



16 December 2024

Lauren Doocy

By email: fyi-request-29026-6393def4@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: CCHOIA-289

Dear Lauren

Response to your request for official information

I acknowledge your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 18 November 2024:

Two recent cases point to this being a significant national problem:

- *What supports and resources has the government put in place to ensure that further harm is prevented?*

New Zealand's largest provider of Emergency Road Ambulance Services (ERAS), Hato Hone St John, has recently received a funding increase of \$21 million, bringing its total ACC and Health NZ (joint purchaser) funding to \$357 million in the 2024/25 financial year. The corresponding funding increase to Wellington Free Ambulance (WFA) is still being confirmed. The 2024/25 funding increases come on top of a cumulative increase to ERAS funding of \$148 million over the previous two financial years, which has resulted in over 300 new front-line staff being employed since 2022.

- *What review processes has the government put in place to determine how extensive the issue is?*

The Clinical Advisor, Ambulance, on behalf of Health NZ and ACC reviews each initial (Part A) notification, as well as final (Part B) investigation reports that are submitted by ambulance services to the Health Quality and Safety Commission (HQSC) for all SAC 1 and 2 incidents. Adverse incident findings are regularly discussed with emergency ambulance service providers, to ensure appropriate processes are being put in place to reduce the likelihood of future harm. Additionally, the Clinical Advisor chairs an Ambulance Sector Quality & Safety Forum where adverse incident data and themes/trends are reviewed, and required quality improvements are discussed. To better enable trends associated with adverse incidents to be monitored, Health NZ has recently enhanced its adverse incidents database and Power BI dashboard. This dashboard contains adverse incident data from all contracted ambulance services.

- *What advice has the Minister received from the Health and Disability Commissioner on this matter?*
- *What advice has the Minister received from the Chief Coroner on this matter?*
- *What advice has the Minister received from Te Whatu Ora on this matter?*
- *What advice has the Minister received from ACC on this matter?*

- *What advice has the Minister received from the Ministry of Health on this matter?*
- *What advice has the Minister received from Ambulance Services on this matter?*

I have not received advice from any of these organisations in relation to adverse incidents. Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

- *Has each of these recent cases been briefed to the Minister, from both Te Whatu Ora and Ministry of Health- please release copies of those briefs.*

The Ambulance Team, which manages ambulance services on behalf of ACC and Health NZ has not provided any advice to me on changes to the communications centres relating to the high-profile incidents you cite. Your request for this information is refused under section 18(e) of the Act as this information does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely



Hon Casey Costello
Associate Minister of Health