27 November 2019

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Tēnā koe Jan

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-002428
Thank you for your request of 01 November 2019, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

> *Please provide statistical information pertaining to the number of covered work related claims for lumbar spine injuries in heavy truck drivers over the last ten years*

Our response to your request
Further to our email on 7 November 2019, we are unable to provide you information about 'heavy truck drivers', as this detail is something ACC does not routinely record when a person lodges a claim. The information asked for in our ACC45 claim form, completed when a person lodges a claim, contains a blank text field where a claimant can record their occupation. This field is not mandatory to complete and not every claimant does so.

As such, we are declining to provide you the statistical information about heavy truck drivers that you requested, because there is no documentation that contains this information. We have made this decision under part 18(e) of the Act.

Information you may find helpful
As we mentioned in our email to you on 8 November 2019, we are able to provide you data in relation to levy classification unit 'CU 61100 - Road freight transport', this being the closest category group to 'heavy truck drivers' that we can extract data for. We have attached a table to this letter that contains statistical information about claims that have this levy classification unit.

Some notes about the data contained in the following tables:

- Claims are collated by calendar year, for those registered between 1 January 2009 and 31 October 2019, with the cover decision 'Accepted';
- Claims included are work-related accident claims where the employer's classification unit is '61100 - Road freight transport';
- The primary injury body site for these claims is 'Lower back/spine';
- A new claim is one that was registered in the specified time period. A claim may be registered at any time after the accident occurred;
- An active claim is one for which ACC has made a payment in the specified time period;
- Active costs are those paid for active claims, exclusive of GST. Acute treatment in public hospitals is bulk-funded and not attributed to individual claims, so these costs are not included in the data;
- Injury description is based on the 'read code' system for classifying an injury. If the primary injury was provided using a different encoding system, it has been counted as 'other' injury description. The data is based on the primary injury diagnosis for each claim;
- Data was extracted on 12 November and may differ if run at a later date.

How you can reach 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

Sasha Wood
Acting Manager Official Information Act Services
Government Engagement & Support

Table 1: New claims, active claims, and costs by calendar year

Measure	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
New claims lodged	720	700	729	684	779	818	864	863	891	941	692
Active claims paid	607	927	906	894	960	1,012	1,073	1,101	1,099	1,194	953
Cost of active claims	$2,243,349	$3,196,022	$2,728,976	$2,456,624	$2,286,194	$3,628,363	$3,811,864	$4,568,212	$4,340,637	$6,033,719	$5,009,829

*2019 data is for the calendar year to 31 October

Table 2: New claims count by calendar year

Injury description	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Lumbar sprain	592	596	612	588	649	676	742	721	721	786	574
Back sprain NOS	11	11	16	6	18	27	41	50	60	58	56
Contusion, back	23	22	25	25	33	25	28	27	46	39	25
Lumbar disc prolapse with radiculopathy	34	28	28	22	24	22	14	11	11	12	5
Sciatica	23	12	13	11	13	13	6	10	8	7	5
All other injury descriptions	37	31	35	32	42	55	33	44	45	39	27

*2019 data is for the calendar year to 31 October