



20 MAR 2018



Dear 

On 29 January 2018, you emailed the Ministry requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982, the following information:

- *For the last five years, how many of those on the job seekers allowance have transitioned into work as a result of the Work Brokers working out of the Oamaru WINZ office?*
- *How many people have had the opportunity for work experience through arrangements made by the work brokers and*
- *Of those, how many have gained employment?*

Work and Income offers a wide range of resources available online to help people find work, including advice about how to find work, prepare for a job interview and access to CV templates. Clients are encouraged to actively seek work. Some clients who are familiar with the job search process obtain work with minimal support. Access to Work and Income job search resources is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/look-for-work/

Some clients require additional support from a Work Broker to seek work and this support is tailored to the client's individual needs. Work Brokers in the Oamaru Community Link work proactively with clients to enhance their job searching activity. This can include updating a client's CV, helping clients with cover letters, providing advice with interview skills and referring clients to training opportunities. A person does not need to be receiving a main benefit to be able to access job search or Work Broker services. Work Brokers also work directly with employers which can include assisting with their vacancies and facilitating industry recruitment seminars.

In the last two years the Oamaru Community Link's Work Broker has placed over 30 clients into employment using wage subsidies. These placements were made in a number of industries including Hospitality, Retail, Administration, Agriculture, Transport, Trades and Services. Post placement support is provided by Work Brokers for these clients and the employers who hire them. Additional information regarding Wage Subsidies is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/providers/programmes-and-projects/projects-in-the-community.html

The following table shows the total number of placements into paid employment made by the Oamaru Community Link, and those that are Jobseeker Support clients, for the years ending 2013 to 2017. Please note that Jobseeker Support was introduced in July 2013, therefore the number of placements in 2013 is from July to December.

The total number of placements into paid employment made by the Oamaru Community Link, and those that are Jobseeker Support clients, for the years ending 2013 to 2017.

Calendar year	Total number of placements	Number of JS placements
2013*	94	13
2014	52	20
2015	74	44
2016	59	42
2017	19	14

Notes:

- This is a count of placements and the same client may have been placed more than once.
- This table only counts placements to paid employment by staff and not client self placements.
- Jobseeker Support (JS) includes JS Work Ready and JS Health Care and Disability.
- The Jobseeker Support benefit started in July 2013 and therefore the number of JS placements does not cover the full 2013 year.

The number of job placements is one measure of a Work Broker's performance. As mentioned earlier a Work Broker helps clients to become work ready and secure their own role. Even though these clients have the support of a Work Broker to obtain work, it is counted as a self placement. Work Broker's can profile clients directly to an employer who may have a suitable job vacancy for the client. The clients who obtain work this way are not counted as job placements.

For a more complete picture regarding clients in receipt of Jobseeker Support who obtain work in Oamaru, please refer to the following table that shows the number of Jobseeker Support benefits cancelled for the reason 'obtained work' at the Oamaru Community Link, broken down by calendar years 2013 to 2017.

Calendar year	Number of cancels
2013*	149
2014	289
2015	338
2016	393
2017	312

Notes:

- This is a count of cancellations and the same client may have been cancelled more than once.
- Jobseeker Support (JS) includes JS Work Ready and JS Health Care and Disability.
- The table includes working age only (18 to 64 years).
- The Jobseeker Support benefit started in July 2013 and therefore the number of JS placements does not cover the full 2013 year.

The Oamaru Community Link's Work Broker facilitates weekly youth focused workshops to ensure support is available for youth by working closely with them to secure sustainable outcomes for their future. As part of this activity Work Brokers can work with clients and employers to negotiate mock interviews, a business walk around and short-term work experience placements.

The Oamaru Community Link's Work Broker works with employers to deliver the Skills for Industry programme. The aim is to up skill clients and move them into employment in the target industry. In this programme Work and Income partners with employers to offer training opportunities that can lead to employment for clients who meet the employer's job specifications in industries where there are skills shortages.

The Oamaru Community Link has recently delivered two such programmes, focused on the meat processing and hospitality industries. These programmes have resulted in 23 Oamaru clients moving into paid employment in the last year. Additional information regarding Skills for Industry is available here: www.workandincome.govt.nz/employers/subsidies-training-and-other-help/skills-for-industry.html

I am unable to provide you with the number of people who have had the opportunity for work experience through arrangements made by the Work Brokers or how many of those have gained employment, as this information is held in notes on individual case files. In order to provide you with this information Ministry staff would have to manually review the files of all clients in Oamaru. As such I refuse your request for this information under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act. The greater public interest is in the effective and efficient administration of the public service.

I have considered whether the Ministry would be able to respond to your request given extra time, or the ability to charge for the information requested. I have concluded that, in either case, the Ministry's ability to undertake its work would still be prejudiced.

However I can advise you that the Oamaru Community Link has a Southern Region initiative in place from July 2017, called Experience Works. This initiative is a wage subsidy paid to employers who take on a job seeker with limited experience to provide them entry level practical work experience for 10 weeks. There is no obligation for the employer to employ the job seeker on a permanent contract. The experience provided, and potentially a reference, is of high value to job seekers.

The group of clients who have taken part in the initiative have been provided with work experience in a range of industries including trades and services, construction and administration. The initiative is proving successful with some clients being retained in their placement, or moving into sustainable employment with other employers.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. The Ministry therefore intends to make the information contained in this letter available to the wider public shortly. The Ministry will do this by publishing this letter on the Ministry of Social Development's website. Your personal details will be deleted and the Ministry 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@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response concerning job placements in Oamaru, 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 or 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kay Read', is positioned above the printed name.

Kay Read

Group General Manager Client Service Delivery