

**From:** Andrew Banks [<mailto:Andrew.Banks@talent2.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 15, 2012 11:53 AM  
**To:** Craig Foss  
**Cc:** Lesley Longstone ([lesley.longstone@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:lesley.longstone@minedu.govt.nz)); Mary Sue Rogers  
**Subject:** Novopay  
**Importance:** High

Dear Craig,

Thank you for the note late last night and while I am currently Asia I am fully briefed with regard the media activity and Novopay.

In response to your concerns I would like to first express that Talent2 is absolutely committed to delivering a high quality service to the sector and we will do what is necessary in working with the Ministry to stabilise the service as quickly as is practical.

For the sake of clarity we had committed to complete the backlog of tickets (which **had an opening balance of circa 9000** tickets) by the 9 November. On the 8 November in consultation with the Ministry the priorities were re-adjusted to focus on pay period 17. Mary Sue Rogers summarised the commitment **to clearing the backlog by Friday the 16 November** in her mail to you on the 12 November.

I acknowledge that the negative press coverage is causing all parties unwanted attention. We are committed to resolving issues and taking actions that will improve the overall service but not at the risk of making things worse.

While I understand that there is no merit in apportioning blame, it is important to acknowledge this entire project was a collaborative effort between us and the Ministry and the service and system we have built **reflect a specification and model that the Ministry participated in and approved**. Some of the design assumptions are clearly being challenged and we are working with the Ministry to readjust. A good example of this would be the many thousands of relievers and the introduction of a new payslip.

In response to your specific requests;

- To re-state what we discussed on Monday, Talent2 has added 15 incremental trained staff from the 12 November. Following many selection interviews the best of those screened were selected and these 15 are made up of 9 incremental experienced payroll resources and 6 existing Novopay team members who have been trained for more complex work. These individuals were then replaced with 6 appropriate new hires. We have not seen the benefit of the 15 people as the productivity increased will only be visible in pay period 18.

We will look to add additional payroll processing staff as required and once they have completed the necessary screening and training they will be operationally deployed. It is important to again reiterate this will contribute to the solution but on an incremental basis, as this is a highly sensitive payroll environment and any new staff must gain the tacit knowledge over the first few runs and comply with our contractual obligations and be trained to minimise the likely hood of human error.

As we have previously explained to Ministry we **had a baseline staffing level with contingency based on volumes provided by the Ministry** but this is clearly not enough and **over 30 FTE have been already added since go live**.

- In respect to the Service desk, today was an exceptionally high volume day with greater **than 20% more call than any other comparative day since go live**. We will closely monitor the situation to see if this is a trend developing associated with end of year or whether this was a one off occurrence. If this remains a trend then we will increase the service desk staff through re-deployment, call backs and other actions we have taken in the past as part of our service desk improvement activities.

Many of the calls today were related to end of year processes and the need for administrators to have a high level of assistants in understand the processes and systems. The Service Desk was not designed as a training facility and while our team are dedicated to helping School Administrators it is extremely difficult to provide a phone based training service. **In addition there is a plan in place with the Ministry to commence outbound calling to Schools in relation to end of year processes, starting this Friday.**

- On the Business Analyst we had one resignation which has now been backfilled. We appreciate that there is a desired from the Ministry to have significantly more resources in this area and the specific individuals from Talent2 with skills in this area have developed deep MoE knowledge. We are committed to work with the Ministry to help ensure that the individuals with deep MoE experience are utilised for the right type of work – and identify other resources within Talent2 and beyond to do the more generic activities such as training, road show support.

- We understand the need to have our most senior executives close at hand in NZ and Mary Sue Rogers will personally be in Wellington later this week ,and again in December for a complete review of this phase of the project in preparation for next year to ensure all we have learned from this initial phase is turned to best advantage.

Please be assured the Executive Management of Talent2 is fully engaged in all the decisions in relation to the Ministry and like you and Lesley and all the team at MOE, we want only the best for the teachers of NZ and for this project to run as smoothly as possible going forward and to minimise disruption.

Yours Sincerely

**Andrew Banks**  
Chairman.

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