



17 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 18 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting the following information:

Thanks for your response to my question about what is being done to ensure clients are able to contact work and income, however you have not listed a single thing being done to ensure clients are connected to MSD first call and instead have given me a very generally overview on how a contact centre works which I am aware of.

I'm interested to know the statistics of attempted calls turned away when the lines are over loaded. Everytime I personally have called it's not given the option for a call back due to the call volume exceeding staffing levels and I will have to call again and again until it eventually will tell me the time for waiting or to even give the call back request.

What I would like to know is what pragmatic and tangible solutions are being worked in to ensure this isn't a common theme for clients in vulnerable situations who rely on state assurance who are unable to make contact for whatever their situation may be. What work is being done to reduce call wait times of 80 min plus on a daily occurrence?

The Ministry's Correspondence Team will be responding to the above aspects of your request, with the exception of the following part, which will be considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I'm interested to know the statistics of attempted calls turned away when the lines are over loaded.

Our staff work hard to answer calls as quickly as possible, and we thank those who have experienced delays for their patience and understanding.

The Ministry's systems are unable to capture data concerning the times, dates and amount of callers that are unable to connect to the contact call centres because of peak calling times. I am therefore refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Act as the information you have requested is not

held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

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.

If you are not satisfied with this response, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



Geoff Cook
General Manager
Contact Centre and Digital Services