

08 MAR 2021

M P Ross

fyi-request-14633-5cfd84b0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Our ref: OIA 85888

Dear Mr M P Ross

**Official Information Act request: Average Official Information Act response times for media companies compared to the public**

Thank you for your email of 8 February 2021 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), information regarding Official Information Act (OIA) response times for media companies compared to the public. I have outlined your specific questions and my responses to each below:

*1) Do media companies and organisations receive preferential treatment to their official information request in terms of receiving responses/official information faster than individual members of the public under the Official Information Act 1982?*

The Ministry of Justice only records information on OIA requests and responses directed to the Ministry. Where a request is logged as an OIA request for a journalist or media organisation, there is no preferential treatment. OIAs that are logged as being media-related have the same due date as any other request logged under the OIA.

*2) What is the average or mean waiting time (in days) for individuals to receive request information from every department or interdepartmental venture, Minister of the Crown, and organisations in accordance with section 12 of the Official Information Act 1982?*

The Ministry does not hold statistics for every agency and/or Minister. On average, the Ministry responded to requests in 20.6 working days in the 2019/20 financial year.

*3) What is the average or mean waiting time (in days) to receive request information on behalf of media companies (e.g. Stuff.co.nz, Newshub, Radio NZ, TVNZ, NZ Herald) from every department or interdepartmental venture, Minister of the Crown, and organisations in accordance with section 12 of the Official Information Act 1982?*

The Ministry's OIA database does not have a field to easily report on media OIAs vs requests from other agencies. However, we were able to filter data by searching for requests where the requester's entity was clearly a media company. For 2019/20, there were 138 requests that were identified as being from media companies and these requests had an average response time of 21.5 days. Please note, this data also includes requests from the FYI website as these are sent out by our Media team.

*4) Do departments, interdepartmental ventures, Ministers of the Crown, and organisations intentionally delay the release of official information that they have available? e.g. 'someone and/or a department has the information ready, and they sit on it for 2 weeks'.*

I cannot speak for other departments or Ministers, but I can confirm that the Ministry of Justice does not purposely delay the release of OIA responses.

If you are not satisfied with my response, you have the right to complain to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Yours sincerely



Anouk Alexander  
**Deputy Secretary – Strategy, Governance and Finance**