



29 May 2020

DOIA19/20030400

Tom Dickie

fyi-request-12446-127b03e0@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Dickie

I refer to your request of 14 March 2020 to the Ministry of Social Development, requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

Please advise, in financial terms, the amount of NZ dollars provided to Registered Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and the resultant number of people occupied in new housing accommodation constructed in the calendar year of 2019, as a direct consequence of the monies provided to CHPs within the calendar year of 2019, that otherwise would not have resulted in the housing accommodation having been constructed and people housed.

On 17 March 2020, your request was transferred in full to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (the Ministry) for response.

This Government is seeing more people asking for help with accommodation than ever before. As you may be aware, Budget 2020 announced funding of \$570 million over the next four years to provide an extra 8,000 homes; approximately 6,000 public housing homes and 2,000 transitional homes. The Ministry will continue to work with Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities (Kāinga Ora), Community Housing Providers (CHPs) and the wider housing sector to achieve the Government's goal of increasing the supply of public housing.

In response to your request, I note you have asked for “*the number of people occupied in new housing accommodation constructed in the calendar year of 2019, as a direct consequence of the monies provided to CHPs within the calendar year of 2019*”. Gathering the information to indicate those housed as a direct consequence of monies provided in 2019 would involve a manual search and review of all invoices in order to match the funding to the places provided. As such, this part of your request has been refused under section 18(f) of the Act, due to the substantial collation required.

In addition, it should be noted that funding for new builds is provided in instalments as construction progresses. Therefore, the funding that is provided to CHPs in one calendar year does not necessarily reflect the total construction cost of the places or that those places will be ready to accept tenants in that same calendar year. Construction build times can vary and there are many factors that can affect the length of time, most recently we have seen this occur with the response to COVID-19.

The Ministry holds information on the number of public housing *tenancies*. A public housing tenancy could be for a single person, or a family. Without manual collation we are unable to provide the number of distinct people housed, instead we can provide the number of tenancies, which can be understood as the number of ‘households’ housed.

As such, our response to your request provides the following information:

- Up-front payments made by the Ministry to CHPs in the calendar year to 31 December 2019 for new housing supply;
- Number of new CHP builds delivered and tenanted between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019.

As noted above, the funding provided to CHPs in one year does not equate to the number of builds delivered and tenanted in that same year as that funding may be for future builds that were not completed in that year. Therefore, comparisons between the funding provided and the number of builds delivered and tenanted should not be drawn.

Table one: New CHP builds delivered and tenanted between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019

	1 Jan 2019 to 31 Dec 2019
New builds delivered tenanted	270

Table two: Total amount of upfront payments made by the Ministry to CHPs for new housing supply between 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019

	1 Jan 2019 to 31 Dec 2019
Upfront funding to CHPs	\$20,622,210

Please note that the above numbers reflect the total of the invoices that were paid during the period. It does not include any accruals or adjustments for prepayments.

You may be interested to know more generally about funding provided for CHP places. The Ministry pays Income Related Rent Subsidies (IRRS) to CHPs to cover the balance between the tenant's rental payment and the market rent for the property. IRRS is a subsidised rent scheme for public housing tenants with low incomes. The IRR is calculated based on a tenants' accessible income and their household type and is limited to no more than 25% of their net income. More information about the IRRS payments made to CHPs can be found in our Public Housing Quarterly Reports at www.hud.govt.nz/community-and-public-housing/follow-our-progress/.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of my response by the Ombudsman, in accordance with section 28(3) of the Act. The relevant details can be found on the Ombudsman's website at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

Yours sincerely



Anne Shaw
Deputy Chief Executive
Housing Supply, Response and Partnerships