



20 July 2020

Jordan Williams
(per email) Jordan@taxpayers.org

REF: IR-01-20-11246

Dear Jordan

I refer to your email dated 17th April 2020, where you requested the following information under the Official Information Act:

"I'm sitting on hold for 105. I was told at the beginning of the call it would be an eight and a half minute wait. It's now more than 16.

How is the 'estimated time' calculated? What is the average wait time since 1

April? What is the average 'estimated time' callers are told?"

I have broken your request into three questions.

1. *How is the 'estimated time' calculated?*
2. *What is the average wait time since 1 April?*
3. *What is the average 'estimated time' callers are told?*

How is the 'estimated time' calculated?

Estimated Waiting Time (EWT) indicates the estimated wait time in seconds for the request.

EWT is calculated based on the average queue time of the last ten calls / number of ready communicators. In addition, there are different "service groups" or queues depending on the call source and each has its own queue priority settings. As such, the EWT may be 8 minutes based on the last ten calls but if calls came through on a queue with a higher priority it could extend this wait time.

What is the average wait time since 1 April?

The EWT is calculated in real time and no information is retained so therefore there is no information available in relation to this question.

The average time to answer for non-emergency calls in April 2020 was 371 seconds. 70% of calls were answered in 300 or less seconds.

Police National Headquarters

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I note that the non-emergency call demand on the 17/4 was 7395 calls - much higher than expected (the preceding day was 4344). This in part reflects the extra-ordinary COVID-19 related demand which was impacting Police at the time. (I also note that the incidences of calls also increased four-fold at around 1600-1700 hours on that date and although I have no information on when you called).

While long wait times are undesirable, sometimes unexpected call demand volume in a narrow time period, longer in-call lengths, and operator availability can conspire to mean that answering times for individual calls are much longer than average and as a consequence expected waiting time can vary quite significantly, even in a narrow time window.

What is the average 'estimated time' callers are told?

The average EWT is calculated in real time as described above. No information is retained so therefore it is not possible to provide what was the average estimated time provided to callers in a period.

It is the best available estimate, using industry standard approaches to what can be a complex-and-moving phenomenon. We think it is preferable that callers are given an indication of the likely wait time, although it is our expectation that under normal circumstances that the estimate provided to callers and their actual wait time is close.

Callers are also reminded every 90 seconds through the call queuing time that if there circumstance is an emergency to hang up and dial 111 or alternatively that there are equivalent online reporting options at [105.police.govt.nz](https://www.police.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with my response to your request, you have a right under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982 to ask the Office of the Ombudsman to seek an investigation and review of my decision.

Yours sincerely



Inspector Ben Butterfield
Deployment Manager
Service