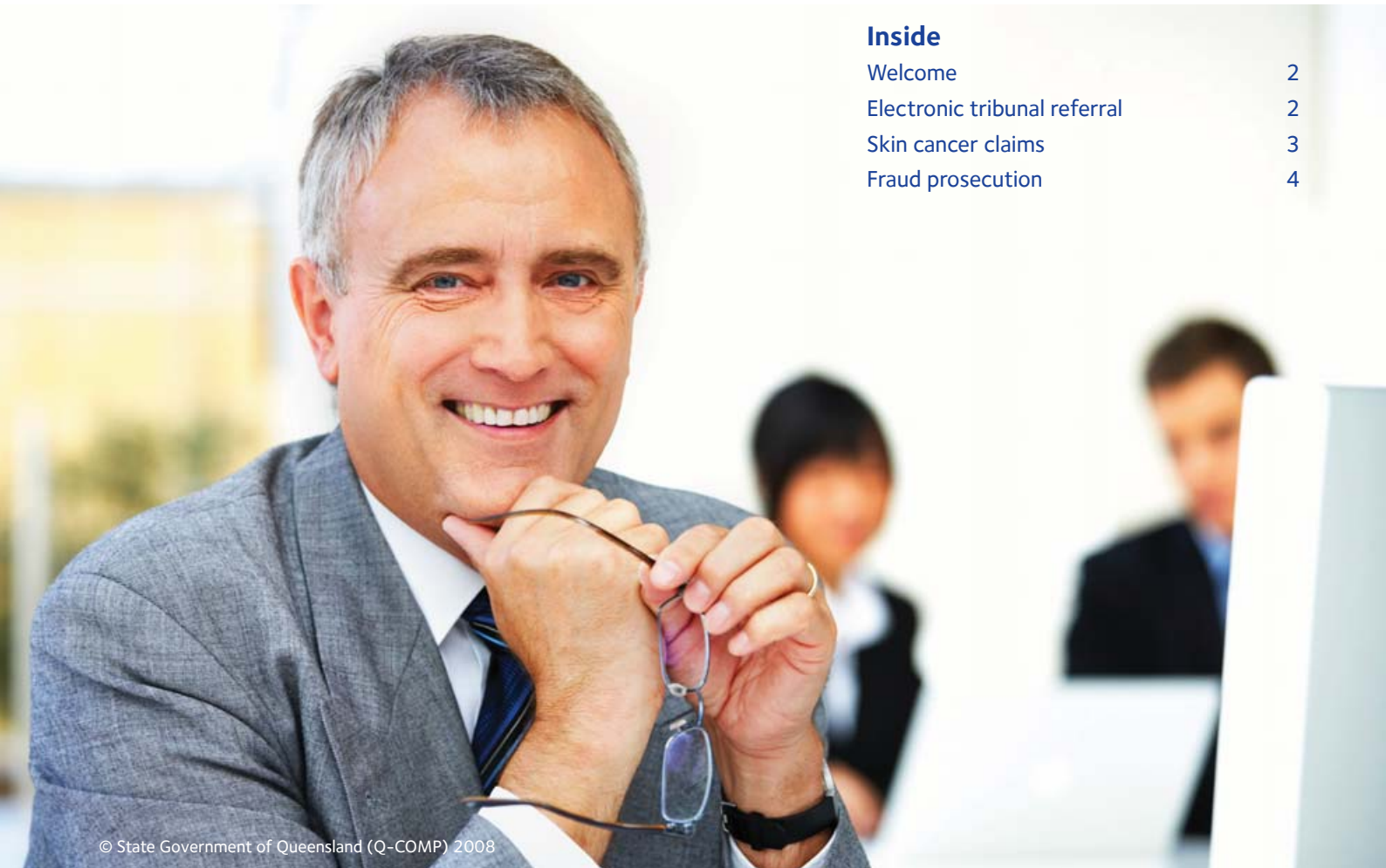
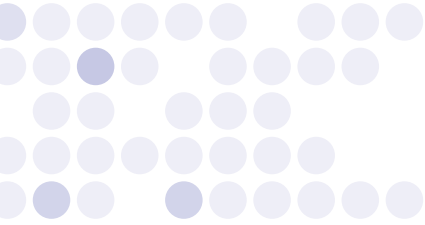


Q-COMP InsurerReport

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Q-COMP Insurer Report*, a newsletter for Queensland workers' compensation insurers.



Inside

Welcome	2
Electronic tribunal referral	2
Skin cancer claims	3
Fraud prosecution	4

Welcome

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Q-COMP Insurer Report*, a newsletter providing regular updates and information about the Queensland workers' compensation scheme.

It's almost a year since we began our customer service realignment to improve service delivery to stakeholders, including you, as the insurer.

The realignment was an opportunity to refocus our priorities and the way we do business.

Over the last year, our customer service delivery has become a high priority—we want to have a relationship with you where you feel that you are treated respectfully and fairly, listened to and involved.

We're also working to make everyday processes easier, such as improvements to the way you can refer to the tribunals and a review on how you submit data.

More details on these improvements are in this issue.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.



Elizabeth Woods
Chief Executive Officer

Electronic tribunal referral

We are now able to accept tribunal referrals by email. No hardcopies are required if you choose to send referrals electronically.

Email the following to newmatreferrals@qcomp.com.au:

1. Medical Assessment Tribunal referral form

Please use the approved form in either Microsoft Word or Excel format and attach to the email.

There is no need to sign (and then scan) the document because your email is sufficient verification.

2. All documents listed in the referral form and under part D.

It's preferred these documents are collated into one PDF document and attached to the email.

Don't send a PDF of the entire claim file. You should only send the documents under part D.

3. Insert the injured worker's name and claim number in the subject line of the email.

We will reply by email and confirm we have received the referral.

For any questions, call the Tribunal Secretariat on 1300 738 197.

Electronic workers' compensation medical certificate

The *Workers' compensation medical certificate* is now in an electronic format on our website.

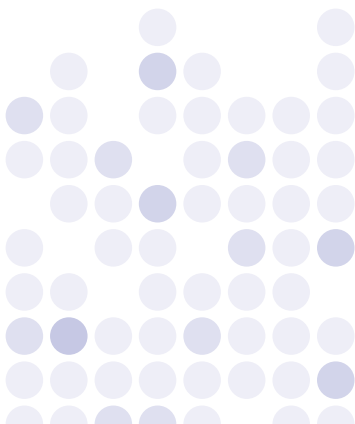
It's easy to access and a handy option for medical practitioners and dentists who only need the medical certificate occasionally.

You can type a patient's details directly into the certificate and save the information entered (with the latest version of the free Acrobat Adobe Reader).

Monthly report changes

You will notice the following changes to the monthly insurer reports:

- cancelled and withdrawn claims are now excluded from intimations
- a wording change in the Review tab will improve the report description.



Fraud prosecution

A worker lodged an application for compensation with a self-insurer for a shoulder injury.

The self-insurer accepted the claim and paid the benefits but the worker failed to disclose that she had a history of shoulder problems going back three years.

The self-insurer claimed that its liability should be restricted to the aggravation.

The worker was charged with defrauding and providing a false statement to the self-insurer.

The worker pleaded guilty in the Beenleigh Industrial Magistrates Court and received a sentence of six months imprisonment wholly suspended for two years, and was ordered to repay \$31,509.57 plus costs for defrauding the self-insurer.

She was also ordered to perform 100 hours community service as part of the charge of providing a false statement.

Fraud presentation

We recently presented on fraud to insurers.

If you were unable to attend and would like a copy of the handouts, contact Ron Weinert or Elizabeth Seymour-Smith on 3235 4906.

Review of AMA Guides

The fourth edition of the *American Medical Association Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment* (AMA Guides) is currently used to assess permanent impairment (PI) for all work-related injuries.

Professor Mohammed Ranavaya MD, JD, an internationally recognised expert on the AMA Guides was recently in Australia educating doctors and insurers on the new (sixth) edition.

Some of the major changes include:

- five impairment classes based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)
- sub-grades within the classes.

According to Professor Ranavaya, the new edition:

- will enable doctors to adjust a PI assessment based on individual circumstances and take into account the affect of impairment on activities of daily living and functional ability
- is still impairment based, but the addition of sub-grades may act as a bridge between impairment and disability
- will be easier to use because there is uniformity across all chapters.

We are coordinating an evaluation of the new edition of the AMA Guides and this feedback will be shared with insurers, the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, the Motor Accident Insurance Commission and the Department of Justice and the Attorney-General.

In the meantime, the fourth edition will continue to be used for all PI assessments in Queensland.



Professor Mohammed Ranavaya, an internationally recognised expert on the AMA Guides and permanent impairment assessment.

RRTWC accreditation changes

Recent changes to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2003 will affect the accreditation and registration of new rehabilitation and return to work coordinators (RTTWCs) from 1 July 2009.

New RRTWCs must complete a course accredited by the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector.

All RRTWCs will still need to register with Q-COMP.

Existing RRTWCs will retain their accreditation under the transitional provisions.

The one-day recertification course will not be transferred to the VET sector and we are now looking at flexible delivery options and we are interested in your suggestions and ideas.

You can contact Senior Rehabilitation Advisors Kerry Lugg or Jo Harris on 3238 3532.

QUOTE

QUOTE and other benefit tables increased on 1 July 2008.

A copy of the table has been sent to insurers and it can also be accessed on our website at www.qcomp.com.au.

Skin cancer claims

The decision of Q-COMP v Gordon Robinson handed down by the Industrial Court earlier this year has changed the way claims for skin cancers are determined.

The appeal was for a worker seeking benefits for the loss of his left eye caused by a skin cancer lesion.

The worker claimed he suffered the skin cancer from unprotected sun exposure while working on the Brisbane docksides in the 1960s.

The worker had been troubled by skin cancers for 20 years and argued that the lesion was a recurrence of a skin cancer that had been removed in 2004.

Previously, Q-COMP's position was for the date of sun exposure to be treated as the date of injury.

During the appeal, President Hall heard the medical opinion of Clinical Dermatologist Dr Godfrey Wagner.

Dr Wagner said three stages of UVB (sun) induced carcinogenesis exist, being:

1. Initiation - sun induced damage to the DNA. These are early changes, some will repair and some will continue to the next stage.
2. Promotion - further mutation of the DNA as a result of the cumulative effect of UV damage. It is still possible for the cell damage to be reversed by the body's immune system.
3. Progression - irreversible commitment to malignant behaviour.

Dr Wagner said that 'the disease process of 'field' change to the entire area caused by sun damage means that [the worker] was at risk of developing new lesions at any site of sun exposure'.

President Hall determined that the 2006 lesion was a 'discrete' injury.

President Hall considered that it was probable that the lesion in 2006 was a recurrence of the 2004 lesion, but that due to the time gap it was improbable that the 2004 lesion was a recurrence of a 1996 lesion.

Insurers will now need to identify the time the claimed lesion was actually sustained when determining the date of injury (as opposed to referring to the date of sun exposure).

The appeal was for a worker seeking benefits for the loss of his left eye caused by a skin cancer lesion.

Industrial court decisions

Recent appeal cases heard by the Industrial Court:

- Craig John Hohn & Q-COMP (C2007/60)
- Lisa-Marie DiCello & Q-COMP (C2008/15)

For more information on these cases, visit www.wageline.qld.gov.au or www.austlii.edu.au.

Search QWCDec on our website for the initial appeal decision from the Industrial Magistrates Court and Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

Data update

Data submission process

We will be interviewing all insurers over the coming months to review the data submission process.

The data reference group has agreed with these activities.

For more details please contact Data Liaison Officers Rachael Keogh or Georgina Best on 3235 4143.

Data quality review

As part of our data quality monitoring, we will be sending you a spreadsheet to fill in so we can reconcile data on each insurer's system totals with our totals.

Keep an eye out for the spreadsheet in the coming weeks.

New claim type derivation rules

We have updated the claim type derivation rules to make them more appropriate and meaningful.

We are currently fine tuning the rules and expect to produce them mid July 2008.

More information and feedback

For more information or to provide feedback about *Q-COMP Insurer Report* or other workers' compensation insurer issues contact:

Ron Weinert

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- phone 3235 4906

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