

10 June 2026

Personal details removed for proactive release

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Thank you for your email of 12 May 2026, following up on an Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request you sent on 20 April 2026, to the address [OIA@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:OIA@mfat.govt.nz), which is a non-existent email address. You requested the following information:

*I am seeking information about cases in which MFAT or a New Zealand diplomatic or consular post provided consular assistance to New Zealand citizens who were detained by United States authorities – specifically US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) or US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at a port of entry or in immigration-related detention. I am **not** seeking information about detentions arising from criminal matters unrelated to border or immigration enforcement.*

*Please provide the information for the following two comparison periods:*

- 1. 20 January 2023 – 19 January 2025 (inclusive)**
- 2. 20 January 2025 – the date this request is received**
  - **For each period, please provide (with names and identifying details removed):**
    - a. The total number of these cases.**
    - b. Why each person was detained – for example, a visa problem, being pulled aside for extra questioning at the border, an alleged immigration breach, or being processed for removal. If you already record this in a standard way, please break it down using those categories.**
    - c. How long each person was held, grouped into bands such as under 24 hours, 1–7 days, 8–30 days, or more than 30 days.**
    - d. What happened in the end – for example, let into the country, sent home, agreed to leave voluntarily, moved into other US custody, or still in detention.**
  - **For (b), (c), and (d), I'm only asking for what you can pull from existing records without having to read through every individual case file. If providing any of this would take substantial time under section 18(f), please share what you can provide easily and tell me which parts you couldn't provide and why.**

**Background**

You provided the following information as background in your original request:

*I have reviewed the Consular Snapshot 2024/25 and the open data releases on consular services, including the country/case-type files for financial years 2023–24 and 2024–25. Those releases provide totals by case-type category (such as "local immigration difficulties" and "law infringement") but do not distinguish CBP/ICE border and immigration detention from other matters, do not provide reason, duration, or outcome, and are not aligned to the calendar-date ranges I have specified. The 2025–26 financial year data is not due for release until July 2026. On that basis I do not believe section 18(d) applies*

**Response to your request**

The information you requested cannot be made available without searching each individual consular case file of the people whose cases are filed in the United States section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s case management system (SafeCase), and categorised as Local Immigration Difficulties or Law Infringement.

Cases that are categorised as ‘local immigration difficulties’, relate to New Zealanders who have experienced immigration difficulties. Some of the people in this category will have been detained, some will not have been detained.

For cases involving New Zealanders who have experienced ‘law infringement’ issues, some of these people will have been found to be of interest to the immigration authorities and may have been detained for immigration related issues, some will not.

The information we hold, in scope of your request in a readily accessible form is provided in the tables below. Please note this data is only what we hold and is likely to be incomplete as some New Zealanders may choose not to seek consular assistance, in which case we will not have a record of their case.

| <b>United States of America Consular Cases</b>         |                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Time period: 20 January 2023 to 19 January 2025</b> |                                |
| Case Type                                              | Number of New Zealand Citizens |
| Local Immigration Difficulties                         | 15                             |
| Law Infringement                                       | 23                             |

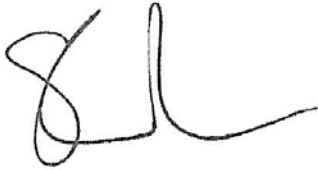
| <b>United States of America Consular Cases</b>     |                                |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Time period: 20 January 2025 to 12 May 2026</b> |                                |
| Case Type                                          | Number of New Zealand Citizens |
| Local Immigration Difficulties                     | 58                             |
| Law Infringement                                   | 15                             |

Your request for parts two (b), (c), and (d) are refused under section 18(f) of the OIA as the information cannot be provided without substantial research and collation.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website: [www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/)

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: [DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz). You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SC', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Corbett  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade