NEW ZEALAND POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa

IR-01-23-34167

9 November 2023

Request for information

Thank you for your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request dated 26 October 2023. This request was in response to the one you received on 24 October 2023 (IR-01-23-33053). You wrote:

> *1. Please can you supply the annual sudden death attendances (code1S) for each of the years 2015, 2016 and 2017;*
>
> *2. I understand from your response that Code 1S under CARD includes suicides amongst sudden death events and does not hold information about the cause of death where there is no offence. Please confirm that my understanding is correct;*
>
> *3. Please advise whether death from domestic violence and/or death from violent crime is recorded under code 1S or are they recorded under a different code?*

When Police communication centres receive a request for service, an event is entered in the Communication and Resource Deployment (CARD) system. CARD events can only have one code type, and Police practice is to code the most serious risk or alleged offence. Sudden deaths would usually be coded as 1S.

The table below shows the number of 1S events attended by Police between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2017.

Table 1. Attended 1S events (closure type code) between 1 January 2015 and 31 December 2017.

Calendar Year	Attended 1S Events
2015	4,761
2016	4,629
2017	5,017

Data in this response is drawn from a dynamic operational database and is subject to change as new information is recorded or updated.

In the previous response you received, it was stated that Police does not hold information about causes of death where there is no offence such as suicide; however, Ministry of

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Health holds information on cause of death from coronial investigations[1], and publishes data on suicide deaths[2].

To further expand on that, Police cannot determine if something is a suicide at the time of attendance – no death constitutes a suicide until a coroner makes a formal finding that it is. These deaths must be reported by Police to a coroner:

- a death that appears to have been without known cause, or suicide, or unnatural or violent
- a death for which no doctor has given a doctor's certificate (defined in s2(1) Burial and Cremation Act 1964)
- a death that occurred during medical, surgical or dental treatment
- any death while the woman concerned was giving birth, or that appears to have been a result of that woman being pregnant or giving birth
- a death in official custody or care (s13)

Further information is available in the Police Manual Chapter on Sudden Death[3].

In CARD, at the point where a call about a homicide is received, police will often not have all the information available. These calls will often be coded as 1S until more information is known. These events may present initially as something else, such as an assault, and are coded in line with this. The event may be re-coded at closure to another code, such as homicide, by those staff who attend the event. In some instances of assault, the person may die later in a hospital, after the CARD event is already closed. When this occurs, the CARD event will remain coded as an assault rather than homicide.

If a doctor does not give a certificate for a sudden death, then Police will open an investigation and further information will be recorded in the case management and investigation system (NIA), such as details of the person and any relevant offences, but at the time of the attendance this may not be known. This is because the CARD system is about Police attendance to events. It is an operational system designed to enable unit dispatch and event management. Once an event is closed, it may then be transferred to NIA where more detailed information about people and offences is recorded (such as further investigation details and more specific details about an offence if there is one).

Please note that as part of its commitment to openness and transparency, Police proactively releases some information and documents that may be of interest to the public. An anonymised version of this response may be publicly released on the New Zealand Police website.

Ngā mihi

A/Superintendent Bronwyn Marshall
Director Emergency Communications Centres (Relieving)

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[1] https://www.health.govt.nz/nz-health-statistics/national-collections-and-surveys/collections/mortality-collection
[2] https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/suicide-facts-data-tables-19962016
[3] https://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/publication/sudden-death-police-manual-chapter