



21 February 2025

Chris

[fyi-request-29363-dc8b0f39@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-29363-dc8b0f39@requests.fyi.org.nz)

DOIA-REQ-0006974

Tēnā koe Chris

Thank you for your email of 28 November 2024 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following:

- *Any and all internal emails, notes memos by the person(s) / teams responsible for declining Candace Owens "Entertainers work visa"*
- *Any and all correspondence / complaints to immigration NZ from all NGOs including but not limited to Holocaust Centre NZ, NZ Young Labour and any other organization that wants to shut down open debate by a young articulate female*
- *Recommendation reports internally / externally including to the minister*
- *Correspondence with our Australian counterparts*

*Ultimately any and all correspondence with persons involved in declining her entry to our country.*

- *Can you also provide a list of all people declined entry to New Zealand in the past based on them being excluded from another country whilst having no criminal record.*

On 15 January 2025 we advised that MBIE has decided to extend the period of time available to make a decision on your request under section 15A(1)(b) of the Act, as consultations necessary to make a decision on your request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonably be made within the original time limit.

### **Our Response**

- *Any and all internal emails, notes memos by the person(s) / teams responsible for declining Candace Owens "Entertainers work visa"*
- *Correspondence with our Australian counterparts*

Please find attached information within scope of these parts of your request in the attached appendix.

Please note some information has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- 6(b)(i), as the making available of that information would be likely to prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of New Zealand on a basis of confidence by the Government of any other country or any agency of such a Government.
- 6(c), as the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial.

- 9(2)(a), as the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons. I do not consider that the withholding of this information is outweighed by public interest considerations in making the information available
- 9(2)(g)(ii), as the withholding of the information is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of such Ministers, members or organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.

*Any and all correspondence / complaints to immigration NZ from all NGOs including but not limited to Holocaust Centre NZ, NZ Young Labour and any other organization that wants to shut down open debate by a young articulate female  
Recommendation reports internally / externally including to the minister*

These parts of your request are refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found. MBIE is aware that groups wrote to the Minister and Associate Minister of Immigration regarding this case but these were not directed to Immigration New Zealand. No 'recommendation reports' were produced, and the decision was made by a designated immigration officer under the Immigration Act 2009.

*Can you also provide a list of all people declined entry to New Zealand in the past based on them being excluded from another country whilst having no criminal record.*

This part of your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. A visa being declined on the basis of being excluded from another country whilst having no criminal record, is information that is not held in a reportable format. To obtain this level of information would require MBIE staff to look through individual application assessments to identify applicants who were declined under section 15 of the Act, and then determine the number of those people who had a criminal record.

This task would remove MBIE staff from their core duties and therefore the greater public interest would not be served. I have considered whether the MBIE would be able to respond to your request given extra time or the ability to charge for the information requested but I have concluded, in both cases, the MBIE's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Immigration New Zealand declined Ms Owens' visa application on the basis of section 15(1)(f) of the Immigration Act 2009 following Ms Owens being denied entry to Australia.

You may be aware that subsequently, Ms Owens requested intervention from the Associate Minister of Immigration, Hon Chris Penk, to exercise his discretion and grant her a visa. The Minister granted Ms Owens a visa following this request, after considering representations made to him.

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.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your request or this response, please contact [inzoias@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:inzoias@mbie.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeannie Melville". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a light blue rectangular border.

Jeannie Melville  
Deputy Chief Operating Officer Immigration  
Chief Operating Officer Immigration  
Immigration New Zealand  
Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment