



8 June 2021

Lobby New Zealand  
fyi-request-15116-2a4608bc@requests.fyi.org.nz

Reference: OIA-2020/21-0506

Dear Lobby New Zealand

**Official Information Act request relating to advice on the legitimacy of placing bans on returning citizens and residence**

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request received on 9 April 2021. You requested:

*“Advice given to Cabinet by any Ministry and/or public officials on the legitimacy of putting a temporary and/or permanent ban of New Zealand citizens and permanent residents from entering New Zealand from overseas, including from other Nations in the Realms of New Zealand, based on the grounds of Covid-19, in accordance with international and New Zealand law and any related exemptions.*

*If it is possible to put such a ban, as considered in Question 1, advice given to Cabinet by the Ministry and/or public officials whether they should exercise such possibility to put a temporary and/or permanent ban, based on the grounds of Covid-19, of New Zealand citizens and permanent residents currently overseas, and if there is any such advice that applies to the other Nations in the Realms of New Zealand.”*

The time frame for responding to your request was extended under section 15A of the Act by 20 working days before a decision could be made on the request, with a response due by 8 June 2021. Following this extension, I am now in a position to respond.

I have decided to publicly release relevant documents, and these will be available on the Unite Against COVID-19 website <https://covid19.govt.nz/> and therefore your request is refused under section 18(d) of the Act, “that the information requested is or will soon be publicly available”.

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.

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Barnes  
**Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Group**