

17 October 2023

Dr Adam Ward

[fyi-request-24293-4baf6a86@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-24293-4baf6a86@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe Dr Ward

**Official Information Act (OIA) request: 2023 Census population by meshblock**

On 30 September 2023 you contacted Stats NZ requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), information as follows:

*Please could you provide usually resident population counts by 2023 Meshblock boundary as of the March 2023 Census. In previous census outputs this information has been publicly released without small cell suppression or random rounding to base three (which tends to upwardly bias population estimates).*

*If this information will be released as part of the standard census data publication please feel free to ignore this request.*

Data collected from the 2023 Census is currently being processed and analysed in order to produce a final data set. This process includes using administrative data, data from previous censuses, and statistical methodologies to fill in gaps in what has been gathered through the field collection operation. Statistics from the 2023 Census cannot be produced until this process has been completed.

Your request for data from the 2023 Census is therefore refused under section 18(g) of the Act because the information is not held by Stats NZ in the requested form.

The first release of data from the 2023 Census is planned for May 2024 and will include national and regional population and dwelling counts, and Māori descent counts, with further data released subsequently. The full schedule for the release of 2023 Census data will be published in late 2023.

We are not planning to publish meshblock data as part of the standard census data publication. However, this information can be created from the data held by Stats NZ upon receipt of a customised data request, with data available in 2024. Please note that there is a [standard charge](#) of \$155 plus GST per hour for customised data requests.

We are currently taking expressions of interest from individuals who would like to receive 2023 Census information when it is available. If you would like to express your interest, and/or discuss this data request further, you can get in contact with Ewan Jonasen in our Customised Data Requests team. Ewan can be contacted by email at [ewan.jonasen@stats.govt.nz](mailto:ewan.jonasen@stats.govt.nz).

info@stats.govt.nz  
toll-free 0508 525 525  
stats.govt.nz

Please note that confidentiality is applied to all census information, including meshblock counts. More information about how Stats NZ keeps census information safe is available at the following links:

- [Privacy, security, and confidentiality principles | Census.govt.nz](#)
- [Applying confidentiality rules to 2018 Census data and summary of changes since 2013 | Stats.govt.nz](#)

Should you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact Stats NZ at: [OfficeoftheGSCE@stats.govt.nz](mailto:OfficeoftheGSCE@stats.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you can contact us on the email above to discuss the response and/or you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

It is Stats NZ's policy to proactively release its responses to official information requests where possible. This letter, with your personal details removed, will be published on the Stats NZ website. Publishing responses creates greater openness and transparency of government decision-making and helps better inform public understanding of the reasons for decisions.

Nāku noa, nā



Mike Webb  
Senior Manager – External & Government Relations | Office of the Chief Executive  
Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa  
[stats.govt.nz](http://stats.govt.nz)