



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

**25 AUG 2020**

Dear

On 7 July 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Information which clarifies how many new employees have been hired at the Ministry of Social Development in the Service Delivery and Policy group since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic period and lockdown (26<sup>th</sup> March 2020) until now (6<sup>th</sup> July 2020).*
- *This number should include employees across both MSD's service centres and its National Office.*
- *This number should include new employees hired to cover secondments as well as new hires.*
- *This number should also include contractors hired during this period.*
- *Please provide a breakdown for each category of employees hired during this period per location or service centre where possible.*

On 31 July 2020, the Ministry notified you that your request was being granted, however, further time was required to prepare the information for release.

The Ministry's Service Delivery group works together to make a difference in the lives of New Zealanders. Whether that's helping someone get sorted financially so they can study, supporting someone into work, ensuring support is there for someone who can't work, helping out a senior by granting their entitlement to New Zealand Superannuation, or giving New Zealanders confidence that the system they fund is being used by people in genuine need. Being the biggest group in the Ministry, Service Delivery is made up of the following areas: Work and Income, StudyLink and Senior Services. More information about Service Delivery can be found on the Ministry's website: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/about-msd/our-structure/service-delivery.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/about-msd/our-structure/service-delivery.html).

The Ministry's Policy group provides policy advice on welfare system change and wider social development, as well as other areas including: income, employment and housing support; regional working; issues faced by seniors and people with a disability; child and youth-related policy; and international policy. The team works with other groups across MSD, especially Service Delivery, and with partner agencies in the social and economic sectors. More information about Policy can be found on the Ministry's website: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/about-msd/our-structure/policy.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/about-msd/our-structure/policy.html).

The date range you specified is 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020. It is important to note that the hiring data for Service Delivery and Policy during this period includes recruitment activity that may have started before 26 March 2020 and resulted in the staff member starting their role on or after 26 March 2020. The data excludes any recruitment activity that was initiated during this period but was not completed.

The numbers in the tables attached include all "hire events." There is no distinction made between those hired that might be considered "business as usual" (i.e. to address attrition) and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.

This response separately addresses Service Delivery recruitment and Policy recruitment.

### **Service Delivery**

The economic impact of COVID-19 has meant a heightened need for financial support from New Zealanders who have lost jobs or had income reduced. As provided by Budget 2020, the Ministry has invested \$250 million in an additional 807 FTEs (full time equivalent), of which, 666 will be frontline staff. You will note the significant increase in the tables provided in new hires across April, May, June and July 2020. This is because the Ministry brought on staff to meet the increased demand in services.

The FTEs have played an integral role in supporting New Zealanders who apply for Jobseeker Support, many for the first time, or other financial assistance such as the Wage Subsidy and the Income Relief Payment. The investment the Ministry has made in employment also includes regional support to employers, ensuring opportunities to place people into employment are maximised.

From 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, the Ministry's Service Delivery team had 245 internal hires, 548 new hires and 40 rehires.

In order to provide a further breakdown of this data, including the month the staff members were hired and where they were hired, the following four tables are attached in Appendix One:

- **Table One:** The number of Service Delivery staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by hire event reason
- **Table Two:** The number of Service Delivery staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by employee type
- **Table Three:** The number of new Service Delivery service centre staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by regional location of the service centre
- **Table Four:** The number of new Service Delivery staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by regional geographic boundary

Please note, the hiring data in the Ministry's service centres in Table Three is broken down by Work and Income's regional locations. These are the regions that the

Service Centres are located in, as explained on the Ministry's website: [www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/find-a-service-centre/](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/contact-us/find-a-service-centre/).

You will note in Table One there is a column titled 'COVID-19 Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) approved'. The 84 people included in this category were originally fixed term employees for the Ministry. However, as a result of the increased demand for Service Delivery staff, the Ministry's DCE of Service Delivery directly converted their employment from fixed term to permanent. By doing this, the Ministry was able to secure permanent resources that had already been recruited and vetted during a time of uncertainty.

### **Policy**

From 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, the Ministry's Policy team had 14 internal hires, four new hires and one rehire.

The number of internal new hires noted above includes 11 fixed term positions converted into permanent positions in the Enabling Good Lives (EGL) demonstration team based in Waikato, working on support for disabled people.

In order to provide a further breakdown of this data, including the month the staff members were hired and where they were hired, the following two tables are attached in Appendix Two:

- **Table Five:** The number of new Policy staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by hire event reason
- **Table Six:** The number of new Policy staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by employee type

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. 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the number of staff members hired by the Ministry's Service Delivery and Policy teams, 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](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bridget Saunders', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bridget Saunders  
**Manager, Issue Resolution  
Service Delivery**

## **Appendix One**

**Table One: The number of new Service Delivery staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by hire event reason**

<b>COVID-19 – Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) approved</b>	<b>Internal New Hire</b>	<b>New Hire</b>	<b>Rehire</b>	<b>Total</b>
84	245	548	40	<b>917</b>

**Notes:**

- 'Hire event reasons' are identified via the following reasons: New Hire, Internal New Hire, Rehire.
- 'COVID-19 – DCE approved' are fixed term to permanent "direct conversions" which previously would have been through a recruitment process.
- The numbers attached include all hire events - there is no distinction made here between those that might be considered "business as usual" and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.

**Table Two: The number of new Service Delivery staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by employee type**

<b>Contractors</b>	<b>Fixed Term</b>	<b>Permanent</b>	<b>Total</b>
5	299	613	<b>917</b>

**Notes:**

- 'Contractor' is simply an Employee Type that is NOT a permanent or fixed term employee, or casual. Sometimes it includes people who only require access to Ministry systems, or are attached to vendors of Ministry systems, as well as people who have specific contracts for service.
- The numbers attached include all hire events - there is no distinction made here between those that might be considered "business as usual" and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.

**Table Three: The number of new Service Delivery service centre staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by regional location of the service centre**

<b>Service Centre Region</b>	<b>Total</b>
Auckland	45
Bay of Plenty	11
Canterbury	9
Central	20
East Coast	11
Nelson, Marlborough and West Coast	3
Northland	27
Southern	14
Taranaki, King County and Whanganui	15
Waikato	15
Wellington	11

**Notes:**

- The 'Service Centre Region' is defined as the region where the Service Centre is located according to Work and Income's website.
- The numbers attached include all hire events - there is no distinction made here between those that might be considered "business as usual" and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.

**Table Four: The number of new Service Delivery staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by regional geographic boundary**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total</b>
Auckland	188
Bay of Plenty	10
Canterbury	86
Gisborne	2
Hawke's Bay	8
Manawatu	84
Nelson	8
Northland	34
Otago	5
Southland	3
Taranaki	10
Waikato	87
Wellington	211
<b>Total</b>	<b>736</b>

**Notes:**

- This data includes staff that were hired in the Ministry's centralised processing units, regional offices and the National Office.
- The numbers attached include all hire events - there is no distinction made here between those that might be considered "business as usual" and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.

## **Appendix Two**

**Table Five: The number of new Policy staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by hire event reason**

<b>Internal New Hire</b>	<b>New Hire</b>	<b>Rehire</b>	<b>Total</b>
14	4	1	<b>19</b>

**Notes:**

- 'Hire event reasons' are identified via the following reasons: New Hire, Internal New Hire, Rehire.
- The numbers attached include all hire events - there is no distinction made here between those that might be considered "business as usual" and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.

**Table Six: The number of new Policy staff members hired by the Ministry from 26 March 2020 to 6 July 2020, broken down by employee type**

<b>Contractors</b>	<b>Fixed Term</b>	<b>Permanent</b>	<b>Total</b>
3	1	15	<b>19</b>

**Notes:**

- 'Contractor' is simply an Employee Type that is NOT a permanent or fixed term employee, or casual. Sometimes it includes people who only require access to Ministry systems, or are attached to vendors of Ministry systems, as well as people who have specific contracts for service.
- The numbers attached include all hire events - there is no distinction made here between those that might be considered "business as usual" and those that were hired specifically or directly as a result of the COVID-19 response or related requirements.