

5 August 2026

s9(2)(a)

Tēnā koe s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your email of 7 July 2026 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting information regarding consultancy expenditure relating to the Crown Response Unit (CRU). Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

Per your response to our clarification request, dated 17 July 2026, the scope of your request has been determined to refer specifically to the CRU, which operated under the umbrella of Oranga Tamariki from 2019 to 2024. The request does not refer to the Crown Response Office (CRO), which was established as part of the Public Service Commission after this point.

The CRU was established to coordinate the Crown's response to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions (the Royal Commission). During the period in which it was hosted by Oranga Tamariki, the CRU operated as an autonomous group within the department and was responsible for coordinating cross-agency work, supporting the Crown's engagement with the Royal Commission, and progressing work on redress and related initiatives.

While administrative and appropriation arrangements sat within Oranga Tamariki, strategic oversight of the Crown response work programme was provided through a cross-agency Chief Executives Group. This group was initially chaired by the CE/Secretary of Education. It was subsequently chaired by a Deputy Public Service Commissioner and included Chief Executives from agencies with responsibilities for the Crown's response. These agencies included Oranga Tamariki, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Development, the Treasury, and Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People. Its role was to establish the overall response plan, monitor implementation progress, and support agency accountability.

I have responded to each part of your request below.

What governance framework has been used to oversee consultancy engagements supporting the Crown Response Unit?

With regards to the procurement process for these consultancy services, the Oranga Tamariki Procurement team follows a prescribed process meeting New Zealand Government Procurement rules and internal policies. Consultants are sourced from the All of Government (AoG) Consultancy Services panel. Procurement Initiation Documents were signed out by the delegated authority under Oranga Tamariki financial and operational delegation policies, which included the Directors of the CRU and the Chief Executive of Oranga Tamariki at the time. Whilst the work programme was governed by the Chief Executives Group, the operational and financial delegations CRU worked within were with Oranga Tamariki as the host agency.

In accordance with the contextual information provided above, the relationship between Oranga Tamariki and the CRU was primarily one of organisational hosting and administrative support, rather than direct operational control over the Crown response programme. Governance and oversight of the Crown response were exercised through cross-agency governance arrangements and ministerial accountability mechanisms established for the response to the Royal Commission.

What key performance indicators, deliverables, and measurable outcomes were established for those consultancy contracts?

The scope and key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed with the business and then negotiated and subsequently agreed with consultants. These inputs form part of the Consultancy Services Order (CSO) which was used by CRU management to track progress.

We are unable to provide copies of the CSOs or other such documents due to the commercial sensitivity of the information therein. As such, these documents have been withheld in full under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act, to protect information where the making available of the information would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information. However, I have provided a summary of deliverables from available documentation, per section 16(1)(e) of the Act.

- Various progress reports e.g. monthly, quarterly
- Key planning documents e.g. survivor engagement plan, communications plan, marketing plan
- Facilitation of workshops and delivery of results following workshops
- Road maps and work programmes
- Reports on specific elements of work
- Relevant video content for public-facing materials
- Discussion sessions between consultant organisation and key stakeholders
- Final written reports on subject matter
- Website to support record access
 - Statistics and analytics from website following go-live

What governance mechanisms exist to ensure lessons identified through the Crown Response Unit are implemented across operational practice rather than remaining strategic recommendations?

As noted above, strategic oversight of the Crown response work programme is provided through a cross-agency Chief Executives Group.

In April 2024, the Minister responsible for the Crown Response established a joint redress and care Ministers group to support the response.

How has Oranga Tamariki evaluated whether those engagements have improved the accuracy of historical records, survivor engagement, investigative practice, and organisational accountability?

What independent assurance or audit processes have been undertaken to evaluate whether consultancy recommendations have resulted in measurable improvements?

These engagements did not have the purpose of delivering the outcomes noted in your question. The purpose of these engagements was to support the development of policy, operational capability, support aspects of the design of a potential redress system, and organisational capacity within the CRU to assist in delivering its mandate.

These consultancy engagements include the following specific purposes:

- Developing design proposals for a new redress service
- Supporting leadership development for redress programme members
- Undertaking a case study of the Australian redress scheme to identify relevant learnings to apply to development of the redress system
- Modelling to inform policy choices surrounding costs and potential improvements to redress systems
- Establishment of a website to support survivors in seeking guidance to access their records following the disestablishment of the CRU
- Improvements to policy and operational capability and capacity

As such, there is limited information regarding the specific concerns you have raised.

No audit processes, evaluations, or similar measures to review the efficacy of these consultancy engagements have been identified. As such, this part of your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, on the grounds that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

How my concerns align with the Crown Response Unit's programme of work and organisational improvement objectives.

Whether my case will be considered within any governance, assurance, audit, or quality improvement processes associated with the CRU.

What measurable improvements have been achieved as a direct result of consultancy expenditure that would address issues such as inaccurate records, deficient historical decision-making, and accountability to survivors.

As noted above, no audit has been undertaken to identify measurable improvements following consultant work undertaken. As such, we are unable to respond specifically regarding any improvements in relation to the consultancy work.

The consultancy work helped inform policy advice that supported Ministers' decisions to improve redress arrangements for survivors. These policy decisions form part of the wider Crown response to the Royal Commission. The Crown response includes initiatives to improve record keeping practices and make it easier for survivors to access their records. Accountability documents and progress reports on the Crown Response work in general can be found on the Crown Response website [here](#).

As the CRU no longer exists, and the CRO is not part of Oranga Tamariki, we are unable to respond to questions about how your concerns align with their functions. If you have questions regarding your circumstances and how they may align with the work of the CRO, we recommend you contact their team to seek further information. You can email them at contact@abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz for general questions, or at OIA@abuseinquiryresponse.govt.nz to make an OIA request.

With regards to your concerns about the accuracy of your records, while we are unable to provide any information regarding organisational improvement in this space in the context of the CRU for the reasons outlined above, Oranga Tamariki has established internal processes for responding to requests to correct personal information.

If you consider that some of the information we hold about you is incorrect, you can ask us to change it by submitting your feedback through the online form on the Oranga Tamariki website [here](#), over the phone at 0508 326 459 (0508 FAMILY), or with a letter to the following address:

Oranga Tamariki Feedback and Complaints
PO Box 546
Wellington 6014

How governance responsibilities are allocated between Oranga Tamariki executives, the Crown Response Unit, and external consultancy providers in ensuring public funds deliver demonstrable improvements in frontline practice.

Please see our response to part one of your request above, outlining the nature of the governance of the CRU.

Oranga Tamariki may make the information contained in this letter available to the public by publishing this on our website with your personal details removed.

IN-CONFIDENCE

I trust you find this information useful. If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@ot.govt.nz. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DLB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Damien Le Breton
Head of Enterprise Portfolio Management Office
System Leadership