

11 July 2023

Requestor
fyi-request-23265-6a65db16@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Requestor

Request for information

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 25 June 2023, in which you asked for information regarding Police video interview technology.

"May 2023 Police helpfully published the following "Investigative interviewing" chapters of the Police Manual to the website:

<https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/investigative-interviewing-police-manual-chapter>

Page 26 - Statement format - of the 'Investigative interviewing: suspect guide' provides, as per the Chief Justice ' s Practice Notes on Police Questioning, that: "Any statement made by a person in custody ... should preferably be recorded by video..."

Video recording is always the preferred method of recording a suspect interview...

<https://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/publications/investigative-interviewing-suspect-guide-180523.pdf>

- 1. Is every NZ Police station equipped with video recording apparatus/capability?*
- 2. What action may be taken where a station is not equipped, a constable offers a suspect the opportunity to either record an audio interview, or make a written statement, but the suspects rejects the offer and wishes to co-operate/proceed to undergo a video interview?*
- 3. Is there a standard procedure as to how often video equipment is checked for faults, and is there a log-book and checklist?*

My response to each of your questions can be found below.

- 1. Is every NZ Police station equipped with video recording apparatus/capability?*

The majority of Police stations are equipped with digital video recording facilities.

Any station that does not have a permanent video interview facility will be within a reasonable distance to travel to a station that does should the officer require to conduct a video interview.

Police National Headquarters

180 Molesworth Street, PO Box 3017,
Wellington
Phone +64 4 474 9499

www.police.govt.nz

There are also portable machines available for staff in rural areas who may arrange to have one on hand for a potential interview as part of matter they are investigating.

- 2. What action may be taken where a station is not equipped, a constable offers a suspect the opportunity to either record an audio interview, or make a written statement, but the suspect rejects the offer and wishes to co-operate/proceed to undergo a video interview?*

Both audio and video interviews are conducted on the same digital interview machine platform. In your scenario, the suspect would therefore need to be transported to a station where the digital interview facilities are located. This would be more likely in a rural setting rather than in a metropolitan area.

- 3. Is there a standard procedure as to how often video equipment is checked for faults, and is there a log-book and checklist?*

There is a bi-annual procedure of maintenance of all interview machines nationally. On top of this, in urgent cases, staff can report any faults for machines through the Police ICT Service Portal.

Each video interview machine is assigned a logbook that records the date, time, and duration of the interview.

All video interview rooms are equipped with a process checklist to be followed before, during and after an interview is conducted.

Yours sincerely



Warren Olsson
Detective Inspector
National Criminal Investigations Group
New Zealand Police