

Hon Nanaia Mahuta

MP for Hauraki-Waikato

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Minister of Local Government

Associate Minister for Māori Development



31 January 2023

James

fyi-request-21413-045779cb@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe James

Thank you for your email of 13 December 2022 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

Total days you spent outside of Aotearoa, New Zealand in your capacity as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Please list the individual trips and days associated with each trip, including if you were accompanied by your husband on any of these trips. This period covers the year beginning January 1st 2021 to December 9th 2022.

All Ministerial trips and appointments that your husband accompanied you to while performing any of your Ministerial duties for any of your portfolios for the year beginning January 1st 2021 to December 9th 2022.

Please provide the date you were first made aware Topher Richwhite was stuck in Iran and any communications related to this, including but not limited to texts, emails and phone calls.

Did you or your office have direct contact with Mr Richwhite or his family at any stage? If so, only the dates are required not what was discussed.

Did any NZ govt employees, MFAT staff, travel into Iran at any stage to provide assistance to Mr Richwhite? If so please provide details such as duration they were there etc.

Please list all the dates you or your office contacted or were contacted by Iran or its representatives where Mr Richwhite was discussed. Just the dates are required, no other information.

The date Mr Richwhite was granted permission and allowed to leave Iran. No other information or details required.

I have answered your requests regarding my travel and Topher Richwhite in turn. Please see below for my response regarding international travel.

Total days you spent outside of Aotearoa, New Zealand in your capacity as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Please list the individual trips and days associated with each trip, including if you were accompanied by your husband on any of these trips. This period covers the year beginning January 1st 2021 to December 9th 2022.

All Ministerial trips and appointments that your husband accompanied you to while performing any of your Ministerial duties for any of your portfolios for the year beginning January 1st 2021 to December 9th 2022.

I have spent 69 days outside of Aotearoa New Zealand in my role as Minister of Foreign Affairs. My husband has not accompanied me on any Ministerial trips, in Aotearoa New Zealand or overseas, in an official capacity. He has attended occasional events with me in Aotearoa New Zealand in his private capacity, with no costs incurred on his behalf by my Ministerial Office or by any of the public sector agencies I am responsible for.

Please refer to the below table regarding my international trips and dates:

Trip	Dates
Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, United States of America and Canada	11 to 28 November 2021 (18 days)
France (Indo-Pacific Forum), United Kingdom, Switzerland (UN Human Rights Council)	19 February-2 March 2022 (12 days)
Fiji	28-31 March 2022 (4 days)
Rwanda (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting)	19 – 28 June 2022 (10 days)
Fiji (Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting)	7 – 9 July 2022 (3 days)
Cambodia (ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting) and Malaysia	2 – 10 August (9 days)
Niue and Tonga	15-19 August 2022 (5 days)
Papua New Guinea	5-8 September 2022 (4 days)
Cook Islands	12-15 October 2022 (4 days)

Regarding the second half of your request:

Please provide the date you were first made aware Topher Richwhite was stuck in Iran and any communications related to this, including but not limited to texts, emails and phone calls.

Did you or your office have direct contact with Mr Richwhite or his family at any stage? If so, only the dates are required not what was discussed.

Did any NZ govt employees, MFAT staff, travel into Iran at any stage to provide assistance to Mr Richwhite? If so please provide details such as duration they were there etc.

Please list all the dates you or your office contacted or were contacted by Iran or its representatives where Mr Richwhite was discussed. Just the dates are required, no other information.

The date Mr Richwhite was granted permission and allowed to leave Iran. No other information or details required.

I am not able to provide details regarding Mr Richwhite or his family due to privacy reasons (section 9(2)(a) of the OIA refers). However I can provide the below information regarding this consular case.

Significant Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) staff resources were devoted to this case over a sustained period of time both in Wellington and in our Embassy in Tehran, with 26 MFAT staff directly involved in the progress of this case from 11 July 2022, until the couple's departure from Iran on 26 October 2022. In addition, a small number of senior officials in MFAT, Ministerial offices and in our overseas posts, had some involvement in the case.

I have supplied a summary of the consular case which provides a timeline of events, this is noted as Annex 1 in the attachment. Attached as Annex 2 are summaries of five key documents (Section 16(1)(e) of the OIA refers) that were supplied to my office regarding this consular case.

All further details of this case are withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 6(d): to avoid endangering the safety of any person; and
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy.

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

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



Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minita Take Aorere / Minister of Foreign Affairs