

21 March 2023

Daniel Thomas
fyi-request-25561-d16b1de0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: OIA 109347

Tēnā koe Daniel

Official Information Act request: Recording and transcription services

Thank you for your email of 29 January 2024 to the Ministry of Justice (the Ministry), in which you requested information under the Official Information Act (the Act).

Specifically, you requested:

I would like to get information about the recording process and the transcription service of the hearings held at the District Courts.

1. Specifically I would like to know the governance process and the roles and responsibilities relating to the recording of the hearings and the transcription service.

2. My understanding is that the recording is a relatively failsafe process. But I would like to get some data about the number of District Court hearings that wasn't recorded by the system (if any). (I can narrow down my request to the failed recordings in the 2022 - 2023 years.)

Your request has been referred to me for response, as it falls within my responsibilities as Group Manager, National Service Delivery and is being managed in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

On 15 February 2024, the Ministry contacted you to clarify your request. You confirmed that your request could be clarified to the following:

1. I am happy to receive information just about the 'roles and responsibilities relating to the recording of the hearing and the transcription service'. Thank you.

2. Just for clarification, if you could disregard the words "governance process" from my request. Everything else stays the same.

In response to your first question, the National Transcription Service team's (NTS) roles and responsibilities are to generate transcripts using audio recordings of hearings. When a request for a transcript is received, the work is allocated to the next available Court Reporter. The role of a Court Reporter is to provide high-quality verbatim evidence recording services and other word processing services within and outside of the courtroom. Once a transcript is completed, it is approved by the Presiding Judge and placed on the court file.

A Court Registry Officer is a court-based staff member who provides the function of Court Taker as part of their wider duties as administrators of the court. Please see the *Court Taker For The Record (FTS)* process document for specific information about the roles and responsibilities undertaken while performing the Court Taker role. This process document covers the steps a Court Taker is responsible for to ensure quality records of hearing, such as courtroom audio set up, capturing log notes during a hearing, and making requests for transcriptions when required.

Please find attached to this letter the following documents as summarised below:

- Job descriptions for the Court Reporter and NTS Reporter,
- Court Taker For The Record (FTS)
- Senior Court Reporter and Senior Court Reporter (Te Reo Māori) and,
- Full process and orientation guide.

These documents have been provided to you in full and are considered in scope of your request. They support further information about the roles and responsibilities relating to the recording of the hearings and the transcription service. Please note that these publications are the most up-to-date version of the roles and responsibilities required.

In response to your second question, the Ministry does not hold or collect data regarding the number of District Court hearings that weren't recorded by the system. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as this information does not exist.

If you require any further information, please contact Media & Social Media Manager Joe Locke at media@justice.govt.nz.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: justice.govt.nz/about/official-information-act-requests/oia-responses/

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Act. The Office of the Ombudsman may be contacted by email to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phone on 0800 802 602.

Thank you for writing.

Nāku noa, nā



Tracey Baguley
Group General Manager, National Service Delivery