

17 November 2015

Anthony Jordan  
fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Jordan

### Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your emails dated 18 October 2015.

#### Your request

Under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), you asked ACC to provide:

1. *"extra initiatives, guidelines that are used to identify Concussion/mTBI injuries since the release of their 2006 Guidelines"*
2. *"with the up and coming head injury awareness week, what Radio, Television or other media initiatives will be taken to promote Concussion and mTBI awareness"*
3. *"information that is assisting the New Zealand Defence force in identifying Concussion related injuries"*
4. *"information that is assisting the New Zealand Defence force in treating Concussion related injuries"*

and to respond to:

5. *"in relation to the above, [that is, Questions 3 and 4] does the Corporation consider this is in line with United States of America initiatives"*

### Concussion/mTBI injuries initiatives and guidelines since 2006

#### Concussion Service

ACC's Concussion Service began in July 2010. It replaced the previous medical model, Concussion Clinics. There are 21 suppliers contracted by ACC throughout New Zealand to provide the Concussion Service.

Access to this service is via referral by a medical practitioner or an ACC case owner (for ACC clients with a mild to moderate traumatic brain injury).

The purpose of the service is to:

- provide early intervention rehabilitation to support recovery and prompt return to everyday life, including work or school
- identify clients likely to develop long-term consequences, such as post-concussion syndrome (PCS), and provide them with effective interventions and education.

You may like to refer to the following website link for further information:

<http://www.acc.co.nz/for-providers/contracts-and-performance/all-contracts/WCMZ002194>.

### ***Sport Concussion Guidelines***

The Sport Concussion in New Zealand: ACC National Guidelines (Sport Concussion Guidelines) were produced in January 2015. Their aim is to assist sports organisations and recreation, education and health sectors to develop policy for concussion in sport. They were developed by ACC with input from a panel of medical, sport and research experts and take into consideration the 2012 Zurich Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport.

The Sport Concussion Guidelines are available at:

<http://www.acc.co.nz/preventing-injuries/playing-sport/common-sports-injuries/PI00105>

and a copy of the 2012 Zurich Consensus Statement can be located at:

<http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/47/5/250.full?sid=5d447155-d418-4148-bdfe-6d028844ec0f> .

Over the past year ACC has also worked with four national sports organisations (rugby, league, netball and football) around why they need to have policies around concussion and what they should include. The Sport Concussion Guidelines have been positively received and work continues with the National Sport Collaboration Group to ensure their successful implementation. As well, ACC has been providing education to primary care clinicians on how to assess and manage concussion. AUT University is working with St John and all agencies that provide first aid training in New Zealand to ensure that ACC's Sport Concussion Guidelines are included in all training materials and resources.

### **Involvement in "head injury awareness week"**

Although ACC tends to take an active role in promoting injury prevention, no media or communications plan specific to the "head injury awareness week" you have referred to has been developed.

ACC prioritises its investment in injury prevention programmes, both locally and nationally, in accordance with its injury prevention strategy. Injuries sustained as a result of falls, sport, road and work place accidents represent the greatest cost to the public and ACC. Efforts and resources are currently focused in these areas.

### **Information available to the New Zealand Defence Force**

At a minimum, the New Zealand Defence Force has access to the Traumatic Brain Injury Guidelines (2006) and the Sport Concussion Guidelines (referred to above).

The New Zealand Defence Force is an Accredited Employer. This means that it has taken responsibility for managing and paying for the cost of work-related claims. ACC assists Accredited Employers in a variety of ways including the provision of injury prevention advice and access to ACC's claims management resources.

Ultimately, the New Zealand Defence Force is responsible for the health and safety of its staff, and has its own medical staff to support this. The New Zealand Defence Force may be able to provide further comment on how it specifically identifies and treats concussion-related injuries.

### **United States of America initiatives**

You appear to be seeking a view on how the initiatives and guidelines used by the New Zealand Defence Force compare with concussion-related initiatives used in the US (or alternatively, by the US Department of Defense). Importantly, the Official Information Act 1982 does not require agencies to provide opinion such as the one you seek. We confirm, in any event, that ACC has not undertaken any comparison.

**Questions or concerns**

If you have any further questions, contact us by email at [GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz](mailto:GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz).

Yours sincerely

Government Services  
**ACC**