

23 November 2022

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OIA 28292

Tēnā koe Harry Peterson

I refer to your email of 13 September 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*I am requesting all communications between MFAT regarding the appointment of Rt Hon Trevor Mallard as ambassador to Ireland.*

*This includes but is not limited to:*

- Communications regarding a diplomatic visa*
- Communications regarding the reason for a hold up or delay in the appointment of the Rt Hon Trevor Mallard as ambassador to Ireland*

On 12 October 2022, due to further consultation being required before a response could be provided, the timeframe for responding to your request was extended by 20 working days, to 10 November 2022.

On 10 November 2022 we wrote to you to advise that a decision had been made on your request. Thank you for your patience while this process was concluded.

The appointment process for Rt Hon Trevor Mallard as Ambassador to Ireland was completed within normal timeframes. There are two parts to the formal appointment process:

- 1) obtaining the formal approvals of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Governor-General. This can take up to six weeks and is dependent upon signing availability of the Minister and Governor-General. In Mr Mallard's case, it took just under five weeks (24 working days);
- 2) obtaining agrément (the foreign government's approval). This can take up to several months and is entirely dependent upon foreign government processes. In Mr Mallard's case, it took five weeks (25 working days) for the foreign government to approve his appointment.

We are attaching copies of documents of the formal approvals of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Governor-General, and the foreign government approval request and response.

No visa is required for the Rt Hon Trevor Mallard to travel to the Republic of Ireland.

We have withheld some information under the following sections of the OIA:

- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy;
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments; and
- 9(2)(k): to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, we have identified no public interest in releasing the information that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that we may publish this letter (with your personal details redacted) and enclosed documents 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](mailto: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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade