



20 July 2022

Tēnā koe

On 22 June 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *A list of occasions, by date, in the last 6 months where MSD officials have met with Police where gang members living in emergency accommodation in Rotorua was brought up.*

In order to provide you with the information you have requested, the Ministry would need to divert personnel from their core duties and allocate extra time to complete this task. The diversion of these resources would impair the Ministry's ability to continue standard operations and would be an inefficient use of the Ministry's resources. As such, your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Act, requires substantial collation. 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 requests 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.

However, the Ministry is happy to provide some context on how it works with clients in Rotorua who are living in emergency housing.

The Ministry recognises that motels are not a long-term solution, particularly for vulnerable people with complex needs. The need to provide the Emergency Housing Special Needs Grant (EH SNG) reflects two things; the shortage of affordable housing, and secondly ensuring that those in need have somewhere to stay.

Regional Ministry staff have not met with the New Zealand Police for the express purpose of discussing gang members living in emergency housing in Rotorua.

However, in Rotorua, regional staff maintain a working relationship with Police and do meet regularly, in various forums, to discuss how vulnerable whānau can best be supported, including those in emergency housing. During these meetings, issues related to the gang membership of certain clients might be discussed where relevant.

Our regional offices communicate regularly with Police to best support our clients in emergency housing.

In general, however, any incidents or risks occurring in emergency housing brought to the Ministry's attention are managed on a case-by-case basis by staff and managers within each region. Regional staff manage any incidents or safety issues as they arise, with the relevant authorities. Any incidents of this nature would also be referred directly to the New Zealand Police.

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. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter and attachments on the Ministry'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 about Ministry staff involvement with Police and gang members living in emergency accommodation in Rotorua, 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.

Ngā mihi nui



Karen Hocking
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