

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, EMPLOYEES, WORKERS' COMPENSATION

3106. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services; Justice; Community Safety

For each department and agency under the portfolio of the Minister -

- (a) how many employees, both permanent and non-permanent are currently on workers' compensation as a result of a workplace injury;
- (b) what is the average time for employees to be on workers' compensation as a result of a workplace injury;
- (c) are all workplace injuries, resulting in lost time, investigated to find the cause of the injury and to review workplace practices;
- (d) if yes, who conducts the investigation;
- (e) if not, why not;
- (f) of the employees absent on workers' compensation, how many are as a result of workplace stress;
- (g) of those employees on workers' compensation as a result of workplace stress, how many are not permanent employees;
- (h) has each case of stress resulting in lost time, been investigated to find the cause of the stress and to review workplace practices;
- (i) if yes, who conducts the investigation; and
- (j) if not, why not?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

Western Australia Police Service

Note: RiskCover do not cover sworn police officers for work place injuries, therefore, the following data relates to unsworn staff only.

- (a) The Insurance Commission advise 12 as at 31/07/04.
- (b) The Insurance Commission advise 19 days as at 30/06/04.
- (c)-(d) The Police Service advise all incidents in the workplace are investigated based on the Incident Investigation Process where the OSH Representative, the Officer in Charge and the employee consider the causes for the injury and ways of preventing future injuries. This is also investigated by the Health and Welfare Branch (Worker's Compensation Officer, Safety Officer and the rehabilitation Officer) with a view to implementing injury management strategies to assist the injured employee to return to the workplace as soon as practicable.
- (e) Not applicable
- (f) RiskCover advise 0.
- (g)-(j) Not applicable.

Fire and Emergency Services Authority

- (a) The Insurance Commission advise 9 as at 31/07/04.
- (b) The Insurance Commission advise 17 days as at 30/06/04.
- (c) The Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA) advise all workplace injuries reported to FESA, using the hazard/accident report form, are investigated to determine the cause of the injury. The hazard/accident report includes an investigation section which the supervisor of the injured person must complete and then forward to the Health Safety and Welfare Branch for review. Once the cause of the injury is known, applicable work practices, equipment and any other relevant information are reviewed to determine if there is any way in which they could be improved. A process is also in place to undertake necessary improvements. Where applicable, circulars are then released to the appropriate departments to ensure all those concerned are aware of any changes which may have been made to work practises or equipment.
- (d) FESA advise the investigation is undertaken by the supervisor of the injured person. FESA's Health Safety and Welfare Branch, and where applicable Safety and Health Representatives, are available to assist at all times throughout the investigation. Serious incidents may also be

investigated by other relevant areas of FESA in accordance with FESA's Incident Analysis policy (Policy 54).

The report, complete with the investigation details, is then forwarded to the Health, Safety and Welfare Branch. The branch then reviews the report and the corrective actions which have been recommended or implemented by the supervisor. The report is viewed by the Safety Advisor and the Safety Coordinator to review from a safety perspective, the Welfare Liaison Officer to review from a psychological viewpoint and the Physical Fitness Officer to review from a physiological aspect. This process ensures independent professional review of possible solutions.

- (e) Not Applicable.
- (f) The Insurance Commission advise 2.
- (g) The Insurance Commission advise 0.
- (h) FESA advise all stress claims are investigated as per the injury reporting procedure outlined above unless the circumstances and sensitivities of the case dictate that alternative investigative procedures are required.

In addition to the above procedure, FESA has conducted an investigation into all stress claims made within the Worker's Compensation system in the last four years. The aim of this investigation was to identify trends which may be able to assist FESA identify possible stress injuries. Stress triggers have been identified and a process implemented to ensure that action is taken when these triggers are identified, including a meeting of the Health Safety and Welfare branch members to determine the best strategies to adopt for each specific case (i.e. a case management approach). This allows early interventions to prevent injuries occurring or escalating in the future.

- (i) FESA advise the supervisor conducts the investigation as per the injury reporting procedure, or if there is a conflict of interest whereby the cause of the stress is a result of conflict with the supervisor, the manager above the supervisor would investigate the incident and so on. If other issues are involved, managers from other FESA Divisions (e.g. Human Services) or independent persons external to FESA may be involved in investigating stress related claims.
- (j) Not Applicable.

Department of Justice

- (a) The Insurance Commission advise 55 as at 31/07/04.
- (b) The Insurance Commission advise 24 days as at 30/06/04.
- (c) Yes
- (d) The Department of Justice advise the Department's Occupational Health Safety representatives or RiskCover undertake/organise an investigation into an incident depending on the circumstances.
- (e) Not applicable.
- (f) RiskCover advise 11
- (g) RiskCover advise 0.
- (h) Yes
- (i) Refer to (d).
- (j) Not applicable

Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services

- (a) Nil
- (b)-(j) Not applicable