



24 September 2025

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email dated 27 August 2025 in which you requested information about the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry's) use of Meta social media platforms to communicate with the public. I also acknowledge receipt of your email dated 30 August 2025 to the Ministry's Procurement and Commercial Services team regarding related matters, to which you will receive a separate response.

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 separately below.

- 1. How much has MSD spent each year since 2016 on META platforms, Facebook and Instagram, to advertise or communicate with New Zealanders?*

Table 1 - The Ministry's expenditure on its primary Facebook account

Financial year	Expenditure
2019/20	\$1,002.00
2020/21 ¹	\$3,312.12
2021/22	\$2,110.94
2022/23	\$4,220.02
2023/24	\$5,083.90
2024/25	\$4,179.78
1 to 30 July 2025	\$391.03

¹ The Ministry's expenditure between 2019 and 2021 was converted from US dollars, based on the OFX yearly exchange rate for 2021 and 2022.

Table 2 – The Ministry’s expenditure on its Job Connect, SuperGold, and StudyLink Facebook profiles

Financial year	Expenditure
2015/16	\$2,754.87
2016/17	\$5,999.14
2017/18	\$22,419.89
2018/19	\$91,977.83
2019/20	\$101,268.31
2020/21	\$99,562.00
2021/22	\$142,737.60
2022/23	\$149,740.67
2023/24	\$125,634.26
2024/25	\$163,501.22
1 July to 27 August 2025	\$16,791.00

Table 3 – The Ministry’s total expenditure on Meta advertising to support violence prevention campaign messaging

Financial year	Expenditure
2016/17	\$82.67
2017/18	\$74.51
2018/19	\$102.00
2019/20	\$414.00
2020/21	\$47,402.00
2021/22	\$32,604.44
2022/23	\$49,730.69
2023/24	\$182,103.54
2024/25	\$241,602.40
2025/26	\$34,464.88

2. Has MSD, its Chief Executive and General Manager, read the 134 submissions received through the Government’s inquiry into online harms encountered by New Zealanders and ways Government, Business, and Society can address those harms? If not, why not?

I understand your question to relate to the Education and Workforce Committee’s inquiry titled: [Inquiry into the harm young New Zealanders encounter online, and the roles that Government, business, and society should play in addressing those harms - New Zealand Parliament](#). As this is a parliamentary inquiry, there are established processes for the Committee to receive, consider and report on submissions. Accordingly, the Ministry’s Chief Executive and senior leadership have not individually reviewed all 134 submissions, as this responsibility sits with the Committee.

The Ministry is committed to supporting efforts that promote safer online environments for all New Zealanders and will continue to contribute to whole-of-government responses as appropriate.

3. Does MSD plan to keep compensating META, a known abuser of hundreds of millions of people?

I refer you to my letter dated 18 August 2025.

4. Does MSD acknowledge there are people who do not use social media and, if so, what are the means they use to communicate with them? Why are these means not used as an alternative for communicating with all its audience?

The Ministry recognises that not everyone uses social media. The Ministry uses a range of channels to communicate with New Zealanders, including websites, targeted letters, and stakeholder newsletters. The Ministry uses the social media accounts it owns to supplement official communications, not as a substitute for them. Please see Table 4 below, which provides an overview of the official channels and communication sources the Ministry uses to communicate with the public.

Table 4 – Overview of official channels and information sources the Ministry uses to communicate with the public

Target audience or objective	Channels
General (Work and Income) – Working aged people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MyMSD portal• Work and Income website• General Enquiries contact centre• Service centres (in person)• Service Express• Email• Letters (physical and electronic mail)• SMS text messages• Printed forms, brochures, and promotional materials
StudyLink – Tertiary students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MyStudyLink portal• StudyLink website• StudyLink contact centre• Information provided in person on campus and/or at school• Email• Letters (physical and electronic mail)• SMS text messages• Printed forms, brochures, and promotional materials
Senior Services – People receiving New Zealand Superannuation or Veteran's Pension	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MyMSD portal• Senior Services and International Services contact centres• Service centres (in person)• Letters (physical and electronic mail)• Email• SMS text messages• Printed forms, brochures, and promotional materials
Accessibility services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interpreter lines• Deaf services• Multi-language support (including New Zealand Sign Language)• Translated brochures and promotional materials
Media / Official information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ministry newsroom• Online publications/webpages• Email

Social media is an effective tool for sharing updates that affect large numbers of people. Social media enables the Ministry to reach a broader audience to increase awareness of the range of ways in which we can support people. Further information about the services and assistance offers is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz.

The Ministry sometimes uses paid advertising to reach specific audiences, particularly those including people who may not be current Ministry clients. The Ministry chooses the channels used, which can include social media, for these campaigns based on the target audience and the objectives of the campaign.

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
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services