

7 May 2021

John Jacobson

By email: fyi-request-15162-1322f185@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202104400

Dear John Jacobson

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) on 13 April 2021 for:

“(a) the dates and titles of all advice or memos generated within the Ministry of Health which are either solely about, or incorporate content relating to, the topic of how a person might provide proof or certification of either having been vaccinated against Covid-19, or otherwise having Covid-19 antibodies.

(b) copies of the advice or memos identified as within the scope of (a) above.

(c) copies of communications from the Ministry to each of the following about options for, or work to progress, people being able to provide proof of their Covid-19 vaccination or antibody status, sent between 1 August 2020 and 13 April 2021;

(i) the Minister or Associate Ministers of Health, or officials in their offices;

(ii) the Minister for Covid-19 Response, or officials in his office;

(iii) officials in the Covid-19 Group in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

(iv) officials in the Department of Internal Affairs

(v) officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

(vi) officials in the Ministry of Justice.

(d) any contract the Ministry holds with a software company which includes work to develop a smartphone app to record and display someone's proof or certification of their Covid-19 vaccination status, and a the statement of work required from that company in relation to that work.

(e) the project plan (or other documentation giving an overview of the work) of any work to develop a smartphone app to record and display someone's proof or certification of their Covid-19 vaccination status.

(f) the number of people working for, or contracted to, the Ministry of Health that are working on methods for people to provide proof or certification of their Covid-19 vaccination status, both in absolute numbers and Full-Time Equivalents.”

With COVID-19 vaccinations being rolled out worldwide, vaccination certificates that both meet rigorous criteria and are operationally sound have been proposed to ease border restrictions without compromising public health. To that end, the Ministry is working jointly with agencies across Government to develop digital vaccine certificates to facilitate international travel.

As this work is still under active consideration by Ministers, information pertaining to your request is withheld in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act, to maintain the constitutional conventions that protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers and officials.

Under section 28(3) of the Act you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maree Roberts". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Maree" and last name "Roberts" clearly legible.

Maree Roberts
Deputy Director-General
System Strategy and Policy