



Statement from the Privacy Foundation New Zealand

15 March 2021

Police Surveillance Must Be Considered

The Privacy Foundation New Zealand welcomes the joint inquiry into the New Zealand Police photographing members of the public, but more must be done. Foundation Chair, Gehan Gunasekara, says:

“The matters raised engage questions about what it is to live in a free and democratic society. Allegations that the Police photographed individuals who are not suspected of committing a crime must be investigated and transparently reviewed. As yet there has not been a clear explanation of the purpose of this photography.”

“Police surveillance, while justified, must remain accountable and consistently within our laws and values.”

“The photography of children adds a further worrying dimension given the clear power imbalance between children and the Police. New Zealand has and must maintain clear boundaries around the protection of young people and their information, including their images.”

“Central to any discussion about surveillance must be the history and increased impact of surveillance on Māori.”

“While we welcome the joint inquiry into these practices, more must be done, including consultation with the public.”

The New Zealand Privacy Foundation advocates for the protection of the privacy rights of New Zealanders by providing independent, expert and fair public comment on privacy.

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