

23 July 2021

Robbie Charles

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Tēnā koe Robbie

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-011745

Thank you for your email of 16 June 2021, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

With reference to the table published on the data.govt.nz website on 4 September 2020, regarding spinal injury related claims.

For each of the following injury types, please tell me the proportion of claimants that are Maori in the years 2015 to 2020 (by calendar year)

- *High Level Tetraplegic*
- *Low Level Tetraplegic / High Level Paraplegic*
- *Paraplegic*
- *Incomplete Spinal Cord Injuries*

For the following payments please tell me the average (mean and median) payments to claimants that are Maori, and to claimants overall, for each of the years 2015 to 2020 (by calendar year)

- *Other Back and Spine Injuries - Entitlement Payments*
- *Other Back and Spine Injuries - Other Payments*
- *Other Back and Spine Injuries - Medical Payments Only*
- *Other Back and Spine Injuries - No Payments*

Published data

The table below was uploaded onto the data.govt.nz website on 4 September 2020. The data showed the number of spinal injury related claims between 1 January 2015 and 31 July 2020, broken down by a severity profile listed from fatal claims to 'other back and spine injury' claims. Please note the payments section relates to the number of claims that received a payment. It does not relate to costs.

Table 1: New spinal injury related claims registered between 1 January 2015 and 31 July 2020 broken down by injury severity and calendar year.

Spinal Injury Severity	Registration Calendar Year					
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fatal	20	21	19	28	25	10
High Level Tetraplegic	5	6	6	7	7	<4
Low Level Tetraplegic / High Level Paraplegic	<4	<4	<4	<4	4	<4
Paraplegic	30	31	22	19	38	6
Incomplete Spinal Cord Injuries	15	15	18	22	10	5
Other Back and Spine Injuries - Entitlement Payments	17,082	18,032	18,383	19,254	19,325	8,409
Other Back and Spine Injuries - Other Payments	307	304	251	191	225	120
Other Back and Spine Injuries - Medical Payments Only	304,859	316,196	318,575	326,972	337,520	160,690
Other Back and Spine Injuries - No Payments	12,057	12,787	13,172	13,675	14,134	23,297

As was stated in the notes attached to the above table, "counts of less than four have been replaced by <4, in the interests of client privacy".

The table below shows the proportion of spinal injury claims for Māori to non- Māori.

Table 2: Proportion of spinal injury claims for Māori clients registered between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2021 broken down by injury severity, ethnicity and calendar year

Spinal Injury Severity	Ethnicity	Registration Calendar Year					
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fatal	Māori	14%	19%	10%	7%	24%	8%
	Non-Māori	86%	81%	90%	93%	76%	92%
High Level Tetraplegic	Māori	0%	33%	67%	29%	29%	20%
	Non-Māori	100%	67%	33%	71%	71%	80%
Low Level Tetraplegic / High Level Paraplegic	Māori	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%
	Non-Māori	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%
Paraplegic	Māori	29%	13%	14%	25%	21%	20%
	Non-Māori	71%	87%	86%	75%	79%	80%
Incomplete Spinal Cord Injuries	Māori	13%	19%	6%	23%	30%	10%
	Non-Māori	87%	81%	94%	77%	70%	90%
Other Back and Spine Injuries - Entitlement Payments	Māori	13%	14%	14%	14%	15%	14%
	Non-Māori	87%	86%	86%	86%	85%	86%
Other Back and Spine Injuries - Other Payments	Māori	12%	9%	7%	9%	10%	11%
	Non-Māori	88%	91%	93%	91%	90%	89%
Other Back and Spine Injuries - Medical Payments Only	Māori	10%	10%	10%	10%	9%	9%
	Non-Māori	90%	90%	90%	90%	91%	91%
Other Back and Spine Injuries - No Payments	Māori	19%	19%	20%	20%	20%	19%
	Non-Māori	81%	81%	80%	80%	80%	81%
Total	Māori	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
	Non-Māori	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%

The table below shows the total average costs per claim, broken down by injury severity groups and Maori and non-Maori.

Please note that, particularly in the case of serious injury, large claim costs can be due to a single claim which can distort the average costs per claim.

Table 3: Average cost per claim to date for spinal injuries registered between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2020, broken down by injury severity, ethnicity and calendar year

Spinal Injury Severity	Ethnicity	Registration Calendar Year					
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Fatal	Māori	\$227,025	\$151,008	\$784,256	\$114,362	\$40,484	\$5,177
	Non-Māori	\$151,607	\$51,424	\$57,659	\$48,696	\$58,090	\$34,099
High Level Tetraplegic	Māori	-	\$3,051,175	\$1,727,931	\$1,111,753	\$1,509,530	\$331,335
	Non-Māori	\$1,703,803	\$2,296,590	\$2,942,526	\$1,708,041	\$797,970	\$598,893
Low Level Tetraplegic / High Level Paraplegic	Māori	-	-	-	-	-	\$159,140
	Non-Māori	\$617,397	\$2,620,407	\$1,451,945	\$507,436	\$1,125,524	\$441,879

Spinal Injury Severity	Ethnicity	Registration Calendar Year					
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Paraplegic	Māori	\$1,120,624	\$986,690	\$1,053,316	\$702,914	\$559,340	\$137,315
	Non-Māori	\$901,801	\$958,785	\$878,064	\$832,379	\$559,085	\$366,050
Incomplete Spinal Cord Injuries	Māori	\$597,813	\$422,385	\$84,488	\$405,452	\$242,618	\$89,172
	Non-Māori	\$487,918	\$323,676	\$427,530	\$431,442	\$328,152	\$189,678
Other Back and Spine Injury Claims with Entitlement Payments	Māori	\$18,524	\$17,474	\$15,227	\$17,223	\$16,242	\$12,769
	Non-Māori	\$18,294	\$17,597	\$17,631	\$17,505	\$15,715	\$12,855

Other Back and Spine Injury Claims with Other Payments but no Entitlement Payments	Māori	\$2,037	\$4,854	\$3,020	\$2,278	\$2,090	\$5,717
	Non-Māori	\$2,500	\$2,710	\$2,917	\$2,907	\$4,235	\$4,250
Other Back and Spine Injury Claims with Medical Payments Only	Māori	\$212	\$215	\$227	\$231	\$250	\$238
	Non-Māori	\$302	\$311	\$336	\$346	\$353	\$338
Other Back and Spine Injury Claims with No Payments	Māori	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Non-Māori	-	-	-	-	-	-

Ethnicity

ACC ethnicity data is prioritised, meaning that a claim can only have one ethnicity based on a client's selections on the ACC45 claim lodgement form. A maximum of six ethnicities can be chosen by the client but the system prioritises these where Māori, regardless of other ethnicities are classified as Māori. Non-Māori includes all clients that did not put Māori as any of their ethnicity options or did not provide an ethnicity.

Fatal claims

A single claim can have multiple injuries. Fatal claims do not identify the specific injury that resulted in the fatality. For this reason, payments attributed to fatal claims could include payments related to other injuries.

ACC is not able to provide comprehensive fatality statistics as ACC data is collected on the basis of claims made. Our data may not represent the total number of fatalities related to accidents for the following reasons:

1. Many people are not aware that they can make a claim related to an accidental death of a family member and therefore ACC only ever receives claims for a subset of accidental deaths.
2. If a person who has an open claim with ACC dies of their injuries, or other causes, ACC is not necessarily notified of this.

For more accurate fatality data, we suggest that you contact the Ministry of Health Mortality Collection (MORT), which classifies the underlying cause of death for all deaths registered in New Zealand. MORT uses a range of sources (Police, funeral director, coroner, hospital records) to validate data reliability.

More information on MORT is available on www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/collections/mortality-collection or by contacting data-enquiries@moh.govt.nz.

In addition, accurate data for workplace fatalities is available from WorkSafe NZ. It can be contacted on oa@worksafe.govt.nz.

Notes about the data

- Costs do not include Public Health Acute Services payments. Acute treatment in public hospitals for covered claims is provided by an annual service agreement between ACC and the Ministry of Health, and is funded by bulk payments from ACC to the Crown. The costs are not attributed to individual claims.
- Costs are exclusive of GST.
- Claims managed by accredited employers are not included as ACC holds little data about these claims.
- The data were extracted on 23 June 2021 and may differ if extracted at a later date.

How to contact us

If you have any questions, you can email me at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz.

If you are not happy with this response, you have the right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman. Information about how to do this is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or by phoning 0800 802 602.

Nāku iti noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sasha Wood', written in a cursive style.

Sasha Wood
Manager Official Information Act Services
Government Engagement & Support