



HEALTH QUALITY & SAFETY
COMMISSION NEW ZEALAND
Kupu Taurangi Hauora o Aotearoa

PO Box 25496
Wellington 6146
New Zealand

T: +64 4 901 6040
F: +64 4 901 6079
E: info@hqsc.govt.nz
W: www.hqsc.govt.nz

18 June 2021

[REDACTED]

By email: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Your official information request – Reference HQSC156-2021

I refer to your official information request (OIA) dated 24 May 2021 requesting answers to the following questions as part of your research investigating what data organisations hold on Pacific family violence and what reporting limitations exist for Pacific-specific data.

- 1. What data the Health Quality & Safety Commission holds on Family Violence in relation to Pasifika families/individuals and what limitations exist for the Commission on reporting pacific-specific data in this space?*
- 2. Request for family violence homicides data on "Family violence deaths out of culpable homicides" from 2017 to date (2021, or to end of December 2020), split by non-Pacific, Pacific and total.*

The information you have requested is prepared and held by the Family Violence Death Review Committee (FVDRC). The FVDRC is established by the Commission under section 59E of the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 (the NZPHD Act). The Committee is not part of the Commission but, rather, is an individual statutory entity.

The information you have requested is not held by the Commission itself. Therefore, the Commission has liaised with the Family Violence Death Review Committee to respond to your questions.

1. *What data the Health Quality & Safety Commission holds on Family Violence in relation to Pasifika families/individuals and what limitations exist for the Commission on reporting pacific-specific data in this space?*

The Family Violence Death Review Committee (FVDRC) collates information on family violence deaths as captured through police homicide data. Ethnicity information is drawn from both police records and (where available) Ministry of Health records. The quality of ethnicity information is dependent on the source information (police or health ethnicity data). The FVDRC prioritises ethnicity data recorded by the Ministry of

Health over that held by police due to increased confidence in the reliability of health ethnicity information.

Reporting on family violence deaths for Pasifika families or individuals is limited by the small number of deaths captured. As described in the FVDRC terms of reference, family violence is defined as:

6. *For the purpose of these Terms of Reference, family violence is defined as: any behaviour that coerces, controls or harms, an (ex) intimate partner and/or family member(s) by the means of deprivation, negligent treatment, isolation, intimidation, threats, violence, and/or causes them to fear for their own, or another family member's safety or well-being. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, and economic abuse, as well as neglect and exploitation. It includes children's exposure to these forms of abuse and the effects of abusive behaviour.*
7. *For the purposes of these Terms of Reference a family violence death is defined as the unnatural death of a person (adult or child) where the suspected perpetrator(s) is a family or extended family member, caregiver, intimate partner, previous partner of the victim, or previous partner of the victim's current partner, and where the death was an episode of family violence and/or there is an identifiable history of family violence.*
8. *The following categories of family violence-related deaths are excluded from this definition:*
 - a. *Non-family member bystanders or interveners*
 - b. *suicides*
 - c. *suicide-assisted deaths*
 - d. *deaths from chronic illness associated with family violence.*
(see <https://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/mrc/fvdrc/about-us/terms-of-reference/>)

Therefore, those deaths that are excluded from the terms of reference will not be included in data produced by the FVDRC.

2. Request for family violence homicides data on "Family violence deaths out of culpable homicides" from 2017 to date (2021, or to end of December 2020), split by non-pacific, pacific, and total.

The FVDRC will generally classify a death according to whether it is included within the terms of reference once it has progressed through the Justice system. As a result, most homicides are not considered for a minimum of 2 years after the death event (it is possible for there to be changes in the identified offender during this process). Because of this, the most current information available is until December 2018.

Due to the small numbers involved, it is not possible to produce an annual number. However, for the period 2009-2018, there have been 6 Child Abuse and Neglect, 3 Intrafamilial, and 5 Intimate Partner Violence homicides in which the deceased was recorded as Pacific people. For the current purpose, ethnicity has been classified according to the Statistics New Zealand prioritised ethnicity groupings¹. In the period 2009-2018, there were a total of 70 deceased children (child abuse and neglect

¹ Please note that while Statistics New Zealand recommends against using prioritised ethnicity groupings (<https://www.stats.govt.nz/methods/population-statistics-user-guide>), the amount of ethnicity information held on administrative records is variable. Therefore, the FVDRC prioritises to one ethnic group to ensure consistency in the presentation of information.

fatalities), 125 intimate partners, and 63 deceased with other familial relationships to the offender.

The FVDRC does not hold information on non-family violence related homicide. To determine the proportion of family violence homicides out of all culpable homicides, you would need to speak to the police.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that the Commission publishes some of its OIA responses on its website, after the response is sent to the requester. The responses published are those that are considered to have a high level of public interest. We will not publish your name, address or contact details.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice Wilson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a short horizontal line.

Dr Janice Wilson
Chief Executive