

**Submission  
No 67**

## **INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME**

**Organisation:** Custom Coaches (Sales) Pty Ltd

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## Submission for Reform to NSW Workers Compensation Act

It is imperative that reforms precede any increase in premium to combat the deficit from an outdated act.

Our organisation is within the Manufacturing sector, with an already high industry premium to cover workers compensation. Having spent the last three years actively reducing the premium cost by dedicating hard work to remedial and progressive actions to further avoid injuries to workers, it would be untenable to have a massive premium increase and both maintain the current level of commitment to reducing claims as well as funding a higher premium cost.

The current act fails in substantial ways, not least in its allowance for 'double dipping' when injured workers are off work and decide to take annual leave – thus resulting in the payment of both annual leave and workers compensation – a ludicrous situation for the act and the employer. By allowing 26 weeks before stepping down, some employees - those who may otherwise make a more speedy recovery – are put in a position of prolonging their claim without penalty for this duration.

We are a medium to large company, blue collar workforce with an average industry standard. Our current premium is prohibitive to empowering internal reform or development of more remedial work in the bounds of safety and employee awareness. We cannot afford to do more than the minimum to protect our workers, let alone educate and provide employee well being programs. The work we currently do is solely through a dedicated team who go beyond to write, devise, manage and deliver pre-emptive actions to provide an environment of safety. We cannot afford to engage expensive external programs and offerings to our workforce.

It is most important to us to reduce premium through continuation of our work, without having a huge premium increase caused from outside our area of control, especially where the act we currently follow is outdated and expensive in its own right.

I state that the best practice is to avoid as many injuries as possible, however, our current system under the act is both open to misinterpretation and in some cases very difficult to work with as the rules are not always clear.

A premium increase would only serve to put even more pressures on our already struggling industry.

Diane McClements, HRM

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Sydney