

21 November 2022

R S Grant
fyi-request-20776-14ad6cda@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe R S Grant,

Your Official Information Act request, reference: HNZ00006605

Thank you for your email of 10 November 2022, asking for the following which has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

“Thank you for your response and for the information on how to submit a complaint to the ombudsman. Your responses so far have indeed been most unsatisfactory, but I will wait a little longer before pursuing a complaint.

You state that the traveller declaration “has been a highly valuable resource for our contact tracing team when investigating border cases”. Please can you provide any information you hold that offers evidential support for this statement.

Secondly, please can you advise how many border cases your contact tracing team investigated during each month since the declaration was introduced.”

Please see the response to your request below.

The NZ Traveller Declaration has been an important tool for case investigation and contact tracing. Primarily, it has enabled more timely communication of COVID-19 status and accompanying requirements to arriving travellers.

The NZ Traveller Declaration (NZTD) includes the provision of contact details in a digital form. For tourists and other non-residents, these details are often not otherwise available, so the NZTD enables contact to be made. The alternative methods to obtain contact details – such as requesting information from Customs, the airline, utilising the handwritten passenger arrival cards, or another search method– are more resource intensive, prone to error, and far less efficient due to the manual work required. Prompt notification of COVID-19 cases is a key public health measure enabling people to isolate and prevent onward transmission early in their illness, something especially important for travellers who may not be familiar with COVID-19 requirements in New Zealand.

The second part of your request is declined under Section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the department or venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation. Since February, the way the COVID-19 case data has been collected (primarily via self-reported RAT) does not allow for an accurate distinction between border and community-acquired cases, so we are unable to provide a count of the number of border cases for the period requested.

How to get in contact

If you have any questions, you can contact us at hnzOIA@health.govt.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

As this information may be of interest to other members of the public, Health NZ may proactively release a copy of this response on Health NZ's website. All requester data, including your name and contact details, will be removed prior to release. The released response will be made available on our website.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Karyn Cardno
Clinical Advisor/Acting Manager
National Investigation Centre