



NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere



Consular Snapshot

2021-22



Consular at a glance



58 Embassies, High Commissions, Consulates and Representative Offices in 52 Countries and diplomatic cross-accreditations to 119 countries.



70 Honorary Consuls



New Zealand citizens have access to 24/7 consular assistance for emergencies anywhere in the world



Responded to 23 offshore emergencies



2 million SafeTravel website users



Assisted New Zealand citizens in 88 new and 178 existing law infringement cases



Assisted with 255 civil unrest cases



Assisted with 168 bereavement cases



Assisted New Zealand citizens in 2300 new and over 1500 existing consular cases



58% of survey respondents are satisfied with the quality of consular services



Responded to over 42,200 general consular advice inquiries



6700 notarial services, including 3400 authentications



Over 1100 SafeTravel messages were sent to registrants



Assisted with over 700 COVID-19 related cases



Assisted 111 new cases of citizens in financial distress

Most common request for assistance:

COVID-19 RELATED

CIVIL UNREST

BEREAVEMENT

Where most cases happened:

AUSTRALIA

AFGHANISTAN¹

UNITED KINGDOM

¹This includes a mix of New Zealand citizens, New Zealand Permanent Residents and Critical Purpose Visitor Visa holders.

A key role for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade is ensuring New Zealanders are safe when traveling and living abroad, and that they can access consular assistance and emergency advice.

2021/2022 was another year navigating the complexities of a world recovering from the unrelenting Covid-19 pandemic with new variants and waves of infection. As Covid-related restrictions around the world eased, and borders reopened, New Zealanders were able to travel and reconnect more freely. But, Covid-19 related issues continued to generate considerable consular work with assistance being provided to more than **3800 New Zealanders in difficulty overseas**. This included 2300 new and over 1500 existing consular cases.

In July 2021, three months into two-way quarantine-free travel between New Zealand and Australia, we operationalised months of contingency planning when quarantine-free travel was suspended. A coordinated all-of-government effort responded to an estimated **5000 calls from New Zealanders in New South Wales seeking priority for limited flights home and MIQ spaces**. Travelling New Zealanders in other parts of Australia were given a 7-day window to return home without having to enter MIQ.

In August 2021, we stood up an Emergency Coordination Centre following the Taliban takeover of Kabul, Afghanistan and assisted an initial military-assisted evacuation of almost **400 New Zealand citizens, permanent residents and their families, and visa holders**. We then worked in an Afghanistan Departures Taskforce, Operation Whakahokinga Mai, which by the time it had formally ended, successfully assisted approximately 99 percent of the people eligible for assistance to travel safely to Aotearoa New Zealand.

In February 2022, consular assistance was provided to New Zealand citizens, permanent residents and their families fleeing Ukraine as part of the international response to Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. We also deployed surge capacity to Poland to assist with our consular response.

After two years advising New Zealanders 'do not travel', due to Covid-19, we removed our global travel advisory in March 2022. We have since updated our travel advice for over 140 destinations and sent over 1100 messages to registrants over the 2021/22 period.

We received **over 8500 calls through our call centre and responded to 42,200 general inquiries.**

Our contingency planning for major events offshore ramped up with the unusual Tokyo Olympics with empty stadiums still requiring significant contingency planning to ensure that New Zealand athletes could safely compete at the Games. We also **supported the first Anzac Day commemoration on the Gallipoli peninsula since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.**





Staff at Embassies can:

- Give advice, with the aim of helping you to help yourself.
- Help with a lost or stolen passport.
- Help you contact relatives or friends to request emergency funds.
- Provide a list of English-speaking lawyers, and help you contact family and friends, if you are detained or arrested.
- Help you contact family and friends if you are ill or injured.
- Help with arrangements following a death overseas.
- In certain circumstances, provide notarial services such as witnessing affidavits, statutory declarations and other documents for use under New Zealand law.
- Help during crises, such as civil unrest and natural disasters.



Staff at Embassies cannot:

- Pay your hotel, travel or other bills, legal or medical expenses, or costs of returning a body to New Zealand.
- Give you legal advice, including on family law matters such as child custody, international surrogacy and adoption issues.
- Investigate a crime or get you out of prison.
- Get you better conditions in prison or hospital than a local citizen would receive
- Arrange visas or work/residency permits for you.
- Operate a personal mail service for you including through the diplomatic bag or store your belongings.
- Compel another country to overturn your travel ban.
- Become involved in commercial disputes or civil litigation.
- Secure access to or administer vaccines to New Zealanders who are located offshore.

**For more information
visit our [SafeTravel](#)
website**



What is Consular Assistance?

Consular assistance is about helping a New Zealand citizen in distress while travelling or living overseas to help themselves.

We deliver consular services as part of the Ministry's purpose **to act in the world to build a safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future for New Zealanders.**

The Ministry's global network is comprised of 58 posts in 52 countries with 119 accreditations to other countries and 70 Honorary Consuls.

Each consular case is unique and the assistance

provided will depend on the circumstances. Consular assistance can range from:

- response capability in the event of an emergency involving New Zealanders overseas e.g. a global pandemic, terrorist incident or natural disaster;
- helping New Zealanders who are sick or injured;
- assisting with arrangements following the death of a New Zealander overseas;
- undertaking welfare visits for those arrested, or detained or in a hospital offshore; and
- providing notarial services such as statutory declarations for use under New Zealand law.



We have three main messages for travelling New Zealanders:

1 Take out appropriate travel insurance

2 Register your travel details on SafeTravel

3 Check our travel advice

1

Take out Travel Insurance

We strongly advise New Zealanders to get comprehensive travel insurance before heading away. Travellers need to make sure that it covers everywhere they are going, and everything they plan to do. **“If you can’t afford travel insurance, you can’t afford to travel”.**

Travel insurance covers risks when travel doesn’t go as planned and things go wrong. Having unforeseen risks covered ensures an additional layer of protection against financial loss. New Zealanders who do not have travel insurance will have to pay out of their own pocket should any problems arise.

Your insurance policy should cover any activities you plan to undertake (from scuba diving to scooter riding), personal liability, medical treatment, emergency medical evacuation, and any pre-existing medical conditions. Even minor medical treatment can be very expensive overseas. Having travel insurance could save you thousands.

Case Study:

While on holiday a New Zealander experiencing shortness of breath was sent to the hospital and later placed on life support in an intensive support unit when their condition worsened. With no travel insurance, the New Zealander is now required to pay over \$200,000 in medical bills.

Case Study:

Accidents overseas can be costly so it’s important to read what your travel insurance will cover and how much. An accident which resulted in broken bones, internal injuries and a punctured lung meant a New Zealander in hospital overseas was facing a long and expensive recovery. The cost of multiple surgeries, medical care and rehabilitation is expected to reach in the millions with travel insurance covering only a quarter of the costs.



2

Register your travel details on SAFETRAVEL

New Zealanders travelling and living overseas are encouraged to register their contact and travel details on SafeTravel. Registering means we can send important travel information to you and provide updates about significant events e.g. natural disasters, terrorist attacks or other emergencies. SafeTravel registration is voluntary and all information provided remains confidential and is held in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

Similar to 2020/2021, over 1100 messages were sent to SafeTravel registrants from July 2021 to June 2022. The messages provided advice and information to thousands of registrants on how to keep safe where they were, and alerted them to other important information relating to emergencies and natural disasters.

Anywhere there is an emergency, and an inkling New Zealanders might be affected, we can respond by:



Sending advice to SafeTravel registrants



Providing travel advice and crisis updates with news features on SafeTravel



Deploying staff to affected areas



Assisting our New Zealand posts to prepare for emergencies by reviewing their contingency plans and providing any necessary guidance



Liaising with families in New Zealand



Liaising with local authorities and networks.

3

Check our Travel Advice

The Ministry has an important role in establishing, updating and disseminating travel advice for destinations around the world through the SafeTravel website.

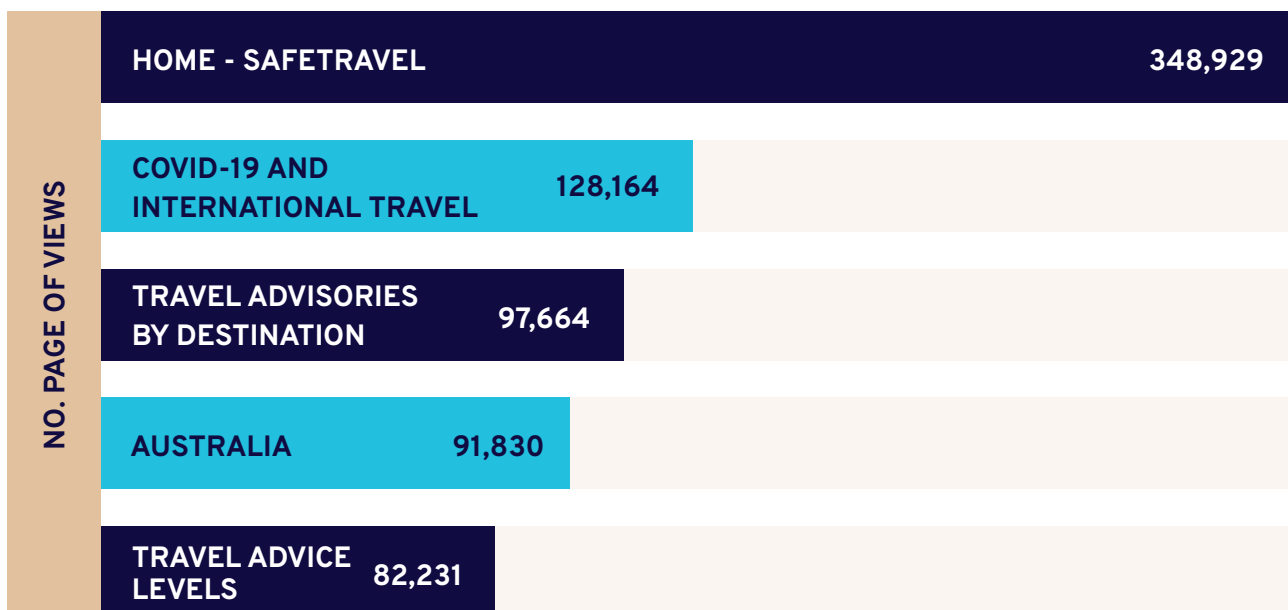
Our goal is to ensure New Zealanders are able to live, do business, travel and communicate more safely offshore.

SafeTravel has a wide range of tips to help ensure safety when travelling offshore, what to do if things go wrong, and how the New Zealand Government can (or cannot) help if you are in trouble.

SafeTravel advice covers security and safety concerns in over 140 destinations. The advice is designed to help New Zealanders make informed decisions about travel destinations. We do not provide advice on all destinations. We focus on locations that we have reliable information on security and safety issues that may affect New Zealanders.

Two million people accessed the SafeTravel website. Most of the SafeTravel users (65%) were in New Zealand suggesting New Zealanders were using SafeTravel as a platform to make informed decisions before travelling overseas. February was the busiest month for SafeTravel website views coinciding with New Zealand's borders opening to vaccinated New Zealanders from Australia.

Top five unique website page views



The New Zealand government's official travel advice website is www.safetravel.govt.nz.

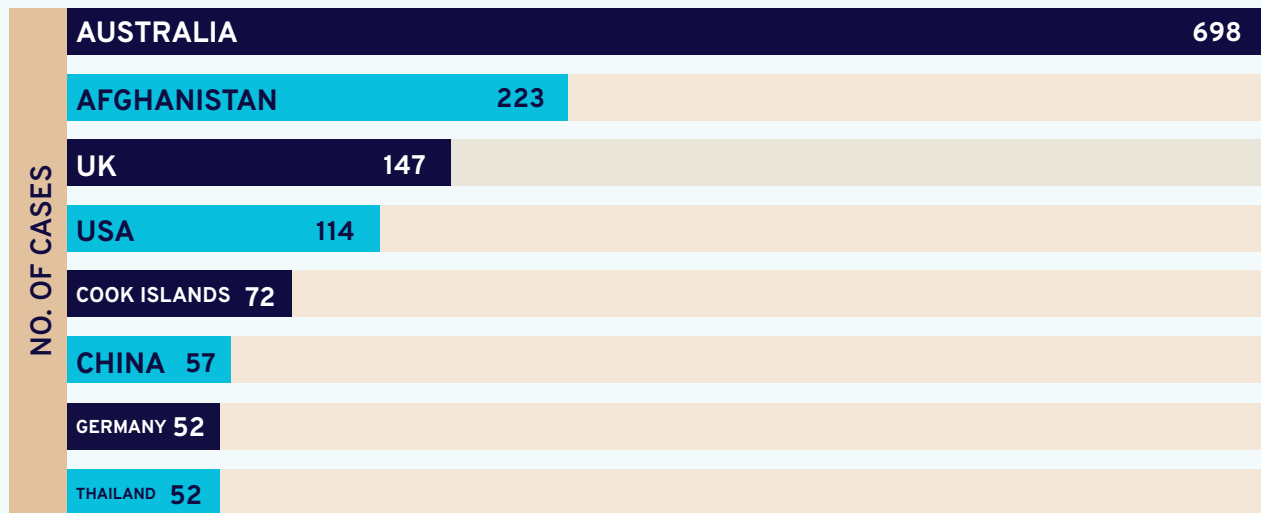
Consular case breakdown

Most travelling New Zealanders never need consular assistance. Some choose not to contact New Zealand embassies even if they do get into difficulty. Lockdowns and other COVID-19 related restrictions including flight disruptions have made finding solutions for all consular cases more complex.

The following table summarise the times where New Zealanders have sought assistance and we have established a new consular case over the past six years.

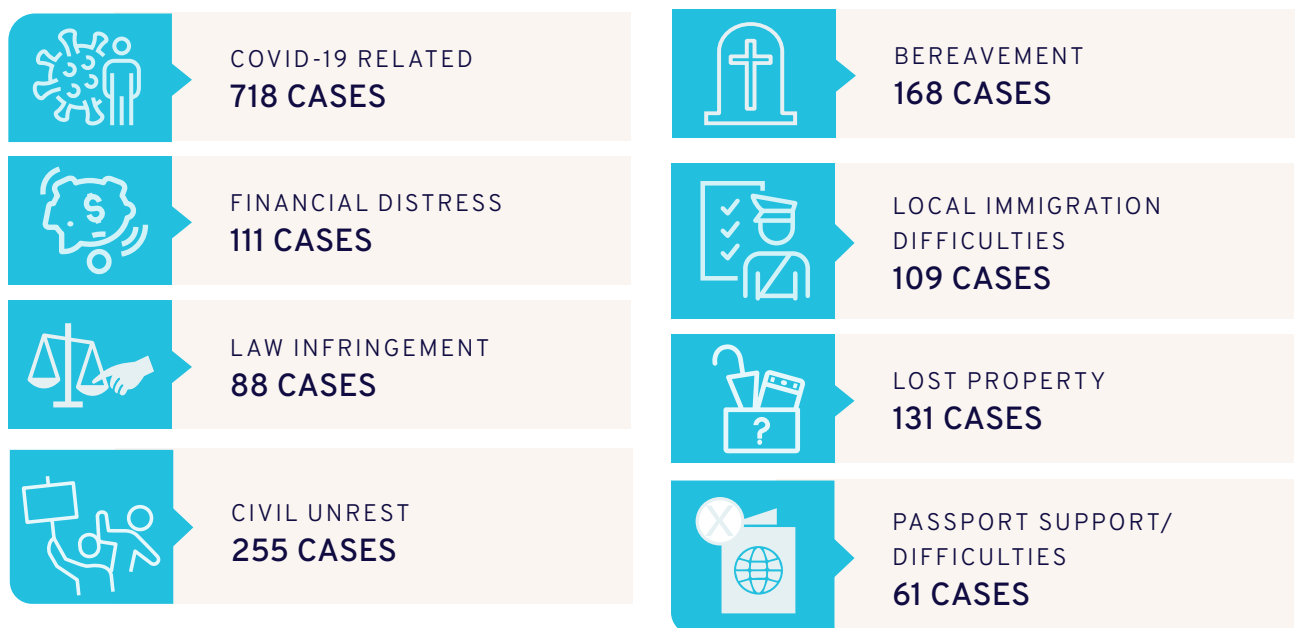
CASE TYPE	NO. OF CASES 2021/22	NO. OF CASES 2020/21	NO. OF CASES 2019/20	NO. OF CASES 2018/19	NO. OF CASES 2017/18	NO. OF CASES 2016/17
Accident	6	10	37	28	26	30
Adoption	5	4	2	1	6	2
Behavioural issues/ Concerns	31	22	58	34	38	37
Child Custody	12	20	37	28	25	30
Civil Unrest	255	10	9	2	15	5
Civil/Employment Disputes	3	2	7	5	14	24
COVID-19 related	718	485	1360	0	0	0
Death	168	130	244	213	183	186
Domestic Incident	18	11	17	14	19	16
Financial Distress	111	98	156	82	105	90
International Surrogacy	0	1	6	1	4	1
Invigilation	1	1	5	9	5	5
Law Infringement	88	78	318	201	212	198
Local Immigration Difficulties	109	97	237	200	230	202
Lost Property	131	49	428	462	542	548
Medical	45	58	193	205	209	179
Missing Person	23	8	44	31	57	42
Natural Disaster	1	1	7	3	23	2
Notarial Problems	6	8	17	10	12	14
Other	64	35	122	78	87	76
Passport Support/ Difficulties	61	40	111	175	170	196
Personal Safety Concerns	61	51	76	66	53	52
Scam	1	1	7	5	9	13
Terrorist Attack	0	0	1	0	5	1
Threat Warning	0	0	1	1	1	0
Victim of Crime	14	6	124	151	193	264
Welfare of Minors	18	6	18	13	7	8
Witness Marriage	0	0	1	0	2	1
GRAND TOTAL	1950	1232	2933	2018	2252	2222

Where consular cases happened



New Zealanders can seek consular assistance from our global consular network and in an emergency situation, consular assistance is available 24/7. Australia continues to be the country with the highest number of consular cases.

Top Consular Cases



COVID-19 related cases



AUSTRALIA

416



UK

48



USA

34



GERMANY

27

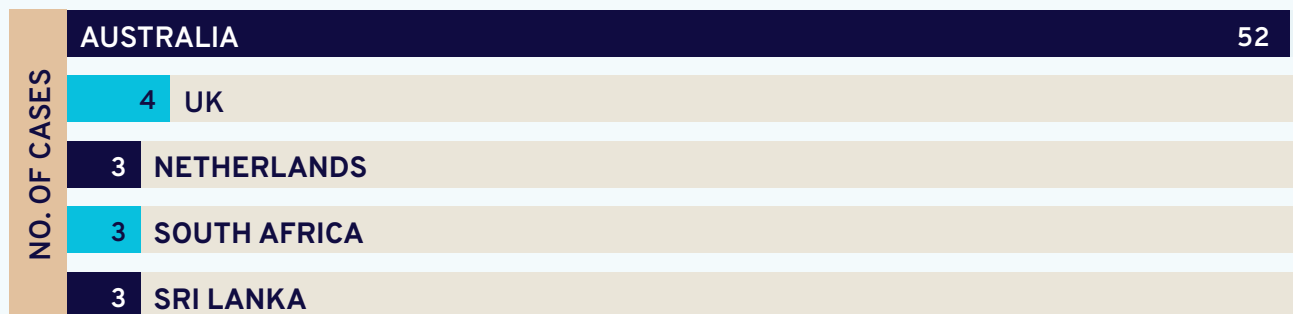


COOK ISLANDS

19

COVID-19 related cases continue to be the most common reason New Zealanders seek consular assistance. The lack of funds, visa expiration and medical reasons are also contributing factors to the COVID-19 related cases. Over half of the 718 Covid-19 cases were in Australia.

Financial Distress



New cases of Financial Distress reported in 2021-22

There is no automatic right for New Zealanders in distress overseas to receive financial assistance from the government. If you do not have insurance, you are expected to pay any costs yourself.



Law Infringement

New Zealanders overseas are subject to the local law of the country they are travelling in. Local laws in some places can seem harsh by New Zealand standards, but New Zealanders are not entitled to special treatment compared with local people. The New Zealand government cannot interfere in the judicial process of another country.

If you are arrested, a New Zealand consular officer can:

- provide a list of local English-speaking lawyers for you to select a legal representative and/or provide information about local legal aid.
- inform your next-of-kin or other relatives/friends of your arrest and seek any financial assistance from them, if you request this.
- depending on the location of the court, attend a final court hearing as an observer.

If you are imprisoned, a New Zealand consular officer can:

- advise family of the prison contact details and how they may communicate with you, if you request this.
- advise family or friends how to bank or deposit their funds for the prisoner, in accordance with prison regulations.
- if required, seek approval for prison visits by family or friends.
- make periodic visits in countries where prison conditions are substantially different from New Zealand conditions, depending on the location of the prison.
- bring any medical or dental problems you may have to the attention of the prison authorities.
- take up any justified complaint you may have about any ill treatment or discrimination with the prison authorities and advise your lawyer of these.



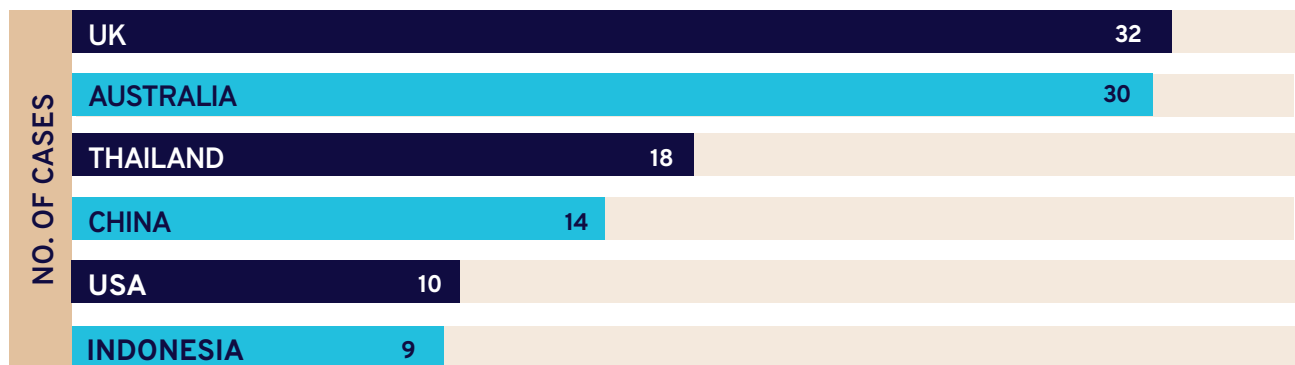
New Law Infringement Cases reported in 2021-22

Deaths of New Zealand citizens overseas

We supported 168 families involving the death of New Zealand citizens overseas.

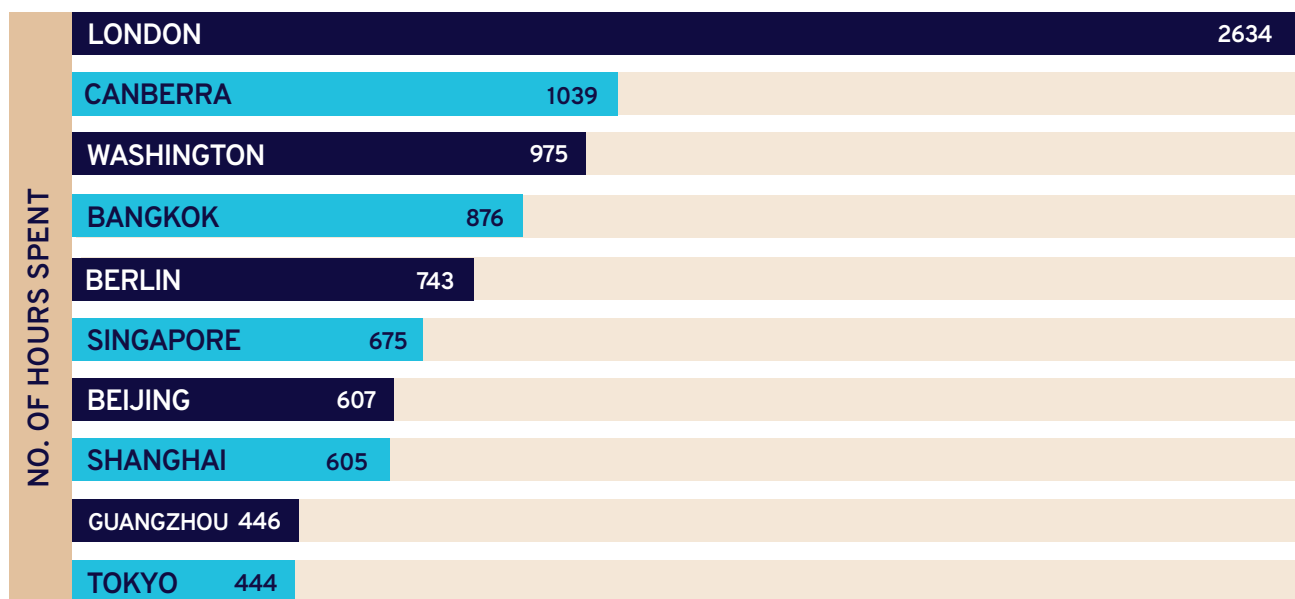
We did this by:

- advising on what options are available locally, including whether burial or cremation was possible, and/or the repatriation of remains or ashes to New Zealand;
- advising on approximate costs of the options available; and
- providing contact details for local funeral directors who could managed the funeral or repatriation arrangements in consultation with the family.

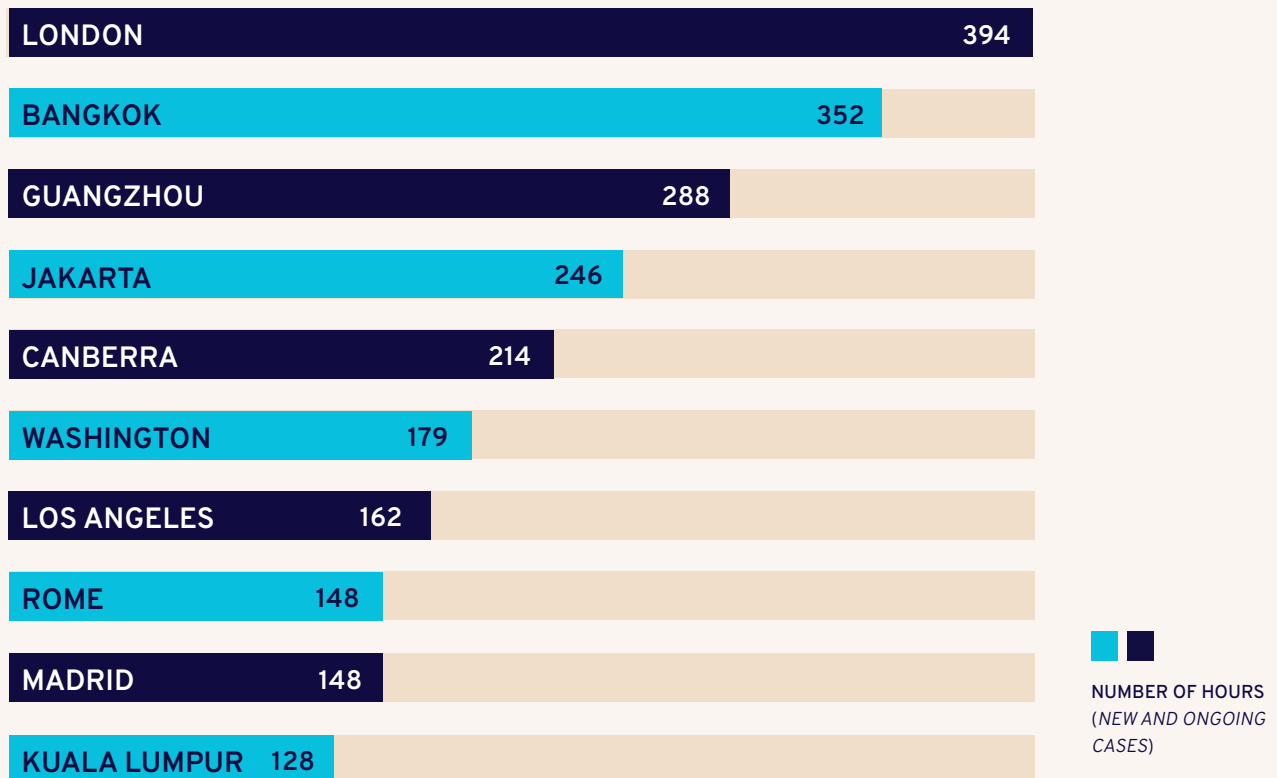


Our busiest posts

Many of New Zealand’s Embassies and High Commissions are accredited to more than one country, which means consular staff may need to travel back and forth across borders to help New Zealanders in difficulty. Dealing with complex and ongoing cases does require significant time investment from posts and other cases can be closed quickly. Some posts may receive more enquiries than others and some posts undertake notarial services more than others. The tables below summarises posts’ efforts including new and ongoing cases, notarial services, general enquiries and other consular work.



Time spent on Consular Cases



Hours spent by case type



LAW INFRINGEMENT
1075 HOURS



CIVIL UNREST
548 HOURS



COVID-19 RELATED
1360 HOURS



PERSONAL SAFETY CONCERNS
229 HOURS



FINANCIAL DISTRESS
935 HOURS



MEDICAL
206 HOURS



BEREAVEMENT
620 HOURS



MENTAL WELL-BEING
262 HOURS



LOCAL IMMIGRATION DIFFICULTIES
336 HOURS



OTHER
97 HOURS



HOW TO FIND US

Our consular staff in Wellington and around the world provide consular advice and assistance to New Zealanders at all times.

If you are in need of consular assistance, you can contact us:

- Through one of our 58 Embassies, High Commissions, Consulates and Representative Offices and other offices in 52 countries and diplomatic cross-accreditations around the world. Contact details for our posts are available here: www.mfat.govt.nz/embassies
- **24/7 Emergency consular assistance:**
0800 30 10 30 (within New Zealand) or +64 20 20 20 (outside New Zealand)
- By email at cons@mfat.govt.nz
- By filling in a form at www.safetravel.govt.nz/contact
- On Facebook www.facebook.com/SafeTravel.govt.nz



PRIVACY

We value the privacy of people we give consular advice and assistance to. Any personal information provided to the Ministry is protected by law, including the Privacy Act 2020. Information we have received is only used for the provision of consular services. We may need to share the information we hold with other New Zealand and host government agencies or service providers, such as hospitals, for the purpose of providing consular services to you or as required by law.

If we need to share the information for reasons other than providing consular services to you, we will only do so in accordance with law or with your consent.





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