



26 January 2022

Robert Brownlee

fyi-request-17727-30bab45e@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA-2021/22-0759

Dear Robert Brownlee

Official Information Act request for origin of the Vaccination Passport System

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) request partially transferred from the Ministry of Health on 13 December 2021. You requested:

1. "1. When was the vaccination passport system first presented as a potential option for covid strategy?
 - a. Who presented/formulated/suggested this system?
 - b. What response was there to this suggestion?
 - c. From where did the idea originate?
2. When was the traffic light system system first presented as a potential option for covid strategy?
 - a. Who presented/formulated/suggested this system?
 - b. What response was there to this suggestion?
 - c. From where did the idea originate?"

The first briefing regarding the COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate titled *Initial advice on the domestic use of COVID-19 Vaccination certificates* was provided to the Minister for COVID-19 Response on 17 September 2021. Further briefings and Cabinet Papers were prepared on the subject, and once Cabinet decisions had been made, these changes were then announced to the public. An increasing number of countries have introduced a form of COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate for customers to enter domestic venues and events, including concerts, sports events and restaurants.

A Cabinet paper titled *COVID-19: A Strategy For a Highly Vaccinated New Zealand* was taken to Cabinet on 27 September 2021, Once Cabinet decisions had been made, these changes were then announced to the public. Under the COVID-19 Protection Framework (the Traffic Light System) businesses and events are able to operate with fewer restrictions in place, if opened to vaccinated customers, as they pose a lower risk. The Framework does not rely on lockdowns as the main measure to stop the virus spreading and we are progressing well with the roll-out of the booster campaign. This allows us to enjoy the greater freedoms that vaccination provides.

We are refusing your request under section 18(d) of the Act. The information within scope of your request is publicly available on the Unite Against COVID-19 website:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/about-our-covid-19-response/proactive-releases/alert-levels-and-restrictions/>.

You have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision under section 28(3) of the Act.

This response may be published on the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's website during our regular publication cycle. Typically, information is released monthly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

Yours sincerely



Cheryl Barnes

Deputy Chief Executive, COVID-19 Response