

Ombudsman to re-investigate insurers' handling of workers compensation claims and WorkSafe oversight

Thursday 7 June 2018

Victorian Ombudsman Deborah Glass has begun a follow up investigation to her previous *Investigation into the management of complex workers compensation claims and WorkSafe oversight*.

In that 2016 investigation, she found that Victoria's workers compensation scheme had failed some particularly vulnerable people.

"Two years ago, we found cases in which WorkSafe agents were working the system to delay and deny seriously injured workers the financial compensation to which they were entitled," Ms Glass said.

"Given the distressing nature of what we found in 2016, it is incumbent upon me to examine whether the situation has improved for workers with complex injuries and conditions," she said. "As I said at the time, the cases we investigated are not merely files, numbers or claims; they involved people's lives, and the human cost should never be forgotten."

Following her 2016 investigation, Ms Glass made 17 recommendations for change, including around financial incentives associated with the termination of claims and the use of Independent Medical Examiners in managing claims.

A key recommendation was for WorkSafe to take greater responsibility to ensure quality decision-making by its agents. Her follow up investigation will examine whether WorkSafe's implementation of the recommendations has changed agent practices and decision making, and improved the effectiveness of its oversight.

"While it is pleasing that both WorkSafe and the Government have accepted the recommendations addressed to them in my 2016 report, we need to understand if they are making a positive difference to the problems identified two years ago. If not, we need to identify what will."

The Victorian Ombudsman continues to receive a large number of complaints from the public about WorkSafe and its agents, with more than 660 complaints received so far in 2017-18 and a similar number in the previous financial year.

Read the 2016 report here: [Investigation into the management of complex workers compensation claims and WorkSafe oversight](#)

Media contact: Ainslie Gowan | Tel 03 9613 6235 | Mob 0409 936 235 | ainslie.gowan@ombudsman.vic.gov.au

NOTE: INFORMATION ABOUT COMPLAINTS

The Victorian Ombudsman can help resolve complaints about workers compensation claims. However, the following options are available to complain about workers compensation issues:

Complaints about	Go to
a decision by an agent	the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (ACCS)
an IME or occupational rehabilitation provider	WorkSafe
agent service delivery issues	the agent's complaints process

Depending on your circumstances, we may advise you to pursue these options before we can further consider your concerns. The Victorian Ombudsman can be contacted on 9613 6222 or via our [online complaint form](#).