



Minister for Commerce  
Minister for Finance  
Minister for Industrial Relations  
Minister for Ageing  
Minister for Disability Services  
Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

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- 9 MAR 2006

The Hon Christine Robertson MLC  
Chair  
Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

RECEIVED

15 MAR 2006

LAW & JUSTICE

Dear Ms Robertson

Please find attached a copy of the NSW Government response to Report No. 29 of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice, entitled *Workers Compensation Injury Management Pilots Project*.

On behalf of the New South Wales Government, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for their review of the Pilots Project. As noted in the report, the Pilots Project identified a number of critical components of the injury management process. This has resulted in a number of key reforms, particularly the development of a case management model for insurers, being successfully introduced into the workers compensation system and have helped improve outcomes for both workers and employers.

Other reforms include an increased emphasis on injury management and return to work strategies, improvements to dispute resolution mechanisms, an increased focus on compliance measures and the provision of incentives for improved workers compensation performance.

The Government agrees with the Committee and, through WorkCover, has implemented, or is in the process of fully implementing, the recommendations as set out in the Report.

I believe this response demonstrates the Government's commitment to continually improve the assistance provided to injured workers and employers of those workers.

Yours sincerely

John Della Bosca MLC

**Government Response to Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice  
Report No 29 into Workers Compensation Injury Management Pilots Project**

Committee Recommendation	Government Response
<p><b>Recommendation 1 (page 15)</b></p> <p>The Committee endorses the case management model developed during and following the injury management pilots project and recommends that WorkCover continue applying and developing this model to manage injured workers.</p>	<p>As noted by the Committee, WorkCover continues to apply and develop the case management model arising from the injury management pilots project. The case management model has now been incorporated into contracts for new agents and includes principles and associated elements that support the achievement of outcomes for return to work. These principles include triaging and screening, people management and training systems, cost effective service provision and quality assurance and evaluation.</p> <p>The case management model has been introduced into insurer operations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist their approach in managing injuries, claims, and return to work programs in a holistic and systematic manner;</li> <li>• maximise return to work and health outcomes for injured workers, while minimising the risk of re-injury;</li> <li>• establish an effective claims management infrastructure with open communication channels; and</li> <li>• deliver cost-effective case management with a strong focus on outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>This model integrates injury and claims management, and operates on the basis of having a single, appropriately qualified person who is responsible and accountable for active management of an injured worker's claim.</p> <p>WorkCover has presented the case management model to the Self Insurers Association with a view to sharing the knowledge gained through the pilot projects.</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 2 (page 18)</b></p> <p>That WorkCover advertise the Claims Assistance Service, including providing clear information on the homepage of the WorkCover website, other advertising as may be necessary and advising workers at time of injury notification that this service is available.</p>	<p>The Claims Assistance Service provides information and assistance to injured workers and employers concerning claims for workers compensation and the resolution of potential disputes. Both workers and employers receive information about the services offered by the WorkCover Assistance and Claims Assistance services through various brochures and publications produced by WorkCover as part of its customer service.</p> <p>WorkCover will be further promoting the WorkCover Assistance and Claims Assistance Services on the WorkCover website homepage in 2006.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3 (page 22)</b></p> <p>That WorkCover implement the findings of the trial of the employer kit developed by the Central West Injury Management Service (CWIMS) across the whole Scheme.</p>	<p>Recognising the value of the employer kit, WorkCover has taken key initiatives from the Central West pilot, including the redevelopment of a brochure for injured workers that will be mailed out with each individual injury management plan. Further, a new brochure is being developed for employers.</p> <p>WorkCover has implemented a single notification system and agents have streamlined their business processes to simplify the process for employers and workers to notify an injury.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4 (page 23)</b></p> <p>That WorkCover consider alternative ways to establish the benchmarks for workers health outcomes that were not achieved in the injury management pilots project, that is, benchmarks for integrated injury and claims management.</p>	<p>WorkCover will continue to explore alternative measures for workers' health outcomes. Performance measures for injuries and claims are now included in the contracts for scheme agents.</p>