

Abortion Supervisory Committee

7 August 2015

Adele Redmond

By email: fyi-request-2890-xxx@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Redmond

OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

I refer to your email of 30 June 2015 to the Abortion Supervisory Committee (ASC) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

- Records on how many women were denied an abortion in New Zealand in the past 5 years and what grounds they failed to satisfy to obtain an abortion, broken down by year

The time to respond to your request was extended, as set out in my email of 1 July 2015, to 7 August 2015 to allow for consultation.

Under section 30 of the Contraception, Sterilisation and Abortion Act 1977, the ASC is required to set up and maintain a list of medical practitioners (certifying consultants) who may be called upon to consider cases referred to them by any medical practitioner and determine whether to authorise an abortion (justified or not justified).

In order for an abortion to be considered lawful, two certifying consultants must be satisfied that a woman seeking an abortion meets the grounds set out in section 187A of the Crimes Act 1961. When a certifying consultant does not believe an abortion is justified, the case is then referred to a third certifying consultant who can consider the case.

Please find enclosed table 1, which sets out the number of consultations where each certifying consultant considered an abortion was not justified in the previous 5 years (2010-2014).

Certifying consultants record which grounds are met when authorising an abortion. There are no grounds recorded when an abortion is considered not justified, as none of the grounds were met. This part of your request is therefore declined under section 18(e) of the Act as the information does not exist.

Statistical information on what grounds were met when an abortion was justified can be located in the ASC Annual Reports. You can download a copy of these reports at: <http://www.justice.govt.nz/tribunals/abortion-supervisory-committee/annual-reports>

You have the right, by way of complaint to an Ombudsman under section 28(3) of the Official Information Act 1982, to seek an investigation and review of this response.

Yours sincerely



Rachael Cole
Secretary
Abortion Supervisory Committee

Table 1

**Number of Not Justified Abortion Certificates
2010-2014**

Year	Not Justified
2010	344
2011	181
2012	198
2013	283
2014	216

Please note that total abortion numbers have been steadily declining each year.