



1 OCT 2018



Dear 

On 21 August 2018, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information regarding statements made by the Ministry about changes made in Ministry investigations:

- *All procedures (relevant to the period at issue in the Appeal Authority decision) authorising investigators to cut off or suspend a benefit without concluding an interview*
- *All procedures relating to interviews at the relevant time*
- *The 'changes' to the procedures referred to by Warren Hudson*

You have previously been provided with a copy of *Investigation Unit Training Package S1: Interviews and Statements Module* that was current at the period in question.

During this period there were no specific instructions regarding when a benefit should be stopped either in relation to an interview or otherwise. Staff were required to comply with section 81 of the Social Security Act 1964 which provides for benefits to be granted, varied or stopped following a review of the benefit.

Authority for making these decisions is delegated to all Service Delivery positions, including Fraud Intervention Services Investigators under Delegations issued by the Chief Executive of the Ministry and the Deputy Chief Executive Service Delivery.

Instructions were given to Fraud Intervention Services on 9 December 2017 that clients were not to be advised of the outcome of an investigation as part of a client interview regarding a client's entitlement or possible offending. Staff are required to review all evidence relating to an investigation, including the client interview, to determine the outcome of the investigation and to then advise the client of the outcome.

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.

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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 shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments 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 instructions given to Fraud Intervention Services, 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 read 'D Dickinson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dwina Dickinson
Group General Manager, Client Service Support