



28 OCT 2020

Tēnā koe

On 21 September 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- 1. Who are the 30 employers which have received the highest payouts through the wage subsidy scheme (including extension and regeneration payments)?*
- 2. What are the 30 employers which have made the largest repayments through the wage subsidy scheme (including extension and regeneration payments)?*
- 3. Have any charges been laid as a result of wage subsidies been taken when they should not have been, and not been paid back?*
- 4. If so, how many charges, what is the value of the payments they relate to, and who has been charged?*
- 5. What is the regional breakdown of wage subsidy payments - where in the country have payments been made?*

On 16 October 2020, the Ministry informed you that an extension was required to consult on the information in scope of the request.

The COVID-19 Wage Subsidy has enabled rapid support for thousands of New Zealand businesses during this time of uncertainty and has ensured that employees are able to remain connected with their employers during the COVID-19 lockdown. The scheme has been set up on a high-trust model, in order to quickly deliver funds to support workers, families and businesses.

As part of the Wage Subsidy application process, businesses were required to sign a declaration that they had met the scheme's eligibility criteria. The declaration is extensive and includes an agreement that details in the application may be verified with other agencies, obligations in terms of the use of the subsidy, and consequences of non-compliance.

Employer Declaration – on or after 4pm 27 March 2020:

[www.workandincome.govt.nz/online-services/covid-19/declaration-wage-subsidy.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/online-services/covid-19/declaration-wage-subsidy.html)

Employer Declaration – before 4pm 27 March 2020:

[www.workandincome.govt.nz/online-services/covid-19/wage-subsidy-declaration.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/online-services/covid-19/wage-subsidy-declaration.html)

Please find the following two tables attached to this response in **Appendix One**. The tables address questions one and two:

- **Table One:** The top 30 employers that received the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, broken down by how much they were paid minus any repayments, as at 25 September 2020
- **Table Two:** The top 30 employers that repaid the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, broken down by how much they repaid, as at 25 September 2020.

It should be noted, for **Table Two**, even though employers have repaid money to the Ministry, it does not mean they did not follow the rules. The Ministry informed employers that they could apply for the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy if they thought they would have a financial downturn as a result of the pandemic. If they did not experience a significant downturn, then they were informed that they would need to repay the money. More information about these obligations can be found in the Employer Declarations Links noted on page one.

In regard to questions three and four, as at 25 September 2020, the Ministry had not laid any charges as a result of the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy. Therefore, your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act, as the information does not exist.

Finally, in regard to question five, Wage Subsidy applicants were required to provide the Ministry with a business address. However, a significant number of businesses have headquarters in big cities, such as Auckland. Therefore, a disproportionate number of businesses that applied for the Wage Subsidy are recording as being in 'Auckland' or other big cities in the Ministry's data pool, although they may (solely) operate in other places. The Ministry, therefore, cannot compile an accurate data table for businesses operating in a certain place at this time, as any data provided may potentially be misleading.

For the reasons outlined above, the Ministry is unable to provide a regional breakdown of the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy. As such, your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Official Information Act, as the information you have requested is not solely held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department of the Crown or organisation.

However, for your interest, the Ministry, Stats NZ and several other agencies have collaborated using an Integrated Data Infrastructure to create a more complete understanding of who received support. Through this, the Ministry has been able to identify the proportion of jobs supported by the Wage Subsidy and payments, broken down by regional council. This data is publicly available at the following link: [www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/covid-19/who-received-the-wage-subsidy-and-wage-subsidy-extension.html](http://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/covid-19/who-received-the-wage-subsidy-and-wage-subsidy-extension.html).

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 available to the wider

public. 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](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response regarding the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, 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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

George Van Ooyen  
**Group General Manager**  
**Client Service Support**

## **Appendix One:**

**Table One: The top 30 employers that received the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, broken down by how much they were paid minus any repayments, as at 25 September 2020**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Paid</b>
Air New Zealand Limited	\$113,469,850.78
FLETCHER BUILDING HOLDINGS LIMITED	\$67,683,717.60
THE WAREHOUSE LIMITED	\$51,988,574.40
Downer New Zealand Limited	\$38,039,173.24
Fulton Hogan Limited	\$34,254,796.80
SkyCity Management Limited	\$31,091,607.30
New Zealand Post Limited	\$29,714,222.40
Spotless Facility Services (NZ) Limited	\$28,718,341.20
The Farmers Trading Company Limited	\$28,029,199.20
Bunnings Limited	\$27,202,044.00
KiwiRail Holdings Limited	\$26,387,304.00
Best Start Educare Limited	\$24,715,987.40
AWF Limited	\$23,321,222.80
OCS Limited	\$22,776,100.80
Restaurant Brands Limited	\$22,071,945.60
Alliance Group Limited	\$17,060,348.15
Compass Group New Zealand Limited	\$15,672,432.00
Bidfood Limited	\$14,314,905.60
Harvey Norman Stores (NZ) Pty Limited	\$12,700,622.40
Adecco Personnel Limited	\$12,219,996.00
NOEL LEEMING GROUP LIMITED	\$12,092,968.80
Kmart NZ Holdings Ltd	\$11,977,440.00
Antares Restaurant Group Limited	\$11,476,586.40
Regional Facilities Auckland Trust	\$11,441,842.40
Flight Centre (NZ) Limited	\$11,163,744.09
Waste Management NZ Limited	\$10,822,666.79
Oji Fibre Solutions (NZ) Ltd	\$10,280,403.00
LSG Sky Chefs New Zealand Limited	\$10,114,983.04
Southern Cross Hospital Limited	\$10,086,931.20
Carters Building Supplies Limited	\$10,050,780.00

**Notes:**

- The totals include the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, Wage Subsidy Extension and Resurgence.
- 'Total Paid' is the total amount paid to these employers for applications across all wage subsidies, minus any repayments they may have made prior to 25 September 2020.
- The name of the employer is the name specified in the Wage Subsidy application.

**Table Two: The top 30 employers that repaid the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, broken down by how much they repaid, as at 25 September 2020**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Total Repaid</b>
Silver Fern Farms Limited	\$39,925,429.60
Alliance Group Limited	\$17,326,107.85
Beca Consolidated Group	\$15,866,556.00
Mainfreight Limited	\$8,072,277.60
Tonkin & Taylor Limited	\$5,253,496.80
Findex NZ Limited	\$3,925,168.80
P B Technologies Limited	\$3,588,653.20
Air New Zealand Limited	\$3,304,737.62
DB Breweries Limited	\$2,902,425.60
Worley New Zealand Limited	\$2,606,522.40
Big Chill Distribution Limited	\$2,581,233.60
Animates NZ Holdings Ltd	\$2,460,916.12
Simpson Grierson	\$2,335,108.80
White Cross Healthcare Limited	\$2,291,865.60
Holmes Group Limited	\$2,129,880.00
Tamaki Health Services Limited	\$2,118,472.80
MinterEllisonRuddWatts	\$2,069,265.60
Hilton Haulage Limited Partnership	\$1,997,349.60
Drake New Zealand Limited	\$1,979,134.33
St Cuthberts College Education Trust Board	\$1,924,867.20
Mondiale Freight Services Ltd	\$1,912,051.20
Bell Gully Partnership	\$1,810,718.40
ABB Limited	\$1,761,600.00
Warren And Mahoney Architects New Zealand Limited	\$1,658,985.60
OCS Limited	\$1,650,828.00
Meredith Connell and Co	\$1,639,178.40
Theta Systems Limited	\$1,545,052.80
AWF Limited	\$1,531,309.20
Skellerup Industries Limited	\$1,504,334.40
Duncan Cotterill	\$1,488,727.20

**Notes:**

- The totals include the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy, Wage Subsidy Extension and Resurgence.
- The name of the employer is the name specified in the Wage Subsidy application.