



01 October 2021

9(2)(a)

Dear 9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 10 September 2021 requesting the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*Can you please answer the following questions:*

- 1) From 1 January to 30 June 2021, how many OIA requests did your agency receive?*
- 2) From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what was the average OIA response time (including any extension time)?*
- 3) From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what was the longest OIA response time (including any extension time)?*
- 4) From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what percentage of OIAs required a time extension?*
- 5) From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what percentage of OIAs were refused?*
- 6) From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what percentage of OIAs were partially refused or redacted?*

The information requested in questions 1 to 4 is provided in the table below. We have interpreted your request as all departmental OIA requests the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry) received between 1 January to 30 June 2021.

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Question	Response
From 1 January to 30 June 2021, how many OIA requests did your agency receive?	The Ministry for the Environment received 123 requests between 1 January and 30 June 2021.
From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what was the average OIA response time (including any extension time)?	The average response time was 28 days, this includes extension times.
From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what was the longest OIA response time (including any extension time)?	<p>The Ministry had one request which it received in February 2021 and the final response was sent in June 2021. This is a total of 99 days.</p> <p>A large number of documents were in scope of the request. To ensure the requester received a full and timely response, the Ministry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- offered to clarify the scope with the requestor to help reduce the number of documents captured</li> <li>- released finalised documents to the requester in tranches.</li> </ul> <p>Consultation with multiple parties was also required, resulting in extended response time.</p>
From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what percentage of OIAs required a time extension?	Seventeen per cent of requests received from 1 January to 30 June 2021 required an extension.
From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what percentage of OIAs were refused?	Refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information cannot be provided without substantive collusion.
From 1 January to 30 June 2021, what percentage of OIAs were partially refused or redacted?	Refused under section 18(f) of the Act as the information cannot be provided without substantive collusion.

The Ministry provides statistical information to the Public Services Commission on a six-monthly basis. It also provides information to the Estimates process and Annual Review. You can find further information on requests completed by all government agencies subject to the Act here: <https://www.publicservice.govt.nz/resources/official-information-statistics/>

The Ministry's Annual Review and Estimates responses for each financial year can be found here: [Submissions and Advice - New Zealand Parliament \(www.parliament.nz\)](http://www.parliament.nz)

The Ministry does not collate statistics on the number of requests that were refused, partially refused or had material redacted, answering these questions would require manual assessment of each request received during the period.

Due to the volume of requests received, the Ministry would need to divert personnel from their core duties to complete this task. The diversion of these resources would impair the Ministry's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Ministry's resources.

As such, questions 5 and 6 of your request are refused under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be provided without substantial collation. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

In terms of section 9(1) of the Act, I am satisfied that, in the circumstances, the refusal of this information is not outweighed by other considerations that render it desirable to make the information available in the public interest.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my decision relating to this request, 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).

Yours sincerely



Bridget Fraser

**Director - Ministerial Services and Quality of Policy Advice**