



29 January 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), received on 11 December 2023. Your full request is outlined in **Appendix A**.

The information contained in the unclaimed monies (UM) list on Inland Revenue's website is current and updated daily. Your request for the full database of UM including a breakdown of UM transfers to Inland Revenue by name, amount, holder and location is refused under section 18(c)(i) of the OIA, as making the requested information available would be contrary to the provisions of a specified enactment, namely Inland Revenue's confidentiality obligation in section 18 of the Tax Administration Act 1994 (TAA). Disclosure of this information does not fall within any of the exceptions to the confidentiality obligation listed in section 18D to 18J of the TAA. The disclosure of this information is only permitted when it is intended to enable the owner of the UM to make a claim of ownership.

The total number of UM items Inland Revenue holds as at 14 December 2023 is 395,079 with a total value of \$499,928,910.62. A breakdown of this information outlining how many items were transferred to Inland Revenue by year is provided in **Appendix B**.

Inland Revenue's transformation programme provided an opportunity to reform the administration of UM. The reforms made the administration of UM more efficient by lowering compliance costs for holders of unclaimed money and made it easier for owners to be reunited with their money.

The reforms included reducing the amount of time which must pass before money is deemed unclaimed by replacing the previous deeming periods of 6 and 25 years with a single period of 5 years for all funds. Therefore, money previously not transferred to Inland Revenue for 25 years is now transferred after 5, resulting in an influx of money.

For further details on the reforms, please see pages 51-64 of the special report on the Taxation (Annual Rates for 2020-21, Feasibility Expenditure, and Remedial Matters) Act 2021 at [Special report on the Taxation \(Annual Rates for 2020-21, Feasibility Expenditure, and Remedial Matters\) Act \(April 2021\) \(ird.govt.nz\)](https://www.ird.govt.nz/publications/special-report-on-the-taxation-annual-rates-for-2020-21-feasibility-expenditure-and-remedial-matters-act-2021).

Your request for the audit process that Inland Revenue takes before it accepts UM to hold is refused under section 6(c) of the OIA, to avoid prejudice to the maintenance of the law, including the prevention, investigation, and detection of offences, and the right to a fair trial.

Right of review

If you disagree with my decision on your OIA request, you can ask an Inland Revenue review officer to review my decision. To ask for an internal review, please email the Commissioner of Inland Revenue at: CommissionersCorrespondence@ird.govt.nz.

Alternatively, under section 28(3) of the OIA, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to investigate and review my decision. You can contact the office of the Ombudsman by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you choose to have an internal review, you can still ask the Ombudsman for a review.

Publishing of OIA response

We intend to publish our response to your request on Inland Revenue's website (www.ird.govt.nz) as this information may be of interest to other members of the public. This letter, with your personal details removed, will be published in its entirety. Publishing responses increases the availability of information to the public and is consistent with the OIA's purpose of enabling more effective participation in the making and administration of laws and policies and promoting the accountability of officials.

Thank you for your request.

Yours sincerely



Hannah Crawshaw

Group Lead, Customer & Compliance Services – Individuals

Appendix A

The following questions relate to the Unclaimed Monies (UM) - money that has been left untouched for 5 years with holders such as banks or with a person such as a solicitor, and has been passed to IRD to hold in Trust. I understand some of the UM records are not digitised as they date back to the 1970's. As such any requests for data within the following questions should only apply to accessible digitised records. Please note: I am not interested in, and nor do I intend to make any endeavour to collect UM on behalf of or as an agent for any entity owed UM.

- 1. Can I please be provided the full database of Unclaimed Monies (UM) that is available in digitised format. I anticipate this would be the list that is represented on the IRD website including the fields "Name", "Amount", "Holder Name", and "Location" - and if possible a field denoting the "date that the UM was passed to IRD". Can this data be provided in CSV, or XLS format please.*
- 2. I expect the database you provide may not be kept current, so could you advise when it was most recently updated, and/or how regularly the UM list that appears on the IRD website is updated to reflect the receipt of new UM's or successful claims.*
- 3. Can you provide a total sum (dollar amount) of UM that IRD are holding - inclusive of non digitised records.*
- 4. If the information is readily available can you provide the number of 'individuals' (read persons and/or entities) that UM are owed to (digitised and non digitised)? I note that some entities are owed UM more than once and if they are represented several times in the number provided that is fine - but could you clarify that that may be the case. If the non digitised data is not readily available pls disregard this request and I will make an assessment based on the data provided via Q1.*
- 5. Does IRD track how much UM (by \$ and entities owed) is passed to it each year (annual or FY)? If so can the figures be provided for those years that the data is available? This request may be redundant if the database provided in Question1 also contains a date field outlining when the UM was passed to IRD.*
- 6. Does IRD track the volume of UM passed to it each year - by Holder? e.g. Total sum passed over from Westpac and the number of a/c's represented. If so can I please be provided this information. This request may be redundant if the database provided in Question1 also contains a date field outlining when the UM was passed to IRD.*
- 7. Can you please outline the audit process that IRD undertakes (or is legally able to undertake) with a Holder of UM (if any) before it accepts UM to hold in Trust.*

Appendix B

Unclaimed money passed to Inland Revenue each year since 14 December 1998

Financial year	Items received	Value received
14/12/1998 - 30/06/1999	971	\$424,757.48
1/07/1999 - 30/06/2000	11,973	\$2,961,629.50
1/07/2000 - 30/06/2001	3,294	\$2,672,788.95
1/07/2001 - 30/06/2002	2,874	\$2,133,619.88
1/07/2002 - 30/06/2003	3,586	\$2,681,472.57
1/07/2003 - 30/06/2004	13,149	\$7,155,167.15
1/07/2004 - 30/06/2005	5,175	\$4,253,934.79
1/07/2005 - 30/06/2006	5,687	\$5,789,764.25
1/07/2006 - 30/06/2007	8,268	\$5,304,330.40
1/07/2007 - 30/06/2008	7,617	\$7,140,719.28
1/07/2008 - 30/06/2009	6,669	\$5,690,163.06
1/07/2009 - 30/06/2010	8,234	\$7,164,353.74
1/07/2010 - 30/06/2011	9,805	\$7,013,632.24
1/07/2011 - 30/06/2012	105,702	\$28,856,763.45
1/07/2012 - 30/06/2013	36,376	\$26,129,739.32
1/07/2013 - 30/06/2014	24,475	\$11,927,900.63
1/07/2014 - 30/06/2015	16,042	\$10,285,314.10
1/07/2015 - 30/06/2016	17,105	\$15,345,903.24
1/07/2016 - 30/06/2017	22,721	\$17,403,527.94
1/07/2017 - 30/06/2018	38,746	\$17,471,790.50
1/07/2018 - 30/06/2019	23,416	\$15,544,154.51
1/07/2019 - 30/06/2020	30,666	\$12,998,277.54
1/07/2020 - 30/06/2021	53,209	\$19,280,787.28
1/07/2021 - 30/06/2022	85,627	\$54,010,883.30
1/07/2022 - 30/06/2023	127,988	\$203,936,368.20
1/07/2023 - 14/12/2023	37,104	\$74,505,065.89