



29 JUL 2015

Ms Emma Russell
fyi-request-2781-f918a3a2@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Russell

On 28 May 2015 you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *Information in relation to the Government's actions or decisions to address child poverty in New Zealand. Cost-benefit analysis, reports, agendas, costings, submissions would all be useful. I am also looking for statistical analysis from the last decade of children in child poverty.*

On 21 May 2015 the Government announced a \$790 million package to reduce hardship among children in New Zealand's poorest families, as the next step in the Government's commitment to address the long-term drivers of deprivation. The Support for Children in Hardship Bill, which supports this \$790 million Budget 2015 package, also passed its first reading in Parliament on 21 May 2015.

The Support for Children in Hardship Bill amends the Social Security, Inland Revenue and Educations Acts, to help deliver the key components of the Budget package, which includes:

- Increased work obligations for sole parents on a benefit
- A \$25 a week after tax increase in benefit rates for families with children, the first increase outside of inflation adjustments since 1972
- More childcare support to help low-income parents into work
- An increase in Working for Families payments to low-income families not on a benefit.

The Bill will go through a full Select Committee process to enable the public to have their say, with changes coming into effect from 1 April 2016.

Information related to the Budget 2015 child hardship package is available on The Treasury's website at www.treasury.govt.nz.

Your request for information in relation to the Government's actions or decisions to address child poverty in New Zealand is very broad and substantial manual collation would be required to locate and prepare all documents within scope of your request. As such I refuse your request under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry 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, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

For statistical analysis of inequality and hardship over the last thirty years, please refer to the Ministry's website, in particular the Household Incomes report which is available at:

www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/monitoring/household-incomes/index.html

You may also find the New Zealand Living Standards report helpful, which is also published on the Ministry's website at www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/monitoring/living-standards/living-standards-2008.html.

I hope you find this information concerning the benefit increase announced in Budget 2015 helpful. You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, whose address for contact purposes is:

The Ombudsman
Office of the Ombudsman
PO Box 10-152
WELLINGTON 6143

Yours sincerely



Peter Galvin
Chief Policy Advisor