



3 November 2023

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Tēnā koe Sahil

### **OIA request 23/24 0252 Request for citizenship processing timeframes.**

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 9 October 2023.

You requested –

- 1. What is the maximum time for Case officer to process application with manual checks especially which required good character eligibility?*
- 2. What is the wait time if case officer is waiting on police checks?*
- 3. 96 % of applications gets outcome in 16 months what about remaining 4 %?*

In response to your request, I can provide you with the following information.

#### **Questions one and two**

The Department does not place a maximum time limit on the processing of a citizenship by grant application which includes good character as part of the eligibility. Also, it is not possible for the Department to isolate the efforts associated with external agency checks which is where the good character information is drawn from. This is because they are performed throughout the processing time and no record is kept of the administration time it takes to request each piece of information. Therefore, I must refuse this portion of your request pursuant to section 18(e) of the Act: the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist.

Should you be interested, information on the *good character* requirement can be found in the citizenship guidance document available here, <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Citizenship-Guidance-Document>.

#### **Question three**

The statement, 96% of applicants received an outcome within 16 months of submitting their application, reflects the proportion of applications that got an outcome within 16 months during the previous month (in this case September 2023). The remaining 4% of applications took longer than 16 months to receive an outcome (the maximum was 51 months during September 2023). These applications take longer primarily for reasons outside of the Department's control such as not being able to contact the customer for long periods of time or due to requiring additional information from external agencies.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, the Department has decided to proactively release a copy of this response on its website. All requestor data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available here: <https://www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2>.

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Crawford-Smith', written in a cursive style.

John Crawford-Smith  
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence (Acting)  
Service Delivery and Operations