

POVB bulletin – Workers’ Compensation

Our Delegates to Management meeting was held on 19, 20 and 21 November. In that forum we discussed Workers’ Compensation.

There are many issues with the *Workers Compensation Act* that governs us. Some of these are:

- Only getting paid 95 per cent of earnings
- The Pre-Injury Average weekly earnings
- If you are long term over 13 weeks, the reduction to 80 per cent of earnings
- The issue of overpayments if you return prior to the next pay fortnight.

Other issues that members are having are:

- Length of time for liability acceptance from the Insurer
- Length of time for approval for treatment/operations
- Return to work duties for staff on light duties
- Little to no contact from managers at the centre, QBE and Injury Management

When these issues were discussed at the meeting last week several outcomes have been decided:

1. PSA/POVB to start a concerted campaign to raise the issues that we are facing.
2. POVB Executive to collect information and data on individual members’ issues to collate and present to our Minister in the new year.
3. POVB Executive to meet monthly with Injury Management to address any concerns that members may have whilst on workers’ compensation. This will happen when a member contacts us with their issue and gives permission to raise it at the meeting.
4. An information sheet be formulated for staff to be given when they are off on workers’ compensation. This information will tell staff what the process entails and what they are entitled to.

Amanda Cotter. Secretary POVB Executive, will be collating the information that will be presented to the Minister. We ask that all POVB staff who have been on workers’ compensation and want their concerns tabled please contact Amanda via email – amanda.cotter@justice.nsw.gov.au. Names do not have to be tabled in the presentation to the Minister if there are any concerns. We encourage staff to make contact as we need



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these cases to prove why it needs to be changed.

Our Minister is currently listening to us about our issues as he has shown by announcing the mandatory testing when staff are bitten, spat on or have bodily fluids thrown over them.

Other data that we are collating is the increase of assaults on staff.

Amanda writes to all staff assaulted and asks on their welfare, if they took workers compensation and if the Assault Committee met. We are finding that not all staff respond to Amanda and that in most cases the Assault Committee does not meet or the person assaulted has no idea if the Committee has met.

Assault Committees are to be held after an assault within five days. The Committee is chaired by the Work Health and Safety Committee. The assaulted staff member must be present or on the phone when the Committee meets and be aware of the outcome of the meeting. This meeting is to look at what led up to the incident, has the paperwork been completed properly, does the staff member need assistance with anything, was equipment an issue, were processes an issue, has an alert been done, does a management plan need to be devised etc.

Please, if Amanda contacts you can you return the email and answer her questions. Out of these responses we can then raise if the Committee doesn’t meet and make sure it does happen. This Committee is of benefit to the centre and to the staff that are assaulted. It can also bring positive change to the workplace.

As we progress with the above issues there will be further bulletins.

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