

WorkSafe
Tasmania

Strategic Plan

2013–18

A focus for workplace safety,
health, rehabilitation
and compensation



Revised May 2016



Minister's Foreword

The Tasmanian Government is absolutely committed to seeing workers return home safely to their families at the end of a shift. Improving work health and safety, return to work and injury management outcomes to ensure Tasmanians are kept safe, healthy and productive is not only good for workers but good for our economy.

The WorkSafe Tasmania Strategic Plan outlines our priorities and strategic focus to 2018 in the areas of work health, safety, rehabilitation and compensation.

The strategic priorities are to: focus on high risk industries; target high consequence activities; be a responsive regulator; engage with the community; and ensure compensation schemes are fair and sustainable.

The strategic plan focuses on those industries with the highest number of lost time injuries, recognising that the biggest gains can be made in these areas. Improvements in these and other industries will benefit all, with reduced deaths, injuries, costs and premiums.

The Government will also ensure this plan results in the removal of the burden of red tape and any unnecessary regulation from work health and safety.

I commend the strategic plan and look forward to the realisation of its strategic objectives by 2018.

The Hon. Guy Barnett

Minister for Building and Construction

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Introduction

This strategic plan outlines WorkSafe Tasmania's strategic focus and priorities for the period 2013-2018. It details those areas of work health, safety, rehabilitation and compensation that WorkSafe Tasmania has identified as strategic priority areas for improvement over the next five years. These strategic priorities were identified following analysis of a range of indicators, including lost time injury rates, fatality data and return to work rates. This data is used to strategically allocate resources.

This document is underpinned by a business plan, which outlines the specific programs and projects that will be undertaken in each year to support each strategic priority.

Both the business plan and this strategic plan will be reviewed annually.

For the period 2013-2015, the review of the plan did not initiate any significant changes. However, based on 2015 data, the Retail sector was removed from strategic objective 1 and a new sector added: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing.

This decision was based around the improved performance of both lost time and serious injury frequency rates in the Retail sector, while identifying an increase in incident rates in the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector. The focus of resources compelled this target industry change. These changes are reflected for 2016-20 and beyond.

Our vision

For all Tasmanian workplaces to be free of death, injury and disease.

Our mission

For all Tasmanians to be safe and healthy at work; and if injured, to be supported financially and systematically to achieve, wherever possible, full physical and mental recovery and return to work as speedily as possible.

Who we are

WorkSafe Tasmania is a division of the Department of Justice responsible for administering and enforcing laws that regulate work health and safety, and workers rehabilitation and compensation.

The WorkCover Tasmania Board is a statutory entity with responsibilities under the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2012.

A legislative function of the WorkCover Tasmania Board is to monitor and review WorkSafe Tasmania in relation to the exercise of powers and the performance of its functions under the workers rehabilitation and compensation legislation and the work health and safety legislation.

In addition to its functions as part of the Department of Justice, WorkSafe Tasmania staff implement the decisions of the WorkCover Tasmania Board and assist the Board to fulfil its functions in injury management, work health and safety, and workers compensation. There is a strong relationship between the Department of Justice and the WorkCover Tasmania Board, with the Secretary of the Department filling the position of Chair of the Board.

WorkSafe Tasmania also provides support to the Asbestos Compensation Commissioner, who is responsible for the administration of the asbestos compensation scheme.

What we do

Broadly, WorkSafe Tasmania's role is to administer and enforce, through a mix of education and compliance activities, the laws it is responsible for.

WorkSafe Tasmania administers the laws that regulate:

- // work health and safety
- // dangerous goods, security-sensitive dangerous substances, and explosives
- // occupational accreditation and licensing
- // mines safety
- // workers compensation and return to work
- // asbestos compensation
- // public sector industrial relations, long service leave, shop trading hours and statutory holidays

WorkSafe Tasmania's activities include:

- // auditing workplaces for compliance with legislation
- // promoting safer and healthier workplaces, by providing information, practical guidance and education activities
- // promoting prompt and effective return to work, by providing information, practical guidance and education activities
- // assessing and processing industry and occupational licences and permits
- // investigating workplace incidents.

Our values

Our values describe the things that are important to us and they outline the sort of organisation that we aspire to be. We will make this a reality by modelling the behaviours below in all our interactions with colleagues, clients and stakeholders.

People first

We treat everyone with respect, integrity and equality.

Collaboration and leadership

We work constructively with colleagues and stakeholders to identify our priorities and achieve our objectives.

Openness and transparency

We communicate clearly and make decisions fairly.

Building capability

We seek opportunities for growth — for our people and our organisation.

Performance matters

We are committed to our mission and to achieving outstanding results for the Tasmanian community.

Our strategic priorities for 2013–2018

WorkSafe Tasmania will fulfil its vision and mission by:

1	Focusing on high risk industries	Focus on targeted high risk industries to reduce the number of workplace deaths, injuries and disease
2	Targeting high consequence activities	Focus on targeted industries and activities with high consequence incidents
3	Being a responsive regulator	Ensure that as a regulator we respond consistently, constructively transparently, accountably, proportionately and in a timely manner
4	Engaging with the community	Influence the community's attitudes and values towards work health and safety to empower a change to positive behaviours
5	Ensuring compensation schemes are fair and sustainable	Ensure that compensation schemes are fair, affordable, sustainable and administratively effective and efficient

1 Focusing on high risk industries

	Measure	KPI	2018 Target*
<p style="text-align: center;">Focusing on targeted industries to reduce the number of workplace deaths, injuries and disease</p>	Lost Time Injury frequency rates (per million hours worked) by industry	Reduced Lost Time Injury rate of targeted industry groups	15% reduction on 2013 baseline of: Manufacturing 11.9 Construction 10.0 Health 16.4 Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (2015-16 baseline) 5.1
	Serious injury frequency rate (claims with 1 or more weeks lost time per million hours worked) by industry	Reduced serious injury frequency rate of targeted industry groups	15% reduction on 2013 baseline of: Manufacturing 10.3 Construction 8.5 Health 13.7 Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (2015-16 baseline) 4.6
	5 year rolling average for the number of work related deaths in high risk industries	Reduced number of work related deaths	20% reduction on 2016 baseline of 3.2
	Inspectorate/Advisory Services field based activities in targeted industries	60% of annual workplace visits in targeted industries. This KPI covers high risk and high consequence industries	60% of workplace visits in targeted industries

* included Retail sector for the period 2013-15 which has been replaced by the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector

Industries have been grouped at the divisional level as per the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC 2006).

Why is this important?

Across Tasmania, there is significant diversity in the type of work people do and the industries they do this work in. Consequently there is great variety in the kinds of health and safety risks that workers face; and in the type and frequency rates of work-related injuries and illnesses. WorkSafe Tasmania needs to strategically allocate its limited resources to maximise impact.

What will this strategy do?

This strategy will help to:

- /// identify the work health and safety challenges for Tasmanian industries needing the greatest assistance
- /// engage with industry to reduce workplace risks and improve work safety and health performance.

Industries will be targeted on the basis of the number of work related deaths¹, injuries and the injury frequency rates.

As industry injury rates and the number of work related deaths change, so too will the industries that are targeted.

¹ A work related death is a death that arose out of or in the course of employment or at a workplace where the activity of the deceased was contributing to or subject to the activity of that workplace (excluding bystanders).

Focusing on industry groups (and their sub-divisions) will identify:

- // at-risk occupations
- // the most common types of injury and mechanisms of injury
- // sectors with a prevalence for certain injuries or diseases.

This strategy will determine the focus of resources allocated for delivering work health and safety programs in these industries.

Why will this strategy make a difference?

Recognising the role industry plays in developing effective work health and safety practices, and working with the businesses operating within these industries to make workplaces safe, healthy and productive, will have a significant impact on Tasmania's health and safety profile.

The long term organisational goal is zero work related deaths. Our five year goal of a 20% reduction to the rolling average is twice the rate aspired to in the Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022.

The multi-focused approach to the top four targeted industries' work related deaths, injuries and illnesses will assist in identifying and developing strategies to address trends in addition to being able to meet wide-ranging emerging safety, health and associated workplace issues and risks.

Data

Between 2006 and 2014 the number of work related deaths each year fluctuated between four and fifteen. In 2014, there were four work related deaths: one each in the agriculture, forestry and fishing; mining; transport, postal and warehousing; and manufacturing.

Four of the industries contributing significantly to the number of Lost Time Injury (LTI) claims² are the manufacturing; health care and social assistance; agriculture, forestry and fishing; and construction industries.

Manufacturing

Between 1997 and 2014, manufacturing had the greatest number of LTI, 18.9% of all LTI.

In 2014, manufacturing had the third highest LTI, with 314 and a LTI frequency rate of 9.0.

Health Care and Social Assistance

Between 1997 and 2014, Health Care and Social Assistance had the second highest number of LTI, 15.9% of all LTI.

In 2014, Health Care and Social Assistance had the highest LTI, with 664 or 15.9% of all LTI reported that year and a LTI frequency rate of 13.23.

Construction

In 2014, construction had the sixth highest LTI with 231 and a frequency rate of 11.48.

The most common mechanisms of injury for the targeted industries in 2014 were body stressing, being hit by moving objects, and falls, trips and slips.³

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing has been selected following a report to the Board that highlighted an increasing frequency rate of injuries for this ANZSIC division. The frequency rates reported within this division for all claims were around 80% higher in 2015, compared to 2012 figures. The increase in the all claim frequency rate was driven by a decrease in the number of workers in these industries and an increase in the number of claims being reported.

The LTI frequency rate is much lower than the all claim frequency rate and has increased by 15% between 2012 and 2015.

In 2014, the number of lost time injury claims was 244 and the lost time frequency rate was 6.8.

² Lost Time Injury or LTIs are those injuries where an income replacement payment has been made, indicating the injured worker has had time off work due to the injury.

³ The mechanism of injury identifies the overall action, exposure or event that best describes the circumstances that resulted in the most serious injury or disease.

2 Targeting high consequence activities

	Measure	KPI	2018 Target
Focusing on targeted industries and activities with high consequence incidents	Severe injury frequency rate (claims with 12 or more weeks lost time per million hours worked) by industry	Reduced severe injury frequency rate of targeted industry groups	15% reduction on 2013 baseline of: Mining 2.6 Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing 1.34
	5 year rolling average for the number of work related deaths in high consequence industries	Reduced number of work related deaths	20% reduction on 2013 baseline of 0.4

Industries have been grouped at the divisional level as per the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC 2006).

Why is this important?

There are a variety of activities and industries in Tasmanian workplaces where there is potential for serious consequences if things go wrong. These areas do not normally manifest themselves in high workers compensation or other incident statistics but require vigilance by the regulator to ensure that the risk is appropriately managed.

Failure to manage risks in these areas may lead to workplace fatalities, serious and severe injuries or disease. However, such failures also have potential ramifications outside of the immediate workplace. For example, a serious incident involving a major hazard facility has the potential for widespread damage and multiple fatalities in the community.

Because of the high consequences of failure when incidents do occur, some of these the activities require formal authorisation by the regulator.

Sound regulatory practice in these areas requires a balance between desktop and workplace assessment of compliance.

What will this strategy do?

This strategy will target industries and activities that are identified as having serious consequences in the event of an incident occurring. These targeted industries and activities will be subject to:

- /// a higher standard of regulatory oversight and, in some cases, legislative requirements
- /// increased frequency of interventions
- /// increased focus on building capacity and development of appropriate guidance materials.

Why will this strategy make a difference?

There is a community expectation that these activities and industries will receive regulatory oversight which is commensurate to the level of risk.

Field compliance assessment programs in each of these areas will assist in ensuring that the incidence of failure is minimised.

This strategy will encourage dialogue and support activities between the regulator and the identified industry groups to promote work health and safety practices to assist in preventing potentially high consequence incidents.

Data

As the industries and activities targeted by this strategy do not normally manifest themselves in high workers compensation or other incident statistics, data to inform this strategy is sourced from a range of other sources, with a strong focus on incident causation and risk mitigation. These sources include (but are not limited to): coronial investigations and reports; past incidents that have occurred locally, interstate or internationally; and recommendations from research studies.

For 2016-17, the industries WorkSafe Tasmania will target that are most affected by high consequence activities are mining and agriculture, forestry and fishing.

These industries have historically involved significant injuries.

3 Being a responsive regulator

Ensuring that as a regulator we respond consistently, constructively, transparently, accountably, proportionately and in a timely manner.	WorkSafe Tasmania as Regulator		
	Measure	KPI	2018 Target
	Stakeholders report that the regulator is consistent, responsive and impartial in its approach	Percentage of stakeholders that report the regulator is consistent, responsive and impartial in its approach	90%
	Stakeholders report that the regulator is transparent, accountable, proportionate and timely	Percentage of stakeholders that report the regulator is transparent, accountable, proportionate and timely in its approach	90%
	Regulator decisions are affirmed	Percentage of regulator decisions that are affirmed	98%
	Legislation is up to date and contemporary	Legislation is reviewed within the last 5 years	No more than five years since last review
	WorkCover Tasmania Board as Regulator		
	Measure	KPI	2018 Target
	Stakeholders report that the regulator is consistent and impartial in its approach	Percentage of stakeholders that report the regulator is consistent and impartial in its approach	90%
Insurers, self-insurers and service providers comply with the appropriate standards	Percentage of insurers, self-insurers and service providers that comply with the appropriate standards	98%	
Workers compensation claimants who report that the process was open and honest	Percentage of workers compensation claimants that report that the process was open and honest	85%	

Why is this important?⁴

WorkSafe Tasmania and the WorkCover Tasmania Board have regulatory functions that need to be exercised appropriately. The way we exercise our regulatory functions is critical to being an effective regulator. Improved work health and safety performance is more likely when there is good communication between the regulator and its stakeholders. WorkSafe Tasmania and the WorkCover Tasmania Board's stakeholders include:

- /// persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs)
- /// workers
- /// health and safety representatives
- /// workers compensation insurers and self-insurers
- /// doctors accredited to issue workers compensation medical certificates
- /// service providers such as rehabilitation providers and injury management coordinators.

⁴ Regulator refers to the regulatory functions as defined by legislation administered by WorkSafe Tasmania and the WorkCover Tasmania Board.

Regulator functions and approaches

WorkSafe Tasmania as a regulator has a range of functions⁵ that relate to communication between the regulator and its stakeholders, and which can help improve work safety and health performance. These include:

- // providing advice and information to duty holders on their responsibilities and rights
- // monitoring and enforcing compliance with work health and safety laws (including inspection, investigations and audits)
- // fostering co-operative, consultative relationships between duty holders, the people they owe duties to, and their representatives
- // sharing information with other regulators
- // conducting and defending proceedings under work health and safety laws.

The WorkCover Tasmania Board as a regulator has a range of functions⁶ that relate to communication between the Board and its stakeholders. These include:

- // issuing permits to organisations to self-insure, and reviewing and monitoring the performance of self-insurers
- // issuing licenses to organisations to provide workers compensation insurance, and reviewing and monitoring the performance of licensed insurers
- // accrediting medical practitioners to provide workers compensation medical certificates
- // accrediting workplace rehabilitation providers
- // maintaining a register of injury management coordinators and approving injury management coordinator training courses.

Both regulators' relationships with their stakeholders are guided by the following key principles⁷:

- // consistency — endeavouring to ensure that similar circumstances lead to similar approaches being taken, providing greater protection and certainty in workplaces and industry
- // constructiveness — providing support, advice and guidance to assist compliance with legislation and build capability
- // transparency — demonstrating impartiality, balance and integrity
- // accountability — willingness to explain decisions and make available avenues of complaint or appeal
- // proportionality — compliance and enforcement responses are proportionate to the seriousness of the conduct
- // responsiveness — compliance and enforcement measures are responsive to the particular circumstances of the duty holder or workplace
- // targeted — activities are focused on the areas of assessed highest risk or strategic priorities
- // timely — information is considered and acted on in a timely manner.

5 Safe Work Australia, National Compliance and Enforcement Policy, September 2011, <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/national-compliance-enforcement-policy>.

6 The functions of the WorkCover Tasmania Board are defined in the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2012.

7 Safe Work Australia, National Compliance and Enforcement Policy, September 2011, <http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/national-compliance-enforcement-policy>.

What will this strategy do?

This strategy will provide WorkSafe Tasmania and the WorkCover Tasmania Board with information about how it is perceived by its stakeholders, which will assist in identifying opportunities for improvement. It will assist in identifying what motivates business to comply with work health and safety, and rehabilitation and compensation laws, and therefore assist the regulator to take the most appropriate approach when discussing these matters with stakeholders.

Why will this strategy make a difference?

Stakeholders are more likely to take steps to comply with legislation if they have confidence in the actions of the regulator and its representatives. To encourage compliance, such actions should generally be positive and consistent with key principles outlined above. Where regulatory activities are undertaken, they should be timely, consistent and focused to ensure issues are resolved in the most effective manner.

This strategy and the supporting processes will encourage active partnerships between the regulator and its stakeholders to improve communication between the parties.

4 Engaging with the community

	Measure	KPI	2018 Target
Influencing the community's attitudes and values towards work health and safety to empower a change to positive behaviours	Community awareness of work health and safety	Community's work health and safety awareness rate	90% awareness rate 2013-14 - 84.9%*
	Community understanding of work health and safety	Increase in the community's understanding of work health and safety	10% increase on 2013-14 baseline 2013-14 - 81.3%*
	Community engagement for work health and safety	Increase in the community's engagement with work health and safety	10% increase on 2013/14 baseline 2013-14 - 56.7%*

Why is this important?

Engaging, educating and raising awareness within the community can change attitudes and behaviours that may contribute to unsafe and unhealthy work practices. Positively changing these attitudes and behaviours may change environments and develop safer and healthier workplaces.

What will this strategy do?

This strategy will help to:

- /// promote the prevention of injuries and disease in workplaces and the development of healthy and safe workplaces
- /// develop, implement and review strategies and plans for improving work health and safety
- /// engage in, promote and co-ordinate the sharing of information
- /// promote an understanding of the work health and safety laws through education and other appropriate means.

WorkSafe Tasmania will draw on research (including the qualitative experiences of stakeholders) to:

- /// engage with the community and help people better understand work health and safety issues such as the legislation, risk management, and improved outcomes
- /// develop further ongoing engagement strategies that address the information needs of various stakeholders and facilitate changes in attitudes and behaviours and therefore improve work health and safety performance.

To successfully engage with the community, it is important to take an innovative approach that will capture attention; and to make good use of evaluation of previous strategies that tell us what works, and what does not work. If a number of methods are used, it is important that they complement each other and provide a consistent message.

Activities that could form part of such a strategy include:

- /// media campaigns
- /// WorkSafe Month
- /// WorkSafe Awards
- /// publications, guidance material and resources
- /// sponsorships, partnerships and grants

- // social media and online resources
 - // information sessions delivered in conjunction with regulatory and enforcement activity.
- Each activity will have an associated evaluation strategy.

Why will this strategy make a difference?

Evaluation of previous community engagement and awareness activities indicates that although behaviour change (decisions about risk and taking actions) is complex and occurs over time, engaging with the community strongly enhances the opportunity and environment for this to occur. This is supported by research that suggests that communities who are involved in a strategy are more likely to make changes to their practices, resulting in improved work health and safety.⁸

This strategy will assist WorkSafe Tasmania to identify the activities that best facilitate community engagement, awareness and understanding of work health and safety in order that resources are appropriately allocated and targeted to areas of greatest impact.

This strategy will assist in identifying emerging work health and safety issues and developing of practical approaches for addressing these issues.

Data

Historically, there have been many approaches for facilitating changes in attitudes and behaviours and therefore improving work health and safety performance.

National

There is now growing evidence to support using a combination of engagement strategies to do this⁹. Recent national research indicates that mass media campaigns are generally successful in increasing broad awareness of an issue or problem, but are more effective when combined with other activities such as education, enforcement and collaborative engagement.¹⁰

Tasmanian

Between 1997 and 2012, Tasmanian work health and safety media campaigns have reported a 70–90% recall engagement rate, with varied reported take out action depending on the level of supporting activity.

In 2011, evaluation of the ‘Homecomings’ mass media campaign found it was extremely successful in terms of recall and positive regard of the message, with 75% of those surveyed reporting this. More than 40% of those surveyed would act on the campaign’s messages. Four clear work health and safety issues were also identified as being important to Tasmanians: back pain/injuries; violence, bullying and harassment; work-related stress; and the safe use of workplace equipment. This shows work health and safety is an issue of concern in the community.

8 *The ‘awareness’ index is calculated as the total percentage of respondents agreeing with the range of statements (rating 4 or 5 on the 5 point scale). The ‘understanding’ index is calculated as the total percentage of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with the range of statements (rating 4 or 5 on the 5 point scale) depending on how the statement relates to understanding of workplace health and safety - indicated in bold type in the relevant table above. The ‘engagement’ index is calculated as the total percentage of respondents who reported that they completed the relevant action in their workplace always or most of the time.

Department of Premier and Cabinet, A Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement, Consultation Paper, March 2013.

9 S. Cowley, Social Marketing and Changing Behaviours of Decision-Makers: Discussion Paper, Safe Work Australia, (2011) 6.

10 L.N. Wundersitz, Best practice in OHSW Mass Media Campaigns, University of Adelaide, CASR091, 2011, <http://casr.adelaide.edu.au/publications/researchreports>.

5 Ensuring compensation schemes are fair and sustainable

	Measure	KPI	2018 Target
Ensuring that compensation schemes are fair, affordable, sustainable and administratively effective and efficient	Key scheme indicators operate within sustainable ranges	Key scheme indicators do not exceed agreed sustainable ranges	95%
	Quantum of levy paid by insurers	WorkCover levy as % of premium remains within agreed range	1.75% - 2.25%
	Workers compensation claimants that believe the system treated them fairly	Percentage of workers compensation claimants that believe the system treated them fairly	80%
	Percentage of compensation that is paid to workers (workers compensation scheme)	Percentage of scheme payments that directly benefit workers	45%
	Claims processed within specified timelines (asbestos compensation scheme)	Legislative timelines satisfied	95%
	Return to work rates (workers compensation scheme)	Return to work rates and durable return to work rates	95%

Key scheme indicators are outlined in the 'Scheme Performance Monitoring Report' and include claim, payment and premium indicators. Durable return to work rate is the proportion of injured workers who have returned to work and were still working at the time of sampling.

Why is this important?

The WorkCover Tasmania Board is assisted by WorkSafe Tasmania in fulfilling its legislative responsibilities to administer, monitor and report on the Tasmanian workers rehabilitation and compensation scheme.

WorkSafe Tasmania also provides support to the Asbestos Compensation Commissioner, who is responsible for the administration of the asbestos compensation scheme. The asbestos compensation scheme is monitored and reported on by the WorkCover Tasmania Board.

Ensuring schemes remain affordable and sustainable

To achieve this in the workers rehabilitation and compensation scheme, the WorkSafe Tasmania Board ensures that the scheme:

- /// provides for the prompt and effective management of workplace injuries in a manner that promotes and assists the return to work of injured workers as soon as possible
- /// provides fair and appropriate compensation to workers and their dependents for workplace injuries
- /// assists in securing the health, safety and welfare of workers and in reducing the incidence of workplace injuries
- /// provides an effective and economical mechanism for resolving disputes relating to the treatment, management and compensation of workplace injuries
- /// is efficiently and effectively administered
- /// is fair, affordable, efficient and effective.

In monitoring and reporting on the asbestos compensation scheme, the WorkCover Tasmania Board must:

- // ensure the provision of fair and appropriate compensation, and the payment of certain expenses, for people who contract an asbestos-related diseases in the course of employment as workers within Tasmania
- // provide for the prompt and effective resolution of applications for compensation or for the payment of certain expenses
- // provide an effective and economical mechanism for resolving disputes relating to applications for compensation or for the payment of certain expenses
- // make provision in relation to certain judgments and agreements for people who contract an asbestos-related diseases in the course of employment as workers within Tasmania.

Both compensation schemes must be carefully administered and monitored to ensure that they remain affordable and sustainable, and provide the best outcomes for Tasmanian workers. Elements that must be considered include:

- // preventing workplace injury, illness and disease
- // rehabilitating those who are injured and providing timely return to work (workers compensation scheme)
- // ensuring that the insurance market includes a range of alternatives, and that the compensation schemes have adequate reserves to meet liabilities
- // providing fair compensation
- // ensuring sound financial management to ensure schemes remain viable.

Reviewing and monitoring the performance of the compensation schemes against projected key scheme metric trends will allow for early identification of emerging issues and the development of appropriate and timely intervention strategies.

What will this strategy do?

This strategy will ensure that key indicators of the compensation schemes are monitored to:

- // ensure the operation of the workers compensation and asbestos compensation schemes remain within sustainable and affordable ranges
- // identify and address legislative and regulatory deficiencies in order to ensure the schemes remain administratively effective and operate efficiently, and that the schemes continue to satisfy scheme objectives
- // ensure that when workers are injured at work, fair and appropriate compensation is received.

Why will this strategy make a difference?

The WorkCover Tasmania Board receives annual actuarial advice as to the projected claim costs and premiums for the coming year. Therefore factors impacting on sustainability are identified 12 months in advance.

This strategy will ensure that key indicators of the compensation schemes operate within approved ranges to ensure the sustainability and affordability of compensation schemes are achieved.

It will ensure that when workers are injured at work they are supported financially and systematically to achieve, wherever possible, full physical and mental recovery and return to work as speedily as possible; and that where a full recovery is not achieved, fair and appropriate compensation is received.

Data

In 2012-13, Tasmania's return to work rate was 88%, with a durable return to work rate of 79%. These figures are collected bi-annually through the National Return to Work Survey.

Key scheme indicators provide a comparison of emerging scheme experience when compared with actuarial projections. Any deviations above anticipated trends can be identified, investigated and intervention strategies applied where necessary. Projections are calculated annually and assessed for sustainability and affordability.

Data on scheme indicators is collected monthly and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Reporting occurs every six weeks and includes, but is not limited to:

- /// total and above excess claims
- /// lost time and active lost time claims
- /// total claim payments
- /// claim payments by payment type
- /// premiums as a percentage of wages.

The bi-annual Return to Work Survey (published by Safe Work Australia) surveys workers about their experiences of being on workers' compensation, and provides information across a range of workers compensation related issues, including the perceived fairness of the system.

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