

Assessment of Permanent Impairment & Approved Assessors

The *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023 (WCIMA23)* provides for an impairment assessment process in accordance with Guidelines issued by WorkCover WA and provides for a framework for approval and regulation of permanent impairment assessors.

Key Points

Act ref: Part 4 Division 3 and 4, s. 580

- WorkCover WA's *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment* provide for the assessment of the degree of an injured worker's permanent impairment.
- The Guidelines are published on the WorkCover WA website.
- Only an approved permanent impairment assessor can assess a worker's degree of permanent impairment.
- The *WCIMA23* provides a framework for the approval of approved permanent impairment assessors. The framework addresses:
 - approval criteria and conditions, duration of approval and registration of permanent impairment assessors
 - provision for compliance audits and investigations to ensure compliance with the Act, regulations, conditions of approval and the Guidelines
 - suspension or cancellation of permanent impairment assessors.

Key Points

- A Ministerial fee order published on the WorkCover WA website fixes maximum fees and charges for permanent impairment assessments undertaken by approved permanent impairment assessors.

Questions & Answers

Q. Do approved medical specialists under the 1981 Act have to reapply to become approved permanent impairment assessors under the *WCIMA23*?

A. No. Savings and transitional provisions provide that an approved medical specialist under the 1981 Act is taken to be an approved permanent impairment assessor under the *WCIMA23*, and is subject to the new Act. This means approved medical specialists under the 1981 Act are subject to the approval criteria, conditions, performance monitoring and compliance requirements in the *WCIMA23* and regulations.