

Catherine Karena, Active Watchful Waiting

28 November 2025

Commissioner Richard Chambers

New Zealand Police

Re: Accuracy and Operational Impact of NZ Police Website Referral to “Anti-Transgender Extremism” Guide

Dear Commissioner Chambers,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Commissioner, and with respect for the operational independence and professional standards of New Zealand Police. My concern is not political positioning, but the accuracy and reliability of material currently linked from the NZ Police website, and the effect this may have on risk assessment, front-line decision-making, and public trust.

1. NZ Police Website Referral to the Gender Minorities Aotearoa Guide

The NZ Police website directs users to the booklet [Anti-Transgender Extremism](#) by Gender Minorities Aotearoa (GMA) as an authoritative resource on extremism.

Quote: “[Anti-transgender Extremism\(link is external\)](#) - practical advice from Gender Minorities Aotearoa on recognising, preventing, and countering anti-transgender extremism, with a focus on keeping community events safe from anti-transgender violence.”

(<https://www.police.govt.nz/contact-us/local-contacts/diversity-liaison-officers>)

That document was funded through the “Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Fund” and presents itself as an operational guide for identifying dangerous individuals or groups.

However, after analysing the document in detail, I found significant and well-documented evidence gaps and unsubstantiated claims that raise concerns about its suitability as guidance for Police risk assessment. (A detailed analysis is available at [Evidence-Based Response to Anti-Transgender Extremism](#), <https://www.aww.org.au/activistframing>)

2. Absence of Evidence for Claims of Violence by “Gender-Critical” Women

The GMA guide makes several allegations about systematic violence, sexual harassment, and organised attacks by women’s groups or “gender critical” advocates.

For example, it states:

- That neo-Nazi “security” providing covert sexual violence at “gender critical events” has been “*well documented*” (p. 25) —but no examples, police reports, or case references are provided anywhere in the document.

- That older women routinely initiate physical attacks against transgender individuals (pp. 23–24) —again, with no cited incidents, case numbers, or independent corroboration.
- That advocacy for safeguarding children or questioning medicalisation constitutes "extreme measures", "genocidal tactics", or "a precursor to fascism" (pp. 6–8, 17)—characterisations that conflate policy debate with extremist intent.

These claims are presented as factual but do not appear to be supported by evidence, documentation, or police-verified incidents.

As currently written, the guide risks encouraging front line staff to conflate peaceful advocacy, human-rights disagreement, or routine public meetings with violent extremism — which is a serious operational concern.

3. Implications for Accurate Police Risk Assessment

Police rely on accurate classification to determine:

- credible vs. non-credible threats
- likelihood of escalation
- appropriate deployment
- proportional response
- health and safety risk to staff and the public

Where materials contain untested assertions or ideological framing, there is a risk of:

- misidentifying the primary source of risk;
- underestimating risks directed *at* women or speakers;
- overestimating risks from peaceful community groups;
- making inconsistent operational decisions across districts;
- unfairly exposing Police to reputational or legal challenges.

The placement of GMA's paper on the [/diversity-liaison-officers](#) section of NZ police's website means the document is positioned as **authoritative** operational guidance for officers with specific diversity/community liaison responsibilities, which makes the evidentiary standard particularly important. Your officers must be able to distinguish between genuine extremism and ordinary democratic disagreement—the material they rely on must support, not undermine, that distinction.

4. The Albert Park Experience — 160+ Complaints

The need for reliable operational guidance is underscored by the Albert Park incident (2023), where more than 160 formal complaints were made regarding police failure to protect women at a lawful, ticketed event. Many women reported assaults, injuries, and the inability to exit safely.

Those complaints were not about political disagreement — they were about inadequate safety response and misjudged risk assessment. To date, these complaints have not resulted in publicly disclosed procedural changes

If Police risk identification systems are informed by inaccurate external material, this increases the likelihood of similar operational failures in the future.

5. Request for Review

In the interests of supporting Police to uphold professional standards of neutrality, evidence-based assessment, and operational consistency, I respectfully request:

1. **The link to the GMA “Anti-Transgender Extremism” booklet on the NZ Police website be removed**, whilst investigations on the following actions are made.
2. **Assessment by Police intelligence or operational risk specialists** as to whether the document meets the evidentiary standard appropriate for extremism guidance.
3. **Clarification of what sources Police consider authoritative** for defining extremism, risk behaviours, and threat indicators.
4. **Consideration of whether more balanced or evidence-based materials are required**, particularly those that distinguish peaceful advocacy from risk behaviour and reflect the diverse views within affected communities (including transsexual people who support safeguarding).

This request is made in good faith, in support of Police professionalism and impartiality, and with acknowledgement of the complexity Police face when navigating contested social issues. Ensuring that official Police resources meet a high evidentiary standard protects both the public and the Police themselves.

I would welcome the opportunity to provide any further information that may assist your review. Also, I would appreciate notification of any changes or reviews undertaken in response to this correspondence

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Karena

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This letter is co-signed by the following organisations:

Mana Wāhine Kōrero, Di Landy, Co founder MWK, manawahinekorero@email.com

Resist Gender Education, Fern Hickson, Co founder

Parents Against Gender Education, Karen Hall, Co founder

