



08 MAY 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

On 26 February 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *The number of families who are currently living in transitional or emergency accommodation in Invercargill;*
- *The names of the emergency accommodation providers in Invercargill*

The Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) is available to people who cannot remain in their usual place or residence, if any, and do not have access to other accommodation which is adequate for them or their family's needs. The Ministry pays EH SNGs directly to the accommodation supplier and assistance is generally granted for up to seven nights but can be extended dependant on individual circumstances.

After these seven nights, the Ministry arranges another appointment with the client to discuss their housing situation and if another grant is required. The Ministry works hard to support people in emergency housing to secure a long-term housing solution, either through public housing and private rental accommodation. Other options including transitional housing can also be explored as an option depending on availability and the individual's circumstances.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution or the solution that we want to deliver for people who are potentially in a vulnerable situation. They provide a short-term solution while more sustainable options are progressed. More information about EH SNGs is available at the following link: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/emergency-housing.html.

On 27 February 2020, the Ministry provided you with a link to a Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) document which shows the numbers of Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants and Transitional Housing places in Invercargill. You accepted this information as a response to the first part of your request (number of families who are currently living in transitional or emergency accommodation in Invercargill).

Please note, the number of families in transitional or emergency accommodation may differ from the number of grants as one family may receive multiple grants.

For your convenience, please find the link again below:

www.hud.govt.nz/assets/Community-and-Public-Housing/Follow-our-progress/December-2019/46ab43c333/Regional-Housing-factsheets-December-2019-Southern.pdf

Regarding the second part of your request, please find a table containing names of Emergency Housing Suppliers that received EH SNG from the Invercargill Community Link between 1 October 2019 and 31 December 2019 below.

Emergency Housing Suppliers in Invercargill between 1 October 2019 and 31 December 2019

Registered name
45 AVENAL MOTEL
AMBLE ON INN
ASHLAR MOTEL
BEACH ROAD HOLIDAY PARK
BOARDING ON DEE
CENTRAL CITY CAMPING PARK
CUMBERLAND MOTEL
GARDEN GROVE MOTEL
GORE MOTOR CAMP
INVERCARGILL APARTMENT HOTEL (IAH)
INVERCARGILL I-SITE VISITOR CENTRE
LOVETT LODGE
MONARCH MOTEL
SOUTHERN STYLE ADVENTURES LTD *VEHICLE RENTALS*
STRATHVALE INVESTMENTS
THE COACHMAN INN
WHITEHOUSE HOTEL

It is important to note the limitations of compiling a list of Emergency Housing Suppliers in Invercargill based on EH SNG by the Invercargill Community Link. In some instances, an EH SNG may have been granted by the Invercargill Community Link to a supplier outside of Invercargill. Furthermore, a client from another Service Centre may have been granted an EH SNG for a supplier in Invercargill. This list may therefore exclude some Emergency Housing Suppliers or include some additional suppliers that are not located in Invercargill. In order for the Ministry to accurately provide this list, staff would have to look into individual client files for every Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant that was granted to confirm the location of each supplier.

As such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act to the extent that it asks for all Emergency Housing Suppliers in Invercargill. A full list cannot be provided for the reasons referred to above. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

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. 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.

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the names of the emergency accommodation providers in Invercargill, 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

PP 

Karen Hocking
General Manager, Housing