

## Significant Issues Impacting the Agency

### Strategic focus in 2009/10

In response to emerging issues affecting the workers' compensation scheme, such as the global financial crisis, WorkCover WA undertook a full review of its strategic outlook. The shift that resulted articulates a clear vision, mission and set of strategic goals that will enable the agency to be proactive and flexible in responding to challenges and changes within the scheme over the next few years.

### Current and emerging issues

WorkCover WA's operations are affected by the scheme environment and influenced by State and national trends.

Current and emerging issues identified as likely to impact on WorkCover WA in the coming years are:

- the global financial crisis
- national agenda (harmonisation of workers' compensation arrangements)
- workers' compensation legislative review
- agency culture and capability
- performance data and reporting requirements
- the need for increased flexibility and responsiveness in delivering services.



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### Legislative environment

In March 2009, the [Minister for Commerce](#) announced a review of the [Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981](#). WorkCover WA is facilitating the review which focuses on the efficiency and structure of the legislative environment and provides an opportunity to address any continuing concerns arising out of the 2005 changes to the Act. A stakeholder reference group was established to perform an advisory role to WorkCover WA in the review process. The review will not entail a broad ranging examination of the benefits and entitlements contained within the scheme.

The terms of reference for the review are to:

1. create an improved structure for the Act, to enhance the readability and consistency of the legislation
2. improve the efficiency of the legislation to respond to changing circumstances
3. address anomalies which have been identified through past experience in the operation of the Act, including matters raised in the evaluation of the 2005 reforms or by stakeholders
4. address specific policy issues, such as age discrimination, as identified by stakeholders.

A final report will be provided to the Minister by December 2009.

### Dispute resolution

The enactment of the *Police (Medical and Other Expenses for Former Officers) Act 2008* imports former Police Officers and Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers into the dispute provisions of the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981*. Discussions are currently under way with WA Police regarding implementation of this legislation. The legislation was gazetted on 23 June 2009.