



1 June 2023

Tēnā koe

On 12 December 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

I would like to request a spreadsheet containing following information for the last 15 years, broken down by financial year and geographic sub region (i.e., Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, East Coast, Taranaki King Country and Whanganui, Central Wellington, Nelson Marlborough and West Coast, Canterbury and Southern)

Please provide separate breakdown of these figures for the southern region, by service centre (i.e., Alexandra, Balclutha, Dunedin Central, Dunedin South, Gore, Invercargill, Mosgiel, Oamaru, Queenstown and Timaru)

- *The number of lockdowns of Winz premises*
- *The number of times police have been called to Winz premises*
- *The annual spend on security guards*
- *The number of people trespassed from Winz premises*
- *The number of times police have been called to Winz premises*
- *The number of times winz staff have been threatened*
- *The number of times winz staff have been assaulted*

I would like to extend my apologies for the delay in responding to your request for information.

The Ministry is committed to providing services to clients and interacting with the public in sites that are safe, secure and fit-for-purpose and places a high priority on the safety of all its staff, clients and visitors.

The Ministry has zero tolerance for any behaviour towards our staff, contractors, clients, and the public that could result in any form of harm. All threats to staff, tautiaki (security guards), clients and others we work with

are taken seriously and assessed to determine whether further action is required.

If a security incident occurs, staff record it in the Ministry's reporting database. A security incident may include property damage, threats, assaults or abuse against a staff member, security guard or our clients.

The Ministry provides follow-up advice and support to any staff involved in such incidents, including support through the Employee Assistance Programme, which is available to all staff.

On 22 July 2019, the Ministry implemented a new event reporting system called Security, Threats, Accidents and Risks (STAR), which replaced an older reporting system called Security and Occupational Health and Safety Incident (SOSHI). STAR and SOSHI have different categories and definitions for threats, as well as different ways of labelling the offices. It should be noted that from 22 July 2019, Community Links were categorised as Service Centres.

Security incidents and events are recorded by the office where the threat was received, but this does not necessarily mean that it was the office that the threat was "made against". For example, a Contact Centre may receive a threat about a Service Centre and in this instance the location of the incident or event would be recorded as the Contact Centre rather than the Service Centre.

It is important to note that the period covered by this data coincides with a period of unprecedented demand for the Ministry's services, brought about by COVID-19 pandemic and exacerbated more recently by cost-of-living pressures. This has seen many more people seek support from the Ministry for the first time in their lives.

For the sake of clarity, the Ministry will respond to each of your requests in turn.

The number of lockdowns of Winz premises

Please find **Table One** in the **attached Appendix** which shows the number of lockdowns on Work and Income premises broken down by Service Centres in the Southern region and regionally, by calendar year from 2008 to 2022.

We are continually looking at ways to enhance the safety of our staff and clients to reduce potential security risks.

Please note that where numbers are less than 5 throughout the table, this has been indicated with 's' due to the potential to identify individual cases.

The number of times police have been called to Winz premises

Due to the way information is captured in our reporting system, we cannot provide this information. Not all calls made to the Police result in the Police attending a Work and Income premises. Such calls may result in the Police going directly to a residential property, or near to a Work and Income premises.

The Ministry does not have standard reporting that can generate this data in the format you are requesting it. In order to provide you with this information, 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 as it 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.

The annual spend on security guards

The Ministry is unable to provide you with a breakdown of the annual spend on security guards by regions and by the Service Centres in the Southern region. 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 are able to provide you with annual spend on security guards for the financial years from 2006/2007 to 2021/2022, and 1 July 2022 to 30 April 2023.

The total paid by the Ministry for security guards services, for the financial years 2006/2007 to 2022 to 30 April 2023.

Financial Year	Amount in Millions¹
to 30 April 2023	\$ 24.170
2021/22	\$ 28.380
2020/21	\$ 27.218
2021/20	\$ 22.872
2020/19	\$ 21.677
2017/18	\$ 21.789
2017/18	\$ 22.748
2016/17	\$ 21.349
2015/16	\$ 19.300
2014/15	\$ 6.734
2012/13	\$ 7.252
2011/12	\$ 6.931
2010/11	\$ 6.945
2009/10	\$ 6.776
2008/09	\$ 6.382
2007/08	\$ 6.077
2006/07	\$ 6.007

You might find helpful information in the 2021/2022 Annual Review of the Ministry of Social Development. More specifically you can locate information in questions 68-75, which provides the contract value and the term awarded to Allied Security for Guard Services at the following link: https://www.parliament.nz/resource/en-NZ/53SCSS_EVI_127528_SS5240/5bb09bc1a83e5bd3396f8d0b9f92fb86e85e984d.

The number of people trespassed from Winz premises

Please find **Table Two** in the **attached Appendix** which shows the number of people trespassed from Work and Income premises broken down by Service Centres in the Southern region and regionally, by calendar year from 2008 to 2022.

The number of times winz staff have been threatened

Please find **Table Three** in the **attached Appendix** which shows the number of Work and Income staff who have been threatened broken down by

¹ Rounded to the nearest \$1,000.

Service Centres in the Southern region and regionally, by calendar year from 2008 to 2022.

The number of times winz staff have been assaulted

Please find **Table Four** in the attached **Appendix** which shows the number of events categorised as assaults recorded as being towards staff, tautiaki and others in Work and Income sites, broken down by Service Centres in the Southern region and regionally, by calendar years 2008 to 2022.

In order to protect the privacy of natural persons, some values in the tables are suppressed and are represented by 's'. The Ministry is unable to provide you with the exact number as releasing this information is likely to risk identifying the individuals concerned. As such, this information is withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. The need to protect the privacy of these individuals outweighs and public interest in the information.

The Ministry encourages the media to consider carefully how they cover security incidents at Ministry offices, as media coverage can potentially encourage copy-cat behaviour.

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 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 regarding security incidents recorded by the Ministry, 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Stenhouse', with a long, sweeping underline.

Pauline Stenhouse
General Manager
Health Safety and Security