

CONSULAR SNAPSHOT



2017/18

OUR HELP FOR NEW ZEALANDERS OVERSEAS

On any given day, more than 100,000 New Zealanders are out of the country on holidays, business travel or other short-term trips. That number is growing rapidly. In 2017 New Zealand residents took a record **2.9 million trips** overseas, which was **9.3 percent more** than in 2016.

More than a million of those trips were to Australia. The next most popular destinations for travelling New Zealanders in 2017-2018 were the United States, Fiji, China and the United Kingdom.

There is also a large New Zealand diaspora. While estimates vary, as many as one million New Zealanders are believed to live overseas.

Most New Zealanders encounter few serious problems travelling or living overseas. However, things can – and do – go wrong. In the 2017/18 year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's offshore posts (Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates) received 34,842 inquiries from travelling New Zealanders, and opened 2,253 new consular cases. We open a consular case when Ministry staff provide consular assistance to a New Zealander.

Ministry staff also responded to 34 offshore emergencies in 2017/18, ranging from natural disasters (such as Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Caribbean, Tropical Cyclone Gita in the Pacific, earthquakes in Mexico and Indonesia, and volcanoes in Hawaii, Vanuatu and the Philippines), to terrorist or mass casualty incidents (including those in Barcelona, Las Vegas, Toronto and London).

WHAT IS CONSULAR ASSISTANCE?

Consular assistance is help provided by the New Zealand government to a New Zealander travelling or living overseas. It can range from helping people who have been victims of crime, to assisting people in detention, to providing advice to families of New Zealanders who have died in another country.

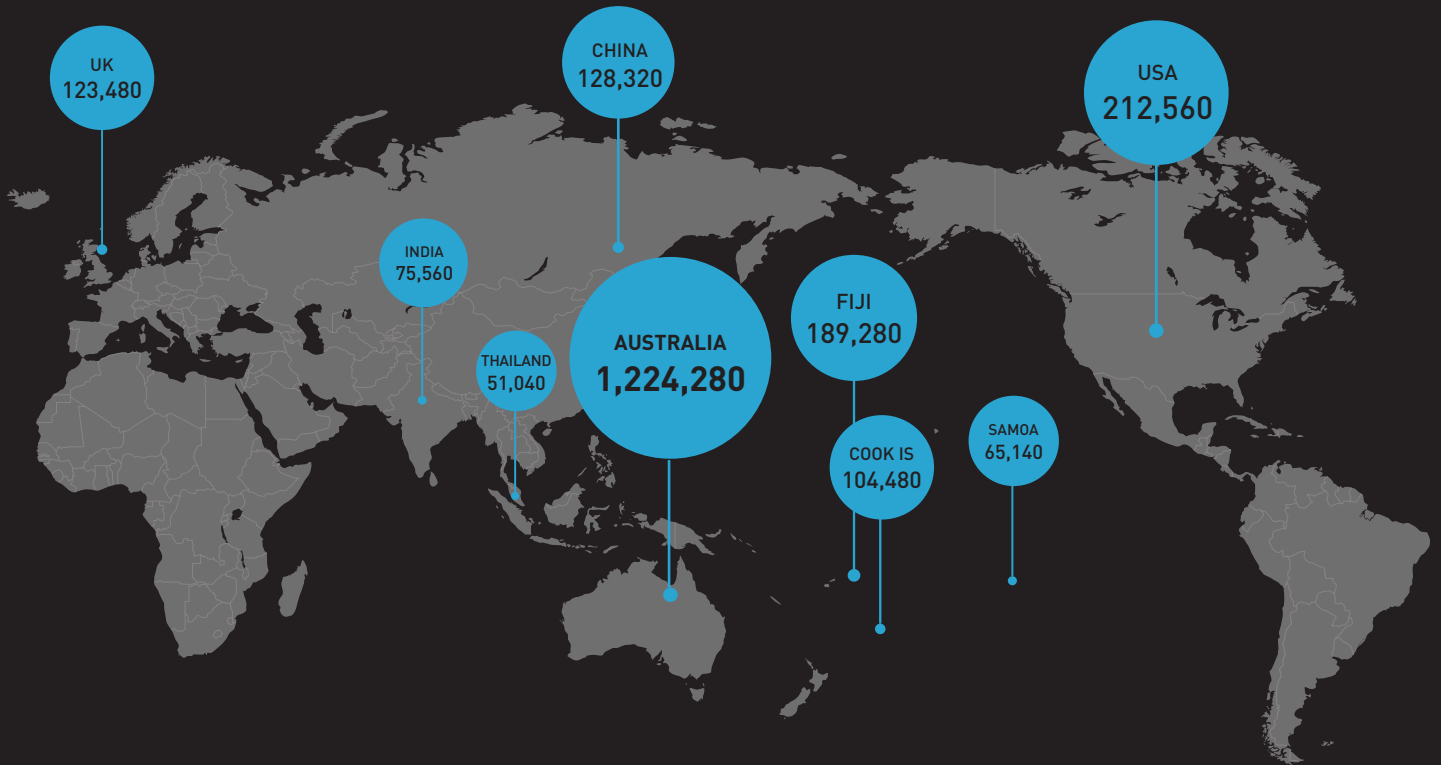
The Ministry's staff provide consular assistance to New Zealand citizens who are travelling on a New Zealand passport. The New Zealand government does not usually provide consular assistance to:

- New Zealanders who are also citizens of another country ("dual nationals"), and who are travelling on a foreign passport
- New Zealanders who are also citizens of another country, and who ask for help while living in or visiting that other country
- People who are permanent residents of New Zealand, but who are not New Zealand citizens. Permanent residents are assisted by consular officials from their country of citizenship.

Consular cases vary greatly in their complexity and how long they take to resolve. Some are resolved in 20 minutes, while others can last months or years.

The statistics in this snapshot reflect the consular cases managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade from 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

WHERE DID NEW ZEALANDERS TRAVEL IN 2017/18?



[Source: Statistics NZ]

WE HAVE THREE MAIN MESSAGES FOR TRAVELLING NEW ZEALANDERS:

1

CHECK OUR TRAVEL ADVICE

2

TAKE OUT APPROPRIATE TRAVEL INSURANCE

3

REGISTER YOUR TRAVEL DETAILS ON SAFETRAVEL



1 CHECK OUR TRAVEL ADVICE

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade produces the New Zealand government's official travel advice, which is published on our SafeTravel website, www.safetravel.govt.nz.

In the 2017/18 year we published advisories for 128 destinations around the world. We also issued 60 news features, providing information about developing events (such as a cyclone brewing) or global issues (like communicable diseases).

Our advice covers security and safety concerns in many destinations. It is based on information from a number of sources. It reflects potential risks, and our assessment of what these might mean for New Zealanders. Our assessment may also take into account actions of local authorities, and our ability to provide New Zealanders with assistance.

The advice is designed to help New Zealanders make informed decisions about travel destinations. We cannot tell New Zealanders what to do, but their travel insurance may be affected by a strong travel warning or the level of our travel advice (particularly if we advise against all travel to a destination). We do not provide advice on all destinations. We focus on those about which we have reliable information on security and safety concerns that may affect New Zealanders.

The SafeTravel website had 1.4 million views in 2017/18. Our most frequently visited page provided information on the Zika virus. We also regularly share updates on our Facebook page, which has around 10,000 followers.

SafeTravel has a wide range of tips to help ensure safety when travelling in foreign countries, what to do if things go wrong, and how the New Zealand government can help if you are in trouble.

2 TAKE OUT APPROPRIATE TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly advise New Zealanders to get comprehensive travel insurance before heading away. We say: "If you can't afford travel insurance, you can't afford to travel".

Insurance is essential for every trip, wherever people are going. Travellers need to make sure that it covers everywhere they are going, and everything they plan to do.

People sometimes think they don't need insurance because they are just hopping across the Tasman, or they will be going on a cruise and they assume that the cruise company will look after them. Or they might think they won't bother with insurance because they are just heading up to the Pacific Islands for a week. But all it takes is a scooter accident, or for a coral cut to turn bad, and they can find themselves having to be flown back to New Zealand at a cost of many of thousands of dollars.

In one recent case, an uninsured Kiwi cruise ship passenger became critically ill and ultimately had to pay \$60,000 in bills, including the cost of a medical escort to accompany him on the flight home. There are many other recent cases of whānau and friends setting up Givealittle pages to fund the medical or medevac costs of people who are uninsured, or who are not covered due to an exclusion in the insurance policy.

New Zealanders who do not have travel insurance have to pay any overseas medical costs themselves, including the potentially high costs involved in returning to New Zealand.

MFAT and Consumer magazine recently produced a travel insurance guide which helps people navigate travel insurance issues (www.consumer.org.nz/topics/travel-insurance-guide). This provides information on policy types, insurance coverage, personal liability and how to make a successful claim if you get into difficulty while travelling.

New Zealanders heading overseas are encouraged to register their travel details on SafeTravel.

Registering means we can immediately contact people and check on their wellbeing if there is a major incident overseas. We can provide updates about emergencies, natural disasters, or terrorist attacks. We can also use information to contact people if they need consular assistance. SafeTravel registration is voluntary and all information provided remains confidential.

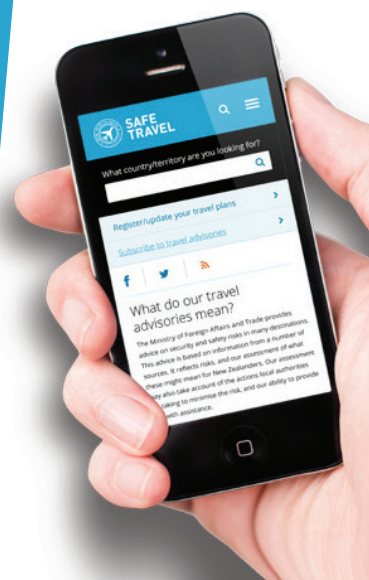
Our response to the Lombok earthquake of 5 August 2018 is a good example of how we use SafeTravel information. At the time of the earthquake, 447

New Zealanders were registered as being in Indonesia, with nine registered as being in Lombok. New Zealand consular staff immediately tracked down those nine people and contacted them about the situation.

As is always the case with serious events, many more people registered on SafeTravel in the hours after the earthquake. We ultimately received enquiries about 70 affected New Zealanders. MFAT staff in Indonesia and Wellington worked hard to track them all down, and to liaise with their families back in New Zealand. We also deployed consular staff to the area to help with their departures from Indonesia.

REGISTERING ON SAFETRAVEL CAN SAVE LIVES

One recent example involved a New Zealander who had travelled overseas to meet a woman he had met online. Unfortunately, he was the victim of a scam which saw him lose tens of thousands of dollars. The man was so upset about what had happened that he left a message for his family saying that he was going to take his own life. The family contacted MFAT and asked us to help. While they did not know the man's whereabouts, the man had entered his hotel details on SafeTravel, which allowed us to locate him and put him in contact with life-saving help.



CONSULAR CASE BREAKDOWN

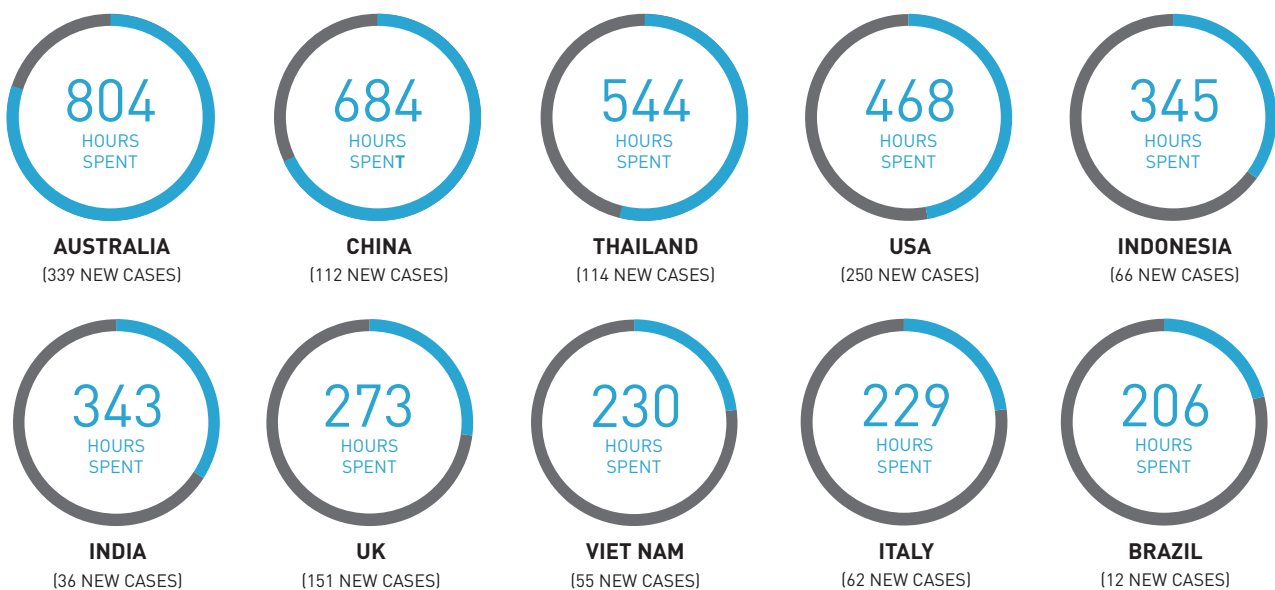
Most travelling New Zealanders never need consular assistance. Some choose not to contact New Zealand posts offshore even if they do get into difficulty. The following tables summarise the times where New Zealanders have sought assistance and we have established a new consular case.

CASE TYPE	NO. OF CASES	NO. OF CASES	NO. OF CASES	NO. OF CASES	NO. OF CASES
	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14
Accident	26	30	20	24	31
Adoption	6	2	4	8	5
Behavioural Issues/Concerns	38	37	34	29	2
Child Custody	25	29	39	16	39
Civil Unrest	15	5	1	4	13
Civil/Employment Disputes	15	24	14	2	
Damaged Passport	11	10	12	14	1
Death	182	186	159	170	165
Domestic Incident	19	16	19	25	
Expired Passport/Insufficient Validity	160	186	200	211	6
Financial Distress	105	90	89	70	75
International Surrogacy	4	1	7	10	6
Invigilation	5	5	5	6	1
Law Infringement	215	201	158	122	159
Local Immigration Difficulties	228	200	215	139	180
Lost Property	543	548	645	535	522
Medical	209	179	164	148	170
Missing Person	58	42	37	34	65
Natural Disaster	23	2	8	15	11
Notarial Problems	12	14	15	1	
Other	86	78	61	32	193
Personal Safety Concerns	53	52	41	51	4
Scam	9	13	10	13	19
Terrorist Attack	5	1	5		2
Threat Warning	1		2		6
Victim of Crime	191	264	321	288	229
Welfare of Minors	7	8	5	9	
Witness Marriage	2	1	3	4	1
GRAND TOTAL	2253	2224	2293	1980	1905

WHERE CONSULAR CASES HAPPENED 2017/18



TIME SPENT ON CONSULAR CASES 2017/18



OUR BUSIEST POSTS 2017/18

Many of New Zealand's Embassies and High Commissions are accredited to more than one country, which means consular staff will work across borders to help New Zealanders in difficulty. For example, our post in Bangkok looks after Cambodia and Laos as well as Thailand.

BANGKOK	130 NEW CASES	715HRS
CANBERRA	160 NEW CASES	485HRS
ROME	105 NEW CASES	386HRS
NEW DELHI	39 NEW CASES	356HRS
JAKARTA	66 NEW CASES	345HRS
LONDON	160 NEW CASES	286HRS
GUANGZHOU	19 NEW CASES	272HRS
LOS ANGELES	118 NEW CASES	224HRS
CHENGDU	7 NEW CASES	209HRS
WASHINGTON	110 NEW CASES	206HRS

MEDICAL CASES OVERSEAS

In 2017/18 we provided consular assistance to New Zealanders in need of medical help or their families in 209 cases. This was a 17 percent increase on the 2016/17 year.

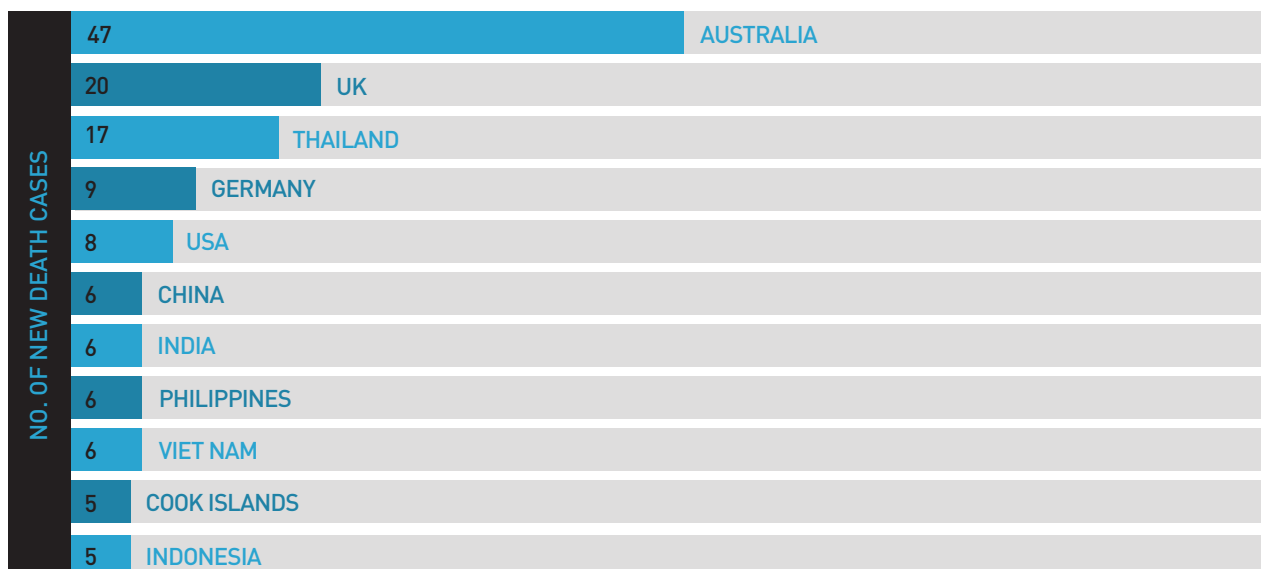


DEATHS OVERSEAS

When a New Zealander dies overseas, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade can help families by:

- providing local advice, including whether burial or cremation are possible in the country where the person has died, or how to go about the process of repatriation of remains or ashes to New Zealand
- advising on approximate costs of the options available
- providing contact details for local funeral directors who can manage the funeral or repatriation arrangements in consultation with the family

In 2017/18, we provided consular assistance in 182 new cases involving the deaths of New Zealanders overseas.



WHEREABOUTS AND MISSING PERSONS

Every year, we hear from New Zealanders who are concerned about the whereabouts of loved ones overseas. Missing persons cases are primarily a matter for the police.

New Zealanders travelling or living overseas can help to alleviate the concerns of their friends and family at home by keeping in touch, especially if they are in the vicinity of a major international incident.

Our advice to travellers is to leave a copy of their itinerary, passport, contact and insurance details with their family or friends at home – and to maintain contact with them by phone, email or social media.

New Zealanders concerned about the whereabouts or welfare of a family member or friends overseas should use all possible means to contact them (phone, text, email, social media, last known address, including other family members, and friends, banks, travel agents, tour companies or employers.) If that is unsuccessful, they should contact their local police to report a missing person.

We may be able to provide advice and support, but we do not carry out searches for missing people. That is a job for local authorities and police.

MISSING PERSONS CASES 2017/18

AUSTRALIA (8)



THAILAND (6)



CHINA (5)



INDONESIA (4)



MALAYSIA (4)



UK (3)



CUBA (3)



FIJI (2)



CANADA (2)



ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS

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.

Travellers should not assume that behaviours that might be acceptable in New Zealand are equally acceptable overseas. For example, some countries have strong religious, social or cultural traditions about things ranging from alcohol use, modesty of dress, to sex and relationships. They sometimes also have strict laws about defamation, possession of any kind of drugs, using obscene language, making rude gestures, or behaving disrespectfully towards the government, the local culture or religion.

THE SAFETRAVEL WEBSITE HAS ADVICE ABOUT WHAT NEW ZEALANDERS CAN DO IF THEY ARE ARRESTED OR IMPRISONED.



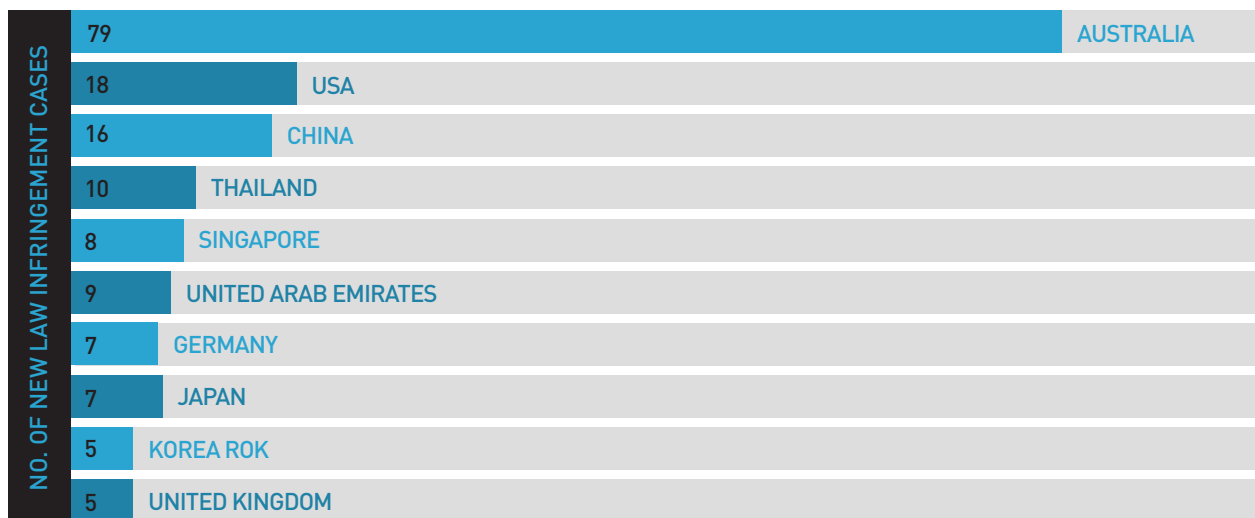
OUR CONSULAR SUPPORT CAN INCLUDE:

- providing a list of local English-speaking lawyers for New Zealanders to select a legal representative and/or provide information about local legal aid
- informing next-of-kin or other relatives/friends of an arrest and seeking any financial assistance from them, if requested
- arranging for the transfer of funds from family or friends for payment of bail or other legal expenses
- depending on the location of the court, attending a final court hearing as an observer



NEW ZEALAND CONSULAR STAFF CANNOT:

- intervene in the judicial process of another country
- have New Zealanders released from detention or imprisonment, or transferred to a prison in New Zealand
- select or appoint a lawyer, provide legal advice or investigate an offence
- pay legal fees, fines or bail, or act as a guarantor for bail or parole
- resolve immigration issues, or make travel arrangements for a deportation, including arranging visas for transits or stopovers

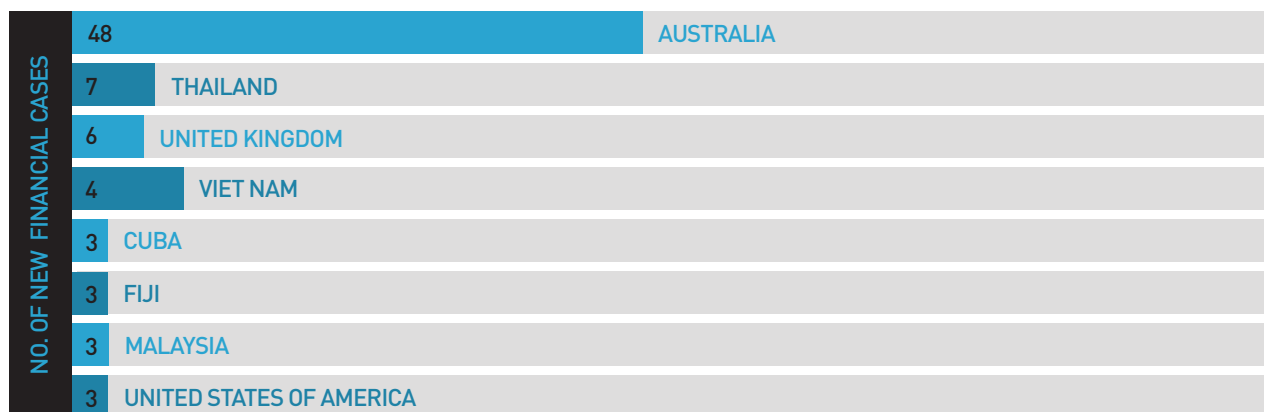


FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

New Zealanders sometimes contact us after they lose money or credit cards overseas or get into other financial difficulties.

New Zealanders who run out of money overseas are not entitled to financial assistance from the New Zealand government. We advise people who are in financial difficulties overseas to:

- Have friends, family, or their employer transfer money to them overseas through a commercial agency such as [Moneygram](#) or [Western Union](#)
- Contact their issuing bank/agency to notify lost or stolen credit cards and travellers' cheques.
- Ask their credit card company if they can advance funds temporarily
- Arrange a funds transfer through their bank
- Check their bank's website for international free calling numbers to report losses and to seek assistance




LOST, STOLEN OR DAMAGED PASSPORTS

The loss or theft of a passport is a serious matter. The replacement of a passport may take some time while enquiries are made. Standard New Zealand passports are only available through the [Department of Internal Affairs](#) passport offices in New Zealand, Sydney and London.

If New Zealanders need to travel urgently, and they are not in New Zealand, Australia, or the United Kingdom, a New Zealand Embassy or High Commission may be able to issue an Emergency Travel Document. More information on Emergency Travel Documents is available at the [SafeTravel](#) website.

WHERE WE HELPED WITH EMERGENCY TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

MFAT POST	NO. OF NEW CASES
LOS ANGELES	73
RAROTONGA	66
WASHINGTON	38
BANGKOK	27
APIA	22
TOKYO	18
OTTAWA	16
ROME	15
SANTIAGO	10
SINGAPORE	10
SUVA	10



VICTIMS OF CRIME

If New Zealanders are the victims of crimes overseas, consular staff may be able to help them report the crime to the local police, find an English-speaking lawyer or locate appropriate medical care or counselling options.

COUNTRY	NO. OF NEW CASES
ITALY	27
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	27
GREECE	16
GERMANY	12
INDONESIA	8
MEXICO	7
COLOMBIA	6
THAILAND	6
UNITED KINGDOM	6
ARGENTINA	5
AUSTRALIA	5
CHILE	5



FOR MORE INFORMATION

A comprehensive set of MFAT's 2017/18 consular statistics is available online at www.mfat.govt.nz

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 and other offices in 51 countries around the world. Contact details for our posts are available here: www.mfat.govt.nz/embassies
- by phone on: **+64 4 439 8000** and ask for Consular
- 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 MFAT is protected by law, including the Privacy Act 1993. Information we have received is only used for the provision of consular services. We do not share information with other government or private agencies unless it is necessary to provide consular services.

MFAT

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

New Zealand Government

safetravel.govt.nz