



11 September 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email dated 7 August 2025, in which you requested information about financial assistance the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) has paid to farmers and agricultural businesses in response to climate-related adverse weather events.

I also acknowledge receipt of your email dated 14 August 2025 in which you agreed to partially refine your request to include Civil Defence Payments (CDPs) paid to all recipients. This is because the Ministry cannot isolate CDPs paid specifically to farmers and agricultural businesses without substantial manual collation.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Please find my decision on each part of your request set out below:

1. *Please include payments and funding related to Civil Defence Payments, Rural Assistance Payments and Enhanced Taskforce Green*
2. *Please provide a breakdown by assistance programme/payment type, year, region, and type of event.*

a) Civil Defence Payments paid between 2013 and 2024

I refer you to Table 1 of **Appendix 1**.

The CDP is available to meet the immediate needs of people affected by a civil defence emergency or adverse event. Further information about the CDP, including the eligibility criteria, is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/civil-defence-payment-01.html.

In Table 1 of **Appendix 1**, you will see that small number of CDPs are recorded as being made during 'No Specific Event.' This data includes instances where a CDP was made in relation to a listed event, but where the assessing staff member used a different reason code. It also includes instances where a CDP was made in response to smaller events that were not declared Civil Defence emergencies, but where a person still needed assistance (for example localised

damage from a tornado). In these cases, the Regional Commissioner exercised their discretion to approve a CDP.

I note that Table 1 of **Appendix 1** contains data regarding the '15 March 2019 Christchurch Event,' which was not a climate-related event.

b) Rural Assistance Payments paid to farmers and agricultural businesses between 2013 and 2024

I refer you to Table 2 of **Appendix 1**.

The Ministry does not record Rural Assistance Payments (RAPs) by type of event. Therefore, I am refusing your request for information about RAPs paid by event type under section 18(g) of the Act as this is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that it is either held by, or more closely connected to the functions of, another department, Minister of the Crown, or organisation.

RAPs are made available when the Minister of Social Development and Employment announces assistance specifically for a primary industry in a certain area. Further information about RAPs, including the qualifications, is published here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/income-support/extra-help/special-needs-grant/rural-assistance-payments-01.html.

c) Enhanced Taskforce Green payments paid between 2013 and 2024

I refer you to **Appendix 2**.

There is an active Enhanced Taskforce Green (ETFG) programme in the Tasman region for the recent flooding. This began on 21 July 2025, but the final cost of the programme has not yet been determined.

There were no ETFG programmes active in FY 2025.

The Ministry's current financial and contracting reporting only has data available for ETFG from FY2018 onwards. Therefore, I am refusing your request for information about ETFG assistance paid between 2013 and 2017 under section 18(g) of the Act as this is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that it is either held by, or more closely connected to the functions of, another department, Minister of the Crown, or organisation.

ETFG can be used following any emergency event. The Government may announce the use of Enhanced Task Force Green (ETFG), and funding for ETFG must be approved by the Minister.

The Minister for Social Development and Employment is authorised to approve up to \$500,000 plus GST of ETFG funding, from existing baselines, to assist in clean-up activities where required, for a specified period. The period will depend on the size and impact of the adverse event). Amounts above \$500,000 require Cabinet approval.

It is important to note that the \$500,000 plus GST is, not per region. If the scale of the event extends beyond one region, then ETFG funding is allocated across the affected area based on damage, impact assessments and work required.

3. Any internal advice or projections relating to climate-related agricultural losses or future fiscal exposure from 2020 onwards

The Ministry does not hold internal advice or projections specifically related to climate-related agricultural losses or future fiscal exposure from 2020 onwards. For that reason, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as this is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that it is either held by, or more closely connected to the functions of, another department, Minister of the Crown, or organisation.

CDPs are forecast as part of the Hardship Assistance appropriation. As there are two to three fiscal forecast updates yearly, the Ministry has made thirteen separate CDP forecasts since 2020. Over the various forecast updates since 2020, the CDP forecast has been \$826,000 per year on average.

I will publish this decision letter, with your personal details deleted, on the Ministry's website in due course.

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 my decision on your request, 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

pp.



Anna Graham
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