

29 SEPTEMBER 2023

TIME FOR REFORM: REPORT CALLS FOR ACTION ON WORKERS COMP

NSW's beleaguered workers comp scheme has failed injured workers, stifled businesses and needs a major overhaul, a landmark report reveals.

The *Fixing the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme* report, released today by Business NSW, identifies problems in the system and key reforms needed to get it back on track.

The report from the state's peak business body follows a years-long investigation into how to make the system better for employers and workers. Almost 150 businesses participated in the research.

BNSW CEO Daniel Hunter said, "hiking premiums and decreasing benefits is not the solution to fix the ailing scheme".

"While BNSW and its members commend the NSW Government for pushing back on icare's eye-watering proposal for a 22 per cent average premium increase – instead opting for 8 per cent – more needs to be done," Mr Hunter said.

"We would like to see the NSW Government commit to important actions in three areas: injury and claims management, statutory safeguards and the scheme's fitness for purpose.

"The unsustainability of the NSW workers compensation scheme threatens to either send more businesses fleeing to more favourable scheme states like Queensland or, worse still, close them permanently.

"A do-nothing scenario could also lead to the regulator considering cutting benefits for injured workers.

“There must also be greater stakeholder oversight of the scheme to ensure the best outcomes for employers and their workers.”

Revealing how compromised the system is, regulator SIRA reports that only 65 per cent of workers return to work four weeks post-injury, compared to more than 75 per cent in 2015.

“It is critical for the state’s economic wellbeing and injured workers that the scheme is sustainable and works for employers and employees,” Mr Hunter said.

The report recommendations include:

- Refining programs to help employers who are, for good reason, unable to provide their injured worker with suitable duties;
- Increasing stakeholder oversight; and
- Improving the level of information and guidance for employers and workers to make it easier to access support and review services.

Read a copy of Fixing the Workers Compensation Report here:

https://www.businessnsw.com/content/dam/nswbc/businessnsw/pdf/Fixing_the_NSW_Workers_Compensation_Scheme.pdf

About Business NSW

Formerly the NSW Business Chamber, **Business NSW** is the peak policy and advocacy body which has been representing businesses in NSW since 1826. We represent almost 50,000 businesses.

MEDIA CONTACT: BEN PIKE – 0429 993 822

