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Tēnā koe Beryl Beauchamp

I refer to your email of 5 September 2021 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

How many fluent Bahasa Indonesia and/or Bahasa Melayu speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many fluent Mandarin Chinese speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many fluent Hindi speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many fluent Japanese speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many fluent German speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many fluent French speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many fluent Bengali speakers are currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

How many Javanese speakers currently employed by MFAT (excluding any locally engaged staff)?

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) staff are able to record information in the Ministry's Human Resources Information System (HRIS) about languages they can speak and the level they assess their proficiency to be in that language. Please note, levels of proficiency may not equate to fluency.

The voluntary data relevant to the languages referred to in your request is set out in the table attached as Annex 1. The Ministry is not able to advise on the actual number of staff employed who are fluent in the Bengali or Javanese languages; no staff member has voluntarily disclosed a proficiency in either of these languages.

A new HRIS is being progressively implemented to replace the current system. This new HRIS will have significantly increased technical functionality that will automate the recording of languages in which Ministry staff have received language training, along with languages that

are able to be spoken or read by staff, and their levels of proficiency. This will provide a more complete record of language capability across the Ministry.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) on the Ministry's website.

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz. You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Julie-Anne Lee
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Annex 1: Information volunteered about language proficiency in Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

The following table provides a record of staff who have volunteered information on speaking proficiency in the following languages:

Speaking proficiency		Bahasa Indonesian	Bahasa Malaysian	French	German	Hindi	Japanese	Mandarin	Total
0	Survival proficiency	6		14	2	1	2	6	31
0+	Exceeds survival proficiency	2	1	5	2	1			11
1	Elementary proficiency	3	2	17	12		5	3	42
1+	Exceeds elementary proficiency	1		16	3	2	4	4	30
2	Limited working proficiency	3		31	11	2	9	13	69
2+	Exceeds limited working proficiency	2		18	3	1	7	7	38
3	Professional working proficiency	1		14	7	1	9	9	41
3+	Exceeds professional working proficiency			3	1		3	8	15
4	Full professional proficiency	1		12	4	2	4	6	29
4+	Exceeds full professional proficiency			2	2	1	1		6
Native proficiency				1	3	3		4	11
Total		19	3	133	50	14	44	60	323