



# INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICER DIRECTION 2020-22

## CONTEXT

The role of the Workers Compensation Independent Review Officer (WIRO) is transforming. The role is being re-established as the Independent Review Officer (IRO) from 1 March 2021 under the *Personal Injuries Commission Act 2020* (PICA), the Office of the IRO (OIRO) is to become a separate Public Sector agency, the IRO's jurisdiction is to be expanded to deal with complaints from persons injured all in motor vehicle accidents and the Independent Legal Assistance and Review Service (ILARS) is to become a legislated IRO function. The Direction 2020-2022 encompasses these reforms and sets an ambitious program of improvement to existing WIRO services and settings. Given the Direction spans this transition period it is framed looking to the future and our expanded role, such that:

- the IRO encompasses both the current WIRO and new IRO roles
- a person who is injured encompasses both workers who are injured and persons injured in motor vehicle accidents
- the statutory compensation schemes encompass both the workers compensation scheme and the motor accident injuries scheme.

## MISSION OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OFFICER

The Independent Review Officer, with the assistance of expert and committed staff, helps persons who are injured and insurers find fair solutions to complaints and claims and recommends improvements to the statutory compensation schemes.

## IRO SERVICES

- helping persons who are injured and insurers find fast and fair solutions
- funding expert lawyers to assist workers who are injured access their workers compensation entitlements
- identifying, reporting on and recommending solutions to emerging and systemic issues in the statutory compensation schemes.

## IRO PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Increasing our impact in finding early solutions</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving how we identify and intervene in grants matters appropriate for early solutions</li> <li>• Improving our capability to investigate and solve intractable complaints</li> <li>• Implementing our role to deal with complaints by persons injured in motor vehicle accidents</li> <li>• Seeking more feedback about our services and implementing suggestions to make them more accessible and effective.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Priority 2:</b> Increasing our impact in improving statutory compensation schemes</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving how we collect and analyse information and sharing our findings and insights</li> <li>• Engaging more effectively with the community and those who have an interest in our work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 3:</b> Improving the well-being and development of IRO people and our workplace</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing learning and development opportunities for every IRO team member</li> <li>• Increasing the flexibility of our workplace and the well-being of IRO team members in responding to and recovering from COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Priority 4:</b> Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of IRO operations</p> <p><b>Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing reforms to create the Office of the IRO as a separate Public Sector agency</li> <li>• Re-establishing ILARS as a statutory function of the IRO</li> <li>• Implementing improvements to our governance and performance management systems</li> <li>• Improving our technology systems and process design to increase the efficiency of IRO services.</li> </ul>

## SUCCESS MEASURES

- > 80% satisfaction with IRO services (accessibility, timeliness, fairness, expertise)
- > 90% achievement of performance measures (timeliness, quality)
- > 80% staff engagement as measured by People Matters Survey
- At least two Systemic Issue reports issued each calendar year.