



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

10 November 2023

Tēnā koe

On 13 October 2023, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

For the sake of clarity, I have answered your questions in turn below, and you will note that some questions have been grouped together where they are able to be answered appropriately.

1. Was a Funding Policy created for the Funding of NGO Participation at SAM Tables across New Zealand? If so can we please have a copy of that Policy? If not can MSD advise if they adhere to NZ Governments Procurement Framework Terms and Conditions?

A Funding Policy was not created for the Funding of NGO Participation at Safety Assessment Meetings (SAM Tables) across New Zealand, therefore your request for a copy of that policy is refused under section 18(e) of the Act, as it does not exist.

The criteria for providers to be eligible for funding for NGO participation at SAM Tables is as follows:

- must be an NGO provider
- be a family violence specialist
- be a Ministry-funded family violence provider
- have level two accreditation

The Ministry adheres to the New Zealand Government [Procurement Rules when undertaking procurement](#). The New Zealand Government Procurement Framework Terms and Conditions (3rd edition) form part of any Outcome Agreement awarded by the Ministry.

2. Can MSD advise how many Regional Relationship Managers approached the NZ Police directly to see how they would like to see the funding for SAM Tables spent prior to contacting any of the NGO's participating at the SAM Tables?

3. *Can MSD advise how many of their Regional Relationship Managers contacted every single provider who held a Family Violence Contract in their Region {regardless of whether or not they were Level 2 Provider approved and met the criteria or not} and invited them to participate in their Regions SAM table?*

Regional Relationships Managers work with Ministry-funded providers, communities, and other key stakeholders across government regularly as part of their business-as-usual roles. This may include discussing upcoming opportunities.

As this funding has been distributed across 46 SAM Tables and was finalised approximately one year ago, we do not know how many Regional Relationship Managers approached NZ Police or other Ministry funded providers to discuss this funding. Therefore, question two and three of your request are refused under section 18(g) of the Act as this information is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is either held by or closely connected to the functions of another department, Minister of the Crown, or organisation.

However, from our interactions with many of the SAM Tables, NZ Police were involved to some level in these conversations, as they are a key stakeholder involved in SAM Tables. While NZ Police were often consulted through this process, they were not a decision maker in the procurement process.

4. *Can MSD please advise in how many instances it declined NGO SAM Table Applications for funding submitted by existing Members of those SAM tables and directed that multiple and repeat community hui be held with NGO's who were both eligible and NOT eligible to apply for the funding? Particularly when a Community wide Hui had already endorsed the Regional Plan proposed.*
5. *Can MSD please advise under what legislation and or Government Policy it has the authority;*
- a. *To override existing Regional Plans created by the NGO's working on the ground actively participating in the daily SAM (Safety Assessment Meetings) and Applications for funding?*

As part of the Ministry's business-as-usual commissioning processes, we procure and contract services in accordance with New Zealand Government Procurement Rules.

As part of the procurement of NGO participation at SAM Tables, they each developed a regional plan to make their own recommendations on how best to invest this funding. These recommendations were submitted to the Ministry to review and for endorsement. The process sought to enable local knowledge, community collaboration, and the best return on investment.

The Ministry provided feedback and worked alongside providers on most of the regional plans. This included asking additional clarification questions, providing advice or recommendations for revisions of regional plans. These questions, advice or recommendations were only issued if the plan did not meet the procurement and funding criteria or if there was conflicting feedback from a region.

The review process led to significant changes on 11 regional plans from a total of 46. Of these, the Ministry then declined two regional plans, including the plan submitted for Whangarei/Kaipara.

Following this process, the Ministry made the final decision on allocation of the funding as part of this business-as-usual commissioning process. We remain committed to working to resolve those cases where regional plans were declined, including with Whangarei/Kaipara.

6. And under what legislation/policy/authority can MSD fund organizations that have neither applied for the funding nor have been able to evidence or verify that they actually do the work that that the funding is intended to support? Nor have approached the applicants with any changes or recommendations to the 3 Year Regional Plan, nor have verbally voiced any changes or recommendations to the 3 year plan as submitted to MSD in any of the Community Hui that MSD repeated directed to occur?

The Ministry can approach any community organisation about relevant opportunities in their area.

The SAM Table funding approach was intended to support an integrated community response. This includes collaboration across family violence providers in each community. The Ministry proactively worked to ensure this was reflected in SAM Table regional plans.

Where providers are contracted by the Ministry, Regional Relationship Managers regularly monitor the deliverables of contracted work.

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 and any attached documents available to the wider public. The Ministry will do this by

publishing this letter on the Ministry'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 regarding SAM tables with us, please feel free to contact 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 or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Henderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Mark Henderson
General Manager
Safe Strong Families and Communities
Maori, Communities and Partnerships