

18 January 2021



Tēnā koe

Thank you for your email of 9 November 2020 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *How many No Notice Uplift Orders were applied for from 2010 – 2020. – The expectation is that these statistics will be provided on a table outlining each statistic each year, by gender and by ethnic group*
- *How many children have been uplifted within a DHB straight from birth from 2010-2020 – The expectation remains the same as above*
- *How many engagements from Social Workers with Whanau following a report of concern took place between 2010-2020 – The expectation remains the same as above*
- *In relation to the above question – How many cases resulted in ongoing support provided to the Parents?*
- *How many cases were appealed by Whanau between 2010-2020*
- *How many cases were passed through as complaints to the Chief Executive Panel*
- *How many Social Workers between 2010-2020 did you have on staff?*

- *How many of these social workers were formally investigated by SWRB between the years of 2010-2020?*
- *What is the understanding of the Chief Executive around the supports that her organization and social workers put in place to support whānau*
- *How many conflicts of interest were reported and registered under requirement between years of 2010-2020? – Please include occupations, departments and office locations*
- *How many social workers were either moved to another office or alternatively terminated from their position? – Provide a table outlining office locations, and numbers for each year*

On 16 November 2020, we contacted you to clarify your request for the number of ‘cases’ appealed by whānau for the period 2010-2020 and the number of ‘cases’ passed through as complaints to the Chief Executive Advisory Panel, and whether your reference to ‘cases’ referred to section 78 orders granted without notice. On 19 and 20 November 2020, we sent follow up emails regarding our clarification. We did not receive a response from you.

On 20 November 2020, you were advised that question one of your request was being transferred to the Ministry of Justice for response and question eight was being transferred to the Social Workers Registration Board for response, in accordance with section 14(b)(i) of the Act.

On 7 December 2020, we contacted you to advise that the timeframe for responding to your request had been extended, in accordance with section 15A(1)(b) of the Act, as the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

Please find our response to your request for information below. Where appropriate, we have grouped questions together and provided one complete response.

- *How many children have been uplifted within a DHB straight from birth from 2010-2020 – The expectation remains the same as above*

You have requested the number of children that have been ‘uplifted within a DHB’ straight from birth for the period 2010-2020. Details of what DHB a new-born was in when they entered our care or custody, would be captured in the case notes of their individual file and is not information that is centrally recorded by Oranga Tamariki. The provision of this information would require us to review, in detail, hundreds of individual files. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. I have considered whether we would be able

to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, our ability to undertake our work would still be prejudiced.

For statistics about how we work with children, including entries to care , broken down by age – including pre-birth to 12 months - pathway, ethnicity, and region, for the period F2011 to F2020, please refer to the link below.

<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/About-us/Report-and-releases/data-about-how-we-work-with-children/Babies-and-children-entering-Oranga-Tamariki-care.pdf>

<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/about-us/reports-and-releases/statistics-about-how-we-work-with-children/>

- *How many engagements from Social Workers with Whanau following a report of concern took place between 2010-2020 – The expectation remains the same as above*
- *In relation to the above question – How many cases resulted in ongoing support provided to the Parents?*
- *What is the understanding of the Chief Executive around the supports that her organization and social workers put in place to support whanau*

Oranga Tamariki is dedicated to ensuring the safety of children and young people at risk of harm. We take all allegations of abuse seriously and the wellbeing and safety of the child or young person is at the forefront of our concern. Under section 15 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, any person who believes that a child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), neglected or deprived, or who has concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young person, may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. These are referred to as reports of concern (ROC) by Oranga Tamariki.

When we receive a ROC, we undertake our assessment across three phases – the initial assessment phase, the core assessment phase and a full assessment phase if required. The purpose of the initial phase of assessment is to understand the needs and vulnerabilities of te tamaiti, the likelihood of harm, and to decide the best response. To do this we have an in-depth conversation with the notifier to understand their concerns, complete a chronology to understand previous history of involvement with Oranga Tamariki, gather information from other agencies in some instances and encourage the notifier, where appropriate, to support te tamaiti and their family/whānau by remaining involved. The response for a tamaiti who has been notified to Oranga Tamariki could be no further action is required, an alternative response such as referral to community services,

further statutory assessment is needed, or an investigation as per the Child Projection Protocol, which is required where there has been a serious alleged offence against a tamaiti. We then record the decision and rationale, including what any alternative response should be.

The next core phase of assessment builds on the initial phase. It helps us to establish a picture of the safety, strengths, vulnerability, and likelihood of harm, determine needs of te tamaiti and their whānau, and the services who are best to address these, and inform the decision about further Oranga Tamariki involvement. Where we are working with tamariki Māori, we utilise Kairaranga ā-whānau or other cultural specialists to support our engagement with the family/whānau and involve hapū and iwi. We also work with other professionals working with te tamaiti and/or family/whānau to gather their views and information.

Information gathered in the full assessment phase is used to inform a Family Group Conference and support quality planning for te tamaiti. This involves deepening our understanding of the needs of te tamaiti and their family/whānau and determining whether there are local support services within the community that the whānau can be referred to. During this phase, we continue to collaborate with other professionals and also consider specialist assessments, such as gateway (specialist health and education assessment) to help identify needs. Assessments are shared with tamariki and their family/whānau so that we can seek and incorporate their views. Ensuring safety planning is up to date is an important step in this phase. We make sure any safety plan in place is reviewed regularly to ensure it is keeping te tamaiti safe. You can find more information about our ROC response pathways and the Tuituia framework at the following links.

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/our-work/assessment-and-planning/assessments/intake-and-early-assessment/>

<https://practice.orangatamariki.govt.nz/our-work/practice-tools/the-tuituia-framework-and-tools/the-tuituia-framework-and-domains/>

Assessing a parent's skills and knowledge, and their ability to provide safe care is an important aspect of the assessment that is undertaken when a tamaiti comes to our attention. Where there is a need to support a parent's ability to safely care for their tamariki we can refer them to a service to build this knowledge and capacity. Some of our programmes and services are about early intervention – stopping the cycle of harm before it happens. An example of this is a new, whānau-centred early intervention prototype designed to strengthen families and improve the safety and wellbeing of children, Ngā Tini Whetū.

Ngā Tini Whetū is a collaboration between Oranga tamariki, Te Puni Kōkiri, ACC and the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency (WOCA). This programme will see

additional early support offered to around 800 whānau across the North Island, to lift child and whānau wellbeing and resilience. This initiative is designed to get intensive support to whānau before there is a crisis.

At the centre of this initiative is the WOCA, who will commission the planning, navigation and service supports for whānau. The prototype will seek to demonstrate how an early and intensive whānau ora approach can deliver a range of positive outcomes that will reduce the need for future government intervention. For further information on how Oranga Tamariki supports whānau, please see the link below.

<https://orangatamariki.govt.nz/support-for-families/>

Every situation we deal with is unique, and the number of interactions a social worker will have with whānau following a ROC and the number of whānau that receive ongoing support will vary depending on the individual circumstances of that whānau. Details regarding Social Worker interactions and family support would be held in the case notes of the relevant child or young person's individual file. The provision of this information would require us to review, in detail, thousands of individual files, as this information is not centrally recorded by Oranga Tamariki. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. I have considered whether we would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, our ability to undertake our work would still be prejudiced.

- *How many cases were appealed by Whanau between 2010-2020*

We have interpreted your request for the number of 'cases' appealed by whānau, to refer to the number of section 78 orders granted without notice that have been appealed by whānau/family for the period 2010-2020. Appeals are made directly to the Family Court and Oranga Tamariki is notified when this occurs. The provision of this information would require us to review, in detail, hundreds of individual files, as this information is not centrally recorded by Oranga Tamariki. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. I have considered whether we would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, our ability to undertake our work would still be prejudiced.

- *How many cases were passed through as complaints to the Chief Executive Panel*

I have interpreted your request for the number of 'cases passed through as complaints to the Chief Executive Panel' to refer to the number of requests made to the Chief Executives Advisory Panel (CEAP to review complaints that relate to a section 78 order, for the period 2010-2020. Please note, while the CEAP might receive a complaint to review where a section 78 order is mentioned, the CEAP cannot make findings on orders made by the Family Court. In addition, this data is not centrally recorded by Oranga Tamariki. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial collation and research. I have considered whether we would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, our ability to undertake our work would still be prejudiced.

- *How many Social Workers between 2010-2020 did you have on staff?*

Please refer to the table below for the total number of Social Workers employed by Oranga Tamariki and Child, Youth and Family, as of 30 June each year for the period 2010-2020.

Year (As at 30 June)	Total Social Workers
2010	1230
2011	1257
2012	1289
2013	1323
2014	1364
2015	1411
2016	1356
2017	1362
2018	1503
2019	1625
2020	1777

Notes:

- Numbers are Social Worker headcount.
- Social Workers: Defined using the standard Field Social Worker Line definition, which includes Social Workers, Senior Practitioners and Supervisors.
- Includes: Active Employees, Permanent, Fixed Term and Permanent Variable Hires.
- Excludes: Employees on paid or unpaid leave, Contractors, and Casual Employees.

- *How many conflicts of interest were reported and registered under requirement between years of 2010-2020? – Please include occupations, departments and office locations*

The Oranga Tamariki Conflicts of Values, Interests and Politics Policy states our commitment to assist our employees to understand and uphold the organisation's values. One way to achieve this is by identifying, raising, and managing any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest (COI). This ensures Oranga Tamariki maintains the highest standards of integrity and professionalism and builds and maintains the ongoing trust and confidence of Ministers, the tamariki and whānau we support, and the public.

Oranga Tamariki encourages and supports staff to disclose all activities or commitments if there is any doubt as to whether a potential or actual conflict may exist. This allows Managers to assist in assessing the situation and determine what actions or protections could be put in place to prevent potential conflicts of interest arising.

Recognising that some conflicts are unavoidable, it is important to review and determine if the actual, potential, or perceived conflict can be managed. The actions or protections that may be put in place to prevent potential conflicts of interest arising, and help resolve any actual conflicts that do occur, are wide-ranging. Examples include:

- transferring a duty from the employee concerned to another employee.
- increasing transparency and scrutiny of decision making.
- abstaining from voting or decision-making (e.g. if the employee is in an Oranga Tamariki decision making role or a role within an external organisation/group which is seeking something from the Ministry, the employee agrees not to participate in any vote or other decision-making process).
- withdrawing from discussions (e.g. if it relates to an individual, organisation or community group that has been identified as a potential conflict).

If no risk mitigation steps are appropriate or achievable, the employee may need to restrict or abandon the interest or activity that creates the conflict.

Please note, Oranga Tamariki does not currently have a central system to record, track and monitor COI's. This information is held by Managers and Sites. The provision of this information would require us to collate and review, in detail, a large number of records in order to identify the information within the scope of your request. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(f) of the Act, as the information cannot be made available without substantial

collation and research. I have considered whether we would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, our ability to undertake our work would still be prejudiced.

- *How many social workers were either moved to another office or alternatively terminated from their position? – Provide a table outlining office locations, and numbers for each year*

We have interpreted your request for the number of Social Workers who were moved to another office or alternatively terminated from their position to refer to the number of Social Workers who have been dismissed from Oranga Tamariki or Child, Youth and Family (CYF) within the period 2010-2020. Please refer to the table below for the total number of Social Worker or Senior Practitioner roles who were dismissed from Oranga Tamariki or CYF between 2010-2020, broken down by year. You have requested a breakdown of this number by office location. I am refusing this part of your request under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, in order to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

Year	CYF / Oranga Tamariki Employees
2010	0
2011	1
2012	1
2013	3
2014	1
2015	0
2016	0
2017	1
2018	3
2019	2
2020	6
Total	18

Oranga Tamariki intends to make the information contained in this letter to the wider public shortly. We will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted, and we 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@ot.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. 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 'S. Groom', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Steve Groom
General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services