



30 MAY 2018



Dear 

On 30 April 2018, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *The latest statistics on overseas pension deductions and spousal provision*

The Ministry regularly publishes information regarding trends in benefit receipt, including overseas pensions deductible under section 70 of the Social Security Act, on the Benefit Fact Sheets. This data is published in the New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's Pension data tables available here: www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit.

The Ministry does not specifically report on spousal deductions under section 70 of the Social Security Act as this information is held on individual case files and would require substantial manual collation.

The data presented to the Human Rights Review Tribunal in March 2018 was therefore the result of a one-off piece of work undertaken for a specific purpose, and based on data as at 27 October 2017. This is not standard reporting produced by the Ministry. This work indicated that as at 27 October 2017, 588 couples were affected by spousal deduction, and that the removal of spousal deductions would increase New Zealand Superannuation expenditure by approximately \$2.7 million annually. No more recent data is available.

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 to the wider public shortly. 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 deductions under section 70 of the Social Security Act, 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 blue ink, appearing to be 'EB', is positioned above the typed name.

Elisabeth Brunt
General Manager, Ministerial and Executive Services