

23 February 2023

Taylor Rice
 Journalist
 Sun Media
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REF: OIA-11764

Dear Taylor

Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 6 December 2022 to the New Zealand Police requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). On 21 December 2022, the following part of your request was transferred to Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency for response as we manage the Crash Analysis System (CAS):

- *How many road accidents can be attributed to drugs in the Bay of Plenty per year?*

On 22 December 2022, we sought clarification as to what timeframe your request refers to. Subsequently, you clarified that you request data from 2018 to 2022.

The data you request is as follows:

Crashes in Bay of Plenty Region with contributing factor 109 - Drugs proven					
Year	Fatal crashes	Serious injury crashes	Minor injury crashes	Non-injury crashes	Total crashes
2018	9				9
2019	11	1		1	13
2020	12				12
2021	10			2	12
2022*	3				3
Total	45	1	0	3	49

* 2022 data is incomplete and is current from CAS as of 30 January 2023.

It is important to note the following in relation to the information provided above:

- This data is provided from the road traffic crash database; CAS version 2.2.9.
- Waka Kotahi maintains the CAS which is updated once a Traffic Crash Report (TCR) is received from NZ Police sometime after the crash.
- Data is limited to crashes in Bay of Plenty Region with contributing factor 109 'Drugs proven'.

- Drugs means any drugs other than alcohol. This includes over the counter, prescription and illicit drugs.
- A crash, to be recorded in the CAS must have occurred on a road. The CAS definition of a road is any street, motorway or beach, or a place to which the public have access with a motor vehicle, whether as of right or not, for example, a public car park.
- Due to the police reporting time frame and subsequent data processing, there is a lag from the time of a crash to full and correct crash records within the CAS.
- Due to the nature of non-fatal crashes, it is believed that these are under-reported, with the level of under-reporting decreasing with the increasing severity of the crash.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, New Zealand had a 4-level Alert system in place from 21 March 2020 until this changed to a Traffic Light system from 3 December 2021 to 12 September 2022. The amount of traffic on the roads during level 4 lockdowns was greatly reduced, which consequently reduced the number of road crashes. Road movements under the Orange and Red levels of the Traffic Light system would also be reduced due to the restrictions in place, so data from these periods will not align with previous trends.
- The cause of a crash cannot necessarily be attributed to any one factor (such as fatigue) as a crash may have multiple factors.
- Police were not doing roadside drug testing during the years in question so it would have been difficult for the officer present at the crash to confirm the presence of drugs.
- In the case of fatal crashes, more testing of drivers for the presence of alcohol and drugs usually takes place so more results are available.

In line with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will soon be published on our website, with personal information removed.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Andrew Knackstedt, Senior Media Manager, by email to andrew.knackstedt@nzta.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely



Galina Mitchelhill
Senior Manager, Research and Analytics