

Ombudsman launches investigation into handling of workers compensation claims

Thursday 05 November 2015

The Victorian Ombudsman has commenced an 'own motion' investigation into the management of workers compensation claims in Victoria.

The investigation will look at whether WorkSafe agents have unreasonably denied liability or terminated entitlements for people who have suffered injuries in the workplace; and whether agents did this for financial incentives offered by WorkSafe. The investigation will focus on agents' use of Independent Medical Examinations. Whether WorkSafe is providing effective oversight of agents and their claims management will also be reviewed.

The investigation is the result of many complaints about WorkSafe agents to the Ombudsman: 370 complaints in the 2014-15 financial year. The most common related to claims decisions and processes, including failures in decision making and failure to consider evidence. The second most common complaint related to payments, with complainants registering dissatisfaction with issues around decision making.

The WorkSafe agents include Allianz, CGU, Gallagher Bassett Services, QBE and XChanging.

The Accident Compensation Conciliation Service annual reports for the last three years have shown increases in the number of requests for conciliation of 13.6 per cent (2012-13), 5.2 per cent (2013-14) and 0.2 per cent (2014-15).

Ms Glass is not available for interview.

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