

9 April 2021

s 9(2)(a)

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REF: OIA-7811

Dear s 9(2)

### Request made under the Official Information Act 1982

Thank you for your email of 11 March 2021 to NZ Police Commissioner Andrew Coster requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). Your request was transferred to Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency on 11 March 2021, as the information requested is believed to be held by, or more closely related to the functions of Waka Kotahi. You have requested the following information:

*[...] please check that the road deaths from illegal use of mobile phones by drivers from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021 is about double the number of deaths in that same period from Covid 19?*

The number of road deaths where 'Attention diverted by cell phone' was a factor contributing to the crash from 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2021 was two (2).

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

- The crash data is provided from the road traffic crash database; Crash Analysis System (CAS) version 2.1.0
- Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency maintains the Crash Analysis System which is updated once a Traffic Crash Report (TCR) is received from NZ Police sometime after the crash.
- Data is limited to fatal crashes for the period 1 March 2020 to 28 February 2021 as recorded in CAS to date - 23/03/2021.
- Data is limited to crashes where 359 'Attention diverted by cell phone' was a factor contributing to the crash.
- A crash, to be recorded in CAS has to 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 e.g. 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 CAS.
- The cause of a crash cannot necessarily be attributed to any one factor (eg cell phone use) as a crash may have multiple factors.
- Numbers sourced from CAS may not match numbers sourced from the Ministry of Transport because of the lag from the time of a crash to full and correct records in CAS.
- 2020 and 2021 data is not yet complete.

Waka Kotahi does not hold information on cases or fatalities from Covid-19, However the Ministry of Health website contains information at the following links:

- <https://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/media-releases/sadly-first-death-covid-19-new-zealand>
- <https://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/media-releases/no-new-cases-covid-19-58>.

In accordance with Waka Kotahi policy, this response will be published on our website shortly.

If you would like to discuss this reply with Waka Kotahi, please contact Kerry Greig, Manager Data Services, by email to [kerry.greig@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:kerry.greig@nzta.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely



**Galina Mitchelhill**

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