



17 June 2024

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Tēnā koe Don Thompson

Official Information Act request

Thank you for your email of 17 May 2024 requesting average wait times for callers of the Work and Income phone system, specifically for calls relating to hardship assistance.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Please find the information requested in **Table One** below.

Table One: Average number of minutes taken to answer at the Ministry's Contact Centre, broken down by month and queue type, from 1 June 2023 to 31 May 2024.

Month	Advances	General
June 2023	11:27	11:51
July 2023	12:45	12:42
August 2023	11:56	11:56
September 2023	15:08	14:23
October 2023	11:51	12:11
November 2023	12:23	12:29
December 2023	11:07	11:23
January 2024	10:54	11:18
February 2024	10:24	10:26
March 2024	07:38	07:46
April 2024	06:53	07:17
May 2024	06:22	06:59
Total average speed to answer	10:34	10:34

Notes

The Ministry attempts to accurately categorise and record each call received, but the exact matters discussed in each call are not able to be reported on.

Callers to the Ministry's Contact Centre are sorted into queues depending on what the caller says to the automated phone system. The data provided above is reflective of the queues callers were sorted into, specifically for the 'advances' and 'general' queues. As you may expect, a client's queue may not match the

matters discussed over the phone. For instance, many callers have multiple discussion points that do not cleanly fit into a single queue.

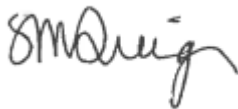
The Ministry advises that the 'advances' queue is used for callers that identify a matter relating to hardship assistance to the automated system. As noted above, it is likely that some calls in this queue did not discuss hardship assistance. Further, not all calls relating to hardship assistance will have been captured in this queue. For this purpose, the General queue has also been provided, as it is likely to contain most of the remaining calls relating to hardship assistance.

I will be publishing 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. 

Magnus O'Neill
General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services