



Dear [REDACTED]

On 27 January 2019, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

1. *How complaints did the Ministry of Social Development receive against WINZ nationwide in 2018?*
2. *How complaints have the Ministry of Social Development received against WINZ nationwide this year?*
3. *How many complaints did the Ministry of Social Development receive per region against WINZ in 2018?*
4. *How many complaints have the Ministry of Social Development received per region against WINZ this year?*
5. *How many of these complaints were related to perceived problems with actions taken by WINZ?*
6. *How many complaints were made in relation to the information provided to clients?*
7. *How many complaints were related to the interpersonal skills and attitudes of staff?*
8. *How many complaints were related to the wait time in WINZ offices?*

The Ministry provides face to face, phone and online services to over one million clients per year. The Ministry works hard to ensure that all clients receive the best possible service in their interactions with Work and Income. In the last 12 months, the Ministry has implemented a number of initiatives aimed at improving our service and the client experience. These initiatives include:

- refining ongoing training to staff, ensuring our case management practice remains focused on achieving good client outcomes, and
- improving our online services and increasing the types of assistance that can be provided over the phone, allowing clients to interact with us in the way that works best for them.

The Ministry takes all complaints seriously. When a complaint is received, Ministry staff work with the client to put it right and identify a solution, and the majority of complaints are resolved to the client's satisfaction. The Ministry endeavours to learn from the complaint and take steps to improve the service for all clients. More information about Work and Income's complaints process is available on the Ministry's website here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/complaints/index.html.

The Ministry records the majority of complaints received in the HIYA system, which allows for simple recording and managing of a complaint from receipt to resolution. The Ministry has interpreted your request for complaints to be those recorded in the HIYA system. This may exclude complaints made through formal channels such as through the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, Office of the Ombudsman and Fraud Intervention Services. The Ministry does not currently have a consolidated approach to complaints management and reporting. The Ministry is looking to develop a single, integrated, consolidated and consistent approach to the lodgment and handling of complaints.

Enclosed are the following six tables:

- Table One shows the number of complaints the Ministry of Social Development received against Work and Income nationwide in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019.
- Table Two shows the number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, broken down by region.
- Table Three shows the number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, that were related to perceived problems with actions taken by Work and Income.
- Table Four shows the number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, that were made in relation to the information provided to clients.
- Table Five shows the number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, in relation to the interpersonal skills of staff.
- Table Six shows the number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, in relation to the wait times at Work and Income Offices.

Please note, these figures may not include complaints that are resolved on the spot. The Ministry works with people to understand their circumstances and ensure that they are receiving their full and correct entitlement. Staff address issues raised by clients immediately in the course of these conversations.

You will note that the data shows a total increase in the number of complaints received between 2017 and 2018. However most recent data show the volume of complaints received per quarter has decreased for the quarter ending December 2018 by 14.8%, from 2,126 to 1,812, when compared to September 2018 quarter end, and decreased 11.1% (from 2,039) when compared to the December 2017 quarter end.

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 and any attached documents available 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 the number of complaints made against Work and Income in 2018, 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



Kay Read
Group General Manager, Client Service Delivery

Table One: Number of complaints the Ministry of Social Development received against Work and Income nationwide in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019.

	Calendar Year		January 2019
	2017	2018	
Number of complaints	8011	8383	483

Table Two: Number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, broken down by region.

Region	Calendar Year		January 2019
	2017	2018	
Auckland	2657	3076	184
Bay of Plenty	730	780	39
Canterbury	778	843	49
Central	364	276	11
East Coast	318	337	23
National Office	93	137	2
Nelson	230	156	8
Northland	376	411	23
Southern	262	272	17
Taranaki	411	316	12
Waikato	829	842	49
Wellington	963	937	66
Total	8011	8383	483

Table Three: Number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, that were related to perceived problems with actions taken by Work and Income.

Region	Calendar Year		January 2019
	2017	2018	
Auckland	806	917	58
Bay of Plenty	255	260	12
Canterbury	260	258	11
Central	99	92	3
East Coast	117	100	10
National Office	20	32	0
Nelson	67	40	2
Northland	117	126	3
Southern	89	78	3
Taranaki	142	113	3
Waikato	259	241	18
Wellington	315	283	19
Total	2546	2540	142

Table Four: Number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, that were made in relation to the information provided to clients.

Region	Calendar Year		January 2019
	2017	2018	
Auckland	353	443	22
Bay of Plenty	76	77	3
Canterbury	103	132	7
Central	43	24	0
East Coast	35	38	1
National Office	16	22	0
Nelson	26	13	1
Northland	47	44	2
Southern	20	44	0
Taranaki	40	39	2
Waikato	114	139	4
Wellington	141	181	8
Total	1014	1196	50

Table Five: Number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, in relation to the interpersonal skills of staff.

Region	Calendar Year		January 2019
	2017	2018	
Auckland	838	875	58
Bay of Plenty	211	200	12
Canterbury	242	226	14
Central	116	93	6
East Coast	96	104	9
National Office	21	47	0
Nelson	92	53	0
Northland	108	114	12
Southern	97	85	9
Taranaki	96	80	2
Waikato	291	303	22
Wellington	231	243	17
Total	2439	2423	161

Table Six: Number of complaints Work and Income received in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and January 2019, in relation to the wait times at Work and Income Offices.

Region	Calendar Year		January 2019
	2017	2018	
Auckland	476	617	30
Bay of Plenty	141	186	9
Canterbury	118	157	13
Central	64	35	1
East Coast	50	64	3
National Office	27	16	0
Nelson	27	25	0
Northland	85	90	5
Southern	25	39	2
Taranaki	104	61	3
Waikato	81	89	3
Wellington	216	167	12
Total	1414	1546	81

Notes:

- These figures are complaints recorded in the Ministry's HIYA system and may exclude some complaints recorded elsewhere.
- Where complaints were received about service provided by contact centres, these are recorded in the region where the contact centre is located. Contact centres are located in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Contact centres provide services to callers from anywhere in New Zealand.
- These complaint figures may also not include complaints which have been resolved on the spot/same day.
- The Work and Income region provided is the region that was the subject of the complaint.
- Table Six: Complaints regarding 'wait time' has been interpreted as complaints about timeliness.