

INQUIRY INTO WORKERS COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Organisation: State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA)

Date Received: 8 February 2022



The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC
Committee Chair
Portfolio Committee No. 1
Upper House Committees
Legislative Council

By email: PortfolioCommittee1@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Chair

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a further submission to the Portfolio Committee's inquiry into the Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2021.

This letter provides information in response to questions raised at the hearing on 2 February 2022 about return to work (RTW) rates for COVID-19 claims.

The most recent period for which we have complete data for RTW analysis is July – October 2021 (based on date of injury). In this period:

- There were 673 claims with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis. Of these:
 - 577 (86%) were in presumptive industries
 - 96 (14%) were in non-presumptive industries
- 649 of the 673 claims had reported time off work
- The RTW rate at four weeks for positive COVID-19 diagnosis claims was 64% (it should be noted this relates to claims made during the reporting period, not the rolling averages that are reported elsewhere by SIRA)
 - Claims from presumptive industries had a RTW rate of 62%
 - Claims from non-presumptive industries had a RTW rate of 73%
 - In the same period, the RTW rate for whole scheme claims was 60%

In general, RTW rates for whole scheme claims have declined throughout the pandemic. Reasons for this may include difficulty in providing suitable work opportunities to injured employees due to lock downs and isolation requirements, and delays for injured workers in accessing treatment.

In the period analysed, four-week RTW rates for COVID diagnosed claims were slightly higher than four-week RTW for all claims. This is expected, as most people return to work within four weeks of a COVID diagnosis. The number of days off work for COVID-19 claims is also not unexpected, due to the requirement to isolate and requirements of the presumptive legislation.

I hope this information is of assistance. If you need more information, please contact James Mathison, Principal Advisor

Yours sincerely

Adam Dent

Chief Executive
State Insurance Regulatory Authority

Date: 8/02/2022