

14 October 2020

Jan MacPherson

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Tēnā koe Jan

Your Official Information Act request, reference: GOV-006935

Thank you for your email of 18 September 2020, asking for the following information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act):

I respectfully request information in relation to the number of covered claims for gradual process work related carpal tunnel injuries

I seek this information in relation to those people employed in an administration type role who are using a computer for long periods daily in their employment

Limitations to ACC's data

The data set available to ACC is reliant on the information provided on an ACC45 injury claim form, which is completed when a person seeks treatment for their injury. ACC collects two kinds of data to identify what kind of work a client does when a claim is lodged for a work-related injury. The client is asked to provide their occupation on the ACC45. This is self-reported and subjective, as two people who have the same occupation may respond differently.

The client's employer is identified as they are often involved in the client's rehabilitation and the claim may have an impact on the employer's levies. In addition, ACC records the employer's business activity which applies to the employer regardless of the individual employees' roles. This means, for example, an administrator for a building company would be recorded under the employer's classification unit of 'House construction'.

Accordingly, we are unable to determine from the client occupation, or employer business activity, if a specific client's role is administrative, or what level of computer use is involved.

To provide the information to level of detail you are seeking, if it is available, would require reviewing hundreds of work-related carpal tunnel claims and involve substantial research or collation. Therefore, we are refusing your request under section 18(f) of the Act. We did consider extending the time limits for responding to your request under the Act. However, the amount of documentation to be looked at, the time required, and the necessary diversion of resources would have unreasonably interfered with ACC's operations.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome statistics

While we are unable to provide the level of detail you are seeking, we are able to provide high level data. The two tables below summarise claims for work-related gradual process for carpal tunnel syndrome, by employer industry and client occupation. We trust that you find this of some interest. The data was extracted on 28 September 2020 and may differ if extracted at a later date.

ACC takes privacy seriously

ACC does not routinely disclose low value claim numbers. Therefore, for some entries in the tables provided we have used the value <4 and double dots (..) where the claim count is less than four or

suppression is required. This limits the potential for particular individuals, or matters specific to certain individuals, from being identified. This decision is made under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of these individuals. In doing so, we have considered the public interest in making the information available and have determined that it does not outweigh the need to protect the privacy of these persons.

Table 1: Accepted claims for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome as work-related gradual process injury by employer industry group and financial year of claim registration.

Employer industry group	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	60	49	37	28	32
Mining		<4	<4		<4
Manufacturing	76	70	44	67	59
Electricity, Gas, and Water Supply	<4	<4			<4
Construction	61	50	51	58	42
Wholesale Trade	9	5	6	6	<4
Retail Trade	28	19	14	12	14
Accommodation, Cafes, and Restaurants	4	5	<4	4	<4
Transport and Storage	<4	<4	<4	<4	<4
Finance and Insurance					<4
Property and Business Services	18	5	11	9	6
Government Administration and Defence	<4	<4		<4	
Education	<4		<4		<4
Health and Community Services	<4		6	<4	<4
Cultural and Recreational Services	<4	5	<4	<4	<4
Personal and Other Services	5	8	8	7	9
Unknown	55	40	26	36	16
Total	326	260	211	234	195

Table 2: Accepted claims for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome as work-related gradual process injury by client occupation high-level group and financial year of claim registration.

Client occupation high-level group	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Trades Workers	103	81	78	84	72
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	66	63	49	56	49
Agriculture and Fishery Worker	43	40	35
Elementary Occupations	42	26	20	29	20
Service and Sales Workers	14	9	11	7	6
Professionals	9	5	<4	9	5
Associate Professionals and Technicians	7	5	<4	4	5
Legislators, Administrators and Managers	<4	5	<4	<4	<4
Clerks		<4	<4	<4	<4
Total	326	260	211	234	195

Who to contact

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