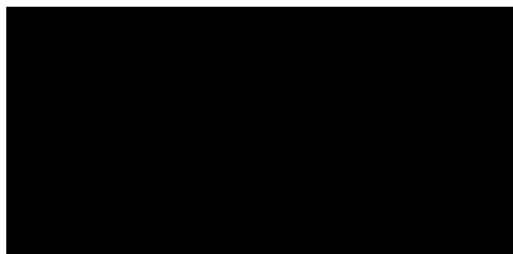




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18 April 2019



Information Request – Structure fires caused by drug use or manufacturing over past 5 years

I refer to your official information request dated 7 March 2019 asking for the following information:

How many investigations into structure fires found the cause likely to be drug use or manufacturing over the past 5 years?

Please include how the use or manufacturing of drugs caused the fire (where it started etc).

Please include the type of drug.

Please include the type of structure (e.g house, business, car) and the extent of the damage.

Please include the location (region, town or city) in each instance.

While your request may seem straightforward, Fire and Emergency is unable to provide the information you are seeking. This is because the cause of a fire is classified in four categories; accidental, natural, incendiary or undetermined. Sub-categories are then used to provide further information about the specific cause. For example, a fire may be classified as accidental, unattended cooking. There is no subcategory that aligns to your specific request.

Where illegal drug activity is identified during an incident, Fire and Emergency has protocols for notifying and working with Police.

Fire and Emergency has considered whether a manual search of records would assist in responding to your request. Due to the volume and potential variation in the reporting of drug involvement in the cause of a fire we are not confident an accurate figure could be provided, therefore your request is refused under section 18(f) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA). Due to the challenges outlined we do not believe consultation or charging would be helpful.

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.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Stevens
Manager, Executive and Ministerial Services