



NEW ZEALAND
CUSTOMS SERVICE
TE MANA ĀRAI O AOTEAROA

WELLINGTON

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PROTECTING NEW ZEALAND'S BORDER

14 October 2020

Ref: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Request for information under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email, dated 21 September 2020, to the New Zealand Customs Service (Customs), in which you make the following request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

"I would like information regarding the rank structure of the New Zealand Customs Service.

Specifically:

- *The dress uniform elements, as compared to working uniform, and if there are differences in the dress uniform as one moves higher through the ranks.*
- *A PDF showing all rank insignia, and their titles.*
- *An image of the Comptroller-General in Dress Uniform (such as from a Customs publication, I am not asking one be taken specifically for this request). If this is unable to be fulfilled for privacy reasons, that is fine.*
- *How the Comptroller-General is appointed - do they have to apply for the role, or does the State Services Commissioner appoint them?*
- *Given the Customs Service is constituted under the authority of Her Majesty, is the Customs Service ever referred to (in modern times), as "Her Majesty's New Zealand Customs Service"? If so, when would that be?*
- *Has Ministerial rank insignia ever been considered, and if so, can a PDF be provided? (If it is unfeasible/too costly/impractical to consider this, then please disregard)."*

In response to your request, below I have set out advice regarding each of the six points in your request.

Points 1 and 2

- *The dress uniform elements, as compared to working uniform, and if there are differences in the dress uniform as one moves higher through the ranks.*
- *A PDF showing all rank insignia, and their titles.*

I can advise that there is no difference in the dress or formal uniform as a Customs officer moves higher through the ranks at Customs. Please find enclosed *Attachment 1 – Customs Uniform* which shows the different types of Customs uniforms, including details of the dress and formal uniform. Please note that since this poster was produced, the rules around name

badges, ties and scarves have changed, and these are now not compulsory elements of the dress uniform. This document for release contains redactions under Section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons. I have also included *Attachment 2 - Rank Slides* which shows the current rank slides (epaulettes) and their titles.

Point 3

- *An image of the Comptroller-General in Dress Uniform (such as from a Customs publication, I am not asking one be taken specifically for this request). If this is unable to be fulfilled for privacy reasons, that is fine.*

The current Comptroller of Customs, Christine Stevenson, was appointed to the role on 1 January 2019 for a period of five years. While the Comptroller of Customs is provided with a formal uniform, there have been no official images taken of the current Comptroller of Customs in uniform to provide to you, therefore this request is refused under Section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist.

Point 4

- *How the Comptroller-General is appointed - do they have to apply for the role, or does the State Services Commissioner appoint them?*

The Comptroller of Customs is also referred to as the Chief Executive of the New Zealand Customs Service. This role, and the appointment of other public service chief executives, is appointed by the Public Service Commissioner as part of the Commissioner's responsibilities as Head of Service for Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission. The role of the Public Service Commission is to provide leadership and over-sight of the public service and ensure that the purpose of the Public Service Act is carried out.

The Public Service Commission upholds long-held public service principles that guide the work of public servants: politically neutral, free and frank advice, merit-based appointments, open government and stewardship.

Point 5

- *Given the Customs Service is constituted under the authority of Her Majesty, is the Customs Service ever referred to (in modern times), as "Her Majesty's New Zealand Customs Service"? If so, when would that be?*

Section 268 of the Customs and Excise Act 2018 outlines that Customs is a department of State called the New Zealand Customs Service, which Customs has been formally titled as since 1996. This was a change from the previous title, the New Zealand Customs Department. Customs is not referred to as Her Majesty's New Zealand Customs Service.

Point 6

- *Has Ministerial rank insignia ever been considered, and if so, can a PDF be provided? (If it is unfeasible/too costly/impractical to consider this, then please disregard)."*

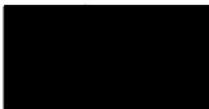
The Minister of Customs has oversight and portfolio responsibilities for Customs but, as they are not a member of the organisation, they do not wear Customs uniform and therefore there is no equivalent rank slide nor has it been considered.

If you are not satisfied with my response, you have the right, by way of complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act, to seek an investigation and review of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available online at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or you can phone the Office of the Ombudsman on 0800 802 602.

Please note that Customs proactively releases responses to Official Information Act requests on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after we have sent it to you. Your name and contact details will be removed.

If you have any queries about this response, please contact the Correspondence, Reviews and Ministerial Servicing team at OIA@customs.govt.nz

Yours sincerely



Debbie Kay

Manager, Correspondence, Reviews and Ministerial Servicing

NEW ZEALAND CUSTOMS SERVICE

CUSTOMS OFFICER UNIFORM STANDARDS

For the public, contact with uniformed staff is their first and most lasting impression of the New Zealand Customs Service. These interactions provide an ideal opportunity for staff to convey a professional image to the public through adherence to a high and consistent standard of dress. This includes wearing specialist uniform items for health and safety reasons.

The uniform must be worn in accordance with the Customs Standard of Dress Policy and Procedures, Uniform Handbook, and Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.

FORMAL UNIFORM

- 1** The Formal Uniform is: forage or bowler hat; tunic; rank slides; long sleeve shirt and tie; tie pin; name badge; ID; trousers (or skirt for women); belt; black dress shoes (men) or court shoes (women). If awarded, full medals to be worn.
- 1A** For less formal occasions ribbons should be worn in place of medals. The forage and bowler hat to be worn if directed.
- Direction will be given on which Formal Uniform (1 or 1A) is to be worn.



DRESS UNIFORM

- 2** The Dress Uniform is: long or short sleeve shirt; rank slides; tie (or scarf for women); tie pin; name badge; ID; trousers (or skirt for women); belt; black safety shoes or boots. If awarded, ribbons to be worn.



INSPECTIONS UNIFORM

- 3** The Inspections Uniform is: inspections shirt; rank slides; ID; cargo pants; belt; black safety shoes or boots.
- 3A** The Inspections Overalls Uniform is: overalls; rank slides; t-shirt; armband ID; black safety shoes or boots.
- The direction to wear either the Inspections Uniform (3) or overalls (3A) will be issued by the Chief Customs Officer on a whole-of-team basis. Mixing and matching of Inspections Uniform and overalls within a team is not permitted.



RIBBONS AND SERVICE MEDALS

Uniformed staff who have been awarded the New Zealand Customs Service Medal should wear their ribbons when in Formal and Dress Uniform. For ceremonial occasions full ribbons and medals must be worn as directed.

Ribbons and medals must be worn on the left breast (centred above the pocket).

SOCKS AND HOSIERY

Female officers may wear either trousers or a skirt with the Formal and Dress Uniform. Socks must be worn with trousers. Hosiery must be worn with the skirt.

TIES AND SCARVES

The Service tie (or scarf for women) must be worn by officers in Dress Uniform when dealing with the public.

When wearing a tie, the top button of the shirt must be buttoned and the end of the tie aligned with the top of the belt. Scarves must be worn with the top button of the shirt unbuttoned.

SHIRTS AND BLOUSES

The Dress Uniform may be worn with either a long or short sleeve shirt. However, only the long sleeve shirt can be worn with the Formal Uniform.

All shirts must be tucked in with the exception of the maternity blouse and Inspections Uniform shirt.

ID DISPLAY

Uniform shirts, jerseys, sleeveless vests, hi-vis vests and rainwear have a sewn on loop to attach ID cards. ID cards should be displayed in this position but may also be displayed from the shirt collar or rank slide.

When wearing overalls, ID cards must be displayed using an armband ID card holder.

FOOTWEAR

Uniformed staff working in operational areas must wear approved safety footwear.

Women wearing the Formal Uniform will wear plain black court shoes with a medium heel height, closed toe and heel, and no fastenings.

All footwear must be kept clean and polished.



PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND HEADWEAR

Protective clothing and headwear must be worn at all times by staff engaged in work for which the items have been issued.

The wide brim hat should be worn for sun protection when working outdoors.



DRILL JACKET AND ANORAK

When in uniform and not on duty, the unbranded drill jacket may be worn (e.g. to and from work or during meal breaks). It must not be worn while performing operational duties.

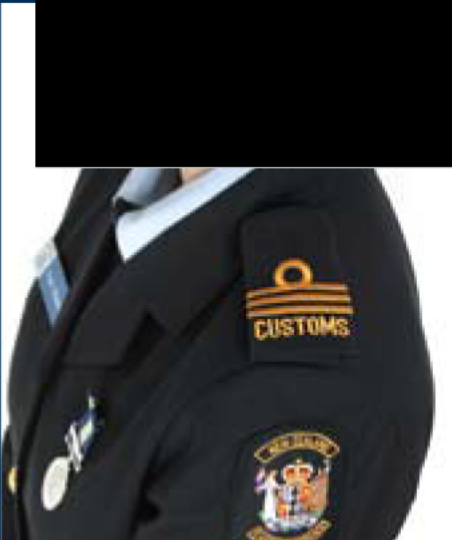
The branded anorak is for use while performing operational duties when extra weather protection is needed.



STAB RESISTANT BODY ARMOUR (SRBA)

The SRBA is for use by investigators, dog handlers and response officers.

The SRBA (overt/covert) is an individually fitted item. For overt wear when in uniform, the SRBA undershirt must be worn.



RANK SLIDES (EPAULETTES)

Rank slides must be worn by staff when in uniform.

Ranks slides (with stripes) will be worn with the top section of the looped stripe flowing to the back.



NAME BADGES

Name badges are worn with the Formal and Dress Uniform on the right breast – centred above the shirt pocket.



V-NECK JERSEY AND FELTED WOOL VEST

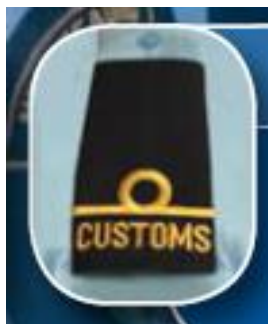
The v-neck jersey or the felted wool vest can be worn with the Dress Uniform or the Inspections Uniform.



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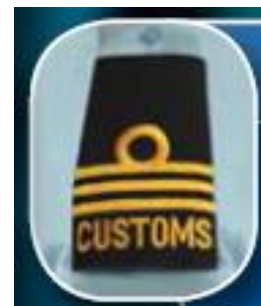
NEW ZEALAND CUSTOMS SERVICE - RANK SLIDES (EPAULETTES)



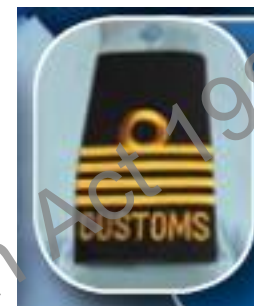
Assistant Customs Officer



Customs Officer



Senior Customs Officer



Supervising Customs Officer/
Customs Technical Specialist



Chief Customs Officer



Operations Manager



Manager



Group Manager



Deputy Comptroller



Comptroller