

25 May 2020

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[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

**Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-004699**

Thank you for your email of 24 April 2020, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*I am looking for data regarding total alcohol related ACC expenditure, compensation payments and patient numbers in 2019 and wondered if you would be able to help. This would include:*

*Total ACC income compensation payments for alcohol related injuries in 2019 and number of claims (including any information on cause of injury e.g. car crashes, crime, accidents etc.).*

*Total ACC expenditure on alcohol related hospital admissions in 2019 and number of alcohol related hospital admissions.*

*Total ACC expenditure on ambulance services for alcohol related injuries/ illnesses in 2019 and number of alcohol related patients that used the service.*

*Any information on alcohol attribution to expenditures, injuries, hospitalisations and use of ambulance services is ideal but wherever this is not possible, total numbers are very helpful too. I also understand 2019 data may not be available yet. If this is the case, the most recent year you have data available for would be fine!! Any additional data you think may be helpful would also be much appreciated!*

**ACC is a no-fault scheme**

ACC does not require the full details of how an injury occurred because the scheme operates on a no-fault basis. We provide cover for injuries by virtue of someone having suffered a personal injury. Therefore, the full circumstances of how an injury occurred are not relevant to our decisions on whether we can cover the claim. For example, whether or not the person was affected by alcohol when they became injured.

**The data we are able to provide you on alcohol related injuries**

The data set available to ACC is reliant on the information provided on an ACC45 injury claim form, which is completed when a person seeks treatment for their injury. There are multiple fields on the ACC45 form, some fields are mandatory to complete, and others are not.

There is a free-text field 'accident description' on the form where a person can provide a brief description of how their accident happened. This field is not mandatory to complete and not every client does so. Also, when the field is completed there is considerable variation in the way accidents are described.

The data provided was extracted for claims where the key words: drunk, alcohol, intoxicate, beer, wine, champagne and under the influence, with some variation, were used in this field. Due to the limitations above, while largely representative of the claims received by ACC, the data should not be considered a

complete, definitive measure of the claims related to alcohol accidents that ACC received during the period covered by this response.

Please see Appendix 1 below which provides data on alcohol related claims for 2019.

*ACC takes privacy seriously*

ACC does not disclose routinely low value numbers related to claims. Accordingly, some of the values in the tables only indicate that the number is less than 4 (denoted as <4). This limits the potential for particular individuals or matters specific to certain individuals from being identified.

Withholding in this way is necessary to protect the privacy of these individuals under section 9(2)(a) of the Act. In doing so, we have considered the public interest in making the information available and have determined that it does not outweigh the need to protect the privacy of these persons.

*Notes about the data*

- Only data for accepted claims has been provided.
- New claims are counted by the date they are lodged with ACC. A claim can be lodged immediately after an injury or at a later date.
- Active claims are claims that generated a payment in the period specified. A claim can be active over many years and appear more than once in the data. The count of active claims includes new claims for which a payment has been made in the period.
- The costs provided is the cost of weekly compensation paid on active claims in the period specified. The costs are GST exclusive.
- This data was extracted on 6 May 2020 and may be different if extracted again at a later date.

**We are unable to provide you with information on the cost to ACC of hospitalisation**

The cost of emergency treatment at public hospitals is bulk funded under the Public Health Acute Services (PHAS) agreement. The costs for ACC covered accidents that fall under this agreement are not individually billed to ACC and allocated to individual claims. Rather, the costs of emergency treatment are covered in a bulk payment made to the District Health Boards each year, via the Ministry of Health.

Due to the above, we are unable to identify the cost of ACC of hospitalisations associated with alcohol related injuries. As such, we are refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held by ACC.

**We are unable to provide you with information on the cost to ACC of ambulance services**

Similar to the above, the cost of road ambulance services, such as St John, for ACC covered accidents is bulk funded under the joint agreement for Emergency Ambulance Services, joint funded by the Ministry of Health and ACC through the National Ambulance Sector Office. The costs for ACC covered accidents requiring ambulance services are not individually billed to ACC and allocated to individual claims.

Due to this, we are unable to identify the cost to ACC of ambulance services as a result of alcohol related injuries. As such, we are refusing this part of your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information is not held by ACC.

Ambulance services such as Air Ambulance and Flying Doctors are individually billed to ACC, and as such do have costs allocated directly to a claim. For us to provide you with this information would require a manual search through each claim relating to an alcohol injury to determine if this service was used and then the cost of this service. As such, we are refusing to provide information on the cost to ACC of air ambulance services under section 18(f) of the Act as to determine the information would require substantial manual collation and research.

**Additional information**

There is further information and statistics relating to alcohol issues on [www.alcohol.org.nz](http://www.alcohol.org.nz) which you may find useful.

**How to get in touch**

If you have any questions, you can email me at [GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz](mailto:GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz).

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Nāku iti noa, nā



Sasha Wood  
**Manager Official Information Act Services**  
Government Engagement & Support

Appendix 1

Table 1. Number of new claims registered for alcohol related injuries in 2019, broken down by top 10 injury causes.

Injury Cause	2019
	New Claims
Loss Balance/Personal Control	1211
Puncture	508
Struck by Person/Animal	389
Lifting/Carrying/Strain	244
Collision/Knocked Over by Object	229
Tripping or Stumbling	134
Loss of Control of Vehicle	71
Medical Treatment	64
Pushed or Pulled	59
Slipping, Skidding on Foot	58
Other	460

Table 2. Number of new claims registered for alcohol related injuries in 2019, broken down by top five injury diagnoses.

Diagnosis	2019
	New Claims
Soft Tissue Injury	1220
Laceration, Puncture Wound, Sting	1000
Fracture/Dislocation	314
Dental Injuries	232
Concussion/Brain Injury	142
Other	519

Table 3. Number of active claims and claim costs for claims which are receiving weekly compensation in 2019 for alcohol related injuries, broken down by top 10 injury causes.

Injury Cause	2019	
	Active Claims	Weekly Compensation (\$)
Loss Balance/Personal Control	109	1,135,748
Struck by Person/Animal	52	676,033
Puncture	31	229,761
Collision/Knocked Over by Object	24	323,875
Loss of Control of Vehicle	22	168,815
Tripping or Stumbling	16	178,731
Twisting Movement	13	114,773
Slipping, Skidding on Foot	12	180,408
Medical Treatment	8	64,749
Lifting/Carrying/Strain	8	85,155
Other	33	630,857

Table 4. Number of active claims and claim costs for claims which are receiving weekly compensation in 2019 for alcohol related injuries, broken down by top five injury diagnoses.

Diagnosis	2019	
	Active Claims	Weekly compensation (\$)
Fracture/Dislocation	108	1,283,908
Soft Tissue Injury	93	992,831
Laceration, Puncture Wound, Sting	67	373,161
Concussion/Brain Injury	26	345,256
Burns	<4	18,239
Other	31	775,510