



16 January 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

On 27 November 2023, Auckland Transport transferred part of your request for information to the Ministry of Social Development. The part of your request which was transferred relates to the Community Service Card (CSC) and information regarding investments into the Community Connect.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find my decision on each part of your request set out separately below.

'The number of people eligible for Community Connect in your district, broken down by demographic if possible'

I refer you to **Table One** of **Appendix One** which shows the number of people with a CSC or CSC plus Super Gold combo card issued in Auckland Super City Territorial Authority area, broken down by ethnicity, age, and gender as at end of October 2023.

'...and the investment (if any) spent on enabling Community Connect to be realised in your district (i.e. technology changes, policy work, engagement and communications of the scheme) either spent from our council or provided by central Government'

Community Connect was an initiative aimed at making public transport more affordable for targeted groups. From 1 July 2023, Community Connect started to provide a 50 percent discount on public transport services for Community Services Card (CSC) holders. Community Connect is eligible for funding from the Climate Emergency Response Fund because it supports actions in Emissions Reduction Plan (ERP).

Community Connect provides a range of important societal, equity and environmental benefits, such as:

- Improving transport equity - people on a low income spend a greater proportion of their household budgets on transport than higher income earners. This creates equity and access issues. Reducing the price of public transport for lower income public transport users allows us to target price decreases in a fairer and more equitable way.
- Reducing congestion - by encouraging people to use public transport instead of private vehicles
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport - by supporting mode shift away from private vehicles to public transport. On a larger

scale, reduced emissions from having less cars on the road as a result of greater public transport use will reduce the health impacts that emissions cause. This will support the wider work of achieving a 41 percent reduction in transport emissions by 2035, as set out in the ERP.

- Improving health outcomes - greater use of public transport, and reduced emissions from having less cars on the road as a result, will reduce the health impacts that emissions cause
- Improving road safety - reduces the number of private vehicles on our roads, particularly around congested areas like schools (where there are many vulnerable road users).

A person with a CSC can apply for Community Connect through their local Public Transport Agency (PTA). As part of this application process, they must consent to providing the Ministry with the information they provided to their local PTA.

It was forecasted, for the initial budget, that the Ministry would need to design, develop, and test a new program interface to operationalise Community Connect. Once work had commenced on implementing the initiative nationwide it was determined that the Ministry's infrastructure that was built for an earlier Community Connect pilot, undertaken with Auckland Transport, would be adequate. This resulted in an underspend for the initiative.

Please see **Table Two** of **Appendix One** which provides a breakdown of the Ministry's expenditure for the Community Connect for Public Transport Concessions for Community Services Cardholders initiative.

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

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 my decision on your request, 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

pp.



Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services

Appendix One

Table One: Number of people with Community Services Card or Community Service Card plus Super Gold card combo issued in Auckland Super City Territorial Authority area, broken down by ethnicity, age and gender as at end of October 2023.

Demographic	Cards on issue
Ethnicity	
Māori	54,987
European	107,094
Pacific Peoples	66,801
Asian	58,443
MELAA	7,968
Other	15,579
Unknown	24,714
Age group	
16	159
17	420
18-19	8,514
20-24	27,783
25-29	27,123
30-34	27,351
35-39	24,897
40-44	22,509
45-49	19,374
50-54	20,286
55-59	19,173
60-64	19,488
65+	84,660
Gender	
Diverse	864
Female	172,827
Male	128,040
Total	301,731

Notes:

- This report shows CSC holders and CSC/SGC holders.
- Territorial Authority is estimated based on the client's address as at end of October 2023.
- SGC may be issued to partners of SGC recipients. Some of those partners may be under 65 years of age.
- Non Qualified Spouses (NQS) of NZS clients who are under the age of 65 may also receive SGC and CSC combo
- Ethnicity data is self-identified and multiple ethnicities may be chosen by an individual as fits their preference or self-concept.
- Total response ethnicity means that if a person identifies with more than one ethnic group, they are counted in each applicable group.

- A client can choose more than one ethnic response, the total number of ethnic responses will be greater than the number of clients.
- MELAA refers to Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African.
- 'Unknown' is where ethnicity is not recorded. 'Other' is where ethnicities fall outside the reported ethnicities.
- CSC may be issued for children.
- Ethnicity data for children is not recorded.
- To protect confidentiality, the Ministry uses processes to make it difficult to identify an individual person or entity from published data.
- These data tables have had random rounding to base three applied to all cell counts in the table.
- The impact of applying random rounding is that columns and rows may not add exactly to the given column or row totals.
- The published counts will never differ by more than two counts.



Table Two: The Ministry's expenditure of the Treasury's Climate Emergency Response Fund Community Connect (Nationwide Rollout) - Public Transport Concessions for Community Services Cardholders.

Expenditure Component	Total Sum of Actual Cost
Capacity Planning Workshops	\$4,755.00
CISO and ITSEC Meetings TOU and MOU	\$785.00
Partner Onboarding to SandBox	\$28,881.42
Production Onboarding and Support	\$10,415.00
Resilience for Community Connect	\$10,490.94
Sandbox Partner Testing Support	\$7,664.18
Other ¹	\$17,872.16
Grand Total	\$80,863.70

Key:

CISO = Chief Information

ITSEC = Security Officer Information Technology Security

TOU = Terms of Use

MOU = Memorandum of Understanding

¹ The Other category includes prorated contracted project management costs and outset IT costs including consultation and partner onboarding.
