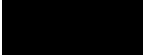




25 March 2020



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your email of 24 February 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting information about the Ministry's practices and processes for collecting and reporting on Official Information Act (OIA) request statistics. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982.

The main tool the Ministry uses on a daily basis to track the status of requests, including the recording of key actions during the development of responses, is the workload management application JIRA. We are continually looking for ways to improve our monitoring and reporting of this important work and we are currently considering better connectivity between business tools we use in this area.

We have recently developed tailored dashboards for business groups, regional leaders and senior leaders. This allows details on OIA volumes, timeliness, trends and key messages to be accessible at any time by any member of staff on a real time basis.

Our work in this area has allowed us to report on our practices in more detail through our annual review to the Education and Workforce Select Committee. You can find a copy of our response to the 2019/20 Annual review of the Ministry of Education:

https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCEW_EVI_103989_EW1577/cbd9a83985b139b86fe2763c925a846767075310.

We are currently working through a complex process of considering how we elicit more meaning from the information captured in our reporting tools, and how that information can help inform all aspects of our work, including how we extract the most meaningful qualitative and quantitative statistics.

1. Are the OIA statistics reported to TKM published on your agency's website, and if so, where?

Yes, this has recently been added and can be viewed at <https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/information-releases/>.

2. Are any additional statistics (such as those detailed below) published on your agency's website, and if so, where?

We do provide some additional statistics within our Annual Report, on the efficiencies of our responses to Ministerial correspondence replies, Parliamentary question replies and Ministerial Official Information Act replies in the Ministry's Annual Report. The 2020 Annual Report, as well as previous years reports, can be found on our website at:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/publications/annual-report/annual-report-2020/>.

Currently, we do not publish any additional statistics in the manner and scope you have set out in your request. However, we are actively exploring ways in which our public accountability documentation might better demonstrate more publicly our commitment to the purposes and principles of the OIA.

3. Does the agency collect or report (please answer collect, report, or no):

- a) the number of requests received;
- b) the number of requests transferred in full;
- c) the number of requests withdrawn;
- d) the number of requests refused;
- e) the number of requests granted in part;
- f) the number of requests granted in full;
- g) time taken from receipt of request to despatch of the official information or decision to refuse;
- h) time taken from receipt to transfer.

Our workflow and tracking tools allow for the capture and collection of a wide amount of information in relation to our OIA requests, including the data referenced in your request. While not all of this information is used and collected for reporting purposes it is captured within these tools and, if required, can be used for analysis. Some of this information could be extracted by the use of formula and/or algorithms while some other information would require manual collation and extraction. Our tools allow a level of flexibility and customisation in the design of workflow tickets which can allow for us to begin capturing and reporting on further data fields and, as indicated above, this is work we are actively engaged in. As mentioned above we are working on ways at better integration of our tools and how we can extract more meaningful reporting.

I am providing answers to your specific questions around captured data in the table below.

Question	Answer
a) <i>the number of requests received;</i>	Collect and report
b) <i>the number of requests transferred in full;</i>	Collect
c) <i>the number of requests withdrawn;</i>	Collect
d) <i>the number of requests refused;</i>	Collect
e) <i>the number of requests granted in part;</i>	Collect
f) <i>the number of requests granted in full;</i>	Collect
g) <i>time taken from receipt of request to despatch of the official information or decision to refuse;</i>	Collect
h) <i>time taken from receipt to transfer.</i>	Collect

4. Does the agency count the number of requests (please answer yes or no):

- a) requesting urgent attention;
- b) amended or clarified (within or outside the legislated seven day time frame);
- c) consulted another agency or 3rd party;
- d) consulted Minister;
- e) charged;
- f) extended;

- g) notified to Minister;
- h) where the statutory time-frame to transfer a request was met or not met;
- i) where the statutory time-frame to notify an extension was met or not met;
- j) where the statutory time-frame to seek amendment or clarification was met or not met.

When requests are received by the Ministry the details of the request, as well as the request as it was submitted, is input and uploaded into individual case records. Likewise with the data requested in part three of your request, the information you have asked about is stored within these individual JIRA records and if required, we are able to count and report on this information.

Question	Answer
a) <i>requesting urgent attention;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
b) <i>amended or clarified (within or outside the legislated seven day time frame);</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
c) <i>consulted another agency or 3rd party¹;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
d) <i>consulted Minister²;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
e) <i>charged;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
f) <i>extended;</i>	Yes
g) <i>notified to Minister;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
h) <i>where the statutory time-frame to transfer a request was met or not met;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
i) <i>where the statutory time-frame to notify an extension was met or not met;</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.
j) <i>where the statutory time-frame to seek amendment or clarification was met or not met.</i>	This data is collected but not counted. No.

5. Does the agency measure (please answer yes or no):

- a) time taken from receipt of request to decision regarding release of information;
- b) time from receipt to seeking clarification;
- c) time from receipt to notification of extension;
- d) duration of extension;
- e) time for agency or third party response;
- f) time for Minister response;
- g) time from decision to release of information.

Along with our reporting to TKM, the Government, Executive and Ministerial Services team produces monthly reporting to our Ministry Senior Leadership Team on the OIA requests currently on hand for the financial year to date and the timeliness in providing responses to these requests.

Question	Answer
a) <i>time taken from receipt of request to decision regarding release of information;</i>	Yes
b) <i>time from receipt to seeking clarification;</i>	This data is collected but not measured. No.

¹ We have interpreted 'agency or third party response' as a response as part of the consultation process for responding to OIA requests.

² We have interpreted 'Minister response' to include both consultations with Ministerial offices as well as the noting of requests under the no surprises convention.

Question	Answer
c) <i>time from receipt to notification of extension;</i>	This data is collected but not measured. No.
d) <i>duration of extension;</i>	Yes
e) <i>time for agency or third party response;</i>	This data is collected but not measured. No.
f) <i>time for Minister response;</i>	This data is collected but not measured. No.
g) <i>time from decision to release of information.</i>	This data is collected but not measured. No.

6. Does the agency have any system to classify requests by (please answer yes or no):

- a) **channel;**
- b) **gateway;**
- c) **requester category;**

as suggested in TKM's "Selection and Reporting of Official Information Act Statistics".

In their Selection and Reporting of Official Information Act Statistics guidance from December 2017, TKM provide the following descriptions for Channel, Gateway and Requester Category:

Channel: by what method was the request submitted?

- *Search of website;*
- *Phone call;*
- *Email;*
- *fyi.org.nz;*
- *Post;*
- *In person;*
- *Etc.*

Gateway: what was the entry point for the request?

- *Website form;*
- *Media unit;*
- *OIA unit;*
- *General enquiries;*
- *Etc.*

Requester category: which category of person made the request?

- *Individual citizen;*
- *Corporation;*
- *Media/Journalist;*
- *Member of Parliament;*
- *Political research unit;*
- *Interest group;*
- *Etc.*

As previously advised, our tools contain information on requesters based upon the requests they submit to the Ministry. The original request is always uploaded to JIRA so the channel, gateway and requestor category is captured. When a request is uploaded the category of requestor is entered as a system field.

We would also, if required, be able to collect and capture this information from not only our records in our workflow tracking tools but also by searching through designated requests mailboxes as well as statistics around unique visits to our website.

Question	Answer
a) channel	The data is collected but not classified. No.
b) gateway	The data is collected but not classified. No.
c) requester category	Yes

It should be noted that the information collected from the requester category can be used in analysis for wider parts of the Ministry by providing trends in requests by certain parts of the Education and political sectors.

We are deeply committed to meeting our obligations under the OIA and to engaging with the public, both proactively and in relation to specific information requests. We are very proud of our “track-record” with regard to the quality and timeliness of our responses. However, as outlined above, improving our data collection and reporting in this area has been, and continues to be a key focus for the Ministry going forward.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes OIA responses on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Emily Fabling
Deputy Secretary
Strategy, Planning and Governance