



17 October 2024

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Paul

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Tēnā koe Paul

OIA request 24/25 0308 Request for information on citizenship processing timeframes.

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 29 September 2024.

You requested –

- 1. In light of many applicants' uncertainty and concern, can the DIA please explicitly state its position of whether the current backlog and processing times are considered acceptable and in line with internal targets, especially average/median processing times?*
- 2. Does the DIA consider the current backlog and processing times to be an issue, and has reducing both, or either, been identified as priorities for the Citizenship Office?*
- 3. Can the DIA share any internal correspondence with the Citizenship Office and/or correspondence with the Minister of Internal Affairs pertaining to the backlog and/or processing times of CbG applications since the Minister took office in November 2023?*
- 4. Apart from the DIA's standard response that assessment processes and staff training are continuously improved, has the Citizenship Office established, or does it plan to establish, a designated strategy or work programme to reduce the current backlog and/or processing times of CbG applications?*
- 5. Furthermore, has the Citizenship Office increased, or does it plan to increase, processing capacities for CbG applications (e.g. additional FTE)?*
- 6. Does the DIA project any noteworthy reductions in the backlog and/or processing times of CbG applications over the next 6-12 months?*

Questions one and two

It is important to explain that the Act only provides access to official information that is held by an agency or Minister. The Act does not require an agency or Minister to create new information or form an opinion to answer a request. For these reasons I am refusing your request for information in questions one and two. Further information can be found on page six of the Ombudsman's guide 'The OIA for Agencies and Ministers':

www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources/oia-ministers-and-agencies-guide-processing-official-information-requests.

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

Questions three, four and six

Significant changes are planned for early 2025, which will increase productivity. Please refer to Appendix A attached alongside this letter. Appendix A provides you with the following documents –

- Internal Affairs briefing – Introduction to Citizenship
- Internal Affairs briefing – Citizenship processing update May 2024
- Internal Affairs briefing – Citizenship processing update June 2024
- Internal Affairs briefing – Citizenship processing update July 2024
- Internal Affairs briefing – Citizenship processing update August 2024
- Internal Affairs briefing – Citizenship processing update September 2024
- Internal Affairs briefing – Life and Identity Services monthly update October 2024

You will note that some of the information has been withheld under the following section of the Act –

- 9(2)(a) – the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

Some information has been omitted from the documents as it falls outside the scope of your request, any information of this nature has been marked as ‘out of scope’.

Should you be interested, briefing papers to incoming Ministers are publicly available on the Department’s website, www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/Resource-material-Briefings-to-Incoming-Ministers-Index?OpenDocument

Question five

I can advise that the information you are seeking is available on the Department’s website via a proactively released OIA response 23/24 0666. This response can be viewed here, [www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/OIA-Releases-2024/\\$file/OIA-2324-0666.pdf](http://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/OIA-Releases-2024/$file/OIA-2324-0666.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.

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.

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 'John Crawford-Smith', written in a cursive style.

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