

2 April 2019

Jordan Bond
Jordan.Bond@rnz.co.nz

REF: OIA-4724

Dear Jordan,

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 19 February 2019 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

"I'm looking at some AA figures here <https://www.aa.co.nz/about/newsroom/media-releases/safety/alarming-increase-in-drugged-driving-deaths/> (and attached if the link disappears) about the number of drivers involved in fatal crashes who were under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The AA says the figures are from the CAS.

Under the Official Information Act, I request:

- * A list of all legal drugs (including prescription and/or medication) and illegal drugs that were in the systems of the 79 drivers involved in fatal crashes from 2017 (or, preferably, 2018 if these are available.)*
- * A breakdown of the number of times each of these drugs appeared in the 2017 (or 2018) figures.*
- * A list of all legal drugs that are considered by NZTA or its road safety partners to impair driving.'*

On 19 March 2019 we sent a letter advising you we were extending your request by 10 working days due to the consultations necessary to make a decision on your request.

I am refusing your first and second question under section 18(f) of the Act because the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

The NZ Transport Agency manages the Crash Analysis System (CAS) which captures information on where, when and how crashes occur. CAS does not record the type of drugs found in the systems of drivers or whether they were prescription and/or medication and/or illegal.

CAS uses the following contributing factor codes relating to all drugs other than alcohol:

Codes	Description
108	Drugs Suspected
109	Drugs present
220	Other Drugs
221	Impaired non-drivers (pedestrian/cyclist/passenger etc)

The complete list of codes for factors influencing a crash can be found in Appendix 2 starting on page 13 of the Guide for the interpretation of coded crash reports from the Crash Analysis system available at:

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/guide-to-coded-crash-reports/docs/guide-to-coded-crash-reports.pdf>

The Transport Agency gets its information about crashes from Traffic Crash Reports (TCR) completed by the NZ Police. To compile a list of drugs and their frequency would involve having to read each individual page of all the fatal crash TCRs. TCRs are stored as PDFs of scanned forms, which are not machine readable. Furthermore, any drug related information is written as free text and cannot be analysed easily.

Drugs may not be noted, suspected or named in the TCR and may only be identified in drug test results or coroner's findings that may subsequently be provided to the Transport Agency. These would also have to be read individually and cross-referenced against CAS for the information you have requested.

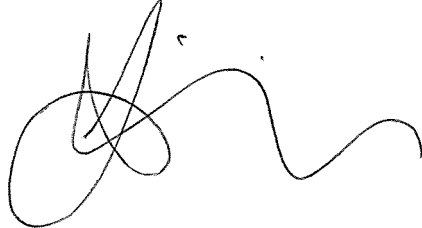
I am declining your third question under section 18(d) of the Act that the information is publicly available. This information can be found at section 11 starting on page 124 of the Medical Aspects of the Fitness to Drive publication is available here:

<https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/medical-aspects/Medical-aspects-of-fitness-to-drive-A-guide-or-health-practitioners.pdf>

Under section 28 of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to refuse this request. The contact details for the Ombudsman can be located at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz.

If you would like to discuss this reply with the Transport Agency, please contact Jasmine Higginson, Acting Senior Manager, Media, by email to jasmine.higginson@nzta.govt.nz or by phone on 04 903 2315.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jasmine Higginson', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jasmine Higginson
Acting Senior Manager, Media