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Tēnā koe Felix

**OIA request 23/24 0889 Request for information regarding New Zealand passports.**

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 23 April 2024.

You requested –

*A complete list of all automated tests or checks a passport application goes through, including but not limited to all the tests or checks in KIWI, IDP and KEA.*

*For each test or check, please give a brief explanation of what it involves.*

*For each test or check, please give the number of applications that failed each one, and number of applications that passed all of them, for the last year.*

In response to your request, I must advise that the information must be withheld pursuant to section 9(2)(k) of the Act. This is because the withholding of the information is necessary to prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or improper advantage. However, we have identified a public interest in people being aware of the purpose of the checks undertaken, so have provided a summary below.

We can advise that we have exception-based processing in place for passport applications. Each application goes through a series of automated checks completed, based on information provided by the applicant.

If an application does not pass a check, it will drop out as an exception. That exception will need to be manually checked by a Life and Identity Services Officer (LISO) to ensure the applicant is entitled to a New Zealand travel document.

It may be helpful for me to explain how a passport application flows between these systems:

- when we first receive an application, it is enrolled in KIWI
- KIWI then runs Evaluation and some of the Evidence of Identity tests
- the application then moves to the Identity Proofing Service (IDP) in our CCMS system
- once IDP is completed, the application returns to KIWI for the remaining Evidence of Identity and Entitlement tests to run

- some final steps are completed in KEA and the passport is printed and dispatched. There are no automated tests that take place in KEA.

I have provided some summary information below about the types of tests that take place in KIWI and the Identity Proofing Service.

## **KIWI**

KIWI runs a series of automated tests to ensure the information is complete and correct, and that the applicant can be issued with a New Zealand travel document.

The tests that run depend on the application type. The tests are categorised as Evaluation, Evidence of Identity (EOI) and Entitlement.

Usually, the Evaluation tests and some EOI tests run first, before the remaining EOI and Entitlement tests are run. Failed tests are displayed to a LISO as an exception.

Once the exception generated by a failed test is resolved, the test will either run again or close, depending on the action taken by the user. All exceptions must be resolved before an application can progress.

### **Evaluation tests**

Evaluation tests are divided into three categories:

1. data validity: tests whether any information supplied on the application form requires clarification and/or correction
2. completeness: tests whether all information required to process the application has been supplied
3. manual assessment: Ensures all supporting documents, and any additional information provided with the application are assessed.

### **Evidence of Identity tests**

These tests determine that the:

- identity claimed by the applicant exists
- identity is still living
- applicant is the sole claimant to that identity
- applicant has links to that identity.

### **Entitlement tests**

Entitlement tests are designed to determine whether the applicant is entitled to hold a New Zealand travel document.

### **Identity Proofing Service**

The Identity Proofing Service uses three objectives – Unique, Exists, and Bind – to ensure that a person accessing a product or service is the owner of the identity they are applying with.

This information is then collected into a verified person record which is enrolled into CCMS.

The Passport Office must be able to verify an applicant's identity with a high level of confidence, and ensure evidence supplied by an applicant, can be linked ("bound") to a genuine person.

## **Unique**

The Unique objective checks if the applicant is already known to the Department through a previous application.

To complete the Unique objective, a set of identifying attributes is used to check against the Department's registers with relevant exception processes depending on the outcome.

If the person has previously been through the identity proofing process with the Department, we will confirm that the applicant is the owner of that identity, and if changes have occurred, we will update their person record. For example, if a person has had a name change, we will update the person record with the new name details.

If the person has not previously been through identity proofing, we will establish the identity and at the completion of identity proofing, collect the information into a new verified person record.

## **Exists**

The Exists objective confirms that the information on a supplied document is valid. The [New Zealand Information Assurance Standard 2019](#) describes the four levels of document verification, including the process and controls required to validate a document.

The set of supplied identifying attributes is verified against the respective authoritative sources in order to ensure they are valid. This includes performing checks against the Births, Deaths and Marriages and Citizenship registers. The attributes need to exist and match those in authoritative sources.

## **Bind**

Binding is the process of connecting verified authoritative information with a real person. The [New Zealand Binding Assurance Standard](#) describes four levels of Binding Assurance, with the highest level requiring a biometric factor.

Binding can be tested by combining up to three factors:

- something the applicant knows
- something the applicant has
- something the customer is

Different tests are performed at the Bind stage depending on the information supplied by the customer and information available to the Department.

The tests performed depend on whether we have an authoritative photo available for the customer, whether they completed an online application and performed a liveness test or submitted a paper application, and the age of the applicant. During this stage referee engagement may also be required.

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

Ngā mihi



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