

20 October 2021

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2021/37

On 22 September 2021 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) for the following information:

I am interested in the number of New Zealand voters who reside overseas. As those enrolled may vote in an election if they have visited within 3 years prior to an election (I think 12 months for residents), I would be interested in the following:

- 1) Number of overseas mailing/contact addresses on the roll in each electorate together with the total number on the roll in that same electorate.*
- 2) the number of overseas votes cast in the last general election by each electorate, and the number of all votes cast in each electorate.*

I would like to see the materiality of expat voters and compare the voting rates of expats against the voting rates in the at-home population.

Attached is a spreadsheet providing a breakdown by electorate for the 2020 General Election of the number of:

- registered electors
- overseas electors
- total votes
- overseas votes.

Please note, at New Zealand parliamentary elections, overseas voters are made up of registered electors who reside overseas (who remain eligible to enrol and vote because they have been in New Zealand within the last 3 years for citizens, and 12 months for permanent residents) and registered electors who reside in New Zealand who are temporarily overseas at the time of the election.

Electors who reside overseas can provide an overseas postal address for electoral purposes, or may choose to provide a postal address in New Zealand for receipt of their electoral correspondence. Overseas electors are registered to vote at the address in New Zealand where they have last lived for at least one month. The address an elector is registered to vote at is listed in the electoral roll. Postal addresses are not included in the rolls but we can identify in the enrolment management system registered electors who have told us they are overseas on their enrolment form.

The overseas vote totals exclude disallowed votes. Votes are disallowed because the voter is not qualified to vote, or because the declaration that special voters have to complete is not in order. We count all disallowed special votes together, so cannot break out those from a particular electorate that are specifically overseas disallowed special votes.

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every three months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted on www.elections.nz.

You have the right under section 28(3) of the Act to make a complaint to the Ombudsman if you are not satisfied with the response to your request. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Astle', written in a cursive style.

Graeme Astle
Manager Voting Services