



20 March 2024

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Tēnā koe John

OIA request 23/24 0634 Request for citizenship timeframes/processing

Thank you for your Official Information Act (Act) request received by the Department of Internal Affairs (Department) on 21 February 2024.

You requested –

- 1. What measures have the DIA implemented to reduce the citizenship application backlog?*
- 2. How effective of these measures in reducing the backlog?*
- 3. Is there any timeframe that DIA estimates the backlog can be cleaned and return to normal timeframe of citizenship application? and how is the progress?*
- 4. Any further planned measures to further reduce the backlog and what is the timeline of the planned measures implementation, and the expected results and effectiveness of the planned measures?*

On the same day you submitted additional questions –

- 5. after an online application has been submitted, when the automated check will be initiated?*
- 6. If the application passes all automated checks, when will it be moved to the appropriate workstream?*

In response to your request I can provide you with the following information.

Question one, two and three

A number of initiatives have been implemented over the past couple of years. The Department applies a range of automated tests against the criteria to reduce processing times for all applications, one of which is the increased use of the citizenship system's automated checking capabilities. Around 40% of applications can be assessed using predominantly automated checks, and in those cases the Department is able to complete assessment within two months – this means that some applications are now processed more quickly than others.

Applications that pass the automated checks are grouped together, and then processed based on the date they were received.

94% of applicants are granted citizenship within 19 months of submitting their application. Citizenship timeframes are published on www.govt.nz and searching 'citizenship timeframes'.

Question four

The Department is continually refining its systems, reviewing processes, recruiting new staff and maintaining appropriate staffing levels.

Question five and six

The automated check initiates as soon as the application is submitted.

On completion of the automated checks, the application is automatically assigned to the appropriate workstream.

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 the DIA 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 or freephone 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi



Julia Taylor
Manager Operational Policy and Official Correspondence
Service Delivery and Operations