



## PROACTIVE RELEASE COVERSHEET

|                        |                                                                  |                             |                |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Minister</b>        | Hon Nicola Grigg                                                 | <b>Portfolio</b>            | Environment    |
| <b>Name of package</b> | Annual update on the regulation of fireworks in New Zealand 2026 | <b>Date to be published</b> | 9 October 2026 |

### List of documents that have been proactively released

| <b>Date</b>    | <b>Title</b>                                                     | <b>Author</b>                                           |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 October 2026 | Annual update on the regulation of fireworks in New Zealand 2026 | Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport |

#### **Information redacted**                      **NO**

Any information redacted in this document is redacted in accordance with the Ministry for the Environment's policy on proactive release and is labelled with the reason for redaction. This may include information that would be redacted if this information was requested under Official Information Act 1982. Where this is the case, the reasons for withholding information are listed below. Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

#### **Summary of reasons for redaction**

N/A



# Annual update on the regulation of fireworks in New Zealand 2026

|              |                |                  |        |                         |              |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Date:</b> | 9 October 2026 | <b>Priority:</b> | Medium | <b>Tracking number:</b> | 26-BRF-02328 |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------------|

| To                                                      | Action sought                                                                                                                                            | Response by     |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Hon Nicola Grigg<br><b>Minister for the Environment</b> | <b>Note</b> the annual update on the regulation of fireworks in New Zealand during the 2025 calendar year.<br><br><b>Agree</b> to its proactive release. | 23 October 2026 |

## Contact for discussion (if required)

| Name          | Position                               | Telephone    | 1 <sup>st</sup> contact             |
|---------------|----------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Glenn Wigley  | General Manager, Waste and HSNO Policy | 027 491 7806 | <input type="radio"/>               |
| Sarah Kenward | Manager, Hazardous Substances Policy   | 027 288 9374 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

## Action for Minister's Office staff

Return the signed briefing to MCERT



## Purpose

1. The purpose of this briefing is to provide an annual update on the use of retail fireworks and adverse effects resulting from their use in New Zealand ahead of the retail fireworks public sale period. This includes statistics on fireworks-related fires, injury claims and unlawful behaviour for the calendar year 2025.

## Key points

2. Retail fireworks may only be sold to the public between 2 and 5 November each year and are regulated under the Hazardous Substances (Fireworks) Regulations 2001.
3. Key statistics for the 2025 calendar year include:
  - 523,882 kg of fireworks imported, down approximately 13% from 2024;
  - 175 fireworks-related fires attended by Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), up approximately 5% from 2024;
  - 1,761 fireworks-related calls for service to New Zealand Police, up approximately 8% from 2024; and
  - 289 new fireworks-related injury claims accepted by the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC), down approximately 1% from 2024.
4. Adverse effects associated with retail fireworks continue to include fires, injuries, unlawful behaviour, nuisance, and impacts on animals. Fires and Police calls remained higher than the levels recorded in 2023 and 2024, while fireworks imports and injury claims were lower.
5. In 2026, the Government considered the Petitions Committee's recommendation to ban the public sale and private use of fireworks and decided to retain the current regulatory framework for fireworks, with no changes to the Fireworks Regulations currently proposed.
6. This briefing will be released proactively on the Ministry's website.



## Recommendations

7. We recommend you:

- a. **note** the annual update on the regulation of fireworks in New Zealand during the 2025 calendar year.
- b. **agree** that this briefing be released proactively on the Ministry's website. Yes / No

Glenn Wigley  
**General Manager, Waste and HSNO  
Policy**  
01 / 10 / 2026

Hon Nicola Grigg  
**Minister for the Environment**  
..... / ..... / .....

## Comments



# Annual update on the regulation of fireworks in New Zealand 2026

## Retail fireworks continue to be regulated under the existing framework

8. This advice is not a statutory requirement. However, as part of its monitoring of the fireworks regulations, the Ministry for Cities, Environment, Regions and Transport (the Ministry) provides the Minister for the Environment with an annual update on retail fireworks to coincide with the retail fireworks public sale period (2–5 November).
9. In 2007, the Hazardous Substances (Fireworks) Regulations 2001 (the Fireworks Regulations) were amended to:
  - raise the legal age of purchase from 14 to 18 years;
  - reduce the retail sales period for fireworks to four days each year (between 2 and 5 November);
  - permit the sale of sparklers only as part of larger retail packs and limited to a maximum of 50 sparklers per pack; and
  - reduce the explosive content (and consequent noise levels) of retail fireworks.
10. Since 1 December 2017, New Zealand Police have been responsible for enforcing restrictions relating to the retail sale of fireworks.
11. Table 1 summarises key fireworks indicators for the period 2023 to 2025. Subsequent sections provide further detail on each dataset.

**Table 1: Summary of key fireworks indicators, 2023-2025**

| Year | Imports (kg) | Fires | Police calls | ACC claims |
|------|--------------|-------|--------------|------------|
| 2023 | 575,544      | 106   | 1,572        | 348        |
| 2024 | 603,239      | 166   | 1,627        | 292        |
| 2025 | 523,882      | 175   | 1,761        | 289        |

12. This briefing draws on data collected by different agencies using different methodologies. The data is not designed to provide a statistically robust basis for drawing strong conclusions about overall trends in fireworks-related harm or use, and year-on-year comparisons should be treated as indicative only.



## Fireworks imports

13. During the 2025 calendar year, approximately 523,882 kg of fireworks were imported into New Zealand for retail sale and public display purposes. This compares with 603,239 kg imported during 2024.
14. Retail fireworks accounted for 10 of the 103 explosive import certificates issued during 2025, or approximately 9.7% of certificates, and 60.87% of the total weight of explosive substances imported into New Zealand.
15. These figures exclude novelty fireworks such as party poppers and Christmas crackers, as they do not require an import certificate.
16. Fireworks imports increased between 2023 and 2024 before declining by approximately 13% in 2025.

## Fireworks-related fires

17. FENZ collects data on the number of fires caused by fireworks each year and during November. These figures are based on 111 call-log data and represent the total number of fires that resulted in a call-out.
18. FENZ reported 175 fires in 2025 where the cause, heat source or object ignited was fireworks, including structure, vegetation and other fires.
19. During November 2025, FENZ recorded 112 fires caused by fireworks, representing 64% of the annual total.
20. Fireworks-related fires increased from 106 in 2023 to 166 in 2024 and 175 in 2025.
21. Figures 1-3 provide additional information on fireworks-related fires and longer-term trends.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Industrial action took place in 2009 and 2011/12, resulting in a lower number of call-outs.

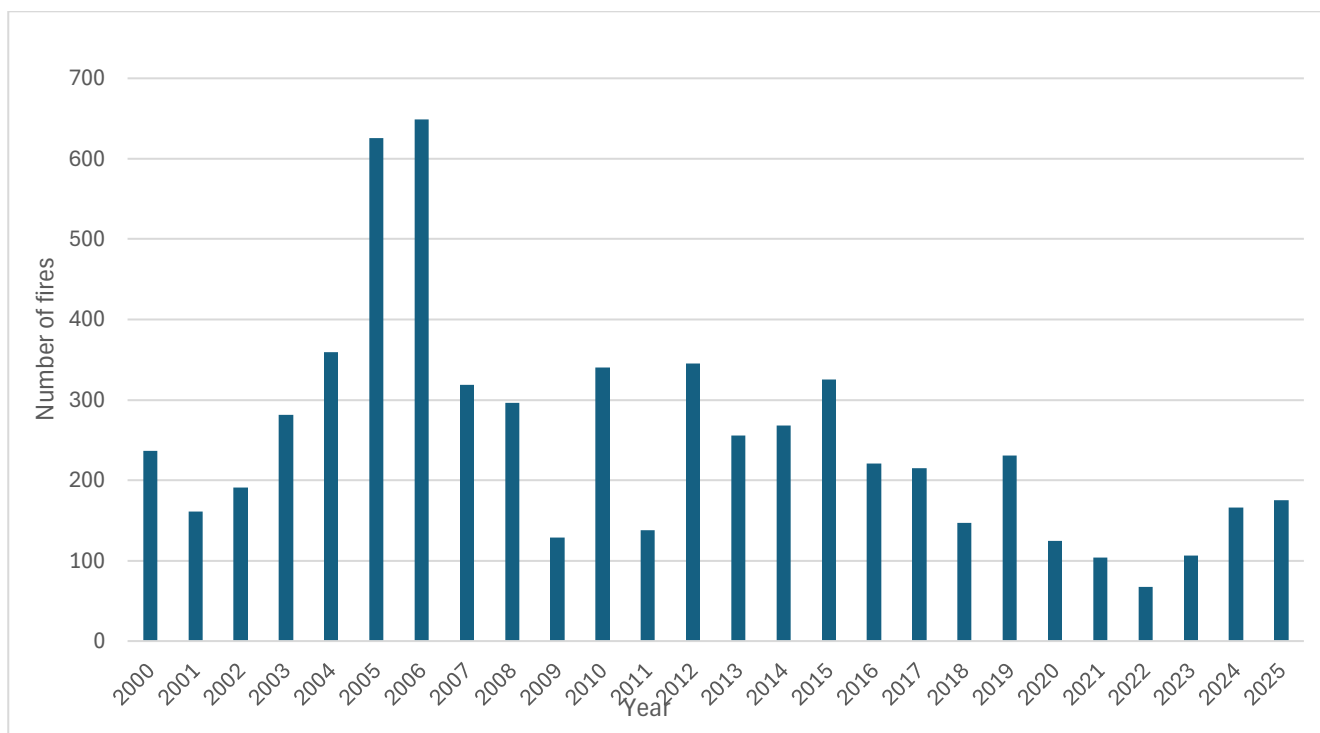


**Figure 1: Total number of fires where the cause, heat source or object ignited was recorded as fireworks, 2000-2025**

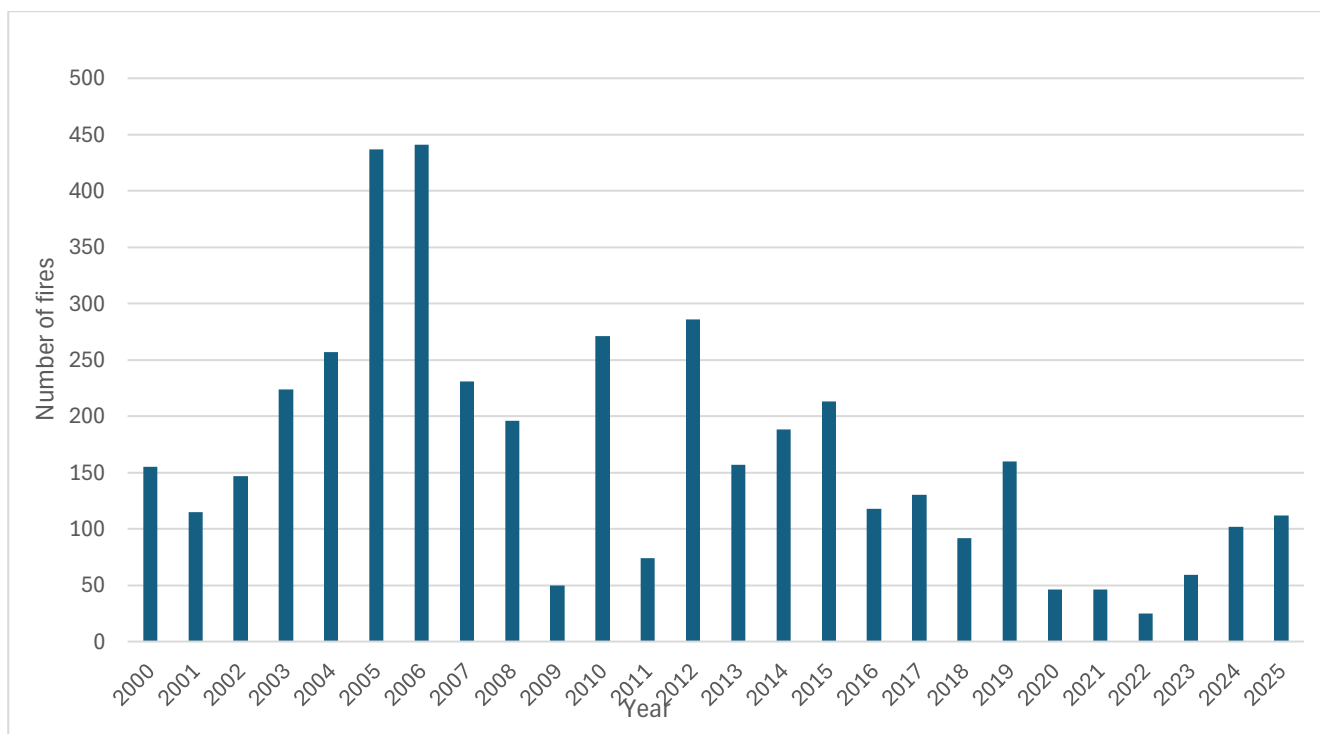


**Figure 2: Total number of fires where the cause, heat source or object ignited was recorded as fireworks during November, 2000-2025**

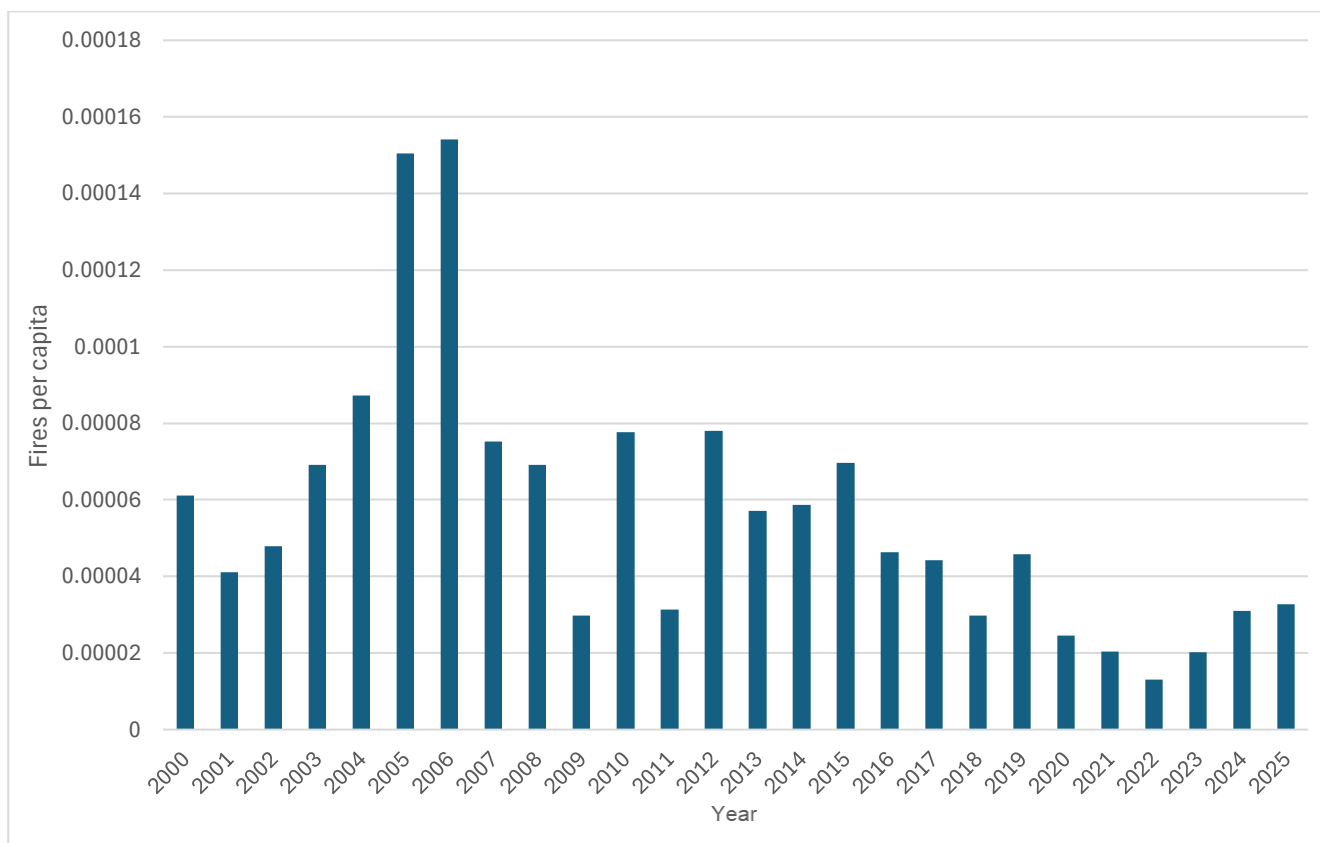


**Figure 3: Total number of fires per capita where the cause, heat source or object ignited was recorded as fireworks, 2000-2025**

### Fireworks-related unlawful behaviour

22. New Zealand Police received 1,761 fireworks-related calls for service during the 2025 calendar year, compared with 1,627 calls during 2024.
23. Of these calls, 396 were received between 2 and 5 November 2025, and a further 355 were received between 6 and 18 November 2025.
24. In 2025, the top four categories of fireworks-related calls were:
  - Breach of the peace (45.15%)
  - Information from the public (16.17%)
  - Property damage (5.63%)
  - Suspicious activity (3.23%).
25. While most fireworks-related service calls occur during November, service calls occur throughout the year.
26. Police also recorded 53 occurrences of the offence 'Setting off Fireworks in a Public Place' during 2025, an increase of approximately 33% from 40 occurrences in 2024.



27. During November 2025, Police recorded 32 occurrences of this offence, representing approximately 60% of the annual total. This compares with 18 occurrences, or 45% of the annual total, in November 2024.
28. Figure 4 shows the number of fireworks-related calls for service between 2023 and 2025.
29. Fireworks-related calls to Police increased from 1,572 in 2023 to 1,627 in 2024 and 1,761 in 2025.
30. In the absence of structured information, Police call figures are derived from a text search for “fireworks” or “fire works”.

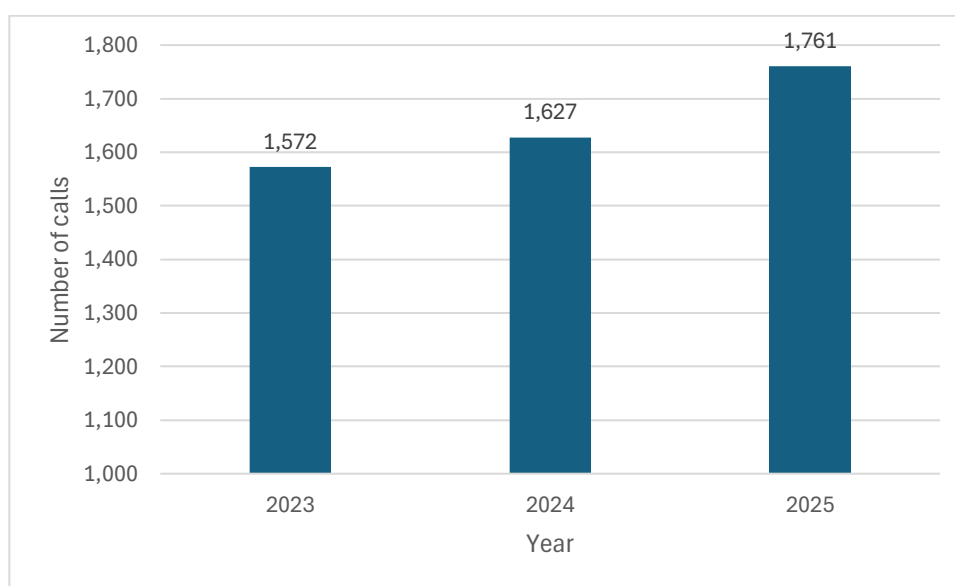


**Figure 4: Fireworks-related calls for service to New Zealand Police, 2023–2025**

### Fireworks-related injuries

31. ACC accepted 289 new fireworks-related injury claims for accidents occurring during 2025, three fewer than the 292 claims recorded for 2024.
32. The cost of active fireworks-related claims during 2025 was approximately \$643,688, excluding GST. This was approximately 27% lower than the \$882,175 recorded for 2024.
33. The three most common primary diagnoses were burns; laceration, puncture or sting injuries; and soft tissue injuries.
34. New fireworks-related injury claims remained broadly stable in 2025, decreasing by approximately 1% compared with 2024.



35. New fireworks-related injury claims peaked in 2023 at 348 claims before decreasing to 292 in 2024 and remaining broadly stable at 289 in 2025.<sup>2</sup>

36. Figure 5 shows the number of new fireworks-related claims and the cost of active claims between 2023 and 2025.

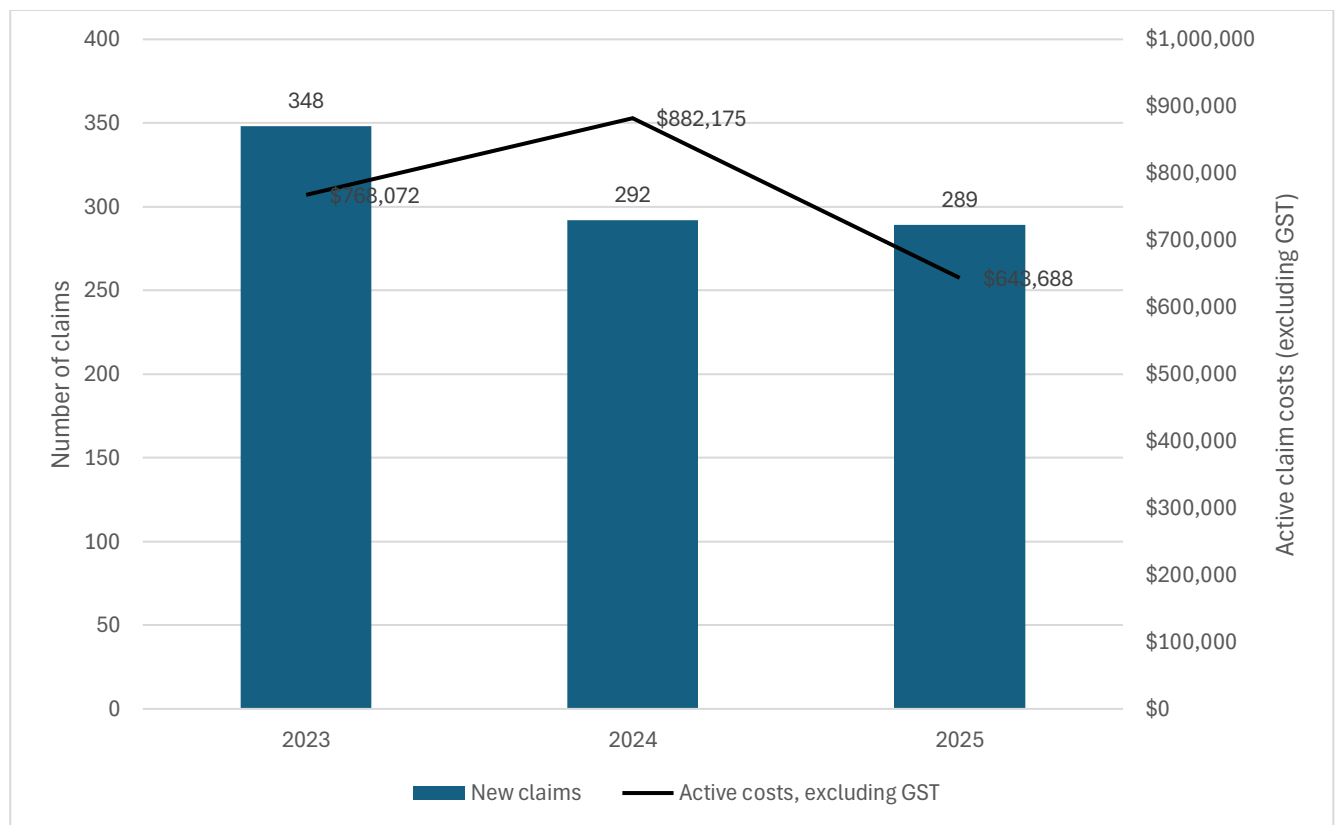


**Figure 5: Fireworks-related injury claims and active claim costs, 2023–2025**

## Public interest and correspondence

37. During the 2025 calendar year:

- 19 pieces of Ministerial correspondence relating to fireworks were received (compared with 13 in 2024);<sup>3</sup>
- 4 pieces of departmental correspondence relating to fireworks were received (the same as in 2024);

<sup>2</sup> Note: ACC identifies fireworks-related claims through keyword searches of accident descriptions. As this is a non-mandatory free-text field, the figures are indicative and may change when the data is refreshed. The figures in this briefing are based on data extracted on 3 August 2026.

<sup>3</sup> Note: 24 letters from a school were recorded as one Ministerial correspondence item.



- approximately 20 fireworks-related correspondence items were received by the Minister's Office during 2025; and
- 3 OIA requests relating to fireworks were received (compared with 1 in 2024).

38. Common themes raised in correspondence included animal welfare concerns, risks to human safety, environmental damage, fire risk, litter and damage to public spaces, and petitions seeking a ban on the public sale and use of fireworks. A small number of correspondents supported the continued private use or sale of fireworks.

### **Government responded to the Petitions Committee report on fireworks**

39. In April 2026, the Petitions Committee reported on three petitions seeking restrictions on the sale and use of fireworks. The Committee recommended that the Government ban the public sale and private use of fireworks.
40. The Government considered the Committee's recommendation and subsequently decided to retain the current regulatory framework for fireworks. No changes to the Fireworks Regulations are currently proposed.
41. Animal welfare was a recurring theme in the petitions and correspondence on fireworks. This briefing does not contain data on fireworks-related impacts on animals, so this aspect cannot be assessed on the same evidential basis as the fires, injuries and Police incidents reported elsewhere in this update.

### **Consultation and engagement**

42. The Ministry consulted:
- the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA);
  - Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ);
  - New Zealand Police; and
  - the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC).
43. These agencies provided the datasets used in this briefing and reviewed relevant sections for factual accuracy.

### **Next steps**

44. Subject to your agreement, this briefing will be released proactively on the Ministry's website.