

## OPERATIONS SERVICES, ANALYTICS & REPORTING

Data request

Hot water bottle injuries



To: Mikaela Wilkes  
Author: Analytics & Reporting, ACC

Redmine Ref: 50266  
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### Question

ACC Analytics & Reporting received a request from Mikaela Wilkes for media:

- *Are you please able to provide your most recent ACC statistics regards hot water bottle injury claims in NZ? i.e How many claims were made in 2018, How many more claims were made in 2018 compared to previous years What is the average number of claims made each year Were these mostly made by a specific demographic (more female than male, a certain age etc.)*

### Response

The data have been extracted based on the following criteria:

The claim registration / payment date is between 1 January 2014 and 23 June 2019.

The claim cover decision is equal to 'Accept'.

The accident description contains 'hottie', 'hotty', or 'hot water bottle', allowing for some spelling variations.

**Table 1: Number of new claims, number of active claims, and active claim costs (excluding GST) for hot water bottle related injuries between 1 January 2014 and 23 June 2019.**

Calendar Year	New Claims	Active Claims	Active Costs
2014	875	2,360	\$492,517
2015	909	2,503	\$423,525
2016	885	2,301	\$446,887
2017	946	2,469	\$467,276
2018	1,005	2,911	\$688,043
2019 (YTD)	190	642	\$184,486

**Table 2: Number of new claims for hot water bottle related injuries registered between 1 January 2014 and 23 June 2019, broken down by top 3 primary diagnoses.**

Primary Diagnosis	Claim Count
Burns	4,387
Laceration / Puncture Wound / Sting	225
Soft Tissue Injury	130
Other	68
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,810</b>

Please note that 'Other' includes all other primary diagnoses.

**Table 3: Number of new claims for hot water bottle related injuries registered between 1 January 2014 and 23 June 2019, broken down by top 6 primary injury sites.**

Primary Injury Site	Claim Count
Lower Leg	1,886
Chest	768
Hand / Wrist	587
Upper and Lower Arm	347
Foot	220
Back / Spine	209
Other	793
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,810</b>

Please note that 'Other' includes all other primary injury sites.

**Table 4: Number of new claims for hot water bottle related injuries registered between 1 January 2014 and 23 June 2019, broken down by gender.**

Gender	Claim Count
Female	3,382
Male	1,428
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,810</b>

**Table 5: Number of new claims for hot water bottle related injuries registered between 1 January 2014 and 23 June 2019, broken down by age at registration.**

Age	Claim Count
00 - 04 years	78
05 - 09 years	181
10 - 14 years	260
15 - 19 years	326
20 - 24 years	415
25 - 29 years	386
30 - 34 years	302
35 - 39 years	276
40 - 44 years	275
45 - 49 years	309
50 - 54 years	290
55 - 59 years	351
60 - 64 years	313
65+ years	1,048
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,810</b>

## **Caveats / notes on data**

A calendar year is 1 January to 31 December.

Accredited employer claims have been excluded.

New claims – the claims in these tables have been counted by the date that the claim was registered with ACC. This can be immediately after the injury occurred or at any later stage.

Active claims – are claims that generated a payment in the relevant calendar years. These claims were not necessarily registered, or had the accident occur, in the same calendar year.

Costs provided are exclusive of GST.

Costs are based on payment date. Payment date may be different to the date of service.

Costs do not include Public Health Acute Services (PHAS) payments. Treatment for covered claims in public hospitals is provided by an annual service agreement between ACC and the Ministry of Health, and is funded by bulk payments from ACC to the Crown.

The calendar year in which the service was paid may differ to the calendar year in which the service was provided.

A claim can cover multiple calendar years. In table 1, a claim which lasts longer than one year is counted once for each calendar year covered. For example, a claim which lasted from 2016 to 2018 would be counted a total of three times, once for each calendar year.

Diagnosis is based on the client's primary injury. Claims may have multiple injuries; however, these secondary injuries will not show within this data extract.

Age is based on the client's age at claim registration, and may differ to their age at the time of accident.

The data ACC collects about accidents, and the individuals injured in them, is largely reliant on the information claimants provide when the ACC45 form is completed. The ACC45 is an electronic claim form. There are a variety of fields for claimants to complete when filling out the ACC45 form, some mandatory, some not.

For example, it is mandatory for a claimant to indicate when their accident occurred, whether the accident occurred at work, and their occupation. Those mandatory fields can be contrasted with the free text field on the ACC45 form, where claimants are able to provide a brief description of how their accident happened. Importantly, it is not mandatory to complete this free text field and not every claimant does so.

The reason ACC does not require that information from claimants is that the ACC scheme operates on a no-fault basis. Cover is available by virtue of a person simply having suffered a personal injury and is not determined by how that injury occurred. Therefore, while that information does have an inherent value in informing our understanding of how and why accidents occur, strictly speaking, it is unnecessary for the purpose of processing claims under the Act.

It also needs to be noted that even where claimants do provide a description of how their injury occurred, there is a large degree of variability in the nature and quality of the descriptions claimants provide. Such inconsistency can make it difficult to search for a particular item or issue with a high degree of accuracy.

Because of the limitations above, while largely representative of the claims received by ACC, the data provided should not be considered a completely definitive measure of the claims ACC received in the relevant period.

Data were extracted on 27 June 2019 and may differ if rerun at a later date.