



**Te Pā Whakamarumarū**  
New Zealand Security  
Intelligence Service

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[www.nzsis.govt.nz](http://www.nzsis.govt.nz)

21 March 2023

D Bali  
[fyi-request-21766-b39dfc79@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-21766-b39dfc79@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Tēnā koe,

### **Official information request**

I write regarding your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request of 8 February 2023 to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment regarding straight to residence (STR) visas. On 27 February 2023, your request was partially transferred to the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) for response.

#### ***What is the timeframe for STR third party checks?***

The NZSIS supports border security agencies to maintain the integrity of New Zealand's border, and each year we conduct a significant number of National Security Checks (NSC). Immigration New Zealand (INZ), administers the visa application system, including the legislative framework under which NSCs are required. The NZSIS does not approve or decline visa applications, rather we provide assessments, on request, to help INZ make decisions.

The processing time for individual NSCs varies across the year, for a number of reasons. The NZSIS conducts NSCs in response to INZ's priorities, which are dynamic and change according to circumstances.

However, for the purpose of national security, we do not disclose information about individuals going through the process, or information about the process itself. As such, I must refuse this request under section 6(a) of the OIA, as the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the Government of New Zealand.

#### ***What is the actual number of staff working at NZSIS and how many are allocated to STR applications?***

As at February 2023, the NZSIS has 391.3 Full Time Equivalent staff. I must refuse your request for the number of staff allocated to STR applications under section 6(a) of the OIA. The information you have requested would, if released, provide an insight into our capabilities and must therefore be kept confidential to protect our ability to carry out our national security roles and functions.

### **Review**

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [oya.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz](mailto:oya.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz).

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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping oval shape with a smaller, more detailed signature underneath it.

**Phil McKee**

Te Tumu Whakarae mō Te Pā Whakamarumarū  
Acting Director-General of Security