

6 July 2026



s9(2)(a)

Our ref: OIA2526-1343

Tēnā koe

s9(2)(a)

Response to your Official Information Act request and correspondence

I refer to your email of 6 June 2026 to the Office of Hon Mark Mitchell relating to the Nepali Community and requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). As you are aware, on 9 June 2026, your email was transferred to the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (the Ministry) for response.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge your points raised and appreciate the insights and recommendations you have shared about how the Ministry can ensure that the Nepali community is meaningfully represented in government policy forums and at strategic decision-making levels. The Ministry values the perspectives and contributions of all the communities we represent, including the Nepali community.

Given the diversity of views, interests and perspectives that may exist within ethnic groups and across the wider community, the Ministry considers it most appropriate for communities to determine and put forward the organization they regard as their peak representative body themselves. Additionally, the Ethnic Communities Development Fund (ECDF) panel is currently the only committee established within the Ministry. Members of the Nepali community are welcome to express their interest in applying to become a panel member once applications for expressions of interest are open. You can find more information here: [Expressions of Interest sought for the Ethnic Communities Development Fund Panel](#).

The Ministry will continue to engage with the Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA NZ) and other Nepali community organisations to encourage participation in relevant public consultation processes run by government agencies to help inform policy formation and strategy development and to engage in Ministry-led forums and events.

Official Information Act request

In your email noted above, you requested the following information under the Official Information Act. The Ministry's response to each part of your request follows below.

- 1. The total number of staff currently employed within the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, disaggregated by ethnicity, including the number of staff who identify as Nepali or of Nepali descent.*
- 2. The number and names of advisory boards, reference groups, community forums, or consultative bodies currently operating under or affiliated with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, and whether any Nepali community representatives sit on these bodies.*

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3. Details of any formal mechanisms through which ethnic community organisations — including Nepali community groups — are invited to participate in policy formation, strategy development, or government consultation processes.
4. The current composition (by ethnicity) of the Ministry's senior leadership team, including Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 positions.
5. Any existing diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies or workforce composition targets within the Ministry, including specific reference to Pacific and Asian communities and sub-groups.
6. A list of ethnic communities formally recognised or engaged by the Ministry within the last three years, and whether the Nepali community is among those listed.

Question one

The Ministry is an interdepartmental agency with the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department). As at 30 May 2026, there are a total number of 57 staff employed within the Ministry. Where demographic information is collected, staff are advised that this information is confidential and restricted to Human Resources and their managers. Additionally, given the size of the Ministry, providing this information could lead to the identification of staff, compromising their privacy. As such, this part of your request is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Ethnicity data is collected at a higher-level classification and does not include a specific Nepalese category. Accordingly, information on the number of staff who identify as Nepali or Nepali descent is not available. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by the Ministry and we have no grounds for believing that the information is held by another department or interdepartmental venture or Minister of the Crown or organisation, or by a local authority.

Question two

The Ethnic Communities Development Fund (ECDF) panel is currently the only committee established within the Ministry. For more information on the ECDF panel members, please visit the Ministry's website at: [Panel Members - Ethnic Communities Development Fund](#).

Question three

The Ministry does not have any formal mechanisms for Ethnic Community organisations, including Nepali community groups, to participate in policy formation, strategy development or government consultation processes. As such, this part of the request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as the information requested does not exist.

Formal mechanisms for public involvement to participate in policy formation and strategy development sit with the respective agencies leading the specific government consultation process. The Ministry engages with Ethnic Community organisations to encourage their participation in these processes.

Question four

For the reasons outlined in our response to you in question one regarding the confidentiality of employee demographic information and the privacy interests of individual staff members, this

information is withheld in full under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.

Question five

Information on existing diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies or workforce composition targets within the Ministry, including specific reference to Pacific and Asian communities and sub-groups are available on the Ministry's website here: [Kia Toipoto and Papa Pounamu PowerPoint Presentation](#).

Question six

The Ministry does not provide formal recognition of community organisations. The Ministry has engaged with a substantial number of community organisations within the last three years. To provide this information would require substantial collation and research. For the purposes of this request, we have identified the Nepali community organisations that the Ministry has engaged with from 6 June 2023 to 6 June 2026. Please see the list enclosed with this letter.

The Ministry's interactions with these Nepali community organisations have primarily been through invitations to Ministry-organised events such as the Minister's Parliamentary events and Ministry roadshows, in addition to meetings or discussions initiated by the organisations themselves.

As required by section 9(1) of the Act, I have considered whether the grounds for withholding information under section 9 of the Act are outweighed by other considerations which would make it desirable, in the public interest, to make that information available.

Under section 28 of the OIA, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Office of the Ombudsman of my response relating to this request. The relevant details can be found on their website at: www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

Please note, due to the public interest in our work, the Ministry may publish responses to requests for official information on our website, shortly after the response has been sent. If you have any queries about this, please feel free to contact our Ministerial Services team: Ministerial@ethniccommunities.govt.nz.

Ngā mihi



Edward Firth

Director of Ministerial Services

List of Nepali community organisations that the Ministry has engaged with from 6 June 2023 to 6 June 2026

Nepali Community Organisation	Year	Interaction Type
Nepalese Association in Bay of Plenty	2023	Invitation to Eid at Parliament
Canterbury Nepalese Society	2024	Invitation to Christchurch ELT Roadshow
New Zealand Nepal Society	2024	Invitation to Auckland ELT Roadshow
New Zealand Nepalese Association	2024	Invitation to Auckland ELT Roadshow
The Nepalese Society of Wellington	2024	Invitation to Wellington ELT Roadshow
The Nepalese Society of Wellington	2024	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Canterbury Nepalese Society	2024	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Non-Resident Nepali Association New Zealand	2024	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Nepalese Association in Bay of Plenty	2024	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Nepal New Zealand Friendship Society of Canterbury	2024	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Nepali Cultural Centre New Zealand	2025	Invitation to Lunar New Year at Parliament
Southland Nepalese Society	2025	Invitation to Minister for Ethnic Communities' State of the National speech, Auckland
Non-Resident Nepali Association New Zealand	2025	Invitation to Minister for Ethnic Communities' State of the National speech
New Zealand Nepalese Association	2025	Invitation to Minister for Ethnic Communities' State of the National speech
New Zealand Nepal Society	2025	Invitation to Minister for Ethnic Communities' State of the National speech
Southland Nepalese Society	2025	Invitation to Minister for Ethnic Communities' State of the National speech
Southland Nepalese Society	2025	2025 Ethnic Advantage
Nepalese Association in Bay of Plenty	2025	2025 Ethnic Advantage
Southland Nepalese Society	2025	Regional Initiative for Ethnic Communities Empowerment (RIECE) Invercargill forum
Canterbury Nepalese Society	2025	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) New Zealand	2025	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Nepal New Zealand Friendship Society of Canterbury	2025	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Nepalese Society, Hindu Council	2025	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
The Nepalese Society of Wellington	2025	Invitation to Diwali at Parliament
Non-Resident Nepali Association New Zealand	2025	Meeting with Ministry Strategic Engagement and Stakeholder Insights senior leadership team
Non-Resident Nepali Association New Zealand	2025	Meeting with Ministry Strategic Engagement and Stakeholder Insights senior leadership team
New Zealand Nepalese Association	2026	Invitation to Auckland ELT roadshow
Nepalese Cultural Centre NZ	2026	Invitation to Auckland ELT roadshow
Nepalese Cultural Centre NZ	2026	Invitation to Auckland ELT roadshow
New Zealand Nepal Society	2026	Invitation to Auckland ELT roadshow