

Hon Carmel Sepuloni

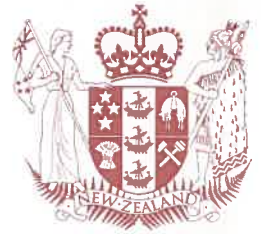
MP for Kelston

Minister for Social Development

Minister for Disability Issues

Associate Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

Associate Minister for Pacific Peoples



20 MAY 2019

Guenter Langenbucher

fyi-request-9986-249e0bdd@requests.fyi.org.nz

Tēnā koe Guenter Langenbucher

Thank you for your further request dated 2 April 2019 asking about the difference between the means-testing of benefits and the direct deduction of overseas pensions from New Zealand Superannuation (NZS). You also request a copy of a report provided by the Ministry of Social Development to me.

Firstly, I would like to clarify that a direct deduction of NZS on account of an overseas pension does not meet the definition of means-testing. Means testing involves an income test and potentially also an asset test. NZS has neither of those tests, although there is an income test where a qualifying superannuitant receives the married rate in respect of a non-qualifying partner. Overseas pensions are not defined as income – they are defined as a benefit or pension of a kind described in section 70 of the Social Security Act 1964 and are treated in accordance with that section.

Section 70, first introduced in 1938, ensured lifelong New Zealanders were not disadvantaged when compared with others who have worked overseas or immigrants to New Zealand who have entitlement to overseas state pensions. The end result is that a combination of an overseas pension and a partner's reduced NZS is equivalent to the rate of NZS that other qualifying married superannuitants receive.

Your request for a copy of the report called "New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's Pension: Modernisation and Simplification" is refused under section 18(d) of the Official Information Act on the basis that the information requested will soon be publicly available. This information will be published as soon as possible in June. You will be able to access the New Zealand Superannuation and Veteran's Pension: Modernisation and Simplification documents when they are available at www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/information-releases/index.html.

Thank you again for writing. I hope you find my reply helpful.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Carmel Sepuloni'.

Hon Carmel Sepuloni
Minister for Social Development