



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

09 SEP 2020

Dear

On 23 August 2020, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, a breakdown by industry of the following information which was provided to you by the Ministry's Media team:

- *As at 14 August we had received 3,537 complaints regarding the wage subsidy. At the same date 689 cases resulting from complaints and audits had been referred to MSD for investigation and 323 investigations were underway, while 115 investigations had been resolved. No cases have been referred for prosecution as yet. Any decisions on prosecutions will come after a thorough investigation and weighing of the evidentiary basis for a prosecution.*

Most industry information is obtained via matching to Inland Revenue data. When this is not available, the Ministry subsequently matches businesses to the Companies Register using their New Zealand Business Number (NZBN).

The information provided to you by the Ministry's Media team is unable to be broken down by industry as requested. This is because each investigation/complaint and referral is stored on an individual case file associated with the Wage Subsidy application and would need to be manually reviewed in order to determine industry.

As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as substantial manual collation would be required. 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.

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.

Page 1 of 2

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 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 your request to provide a breakdown of Wage Subsidy complaints by industry, 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



Bridget Saunders
Manager, Issue Resolution, Service Delivery