

03 May 2024

C179316

Felix Lee

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Tēnā koe Felix

Thank you for your email of 11 March 2024 to the Department of Corrections – Ara Poutama Aotearoa, requesting information shared with the New Zealand Bankers Association (NZBA) regarding Corrections Bank Accounts Upon Release (BAUR) programme and the progress of other banks adopting this programme. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

You requested:

*1. what was shared with members of NZBA*

Please see Appendix One, which contains the presentation that was shared with the NZBA regarding the BAUR programme.

Please note that certain information has been withheld as it is not considered within scope of your request.

*2. what is the progress with other banks also adopting this process*

The BAUR programme (or New Start as it is known at Westpac) is the first of its kind in New Zealand and ensures people in prison have access to banking at the time they are released, making it easier for them to reintegrate into the community.

At this stage, Westpac remains the only Bank involved with the BAUR programme.

Westpac has shared information about the BAUR (New Start) initiative at various RBNZ meetings and other forums, to encourage other banks to consider how they can support access to banking, as they believe a person should be able to choose which bank they open an account with.

Having access to appropriate identification is highlighted as the main barrier to opening a bank account. Corrections is currently launching the Kiwi Access Card programme to all sites, which allows people in prison to obtain photo identification. Applications for Kiwi Access Cards can now be completed online and on request from within prison, eliminating

the need for escorted outings or temporary releases, and making the process faster, simpler, and less costly. More information on this project is available in [Corrections 2022/23 Annual Report](#) (pg. 94).

Westpac has advised that the work Corrections has done to make obtaining a Kiwi Access Card easier has greatly improved their ability to provide bank accounts prior to release.

Please note that this response may be published on Corrections' website. Typically, responses are published quarterly, or as otherwise determined. Your personal information including name and contact details will be removed for publication.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. I encourage you to raise any concerns about this response with Corrections. Alternatively, you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Ngā mihi

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alice', followed by a horizontal line.

Alice Sciascia  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Strategy and Corporate Services