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18 February 2022



REF: OIA-9368

Dear 

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

Thank you for your email of 20 January 2022 requesting the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

*We were provided with the stats below about 7 years ago:*

*Between 2004-2009*

- 1046 drivers died on New Zealand roads
- 500 were impaired
- 135 had used alcohol alone
- 96 had used cannabis alone
- 142 had a combination of cannabis & alcohol
- 127 had a combination of other drugs which included cannabis &/or alcohol

*Last year I was given a link to look up other stats that related to 2020, but I couldn't find any stat related to the above information. If it is possible to update these, it would help to confront the myth that drug driving isn't a problem in NZ.*

The updated figures for 2020 are as follows:

- 212 drivers died on New Zealand roads.
- 128 were impaired (92 above and 36 below legal limit).
- 44 had used alcohol alone (22 above and 22 below legal limit).
- 13 had used cannabis alone.
- 26 had a combination of cannabis & alcohol (21 above and 5 below legal limit).
- 33 had a combination of other drugs which included cannabis &/or alcohol.
- 8 had a combination of other drugs which did not include included cannabis &/or alcohol.

"Impaired" is to be interpreted as a non-zero alcohol or test refused. "Cannabis & alcohol" is to be interpreted as having no other drugs involved.

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

- This data is provided from the road traffic crash database; Crash Analysis System (CAS) version 2.2.0
- 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 year 2020 as recorded in CAS to date - 8/02/2022.
- Data is limited to deceased drivers.
- Drugs means that crash cause code 109 'Drugs proven' was a contributing factor to the crash.
- Alcohol above limit means crash cause code 103 'Alcohol test above limit or test refused' was a factor contributing to the crash.
- Alcohol below legal limit means the breath or blood reading was non-zero but below the legal limit.
- A crash, to be recorded in 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 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 alcohol) as a crash may have multiple factors.
- Drug and alcohol factors for a fatal crash can be updated at a later date when Serious Crash Unit reports and Coroner's reports become available.
- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, NZ had a 4-level Alert system in place from 21 March 2020 until this changed to a Traffic Light system in December 2021. 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.
- 2020 data is incomplete.

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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