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**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Insurance Commission puts injured Western Australians on \$700 million road to recovery**

- **1.9 million drivers and 120,000 government employees covered**
- **Received 30,600 new claims in 2019 for crash and workplace injuries**
- **Paid for 180,000 physiotherapist and doctor visits for injured people**
- **\$265 million to Government in dividends and return of capital**

The Insurance Commission paid out over \$700 million in 2019 to help tens of thousands of Western Australians return to work and the community following a car crash or workplace accident.

Its [annual results](#) (published yesterday, 25 September) show that it received over 30,600 new claims during the year and managed claims valued at \$4 billion, including anticipated future claims expenses of \$3.3 billion.

Rod Whithear, Insurance Commission Chief Executive, says: “We play a quiet but important role in most Western Australians’ lives. We’re the State’s insurer covering 1.9 million motorists, 120,000 state government employees and \$55 billion of government assets.”

### **Crash claims**

In 2019, the Insurance Commission received 11,300 new motor injury insurance claims. The number of new compensation claims increased 5.3% (169 claims) from 3,191 in 2018 to 3,360 in 2019. This partly contributed to claims payments being \$57.1 million higher at \$448.5 million than the \$391.4 million paid in 2018.

Rod Whithear says: “Over 11,000 injured road users claimed against our motor injury insurance during the year, and close to half a billion dollars was paid to people injured in crashes and the service providers delivering their care and support.”

Spine and neck (4,333 injuries; \$130.1m payments) followed by upper limbs (1,397; \$58.5m) and lower limbs (1,342; \$80.7m), were the most common injuries reported in motorists’ insurance claims.

Injury claims involve costs paid to help a person recover and return back to work and normal life. Care accounts for 39% (\$1.2b) of current and future motor injury claims costs, ahead of compensation (31%; \$956m) and hospital and medical (13%; \$389m).

The Commission also continued its efforts to help injured people in remote areas who may not have convenient access to the services required to help them finalise their claims.

The regional claims trip to the Kimberley and Pilbara, where claimants are met in person, was extended to the Goldfields. In 2019, this customer service initiative assisted 53 claimants obtain compensation for their injuries, paying out over \$3 million.

### **Public sector claims**

The Insurance Commission also provides a range of government insurance services. During the year, it received 19,328 new claims and paid \$254.9 million to claimants, service providers and agencies across all its funds and schemes. Although there were fewer new claims (1,280 or 6.2% less than 2018), claim payments were \$18 million higher than the year before.

Rod Whithear comments: “The continued reduction in total new claims is a desired outcome, as it indicates Government agencies are managing their risks.”

Virtually all (99%) claims were made against the RiskCover Fund, the self-insurance arrangements of the WA Government. The fund supports 120,000 state government employees at 111 agencies deliver critical services to the community and provides compensation when injury and adverse events occur.

The most common injury type for workers’ compensation claims was upper limbs (1,661 injuries; \$46.8m payments) followed by lower limbs (1,120; \$37.0m) and trunk and back (864; \$28.2m).

### **Services provided**

To provide for the care and rehabilitation of claimants, the Insurance Commission works with hundreds of service providers across WA from hospitals to house modification specialists.

In 2019, it paid for over 525,000 services, including: almost 100,000 physiotherapy appointments; over 80,000 visits to the doctor; and around 70,000 vocational rehabilitation sessions.

### **Community engagement**

The Insurance Commission’s community engagement program aims to prevent or minimise the risk of injuries, which helps keep its claims costs down and premiums affordable.

Rod Whithear says: “We continued to promote the Belt Up seat belt campaign in 2019 by working with community sporting clubs to get the road safety message out. The simple fact is that seat belts save lives and lessen injuries but not everyone wears one.

“We also partnered with service providers and hospitals to fund research designed to increase the independence of people injured in car crashes and at work.”

### **Contribution to the State**

The Insurance Commission contributed \$264.9 million to Government in 2019 in dividends and RiskCover Fund return of capital payments. This included amounts that relate to 2018.

In the last five years, it has contributed \$795.7 million to Government in dividend and return of capital payments and \$2.2 billion in net debt reduction.

**Further information on the Insurance Commission's performance and activities in the last year is available in its [2019 annual report](#).**

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### **Media contact**

For additional information, media comments or queries, please contact:

Gavin Hill-Smith  
Insurance Commission of Western Australia  
+61 8 9264 3227  
[gavin.hill-smith@icwa.wa.gov.au](mailto:gavin.hill-smith@icwa.wa.gov.au)

### **Insurance Commission – 2019 overview**

*Customers*  
**2,910,027** total insured vehicles  
**1,857,107** total insured drivers  
**111** total government agencies covered  
**119,825** total government employees covered  
**\$55b** total value of government assets covered

*Insurance Claims*  
**30,628** Total New Claims  
**\$703.4m** Total Paid

*Contribution to the State in 2019*  
Net Debt Reduction - \$124.3m  
RiskCover Fund Return of Capital - \$162.3m  
Tax Paid - \$117.8m  
Dividends - \$102.6m  
Insurance Duty - \$87.7m

*Contribution to the State 2015 to 2019*  
**\$2.2b**  
Five-Year Net Debt Reduction  
  
**\$1.5b**  
Five-Year Payments to Government<sup>^</sup>  
<sup>^</sup>Dividend, RiskCover Fund Return of Capital, tax and duty

## Insurance Commission data tables – 2019

*Services provided to claimants and paid by Insurance Commission*

<b>Service type</b>	<b>Number*</b>
Physiotherapy sessions	97,646
Doctor appointments	80,286
Vocational rehabilitation	70,112
Chemist expenses	36,122
Exercise programs	30,829
X-rays	18,642
Psychologist and psychiatrist appointments	14,583
Occupational therapy appointments	13,575
Chiropractor and osteopath appointments	9,005
Aids, appliances and equipment	8,778

\*Motor Injury Insurance and Government Insurance combined

## Motor Injury Insurance

*Number and cost of crash injuries by body part*

<b>Body part</b>	<b>Number of injuries</b>	<b>Payments</b>
Spine and neck	4,333	\$130.1m
Upper limbs	1,397	\$58.5m
Lower limbs	1,342	\$80.7m
Burns and other	493	\$7.0m
Chest	460	\$38.3m
Head	400	\$95.5m
Psychological	147	\$3.2m
Face	130	\$4.3m
Abdomen and pelvis	110	\$5.2m

Excludes minor injury claims.

*Breakdown of current and outstanding claims costs*

	<b>Payments</b>	<b>Estimates</b>	<b>Total</b>
Care	\$88.1m	\$1.12b	\$1.2b
Compensation:			
- Economic loss	\$116.1m	\$431.6m	\$547.7m
- Pain and suffering	\$78.7m	\$329.4m	\$408.1m
Hospital	\$37.2m	\$63.8m	\$101.0m
Medical and equipment	\$42.4m	\$245.9m	\$288.3m
Other	\$86.0m	\$465.7m	\$551.7m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$448.5m</b>	<b>\$2.7b</b>	<b>\$3.1b</b>

## Government Insurance

### *RiskCover Fund Classes Finalised Claims in 2019*

	<b>Finalised Claims</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>Average Cost</b>
Workers' compensation	5,539	\$186.4m	\$33,654
Liability	349	\$39.8m	\$113,981
Motor	2,268	\$9.6m	\$4,236
Property	11,640	\$19.6m	\$1,687
Miscellaneous	110	\$1.3m	\$12,055
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,906</b>	<b>\$256.7m</b>	

### *Finalised Workers' Compensation Claims - Number and Cost of Injuries by Body Part*

	<b>Number of injuries</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Upper Limbs	1,661	\$46.8m
Lower Limbs	1,120	\$37.0m
Trunk and Back	864	\$28.2m
Multiple and Other Locations	739	\$23.1m
Mental Stress	550	\$40.3m
Head	474	\$7.2m
Neck	131	\$3.8m
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,539</b>	<b>\$186.4m</b>

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