

21 January 2016

Anthony Jordan
fyi.org.nz

Dear Mr Jordan

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 10 December 2015 requesting information under the Official Information Act 1982. You asked for the following information;

How are companies who offer embalming/funeral services/body retrieval to the Corporation accredited and overseen to ensure that services billed for have in fact been carried out?

Providers of funeral and/or related services do not provide services directly to ACC. In cases of accidental death ACC's governing legislation provides for a funeral grant. The grant is currently capped at \$6,021.11 (in usual circumstances).

The usual practice is for the family or whānau of the deceased to make direct contact with the provider. This enables arrangements to be made appropriate to the circumstances and wishes of the deceased and/or the family and whānau.

A funeral grant can be paid directly to a funeral director or the grant can be reimbursed to the estate or person who paid the account. As such, ACC has no direct involvement in the arrangements.

Most funeral directors in New Zealand are members of the Funeral Directors Association of New Zealand. Members adhere to a Code of Ethics and a Code of Professional Conduct. One of the roles of the Association is to regularly monitor its members. Further information can be found at <http://www.fdanz.org/what-does-fdanz-do>

You may also be interested to know that in October 2015 the New Zealand Law Commission delivered its report on its review of the Burial and Cremation Act. The report can be found at <http://www.lawcom.govt.nz/sites/default/files/projectAvailableFormats/NZLC-R134-Death-Burial-and-Cremation.pdf>

While the Law Commission has recommended to the Minister of Justice that consideration be given to the registration of funeral directors, it noted at page 13 of the report;

"Our consultation and research did not reveal evidence of widespread problems of abuses in the funeral services sector. On the contrary, the vast majority of those operating in this industry do so with integrity and to high standards."

If you have any further questions, we can be contacted by email at GovernmentServices@acc.co.nz.

Yours sincerely



Government Services
ACC