



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

13 FEB 2019

Mr Gregory Soar  
[fyi-request-9430-8ca00bc6@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-9430-8ca00bc6@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Mr Soar

On 20 January 2019, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *I request all and every information held by WINZ MSD that WINZ MSD relied upon to arrive at the conclusion that telling clients untruthful information / deceiving them (false names on documents, false names when talking by phone) would lessen any risk to any staff members. Any studies, anything that would lead MSD to think such actions as deceit would placate an unhappy client and the full reasoning on which this plan to use non legal actions and serious abuse of natural justice rights was based upon please. Any proof that this action of removal of natural justice rights would achieve its goals rather than anger further already annoyed clients. The theory that abusing clients rights would lessen their annoyance or anger in any way. Studies etc.*

Your request is refused under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act as the information you have requested does not exist.

The Ministry can advise that due to the risk profile of the client group that the Remote Client Unit staff were required to manage, the Ministry determined that the use of pseudonyms was necessary and appropriate to protect staff from being identified and potentially placed at greater risk of harassment, threats or even violence, both within and outside of their work environment.

Please find enclosed an excerpt of the Remote Client Unit Business Process document, dated 16 March 2015, regarding staff identity and pseudonyms.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact [OIA\\_Requests@msd.govt.nz](mailto:OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz).

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

Jenni Allan  
**Senior Advisor, Issue Resolution**

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Out of scope

Excerpt of the Remote Client Unit Business Process document, 16 March 2015.

#### *Staff Identity and Pseudonyms*

Staff members who work within the unit must use pseudonyms in order to protect their identity and personal safety. Their true identity in the MSD Global directory is hidden from view and only their pseudo names showing under the Remote Client Unit. The RCU Manager is responsible for ensuring that the pseudo and unit details in Global do not any reference to the physical location of the

It is the responsibility of the RCU case manager to maintain their pseudo identities and any breaches must be reported to the RCU manager who will work with the Health Safety and Security team and National Office to determine the best course of action. Approval for the establishment of a new system profile must obtained by the National Commissioners Office.

#### *To set up a pseudo name*

The RCU Manager must choose a pseudo name and check global to ensure that there is not an existing staff member by this name. When selecting an appropriate name, focus on selecting names that are not too unique or close in relationship to the true identity, i.e. maiden name etc.

An email must be sent to the General Manager Contact Centre Services and National Commissioner Advisor to advise that a new pseudonym is needed and why, e.g. staff changes. Approvals for system access are granted via the DCEs office.