

14 February 2023

Jenny Ling  
Journalist  
Northern Advocate  
[jenny.ling@nzme.co.nz](mailto:jenny.ling@nzme.co.nz)

REF: OIA-11875

Dear Jenny

### **Request made under the Official Information Act 1982**

Thank you for your email of 16 January 2023, requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*Just reading the NZ Herald article re complaints about vehicle damage caused by potholes. In the first 10 months of 2022, Waka Kotahi received 555 complaints, compared to 421 complaints made in 2021. Could we please get the number of complaints for Northland for 2022 and also for 2021?*

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency would like to highlight that 555 is the total number of requests for compensation logged in our Customer Record Management System (CRMS) between 1 January 2022 and 7 October 2022, not complaints about vehicle damage caused by potholes. Waka Kotahi received 351 complaints regarding potholes or road surfaces in 2022. You can read more about the incorrect reporting, in our media release of 20 January 2023 at: [www.nzta.govt.nz/media-releases/state-highway-pothole-complaints-not-as-high-as-reported/](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/media-releases/state-highway-pothole-complaints-not-as-high-as-reported/).

In 2021, we received 16 complaints regarding potholes or road surfaces and 22 requests for compensation in total (not exclusively pothole related) for Northland. In 2022, we received 21 complaints about potholes or road surfaces, and 72 requests for compensation in total (not exclusively pothole related) for Northland.

The number of Northland complaints regarding potholes and number of requests for compensation provided to you for this response have been pulled from our CRMS for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2022. These include complaints and requests for compensation that are received through different channels, and directly to our state highway maintenance and operations contractors.

The information available at present in our CRMS geographically covers all of New Zealand's state highway network, but excludes complaints:

- received directly by individual capital projects
- received by the Auckland Motorway Alliance (until 30 June 2019) or the Auckland System Management contract (from 1 July 2019)

- relating to local roads (except in some regions)
- received through media or social media channels.

Please note, our definition of complaint is '*... any expression of dissatisfaction where a customer expects a response or resolution – even if they don't specifically ask for one. A complaint identifies a problem or gap between people's expectations and what was delivered.*' Additionally, a complaint is '*any submission that comes through our complaints form on the NZTA website.*'

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Ministerial Services by email to [official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:official.correspondence@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Neil Walker', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Neil Walker**

National Manager, Maintenance and Operations.