



13 December 2022

Tēnā koe

On 26 October 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *How many young offenders have been directed to the LSV Scheme in the past year?*
- *How effective is the LSV Scheme in turning around their lives?*

The Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) programme is a free voluntary six-week residential training programme targeted at 18 to 24-year-olds who are not engaged in employment, education or training (NEETS). LSV is one of many work confidence programmes offered by the Ministry and is different in nature to youth justice programmes which young offenders might typically be referred to. In other words, there is no situation where someone would be directed to attend LSV.

The aim of the LSV programme is to help more young people to start employment or training by improving their self-discipline, self-confidence, motivation and initiative while onsite at a New Zealand Defence Force facility.

I will address each section of your request in turn.

- *How many young offenders have been directed to the LSV Scheme in the past year?*

As noted above, attendance at LSV is entirely voluntary and there is no situation where someone would be directed to attend. Young people who may have a history of offending may require special permission to attend the LSV scheme – for example, a supporting letter from their Probation Officer.

I am unable to provide you with this information as, if the Ministry holds information on whether LSV volunteers are young offenders, it would be held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information, Ministry staff would have to manually review a substantial number of files. As

such, I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Act. 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.

In the spirit of being helpful, the Ministry can confirm that the number of people who started the LSV programme from 1 November 2021 to 31 October 2022 was 447 young people.

- *How effective is the LSV Scheme in turning around their lives?*

The Ministry measures the effectiveness of LSV by comparing the outcomes of the LSV participants against a comparison group. The comparison group is made up of people who have similar characteristics at the time when participants started LSV. Using the Stats NZ Integrated Data Infrastructure, the Ministry assesses the effectiveness of LSV against the following outcomes: employment, income, justice, education and training, qualifications, and welfare.

For the most recent participant group we have results for (2016), we estimate that participating in LSV increases both the time in employment and total income, but also results in participants having lower qualifications than the comparison group. The results of this analysis is available in the Employment Assistance Evidence Catalogue at the following link: [https://ea.analytics.msd.govt.nz/?inputs\\_&page=%22intervention%22&prog=%22PI\\_55%22](https://ea.analytics.msd.govt.nz/?inputs_&page=%22intervention%22&prog=%22PI_55%22). The Ministry regularly updates this analysis, so the results outlined in the catalogue may change in the future.

Two of the Ministry's annual reports also provide an update on the LSV programme.

For the 2018 calendar year, 800 trainees began the LSV programme, 80 per cent of participants successfully completed the programme and 50% moved off benefit within 16 weeks of completion. More information is available, here: [www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2019/annual-report-2018-19.pdf](http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2019/annual-report-2018-19.pdf).

For 2019/2020 period 766 trainees began the LSV programme, 567 graduated and 301 have gone into employment, education or training. More information is available, here: [www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2019-2020/msd-2019-20-annual-report.pdf](http://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/corporate/annual-report/2019-2020/msd-2019-20-annual-report.pdf).

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

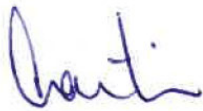
- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

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'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 LSV programme, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



Shane Carter  
**Director**  
**Partnership and Services**