



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBERS

15 January 2026

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Ref: OIA OIA-2025/26-0383

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Official Information Act request: Officer of New Zealand Order of Merit validation processes

Thank you for your Official Information Act (the Act) request received on 5 December 2025. You requested:

I would like to know specifically the validation and decision making process for these appointments? When someone is nominated, how is their nomination verified, validated and confirmed as a true and accurate nomination?

For example if a funeral director was nominated, are key stakeholders like the Funeral Directors Association contacted to validate the nomination?

I have interpreted your request to be for information held by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC) relating to the validation and decision-making process for nominations for New Zealand Royal honours, including appointments to the New Zealand Order of Merit but not including honours relating to bravery.

Response to your request

Appointments and awards of New Zealand Royal honours are made by the King on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. Appointments are announced in regular honours lists at New Year (30/31 December), and on the New Zealand observance of the King's Birthday (first Monday in June).

The decision-making process for the awards is as follows: twice a year the Appointments and Honours Cabinet Committee, which is made up of Ministers and chaired by the Prime Minister, considers all nominations received, and selects a shortlist of proposed recipients. Proposed recipients are "sounded" to see if they would accept an honour if it were offered to them. The formal responsibility for making final recommendations to the King for the grant of honours rests with the Prime Minister.

Nominations for an honour may be made by any person by completing a nomination form. The guidelines for nominators are set out on the website of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet [at New Zealand Royal Honours nomination guidelines | Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet \(DPMC\)](#). Nominators must provide at least

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two letters of support from others who are familiar with the nominee's service and achievements and who endorse the nominee's contribution. The letters of support add depth and help to validate the factual content of the nomination. Where those letters of support (or the nomination itself) come from key stakeholders in the relevant field, that adds to the strength of the nomination.

The Honours Unit receives and processes nominations for consideration for the regular lists, including preparing a draft citation based on the information set out in the nomination.

Where a member of the public nominates someone who works or has worked for a government agency (including as a volunteer or Justice of the Peace), the Honours Unit may contact the relevant agency in confidence in relation to service or appointment records. Other stakeholders are not consulted in the preparation of the draft citation.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response will be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Nāku noa, nā



Rachel Hayward
Clerk of the Executive Council