



6 August 2020

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

**Official Information Request**  
**Our Ref: SSCOIA 2020-0059**

I refer to the parts of your official information request which were transferred from the Prime Minister's office to the State Services Commission (SSC) where you have asked:

- *When and under what authority and for what reason were the Government Departmental names changed to Maori, followed by English?*
- *How many Departments had a name change?*
- *What was the cost of the changes, Department by Department?*

**Information being released**

The SSC is the government's adviser on creating, disestablishing and reorganising government departments and administers the relevant legislation, including any changes to the schedules listing public service agencies.

The legal names of public service agencies (departments and departmental agencies) are listed in Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act and there are currently two departments that have a Māori name followed by an English name. They are Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children and Te Kāhui Whakamana Rua Tekau mā Iwa—Pike River Recovery Agency.

Both of these Māori names were approved by Cabinet when the departments were created, in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

Like other organisations, departments are able to use trading names other than their legal name, whether for particular business units or all of the organisation. After Parliament agreed in the Māori Language Act 1987 to recognise Māori as an official language of New Zealand, most departments and other agencies acquired a Māori name to use alongside their English name. Whether to have a Māori name and how to use it has been a matter for individual agencies.

**How many Departments had a name change?**

We have interpreted your question to be in relation to the changes in the legal name that result in the Māori name being placed ahead of the English name.

The only department that had a name change which has resulted in the Māori name being placed ahead of the English name is the change from 'Ministry for Vulnerable Children – Oranga Tamariki' to 'Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children'. This change was made by Cabinet through Order in Council and took effect in early 2018.

### **What was the cost of the changes, Department by Department?**

The SSC does not hold information that outlines the costs occurred by Oranga Tamariki as a result of the name change. However, publicly available on the Oranga Tamariki website is their response to an Official Information Act request which provides this information. A copy can be found [here](#).

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz](mailto:Ministerial.Services@ssc.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) on the State Services Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Dirks  
**Managing Principal – Ministerial Services**  
**State Services Commission**