



9 September 2022

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Tēnā koe Alexandr

OIA request 22/23 0131 Request for citizenship by grant processing timeframes

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 15 August 2022.

You requested –

- 1. What the Department of Internal Affairs is planning to do to speed up applications that did not pass automated checks?*
- 2. What the Department of Internal Affairs is planning to do to speed up applications that have been sitting in a queue for more than 12 months?*
- 3. At this point, the Department of Internal Affairs's primary goal is to reduce a backlog of citizenship applications by processing the latest submitted applications. Does the Department of Internal Affairs give a processing priority to new applications?*
- 4. Is there a process to push old paper applications to the new system and try to assess them with automated checks?*
- 5. How many case officers are working on an automated checks queue, and how many are working on a failed automated checks queue?*
- 6. How many case officers are working on applications sitting in a queue for longer than 12 months?*

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

Question one

The Department is currently doing further analysis of the applications that failed one or more automated checks and are triaging them into workstreams to help expedite our processing. Over the next month, we will be shifting additional Life and Identity Services Officers (LISO) into this area to assist with processing.

Question two

As mentioned above, we are in the process of redirecting LISOs from passport processing back to citizenship. These staff members will be focused on processing the oldest applications in the queue.

Question three

The Department is committed to reducing our backlog of citizenship applications. Our current approach is to rely on automated system checks to help triage the applications into different processing queues. The applications can then be picked up for processing by citizenship trained LISOs with different levels of experience (applications that do not pass automated checks require additional training to process).

We always start with processing the oldest application in each queue and can assure you that we do not arbitrarily process applications based on random choice or a personal whim.

Question four

The Department has a process in place for digitising paper applications into the new system so that they can be assessed and processed there.

Question five

As of week, beginning 15 August 2022, I can confirm that there are 36 citizenship trained LISOs assigned to the automated checks queue and 25 citizenship trained LISOs assigned to the failed automated checks queue. However, it is important to note that a LISO can be assigned to both queues as some are cross-skilled, and they will work on the earliest-submitted application first.

Question six

As of week, beginning 15 August 2022, there are 50 citizenship trained LISOs processing applications that are older than 12 months.

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.

Ngā mihi



Julia Taylor
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Service Delivery and Operations