

29 June 2026

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OIA 30939

Personal details removed for proactive release

Tēnā koe Personal details removed for proactive release

Thank you for your email of 12 May 2026 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

"I am requesting information relating to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) construction, redevelopment, and major property projects at overseas embassies, high commissions, consulates, and other diplomatic posts.

A list of all active and planned overseas construction, redevelopment, refurbishment, or major capital works projects currently managed or overseen by MFAT.

1. *For each project, please provide:*
 - *the location and description of the project*
 - *the current approved budget, including contingency allowances*
 - *total expenditure to date*
 - *the current project status*
 - *whether the project is on time and on budget.*
 - *the procurement method used (for example open tender, limited tender, direct appointment, negotiated contract)*
 - *the rationale for the procurement approach selected*
 - *whether external project managers or consultants were engaged.*
2. *Any internal reviews, audits, or assurance reports relating to cost escalation, budget overruns, contractor performance, or value for money concerns in relation to overseas property projects since 1 January 2024.*
3. *Any guidance, policies, or frameworks used by MFAT to assess and challenge contractor pricing, estimates, or project cost increases."*

On 9 June 2026, the timeframes for responding to your request were extended by an additional 13 working days due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request (section 15A(1)(b) of the OIA refers).

Background

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) actively manages a portfolio of 363 owned and leased properties globally as of 29 June 2026 (this number fluctuates as

staff housing requirements change). These are essential to maintaining New Zealand's international diplomatic network and connecting our people worldwide. Construction, redevelopment and other major property projects are undertaken to ensure these properties are safe, secure and fit-for-purpose.

Response to your request

In response to part one of your request, below is a table listing all major active and planned overseas construction, redevelopment, refurbishment and major capital works projects currently managed or overseen by the Ministry. Minor capital works projects have been excluded, as have projects without approved business cases and projects.

The rationale for the procurement approach selected varies by project, however a competitive tender process is generally preferred as it is transparent and more likely to result in good value for money.

Location	Description	*Capital Budget (NZD) millions	Spend to 30/4/26	Status	On time	On budget	Procurement approach	External project manager or consultant
New Delhi	Full compound boundary security Replacement	12.7	1.5	Active	Y	Y	Competitive tender	Y
Port Moresby	Replacement High Commission	31.3	5.65	Active	Y	Y	Competitive tender	Y
Suva	Replacement High Commission and Official Residence	64.2	8.5	Active	N	Y	Competitive tender	Y
Rarotonga	Replacement High Commission	34.1	3.4	Active	Y	Y	Competitive tender	Y
London	Fitting out High Commission and Official Residence in New Zealand House	s9(2)(j)	s9(2)(j)	Planned	Y	Y	Competitive tender	Y
Niue	Housing and in-ground infrastructure Replacement	s9(2)(j)	s9(2)(j)	Planned	Y	Y	Competitive tender	Y
Tarawa	Housing Replacement	9.8	0.9	Active	Y	Y	Competitive tender	Y
Details of project withheld in full under s6(a).								

**Note that the Capital budget includes all contingency allowances.*

Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government; and
- 9(2)(j): to avoid prejudice to negotiations.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Part two of your request has been interpreted to be relating to internal reviews, audits, or assurance reports requested or undertaken outside of orthodox project management practice. The Ministry has not requested nor undertaken any such internal reviews, audits, or assurance reports in relation to overseas property projects since 1 January 2024. Accordingly, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the OIA, as the information does not exist, or despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Regarding part three of your request, each project is delivered using an orthodox project management approach calibrated to its specific risk profile and level of complexity. For projects involving elevated risk or complexity, independent specialist assurance providers are engaged to provide external probity services. Cost control is generally overseen by the Project Manager, working closely with an external Quantity Surveyor and the Engineer to Contract.

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/

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: 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 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