



31 AUG 2020

Dear

On 8 July 2020, the Office of the Minister for Social Development, Hon Carmel Sepuloni, received the following Official Information Act (1982) request transferred from the Office of the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon Jacinda Ardern:

- *How many people who were receiving an unemployed benefit before Covid-19 changed the country are retraining for new employment roles?*
- *News reports show those who became unemployed due to Covid-19 making the effort. What about those who were already unemployed?*
- *Also, what are the political parties doing to ensure everyone is making an effort?*

On 9 July 2020, the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) was advised of the intent to transfer of the following question:

- *How many people who were receiving an unemployed benefit before Covid-19 changed the country are retraining for new employment roles?*

In response to your question, the Ministry has provided **Table One** attached.

**Table One** shows the number of participation 'starts' in contracted training programmes broken down by those who were and were not on a main benefit before 1 March 2020, for each month from March 2020 to June 2020.

Please note in **Table One**, that those 'who have not been granted a main benefit before 1 March 2020' include those with a benefit granted before this date, and those not on a main benefit but on other assistance such as Accommodation Supplement or COVID-19 Income Relief Payments, and other forms of assistance, and who have been granted access to a contracted training programme under special circumstances.

For your interest, and to provide context, the Ministry has also attached **Table Two**.

**Table Two** shows the number of participation 'starts' in training programmes over the period 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2020, compared with the same period last year, broken down by month.

Please note that the Ministry contracted training providers experienced the challenges of COVID-19 Alert Level restrictions and these restrictions have impacted the uptake in enrolments over the timeframe provided.

The Ministry is not able to differentiate between those who required assistance from the Ministry during the COVID-19 Pandemic and those who required assistance because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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 clients in contracted training programmes before and after 1 March 2020, 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



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

**Table One: The number of participation 'starts' in contracted training programmes broken down by those who were and were not on a Main Benefit before 1 March 2020, for each month from March 2020 to June 2020.**

	Number of people who have been granted a Main Benefit since 1 March 2020	Number of people who have not been granted a Main Benefit since 1 March 2020	Total
<b>March 2020</b>	214	1,809	2,023
<b>April 2020</b>	82	313	395
<b>May 2020</b>	445	701	1,146
<b>June 2020</b>	460	682	1,142
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,201</b>	<b>3,505</b>	<b>4,706</b>

**Table Two: The number of participation 'starts' in training programmes over the period 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2020, compared with the same period last year, broken down by month.**

	Number of participants in 2019	Number of participants in 2020
<b>March</b>	2,613	2,023
<b>April</b>	2,593	395
<b>May</b>	3,091	1,146
<b>June</b>	2,552	1,142
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,849</b>	<b>4,706</b>

**Notes for Table One and Table Two:**

- The above figures are a count of 'starts' in contracted training programmes and not clients/individuals. Some clients may have been counted more than once, as they are enrolled in more than one programme.
- The number of people in a contracted training programme who have not been granted a main benefit since 1 March 2020 include those with benefits granted before this date, those in receipt of assistance but not on a main benefit, and those not on a benefit, but due to special circumstances are still enrolled in these programmes.
- This information includes Contracted training programmes as recorded under the Multi-Category Appropriation (MCA) Employment and Work Readiness categories.
  - o Programmes in the MCA employment include: Employment Placement or Assistance Initiative, Skills for Industry, Training for Work, and Mana in Mahi.
  - o Programmes in the MCA Work Readiness category include: Work Preparation Services, Information Services Initiative, and Work Confidence.