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Tēnā koe John

OIA request 2526-1127 - Request for Certificate of Identity data

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 24 April 2026.

You requested –

- 1. Over the past three calendar years (2023, 2024, and 2025), how many Certificates of Identity have been issued per each calendar year, with a breakdown by nationality.*
- 2. Whether DIA maintains records on the categories under which an applicant applies under.*
- 3. Outline any other categories or reasons under which a Certificate of Identity may be issued.*

For ease of response, I have numbered your request.

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

I note that there is a single application form¹ used for both a Certificate of Identity (COI) and a Refugee Travel Document (RTD), regardless of whether an applicant is seeking one document or the other. The information provided below relates to COI only.

Question one

Please refer to Appendix A, which sets out the total number of COI's issued in 2023, 2024, and 2025, with a breakdown by nationality for each calendar year.

Questions two

I can advise that the Department records only whether an individual has applied for and been issued a COI, as outlined in Appendix A. The Department is unable to provide data on the specific eligibility category under which an individual qualifies for, and is issued, a COI, as this would require manual assessment of each individual application. Therefore, I must refuse this

¹ https://www.passports.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/46735/PAS205-Application-for-a-certificate-of-identity-or-refugee-travel-document.pdf

portion of your request pursuant to section 18(f) of the Act; that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

Question three

I can advise that a COI **can** be issued to an individual who:

- is not a New Zealand citizen, and
- is physically present in New Zealand, and
 - is unable to obtain a national passport of their own nationality unless they return to their country of origin, or
 - can provide evidence that they held refugee status in another country, or
 - is the spouse or child of a person that holds refugee status granted by Immigration New Zealand (INZ), or
 - has held and then lost their refugee status, or
 - is stateless, but does not qualify for refugee status, or
 - is unable to establish their nationality.

A COI **cannot** be issued to an individual who:

- holds a valid national passport, or
- is a citizen of a country that is represented in New Zealand or Australia, unless they:
 - are a citizen of Zimbabwe, or
 - are unable to obtain travel documents from their country's embassy or consulate, and can produce a letter from their embassy or consulate stating why the applicant cannot be issued with a travel document at that time.

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.

Nāku noa, nā



Julia Taylor
Director Branch Performance
Regulatory and Identity Services