



25 June 2024

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Josh

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Tēnā koe Josh

OIA request 23/24 1025 Request for Citizenship Statistics

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 27 May 2024.

You requested –

- 1. Could you verify the number of pending applications from 2023 and provide information on how many are still awaiting assignment to a case officer? Additionally, could you specify which work stream they are in and the dates they submitted their applications?*
- 2. How many case officers are currently assigned to manage each workstream for 2023 applicants?*
- 3. Is priority given to older applications when assigning case officers?*
- 4. Despite the backlog of 2023 applications, there have been reports of approvals for 2024 applicants. Could you please clarify how resources are allocated for processing 2023 applications?*
- 5. Regarding the use of automated checks during assessment, why doesn't the system prompt applicants to rectify failed aspects such as the absence of last names in identity details? For example, could the system request another face image or identity document in a different format, or a document from a Justice of the Peace to verify the name?*
- 6. The DIA call centre often emphasizes that each application is handled differently. Could you explain the factors influencing this differentiation? Is it related to existing passports, ethnicity, or specific countries of origin?*

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

Question one

Please refer to Appendix A attached alongside this letter. Appendix A provides you with a breakdown of citizenship by grant applications submitted during 2023, broken down by workstream and status.

Question two

Please refer to the tables below for the number of Life and Identity Services Officers (LISO) in each workstream as of 31 May 2024.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Workstream 1 – Assessment | 0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) as all current work is assigned |
| Workstream 2 – Assessment 2 | 33 FTE |
| Workstream 3 – Assessment 3 | 10 FTE |
| Workstream 4 – Assessment 4 | 4 FTE |
| Workstream 5 – Assessment 5 | 10 FTE |
| Workstream 6 – Assessment 6 | 0 FTE |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Validation 1 and 2 | 13 FTE |
| Validation 3 | 2 FTE (Currently Team Leaders (TL) validating this bucket) |
| Validation 4 | 1 FTE |
| Validation 5 | 2 FTE (Currently Team Leaders (TL) validating this bucket) |
| Validation 6 | 0 FTE |

Determining the number of LISOs processing citizenship by grant work is not straight forward. This is because LISOs perform different tasks when it comes to the processing of an application, meaning that a single LISO does not process an entire application. The two major tasks are *Assessment* and *Validation*. The ‘assessment’ stage is where the bulk of the processing time is spent, and the ‘validation’ stage is where the application is second checked by another LISO.

Question three

This information is published on the Department’s website, www.govt.nz/browse/passports-citizenship-and-identity/nz-citizenship/how-to-apply-for-nz-citizenship/citizenship-timeframe-differences/. Please refer to the heading *Applications are processed in date order*. Therefore, I must refuse this portion of your request under section 18(d) of the Act; that the information requested is publicly available.

Question four

The majority of our workforce is focussed on processing the oldest applications which require most manual checks. Resources are allocated based on demand across our different workstreams. Some workstreams have automated checks completed by the system while others require manual intervention by a LISO.

Should you be interested, information about why some applications are processed faster than others is published on the website provided above.

Question five

The Department uses two systems for the processing of citizenship applications; Citizenship Operating System (COS) and Customer Centred Management Solution (CCMS). CCMS is used for online applications. The system does not have the capability to assess photo quality or document format, or to identify any differences in names as the application is created. These need to be manually assessed in all cases, once the application has been submitted.

Question six

I can advise that the information requested is already available via a proactively released OIA response, available here: [OIA2324-0923.pdf \(dia.govt.nz\)](#) I must, therefore, refuse this part of your request pursuant to section 18(d) of the Act: that the information requested is publicly available.

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 the DIA 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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'T' followed by a horizontal line.

Julia Taylor
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence
Service Delivery and Operations