

31/01/23

By email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST 2022/42

On 13/12/22 you made a request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA) for the following information:

1. Further to [this](#) response, can you please clarify how the Electoral Commission contacts prisoners and overseas voters as part of its Enrolment Update Campaign if the address used for enrolment is one the person no longer lives at (and one where no friends or family live who could receive mail on that person's behalf)?
2. Further to [this](#) response, are there any data sharing arrangements with Corrections to remove prisoners sentenced for longer than 3 years? If so, how frequently is that cross-referenced?
3. Similarly, are there any data sharing arrangements with Customs to remove people who haven't visited New Zealand in the last 3 years? If so, how frequently is that cross-referenced?
4. Further to [this](#) response, what checks are undertaken by the Registrar of electors?
5. What, if any, checks done to confirm overseas voters are still alive?
6. What date were the 2022 electoral rolls printed (being the physical copies currently held by the National Library in Wellington)?
7. If someone is missing but not yet confirmed dead, do they stay on the electoral roll?
8. Is there a period of time after which the Electoral Commission assumes someone is dead and removes them from the electoral roll? For instance, if details have not been updated or confirmed after 80 years or if the date of birth is more than 100 years ago?
9. I note this [press release](#) from 2013 and [another](#) from 2014 about removing 'gone no address' returns to sender. How often does this happen and how many people have been removed as 'gone no address' during the last 10 years?
10. Further to [this](#) response, what is the prescribed fee for purchasing a copy of the electoral roll and the habitation index?
11. Are there any other sources of information used to confirm deaths and/or remove people from the electoral roll? If this happens, what are those other sources and how frequently does this happen?
12. Is there any way to find out when named individuals last verified their contact information?
13. Are people removed from the electoral roll for any reason not covered in the questions above?
14. Have there been any significant changes to any of these processes over time?

The Electoral Commission's responses to the above questions follows.

1. The Electoral Commission does not keep records of individuals currently in prison. Anyone sentenced to 3 years or less is entitled to be enrolled at the address they qualified at, before going to prison. The Electoral Commission works closely with Department of Corrections to encourage anyone that is eligible to enrol and vote.

The Electoral Commission encourages people living overseas, to include their overseas address as a postal address. They can also indicate they are enrolling from overseas.

During an election year, we send all registered overseas electors an enrolment update pack to the postal address on their enrolment registration.

Our system can also recognise overseas IP addresses. We also have targeted online marketing campaigns, advertising in social media, and work with expat groups in multiple countries to encourage people to update their details online and explain how to vote from overseas.

2. The Department of Corrections are required to provide notification to the Electoral Commission within 7 days of person being sentenced to a period of imprisonment for longer than three years. These notifications are received daily.
3. The Electoral Commission do not have an arrangement with Customs to identify people that have been outside New Zealand for 3 years or more.
4. All applications for enrolment are checked for eligibility and validity, in accordance with the Electoral Act 1993.
5. The Commission does not receive notification of voters passing away overseas. However, it is acceptable that an immediate family member (e.g. mother, father, son, or daughter) can write a declaration stating that the family member has passed away.
6. The 2022 Parliamentary roll was printed as at 12 August 2022.
7. Correct
8. The Electoral Commission makes no assumptions of a person's death, and the Electoral Act 1993 makes no provision for a person to be deceased after a period of time or based on a year of birth.
9. The Electoral Commission sends correspondence to many thousands of electors each year. If the person to whom the letter is addressed no longer resides at the address listed on that correspondence, it can be returned as "gone no address". There were 599,477 Gone No Address transactions that took someone off the electoral roll between 1 January 2012 and 31 December 2022.

10. A general or Māori electoral roll costs \$30.20, and a Habitation index is \$120.80 (both GST inclusive).
11. The following are reasons for removing voters from the electoral roll
 - a. Notification of Death from Birth, Deaths and Marriages (received daily)
 - b. Notification of Sentence from Corrections (received daily)
 - c. Certification of order – a person that is detained under the Mental Health Act (received adhoc)
 - d. Written correspondence from immediate family members (received adhoc)
12. The Electoral Commission does keep historical records of enrolment applications however due to privacy reason we cannot provide details to a third party.
13. No.
14. Significant changes to processes have resulted from legislative amendments to electoral disqualification including changes to the prisoner franchise in 2010 and 2020 and recent temporary changes to the eligibility of overseas voters which take effect on 31 March 2023. You can read more about the eligibility of prisoners [here](#) and [here](#), and overseas voters [here](#). I have also provided a link to a list of amendments incorporated in the current version [here](#).

In the interests of transparency, we release responses to Official Information Act requests every 3 months. We will publish this response with your personal details redacted.

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



Ross McPherson
Director Enrolment Operations