

INDUSTRY NEWS

New Dispute Resolution Process for Workers Compensation

The NSW government has announced plans to reform the workers compensation dispute resolution system.

This follows the release of a discussion paper seeking feedback on options to improve the system (see our [April Newsletter](#)).

Essentially, the merit review and procedural review processes currently performed by SIRA and WIRO will no longer continue and all disputes will go to the WCC.

The reforms include the following:

- All enquiries and complaints from injured workers that are not resolved with their insurer will be directed to the WIRO for assistance,
- All enquiries and complaints from employers and other system participants will be referred to the SIRA, and
- The WCC will undertake all dispute resolution once an internal review is completed by the insurer, removing these functions from SIRA and WIRO.

WIRO will continue to administer the ILARS to provide legal support to injured workers.

Further legislation will be enacted to give effect to the changes. The objective is to provide a one-stop shop for resolving disputes and a system that is more user friendly and supports claimants in their return to work and good health.

Reference:

State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA)

Workers Compensation Independent Review Office (WIRO)

Workers Compensation Commission (WCC)

Independent Legal Aid and Review Service (ILARS)