

3 June 2022

Philip Shaw

By email: fyi-request-17767-8b4c8d43@requests.fyi.org.nz
Ref: H202116873/ 574313

Cc: rich.woodward@ombudsman.parliament.nz

Tēnā koe Philip

Reconsideration and clarification of your request for official information

I refer to your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 10 March 2022 for:

“If I could please reduce this scope to the earliest ten emails with MATTR in regards to the My Vaccine Pass application,”

On 15 March 2022, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) communicated a decision on your request. The Ministry interpreted your request to refer to engagements specifically with MATTR in connection with the development of the My Vaccine Pass.

Following your complaint to the Ombudsman, the Ministry is able to make a new decision on your request. The Ministry conducted a search of its records and identified the 10 earliest emails the Ministry had with MATTR, regardless of subject matter. These are administrative in nature and do not provide any information regarding the “My Vaccine Pass”.

The Ministry considers the term “My Vaccine Pass” to relate to a digital credential issued for the purpose of proving vaccination status for COVID-19 in a domestic setting. Therefore, in your original response the Ministry excluded work on the international certificates, work on the underlying platform that was already in progress, and any of the proof of concept or initial discussions held prior to September.

It may be helpful if I explain that the Ministry had already engaged with MATTR regarding international certificates prior to the decision by Ministers on 17 September 2021 to direct the consideration of a domestic implementation of a proof of vaccination.

The following summarises those engagements:

February 2021:

The Ministry began work to understand the landscape and an approach to digital health credentials, including how those credentials might be used to prove COVID-19 vaccination and test status, on the assumption that New Zealanders would require these to undertake international travel. This work was hypothetical and was designed to help the Ministry understand the technology to ensure re-usability and good value for money in line with its investment approach.

April – May 2021:

The Ministry of Transport began working on “travel health passes” around this time. The Ministry of Health decided to run a proof of concept with MATTR to gather detailed requirements for an international vaccination certificate solution, covering off technical, user experience, and trust framework aspects. The Ministry of Health met MATTR again to discuss the scope for the international vaccination certificate proof of concept.

June – August 2021:

The Ministry continued to work with MATTR to complete analysis of the international vaccination certificate proof of concept. The Ministry issued a closed request for proposal (RFP) in mid-July to vendors identified by the Department of Internal Affairs. MATTR was selected as the preferred supplier, supported by Cogito for aspects related to document signing. By August, the Ministry started working on the implementation of a solution for the creation of EU Digital COVID-19 certificates for international use. This approach was driven by the Ministry’s growing understanding that New Zealanders travelling overseas would require a form of COVID-19 vaccination evidence on entry to a foreign jurisdiction. It should be further noted that the budget identified for this work only included certificate volumes and costs associated international certificates.

I hope this assists with your complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gaynor Bradfield
**Manager, Office of the Deputy Director-General
Data and Digital**