



5 August 2024

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Anna

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Tēnā koe Anna

**OIA request 24/25 0043 Request for citizenship by grant submission statistics.**

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 9 July 2024.

You requested –

1. *I seek clarification on why submissions under the "approve" category require ministerial approval.*
2. *For submissions under the "Presence Requirement" category, where applicants did not satisfy the DIA that they clearly intended to reside in New Zealand, from 01/01/2023 to 08/07/2024, I request the following information:*  
*Reduction in Presence Requirement (Section 8(7)):*
  - 1) *The number of applications approved.*
  - 2) *The number of applications declined.*
  - 3) *The recommendation provided by the case officer for each application.*
  - 4) *The mean, median, maximum, and minimum time taken by the Minister to make a decision after submission.*
3. *Special Cases (Section 9):*
  - 1) *The number of applications approved under the "Public Interest" category.*
  - 2) *The number of applications approved under the "Humanitarian" category.*
  - 3) *The number of applications declined in each of these categories.*
  - 4) *The recommendation provided by the case officer for each application in these categories.*
  - 5) *The mean, median, maximum, and minimum time taken by the Minister to make a decision after submission for each category.*

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

**Question one**

I can advise that the information you are seeking is available on the Department's website via proactively released OIA response 23/24 1086. The response can be viewed here, [www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/OIA-Releases-2024/\\$file/OIA-2324-1086-Response-for-proactive-release.pdf](http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/OIA-Releases-2024/$file/OIA-2324-1086-Response-for-proactive-release.pdf).

Therefore, I must refuse this portion of your request pursuant to section 18(d) of the Act; the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.

### **Question two**

It may be helpful for me to explain that the Citizenship Act 1977 authorises the Minister to accept a shorter presence under section 8(7) and approve a grant of citizenship under section 8(1) only if they consider that the applicant meets the intention requirement. If an applicant is considered to not meet the intention requirement, they can only be approved under section 9, even if they are eligible for a reduction in the presence requirement under section 8(7).

From 1 January 2023 to 8 July 2024, there was one application where the applicant's ability to meet the intention requirement was discussed in the submission. However, they were considered to meet the requirement, and the Minister accepted a shorted period of presence under section 8(7).

During the same period, there were two applications where the applicants met the criteria for a reduction of the presence requirement under section 8(7) but were not considered to meet the intention requirement, so they were considered and declined under section 9(1)(c)<sup>1</sup>.

The application that was approved had a recommendation of approve and the submissions that were declined had recommendations of not approve.

For these three submissions, the mean time taken by the Minister to make a decision was 22 days, the median was 14 days, the maximum was 40 days, and the minimum was 13 days.

### **Question three**

From 1 January 2023 to 8 July 2024, there were no applications approved under the 'public interest' or 'humanitarian' category.

During the same period, there were four submissions for applicants who did not meet the presence requirement, were not eligible for consideration under section 8(7), and did not meet the intention requirement. All four were declined and had recommendations of not approve.

When applications are approved or declined under section 9(1)(c), the specific category i.e., 'public interest' or 'humanitarian', is not recorded so we are unable to provide that information. Therefore, I must refuse this portion of your request pursuant to section 18(g) of the Act; that the information requested is not held by the department and the person dealing with the request has no grounds for believing that the information is held by another organisation subject to the Act. Please note, for three of the four submissions the applicant also failed to meet the other requirements.

For these four submissions, the mean time taken by the Minister to make a decision was 12 days, the median was 7 days, the maximum was 30 days, and the minimum was 4 days.

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<sup>1</sup> if the Minister is satisfied that granting a certificate of New Zealand citizenship to the applicant would be in the public interest because of exceptional circumstances of a humanitarian or other nature relating to the applicant; or

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: [www.dia.govt.nz/Official-Information-Act-Requests-2](http://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



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