

Report Date: 8/05/2023
Data extract date: 8/05/2023
Request: Under the Official Information Act, I'd like to request an update to the attached table (please see the email) to include figures for 2021, 2022 and if available, figures for 2023 so far.

I would like figures for:

- The number of deaths involving drugs
- The number of deaths involving alcohol (separated for those above and below the limit)
- The total number of deaths involving alcohol/drugs

Could you also supply these figures broken down by Regional Council territory for the last five years?

Previous request: OIA-9170
Source database: CAS
Report produced by: Paul Phipps (Data Services)
Peer reviewed by: Wonsang Yu (Data Services)

Please note the following concerning the data contained in this spreadsheet:

- This data is provided from the road traffic crash database; Crash Analysis System (CAS) version 2.3.1
- Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency maintains CAS 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 years 2013 to 2023 as recorded in CAS to date - 8/05/2023.
- Data is limited to crashes involving drugs or alcohol.
- Drugs means cause 109 'Drugs proven' was a contributing factor to the crash.
- Alcohol above limit or test refused means cause 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.
- Fatal, Serious Injury and Minor injury crash report data is usually recorded in CAS within one working day of Waka Kotahi receiving it from NZ Police.
- 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 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 (eg drugs) 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.
- Note that this is a table of road deaths involving a driver with alcohol or drugs. There are a few crashes where a drugged pedestrian or cyclist was killed but the driver had neither alcohol nor drugs in their system. These are not included in the table (one crash in each of 2014, 2017, two in 2020, and one in 2022).
- Total deaths involving alcohol and drugs in a crash means the alcohol and drugs could be different drivers or the same driver.
- A death can appear in more than one column of the table.
- From 1 December 2014 the breath alcohol limit was lowered to 250 micrograms of alcohol per litre of breath and the blood alcohol level was reduced to 50mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood. The previous limits were 400 micrograms of alcohol per litre of breath and 80 mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood.
- 2022 and 2023 data is incomplete in CAS but the figures provided are what is currently in CAS as at 8/05/2023.
- Over time, crash numbers can change a little - either up (eg as late reports are entered) or down (eg as duplicates are removed). Serious crashes can become fatal crashes, fatal crashes can be excluded eg if a later Coroners report makes it clear that the crash was due to medical factors

For further information, please contact StatisticalAnalysis@nzta.govt.nz

This information must be read in conjunction with the Caveats on the first page of this spreadsheet

Road deaths involving drugs or alcohol				
Year	Deaths involving drugs	Deaths involving alcohol		Total deaths involving alcohol and/or drugs
		Above limit or refused	Below legal limit	
2013	14	53	29	90
2014	18	48	41	99
2015	39	65	53	136
2016	62	67	70	158
2017	92	76	75	186
2018	98	81	46	176
2019	112	86	52	183
2020	102	77	39	165
2021	95	78	33	156
2022*	65	111	52	192
2023*	1	7	6	14

* 2022 and 2023 data in CAS is not yet complete but this is current from CAS as at 8/05/2023

Some deaths involved both drugs and alcohol and would therefore be counted in both the drugs and one of the alcohol above/below columns.

This information must be read in conjunction with the Caveats on the first page of this spreadsheet

2018-2022 Road deaths involving drugs or alcohol				
Regional Council	Deaths involving drugs	Deaths involving alcohol		Total deaths involving alcohol and/or drugs
		Above limit or refused	Below legal limit	
Northland	54	53	24	102
Auckland	50	62	27	110
Waikato	108	75	57	185
Bay of Plenty	48	48	18	86
Gisborne	9	10	3	15
Hawke's Bay	18	14	11	35
Taranaki	24	13	17	38
Manawatū-Whanganui	47	26	20	75
Wellington	17	17	7	31
Tasman	7	4	6	11
Nelson	6	4	1	7
Marlborough	7	5	1	11
West Coast	6	11	1	15
Canterbury	52	57	15	92
Otago	9	22	11	36
Southland	10	12	3	23

* 2022 data in CAS is not yet complete but this is current from CAS as at 8/05/2023

Some deaths involved both drugs and alcohol and would therefore be counted in both the drugs and one of the alcohol above/below columns.