



22 March 2023

Tēnā koe

On 9 February 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Data on the number of people accessing the orphan's benefit and unsupported child's benefit, per year, since 2010, broken down by year, age of recipient, ethnicity of recipient*
- *Data on the cost of the orphan's benefit and unsupported child's benefit, per year, since 2010, broken down by year, age of recipient, ethnicity of recipient*
- *Reports, memos, briefings, reviews into the orphan's benefit and/or unsupported child's benefit produced since 2017*

On 17 February 2023, the Ministry emailed you to advise that part 3 of your request has been transferred to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), as the information is not held by the Ministry but is believed to be held by Oranga Tamariki.

On 8 March 2023, the Ministry emailed you to advised that we required more time to respond to your request and a decision will be with you no later than 23 March 2023. The reason for the extension is that consultations necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response to the request cannot reasonable be made within the original time limit.

The Ministry will now respond to your request.

- *Data on the number of people accessing the orphan's benefit and unsupported child's benefit, per year, since 2010, broken down by year, age of recipient, ethnicity of recipient*

Please see attached **Appendix** containing **Table One** and **Table Two** which outlines the number of caregivers receiving Unsupported Child's Benefit and Orphan's Benefit as at the end of each year 2010 to 2022 by year, age group and total response ethnicity.

- *Data on the cost of the orphan's benefit and unsupported child's benefit, per year, since 2010, broken down by year, age of recipient, ethnicity of recipient*

Please see attached **Appendix** containing **Table Three** which shows the weekly amount payable to caregivers with Unsupported Child's Benefit and Orphan's Benefit as at end of each year 2010 to 2022 by year.

After the Ministry transferred part 3 of your request to Oranga Tamariki, we found one report to be in scope of your request. See the attached document titled REP/17/03/338 Report approved by the Minister, on responsibility for leading work and Vulnerable Children benefit payments.

- Information not related to your request for Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Child's Benefit has been deemed as out of scope.
- Some information is withheld under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials. The release of this information is likely to prejudice the ability of government to consider advice and the wider public interest of effective government would not be served.

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 regarding the Orphans Benefit and Unsupported Child Benefit, 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

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
Manager
Issues Resolution
Service Delivery



Report

Date: 27 March 2017

Security Level: IN CONFIDENCE

To: Hon Anne Tolley, Minister for Social Development and Minister for Children

Responsibility for work on ^{Out of scope} [redacted] and Vulnerable Child Benefit payments

Purpose of the report

- 1 This paper asks you to agree that the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) will continue to be responsible for leading the Government work programme on the ^{Out of scope} [redacted] for the next two years.
- 2 This paper also asks you to agree that:
 - MSD will continue to be responsible for delivery functions relating to Orphan's Benefit (OB), Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB) and associated products; Early Learning Payment (ELP) and the 9 hours' non-activity component of Childcare Subsidy (CCS)
 - the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki (Oranga Tamariki) will take on the policy functions relating to these products.

Recommended actions

It is recommended that you:

- 1 **note** that senior officials have given further consideration to which agency is best placed to lead work on the ^{Out of scope} [redacted] and Vulnerable Child Benefit payments (Yes / No)
- 2 **agree** that the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) will continue to be responsible for leading the Government work programme on the [redacted] for the next two years AT (Agree / Disagree)
- 3 **agree** that MSD will complete a review in 2019 to determine the best agency to lead the Government work programme on ^{Out of scope} [redacted] on a permanent basis AT (Agree / Disagree)
- 4 **agree** that MSD will continue to be responsible for delivery functions relating to Orphan's Benefit, Unsupported Child's Benefit and associated products; Early Learning Payment and the 9 hours' non-activity component of Childcare Subsidy, but will transfer the policy functions relating to these products to the Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki (Oranga Tamariki) AT (Agree / Disagree)

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s9(2)(f)(iv) OIA

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note that this split of policy and delivery functions for Vulnerable Child Benefit payments will result in responsibility for the affected products being split across two Ministerial portfolios, with the Minister for Social Development responsible for delivery and the Minister for Children responsible for policy.

Yes / No

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note that we will advise the Office for the Children's Commissioner and the Monitoring Group that MSD will continue to be responsible for leading the Government work programme on

Out of scope

Yes / No

8

note that we will

- 8.1 prepare a document (such as a memorandum of understanding) that clearly sets out where responsibilities will fall and how the agencies will work together in relation to the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments
- 8.2 share this document with the Ministers' Offices involved.

Yes / No

Justine Cornwall
General Manager
Child, Family, Community and Youth Policy

27 March 2017

Date

Hon Anne Tolley
Minister for Social Development

4-4-17

Date

Out of scope

Background

3 On 11 July 2016 Cabinet agreed on the core future role and functions for Oranga Tamariki and the Ministry of Social Development [CAB-16-MIN-0339 refers]. At that stage, specific consideration had not been given to which agency should be responsible for:

- leading the Government work programme on Out of scope
- policy and delivery functions relating to:
 - Orphan's Benefit (OB) and Unsupported Child's Benefit (UCB), including the establishment grant, extraordinary care fund and school and year start-up payment
 - Early learning payment (ELP)
 - Childcare subsidy for 9 hours' non-activity only (CCS) (together, the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments).

Out of scope

4 Out of scope

Vulnerable Child Benefit payments

5 Cabinet also agreed that Oranga Tamariki would be responsible for delivering child-centred services relating to supporting vulnerable children and young people to fulfil their potential, and providing the government with policy advice on preventing or reducing vulnerability for this group. Cabinet agreed that MSD would deliver services for income support and provide policy advice relating to populations served by MSD.

6 While the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments are payments closely linked to vulnerable children, they also form part of income support paid to a population served by MSD (as payments are made to the carers). The Cabinet decision did not specifically determine how to deal with complex cases where functions overlap between agencies and Ministerial portfolios, so senior officials have considered how Cabinet's decision can be applied in practice to this case.

Out of scope

7 Out of scope

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Out of scope

Out of scope

Out of scope

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Out of scope

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- 13 We consider that this decision will be well received by the sector, given the concerns about New Zealand placing too narrow a focus on vulnerable children.

Delivery of the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments will remain with MSD but policy functions will be transferred

- 14 Senior officials have given consideration to which agency is best placed to provide functions related to the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments. MSD will continue to be responsible for delivery of the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments but will transfer the policy advice functions for the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments to Oranga Tamariki.
- 15 This separation of the policy function from delivery will result in responsibility for affected products being split across two Ministerial portfolios. The Minister for Social Development will be responsible for delivery and the Minister for Children will be responsible for policy. This will be similar to the way that MSD currently works with the Ministry of Education on student allowances.
- 16 The delivery functions involved are wide-ranging and include payment to clients for essential living costs, assessment of applications, funding of services through third-party providers, responding to ad hoc queries and completing reviews. Some of these functions, particularly initial assessment and on-going payments, would be difficult to transfer from MSD to Oranga Tamariki.
- 17 MSD Service Delivery has existing systems, infrastructure and staff that are already familiar with the work. Our view is that Oranga Tamariki would not have the ability, either in the form of systems or staff, to take on responsibility for many delivery functions. However, if there are changes to delivery requirements or systems (such

1 Out of scope


Out of scope

as could occur as part of work on alignment of OB/UCB and foster care entitlements), we would recommend reviewing the separation of functions at that time.

- 18 Transfer to Oranga Tamariki of the policy functions relating to the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments would be relatively simple. Handover would involve the transfer of existing knowledge and MSD policy staff would be available to discuss with Oranga Tamariki staff both before and after handover.
- 19 We note that an October paper (REP/16/10/1282) presents options for the re-targeting of the 9-hours' non-activity component of CCS payments to vulnerable children. If you wish to progress an option from this paper, further policy work would be led by Oranga Tamariki.
- 20 As part of the functional analysis, 0.5 of an FTE was allocated for transfer to Oranga Tamariki to support policy work on the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments.

Next steps

21 Subject to your agreement, we will:

- Out of scope

- prepare a document (such as a memorandum of understanding) that clearly sets out where responsibilities will fall and how the agencies will work together in relation to the Vulnerable Child Benefit Payments. Once that is completed, this document will be shared with the Ministers' Offices involved.

File ref: A 9531731

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