



30 March 2021

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 9 February 2021 to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

1. *Can I please have a copy of the current "status dashboard" of PAG assessments?*
2. *What is the current staffing of the PAG?*
3. *Can I also have a summary of the number of ECE services that PAG investigated in the 2020 calendar year, the PAG's findings, and the outcome of each investigation?*
4. *And finally, can I please have a copy of any internal reports produced for Education Ministry senior managers in 2020 and in the 2021 year to date that provides an overview, summary, or assessment of the PAG's work?*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). My response to each of your questions is below.

#### **Question One – "Status Dashboard" of PAG**

Provider Assessment Group (PAG) reporting was consolidated in mid-2020 to reflect the one remaining active investigation. Later the dashboard was discontinued, with reporting consumed into a broader weekly report.

I am partially releasing the most recent PAG Status Report/Dashboard as Document 1, and subsequent weekly reports as Documents 2 – 24. Some information within these documents has been withheld under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a) of the Act to protect privacy of individuals;
- 9(2)(b)(ii) to protect the commercial position of the subject of the information,

Information that is out of the scope of your request has also been removed.

In preparing this information for release to you, we noted that in our earlier response to you on this topic some information had been incorrectly referenced as being withheld from the PAG dashboard under section 9(2)(ba)(ii) of the Act. In retrospect, that information should have been withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the Act, to protect the commercial position of another party.

## **Question Two - Staffing**

The PAG was initially established as a pilot programme. At Cabinet's recommendation, we undertook a review of the PAG model. Grant Thornton was selected from the All of Government (AoG) list of providers through our standard procurement process to conduct this review.

We are progressing the establishment of a permanent structure and operating model for PAG. A phased change programme is underway, which includes staffing and capability needs to mature the pilot programme. While this change programme is progressing, reactive licensing activities that may otherwise have been undertaken by PAG, have temporarily been undertaken by our regional teams with support from our National Office as required.

On 30 October 2020, PAG pilot staffing arrangements including fixed term contracts and seconded staff ceased. Permanent Ministry staff returned to their substantive positions. We are currently recruiting for a Manager for the Provider Assurance Group. Once that appointment is in place, we will actively progress staff appointments.

## **Question Three – Summary of investigations**

I am releasing a summary of the investigations undertaken in 2020 as Document 25. You will note that through 2020, PAG completed a formal investigation for one service and several spot checks for four other services. These numbers are reflective of the environment that PAG was responding to, because of the COVID-19 changes in Alert Levels and the large-scale change process following Grant Thornton's review.

## **Question Four – Reports on PAG**

No internal reports have been produced internally and delivered to Senior Managers *in 2020 and in the 2021 year to date that provides an overview, summary, or assessment of the PAG's work?*

As such, this part of your request has been refused under section 18(g) of the Act as the requested information does not exist.

While I acknowledge there is public interest in the activities of PAG, we consider it necessary to withhold the names of ECE service providers whose licences were identified as possible providers of interest for PAG. Until non-compliance is found, any assessment is unconfirmed. Releasing this list may unreasonably damage the reputation of providers.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes OIA responses on our website. As such, we may publish this response on our website after five working days. Your name and contact details will be removed.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Katrina Casey  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Sector Enablement and Support**