

06 APR 2018

Mr Jason McIntosh
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Dear Mr McIntosh

Thank you for your three emails of 8 March 2018 to Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki), requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- *Is it true that Oranga Tamariki is owned by Circo? If not who owns and profits from it?*
- *Is it true that you have a quota for child rehousing? Is it true that it has risen to 15000 per year?*
- *How many Oranga Tamariki or Cyfs staff members or associated contractors have been arrested for Job related Crimes? Kidnap? Child Abuse? Fraud? Sexual Assault? Perjury? Perverting the cause of justice? etc.*

I will address your questions separately:

- *Is it true that Oranga Tamariki is owned by Circo? If not who owns and profits from it?*

We interpret Circo to mean Serco, the British company that provides public services to governments. We interpret profits to mean financial gain.

Oranga Tamariki is not owned by Serco. Oranga Tamariki is a Government Department of the Public of New Zealand as defined in section 27A of the State Sector Act 1988. The New Zealand Government does not make any financial gain from Oranga Tamariki.

- *Is it true that you have a quota for child rehousing? Is it true that it has risen to 15000 per year?*

On 12 March 2018, we wrote to you seeking clarification about what you mean by 'rehousing.' You did not respond. I therefore have clarified your question to be:

- *Is it true that you have a quota for removing children from their homes to be placed in the care of Oranga Tamariki?*

Oranga Tamariki does not have a quota for removing children from their homes and placing them into care. The priority of Oranga Tamariki is to ensure that children are in a safe and healthy environment and receiving the care and support they need. Our social workers provide advice and support to the families of children at risk to enable them to do everything possible to prevent the children from being removed.

- *How many Oranga Tamariki or Cyfs staff members or associated contractors have been arrested for Job related Crimes? Kidnap? Child Abuse? Fraud? Sexual Assault? Perjury? Perverting the cause of justice? etc.*

Oranga Tamariki was formed on 1 April 2017, and holds records going back to this date.

Our records show that since 1 April 2017, no employees of the organisation have been arrested for crimes, as per the list in your request.

All staff are required to abide by Oranga Tamariki's Code of Conduct. Part of this Code of Conduct requires employees to advise their managers if they have any convictions or criminal charges laid against them while employed by Oranga Tamariki. This requires employees to be upfront and honest with their managers about any offending they may have been involved with. Details of any charges or convictions will be held on individual employee files.

Contractors are not employees of Oranga Tamariki, therefore this part of your request is refused under section 18(g)(i) of the Act, as the information requested is not held by us and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

The Government is committed to growing a safe and competent children's workforce who can play their part in keeping vulnerable children safe. Through the Children's Action Plan and Vulnerable Children Act a new culture of protection has been introduced across the children's workforce to ensure that children are safe.

Many organisations, particularly the state sector, already have checks in place to ensure that unsuitable people do not work with children. However, there is a need for more consistent, high-quality safety checking for the children's workforce.

The safety of children is at the heart of what we do. Staff vetting and screening processes came into force under the Vulnerable Children Act effective from 1 July 2015. The Act requires state-funded government agencies and their providers to implement a new standard of safety checking of employees and contractors who are in charge of or work with children, and prohibits people with certain serious convictions from working in roles directly with or with authority over children.

This applies to all core and non-core children's workers, which includes paid employees and contractors. Checks of all newly-recruited core and non-core children's workers started from 1 July 2015.

Safety checking is made up of the following steps:

- identity confirmation
- third party checking
- police vetting
- other required information, for example, CV and interview
- risk assessment and evaluation

In addition, social workers are required to undergo checks when they are registered or have their registration renewed by the Social Worker Registration Board. This involves a Police check and character references. For further information on this please see the Board's website:

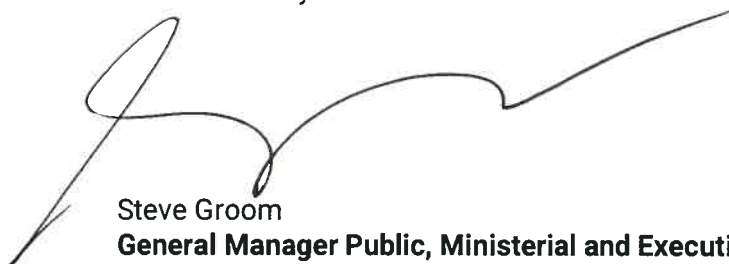
<http://swrb.govt.nz/for-social-workers/new-registrations/application-process/>

We intend to make the information contained in this letter and any attached documents available to the wider public shortly. We will do this by publishing this letter on our website. Your personal details will be deleted and we will not publish any information that would identify you as the person who requested the information.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@mvcot.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. Information about this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by contacting them on 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Groom', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Steve Groom
General Manager Public, Ministerial and Executive Services