



Te Pā Whakamarumarū
New Zealand Security
Intelligence Service

PO Box 900, Wellington 6140
P +64 4 472 6170, F +64 4 472 8209
www.nzsis.govt.nz

25 October 2023

Mr. Wong

fyi-request-24361-d7459601@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Mr Wong

Official information request

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 9 October 2023 to the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) seeking information about the current processing / response time for National Security Checks (NSCs) for residence applications.

You have specifically asked for: *"The average processing time frame for the NSC requests that were submitted from October 2022"*.

The NZSIS's role in border screening

The NZSIS supports border security agencies to maintain the integrity of New Zealand's border, and each year we conduct a significant number of NSCs. Immigration New Zealand (INZ) administers the visa application system, including the legislative framework under which NSCs are required.

The NZSIS does not approve or decline visa applications; rather we provide assessments, on request, to help INZ make decisions. INZ makes the final decision on all visa applications.

The processing time for individual NSCs varies across the year, for a number of reasons. The NZSIS conducts NSCs in response to INZ's priorities, which are dynamic and change according to circumstances.

Response to your request

I must refuse your request under section 6(a) of the OIA, as making the information available would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.

The reason we are refusing your request is that we assess there would be a likely harm to New Zealand's national security if we release NSC processing times.

While providing a snapshot of processing times is not a concern, building a dynamic picture of the NSC system by releasing this information over time is of security concern as it could allow our adversaries to exploit the border screening system.

Review

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact oya.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'APW', with a stylized, wavy line extending to the right.

Andrew Hampton

Te Tumu Whakarae mō Te Pā Whakamarumarū
Director-General of Security