

# WORKCOVER CORPORATION OF SA

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## Employers Research Final Report

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Prepared for: WorkCover Corporation of SA

Project No: 8685-E

Date: June 2009

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# *Section 1*

## *Introduction*

This document has been prepared by McGregor Tan Research to report on the employers satisfaction research.

## **Background**

- 1.1 WorkCover began operations in 1987 and is currently constituted as a statutory authority under the WorkCover Corporation Act 1994 with a Board appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the responsible Minister (now the Minister for Industrial Relations).
- 1.2 Since 1994 WorkCover has been responsible for administering the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986 (WR&C Act).
- 1.3 The WR&C Act provides for the rehabilitation and compensation of workers who suffer workplace related injury, illness or death.
- 1.4 Currently, 65,000 employers are registered with the WorkCover scheme in South Australia. At any one time about 9,500 injured workers have an active claim.
- 1.5 WorkCover made a strategic decision to appoint Employers Mutual Limited (“EML”) as its sole claims agent in South Australia, this came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006. The WorkCover agent contract provides an opportunity for the agent to gain financial reward, specifically linked to achieving improvement in customer satisfaction. This survey tracks the progress of the performance measures against the benchmark established in the previous survey conducted in May 2007.
- 1.6 Over several years WorkCover has conducted primary research into perceptions of its operation and of the whole scheme’s service delivery. It has also subscribed to a major, national, syndicated Return to Work study, and been party to a number of reviews of its own operations. It also consults widely with major, organised stakeholders’ groups through face-to-face interactions and the receipt of proposals and reports.

- 1.7 WorkCover Corporation SA required market research to provide a benchmark for measuring improvements in satisfaction – specifically injured workers and employer satisfaction with services delivered by contracted claims agent, Employers Mutual Limited (EML).

### **Key Objectives**

- 1.8 In essence, the key objectives of the **employers** research were to determine:
- The awareness of claims agents' roles and responsibilities
  - The performance ratings of attributes associated with claims managers handling of cases
  - The importance ratings of attributes associated with claims managers handling of cases
  - The revealed drivers of satisfaction
  - The overall satisfaction with claims managers
  - The overall satisfaction with rehabilitation managers
  - Complaints issues with WorkCover
  - The awareness and usage of the WorkCover website
  - The general perceptions of WorkCover
  - The performance ratings of attributes associated with the WorkCover system
  - Suggestions for improvements to the WorkCover system

### **Methodology**

- 1.9 McGregor Tan Research conducted a telephone survey of 1,003 employers from the database provided by WorkCover. These interviews were conducted using McGregor Tan Research's CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system.

- 1.10 The surveys were conducted from the 1<sup>st</sup> May and the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009.
- 1.11 The sample size of the survey has enabled us to generate a dataset which has a level of accuracy of plus or minus 2.9% at a 95% confidence interval.

***Section 2***  
***Key Findings and***  
***Recommendations***

The following section covers the key findings and recommendations of the employer's satisfaction research.

## **Key Findings**

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### **2.1 Awareness of WorkCover**

Those surveyed were asked who they were mostly thinking of when they refer to WorkCover.

Almost half (47%, down from 53% in May 2008) of the employers surveyed named WorkCover SA itself, while one third (30%, up from 25% in May 2008) named Employers Mutual.

One fifth (21%, up from 20% in May 2008) of respondents stated they were mostly thinking of both WorkCover SA and Employers Mutual.

### **2.2 Perceived Accountability for WorkCover Performance**

Almost half (49%, down from 54% in May 2008) of those surveyed considered WorkCover SA itself to be accountable for the performance of WorkCover, compared to 24% (up from 21% in May 2008) who considered Employers Mutual to be accountable. Almost one quarter 23% (up from 20% in May 2008) held both of these organisations accountable.

### **2.3 Aspects of Case Manager's Performance**

#### **Satisfaction with Performance of the Case Manager**

Those surveyed were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is excellent and 1 is very poor, a number of aspects relating to the performance of claims agents.

In general, these ratings were above those recorded in May 2008 and were in the range from 5.50 to 7.10, as outlined below:

- The accuracy of the paperwork relating to the case (7.10, above the 6.60 recorded in May 2008)
- Ensuring honest, ethical and professional service from those treating your injured worker (6.90, above the 6.40 recorded in May 2008)
- Having a knowledgeable and professional case manager to handle the case (6.70, above the 6.30 recorded in May 2008)
- Having a case manager who is focused on achieving a Return-to-Work Plan (6.50, up from 6.20 in May 2008)
- Getting clear direction as to what you need to do (6.60, up from 6.20 in May 2008)
- Being fair to the interests of both the injured worker and your company (6.60, above the 6.20 recorded in May 2008)
- Effectiveness in explaining your company's rights and obligations (6.40, up from 6.10 in May 2008)
- Having a case manager who is prepared to work together with the doctor and rehabilitation provider (6.40, new question)
- Having a claims manager who is understanding of, and responsive to your company's needs (6.40, above the 6.10 recorded in May 2008)
- Organising fast and effective treatment for your injured worker (6.40, above the 6.00 recorded in May 2008)
- Effectiveness in communicating how the WorkCover system works, and any changes to policies and procedures (6.20, above the 5.80 recorded in May 2008)
- Having a case manager who has a good understanding of your workplace situation when managing the claim (6.00, above the 5.70 in recorded May 2008)
- Proactively investigating doubtful or false claims by workers (5.50, up from 5.40 in May 2008)

**Importance of Aspects Related to the Case Manager's  
Performance**

Those surveyed were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is very important and 1 is not at all important, the importance of a number of aspects relating to the performance of claims agents.

In general, the importance of these aspects were rated extremely highly, as outlined below:

- Ensuring honest, ethical and professional service from those treating your injured worker (9.50, down from with 9.60 in May 2008)
- Being fair to the interests of both the injured worker and your company (9.50, unchanged from May 2008)
- Organising fast and effective treatment for your injured worker (9.40, down from 9.50 in May 2008)
- Proactively investigating doubtful or false claims by workers (9.40, down from 9.50 in May 2008)
- Having a case manager who is focused on achieving a Return-to-Work Plan (9.40, down from 9.50 in May 2008)
- Getting clear direction as to what you need to do (9.40, down from 9.50 in May 2008)
- Having a knowledgeable and professional case manager to handle the case (9.40, down from 9.50 in May 2008)
- The accuracy of the paperwork relating to the claim (9.40, unchanged from May 2008)
- Having a claims manager who is understanding of, and responsive to your company's needs (9.30, down from 9.40 in May 2008)
- Effectiveness in explaining your company's rights and obligations (9.30 unchanged from May 2008)
- Having a case manager who is prepared to work together with the doctor and rehabilitation provider. (9.30, new question)
- Having a case manager who has a good understanding of your workplace situation when managing the claim (9.10, down from 9.20 in May 2008)

- Effectiveness in communicating how the WorkCover system works, and any changes to policies and procedures (9.10, down from 9.20 in May 2008)

### **Importance/ Performance Matrix**

In analysing the results from the importance and performance questions relating to the Claims Manager and the claim in particular, we found that all attributes fall into the top left hand quadrant, that is, the High Performance Improvement Quadrant. This indicates that all these attributes are very important and improvements in these ratings will result in a higher overall satisfaction rating.

### **Multiple Regression Analysis**

Multiple regression analysis revealed thirteen drivers contributing significantly to the injured workers' satisfaction with the service provided by their Case Manager. These drivers were:

- Having a Case Manager who is understanding of, and responsive to, your company's needs
- Having a knowledgeable and professional Case manager to handle the claim
- The accuracy of the paperwork related to the claim
- Organising fast and effective treatment for your injured worker
- Getting clear direction as to what we need to do
- Proactively investigating doubtful or false claim by workers
- Being fair to the interests of both the injured worker and your company
- Effectiveness in explaining your company's rights and obligations
- Having a Case Manager who has a good understanding of your workplace situation when managing the claim
- Effectiveness in communicating how the WorkCover system works, and any changes in policies and procedures
- Having a Case Manager who is focused in achieving a return to work

- Ensuring honest, ethical and professional service from those treating your injured workers
- Having a Case Manager who is prepared to work together with the doctor and rehabilitation provider

## **2.4 Overall Satisfaction with Employers Mutual's Service**

All respondents were asked, when thinking about their company's relationship with Employers Mutual how satisfied they were, on a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is extremely satisfied and 1 is not at all satisfied, in terms of the service provided to their company by Employers Mutual.

An overall average satisfaction rating of 6.80 was recorded, above the 6.20 recorded in May 2008.

## **2.5 Dealing and Satisfaction with Rehabilitation Providers**

Over half (58%) of the employers surveyed indicated that they had not dealt with any rehabilitation providers in the last two years. Conversely, 21% stated that they dealt with a provider, mainly:

- Beckman and Associates (3%)
- De Poi Consultancy Services (3%)
- NN Associates (3%)
- Effective Consulting and Rehabilitation (2%)
- Insite Injury Management Group (2%)

Survey participants who had dealt with a rehabilitation provider indicated a relatively high level of satisfaction with the services they were provided, with an average rating of 7.30 (unchanged from May 2008).

The level of belief that the rehabilitation providers assisted the employers surveyed in the process of achieving successful return to work outcomes was relatively high, with an average rating of 6.80 (unchanged from May 2008).

## 2.6 Complaint Process

### Incidence of Making a Complaint

Exactly one third (33%, up from 29% in May 2008) of those surveyed indicated that they had wanted to make a complaint about the services they had received. Almost half (48%, down from 51% in May 2008) of this group proceeded with their complaint.

### Method Of Complainants

Those who had made a complaint were asked how they found out how to make a complaint. Two main methods were identified, those being:

- Half (53%) of the respondents found out through 'other' methods
- More than one quarter (29%) found out how to complain by phoning EML or the Case Manager
- More than one quarter (27%) found out how to complain by phoning WorkCover

### Complainants

Those who had made a complaint were asked to rate their level of agreement, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree, with a number of statements.

Although recording higher ratings than the previous Monitor, there were mid to low average ratings recorded, indicating that those who had gone through the complaints process were not overly satisfied, as outlined below:

- It was clear who was responsible for actioning my complaint (5.10, up from 5.00 in May 2008)
- My complaint was responded to within the given timeframe (5.30, up from 4.30 in May 2008)
- I feel my complaint was fairly considered (4.50, up from 4.20 in May 2008)

- I was given a clear explanation of the outcome of my complaint (4.80, up from 4.20 in May 2008)
- I was given an indication of how long it would take to respond to my complaint (4.70, up from 4.10 in May 2008)
- I was given a clear explanation on how my complaint would be handled (4.80, up from 4.10 in May 2008)

### **Non-Complainants**

Those who had not complained were asked why they had not. The lack of faith in the complaints process evident in previous Monitors remained, as evidenced by the following responses:

- Complaints are not taken seriously (23%, down from 27% in May 2008)
- Did not think my complaint would be followed up (26%, up from 19% in May 2008)
- Did not have time (18%, up from 15% in May 2008)
- Did not know I could complain (3%, up from 2% in 2008)
- Problem was resolved before I took any action (11%, new question)
- I was worried about the repercussions of complaining (4%, down from 8% in May 2008)
- Did not know the process (12%, up from 6% in May 2008)

## **2.7 Claims Agent**

### **Benefits**

Over three quarters (68%, above the 60% in May 2008) of the employers surveyed specified at least one main benefit to their company of appointing one claims agent, while less than one quarter (22%, up from 28% in May 2008) indicated that there were no main benefits. A further 10% (slightly down from 12% in May 2008) were not sure of any such benefits.

The main benefits that were identified by respondents included:

- Simpler (34%, up from 11% in May 2008)
- Consistency of decisions (23%, up from 8% in May 2008)
- Better service (21%, up from 8% in May 2008)
- Better accountability for results (11%, up from 5% in May 2008)
- On going relationship/ more personalised/ consistency (6%, well below the 30% recorded in May 2008)
- Faster resolution for claims (2%, down slightly from 3% in May 2008)
- Fairer resolution of claims (1%, unchanged from May 2008)

### **Disadvantages**

Almost half (43%, slightly down from 44% in May 2008) of the employers surveyed stated that there were no main disadvantages of appointing one claims agent. The main disadvantages named by respondents, however, included:

- Takes away my freedom of choice (17%, down from 21% in May 2008)
- Service will decline (12%, down from 14% in May 2008)
- In time, the claims company will exploit its monopoly situation (12%, up from 11% in May 2008)
- How do we know they will perform (6%, unchanged from May 2008)
- I will lose continuity in my relationship (2%, down from 4% in May 2008)
- Lack of experience/ knowledge/ understanding of all industries (4%, up from 2% in May 2008)

## **2.8 Visiting workcover.com**

### **Incidence of Visiting workcover.com**

When those surveyed were asked if they had visited the workcover.com website, three in five respondents (64%) stated that they had done so.

### **Perceptions of workcover.com**

Those who had visited the website were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is very satisfied and 1 is not at all satisfied, their level of satisfaction on the following aspects of the website:

- Ease of navigation (7.1)
- Ease of understanding the information (7.3)
- Layout of the information (7.2)
- Topics covered (7.4)
- Layout of website (7.2)

### **Reasons for Not Visiting workcover.com**

Among those who did not visit the website, not having a need to do it (81%) was named as the main reason for not doing so. Other reasons named by significantly lower proportions of respondents included:

- Not interested on visiting it (6%)
- Too busy/ no time (4%)
- Do not have internet access (2%)
- Did not know there was a website (2%)

## **2.9 “Injured at Work” Poster and Tear Off Sheets**

One third (31%) of employers surveyed indicated that they had received a copy of the “Injured at Work” poster and tear off sheets. Over half (54%) indicated that they had not.

## **2.10 Dealings with WorkCover**

Respondents were asked if they have had any dealings specifically with WorkCover. Approximately one third (30%) stated that they had dealings with WorkCover, while more than two thirds (68%) indicated that they had not.

## **2.11**                    **Overall Satisfaction with WorkCover's Service**

All respondents were asked, when thinking about their company's relationship with WorkCover, how satisfied they were, on a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is extremely satisfied and 1 is not at all satisfied, in terms of the service provided to their company by WorkCover.

A relatively high overall average satisfaction rating of 7.00 was recorded.

## **2.12**                    **Attitudinal Statements**

Those surveyed were asked, using a scale of 1 to 10 where 10 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree, to rate their level of agreement with a list of statements related to WorkCover.

Respondents showed relatively high levels of agreement with all the statements assessed, as outlined below:

- My privacy and confidentiality was assured (8.1 up from 7.4 in May 2008)
- WorkCover staff were courteous, considerate and respectful (8.0, up from 7.3 in May 2008)
- Advice and information provided was clear (7.5, up from 6.9 in May 2008)
- Issue was addressed impartially and sensitively (7.3, up from 6.9 in May 2008)
- Services, information and resources were easy to access (7.3, up from 6.8 in May 2008)
- Written enquiries and correspondence were addressed within 5 business days (6.8, new question)
- Phone messages were returned in 1 business day (6.4, new question)

### **2.13**                    **Areas within WorkCover**

Respondents were asked which areas within WorkCover they had dealings with. Clearly, the Service Centre (44%) was the main area identified.

### **2.14**                    **Perceptions of WorkCover**

Almost half (44%, down from 47% in May 2008) of the employers surveyed indicated that they had a positive perception of WorkCover, while one in five (18%, slightly down from 20% in May 2008) had a negative perception. A further 38% (up from 33% in May 2008) were neutral, stating that they had neither a positive or negative perception of WorkCover.

### **2.15**                    **Overall Satisfaction with the WorkCover System**

When the employers surveyed were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is excellent and 1 is very poor, the WorkCover System overall on a number of attributes, all average ratings were in the range from 5.30 to 6.70, as outlined below:

- Customer service (6.70, up from 6.60 in May 2008)
- Responsiveness (6.50, up from 6.40 in May 2008)
- Effectiveness of communicating with its customers (6.40, unchanged from May 2008)
- Openness and transparency (6.40, up from 6.30 in May 2008)
- Involving employers in the process of getting injured workers back to work (6.40, up from 6.20 in May 2008)
- Fairness to all parties (6.30, up from 6.10 in May 2008)
- Collaboration – working together with claims manager/ doctor/ physio/ rehabilitation provider (6.30, up from 6.00 in May 2008)
- Effectiveness in terms of claim resolution (6.20, up from 5.90 in May 2008)
- Effectiveness of rehabilitating injured workers (6.10, up from 5.90 in May 2008)

- Flexibility of the scheme to adapt to my workplace situation (5.70, up from 5.60 in May 2008)
- Minimising false or doubtful claims (5.40, unchanged from May 2008)
- Effectiveness of Employers Mutual assisting with getting employees back to work (5.40)
- Cost effectiveness (5.30, up from 5.00 in May 2008)

## **2.16**      **Effectiveness of Employers Mutual**

Respondents were asked how effective Employers Mutual was in assisting in getting employees back to work, using a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is extremely effective and 1 is not at all effective.

The mean response was 5.4.

## **2.17**      **Suggested Changes to the WorkCover System**

Employers were given the opportunity to suggest one change to the WorkCover system. While 14% (up from 7% in May 2008) of those surveyed considered that no changes were needed, other respondents suggested a range of initiatives, including:

- Better/ more Doctors/ better medical service (9%)
- Better communication/ contact between parties (8%)
- Better evaluation of false claims (5%)
- Finding light/ restricted duties / more suitable work for workers (5%)
- Quicker and easier process (4%)
- Better case managers (4%)
- Quicken/ change rehabilitation process (4%)

## 2.18 **Key Recommendations**

From the perspectives of both WorkCover SA and EML, the major gains in customer satisfaction can be achieved by making improvements in the areas which have the greatest influence on performance.

As a result, addressing the following key attributes will have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction levels:

- Having a Case Manager who is understanding of, and responsive to, your company's needs
- Having a knowledgeable and professional Case manager to handle the claim
- The accuracy of the paperwork related to the claim
- Organising fast and effective treatment for your injured worker
- Getting clear direction as to what we need to do
- Proactively investigating doubtful or false claim by workers
- Being fair to the interests of both the injured worker and your company
- Effectiveness in explaining your company's rights and obligations
- Having a Case Manager who has a good understanding of your workplace situation when managing the claim
- Effectiveness in communicating how the WorkCover system works, and any changes in policies and procedures
- Having a Case Manager who is focused in achieving a return to work
- Ensuring honest, ethical and professional service from those treating your injured workers
- Having a Case Manager who is prepared to work together with the doctor and rehabilitation provider