



MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Te Manatū Whakahiato Ora

Bowen State Building, Bowen Street, Wellington 6011, PO Box 1556, Wellington 6140 • Telephone: 0-4-916 3300 • Facsimile: 0-4-918 0099

- 2.SEP 2013

Ms Mary Hart
fyi-request-909-244b295a@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Hart

Thank you for your email of 2 June 2013 requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *the number of complaints made to Child, Youth and Family complaints for the last year, broken into monthly figures.*
- *the number of complaints made to Child, Youth and Family complaints and forwarded to NGOs for the last year, broken into monthly figures.*
- *the number of complaints fully upheld for the last year, broken into monthly figures.*
- *the number of complaints partially upheld for the last year, broken into monthly figures.*
- *the number of complaints not upheld at all in the last year, broken into monthly figures.*
- *what results you have for complaints forwarded to NGOs (and which NGO) for the last year, broken into monthly figures.*

The Ministry of Social Development supports community environments where abuse and neglect of children and young people is not tolerated. Child, Youth and Family always works in the best interests of the child or young person and every allegation of abuse is treated seriously.

Currently if an individual or family wishes to complain about Child, Youth and Family there are several options available to them.

Child, Youth and Family makes every effort to resolve all concerns raised. If a complaint remains unresolved the complainant can approach the Ministry of Social Development's Chief Executive's Advisory Panel. This Panel is independent of Child, Youth and Family and provides families or individuals with another opportunity to have their complaints reviewed.

People are also able to lodge complaints with the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Office of the Ombudsman. These organisations are both independent of Child, Youth and Family.

Further information about the complaints process can be found on the Child, Youth and Family website at: www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/our-service-commitment/index.html.

Since April 2010 Child, Youth and Family has registered complaints in the Complaints Management IT system, based on the date they were received. This system was developed to assist in the management and tracking of complaints through their various stages and the information recorded in it is constantly being updated.

The Ministry reports on the total number of complaints received in a financial year. The table below contains the total number of complaints registered in the Child, Youth and Family Complaints Management System for each of the last three financial years.

Financial Year	Total Number of Complaints
2010/11	532
2011/12	512
2012/13	786

You have requested the number of complaints made to Child, Youth and Family and forwarded to NGOs in 2012/13 as well as the result of those complaints. This information is held on individual records. You have also requested the total number of complaints broken down by month and outcome. Your request for this information is refused under section 18(f) of the Act as it would require substantial manual collation. I do not consider this to be in the public interest as this would remove staff from their core duties and impact on the effective functioning of the Ministry.

The Ministry is currently implementing changes to the complaints process and policy. This work began in April 2013. These changes are the result of a full review of the complaints process and policy, undertaken in late 2012. The outcome of this review informed the design and implementation of a service improvement model for complaint resolution that promotes continuous quality improvement in service delivery. Full implementation of the new policy and process will occur with the completion of the revised Complaint Management IT System.

These improvements include:

- the expected timeframe for the completion of all complaints within the new policy and process framework will be 30 working days, with a 15 working day extension
- dedicated advisors for service improvement based in each regional office to manage and investigate complex complaints, ensuring independence from the site and other frontline services. The advisors will also follow up on complaints not addressed by sites within the 10 working days. Six regionally based positions are currently in place.

You may be aware that the former Police Commissioner, Howard Broad, has been appointed to lead an independent review of Child, Youth and Family's complaints process. The review is one of the measures announced in the White Paper for Vulnerable Children, which sets out detailed plans to curb child abuse and improve reporting. The review will be completed by December 2013 and will consider whether changes need to be made, including the possibility of establishing a complaints mechanism independent from the Ministry.

I hope you find this information 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernadine Mackenzie', written in a cursive style.

Bernadine Mackenzie
Deputy Chief Executive Child, Youth and Family