

6 November 2014

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Dear Madeleine Harris

Thank you for your email of 8 October 2014 requesting, under the Official Information Act, the following information.

- 1. The requirements (if any) MFAT has of ensuring language proficiency before posting a person to work in a foreign speaking country. If the requirements differ between foreign speaking countries please list country with the corresponding language requirements.*

Requirements for language proficiency depend on the position and country. Some positions at some posts in non-English speaking countries require professional proficiency while others require survival/cultural language skills. Language training is provided.

The attached table sets out the language training provisions by post for each non-English speaking country.

- 2. How long the average posting is?*

The average posting is three or four years.

- 3. If an employee moves to a foreign country with their family what costs (for example preschool, primary school, living costs, health insurance, living allowance) does MFAT cover?*

The Ministry aims to ensure that staff and families posted offshore are no worse off than they would be living and working in New Zealand. Accordingly the costs that would not normally be met by staff in New Zealand including transfers to and from post, accommodation, medical and educational costs are met by the Ministry. Staff do though make a contribution toward their accommodation, utilities and medical costs. In addition, where applicable, the Ministry will top up for example, the difference in

personal car insurance between New Zealand rates and in country insurance costs. The Ministry also applies a regularly updated cost of living adjustment to recognise the differences in living costs between Wellington and the post. This can result in a positive or negative living adjustment. An incentive allowance to take into account the different living and financial situations arising from a posting is also paid along with a partner and dependent child allowance if applicable. A location allowance is payable for those posts where staff experience difficult living environments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Townley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie Townley
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

**Language Training Provisions By Post
as at October 2014**

Post	Language	Language provisions
Abu Dhabi	Arabic	Survival
African Union & Ethiopia (Wellington-based)	French	Proficient
Ankara	Turkish	Survival
Apia	Samoan	Survival
Bangkok	Thai	Survival
Beijing	Mandarin	Mixture of survival and proficient
Berlin	German	Proficient
Brasilia	Portuguese	Proficient
Brussels	French	Survival
Buenos Aires	Spanish	Proficient
Cairo	Arabic	Mixture of survival and proficient
Dili	Tetum	Survival
Geneva	French	Survival
The Hague	Dutch	Survival
Ha Noi	Ha Noi	Mixture of survival and proficient
Honiara	Solomon Islands Pijin	Mixture of survival and proficient
Hong Kong	Mandarin	Survival
Jakarta	Indonesian	Mixture of survival and proficient
Kabul & Bamiyan	Dari	Survival
Kuala Lumpur	Malaysian	Survival
Madrid	Spanish	Proficient
Manila	Tagalog	Survival
Mexico	Spanish	Proficient

Moscow	Russian	Mixture of survival and proficient
Niue	Niuean	Survival
New Delhi	Hindi	Survival
Noumea	French	Proficient
Nuku'alofa	Tongan	Survival
Paris	French	Mixture of survival and proficient
Port Moresby	PNG Pigin	Mixture of survival and proficient
Port Vila	Bislama	Proficient
Rarotonga	Cook Island Māori	Survival
Riyadh	Arabic	Mixture of survival and proficient
Rome	Italian	Proficient
Santiago	Spanish	Proficient
Seoul	Korean	Mixture of survival and proficient
Shanghai	Mandarin	Proficient
Suva	Fijian	Survival (Proficient tbc)
Tarawa	Kiribati	Survival
Tehran	Farsi	Survival
Tokyo	Japanese	Mixture of survival and proficient
Tuvalu	Tuvaluan	Survival
Vienna	German	Survival
Warsaw	Polish	Survival