



New Zealand
Security Intelligence
Service
Te Pā Whakamarumarū

New Zealand
Security Intelligence Service
PO Box 900, Wellington

P +64 4 472 6170

F +64 4 472 8209

www.security.govt.nz

26 March 2018

C Fuller

fyi-request-7361-c01abfb6@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear C Fuller

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your correspondence of 2 March 2018 seeking information under the Official Information Act 1982. Your questions are addressed in order.

The number of security clearances that were applied for in 2017, broken down by clearance level.

Over the 2017 calendar year the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) received 6147 applications for security clearances.

Confidential	2567
Secret	2040
Top Secret	1106
Top Secret Special	434
Total	6147

Of the 6147 applications that were received in 2017, 245 of those applications were cancelled by the government agency that was sponsoring the clearance. There are a variety of reasons why a clearance may be cancelled, for example, the person no longer works for the agency or the person decided to withdraw from the security clearance process.

Of those security clearance applied for in 2017, how many were approved (broken down by clearance level)?

NZSIS has the statutory mandate to conduct security vetting assessments and to make a recommendation on a person's suitability to hold a security clearance. The final decision to grant a security clearance is made by the sponsoring agency not NZSIS.

The following table is a break down of security clearance recommendations made to government agencies.

Confidential	5156
Secret	1416
Top Secret	708
Top Secret Special	310
Total	4590

Of those security clearance applied for in 2017, how many are still being processed (broken down by clearance level)?

There are 1310 security vetting applications that were received in 2017 that continue to be processed by NZSIS in 2018. 72% of the applications that are still being processed were received in the last four months of the 2017 year.

Confidential	290
Secret	573
Top Secret	345
Top Secret Special	102
Total	1310

Of those security clearance applied for in 2017, how many were declined (broken down by clearance level)?

In 2017, NZSIS made two adverse security vetting recommendations¹. The two adverse recommendations were for a confidential level clearance and a top secret special clearance. NZSIS is not aware of any situation where the sponsoring agency has disregarded an adverse security vetting recommendation.

NZSIS also made 328 qualified security clearance recommendations² to government agencies. These qualified recommendations were across all levels of security clearances.

Where NZSIS provides a qualified or adverse recommendation, NZSIS ensures that the principles of procedural fairness are adhered to before a final recommendation is provided to the sponsoring agency. This means that the candidate is provided with an opportunity to understand the security risks and the relevant information that has been collected, and has the ability to respond to the risks, clarify the facts and identify any possible mitigation. Any

¹ An adverse recommendation is made when NZSIS has assessed that there are significant security risks connected to an individual and that the risks cannot be completely mitigated.

² A qualified recommendation is made when there is an identified level of security risk connected to an individual. The sponsoring government agency is advised of the relevant security risk and that the risk will need to be actively managed. The sponsoring agency decides whether the risk can be mitigated and determines whether they will grant the security clearance. Security risks are assessed in accordance with the Protective Security Requirements (PSR). This document outlines relevant personnel security risks and associated mitigations.

response from the candidate will be taken into account before a recommendation is issued by NZSIS to the sponsoring agency.

NZSIS is committed to procedural fairness to protect the rights of the candidate in the security vetting process. If the candidate is unhappy with the way the process was handled the candidate can make a complaint to the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security (www.igis.govt.nz).

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact oa.privacy@nzsis.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Rebecca Kitteridge
Director-General of Security