



30 August 2022

Ref: OIA 22-146

Mr Felix Lee

By email: [fyi-request-20118-6f889c2b@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-20118-6f889c2b@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Lee

### Request for Information under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your request dated 3 August 2022 to the New Zealand Customs Service (Customs), received via the FYI website, for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*"I would like to make an OIA request regarding any plans regarding the future of NZ Traveller Declaration.*

*1. Any planned new features/bug fixes to NZTD*

*2. Any plans regarding integrating the paper Arrival Card*

*3. If there are plans to integrate the Arrival Card, how do you deal with the case where the traveller picks up new biosecurity risk items between the period of filling in NZTD and arriving at the border."*

In response, please find Customs' responses to each of your questions below.

#### Questions one and two

*Any planned new features/bug fixes to NZTD*

*Any plans regarding integrating the paper Arrival Card*

I can advise that the New Zealand Traveller Declaration system is being delivered in three stages or 'tranches'.

- Tranche one involved the establishment of a digital system to collect COVID-19 health information and issue a 'Traveller Pass' for travellers to support the re-opening of the air border.
- Tranche two will extend the New Zealand Traveller Declaration health declaration requirements to the maritime border (as appropriate), and the integration of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration with other systems to support traveller processing.
- Tranche three will involve scaling capacity to support pre-COVID-19 traveller volumes and introduce digital customs, immigration and biosecurity declarations, alongside a health declaration as required. Tranche three provides for the service design, development and testing of a digital arrival card, with the aim of the digital declaration replacing the current paper arrival card.

The New Zealand Traveller Declaration, developed in tranche one, has been available for air travellers since 25 March 2022. Additional functionality is being added to the system on an ongoing basis, including improvements to accessibility and making the experience more user-friendly. Customs continues to work alongside other border agencies, key partners, and travellers to ensure feedback is heard and incorporated into future changes.

I can advise that updates are made to the New Zealand Traveller Declaration system on a regular basis. For example, recent system improvements include:

- From 16 April 2022, an enhancement, integrating the New Zealand Traveller Declaration system with eGates was implemented at Wellington International Airport and Christchurch International Airport. This allows travellers who do not require manual checking of their submitted documents to exit via the eGates rather than their Traveller Pass being scanned by a Customs officer.
- The Apple iOS operations system upgrade to 15.6 created an issue for some travellers who use the iOS operating system. Following identification of this issue, Customs implemented changes to resolve this issue.

### Question three

*If there are plans to integrate the Arrival Card, how do you deal with the case where the traveller picks up new biosecurity risk items between the period of filling in NZTD and arriving at the border*

The intention longer term is for the New Zealand Traveller Declaration to enable travellers to digitally complete their full travel declaration (customs, biosecurity, immigration, and health) in advance of departure, and update and confirm on arrival. As such, Customs acknowledges that the timing of when a declaration is made by the traveller is a key consideration of their full digital declaration. Customs is currently working through the details of the system's design to prompt travellers to update their declaration if their circumstances have changed.

If you wish to read further about the background and development of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration system, you can refer to the recently proactively released Cabinet Paper titled '*Establishing a legislative framework for Customs' use of the New Zealand Traveller Declaration*', which you may find of interest. This Cabinet Paper can be accessed on Customs' website at the following link:

<https://www.customs.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/cabinet-material/establishing-a-legislative-framework-for-customs-use-of-the-new-zealand-traveller-declaration.pdf>

If you have any queries in regard to this response, please contact the Correspondence, Reviews and Ministerial Servicing Team: [OIA@customs.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@customs.govt.nz).

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.

Yours sincerely



Sharon May  
**Deputy Chief Executive - Technology & SRO New Zealand Traveller Declaration**