

## *News Release*

# **Personal Injuries Assessment Board publishes two reports showing big drop in numbers of personal injury claims and average value of compensation awards**

**Thursday, 7 December 2023** - The Personal Injuries Assessment Board today published two reports showing that numbers of personal injury claims are still far lower than before Covid, and that the average value of an injury compensation award has dropped by 35% compared to 2020.

The organisation published its 2022 Annual Report and its fourth Average Awards Report since the Guidelines commenced, covering the 2022 year.

Both reports show that the cost of compensation claims in Ireland has fallen sharply since 2019, with far fewer claims being received and a reduction in the value of average awards, all of which should contribute to a better claims environment, and positive impacts on premiums.

2022 was a significant reporting year for PIAB as it was the first full year of operating under the Personal Injuries Guidelines.

**PIAB's 2022 Annual Report** key figures include:

- **The volume of claims decreased for the third consecutive year with** 18,453 claim applications made to PIAB in 2022, a 14% decrease on the previous year and **a 41% decrease on claim volumes compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019.**
- The **total value of awards has reduced by €134m since 2019**, driven by both changes to the volume of claims and changes to average award values resultant from the Guidelines which should have a significant impact on the overall cost of claims in Ireland, and insurance costs.
- **€141 million in claims was awarded by PIAB in 2022, the lowest figure in the last 16 years.**
- The number of fatal claims increased to 96 from 84 and over half of those in the motor area were vulnerable road users.
- **PIAB's work in 2022 has directly generated savings of €40 million in avoided litigation costs.**

### Average Awards Report 2022:

Today PIAB also published its fourth **Average Awards Report**, the latest in a series of reports since the introduction of the Personal Injuries Guidelines. The report provides detailed analysis on awards for 2022 and shows that **Award values are still substantially lower than values pre-Guidelines**.

- Overall **average award values were 35% lower in 2022**, when **compared to** the average award in **2020**, assessed under the previous Book of Quantum.
- The **average value of awards** of compensation made by PIAB in 2022 was **€15,544**.
- **General Damages**, which cover awards for pain and suffering to an injured party **were 41% lower on average in value than the 2020 average**.
- **There was an increase in the average value of Special Damages**, which covers financial loss/vouched expenditure by a claimant, but those payments represent a relatively small proportion of the average overall awards. Special Damages, which are not affected by the Personal Injuries Guidelines, **increased in average value, from €2,027 in 2020 to €2,740 in 2022, an increase of 35%**.
- The **overall average award in 2022 increased by 12% on the average award made under the Guidelines in the period April to December 2021** due to the impact of Special Damages which was related to overall inflation, as well as the greater proportion of high-value cases assessed by PIAB in 2022, and as a result of the changing profile of injuries assessed by PIAB. However, average awards in 2022 continue to be substantially lower than those in 2020 before the Guidelines were implemented.
- **Nearly half (47%) of awards made in 2022 were for under €10,000** v one-eight (12%) in 2020, and two-thirds (67%) of awards made in 2022 were for under €15,000 v under one-third (30%) in 2020.
- **The acceptance rate for PIAB Awards by November 2022 had reached 48% meaning nearly half of all claims assessed were not entering litigation and the impact of the Guidelines would be immediate.**

### The profile of injuries assessed by PIAB is evolving:

- An increasing proportion of cases are employer liability ones (+2%) which tend to be higher value than motor cases which have dropped proportionally (-3%).
- In 2022, 1 in 12 assessments of compensation made by PIAB related to Psychiatric Damage injuries, compared to 1 in 20 awards in 2021. These cases tend to have higher average value than the most common occurring injuries relating to neck & back.
- The proportion of neck and back injuries, the most frequent injury types assessed by PIAB, is decreasing. Generally, neck and back injuries are lower value awards as 90% of such injuries are minor in severity, when assessed by PIAB.

**PIAB Chief Executive Rosalind Carroll said:**

*“2022 saw continued reductions in the volume of personal injury claims being made to PIAB. While at the same time we saw the continued impact of the Personal Injuries Guidelines with a reduction in average award levels. The combined impact is that the overall cost of claims has dropped significantly which should have a very positive impact on insurance premiums.”*

*“Behind every claim, is a person, and PIAB’s job is to offer them and the respondent party to a claim, a fair and impartial service that both can trust and that allows everybody to move on. In doing so we also remove a lot of costs, significant time and stress. The €40 million that was saved by parties accepting PIAB awards shows the significant impact we can have together and the potential for more savings that could help both claimants, and make Ireland a more competitive place to live and do business in.”*

**Dermot Divilly, Chairperson of PIAB stated:**

*“These reports demonstrate that there has been great progress in the reform of the personal injuries area. The (personal injuries) Guidelines are a once-in-a-generation opportunity which will result in fair outcomes for claimants and in cheaper insurance premiums. It is vital that we, as a society, grasp this opportunity. PIAB are determined to play our part in the implementation of the reforms in this area, which have significant societal benefits. “*

**ENDS**

For more information, please contact the PIAB Press Office - [media@piab.ie](mailto:media@piab.ie).

About the Personal Injuries Assessment Board

The Personal Injuries Assessment Board is Ireland’s independent State Body which assesses personal injury claims. PIAB was established in 2004 to support the fair, prompt, and transparent resolution of personal injuries claims without the need for unnecessary litigation. It is a self-funded public body and is a key pillar in contributing to reform of the insurance sector and the personal injuries environment. The state body generates millions of euro in savings which would otherwise be spent on processing claims, leading to higher costs for policy-holders