

13 February 2024

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Tēnā koe Iain Hughes

I refer to your email of 15 January 2024 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

- 1. Was due process followed in the appointment of Trevor Mallard as ambassador to Ireland.*
- 2. Was a shortlist of candidates prepared.*
- 3. Was the position advertised.*
- 4. Is it standard practice to appoint ambassadors with no training in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*
- 5. What minister/officer of state has the legal authority to appoint an ambassador.*

Please find responses to your queries below:

**1. Was due process followed in the appointment of Trevor Mallard as ambassador to Ireland.**

Yes. The appointment of heads of mission (including Ambassadors and High Commissioners) are made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in accordance with the Foreign Affairs Act 1988. The Ministers' appointment recommendations are approved by the New Zealand Governor General. Appointments then require acceptance by the receiving state prior to the position being confirmed.

**2. Was a shortlist of candidates prepared.**

No.

**3. Was the position advertised.**

No.

**4. Is it standard practice to appoint ambassadors with no training in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.**

The Minister of Foreign Affairs makes appointment recommendations to the Governor General based on their assessment of the candidates' skills and experience to fulfil the position.

**5. What minister/officer of state has the legal authority to appoint an ambassador.**

I refer to Section 4 of the Foreign Affairs Act 1988 - Appointment of head of mission or head of post (<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1988/0159/latest/whole.html#DLM138725>).

- (1) The Governor-General may from time to time appoint or reappoint any person as a head of mission or head of post.

(2) The procedure put in place by the Secretary pursuant to clause 5 of Schedule 8 of the Public Service Act 2020 shall not apply to any appointment or reappointment of a head of mission or head of post.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: [www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/)

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: [DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz). You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett  
For Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade