

4 May 2022

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2022/09

On 1 April 2022 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for the following information:

A copy of the latest general electoral roll for every district/city. Please keep them separated by district/city, same as at the libraries etc.

I also request how many people are on the unpublished electoral roll, the reason why they are unpublished and their occupation.

A copy of the latest general electoral roll for every district/city. Please keep them separated by district/city, same as at the libraries etc.

This request is refused under section 18((c)(i) of the Act, as making the information available would be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment.

The electoral rolls are public registers created under the Electoral Act 1993. Access to information on the rolls is strictly regulated under the Electoral Act. Apart from a general right of public inspection and the right to purchase printed copies of the rolls and habitation indexes, the supply of information from the rolls, particularly in electronic form, is closely regulated.

Any person may purchase the current main roll or habitation index for an electoral district under section 110(5) of the Electoral Act, on payment of the prescribed fee. The roll lists the names and addresses, and occupation (if provided) of registered electors, ordered alphabetically by family name, for the district. The index lists the names of electors by street address in the district. I have attached the form for applying to purchase a printed electoral roll or habitation index. You should note that it is an offence under section 117 of the Electoral Act for a person to produce roll or habitation index information provided in printed form into a different form from that in which it was supplied. A breach of section 117 of the Electoral Act carries a fine not exceeding \$50,000. If you wish to purchase printed rolls please contact: rolls@elections.govt.nz or (04) 495 0030 to request an application form.

I also request how many people are on the unpublished electoral roll, the reason why they are unpublished and their occupation.

The current number of people on the unpublished roll is 24,722.

Not everyone feels safe enough to have their name, address and occupation publicly available on the electoral roll, but that doesn't mean they lose the right to vote. If anyone is concerned about their personal safety, or that of their family, they can apply to go on the confidential unpublished roll.

Under section 115 of the Electoral Act, any person wishing to apply to go on the unpublished electoral roll must satisfy the Commission their personal safety or that of their family could be impacted. Section 115 also states, once satisfied the Commission are to place the individual's name, residence and occupation on the unpublished electoral roll and that that information shall not be published or made available for inspection. The provision of occupation information is voluntary and self-stated, which means we do not have occupation information recorded for every elector and there is potential for occupation to be identifying. This means we cannot provide information relating to individual reasons why people are on the unpublished roll and people's occupations that are registered on unpublished electoral roll. Your request for that information is refused under section 18(c)(i) of the Act as the making available of the information requested would be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment.

What we can say is that unpublished electors come from all walks of life. Occupations given include managers, caregivers, homemakers, students, public servants, unemployed, and retired people, but the occupations that feature most highly are from the legal, judicial, health, law enforcement, corrections and probation sectors.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every three months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted on www.elections.nz.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ross McPherson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ross McPherson
Acting National Manager, Enrolment and Community Engagement