



16 SEP 2021

Dear

On 17 August 2021, you emailed the Office of Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development and Employment (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following reports of the Ministry of Social Developments (the Ministry) website:

- *REP/21/6/665 - Aide memoire - Wellington City Mission - Opening of new Transitional Housing, dated 29 June 2021*
- *REP/21/6/683 - Aide memoire - 2021 RSE Conference, dated 30 June 2021.*

On 19 August 2021, the Minister's office transferred your request under section 14 of the Act to the Ministry to respond.

Please see enclosed, the following two papers requested.

You will also note that the names of some individuals are withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act in order to protect the privacy of natural persons. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs any public interest in this information.

As you excluded Ministry staff names from the scope of your request, these have been redacted as 'out of scope'.

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
- 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 and attachments 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 these two papers, 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 'Magnus O'Neill', written in a cursive style.

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Aide-mémoire



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Meeting

Date: 23 June 2021 **Security Level:** IN CONFIDENCE
For: Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development and
Employment
File Reference: REP/21/6/665

Wellington City Mission - Opening of new Transitional Housing

Visit details	Tuesday 29 June, 9.00am – 10.00am 58 Tory Street, Te Aro, Wellington
Expected attendees	Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Grant Robertson Minister of Housing, Hon Dr Megan Woods Associate Minister of Housing (Public Housing) Hon Poto Williams Associate Minister of Housing (Homelessness) Hon Marama Davidson Mayors Andrew Foster (Wellington City), Campbell Barry (Lower Hutt), Anita Baker (Porirua), Wayne Guppy (Upper Hutt), and K (Guru) Gurunathan (Kapiti Coast) Paul Eagle MP Nicola Willis MP
Visit purpose	You will be attending the building opening of new Transitional Housing facility, Te Pā Pori. The facility is managed by Wellington City Mission (WCM) and will cater for up to 100 residents. The event will include a tour of the facility as well as a morning tea. The aim of the event is to celebrate this initiative as well as the partnership between the WCM and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. We understand media have been invited and may ask questions.
MSD Transitional Housing	The Wellington City Mission (Anglican) Trust Board has contracted funding for Transitional Housing Accommodation and Support Services through HUD \$3,022,000 for 15 April 2019 14 April 2022.

The introduction of Te Pā Pori represents a considerable increase in housing support and transitional housing stock in Wellington City. It will house and support up to 100 residents and will act as a cornerstone for transitional housing in the city. Te Pā Pori will be the largest transitional housing facility outside of Auckland.

Wellington Region MSD and The City Mission

- MSD's Wellington regional team have a close working relationship with WCM staff at the operations level – especially Integrated Case Managers and emergency housing teams.
- WCM are proactive in placing our clients in long term accommodation, where referrals have been steady.
- MSD's housing assessment team respond to the WCM's requests for social housing assessments. MSD assign their requests to a specific case manager to ensure consistency of service and communications.
- MSD have an emergency housing case manager based at WCM Transitional Housing sites full time who works in partnership with WCM in supporting our clients to access their benefit and housing entitlements as well as supports in searching for housing and employment.
- Integrated Service Case Managers have been trained in public housing assessments.
- MSD are also connected to the City Mission's new social supermarket and regularly refer people to access the services they provide.
- MSD are part of the Strengthening Families Wellington Local Management Group (SFLMG). This group includes WCM, Wellington City Council, Kahungunu, Womens Refuge, Birthright Wellington, Skylight, MOE, Oranga Tamariki, Catholic Social Services, IRD, CCDHB, Taamanino Trust. We work together to build stronger communities and make it easier for families to get the services and supports they need.

Joint initiatives

- MSD have been running fortnightly clinics with The City Mission in Newtown for the last two years (at the service centre or at WCM site). Together the organisations work through complex cases These vary in volume and degree of assistance needed. In the last months these have had more of a focus on housing needs. (Note: This clinic was temporarily paused during Covid)
- MSD's Assistant Housing Manager also regularly visits the WCM Petone Centre (Britannia). MSD and WCM are discussing potential support options post-Covid.
- MSD have been looking at how the Regional Housing team can support WCM's new transitional housing accommodation they're taking up at 70 Tory Street.
- Through this partnership MSD has engaged with WCM, offering support for identifying and securing new employees. MSD have

also been working with them to give mutual clients access to MSD services and support such as flexi-wage, access to work brokers, other employment programs and training courses to upskill. MSD's employment team have been engaging proactively with the team of WCM and have a presentation scheduled to go through the various support and services we offer our clients so we can work in partnership for employment. There is a major focus on a whole of service approach (income, housing and employment)

- MSD are also working with WCM and HUD on their transition to Tory Street from their current location – the Setup on Manners Street. The City Mission have people in transitional housing at the Setup who will be moving to the new Tory Street complex. MSD have emergency housing in the Setup and want to ensure clients move into a supported environment and make it a smooth transition.
- MSD have also been connecting with WCM on a new role we created - Kaitiaki for Emergency Housing. The local Service Centre Manager has been in this role for a few months now working directly with providers, navigators, moteliers. She coordinates feedback and any potential issues from our clients to help respond quickly and ensure people are getting the support they need.
- MSD also works closely with WCM (and Downtown Community Ministry) on our Wellington Wellbeing Continuity Pilot. This supports prisoners being released into the Wellington region.

Some recent success stories with the City Mission

- Te Pā Port: During lockdown MSD worked with WCM, moving clients who were either rough sleeping or using the night-by-night accommodation at the shelter which was not suitable for self-isolation. MSD quickly organised for the Night Shelter to provide transitional housing - 57 rooms. Through MSD and WCM relationships this was able to set this up in two weeks. MSD worked with WCM to provide wrap around support and staffing for this property to help people safely self-isolate.
- The MSD/WCM clinics are making a significant difference: Through the clinics we met a young man who had been rough sleeping. He previously did not want to engage with anyone. At our meeting we discussed the support he could get through our transitional housing contract at Britannia run by WCM in Petone. We walked him through the process to put his mind at ease and reassured him of the ongoing support available to help him succeed. The young man was accepted into the programme and is now in housing and has been for two years now. He is also working with WCM as a mentor, supporting others who are going through similar situations, tough times.

Author: Out of Scope, Advisor, Issue Resolution

Responsible manager: Bridget Saunders, Manager, Issue Resolution

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

Aide-mémoire



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

Meeting

Date: 29 June 2021 **Security Level:** IN CONFIDENCE

For: Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development and
Employment

File Reference: REP/21/6/683

2021 RSE Conference

Event/visit details Thursday 1 July 2021 from 11.00 – 11.30am
Rutherford Hotel, 27 Nile Street, Nelson

Conference Host **Mike Chapman**, Former Chief Executive, Horticulture New
Zealand

[REDACTED]

The Conference is hosted by Horticulture NZ and Mike Chapman is the MC for the event.

MSD Host **Craig Churchill**, Regional Commissioner for Nelson, Ministry
of Social Development

Other conference attendees Hon Kris Faafoi, Minister of Justice, Minister for Broadcasting
and Media, and Minister of Immigration

High Commissioners and representatives from RSE partner
nations

Officials from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

Officials from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and
Employment (MBIE)

Officials from the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI)

Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)

Growers, contractors and packers from the horticulture and
viticulture industries

Representatives from New Zealand Apples and Pears (NZAPI) Horticulture New Zealand – Ahumāra Kai Aotearoa (HortNZ), New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI) and Summerfruit New Zealand

Nadine Tunley – Chief Executive, HortNZ

Barry O’Neil – President, HortNZ

Kate Hellstrom – Chief Executive, Summerfruit NZ

Colin Bond – Chief Executive, New Zealand Kiwifruit Growers Incorporated (NZKGI)

Purpose of meeting/visit

You have been invited to provide a formal 30-minute speech at the 2021 RSE Conference.

This includes time for Q&A. The time allocated for your speech and Q&A is 11.00 – 11.30am on Thursday 1 July.

Speech notes have been provided for you alongside this briefing.

Background

The theme of the 2021 RSE Conference is “The Post-Covid Future”

This year’s theme will address the changes to the way the RSE scheme has been operating due to Covid-19 and how we can plan for the future of the RSE scheme.

The 2021 theme is important as we need to ensure the RSE scheme is resilient and sustainable in the Covid-19 environment and in the future, with the right focus on supporting New Zealanders into the horticulture and viticulture sectors.

An RSE conference was not held last year due to Covid-19. The RSE scheme has undergone a number of operational changes due to Covid-19, including a significant reduction in the numbers of RSE workers travelling through the border under border exceptions.

The 2021 RSE Conference will focus on how the RSE scheme can become more resilient in the Covid-19 environment and in the future. Sessions at the conference include:

- RSE in the Covid-19 environment – challenges and solutions;
- The future of the RSE scheme from an industry perspective;
- MSD’s programmes that get New Zealanders into seasonal work;
- The impact of immigration changes and border restrictions on the RSE system; and
- The impact of Covid-19 in the Pacific.

The purpose of the conference is to reinforce the importance of increasing the domestic workforce and investing in workforce

planning to meet current and project labour supply needs. The conference will also cover how immigration settings and the border closure have impacted the RSE scheme.

There will be a wide range of industry bodies attending with HortNZ leading the conference.

Industry leaders from NZ Apples & Pears, Summerfruit New Zealand, NZ Kiwifruit Growers, NZ Wine, and Ethical Employers will be attending the conference.

HortNZ is hosting this year's conference, with their priority being creating an enduring environment where growers thrive. They advocate and represent the interests of New Zealand's 6,000 commercial fruit and vegetable growers. In 2019, the New Zealand horticulture industry was valued at \$6.4 billion. The horticulture industry sees 60,000 people employed with HortNZ having 6,000 growers in New Zealand.

The Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) will maintain last year's cap.

Introduced in 2007, the RSE scheme allows New Zealand horticulture and viticulture employers to recruit workers from the Pacific when there are insufficient New Zealand workers.

Cabinet previously confirmed that the RSE scheme is to remain in place. Pre Covid-19, the annual RSE cap was set at 14,400 however due to border closures, this cap has not been fully used up.

Unless employers can show they have pre-established relationships with workers from other countries, they may only recruit workers under RSE policy from certain Pacific Islands including Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. People employed under the RSE policy may stay in New Zealand for up to seven months during any 11-month period.

Border exceptions have been granted for two cohorts of RSE workers.

The RSE border exception agreed in November 2020 allowed 2,011 experienced seasonal workers from the Pacific to travel to New Zealand to address labour shortages in the horticulture and wine growing sectors.

Around 300 RSE workers will continue to arrive every month from June totalling to around 2400 arriving by March 2022.

The Government has a continued commitment to increase support for New Zealanders to work in seasonal jobs and a real effort is being made to get as many jobseekers as possible to work in the horticulture and wine growing sectors.

As a condition of the latest RSE border exception, RSE employers are required to report back to the Government on

the workforce development plans, and actions intended to attract more New Zealanders into the sector.

MSD and MBIE are currently undertaking a RSE Policy Review.

The RSE Policy Review will look at what changes might be needed to the scheme to ensure it is fair, transparent and has a good focus on the recruitment of New Zealand workers. One element of the review will examine how the allocation of RSE workers can be done in a fair and equitable way, balancing industry needs with the right incentives to recruit and train New Zealanders. MBIE has begun consultation with industry on the Review. The Review will also examine what components of the system can be strengthened to increase accountability of employers to recruit, train and upskill New Zealanders, reduce transport and accommodation barriers and create greater equity of employment conditions between RSE workers and New Zealanders.

Other advice currently being prepared by MBIE

We understand Cabinet papers are being prepared for 7 July on proposals for Quarantine Free travel for RSE workers coming in from the Pacific (already granted a border exception) and proposals for extending visas for onshore migrants for up to three years. We will provide you with advice on these proposals prior to the Cabinet meeting.

Supporting New Zealanders into seasonal jobs

Border closures have caused disruption to labour supply for the horticulture and viticulture industries. The industry has had to manage a significant reduction in the number of RSE workers coming through the border.

This has provided us with the opportunity to think innovatively as to how we can place more New Zealanders into seasonal work. Supporting New Zealanders into long-term sustainable employment is a top priority for this Government.

The horticulture and viticulture sectors are expecting strong growth over the next few years, and it is now a critical time to develop our domestic labour supply and ensure there are good pathways for New Zealanders to upskill and gain better sustainable employment opportunities.

This comes with labour market challenges. The industry needs to be prepared to recruit, train, and upskill New Zealanders for roles in seasonal employment. There needs to be incentives on the industry to pay New Zealanders the same as migrant workers, inclusive of RSE workers.

The barriers that New Zealanders face when entering into seasonal work need to be addressed, including improved work and pay conditions, providing transport, training,

accommodation and pastoral care to support more New Zealanders into the horticulture and viticulture industry.

**MSD
Seasonal/National
Initiatives**

MSD has implemented a number of initiatives in partnership with the horticulture and viticulture industries to increase the number of New Zealanders undertaking seasonal work.

New Zealand Seasonal Work Scheme (NZSWS)

NZSWS supports people who want to take up seasonal horticulture or viticulture work of 6 weeks or more and require support. The Seasonal Work Scheme is made up of three types of support, and someone can receive more than one type depending on their situation. It includes supporting New Zealanders to relocate to a seasonal region, along with accommodation payments, payments for gear or equipment required for the role, daily transport costs and an incentive payment (for work of 6 weeks or longer).

Since the scheme was relaunched in November 2020 over 500 New Zealanders have received assistance under the scheme to take up seasonal work. MSD has also expanded eligibility for transport assistance under the NZSWS, which allows for more locals to take up seasonal work.

Seasonal Work Assistance Payment (SWAP)

SWAP provides financial assistance for seasonal workers who are no longer getting a benefit and have lost wages because of work missed due to bad weather. Someone may receive Seasonal Work Assistance if:

- they stopped getting a benefit within the last 26 weeks to go into seasonal horticultural work;
- have lost wages because they could not work due to bad weather; and
- are a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.

For the 2021 Financial Year 1736 grants have been paid totalling \$451,507. For the 2020 Financial Year 845 grants have been paid totalling \$140,558. For 2021, the highest user of the scheme was the Bay of Plenty region with 980 grants, followed by Northland (320 grants) and East Coast (232) grants.

MSD is currently reviewing the NZSWS and the SWAP.

Work the Seasons website

MSD also supports the Work the Seasons website which connects New Zealand jobseekers with seasonal employers and accommodation options across New Zealand.

**MSD Regional
Initiatives**

MSD has made significant investment in our regions to support more New Zealanders into work.

Nelson-Tasman region

The Pick Nelson Tasman initiative is a collaboration between industry, MSD, Government and Project Kōkiri to entice workers to Nelson-Tasman for the upcoming horticultural harvest. The campaign aimed to create awareness and interest in seasonal horticultural jobs, and a way that the NZSWS could be promoted and offered to a large number of jobseekers.

Pick Your Path is an interactive online tool designed and launched by MSD's Nelson regional team. Pick Your Path showcases potential employment pathways across industries and regions. This tool allows users to plan work and training across a calendar year in Nelson-Tasman, Marlborough and the West Coast. Jobseekers can use this tool to look at industry profiles, task descriptions and contacts all in one place. This is an innovative approach to attracting New Zealanders to primary industries and connecting them to the right people.

Southern region

MSD's Southern regional team sits on a working group with representatives from Summerfruit NZ, MPI, HortNZ and Central Otago District Council and plan for peak season labour shortages and discuss issues and initiatives in the region. The group created a collective workforce plan and developed strategies to streamline the work done across agencies.

MSD's Southern team is working with HortNZ, local growers and the Central Otago District Council to launch a video campaign to highlight opportunities in horticulture and viticulture in Central Otago. This is part of a broader regional and national campaign that aims to promote the diverse range of career opportunities the industry has to offer.

Northland region

In Northland, MSD is partnering with Te Hiku Iwi on an initiative under the Te Hiku Iwi Crown Joint Work Programme to support whānau into sustainable employment. This partnership is supporting people in the Northland region who would face barriers to seasonal employment, through delivering training, pastoral care, and career support.

Bay of Plenty region

In the Bay of Plenty, MSD has piloted a training programme – Hanga Motuhake (make independent) to train jobseekers for winter pruning roles.

Author: Out of Scope, Graduate Policy Analyst, Employment Policy

Responsible manager: Megan Beecroft, Manager, Employment Policy

Appendix 1: Potential Questions and Answers – Speech at RSE Conference 2021

Q. What's MSD's plan to address seasonal labour shortages?

MSD is committed to placing more New Zealanders in employment, education, and training; and the New Zealand Seasonal Work Scheme (NZSWS) is an important part of that commitment. The NZSWS has supported more than 500 New Zealanders into seasonal roles since November 2020, providing financial support towards accommodation, transport costs, equipment costs, and pastoral care.

A key focus of this Government is to get more Kiwis into sustainable employment. The MSD initiatives support New Zealanders into employment in the horticulture and viticulture sectors and simultaneously addresses the seasonal labour shortages. These initiatives are active across the regions and works to promote the uptake of New Zealanders into the industry. An example of this is Pick Nelson Tasman which is a collaboration between industry, MSD, government, Project Kōkiri to attract workers to Nelson-Tasman for the upcoming horticultural harvest.

MSD's Nelson team have helped to develop "Pick Your Path" – an interactive online tool developed for the Top of the South region to show potential employment pathways across industries and regions. The tool allows jobseekers to see in one central hub, where seasonal peaks and troughs occur across industries in the region, allowing them to plan out continuous work or training over 12 months. I am proud that MSD is working hard to link jobseekers to job opportunities and training in the horticulture and viticulture sectors.

Q. What support specifically is available for unemployed New Zealanders?

MSD provides a range of support for Kiwis looking for seasonal jobs. The New Zealand Seasonal Work Scheme helps unemployed New Zealanders relocate and help with transport and training costs. The Seasonal Work Assistance Payment covers lost wages if it's wet and people can't work. There is also the \$5k to Work initiative, which helps with relocation costs for a job of more than 91 days. MSD's regionally led, contracted training programmes support industry or employers to take on jobseekers and give them the training and upskilling they need to be fit and ready for seasonal work.

MSD also offers programmes such as Mana in Mahi, the Apprenticeship Boost Initiative and Course Participation Assistance which employers can take advantage of to support their domestic workforce. MSD also offers support under the Flexi-Wage programme, which helps jobseekers get the skills they need to meet the requirements of a job.

Q. Is there anything in particular MSD staff are doing to try and attract New Zealanders into seasonal jobs?

MSD's regional teams are working hard to identify suitable job seekers for seasonal work. MSD has a broad understanding of the skills, abilities and availability of job seekers who can take on seasonal work.

MSD uses a range of communication channels to promote seasonal work, like digiboard screens in service centre, the Work the Seasons website and through

regular and ongoing engagement with employers across the key seasonal regions. MSD's teams support a number of campaigns, including recruitment drives and careers expos in regions across New Zealand to attract New Zealanders into seasonal roles and promote career pathways in the industry.

Q. What are MSD doing to ensure people are work ready? (e.g. showing up for the job, a positive attitude/faith in themselves)

MSD undertakes a lot of work to identify people who may be suitable to take up seasonal work. Some MSD regions undertake seminars to make sure jobseekers are aware of what seasonal work entails and what is expected of them.

MSD also partners with iwi to support rangatahi into seasonal work and provides support for pre-work fitness training and work experience.

MSD's industry partnerships team offers pre-employment training, in-work mentoring and pastoral care support. The pastoral care support has been successful in the pack houses in the Hawkes Bay Region.

Q. In regions with very low unemployment, can we have more RSE workers?

MBIE and MSD are currently undertaking a RSE Policy Review which I understand will look at changes that may need to be made to the scheme to ensure it is fair, transparent and has a good focus on the recruitment of New Zealand workers. One focus of this review is the allocation of RSE workers, which Government and industry will be given the opportunity to provide input.

In the review, MBIE and MSD will focus on ensuring that the RSE system strikes the right balance between supporting RSE workers and industry needs, with incentivising employers to take on New Zealanders.

I understand that MBIE has begun consultation with industry on the Review. The Review will also examine which components of the system can be strengthened to increase accountability of employers to recruit, train and upskill New Zealanders, reduce transport and accommodation barriers and create greater equity of employment conditions between RSE workers and New Zealanders.

Q. Would MSD consider continuing to pay the benefit for a few weeks while people are working as a real incentive to do the job?

As you are aware, last year I agreed to restart and enhance the New Zealand Seasonal Work Scheme, to encourage more New Zealanders into seasonal work.

Over 500 people have taken advantage of this. This included the addition of a \$1,000 incentive payment, along with accommodation, transport, and pastoral care support. The eligibility for transport assistance under the NZSWS has been widened, to allow more locals to get help travelling to and from work. I am aware that this change has made a big difference to New Zealanders who otherwise would have faced financial barriers paying for transport to and from work.

I am always interested in considering options to get more New Zealanders into seasonal work and I would be interested to hear from you more about how this could work.

Q. This year you allowed \$5K to Work to be used for Seasonal Work – Are you going to consider continuing this? (One Nelson grower featured on the news around a \$5K to Work story where the person left immediately after the receiving the \$5K)

MSD officials are currently undertaking a review of the seasonal work assistance that MSD provides. Part of this will include considering the relationship between seasonal work assistance and support provided through \$5K to Work.

After I receive that information, I will decide if \$5K to Work will continue to be provided for seasonal work.

Q. Where are the seasonal work opportunities in New Zealand?

The main regions for seasonal work are Northland, Bay of Plenty, East Coast (particularly the Hawkes Bay and Gisborne), Nelson (in Marlborough and Tasman) and Southern (in Central Otago).

List of MSD regional seasonal initiatives

Some of the initiatives that our regional staff employ to help increase the supply of labour include the following:

- Nudge messaging to MSD clients promoting seasonal work and the Work the Seasons website
- During the seasonal period we subsidise transport costs
- Hosting pruning and thinning workshops
- Provision of job share pack house programmes for sole parents
- Provision of job share programmes for people with ill health and disability
- Funding of forklift training
- Work brokerage and recruitment services for horticultural employers
- Provision and promotion of the Work the Seasons website
- Job advertisements on digital notice boards in service centres
- Print media, radio and social media advertising to raise awareness about seasonal jobs to a wide audience
- Active participation with the industry on various Labour Utilisation Groups
- Working with local iwi and employers on pre-employment training
- Work experience opportunities
- Gym + 5 programme to support young people to be work-ready for horticultural and viticultural jobs
- Regional recruitment campaigns, including the Pick Nelson-Tasman campaign and Pick Your Path website
- Support for industry workforce development strategies and plans
- MSD representation on industry working groups to plan for peak seasonal labour shortages Te Hiku iwi – MSD partnership with Te Hiku iwi in Northland to support rangatahi into seasonal work opportunities