



4 May 2021

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 30 March 2021 requesting a copy of the Provider Assessment Group Review Report, conducted by Grant Thornton.

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

In 2020, Grant Thornton were selected from the All-of-Government Independent Quality Assurance (IQA) panel to assess the Provider Assessment Group (PAG). PAG was initially established to operate as a pilot programme for two years. The review by Grant Thornton was part of transitioning PAG to a permanent function and fulfilled Cabinet's recommendation for the Ministry to complete a quality assurance evaluation of the group. Although the review was commissioned by us, the Grant Thornton report is an external evaluation and therefore an external report. At the time of your first official information request, we considered this report was out of scope of your request.

A copy of report is now attached as **Document One**.

Some information has been withheld from the report under the following sections of the Act:

- 9(2)(a), to protect the privacy of individuals
- 9(2)(b)(ii), to avoid prejudice to the commercial position of another party
- 9(2)(g)(i), to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

Information in the report includes the names of some early learning service providers, identified as potentially in-scope of PAG's activity. While I acknowledge there is public interest in the activities of PAG, I consider it necessary to withhold names of service providers where non compliance was not proven, or any assessment was unconfirmed. Releasing these names may unreasonably damage the reputation of these service providers.

PAG was established to provide better monitoring of early learning services, contributing to a lift in the quality of early childhood education, while also reducing potential fraud and mismanagement in services. The Grant Thornton review identified that some of those benefits had been realised. The review also made several suggested improvements, which we will give effect to as PAG transitions from a pilot programme into a more established function.

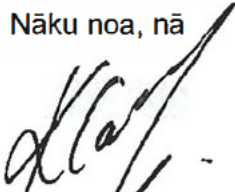
We are currently in the process of finalising the recruitment of a Manager for PAG. Once this appointment is in place, we will start recruiting staff members with specific skills. A key feature

of the PAG function is that it delivers a mix of national oversight and regional presence. Specific placements are yet to be made, as these rely in part on where individuals reside.

Please note, the Ministry now proactively publishes Official Information Act 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. If you have further questions please feel free to contact our media team in the first instance at media.team@education.govt.nz. If you are unsatisfied with my response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review it. You can do this by writing to 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