



[REDACTED]

Tēnā Koe [REDACTED]

On 20 May 2019 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Any communications between the Ministry including any of its units, or an agent of the Ministry, and the NZ Police regarding MSD interactions with the Muslim community in terms of any concerns about any security or crime or social disruption, for the period start of 2017 to March 14, 2019*
- *A list of any reports or memos or advisories or communications between the Ministry including any of its units, or an agent of the Ministry, and the NZ Police regarding MSD interactions with the Muslim community in terms of any concerns about any security or crime or social disruption, for the period start of March 15, 2019, to May 20, 2019.*

The Ministry of Social Development engages with Police on matters ranging from individual client matters and local community initiatives to national strategic work programmes. Engagement between the Ministry and Police, such as face to face engagements and meetings occur between the Ministry and the Police at national, local and regional levels around a range of topics, for example, family violence and wider social issues. Frequency of engagement is based on the topic of discussion or issue and can range from daily through to weekly, monthly or quarterly communication. It is possible that concerns specifically relating to Muslim communities could have been raised at any point of engagement.

With regards to concerns about any security or crime or social disruption relating to the Muslim community specifically, engagements with the Police usually focus on community or social issues and are generally not specific to a religious denomination. The number of interactions which occur through the Ministry's engagement with Police means the Ministry is unable to accurately identify which of these engagements may relate to the Muslim community and concerns regarding security, social disruption and crime.

In order to provide the information you have requested, the Ministry would need to identify all communications and documentation across the Ministry both nationally and regionally from all Ministry staff that have engaged with Police in the two-year period. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act as it would require substantial manual collation to locate and prepare all information within scope of your request. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

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I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

Please note that if the Ministry were able to provide information in scope, most if not all documents relating to security, crime or social disruption would likely be withheld under section 6(c) of the Official Information Act, as making that information available would be likely to prejudice the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation and detection of offences.

In order to meet the intent of your request, below is a summary of the types of work the Ministry undertakes with the Police and Muslim communities.

Over the years, the Ministry has built strong relationships with many communities throughout New Zealand. When the Police have concerns about youth at risk, family violence or other social issues, they may notify the Ministry in order for the Ministry to provide appropriate wrap around support to the individual, young people, families and/or wider community where the issues maybe occurring.

For example, the Te Roopu Mana Manaaki team within Service Delivery work with iwi, hapu, former refugee and migrant communities all over New Zealand. This work primarily focuses on prevention of family violence, social issues and other minor crime through community action and support. In particular, the Ministry facilitates community action which includes mentoring young people, growing leadership of women and girls, and parenting support. It is important to note that the community action is led and implemented by the community and where appropriate is supported by the Ministry.

Since 15 March 2019 the Ministry has worked closely with the Muslim community, Victims Support, Christchurch City Council and other Government agencies, including Police to implement the Christchurch Recovery Plan. The Ministry is an active member of the Christchurch Chief Executives Group which provides leadership support for the implementation of the recovery plan. We have also partnered with groups from the Muslim community to ensure victims, their families and the community receive appropriate social supports in accordance with the recovery plan. This has included supporting the development of relationships with key community representatives and local Ministry staff and officials from other key agencies. The Ministry is currently ensuring our response, which focuses on the provision of welfare and case management support meets the needs of the individuals, families and the community directly affected by the attack in a manner that is culturally appropriate and effective.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and

- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Viv Rickard', is written over a large, hand-drawn circular scribble.

Viv Rickard
Deputy Chief Executive, Service Delivery