



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

MEDIA RELEASE

REFORMS TO THE NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

13 June 2012

A suite of reforms to the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme have been recommended by the Joint Select Committee on the NSW Workers Compensation, in an effort to address the Scheme's poor financial performance.

Committee Chair, the Hon Robert Borsak MLC, said, "The Committee has considered several hundred submissions and evidence from over 70 witnesses, which has highlighted the complexity and scale of the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme, and the problems it faces in terms of its financial sustainability and its performance in meeting its key objectives."

"Although the views of stakeholders were diverse, particularly with regard to the options proposed in the Issues Paper released by the Minister for Finance and Services, a strong message coming out of the Inquiry is that immediate reform is needed to respond to the dire financial position of the Scheme. The Committee has had regard to evidence that a benefit restructure will deliver cost savings, which are necessary to ensure that the Scheme is able to continue to meet its key objectives of promoting better health outcomes and return to work outcomes for injured workers. In particular, the recommendations include enhancements to the benefits available to severely injured workers" Mr Borsak said.

Mr Borsak also stated, "We believe that the complexity and size of the Workers Compensation Scheme, and the issues raised in respect of it, necessitates a considered and thorough review which, given the timeframe, has been beyond the scope of this inquiry. On that basis, the Committee has recommended that such a review be undertaken. The Committee is also of the view that the Scheme would benefit from regular review and oversight from an independent body."

"We have therefore also recommended that the NSW Government establish a joint standing committee of the Parliament of NSW to undertake an initial detailed review of the Scheme, and to continue to review and oversight the Scheme" Mr Borsak stated.

Mr Borsak also said, "This inquiry has not examined specialised workers compensation arrangements that apply to specific industries such as the coal industry, therefore the Committee's recommendations do not apply to those arrangements."

A list of the Committee's recommendations is attached. The report is on the Committee's website: <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/workerscompinquiry>. Hard copies are available on request.

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For further information please contact Committee Chair Hon Robert Borsak MLC, on 0419977097