



16 January 2025

OIAD-1414

9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your emails of 15 November 2024 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- 1. The number of all Ministerial/Departmental items that have been received by your office and your Ministries/Departments from 15 May 2024 until 15 November 2024. Please break these down by workflow: e.g. Ministerial Correspondence, Departmental Official Information Act Requests, etc.*
  - 2. The standard timeframes set by your office for response, broken down by workflow (e.g. 14 working days for a Ministry to complete an OIA request and send to the Minister's Office for final sign-off, 28 working days to complete and dispatch to requestor the response to Ministerial Correspondence, etc.).*
  - 3. The number of Ministerial/Departmental items that were completed late at any stage of the process (e.g. an item was late to be sent to the Minister's Office or was late to be sent to the requestor). Please also specify by how many days these items were overdue.*
  - 4. The number of Ministerial/Departmental items that required and were granted an extension. Please also specify by how many days an extension was granted.*
- If possible, please express the answers for questions 1, 3, and 4 through an excel spreadsheet. I am looking for the actual numbers of Ministerial/Departmental items and not the percentages as published in the Annual Reports.*

The departmental components of your requests were transferred to the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) on 27 November 2024, with responses to the Ministerial components of your requests to be provided by the offices of Ministers Bishop, Watts, Hoggard and Simmonds.

The Ministry has interpreted your request for 'departmental items' to refer to departmental correspondence and departmental Official Information Act requests. The Ministry has addressed each part of your request in turn below. Note that the below information pertains only to items received by the Ministry.

As requested, the Ministry is providing you with an Excel spreadsheet with information in scope of parts 1, 3, and 4 of your request.

***Part 1: The number of all Ministerial/Departmental items that have been received by your office and your Ministries/Departments from 15 May 2024 until 15 November 2024. Please break these down by workflow: e.g. Ministerial Correspondence, Departmental Official Information Act Requests, etc.***

Between 15 May and 15 November 2024, inclusive, the Ministry received 55 pieces of correspondence and 291 Official Information Act requests.

***Part 2: The standard timeframes set by your office for response, broken down by workflow (e.g. 14 working days for a Ministry to complete an OIA request and send to the Minister's***

**Office for final sign-off, 28 working days to complete and dispatch to requestor the response to Ministerial Correspondence, etc.).**

The standard timeframes for each departmental deliverable are as follows:

1. The Ministry aims to provide a response to correspondence within 20 working days. This is an agreed performance measure within the Ministry and is not a statutory timeframe.
2. The statutory timeframe for response to Official Information Act requests is 20 working days, unless transferred or extended in accordance with the Act.

Please note, as of 15 November 2024, 21 of the 55 pieces of correspondence and 25 of the 290 Official Information Act requests received by the Ministry between 15 May and 15 November 2024 had not been responded to for the following reasons:

1. The correspondence or request was transferred as the matters raised were more closely connected to the functions of a Minister's Office or other department or agency.
2. The correspondence did not require a response, and it was therefore reviewed and filed.
3. The Official Information Act request was withdrawn or merged with another active request.
4. As of 15 November 2024, the Ministry was preparing a response and was still within its 20-working day timeframe.
5. The Official Information Act request was being responded to under an extended timeframe.
6. The subject matter of the correspondence or request was addressed via a phone call or a meeting with the requester.
7. The request or correspondence was found to be a duplicate item.

**Part 3: The number of Ministerial/Departmental items that were completed late at any stage of the process (e.g. an item was late to be sent to the Minister's Office or was late to be sent to the requestor). Please also specify by how many days these items were overdue.**

The Ministry has identified eight responses to correspondence that were provided outside of its 20 working-day timeframe. Please see the spreadsheet for the number of days these responses surpassed this timeframe. Please note that CORD-327 was a request from the Environment Committee for information. The timeframes for providing this information were managed with the Committee.

The Ministry has identified two responses to Official Information Act requests which were provided outside of the statutory 20 working-day timeframe. Please see the spreadsheet for the number of days the responses surpassed this timeframe.

**Part 4: The number of Ministerial/Departmental items that required and were granted an extension. Please also specify by how many days an extension was granted.**

The Ministry has identified 47 responses to Official Information Act requests which required extensions. A further four Official Information Act requests were clarified with requesters within the required seven-day timeframe and were hence treated as new requests under the Act, with the statutory 20 working-day timeframes reset. Please see the spreadsheet for the length of extensions for extended requests and the delivery dates for clarified requests.

The Ministry does not apply extensions to correspondence responses provided outside of its 20 working-day timeframe. As detailed above, this timeframe is an agreed performance measure

within the Ministry. Any responses provided outside of this timeframe are considered late, including instances where the requester has been notified of a delay within the 20 working-day timeframe. There are a variety of reasons why the 20 working-day timeframe was not met, for example: the Ministry had a meeting planned with the writer to discuss the matters raised and sending the response after that meeting to capture the detail shared was more helpful than responding in advance of the meeting; waiting for an imminent public announcement to be made meant that a more helpful and informed reply could be crafted; in rare instances workload prioritisation may have also contributed to a short delay. Any delays are actively managed and communicated to writers promptly, reassuring writers that their correspondence is valued and we're committed to providing a response.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on their website at: [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz).

Please note that due to the public interest in our work the Ministry for the Environment publishes responses to requests for official information on our [OIA responses page](#) shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: [ministerials@mfe.govt.nz](mailto:ministerials@mfe.govt.nz).

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Ryan', with a horizontal line underneath.

**Danielle Ryan**  
Manager, Ministerial Services  
Ministry for the Environment | Manatū Mō Te Taiao