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3 August 2012

Finance and Administration Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE OPERATION OF THE QUEENSLAND WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the operation of the Queensland Workers Compensation Scheme on the recreational and Light Commercial Marine Industry in Queensland. Marine Queensland recommends the following matters be addressed by the Parliamentary committee in its inquiry into the Workers compensation Scheme:

1. Review the criteria whereby a common law claim can be initiated. It is suggested that potential criteria could be established that limits claims to a maximum predefined amount and the setting of a defined procedure that must be followed to access a common law claim. The purpose of any such procedure would be aimed at making a common law claim a course of last resort.
2. Provide employers with a greater level of access and influence on the determination of common law claims. Many employers complain of feeling sidelined in the assessment and prosecution of common law claims, yet often endure significant implications in terms of assessing future premiums when common law claims are settled by Workcover.
3. Increase the focus of the workers compensation scheme on rehabilitation and return to work mechanisms. These mechanisms should have an overriding goal of early rehabilitation.
4. Review the criteria in which occupation and industry classes are used as the basis for the calculation of premiums. For example, the classification applicable to boat building encompasses the building of boats from small alloy tinnies through to large complex ships. Accordingly risk factors that may be present in building ships are loaded onto employers whose primary business is building small recreational craft. The practical effect of this issue is extremely expensive premiums for builders of recreational craft when compared to other high risk industries. The burden of these premiums on these employers is significant.

The Association is available to expand on these points as necessary.

Kind regards,

Don Jones

Don Jones
Chief Executive Officer

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