



3 September 2021

45 Pipitea Street, Wellington 6011

Phone +64 4 495 7200

John Burns-Smith
fyi-request-16317-
fbfd5c22@requests.fyi.org.nz

dia.govt.nz

Dear John

OIA request 21/22 0113 Request for information relating to the New Zealand passport design

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 6 August 2021.

You requested –

I wish to make a three-part OIA request for policy/discussion documents (or the like) which pertain to passport language and issuance.

- **PART A**

Please supply policy or discussion documents that pertain to the redesign of the passport in 2021, as noted in the Seek Article 'New Zealand passport to get a security makeover' published on 3 May. I appreciate this request is broad, so I would like to limit the request to policies/discussions that focus on the primacy of one language over another.

- **PART B**

Please supply policy or discussion or advice documents that the DIA generated or receive when considering the presentation of Maori and English in various iterations of the covers of passports and Emergency travel documents?

When considering Maori/English presentation, what advice did the Department receive as to the presentation in terms of type size and position of 'Aotearoa'? It appears not to be on equal footing with 'New Zealand' which appears larger on passports but the reverse is true on Emergency travel documents where 'Aotearoa' and 'New Zealand' are equal.

- **PART C**

I would also like to request policy documents that outline what categories of person are entitled to be issued diplomatic and official passports, and under what circumstances (for example, current and former prime ministers / Department CEOs) and any policies that govern the use of these documents. I appreciate that the policy which governs the use of Diplomatic/Official passports may be issues by another government department, if that is the case any helpful suggestion would be welcomed so I can redirect the enquiry to the right area.

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

Part A

Much of the discussions around putting Te Reo Māori before English occurred in conversations through the project phases, and not official advice provided in any form of documentation. There are, however, two email chains that refer to the changes. Should these be of interest to you, please find them attached alongside this letter. You will find that the email addresses of external staff and the cellphone number of one Department staff member have been withheld. This is pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Act; the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons.

It may be helpful for me to explain that this is because the decision to put Te Reo Māori before English on the New Zealand passport was part of the Uruwhenua 2020 project (the Project). The Project was established to conduct a formal tender process for a new supply contract for New Zealand travel documents, due to the expiry of the Department's contract with Canadian Bank Note (CBN).

The Department entered into a new ten year contract with CBN for the supply of travel documents as a result of the tender process. The new contract included a refresh of the passport book design, and the deployment and support of the infrastructure needed to produce New Zealand passports.

As part of the refresh, the decision was made by the Department for Te Reo Māori to appear first on the cover and throughout the book. This is because the Department has obligations as a lead agency under Maihi Karauna, the Crown's Māori Language Strategy. I note that making the change in the New Zealand passport is an example of the strategy in practise, and a reflection of true Treaty of Waitangi partnerships.

Part B

We have interpreted Part B of your request to be in relation to the 2020 passports redesign and our current suite of travel documents.

I must advise that decisions about the size of the text in the various iterations of travel documents were made in 2009 and there was no change to the type size in the latest 2020 redesign. I can confirm some changes were made to the positioning of text as a result of the 2020 redesign from a design/aesthetic perspective.

As there are no discussion or policy documents relating to Te Reo Māori and English in various iterations from the 2020 passports redesign, we must therefore refuse this portion of your request under section 18(e) of the Act.

Part C

Please find attached the policies relating to Official and Diplomatic passports, extracted from the Department's policy resource Tuwhiria te Tikanga.

I note that it is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) who direct the Department on whether to issue a Diplomatic passport. You may therefore wish to contact them in order to seek out any policy documentation they hold regarding this. Information on making an Official Information Act request to MFAT can be found here;

<https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-requests/?m=554834#search:b2ZmaWNpYWwgaW5mb3JtYXRpb24>.

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.

Yours sincerely



Julia Taylor
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence
Service Delivery and Operations