



NEW ZEALAND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE  
Manatū Aorere



# Consular Snapshot

2023-24



# Consular at a glance



58 posts (embassies, high commissions, consulates, and representative offices) in 50 countries, with diplomatic cross-accreditations to 113 countries, and a network of 73 honorary consuls



Almost 1.1 million visits/ views to [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz) (our travel advice website)



564 SafeTravel messages sent to registrants



Assisted 1,725 New Zealanders in new cases this year, with 75% satisfied with MFAT's consular services



Responded to 43,544 general consular enquiries, with 4078 consular calls received by our emergency call centre



7185 notarial services provided



Assisted with 230 new bereavement cases



Supported New Zealand citizens caught up in 22 offshore emergencies, including evacuations from the Middle East and Pacific



Assisted 149 new law infringement cases



Assisted New Zealanders involved in 427 new cases of lost belongings and property



Assisted with 143 new cases of New Zealand citizens in medical distress



Assisted 154 new cases of New Zealand citizens in financial distress



Ongoing support being provided to 847 existing consular cases at end of reporting year



*All reported case numbers are for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 as at 15 July 2024.*



**Most common requests for assistance are:**

**LOST PROPERTY**

**BEREAVEMENT**

**LAW INFRINGEMENT**

**MEDICAL**

**Where most new cases happened:**

**AUSTRALIA**

**UNITED STATES**

**THAILAND**

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade acts in the world to build a safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future for New Zealanders.**

**Keeping New Zealanders safe when traveling and living abroad, and ensuring they can access consular assistance and emergency advice when required, is an important part of our work.**

Over the twelve months from July 2023 to June 2024, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade continued to manage a complex and demanding consular workload. The Israel-Hamas conflict created a devastating humanitarian crisis in Gaza, severely heightened tensions in the Middle East, and required consular responses in Israel, the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon. Consular staff from Wellington and New Zealand's Embassies in Ankara and Cairo were deployed to Tel Aviv, Rafah and Cyprus and were instrumental in assisting the departures of almost 100 New Zealanders and their families from Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

In May 2024, with the support of the New Zealand Defence Force, the Ministry led a large-scale evacuation after unrest broke out in New Caledonia. Over the course of eight flights, the New Zealand Government brought 224 stranded New Zealanders home and evacuated the largest number of foreign nationals (almost 150 from over 20 nations) of any other country involved with the response.

Throughout the rest of the year, the Ministry's crisis team also led responses to wildfires in Maui, flooding in Brazil, and other extreme weather events across the globe impacting many New Zealanders, their families and travelling groups. A final few New Zealand families in Sudan were helped to leave. Significant consular operations also took place to support New Zealanders participating at the ANZAC services on the Gallipoli Peninsula and to provide consular services at other major international events, such as the Rugby World Cup.

The Ministry sent 564 messages to New Zealanders registered on [SafeTravel](#) to advise them of security alerts and communicate with registrants during the 22 emergencies in 2023/24. Over 120 regular updates were made to travel advice for New Zealanders living or travelling offshore.

Over the same period, the Ministry assisted 1,725 new cases of New Zealanders in difficulty overseas, continued to support 847 ongoing cases, received 4,078 calls to our 24/7 emergency call centre, and responded to 43,544 general consular enquiries through our embassies, high commissions, and consulates.

The most complex cases in the last year have included New Zealanders that were unwell or sustained serious injuries, assisting whānau to return loved ones home after a death overseas, providing advice to New Zealanders in detention in other countries, responding to cases involving vulnerable children, advocating against the death penalty, and leading the response to a New Zealander held hostage in Papua, Indonesia.

Despite the challenging global environment and growing complexity in the Ministry's consular caseload, the latest survey results of those that received consular assistance showed that a majority of New Zealanders:

- Were satisfied or very satisfied with the service they received (75%)
- Received the help they needed (83%)
- Were satisfied with the time it took to receive assistance (76%).



Photo: Robson Hatsukami Morgan on Unsplash



## Staff at embassies can help you by:

- giving advice, with the aim of helping you to help yourself.
- supporting you with a lost or stolen passport.
- contacting relatives or friends to request emergency funds.
- providing a list of English-speaking lawyers, and helping you contact family and friends, if you are detained or arrested.
- contacting family and friends if you are ill or injured.
- supporting you with arrangements following a death overseas.
- in certain circumstances, providing notarial services such as witnessing affidavits, statutory declarations and other documents for use under New Zealand law.
- supporting you during a crisis, such as civil unrest and natural disasters



## Staff at embassies cannot:

- pay your hotel, travel or other bills, legal or medical expenses, or costs of returning a body to New Zealand.
- give you legal advice, including on family law matters such as child custody, international surrogacy and adoption issues.
- investigate a crime or get you out of prison.
- get you better conditions in prison or hospital than a local citizen would receive.
- arrange visas or work/residency permits for you.
- operate a personal mail service for you, including through the diplomatic bag.
- store your belongings.
- compel another country to overturn your travel ban.
- become involved in commercial disputes or civil litigation.
- secure access to, or administer, vaccines to New Zealanders who are located offshore.

For more information visit our [SafeTravel](#) website.

# What is consular assistance?

Consular assistance is about helping a New Zealand citizen in distress overseas to help themselves.

In addition to our Wellington-based team and emergency call centre, we provide consular services through our global network of posts (embassies, high commissions, consulates, and representative offices) in 50 countries and 73 honorary consuls. Our embassies, high commissions and consulates are accredited to 113 countries.

Each consular case is unique and the assistance provided will depend on the circumstances.

Consular assistance can range from:

- responding to an emergency event involving New Zealanders overseas e.g. a global pandemic, terrorist incident or natural disaster;
- helping New Zealanders who are sick or injured;
- assisting with arrangements following the death of a New Zealander overseas;
- undertaking welfare visits for those arrested, or detained or in a hospital offshore; and
- providing notarial services such as statutory declarations for use under New Zealand law.

SafeTravel provides detailed information on the consular services we provide.



## We have three main messages for travelling New Zealanders:

**1** Register your travel details on SafeTravel

**2** Take out appropriate travel insurance.

**3** Check our travel advice, before you go

# 1

## Take out travel insurance

We strongly advise New Zealanders to get comprehensive travel insurance before heading away. Travelers need to make sure that it covers everywhere they are going, and everything they plan to do.

### **“If you can’t afford travel insurance, you can’t afford to travel”.**

Travel insurance covers risks when travel doesn’t go to plan and things go wrong. Having unforeseen risks covered ensures an additional layer of protection against financial loss. New Zealanders who do not have travel insurance will have to pay out of their own pocket should any problems arise.

Your insurance policy needs to cover any activities you plan to undertake (from scuba diving to scooter riding), personal liability, medical treatment, emergency medical evacuation, and any pre-existing medical conditions. Even minor medical treatment can be very expensive overseas. Having travel insurance could save you thousands. The New Zealand Government cannot pay your travel bills, legal or medical expenses, or the costs of returning to New Zealand. Make sure you follow any insurance restrictions, for example driving within your license restrictions or engine capacity limitations, and stick to the laws in the country you are in.

#### **Case study:**

A New Zealander travelling in the Gold Coast, Australia suffered a stroke. The hospital agreed to cover all necessary treatment costs, however ongoing health care was required. Without travel insurance the New Zealander had to cover the on-going costs of treatment and medical repatriation to New Zealand at significant cost.

#### **Case study:**

A New Zealand citizen hospitalised in Indonesia after being seriously injured in a scooter accident faced extensive medical costs. Their insurance policy only covered accidents involving scooters with an engine size of up to 50cc. As the scooter they were driving had an engine larger than what was specified on the policy, their insurance claim was denied. The New Zealander had to pay their own hospital costs and treatment of reportedly more than \$18,000.

#### **Case study:**

The costs involved following the death of a New Zealander overseas, including their repatriation to New Zealand, can range from NZ\$2,200 to \$29,000. If a deceased New Zealander had no travel insurance, then families are required to cover all the costs involved, which can cause significant distress to families at an already traumatic time.



# 2

## Register Your Travel Details on SafeTravel

New Zealanders travelling and living overseas are encouraged to register their travel and contact details on [SafeTravel](#). Registering means we can send important travel information to you and provide updates if the worst happens (e.g. significant events such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks or other emergencies). [SafeTravel](#) registration is voluntary, and all information is held in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

You can only receive [SafeTravel](#) messages if you are registered with us. These messages convey important security alerts and are the key way we circulate information in a crisis. The messages provide advice and information to thousands of registrants on how to keep safe, information on significant events, and how advice when emergencies and natural disasters strike.

**Anywhere there is an emergency, and if we think New Zealanders might be affected, we can respond by:**



**Sending advice directly to SafeTravel registrants**



**Providing travel advice and crisis updates with news features on SafeTravel**



**Deploying staff to affected areas**



**Activating crisis and contingency plans that all New Zealand embassies and high commissions have in place**



**Liaising with families in New Zealand**



**Liaising with local and international authorities and networks**

# 3

## Check our travel advice

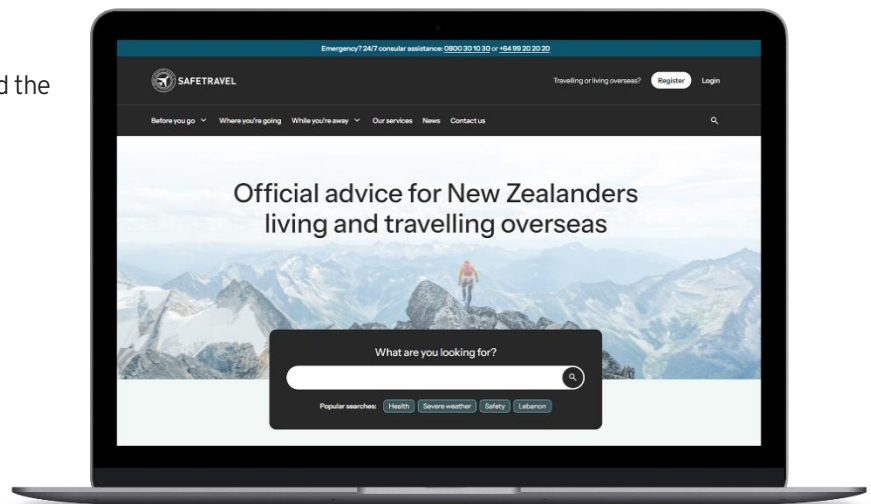
The Ministry is responsible for establishing, updating and disseminating travel advice for destinations around the world through the [SafeTravel](#) website.

Our goal is to ensure New Zealanders are able to live, do business, travel and communicate more safely offshore.

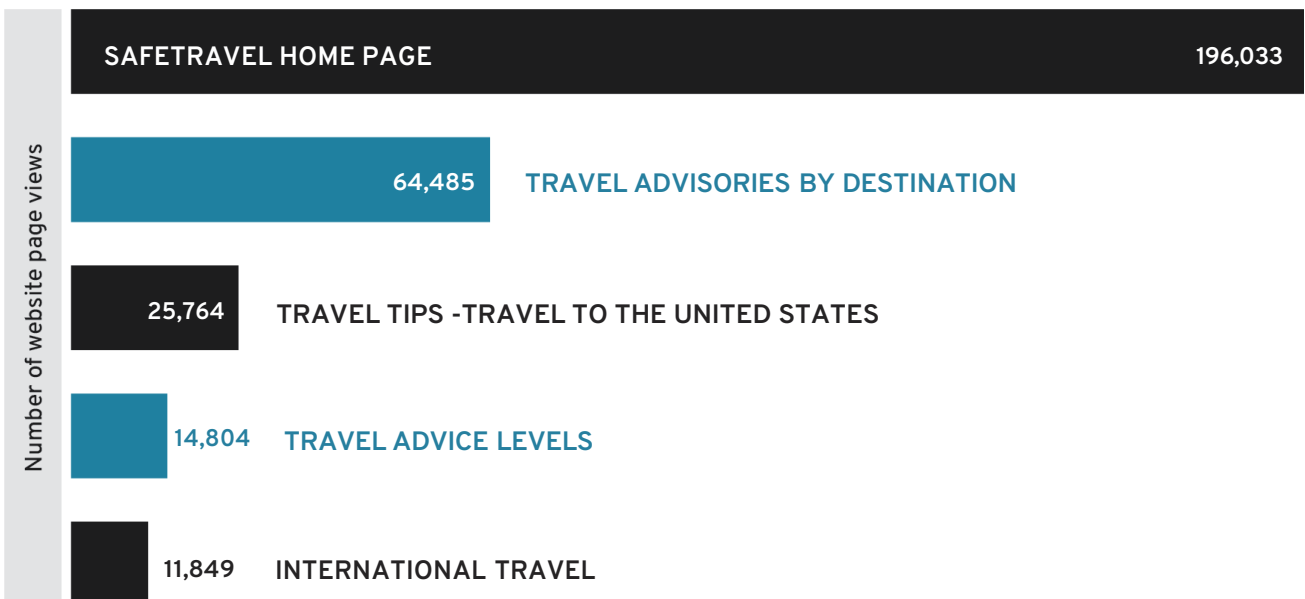
[SafeTravel](#) has a wide range of tips to help ensure safety when travelling offshore, what to do if things go wrong, and how the New Zealand Government can (or cannot) help if you are in trouble.

[SafeTravel](#) advice is designed to help New Zealanders make informed decisions about travel destinations. We do not provide advice on all destinations. We focus on locations that we have reliable information on security and safety issues that may affect New Zealanders.

Over a million people accessed the [SafeTravel](#) website over the last year. Most surveyed users (83%) said [SafeTravel](#) had the information they needed to make informed decisions before travelling overseas.



## TOP FIVE UNIQUE WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS



The New Zealand Government's official travel advice website is [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz).

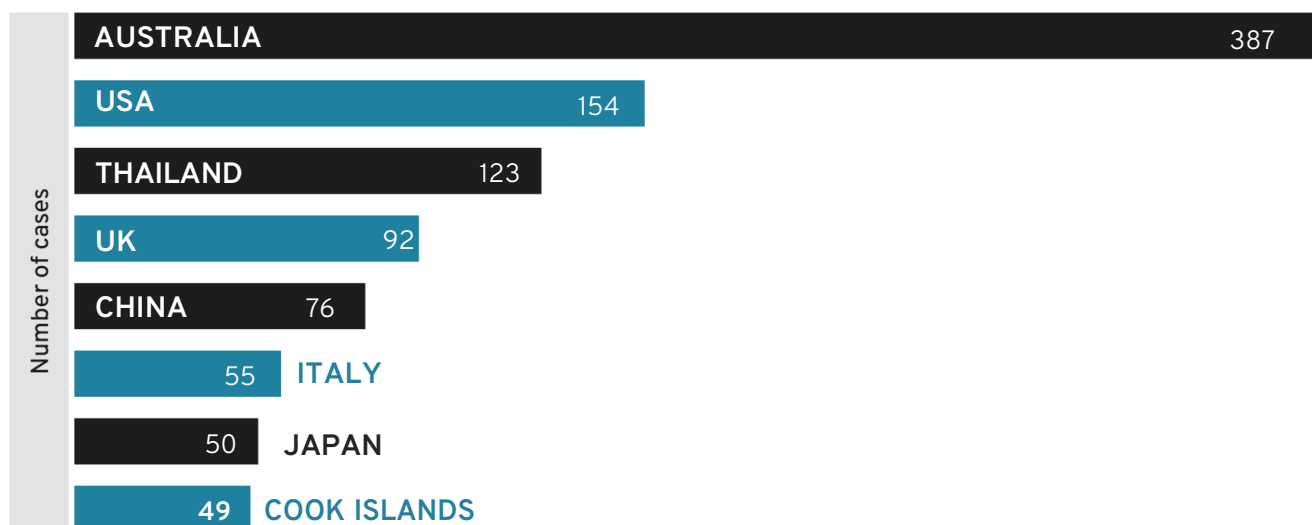
# Consular case breakdown

Most travelling New Zealanders never need consular assistance. Some choose not to contact us even if they do get into difficulty. The following table summarises instances where New Zealanders have reached out for help in the past seven years.

*Data from 1 July to 30 June each financial year as at 15 July:*

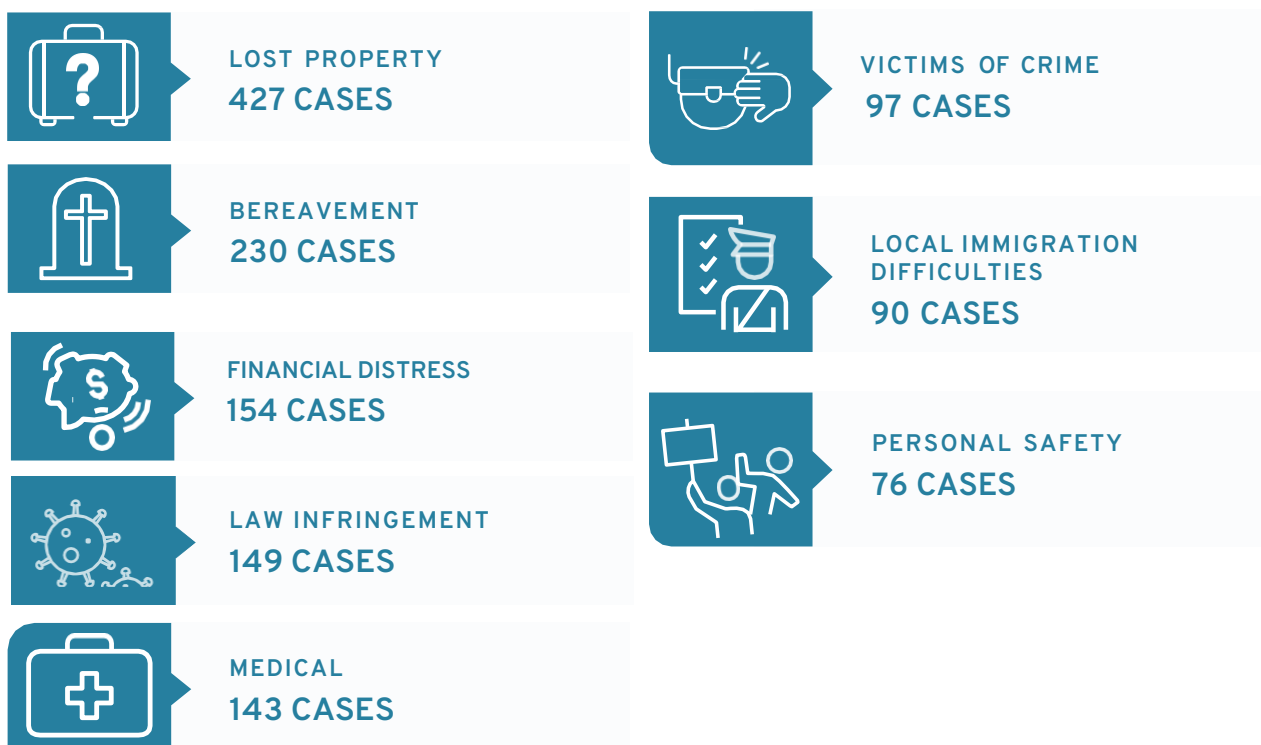
CASE TYPE	NUMBER OF CASES							
	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Accident	25	29	6	10	26	28	26	30
Adoption	0	0	5	4	0	1	6	2
Child custody	15	23	12	20	16	28	25	30
Civil unrest	46	20	257	9	8	2	15	5
Civil/employment disputes	3	4	3	3	4	5	14	24
COVID-19 related	0	17	724	486	1117	0	0	0
Death	230	226	167	127	190	213	183	186
Domestic incident	21	13	18	11	11	14	19	16
Financial distress	154	117	107	96	362	82	105	90
International surrogacy	3	1	0	1	5	1	4	1
Invigilation	4	1	1	1	0	9	5	5
Law infringement	149	130	88	81	138	201	212	198
Local immigration difficulties	90	97	113	96	147	200	230	202
Lost property	427	275	133	50	339	462	542	548
Medical	143	111	47	57	144	205	209	179
Mental well-being	41	26	31	22	39	34	38	37
Missing person	36	30	23	8	31	31	57	42
Natural disaster	15	1	1	1	5	3	23	2
Notarial problems	6	8	5	8	15	10	12	14
Other	72	86	67	39	91	78	87	76
Passport support/difficulties	52	54	59	41	93	175	170	196
Personal safety concerns	76	61	61	52	52	66	53	52
Scam	6	6	1	1	3	5	9	13
Terrorist attack	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
Threat warning	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Victim of crime	97	84	15	6	87	151	193	264
Welfare of minors	13	21	19	7	9	13	7	8
Witness marriage	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1725</b>	<b>1441</b>	<b>1963</b>	<b>1237</b>	<b>2933</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2252</b>	<b>2222</b>

# Where consular cases happened

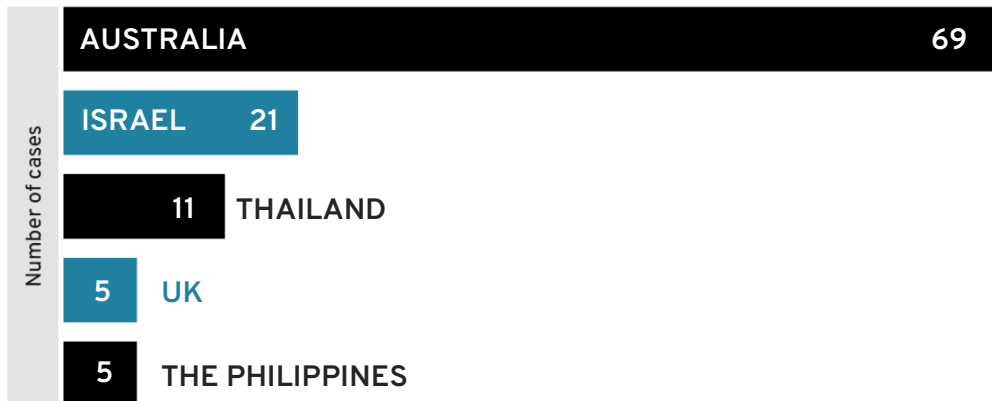


New Zealanders can seek consular assistance from our global network. In an emergency situation, consular assistance is available 24/7. Australia continues to be the country with the highest number of consular cases.

## Most common new consular cases



# Financial distress



*New cases of financial distress reported in 2023-24*

There is no automatic right for New Zealanders in distress overseas to receive financial assistance from the Government. If a person does not have insurance, they are expected to pay any costs themselves – this can be very expensive.

As a last resort, and only in certain emergency exceptional circumstances, and when all other options for support have been exhausted, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade may be able to provide an emergency consular loan. A consular loan is not a right – it depends on the circumstances, and is subject to strict rules. All loans must have a loan agreement and be repaid within a short timeframe. Loans which are not repaid are referred to debt collection.



# Law infringement

New Zealanders overseas are subject to the local law of the country they are travelling in. Local laws in some places can seem harsh by New Zealand standards, but New Zealanders are not entitled to special treatment compared to locals.

The New Zealand Government cannot interfere in the judicial process of another country.

**If a New Zealander is arrested overseas, a New Zealand embassy, high commission or consulate can:**

- provide a list of local English-speaking lawyers so the person can select a legal representative.
- provide information about local legal aid.
- if requested, inform the next-of-kin or other relatives/friends of the arrest and seek any financial assistance from them.
- depending on the location of the court, attend a final court hearing as an observer.

**If a New Zealander is imprisoned, a New Zealand embassy, high commission or consulate can:**

- provide family or friends with the prison contact details and how they may communicate, if requested to do so by the New Zealand prisoner.
- advise family or friends how to transfer or deposit funds for the prisoner, in accordance with prison regulations.
- if required, seek approval for prison visits by family or friends.
- make periodic visits in countries where prison conditions are substantially different from New Zealand, depending on the location of the prison.
- bring any medical or dental problems to the attention of the prison authorities.
- take up any justified complaint about any ill treatment or discrimination with the prison



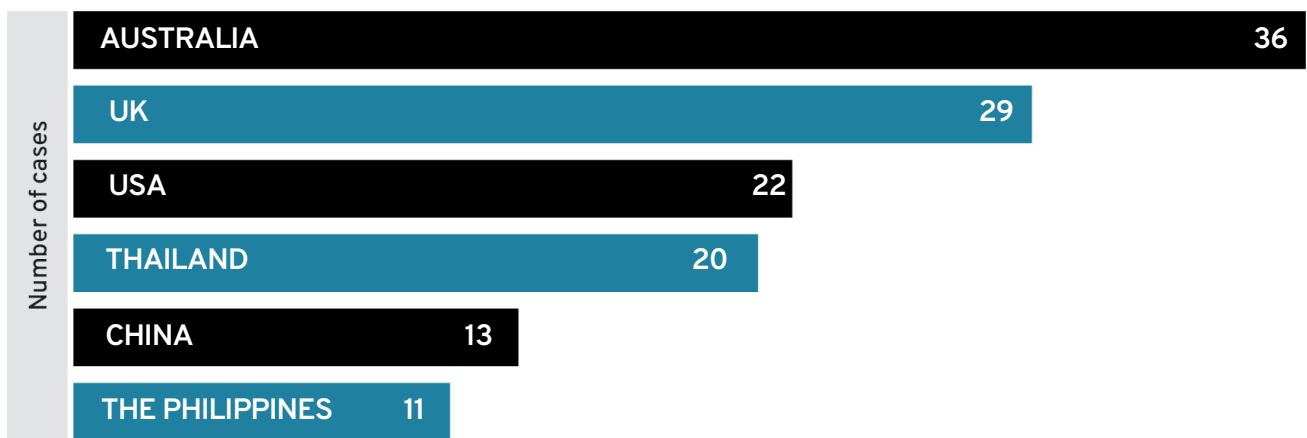
*New law infringement cases reported in 2023-24*

# Deaths of New Zealand citizens overseas

Over the last year, we supported 227 new cases of families who were dealing with the sad loss of a New Zealand citizen overseas. The type of advice we provide includes:

We did this by advising on:

- explaining the options which are available locally, including if burial or cremation is possible.
- repatriation of remains or ashes to New Zealand.
- approximate costs of these the options above.
- the contact details for local funeral directors who could manage the funeral or repatriation arrangements in consultation with the family.



# Our busiest posts

Many of New Zealand's embassies and high commissions are accredited to more than one country, which means consular staff may need to travel across borders to help New Zealanders in difficulty. Dealing with complex and ongoing cases does require significant work by our offices, while other cases can be closed quickly. Some offices receive more enquiries than others, and some posts experience higher demands for notarial services. The tables below show the number of cases and time spent by our busiest offices, and the total hours spent by all posts on some of our consular work.

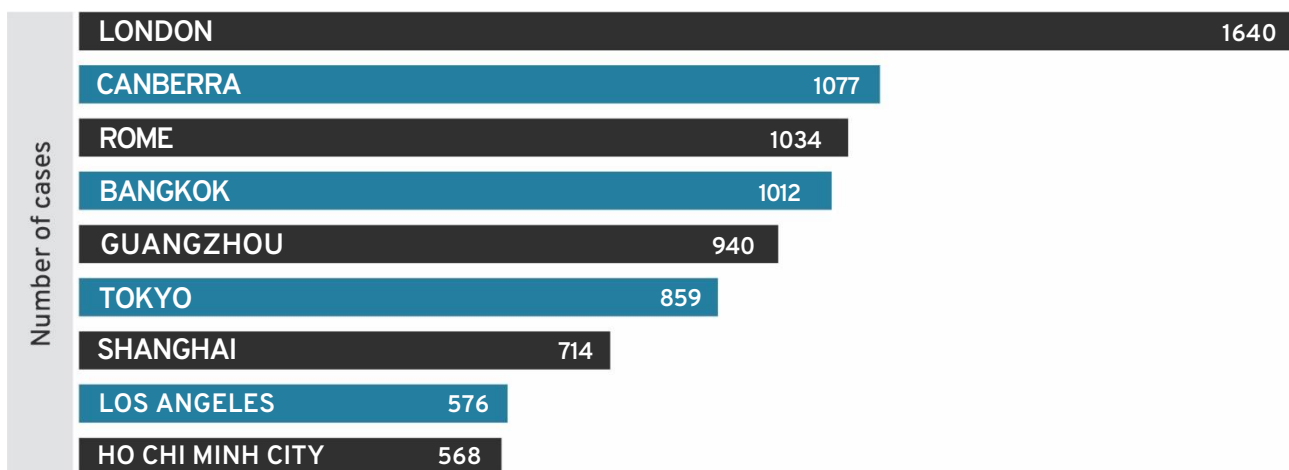
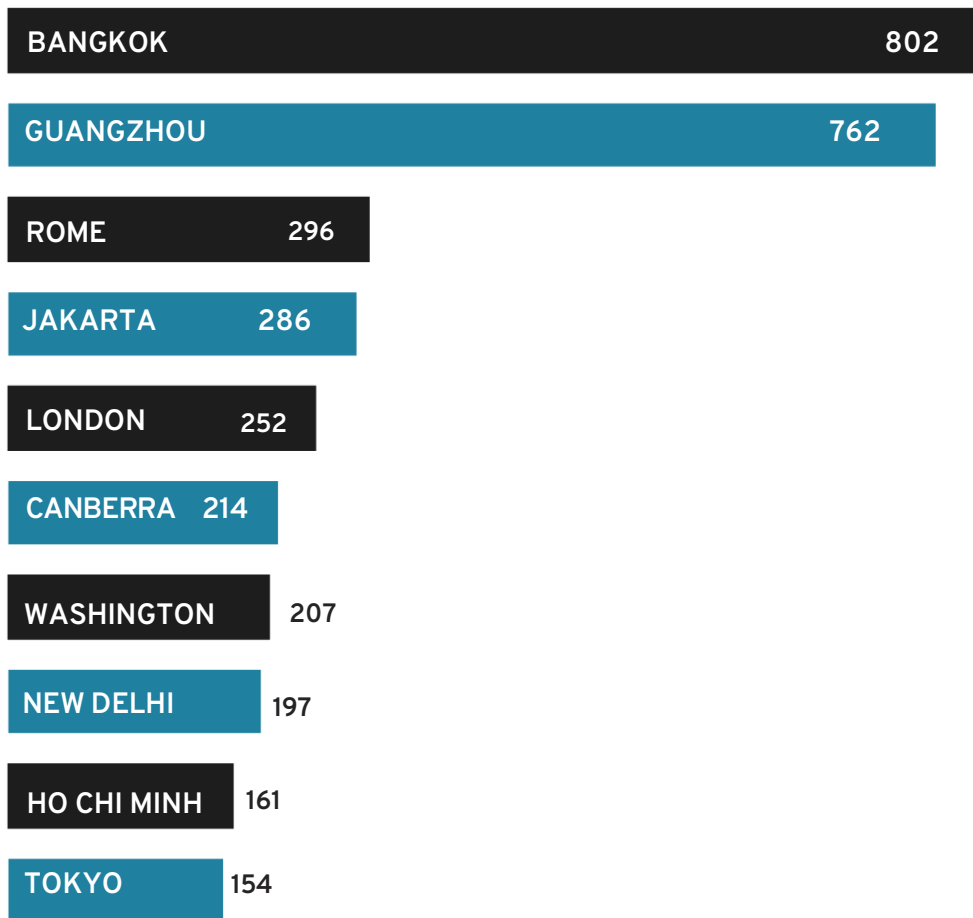


Photo: Felipe Schiarolli on Unsplash



# Time spent on consular cases



## Hours spent by case type



LAW INFRINGEMENT  
1916 HOURS



FINANCIAL DISTRESS  
1204 HOURS



BEREAVEMENT  
791 HOURS



LOST PROPERTY  
586 HOURS



MEDICAL  
522 HOURS



LOCAL IMMIGRATION  
DIFFICULTIES  
362 HOURS



VICTIMS OF CRIME  
421 HOURS



PERSONAL SAFETY  
CONCERNS  
277 HOURS



MENTAL WELL-BEING  
256 HOURS



CIVIL UNREST  
167 HOURS



## HOW TO FIND US

Our consular staff in Wellington and around the world provide consular advice and assistance to New Zealanders 24/7.



### If you are in need of consular assistance, you can contact us:

- At one of our posts: [www.mfat.govt.nz/embassies](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/embassies) or by searching for the country you are travelling here: [www.safetravel.govt.nz](http://www.safetravel.govt.nz)
- 24/7 emergency consular assistance: 0800 30 10 30 (within New Zealand) or +64 99 20 20 20 (outside New Zealand)
- By emailing [cons@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:cons@mfat.govt.nz)
- On Facebook [www.facebook.com/SafeTravel.govt.nz](https://www.facebook.com/SafeTravel.govt.nz)



## PRIVACY

We value the privacy of people we give consular advice and assistance to. Any personal information provided to the Ministry is protected by law, including the Privacy Act 2020. Information we have received is only used for the provision of consular services. We may need to share the information we hold with other New Zealand and host government agencies or service providers, such as hospitals, for the purpose of providing consular services to you or as required by law.

If we need to share the information for reasons other than providing consular services to you, we will only do so in accordance with law or with your consent.





**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

