

Policy activities

Providing policy advice and legislative support are important WorkCover WA activities, as is the monitoring and evaluating scheme performance through data analysis and research.

Additionally the agency manages internal and external research projects, and participates in cross-jurisdictional activities through the Heads of Workers' Compensation Authorities.

WorkCover WA's key policy and scheme performance initiatives and activities in 2008/09 are detailed below.

Legislation and policy

The agency began a review of the [*Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981*](#) (the Act) with a focus on examining the readability, accessibility and consistency of the statute. This review includes:

- establishing a reference group of key external stakeholders to assist the review process
- preparation of a range of documents to support the review
- managing a broad consultation process with workers' compensation scheme participants.

WorkCover WA managed the process to have exercise physiology recognised as an 'approved treatment', and pleural plaques recognised as a specified industrial disease, under the Act.

WorkCover WA provided policy and legislative advice on the following Amendment Bills which affect workers' compensation legislation in Western Australia:

- *Standardisation of Formatting Bill 2009*
- *Police (Former Officers' Medical and Other Expenses) Bill 2008*

Additionally, WorkCover WA commissioned an actuarial assessment of the cost effect of amending references to age in the Act.

Scheme management

WorkCover WA actively managed the workers' compensation scheme in Western Australia through the:

- responsive monitoring of scheme performance in a period of economic volatility
- gazettal of recommended premium rates for the underwriting year commencing 1 July 2009
- review of the contingency margin applicable to the 2009/10 recommended premium rates.

It also published a range of benefits and fee schedules, in accordance with statutory responsibilities, including:

- calculation and publication in the *Government Gazette* of the Variations in Prescribed Amount and other Workers' Compensation Payments scheduled for the financial year commencing 1 July 2009
- indexation of medical and allied health service fees, resulting in a 4.78 per cent increase
- insertion of a new fee schedule for Exercise Physiologists into the *Workers' Compensation (Scale of Fees) Regulations 1998*.

Research and statistics

WorkCover WA manages a range of workers' compensation scheme performance data to measure and report on scheme health. Using this data WorkCover WA:

- published a series of workers' compensation scheme performance and status reports on trends across the scheme
- produced the *Workers' Compensation Statistical Report for 2007/08* providing an overview of workers' compensation in Western Australia and detailing information on the characteristics of lost-time workers' compensation claims
- contributed to the refinement of cross-jurisdictional data collection processes and provided data to enhance national comparisons of workers' compensation performance
- provided information to seminars and other presentations to enhance stakeholder knowledge and understanding of the workers' compensation scheme in Western Australia.