



21 September 2021

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dia.govt.nz

Dear Sukhwinder

Official Information Act 1982 request 2122-0169 –

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 24 August 2021.

You requested –

- 1. Can you please suggest when dia is implementing new strategies to reduce the backlog and by when it will be resolved?*
- 2. Can you please provide month wise details of applied and processed paper applications in Wellington office from October 2020 until August 2021?*
- 3. Can you please provide the number of case officers working on paper applications and time taken for applications to get assigned to case officer every month?*

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

Question one

The Department currently has initiatives underway to reduce the citizenship application backlog, speed up processing, and improve general customer experience. In the immediate term this includes hiring additional temporary staff who will focus on reducing the backlog of paper applications, freeing up most existing staff to work exclusively on online applications.

We expect that the time taken for staff to process in the new online system should reduce as they become more familiar with our new system. We are also continuing to develop this new system and train more existing staff to process citizenship applications. Taken together the range of initiatives should see a decrease in the backlog in coming months.

Questions two and three

In response to these parts of your request, please see attached for Appendix A. Appendix A provides you with a break down of the following information:

- Table one – Number of paper-based citizenship by grant applications received, begun processing, and completed, by citizenship trained Life and Identity Services Officers based in Wellington.*

- *Table two – Time taken to assign paper-based citizenship by grant applications to citizenship trained Life and Identity Services Officers based in Wellington.*

I am unable to provide you with the exact number of Wellington based Life and Identity Services Officers (LISOs) who are working specifically on paper-based citizenship by grant applications at any given time. This is because this kind of information can vary on any given day due to staffing variation caused by, but not limited to, sick leave, annual leave and parental leave.

However, I can advise of the number of LISOs who are trained in processing applications via COS, the case management system used for paper-based applications. There are currently 24 permanent Wellington based LISOs who are trained to process applications via COS and is in the process of employing and training a further 20 temporary LISOs to assist with clearing the backlog of paper applications.

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