

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Accident Compensation Conciliation Service



CERTIFIED
CO₂
NEUTRAL

The Hon. Robin Scott MP
Minister for Finance
1 Macarthur Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit for your presentation to the Victorian Parliament the 2017-2018 Annual Report of the Accident Compensation and Conciliation Service in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Meriel O'Sullivan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Meriel O'Sullivan
Board Chair

20 August 2018



Chair Report

The 2017-2018 financial year has been marked by significant change at the Accident Compensation and Conciliation Service (ACCS), after its establishment as a statutory authority on 11 October 2017.

Becoming a statutory authority has reinforced our role in the Victorian workers compensation system as an independent conciliation service. It has created opportunities to refine and modernise the way we work, and to respond more effectively to changing community needs. As an independent authority, the ACCS is now able to employ staff directly and set its own vision, purpose and objectives. We are also empowered to introduce innovative practices and regularly review our operations to ensure we remain effective and responsive, while becoming more accountable.

Key internal changes occurred in the last financial year as a result of becoming an independent statutory authority. The changes include:

- Completing an open, transparent, merit-based recruitment process within the six-month transition timeframe, leading to the employment of 29 highly qualified, talented and committed Conciliation Officers (including two Deputy Senior Conciliation Officers). The team includes a mix of new recruits and experienced ACCS hands from a rich variety of backgrounds, who have variously worked in tribunals, courts and the private and public sectors, and in disciplines ranging from law and medicine to counseling, rehabilitation, OH&S, case management, disability services, training, advocacy, mediation, arbitration and conciliation. It is a truly diverse, experienced and expert team.
- Bringing all roles at the ACCS together into a single staff group. This important change was highlighted at our corporate planning day on 4 May 2018, which supported collaboration between our Administration Team, Client Services, Information Officers, Conciliation Officers and Executive Leadership Team. The day also facilitated valuable connection with and learning from stakeholders.
- Appointing a new and dynamic executive leadership team to oversee planning and decision making, lead change initiatives and ensure the establishment of appropriate governance systems and procedures.
- Setting strategic objectives, undertaking strategic planning initiatives and commencing a review of systems, reporting, communications and service delivery.

These changes are foundational steps to support the provision of a timely, accessible, responsive and high-quality conciliation service. In establishing an independent statutory authority, the Government challenged the ACCS to reflect upon and reform how we work, how we serve the users of our service and how we support the workers compensation system. Work undertaken by the ACCS in 2017-2018 has focused on ensuring the fundamentals are in place, and positioning the organisation to effectively enhance and improve our services in line with needs of service users, stakeholders and the community.

Throughout the year of change, our staff worked hard to strengthen the quality of conciliation services. It has been an honour to work with such a talented and dedicated group. Their dedication is recognised in the strong results in the 2017-2018 client satisfaction survey. I thank Board members and staff for their commitment, collaboration and sheer hard work over the 12 months. On behalf of the organisation, I also extend our appreciation to stakeholders for their assistance and support as we build a world-class dispute resolution service.

I conclude with special thanks to two significant leaders within the ACCS. Firstly, to Julie Ligeti, the inaugural Chair of the Board from its commencement as a statutory authority. Julie worked with energy and vision to steer the ACCS through transition and position the organisation to meet the challenge of delivering excellence to the Victorian community. Secondly, to Anita Kaminski for her dedication and commitment as Senior Conciliation Officer leading the ACCS through the transition and establishment period. We are pleased to confirm that Anita plans to resume working as a Conciliation Officer upon the appointment of a new Senior Conciliation Officer.

Meriel O'Sullivan
Board Chair

SCO Report



The commitment of the ACCS to improve service delivery in its new era as a statutory authority was advanced in April 2018 with the arrival of 12 new Conciliation Officers. We also reappointed 17 of our most experienced and talented Conciliation Officers. This includes the creation of two new senior executive roles with a specific brief to deliver legal and technical expertise to enhance the experience of our clients and stakeholders.

The creation of the new *Deputy Senior Conciliation Officer* roles – *Service Improvement* and *Legal and Technical* and the infusion of new talent into our team of Conciliation Officers were landmark events in a year of major transition for the organisation.

The new recruits underwent a comprehensive training and induction program coordinated by the new Deputy Senior Conciliation Officer – Legal and Technical. The program comprised direct engagement with key stakeholders – including WorkSafe, WorkCover Assist, Union Assist, Medical Panels and representatives of self-insurers, authorised agents and employers – and comprehensive training in technical and legal matters, mediation training, mental health and wellbeing and use of interpreters. The program was designed to deliver consistency in conciliation practice and ensure stakeholder engagement.

The new Conciliation Officers commenced conference work on 21 May, and by 18 June had a full conference load. During the transition period, existing Conciliation Officers carried the conferencing load and provided an exceptional mentoring service to their new colleagues, supporting and encouraging them while they settled into their new roles. The transition had a temporary impact on one of our key performance measures – days to conference. This impact was minimised thanks to a combination of exceptionally hard work and commitment from the existing Conciliation Officers and Information Officers, the assistance of short-term Conciliation Officers engaged to provide support during this period, and the enthusiasm and work ethic of the new recruits.

The smooth transition could not have been achieved without the efforts of our Client Services, Operations and Business Services team members, all of whom worked hard to maintain a consistent and accessible service, while supporting their colleagues and enhancing the ACCS.

On other fronts, the Early Resolution Program continued to provide timely and effective resolution services in 2017-2018, while ensuring that conferences are always available to those who need them.

Throughout the year, the ACCS held regular formal meetings with key stakeholders including the ACCS Users Group, WorkSafe, WorkCover Assist and Union Assist, Self Insurers Association of Victoria and authorised agents. We also had frequent informal exchanges of feedback and information with these key stakeholders and Trades Hall Council. I thank them all for their contributions in providing feedback and insight to assist the ACCS to improve its services.

The latest client satisfaction survey attests to the success of the ACCS in continuing to provide quality conciliation services during this time of unprecedented change. The service achieved an overall client satisfaction rating of 81%. Perceived value of the service rose to 89%, and there was an overall Conciliation Officer satisfaction rating of 90%.

As this year is my final year in the role of Senior Conciliation Officer/CEO, I would like to thank the Board for their support and acknowledge the wonderful work done by all members of the ACCS staff. It has been inspiring to lead such a passionate and skilled group of people and I look forward to continuing to serve all stakeholders in the coming years as a Conciliation Officer.

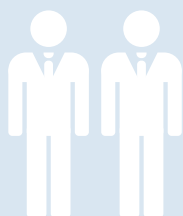
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anita Kaminski'.

Anita Kaminski
Senior Conciliation Officer

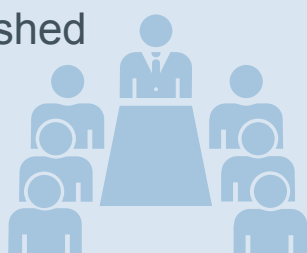
ACCS becomes an
**INDEPENDENT
STATUTORY
AUTHORITY**

11 October 2017

2 new
Deputy Senior
Conciliation
Officers
appointed

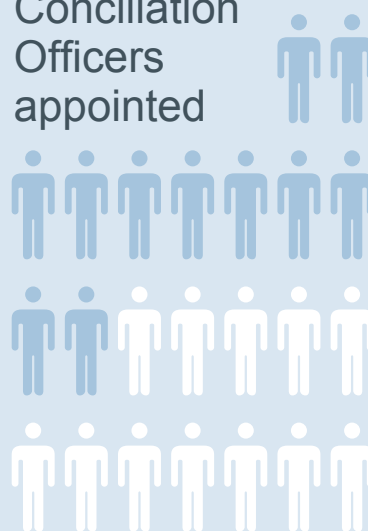


7 Member Board
established



13,316
disputes referred
for conciliation

11 new
Conciliation
Officers
appointed



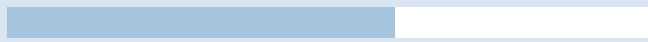
16 existing
Conciliation
Officers
reappointed



7,791
disputes
resolved



62% resolution rate with authorised agents



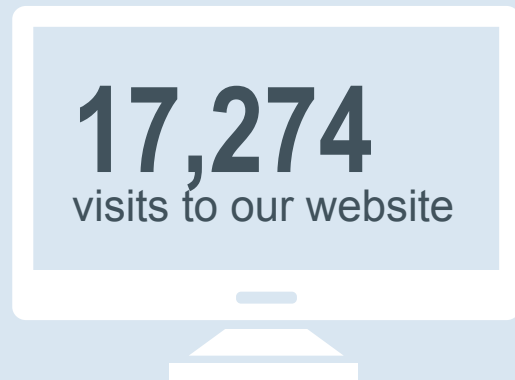
56% resolution rate with self-insurers



821
files
resolved by
Early Resolution
Project within
14 days



17,274
visits to our website



1,404
matters
referred to
Medical
Panels



90%



81%

Satisfaction
with
Conciliation
Officers
work

Satisfaction
rates with
conciliation
process



ACCS

Accident Compensation
Conciliation Service

About the ACCS

The ACCS is an independent statutory authority that came into effect on 11 October 2017 following Victorian Government amendments to the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* (WIRC Act). The ACCS was previously an independent body corporate under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985* and the WIRC Act. The ACCS is a key part of the Victorian workers compensation scheme, providing conciliation services, at no cost to injured workers, to assist the parties to resolve disputes. Conciliation facilitates the resolution of disputes by involving all parties in an informal, non-adversarial process to pursue an agreement that is fair and mutually acceptable. The ACCS operates independently of WorkSafe Victoria, WorkSafe agents, self-insurers, workers, employers, solicitors and unions.

The functions of the ACCS are to provide independent conciliation services for the purposes of the WIRC Act and the *Accident Compensation Act 1985* (AC Act), and to ensure that conciliations are conducted by the ACCS in an expeditious and consistent manner.

The Ministerial Guidelines under the AC Act and the WIRC Act include statements that the purpose of conciliation is to:

- Assist the parties to achieve durable resolutions and agreements wherever possible;
- Be even handed and fair, and address matters on their merits;
- Maximise flexibility and informality;
- Facilitate early return to work opportunities;
- Enhance ongoing worker/employer employment relationships;
- Be prompt and timely in the conduct of conciliation processes and in dealings with the parties; and
- Reduce cost implications for the parties and the scheme and ensure that matters do not unnecessarily proceed to the courts.

The ACCS is committed to conciliation of disputes in an economical and prompt manner. While most matters are dealt with at a conference, early intervention by the ACCS assists parties to address the matters in dispute. More than 48% of disputes are disposed of without the need for a conference.

How conciliation works

Requests for conciliation are usually lodged with the ACCS by workers in relation to disputes with their employers, WorkSafe agents or self-insurers.

Disputes dealt with by the ACCS typically involve issues such as:

- Claims that are rejected;
- Claims in which weekly payments are reduced, altered or terminated;
- Lump sum compensation;
- Payment of medical and like expenses; and
- Return to work and rehabilitation matters.

The ACCS offers a non-adversarial environment that brings together all parties to a workplace compensation dispute to try to achieve a resolution. Conciliation assists those parties to:

- Identify the issues relevant to the dispute;
- Develop potential resolution options;
- Consider alternatives and consequences; and
- Endeavour to reach an agreement.

Each matter is assigned to a Conciliation Officer who acts as an independent third party in the dispute. In the majority of matters, the parties attend a conference. Employees and employers are entitled to have an assistant with them. Legal practitioners can only attend if all parties consent. Professional interpreters are provided by the ACCS if required.

The ACCS facilitates the exchange of relevant information between the parties to assist in the conciliation of the dispute.

In the main, Conciliation Officers play a facilitative rather than a determinative role in relation to the dispute and its resolution. They facilitate the conciliation, provide information about workplace compensation legislation, may make recommendations for the terms and any associated consequences of agreement, and may actively encourage the participants to reach an agreement.

Where a matter cannot be resolved by agreement between the parties, Conciliation Officers have the power to make recommendations, refer medical questions to the Medical Panel, or issue an Outcome Certificate allowing the parties to proceed to court. In limited circumstances Conciliation Officers also have the power to make a direction.

As well as having powers and responsibilities under the AC Act 1985 and the WIRC Act 2013, Conciliation Officers work under Ministerial Guidelines and a Code of Conduct and Protocols developed by the Conciliation Service and approved by the Minister for Finance.

Our vision

To deliver world-class dispute resolution and make the system fairer for Victorians impacted by workplace injuries.

Our purpose

Our purpose is to reduce the health, social and economic costs of workplace injuries and illnesses through fair, affordable, timely and effective resolution of workers compensation disputes. We do this by:

- Upholding the objectives of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*, and applying relevant laws practically, clearly and consistently;
- Applying skillful, independent conciliation dispute resolution practices to achieve durable outcomes;
- Respecting the views, dignity and rights of all parties;
- Safeguarding the health and wellbeing of injured workers within the dispute resolution process; and
- Building understanding and confidence in conciliation processes among those affected by workplace injuries and in the wider Victorian community.

Our values

We are guided by an ethos of service to the community and are committed to applying Public Sector Values as outlined in the *Public Administration Act 2004*, and associated codes of conduct. We also uphold the values in the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Given the role of the ACCS within the Victorian workers compensation system, the following values are highlighted:

- **Respect** – we will treat our colleagues and all who use our service with consideration, dignity and compassion;
- **Professionalism and accountability** – we aspire to the highest standards of ethics, independence and excellence in the provision of our services; and
- **Collaboration** – we actively and constructively engage with our stakeholders and colleagues to achieve ongoing service improvements.

Reporting progress on achieving objectives

The interim ACCS strategic plan for January to June 2018 identified three strategic priority areas:

1. *Service improvement - we will improve our service and reduce time to conciliation conferences.*

A number of initiatives to improve service to clients – particularly to reduce waiting times for conciliation conferences – have been introduced since the ACCS became a statutory authority on 11 October 2017:

- A comprehensive induction program for Conciliation Officers was developed to ensure quality of conferencing and a consistent approach. The program included detailed legal and technical information relevant to workers compensation law, exercising powers under the Act, mock conferencing and an organisation overview;
- Additional resource capacity has been added to our Early Resolution Project to improve efficacy;
- The role of Deputy Senior Conciliation Officer - Legal and Technical has been created to ensure that Conciliation Officers are aware of and educated about the legal and technical issues relevant to workers compensation law. This will assist in ensuring that service users experience a consistently high standard of conciliation;
- The ACCS engaged additional experienced Conciliation Officers on a short-term basis to reduce waiting times for conferences and address a temporary backlog of cases;
- File allocation was reviewed, changes were made to the scheduling of conferences to increase availability of conference slots, and enhanced data collection and analysis enabled the ACCS to offer a more responsive conciliation service and further reduce time to conference; and
- Broader engagement with stakeholders on improvements and initiatives, including at the Board level and through collaboration with key stakeholders from unions, employers and insurers at the ACCS corporate planning day on 4 May 2018.

The new Deputy Senior Conciliation Officer - Service Improvement will work with staff to continue to examine and enhance the ACCS model of service delivery, in order to tailor processes to the dispute, increase resolution rates and deliver more durable outcomes.

2. Strengthen our organisational culture and capability – we will foster an organisational culture that is collaborative, accountable, responsive and unified in focusing on improved service outcomes.

The second strategic priority is underpinned by the establishment of our new executive leadership team, including two Deputy Senior Conciliation Officers (DSCOs). Over the reporting year the team has worked hard to ensure strong governance arrangements are in place to support the delivery of effective and responsive services. The new team has:

- Supported the establishment of the Board and the development of the organisational vision, purpose, values and strategic objectives;
- Managed the transfer of staff to the independent authority;
- Implemented the new structure, including the appointment of a Chief Financial Officer, Board Secretary and Human Resources and Change Management Director;
- Held an all-staff corporate planning day, 'Growing our future together', on 4 May 2018;
- Established staff forums, such as an Occupational Health and Safety Committee;
- Created a Human Resources plan;
- Revised the Service Level Agreement with WorkSafe Victoria to enable independence whilst ensuring continuity of service;
- Set up finance, risk management and audit systems and frameworks; and
- Developed and implemented policies and procedures compliant with Public Sector standards.

3. Reduce costs of disputation in the Victorian workers compensation system – we will improve outcomes for disputes related to mental injuries (which are increasing in complexity), and for return-to-work disputes.

The ACCS is committed to working with stakeholders to identify opportunities for improvement in dispute resolution and the workers compensation scheme more broadly, with the aim of improving the experience of service users, achieving more long-term, durable outcomes and reducing social and economic costs of disputation. Multiple meetings with stakeholders have occurred over the year – at the Board, Senior Conciliation Officer and staff levels – to enhance understanding of the issues facing injured workers and employers navigating the workers compensation system, and ways in which the ACCS can support timely, fair and durable resolution of disputes. These meetings included the ACCS users group quarterly meeting, WorkCover Assist, Union Assist, Agent and WorkSafe quarterly meetings, and regular meetings with Self Insurer Association of Victoria.

The ACCS surveys service users twice yearly through its client survey, and contacts all workers who have attended a conciliation conference for feedback about their experience. In 2017-18 the client survey obtained feedback from 200 workers, 200 employers and 50 WorkSafe agents and self-insurers. The client service index which measures satisfaction of participants in the conciliation process remained virtually stable at 85% for 2017-18 (84% in the previous survey).

An important initiative to improve outcomes for disputes related to mental injuries includes the development of a pilot Restorative Engagement Project. The design of the project has been finalised over the year and will be implemented in 2018-2019 with the cooperation of service users. The project aims to deliver a new conference model based on the premise that the conference should promote wellbeing and restore right relations between the participants. It is hoped that the use of a broader range of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) models will help the ACCS to become more responsive to user needs and provide different paths of dispute resolution, particularly for workers experiencing mental injuries.

Our talented team of Conciliation Officers

A blend of new talent and experience in our team of Conciliation Officers has strongly positioned the ACCS to achieve new levels of service and excellence in workplace dispute resolution across Victoria.

Twelve new faces joined the ranks of our Conciliation Officers in April 2018, while 17 of our most skilled and experienced Conciliation Officers were reappointed (inclusive of the DSCOs). The appointments came after an extensive external and internal recruitment process triggered by the ACCS becoming an independent statutory authority.

The new team comprises a total of 29 (including DSCOs) highly qualified and talented people from richly diverse backgrounds spanning both the private and public sectors. Many have worked in courts and tribunals, and the list of disciplines in which they have acquired expertise is truly impressive.

Naturally, given the nature of their work at the ACCS, many of our Conciliation Officers have strong backgrounds in law, mediation and conciliation. But the new team also boasts broad expertise and experience in other areas including medicine, counselling, rehabilitation, occupational health and safety, case management, disability services, training, advocacy and mediation.

This unprecedented breadth of experience among the Conciliation Officers will enhance the ability of the ACCS to deal expertly and expeditiously with workers compensation disputes covering a wide spectrum of employment situations.

Under our new structure at the ACCS, Conciliation Officers have been organised into two teams led by two new DSCOs – Alyssa Duffy, who will focus on the legal and technical aspects of the Conciliation Officer role, and Kate Spillane, who will concentrate on service improvements. Both DSCOs will conciliate disputes.

Alyssa Duffy is a conciliator and qualified lawyer who commenced her career at Slater & Gordon Solicitors in 2003. She also worked at WorkSafe as Legal Counsel before joining the Accident Compensation Act Review and working in legislative reform and implementation. She is a member of the Resolution Institute, Victorian Association of Restorative Justice and Victorian Association of Dispute Resolution.

Kate Spillane has had over 24 years of experience in courts of all jurisdictions across Victoria, most recently as Acting Operations Manager and Principal Registrar of the County Court of Victoria. She has won a number of awards during her career, including the One Justice Award for Leading Significant Change. She holds a Diploma in Government Court Services from Victoria University.

Performance 2017-18

Big changes at the ACCS associated with the transition to a statutory authority have contributed to temporary falls in some performance measures in 2017-18. This was notably true for the time taken to allocate a conference, which was affected by an interim reduction in the number of available Conciliation Officers while we inducted and trained our new recruits. For example, average time to disposal increased, with 78% of all disputes finalised within 90 days compared with 83.1% in 2016-2017. However, our resolution rate for 2017-18 remained consistent with results over the previous three years at 61%. These figures were achieved despite the additional pressure on the ACCS of a 4.9% increase in requests for conciliation to 13,316. Ongoing strategies to improve service – including extension of additional temporary staff – have helped to bring down average waiting times to conference each month since the transition period, and we are on track to reach optimal levels by December 2018.

Our annual Client Survey, carried out by an independent research firm, demonstrates the professionalism of ACCS staff over the last financial year. In responding to the survey, workers, employers, WorkSafe agents and self-insurers rated the ACCS service as good or very good in 87%, 84% and 92% of responses respectively. These results are in line with the 2016-2017 results.

The following tables demonstrate how the ACCS continues to be effective in assisting parties to resolve disputes. The 2017-18 financial year figures have been split into two periods: pre-statutory authority (1 July 2017 - 10 October 2017) and post-statutory authority (11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018). This enables full comparisons with data presented in the previous 2016-17 annual report.

Overview

The 2016-2017 Annual Report included data for the period 1 July 2017 to 10 October 2017, as the annual reporting period was extended by the Minister to cover the period immediately before commencement as a Statutory Authority on 11 October 2017. To enable comparison of year-to-year results, the statistical overview for 2017-2018 (below) includes full year data, followed by information on the separate reporting periods 1 July 2017 to 10 October 2017, and 11 October 2017 to 30 June 2018.

	2016 – 2017	2017 – 2018	1 July 2017 – 10 October 2017	11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018
New Requests	12,693	13,316	3,874	9,442
Re-opened Matters**	725	589	158	431
Disposals	15,270	14,831	3,960	10,871
Cases in Progress	2,237	5,416	2,714	2,702

The work of the ACCS consists of new requests for conciliation and reopened matters. Disposals are those matters finalised by the ACCS (as detailed in the Outcomes table). Cases in progress include matters that are awaiting finalisation, those that have been scheduled for conference and those that have been recently received.

New requests over the full financial year (1 July 2017 – 30 June 2018) were 4.9% higher than in 2016-17. Reopened matters were down 18% on the previous year 2016-17. The number of reopened cases can fluctuate significantly depending upon circumstances of cases. Disposals were down 2.4% and cases in progress (based on a snapshot at a point in time) have increased by 21%, with both reflecting the increased complexity of cases.

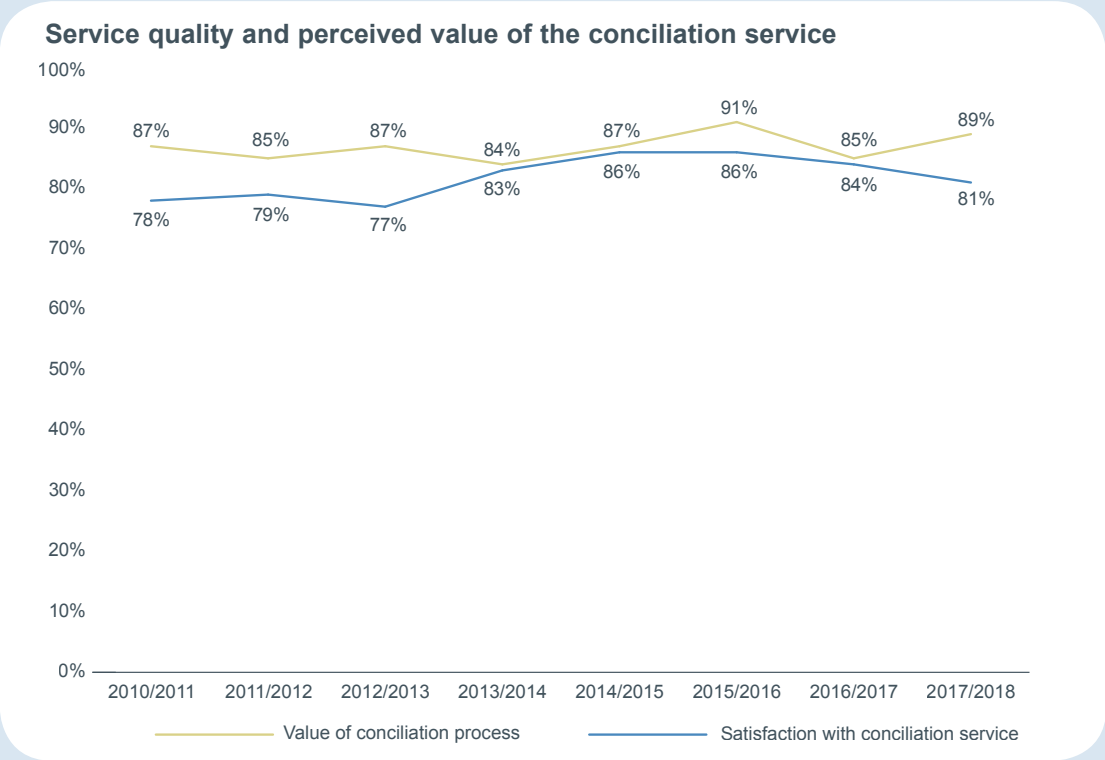
In addition to matters resolved at conciliation, some unresolved matters do not proceed further because the conciliation process allows each party to fully appreciate the other's position and review their own claim in light of the conciliation process. Matters that are unresolved at conciliation may proceed to litigation but can still settle prior to any hearing. The ACCS plans to work with stakeholders to focus on unresolved matters that settle prior to litigation with a view to improving resolution rates at conciliation.

** Reopened matters do not include files suspended while awaiting a Medical Panel outcome.

Client satisfaction

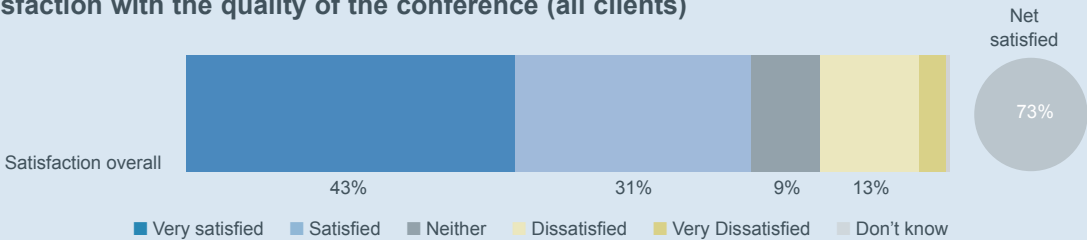
The results of the Client Satisfaction Survey 2017 – 2018 show client satisfaction with our services remain high and the quality work of Conciliation Officers is well regarded.

Overall satisfaction with ACCS’ services remained stable in 2017/18. Perceived value of conciliation is 89% compared to 85% in 2016/17, while satisfaction is at 81% compared to 84% in 2016/17. These results indicate that perceptions of service quality have stabilised following a period of change.



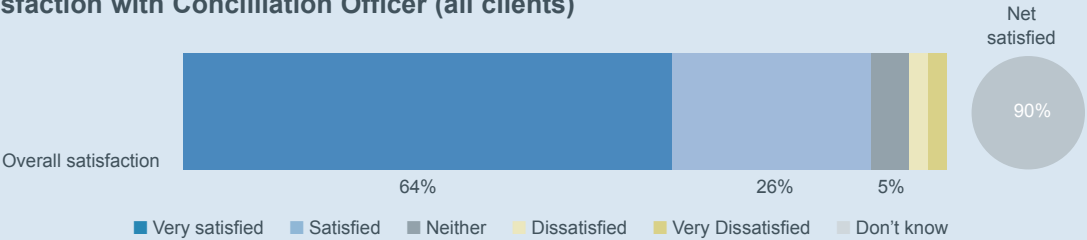
Overall, 73% of all clients were satisfied with the conference (72% 2016/17). The areas of greatest satisfaction were being given time to prepare (91% satisfied or very satisfied, 90% 2016/17), having a clear understanding of next steps (89%, 70% 2016/17) and being well structured (87%, 80% 2016/17).

Satisfaction with the quality of the conference (all clients)



Most clients were satisfied overall with the Conciliation Office (CO) during the conference (90%). They felt most positively toward the way they explained their role, their politeness and professionalism, and how organised and prepared they were (97%, 94%, and 93% respectively. 94%, 95% and 89% respectively 2016/17).

Satisfaction with Conciliation Officer (all clients)



Disputes lodged for conciliation

Requests for conciliation categorised by the nature of the dispute

Nature of Dispute (New Requests & Re-opened Matters)	2016 – 2017		2017 – 2018		1 July 2017 – 10 October 2017		11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Medical and like expenses	5,147	38.40%	5,865	39.38%	1,535	38.1	4,330	39.90%
Payment of weekly payments*	856	6.40%	934	6.27%	257	6.4	677	6.20%
Rejection of claim	2,490	18.60%	2,643	17.75%	753	18.7	1,890	17.40%
Terminations at 130 weeks of compensation	1,354	10.10%	1,583	10.63%	417	10.3	1,166	10.70%
Other Terminations**	1,885	14.00%	2,188	14.69%	593	14.7	1,595	14.70%
Permanent impairment	857	6.40%	919	6.17%	256	6.3	663	6.10%
Other***	829	6.20%	762	5.12%	221	5.5	541	5%
Total	13,418	100	14,894	100%	4,032	100	10,862	100%

The nature of disputes as a percentage of total disputes has remained constant across the two periods.

*Payment of weekly payments – Relates to situations where there has been non-payment of weekly payments to a worker, no provision of a medical certificate, provision of an invalid medical certificate, or the worker ceases to reside in or is temporarily absent from Australia.

**Other terminations – Relates to termination of weekly payments other than by expiration of the second entitlement period (104/130 weeks), suspension of weekly payments, injury after retirement, termination having attained retirement age, imprisonment, no entitlement, termination of entitlement to weekly payments based on absence from Australia on a temporary or permanent basis unless able to satisfy the Authority or self-insurer the worker has no current work capacity and is likely to continue indefinitely to have no current work capacity.

***Other – Covers a variety of different disputes ranging from, but not exclusive to, return to work issues, calculation of pre-injury average weekly earnings, provision of certificates of capacity, indexation, access to information, recovery of payments, interest on weekly payments, fraud, indexation, FOI, lump sum settlements, failure to pay outstanding weekly payments.

Outcomes

Outcomes	2016 – 2017			2017 – 2018			1 July 2017 – 10 October 2017			11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018		
	No.	% of total completed	% of outcomes	No.	% of total completed	% of outcomes	No.	% of total completed	% of outcomes	No.	% of total completed	% of outcomes
Resolved by agreement – no variation to original decision	624	4.7%	4.1%	618	4.8%	4.2%	109	3.2%	2.8%	509	5.4%	4.7%
Resolved by agreement – variation to original decision	4,735	35.6%	31.0%	4,457	34.9%	30.2%	1,193	35.0%	30.5%	3,264	34.8%	30.0%
Resolved by agreement to a recommendation	2,030	15.3%	13.3%	2,028	15.9%	13.7%	532	15.6%	13.6%	1,496	16.0%	13.8%
Withdrawn	726	5.5%	4.8%	677	5.3%	4.6%	178	5.2%	4.6%	499	5.3%	4.6%
Direction	17	0.1%	0.1%	12	0.1%	0.1%	2	0.1%	0.1%	10	0.1%	0.1%
Resolved Subtotal	8,132	61.0%	53.2%	7,792	60.9%	52.7%	2,014	59.1%	51.6%	5,778	61.6%	53.2%
Unresolved	5,172	38.9%	33.9%	4,994	39.1%	33.8%	1,396	40.9%	35.7%	3,598	38.4%	33.1%
Total Completed	13,304	100.0%	87.1%	12,786	100.0%	86.5%	3,410	100.0%	87.3%	9,376	100.0%	86.3%
Not Proceeding *	1,951		12.8%	1,987			495			1,492		
No Jurisdiction	15		0.1%	4			1			3		
Total	15,270		100	14,777			3,906			10,871		

*The category of 'Not Proceeding' is used for matters that have been suspended and may be finalised in the future. It includes matters referred to medical panels with files reopened after receipt of the Medical Panel Opinion.

The number of matters that can be resolved at conciliation will be affected by various factors outside the control of the ACCS. These include the quality of decisions of WorkSafe agents and self-insurers, the attitudes of the parties to court proceedings and other disputes the claimant may have before the courts. The resolution rate by itself should not be taken as a measure of the quality of conciliation. The client satisfaction survey provides positive feedback on the value of conciliation for parties.

Early Resolution Project

The Early Resolution Project (ERP) deals with disputes that appear to be capable of resolution without the need for a conciliation conference. During 2017-18 a total of 821 files were disposed in ERP, representing 6.4% of all disposals. A further 1077 files referred to ERP were subsequently listed for conference, with 381 of those actually being conferenced. For the period 11 October 2017 to 30 June 2018, 1387 files were referred to ERP and 36% were conferenced.

As a general rule, workers availing themselves of ERP tend to be legally represented or assisted by WorkCover Assist, Union Assist or another union representative. In all ERP matters, whether the worker is assisted or represented, the ERP Conciliation Officer must ensure the individual worker is directly engaged as much as is practicable and is enabled to make informed decisions.

ERP supports shorter resolution times for easily resolvable disputes and frees up conciliation resources for more complex cases. Timely resolution enhances the well-being of injured workers and assists businesses in the management of workers compensation claims.

Disputes referred to Medical Panels

2016 – 2017	2017 – 2018	1 July 2017 – 10 October 2017	11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018
1,099	1,404	368	1,036

Disputes are referred to Medical Panels for a final and binding determination on medical questions, which usually resolves the issue in dispute.

Instances when SCO allowed an extension of time or allowed an out-of-time lodgement

2016 – 2017		2017 – 2018		1 July 2017 – 10 October 2017		11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018	
Late lodgements		Late lodgements		Late lodgements		Late lodgements	
Requests	Allowed	Requests	Allowed	Requests	Allowed	Requests	Allowed
1,801	1,790	1,902	1,888	470	465	1,432	1,423

Some requests for conciliation are referred to the Senior Conciliation Officer to consider whether they are able to be lodged. If the request is outside the statutory period of 60 days of the employee receiving the decision they wish to contest, they can request a late lodgement.

Requests for medical reports

In 2017-18, pursuant to Section 289 of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*, the ACCS requested 1380 medical reports and received 902. For the period 11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018, 986 medical reports were requested and 637 reports were received. Medical reports can play a key role in the resolution of disputes by providing objective information in relation to the injured worker's medical condition, work capacity and treatment required.

Regional disputes

While the majority of disputes originate within the Melbourne metropolitan region, 21% of disputes dealt with over 2017-18 came from regional Victoria. In order to make the process of conciliation more accessible to parties outside Melbourne, Conciliation Officers undertake significant travel each month to conduct conferences in regional Victoria.

The ACCS holds conferences in the following locations: Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Traralgon, Mildura, Shepparton, Warrnambool and Wangaratta. We routinely review the available local venues to ensure that we are providing the best available facilities for conferencing. An independent safety and security review of ACCS regional conference venues conducted in 2017-2018 found that in the main, the regional conferences venues met with the organisation's safety and security criteria. Some slight changes, including a change to the conference venue in Bendigo, were actioned in accordance with the report's recommendations and ongoing monitoring of the new venue in Bendigo is in place.

Organisation Structure and Governance

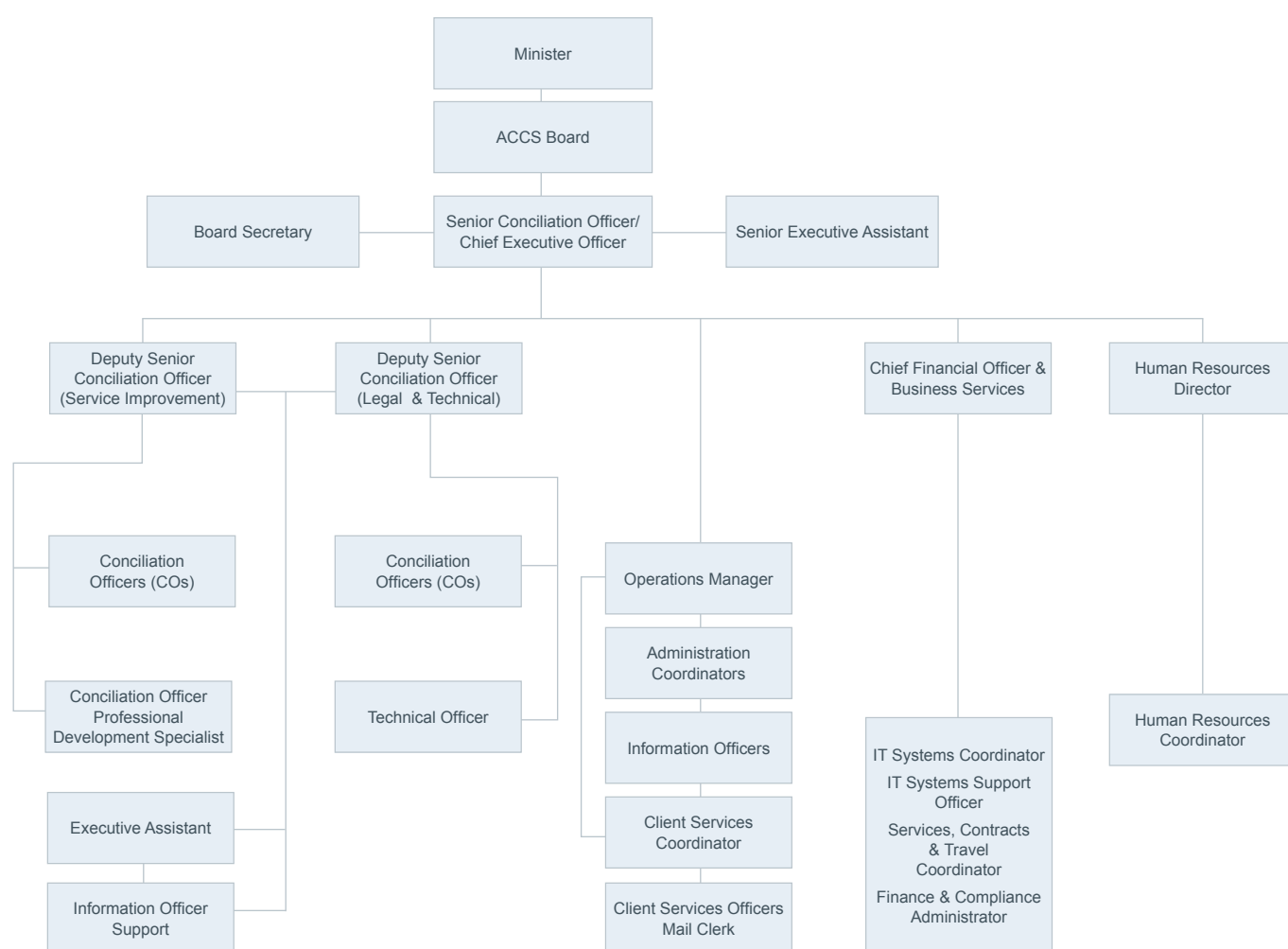
For the period 11 October 2017 to 30 June 2018, the ACCS was an independent statutory authority governed by a board of directors, established under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*, the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*, and the *Compensation Legislation Amendment Act 2016*.

The Senior Conciliation Officer exercises powers and duties as set out in the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* and observes guidelines issued by the Minister.

A new Executive Leadership Team has been created:

- To drive service improvements the ACCS has created two DSCO roles to provide line management, resourcing and professional support for Conciliation Officers. One DSCO has service improvement responsibilities; the other has a focus on legal and technical advice to ensure consistency in the application of legislation across the organisation.
- The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for financial administration, information technology and management of the corporate services of the organisation.
- The Operations Manager is responsible for the management and oversight of the operations of the ACCS, with a particular focus on delivery of efficient and effective administrative support to the Conciliation Officers.
- The Human Resources & Change Management Director supports the people and change management initiatives required to enact the transition to a statutory authority.
- The Project Manager provides project management support for the transition, and is therefore in a temporary role.

Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (ACCS) Organisational Structure



Board information

Meriel O'Sullivan

Board Chair
Deputy Board Chair and Chair Remuneration Committee

Commenced 23 March 2017
30 April 2018
23 March 2017 – 29 April 2018

Meriel O'Sullivan is the Director of Redd Consultancy, a firm that specialises in employee relations and the resolution of workplace conflict. She has over 25 years experience in industrial relations and human resource management, working across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Meriel has postgraduate qualifications in Alternative Dispute Resolution and Employment Law, is undertaking a Masters of Conflict Resolution and tutors in ADR at La Trobe University Law School.

Tali Bernard

Deputy Board Chair
Chair Remuneration Committee

Commenced 23 March 2017
30 April 2018
2 May 2018

Tali Bernard has over 18 years of experience in family law and personal injury litigation, including within the Commonwealth's workers compensation scheme. She has a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Arts and has been admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor in the Supreme Court of Victoria and High Court of Australia. Tali is a legal practitioner within the Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria). She is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has had over 13 years experience as a Board member in the Community Legal Service sector.

Julie Ligeti

Board Chair
Remuneration Committee

Commenced 23 March 2017
23 March 2017 – 29 April 2018

Julie is currently the Global Manager Public Advocacy for Cochlear Ltd. She is Chair of the Board of the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation and Chairs its Executive Remuneration Committee and Research, Policy and Advocacy Committee. Julie has served on a number of community sector boards and has 30 years of work experience in legal practice and policy, management, government affairs, communications, public policy and advocacy. Julie has a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Arts from Monash University and certificates in Mediation Skills and Governance and Risk Management. She has been admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor in the Supreme Court of Victoria.

Kelly Humphreys

Chair Risk, Audit and Finance Committee

Commenced 18 May 2017

Kelly Humphreys has extensive experience as a senior executive in financial services in both the public and private sectors. She is an experienced non-executive director and is currently a Commissioner with the Victorian Building Authority and a Director of Latrobe Health Services. Kelly has a Masters of Management, Diploma of Financial Services and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Iain Findlay

Risk, Audit and Finance Committee

Commenced 23 March 2017

Mr Findlay has a diverse background. He has 20 years of experience with the Victoria Police and 15 years in senior management roles in the construction, travel and conference event management industries. He has also been a players' advocate with the AFL/VFL Tribunal for 36 years and is a Board member for several charities, sports leagues and training organisations. Mr Findlay is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Adrian Fitzpatrick

Risk, Audit and Finance Committee

Commenced 10 October 2017

Adrian retired from Pitcher Partners in 2016 after 39 years in Professional Practice, including 29 years as a partner. Adrian has an extensive background across a broad range of industries and significant experience in business planning, corporate processes, strategy, and risk management. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce, is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand and member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Adrian is currently a Director of ARB Corporation Limited, a Board Member of 2 Community based Not for Profit Organisations and advises private group boards.

Karen Cusack

Remuneration Committee

Commenced 30 April 2018

Karen Cusack was appointed as Victoria's inaugural Health Complaints Commissioner in February 2017. The office is established under the *Health Complaints Act 2016*. Prior to leading the Office of the Health Complaints Commissioner, Karen was Corporate Counsel of The Royal Women's Hospital, Melbourne. She has over 20 years' experience as a senior lawyer and is passionate about the role she plays within the Victorian health sector. As well as completing her undergraduate degrees at Monash, Karen has undertaken various post-graduate study including a Master of Laws at Monash.

Michael Mitchell

Commenced 23 March 2016
Resigned 15 November 2017

Public sector values and employment principles

The ACCS issues all staff with the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct to promote adherence to public sector values and employment principles on commencement of employment. The ACCS has introduced policies and practices that are consistent with the Victorian Public Sector employment principles.

Employee and conduct principles

The ACCS is committed to applying merit and equity principles when appointing staff. The selection processes ensure that applicants are assessed and evaluated fairly and equitably on the basis of key selection criteria and other accountabilities without discrimination. Employees are treated fairly and reasonably and, if required, have avenues of redress through the ACCS grievance policy.

Diversity and inclusion commitment

The ACCS is working towards creating an inclusive workplace where diversity is valued. Programs are being put in place to help foster understanding and recognition of difference, and to allow flexibility for employees based on individual circumstances. To this end, the ACCS has become a member of *prideindiversity*, a national not-for-profit employer support program for all aspects of LGBTI workplace inclusion.

Executive officer data

An executive officer is defined as a person employed as a public service body head or other executive under Part 3, Division 5 of the *Public Administration Act 2004*. All figures in the following tables reflect employment levels (exclusive of Conciliation Officers) at the last full pay period in June of the current and corresponding previous reporting year. The executives comprise the Executive Leadership Team.

Classification	Fixed Term		Temporary
	Male	Female	Female
Senior Conciliation Officer/ Chief Executive Officer		1	
Deputy Senior Conciliation Officer		2	
Other Executives	1	2	1
Total	1	5	1

Workforce information

As at 30 June 2018			
Position	Male	Female	Total
Conciliation Officer	10	25	35*
Administrative staff	12	39	51
Total	22	64	86

Position	Full time	Part time	FTE**
Conciliation Officer	22	13	31.2
Administrative staff	40	11	46.5
Total	62	24	77.7

*Includes the employment of temporary Conciliation Officers, which will cease as of 31 December 2018

**Full-time equivalent

At 30 June 2018, 28% of staff members at the ACCS were part time, 74% of all staff were female, and Conciliation Officers accounted for 41% of staff.

Developing our staff

The ACCS provides a range of learning and development opportunities for all employees to enhance their skills and share their knowledge with colleagues. In 2017-18 there was a focus on increasing the skills of employees to respond to a time of transition. The learning programs and initiatives included Transition to Change workshops, Career Transition workshops, Health and Wellbeing sessions, individual coaching sessions in relation to career transition and individual coaching sessions for developing strategies for responding to change.

Productivity enhancement was provided to all employees through workshops and individual coaching to increase skills in relation to Lotus Notes (email system).

During the transition period, the organisation implemented a range of external and internal support systems to assist career transition. These included:

- An ongoing independent and confidential employee assistance provider;
- Psychological support services on-site to assist staff during recruitment announcements;
- Two confidential de-briefing sessions for existing employees affected by the transition, facilitated by a clinical psychologist from the ACCS Employee Assistance provider;
- Outplacement providers on-site for transitioning employees;
- Financial advice and professional support coaching for transitioning employees; and
- Communication tools for transitioning staff, including websites to help with career transition.

Conciliation Officers attended industry workshops and conferences including the Council of Australasian Tribunals annual conference. A key focus for administration staff and Conciliation Officers was developing a greater understanding of mental health issues and managing mental health-related disputes. A range of Conciliation Officers and staff attended a Conferencing and Restorative Approach seminar.

Administration staff attended tailored development programs designed to improve knowledge and understanding of the workers compensation scheme and relevant legislation.

In 2017-18, 209 days were invested in professional development and training activities, inclusive of 89 days dedicated to OHS training (49.2 days in the period 11 October 2017 – 30 June 2018). Training is delivered face-to-face and online.

Health and safety

The ACCS is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all our employees, contractors, visitors and the public. This is achieved through the use of procedures, guidelines and management tools that develop an informed safety culture and meet our legislative requirements.

There was an increased focus in 2017-18 on the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, visitors and the public. The emphasis is on developing an ACCS health and safety system, reviewing and actioning risks and increasing the engagement of employees through the nomination of health and safety representatives and the creation of a safety, health and environment group.

An independent safety and security review of ACCS regional conference venues in Geelong, Ballarat, Warrnambool, Shepparton, Wangaratta and Traralgon was completed. The review found that in the main, all regional conferences venues used by the ACCS met with the organisation's safety and security criteria. Some slight changes, including a change to the conference venue in Bendigo, were actioned in accordance with the report's recommendations.

Commencing April 2018, the Safety, Health and Environment Group (SHEG), consisting of newly nominated health and safety representatives and management representatives, commenced meeting on a monthly basis. Following a review of the Risk report conducted by independent Health and Safety consultants, a number of new safety initiatives were implemented for all ACCS employees:

- Completion of ergonomic workstation assessments;
- Health and Safety induction;
- Training for ACCS Ergonomic Assessors;
- Lunchtime learning sessions in relation to wellbeing and resiliency; and
- Consultation in relation to the proposed ACCS safety management system.

A program of individual Proactive Wellbeing Sessions (PWS) was also developed to promote wellbeing for Conciliation Officers and the Executive Leadership Team.

Incident reports and notification

In 2017-18 there were seven reported incidents, with all incidents now closed. No incidents were reported as high risk. There were no new WorkCover claims in this period, and there have been no fatalities.

Claims costs

The claims cost total between 11 October 2017 and 30 June 2018 was \$37,116. This equates to an average claims cost of \$1025 per week.

Publications and information

The ACCS continues to work to make information for users of conciliation services available in effective formats for the public. All publications are available free of charge online at www.conciliation.vic.gov.au, or by contacting the ACCS direct.

The following publications and information about the ACCS are available to the public:

- Request for Conciliation form
- Resolving workers compensation disputes – the conciliation process booklet*
- Resolving workers compensation disputes – the conciliation process DVD**
- Annual Report
- Client Survey Report
- Code of Conduct and Protocols
- Privacy Policy
- Procedures under the Protected Disclosures Act
- Complaints Process
- Strategic Plan
- Service Charter
- Board Charter
- Directors Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Remuneration Committee Charter
- Risk, Audit and Finance Committee Charter
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy

* Available in the following languages: English, Arabic, Cantonese, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin, Polish, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.

** Available in the following languages: English, Arabic, Croatian, Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Serbian and Vietnamese. The English version includes closed captions for use by hearing impaired people.

Culturally diverse injured workers

The clients of the ACCS are culturally and linguistically diverse. For example, in 2016-2017, 10.2% of people who requested conciliation indicated that they would need an interpreter.

Consequently, the ACCS seeks to maintain awareness of clients with culturally diverse backgrounds and their experiences of conciliation. As noted above, a number of publications are available in other languages.

When a Request for Conciliation is received, we ask if an interpreter is required. To help ensure that people from diverse language backgrounds have appropriate access to conciliation, free interpreter services are available at conciliation conferences as well as for telephone communications.

The independent research company engaged to carry out our Annual Client Survey employs multi-lingual survey staff to ensure that people from diverse language backgrounds can participate effectively.

Information and communication technology expenditure

In 2017-18, the ACCS had total information and communication technology expenditure of \$762,291 (see table below).

Business as usual ICT expenditure	Non-business as usual ICT expenditure (Total = operational expenditure and capital expenditure)	Operational expenditure	Capital expenditure
\$762,291	\$0	\$0	-

Consultancy Expenditure

Details of individual consultancies valued at \$10,000 or greater

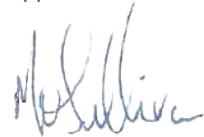
Consultant	Purpose of consultancy	Start date	End date	Total approved project fee (excl. GST)	Expenditure 11/10/17-30/06/2018 (excl.GST)
JOST & Co Pty Ltd ATF Joust Trust	Internal Communication	10/11/17	6/30/18	\$90,000	\$54,000
JOST & Co Pty Ltd ATF Joust Trust	Change Management and Culture Program	10/11/17	6/30/18	\$21,025	\$21,025
JOST & Co Pty Ltd ATF Joust Trust	Event Management Support	4/30/18	6/30/18	\$34,295	\$34,295
Dench McClean Carlson	Advisory Services – Integrity Advisor	11/1/17	4/30/18	\$15,000	\$15,000
TL Consult	Executive Contract and Induction Projects	10/11/17	11/3/17	\$17,000	\$17,000
Aeon Advisory Pty Ltd	Executive consultancy and advice to SCO/CEO change management process and executive leadership team	3/18/18	6/30/18	\$208,000	\$106,400
Nina McCarthy Consulting	Research, scoping and project planning for ACCS safety management system	6/4/18	6/29/18	\$16,500	\$16,500
Peter William Partners	Scoping, development and facilitation of Executive leadership team planning Day and planning/ reporting tools	4/17/18	6/30/18	\$10,000	\$10,000
Peter William Partners	Executive OnBoarding transition support program; Induction for 3 executive leaders	4/17/18	6/30/18	\$30,000	\$30,000
Mercer	Provision of work value assessment and remuneration advice and audit/test of CO Advice	10/11/17	11/27/17	\$14,100	\$14,100
Karol Zdravevski	HR Consulting Services - Operational HR Support	2/12/18	4/19/18	\$90,000	\$31,695

From 11/10/2017 to 30/06/2018, the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service engaged 12 consultancies and specialist and technique services where the total fees payable to the consultants were less than \$10,000, with a total expenditure of \$69,058.90 (excl.GST).

Accident Compensation Conciliation Service Financial Management Compliance Attestation Statement

Compliance with the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework

I, Meriel O'Sullivan, on behalf of the Board, certify that the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service has complied with the applicable Standing Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994* and Instructions.



Meriel O'Sullivan
Board Chair
Accident Compensation Conciliation Service

Date signed: 20 August 2018

Financial Report

The ACCS operating expenditure for 2017-2018 was \$12.202 million compared to \$19.260 million in the previous year. The 2016-2017 financial year was extended by the Minister to cover the period 1 July 2016 to 10 October 2017, being the date immediately before the commencement of the ACCS as a statutory authority. Subsequently, this financial report is for the period 11 October to 30 June 2018.

2017–18 FINANCIAL REPORT

Comprehensive Operating Statement

Balance Sheet

Statement of Changes in Equity

Cash Flow Statement

Notes to the Financial Statements:

- 1 Accident Compensation Conciliation Service
- 2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
- 3 Operating Costs
- 4 Remuneration of Auditors
- 5 Receivables
- 6 Employee Related Provisions
- 7 Commitments
- 8 Responsible Persons
- 9 Related Parties
- 10 Remuneration of Executives
- 11 Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities
- 12 Financial Instruments
- 13 Events after the Reporting Period

Statement by Chair, Acting Senior Conciliation Officer and Chief Financial Officer

Auditor-General's Report

Comprehensive Operating Statement for the Period Ended 30 June 2018

		11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018
	Note	\$000s
Revenue		
Funding from WorkSafe Victoria	2(b)	12,202
Expenses		
Operating costs	3	(12,572)
Net result before other economic flows		(370)
Other economic flows		
Movement in provisions due to changes in discount rates		370
Net result		-
Other comprehensive income		-
Comprehensive result		-
The comprehensive operating statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.		

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2018

		30 June 2018
	Note	\$000s
Current assets		
Receivables	5	2,672
Prepayments		229
		2,901
Non-current assets		-
TOTAL ASSETS		2,901
Current liabilities		
Payables		(385)
Employee related provisions	6	(2,308)
		(2,693)
Non-current liabilities		
Employee related provisions	6	(208)
TOTAL LIABILITIES		(2,901)
NET ASSETS		-
Equity		
Accumulated Surplus		-
TOTAL EQUITY		-
The balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.		

Statement of Changes in Equity for the Period Ended 30 June 2018

	11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018
	\$000s
Total equity at beginning of the period	-
Net result for the period	-
Total equity at end of the period	-
The statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.	

Cash Flow Statement for the Period Ended 30 June 2018

11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018

\$000s

Cash Flows From Operating Activities	-
Cash Flows From Investing Activities	-
Cash Flows From Financing Activities	-
Net increase in cash held	-
Cash at the beginning of the period	-
Cash at the end of the period	-

The cash flow statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the financial period ended 30 June 2018

1. Accident Compensation Conciliation Service

The Accident Compensation Conciliation Service ("Conciliation Service") was established on 1 July 2002 under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985*, which together with the *Accident Compensation (WorkCover Insurance) Act 1993*, were recast into the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* on 1 July 2014.

Pursuant to section 15 of the *Compensation Legislation Amendment Act 2016*, which came into operation on 11 October 2017, the Conciliation Service was wound up and the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service ("ACCS") was established as a statutory authority with a ministerially appointed board. All property and rights of the Conciliation Service were vested in the ACCS, and all liabilities of the Conciliation Service were assumed by the ACCS from 11 October 2017. The ACCS is the successor in law of the Conciliation Service.

2. Summary Of Significant Accounting Policies

Statement of compliance

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994* and applicable Australian Accounting Standards (AAS) which include Interpretations, issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB). For the purposes of preparing the financial statements the Victorian State Government has determined that the ACCS is a not-for-profit entity. Where appropriate, those AAS paragraphs applicable to not-for-profit entities have been applied.

The audited annual financial statements were authorised for issue in accordance with a resolution of the Board on 20 August 2018.

Basis of accounting preparation and measurement

The ACCS was a body corporate established by statute enacted by the Victorian State Parliament and domiciled in Australia.

These financial statements cover the ACCS as an individual reporting entity for the period from 11 October 2017 to 30 June 2018. In accordance with the ministerial determination made by the Minister for Finance under section 6(1) of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the financial period of the ACCS commenced from 11 October 2017 in line with the operative date of section 15 of the *Compensation Legislation Amendment Act 2016*.

There are no comparatives as this is the first set of financial statements of the ACCS.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis, and are based on historical costs and do not take into account changing money values. Historical cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported.

Going concern

The going concern assumption has been applied in the preparation of these financial statements as all property and rights of the Conciliation Service were vested in the ACCS, and all liabilities of the Conciliation Service were assumed by the ACCS from 11 October 2017. The ACCS is the successor in law of the Conciliation Service.

The ACCS continues to be funded by the Victorian WorkCover Authority (trading as WorkSafe Victoria) in accordance with section 536D of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* (Note 2 (b)).

Australian Accounting Standards issued but not yet effective

The AASB has issued the following new or revised Australian Accounting Standards, which will be applicable to the ACCS:

AASB	Title	Operative Date
9	Financial Instruments	1 January 2018
2010-7	Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from AASB 9 (December 2010)	1 January 2018
16	Leases	1 January 2019
1058	Income of Not-for-Profit Entities	1 January 2019

These standards are not effective for the reporting period ended 30 June 2018 and have not been applied in preparing the ACCS's financial statements. While the preliminary assessment has not identified any material impact arising from the adoption of AASB 9, it will continue to be monitored and assessed. The key changes introduced by AASB 16 include the recognition of operating leases (Note 7) on balance sheet, measured at present value of the lease payments. AASB 1058 is not expected to have material impact on the ACCS.

The ACCS will apply these standards for the annual reporting periods beginning on or after the operative date set out above, where applicable.

Significant accounting policies

The following significant accounting policies have been adopted in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements:

(a) Cash flow

The ACCS does not maintain bank accounts. Under funding arrangements made with WorkSafe Victoria, the ACCS utilises WorkSafe's banking arrangements to facilitate its payments.

(b) Funding from Victorian WorkCover Authority

The ACCS is funded by WorkSafe Victoria in accordance with section 536D of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*. Subject to and in accordance with the budget approved by the Minister for Finance, all operating costs of the ACCS including obligations for employee and related costs are met through this funding arrangement.

Funding revenue is recognised to match the operating expenses as and when such expenses are incurred by the ACCS.

(c) Operating leases

The ACCS has obligations under operating lease agreements for certain buildings, motor vehicles and office equipment. Operating lease payments are charged as an expense in the comprehensive operating statement on a straight line basis over the lease term, except where another systematic basis is more representative of the time pattern in which economic benefits from the leased asset are consumed.

(d) Employee benefits

Employee benefits comprise benefits accruing to employees in relation to salaries, annual leave and long service leave. Depending on the expectation of the timing of settlement, liabilities for wages, salaries and annual leave are measured at:

- undiscounted value – if the ACCS expects to wholly settle within 12 months
- present value – if the ACCS does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Long service leave

Unconditional long service leave (LSL) is disclosed as a current liability, even where the ACCS does not expect to settle the liability within 12 months because it will not have the unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement should an employee take leave within 12 months. The components of this current LSL liability are measured at:

- undiscounted value – if the ACCS expects to wholly settle within 12 months
- present value – if the ACCS does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Conditional LSL is disclosed as a non-current liability. There is an unconditional right to defer the settlement of the entitlement until the employee has completed the requisite years of service. This non-current LSL liability is measured at present value.

On-costs

Provisions for superannuation, payroll tax and WorkCover insurance premium are recognised separately from the provision for employee benefits.

Defined contribution superannuation plans

Contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are expensed when incurred.

Defined benefit superannuation plans

The amount charged to the comprehensive operating statement in respect of defined benefit plan superannuation represents the contributions made by the ACCS to the superannuation plans in respect of the current services of current ACCS employees. Superannuation contributions are made to the plans based on the relevant rules of each plan.

The ACCS does not recognise any defined benefit liability in respect of the superannuation schemes because it has no legal or constructive obligation to pay future benefits relating to its employees; its only obligation is to pay superannuation contributions as they fall due. The Department of Treasury and Finance administers and discloses the State's defined benefit liabilities in its financial report.

(e) Commitments

Commitments include those operating, capital and other outsourcing commitments arising from non-cancellable contractual sources and are disclosed at their nominal value, inclusive of GST.

(f) Rounding

Amounts have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars, unless otherwise stated.

(g) Presentation and functional currencies

The presentation currency of the ACCS is the Australian dollar, which is also the functional currency of the ACCS.

(h) Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the balance sheet, but are disclosed by way of a note and, if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value, inclusive of GST.

(i) Events after the reporting period

Income or expenses arise from past transactions or other past events. Where the transactions result from an agreement between the ACCS and other parties, the transactions are only recognised when the agreement is irrevocable at or before the end of the reporting period. Adjustments are made to amounts recognised in the financial statements for events which occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue, where those events provide information about conditions which existed at the reporting date. Note disclosure is made about events between the end of the reporting period and the date the financial statements are authorised for issue where the events relate to conditions which arose after the end of the reporting period that are considered to be of material interest.

3. Operating Costs

11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018

	\$000s
Staff and related costs	8,584
Occupancy and utilities	1,725
Asset rental expenses	153
Information technology	701
Marketing and communication	58
Professional services	825
Other expenses	526
	12,572
Operating costs include the following:	
Operating lease rentals	
Premises	1,468
Motor vehicles	58
Office equipment	26
	1,552
Employee benefit expense	
Salaries and other employee benefits	7,547
Post employment benefits	
- Defined contribution plans	456
- Defined benefit plans	53
	8,056

4. Remuneration of Auditors

11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018

	\$000s
Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Audit of the ACCS's financial statements	18
	18

5. Receivables

30 June 2018

	\$000s
Amount due from Victorian WorkCover Authority	2,616
Other receivables	56
	2,672

6. Employee Related Provisions

30 June 2018

Current	\$000s
Annual leave	
Unconditional and expected to be settled wholly within 12 months	430
Unconditional and expected to be settled wholly after 12 months	179
	609
Long service leave	
Unconditional and expected to be settled wholly within 12 months	111
Unconditional and expected to be settled wholly after 12 months	1,264
	1,375
On-costs	
Unconditional and expected to be settled wholly within 12 months	87
Unconditional and expected to be settled wholly after 12 months	237
	324
Total current provisions	2,308
Non-current	
Long service leave	178
On-costs	30
Total non-current provisions	208
Total provisions	2,516
Reconciliation of movement in on-cost provisions	
Balance at beginning of the period	-
Transfer from Victorian WorkCover Authority	349
Additional provision recognised	166
Reduction arising from payments	(103)
Unwinding of discount and effect of changes in discount rates	(51)
Balance at end of the period	361

7. Commitments

30 June 2018

Operating Leases	\$000s
Future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating lease arrangements:	
- Due within one year	2,125
- Due later than one year and less than five years	9,193
- Due later than five years	10,426
Total operating lease commitments (inclusive of GST)	21,744

8. Responsible Persons

In accordance with the Directions of the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the responsible persons who held office during the financial period were as follows. Responsible Minister

Responsible Minister

Robin Scott MP, Minister for Finance

Board Members

Meriel O'Sullivan (appointed as member on 11 October 2017 and as Chair on 4 May 2018)

Julia Ligeti (appointed as Chair on 11 October 2017 and ceased as Chair on 4 May 2018)

Iain Findlay (appointed on 11 October 2017)

Kelly Anne Humphreys (appointed on 11 October 2017)

Tali Bernard (appointed on 11 October 2017)

Adrian Robert Fitzpatrick (appointed on 11 October 2017)

Karen Lesley Cusack (appointed on 30 April 2018)

Michael Mitchell (appointed on 11 October 2017 and ceased on 16 November 2017)

Senior Conciliation Officers

Anita Kaminski

Alyssa Duffy (Acting, with effect from 14 June 2018)

The number of responsible persons of the ACCS whose remuneration falls within the following income bands was as follows.

	11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018
Income Bands	Number
Up to 9,999	7
10,000 - 19,999	2
160,000 - 169,999	1
	10

The compensation detailed above excludes the salaries and benefits the Portfolio Minister receives. The Minister's remuneration and allowances is set by the *Parliamentary Salaries and Superannuation Act 1968* and is reported within the Department of Parliamentary Services' Financial Report.

9. Related Parties

Key management personnel of the ACCS comprises the responsible minister, Board members and members of the executive leadership team. The remuneration of key management personnel, other than the responsible minister, is as follows.

	11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018
	\$000s
Short-term employee benefits	801
Post-employment benefits	78
Other long-term benefits	18
Total remuneration	897

There were no responsible person-related party transactions during the financial period. Related parties of the ACCS include key management personnel and their close family members and personal business interests (controlled entities, joint ventures and entities they have significant influence over).

10. Remuneration of Executives

The number of executives, other than the responsible minister and Board members, and their total remuneration during the reporting period are as follows. Total annualised employee equivalents provides a measure of full time equivalent executives over the reporting period.

	11 October 2017 - 30 June 2018
	\$000s
Short-term employee benefits	740
Post-employment benefits	72
Other long-term benefits	18
Total remuneration	831
	Number
Total number of executives	8.0
Total annualised employee equivalent¹	4.2

Note: 1. Annualised employee equivalent is based on the time fraction worked over the reporting period.

11. Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities

The ACCS had no contingent assets or contingent liabilities at the reporting date.

12. Financial Instruments

Exposure to credit and liquidity risks arises in the normal course of the ACCS's operations.

The ACCS's maximum exposure to credit risk at reporting date is the carrying amount of its receivables as reported on the balance sheet.

The ACCS's contractual payables are due within 1 month.

The ACCS is funded by the Victorian WorkCover Authority in accordance with section 536D of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*.

13. Events after the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial period which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the ACCS, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the ACCS in future financial years.

Statement by Chair, Acting Senior Conciliation Officer and Chief Financial Officer

The attached financial statements of the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service have been prepared in accordance with Standing Direction 5.2 of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian Accounting Standards including Interpretations, and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the comprehensive operating statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement and accompanying notes, presents fairly the financial transactions during the period ended 30 June 2018 and the financial position of the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service as at 30 June 2018.

At the time of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We authorise the attached financial statements for issue on 20 August 2018.



Meriel O'Sullivan
Chair



Alyssa Duffy
Acting Senior Conciliation Officer



Tony Mastroianni
Chief Financial Officer

Dated at Melbourne this 20th Day of August 2018

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Senior Conciliation Officer of the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service

Opinion	<p>I have audited the financial report of the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (the Authority) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• balance sheet as at 30 June 2018• comprehensive operating statement for the year then ended• statement of changes in equity for the year then ended• cash flow statement for the year then ended• notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies• Statement by Chair, Acting Senior Conciliation Officer and Chief Financial Officer. <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority as at 30 June 2018 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i> and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p>
Basis for opinion	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
Senior Conciliation Officer's responsibilities for the financial report	<p>The Senior Conciliation Officer is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the <i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>, and for such internal control as the Senior Conciliation Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Senior Conciliation Officer is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>

Auditor's Report

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control.
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Senior Conciliation Officer.
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Senior Conciliation Officer's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Authority to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Senior Conciliation Officer regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

MELBOURNE
22 August 2018



Timothy Maxfield
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Disclosure Index 2017–18

The Annual Report of ACCS is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislations and pronouncements. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of ACCS's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

Legislation	Requirement	Page Reference
Ministerial Directions and Financial Reporting Directions		
Report of Operations		
Charter and purpose		
FRD 22H	Manner of establishment and the relevant Ministers	Page 1, 6
FRD 22H	Purpose, functions, powers and duties	Page 6
FRD 8D	Departmental objectives, indicators and outputs	Page 7, 8
FRD 22H	Key initiatives and projects	Page 7, 8
FRD 22H	Nature and range of services provided	Page 6
Management and structure		
FRD 22H	Organisational structure	Page 14
Financial and other information		
FRD 8D	Performance against output performance measures	Page 10, 11, 12, 13
FRD 10A	Disclosure index	Page 30
FRD 15E	Executive officer disclosures	Page 16
FRD 22H	Employment and conduct principles	Page 16
FRD 22H	Occupational health and safety policy	Page 17
FRD 22H	Summary of the financial results for the year	Page 21, 22
FRD 22H	Major changes or factors affecting performance	Page 2, 3
FRD 22H	Subsequent events	Page 27
FRD 22H	Application and operation of <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>	Page 31
FRD 22H	Compliance with building and maintenance provisions of <i>Building Act 1993</i>	Page 31
FRD 22H	Statement on Competitive Neutrality Policy	Page 31
FRD 22H	Application and operation of the <i>Protected Disclosure Act 2012</i>	Page 32
FRD 22H	Details of consultancies over \$10 000	Page 19
FRD 22H	Details of consultancies under \$10 000	Page 19
FRD 22H	Disclosure of ICT expenditure	Page 18
FRD 25C	Victorian Industry Participation Policy disclosures	Page N/A
FRD 29C	Workforce data disclosures	Page 16
SD 5.2	Specific requirements under Standing Direction 5.2	Page 27
Compliance attestation and declaration		
SD 5.1.4	Attestation for compliance with Ministerial Standing Direction	Page 19
SD 5.2.3	Declaration in report of operations	Page 21
Financial statements		
Declaration		
SD 5.2.2	Declaration in financial statements	Page 27
Other requirements under Standing Directions 5.2		
SD 5.2.1(a)	Compliance with Australian accounting standards and other authoritative pronouncements	Page 22
SD 5.2.1(a)	Compliance with Ministerial Directions	Page 27
Other disclosures as required by FRDs in notes to the financial statements ^(a)		
FRD 21C	Disclosures of Responsible Persons, Executive Officers and other Personnel (Contractors with Significant Management Responsibilities) in the Financial Report	Page 26
FRD 110A	Cash Flow Statements	Page 22
FRD 112D	Defined Benefit Superannuation Obligations	Page 23
Note: (a) References to FRDs have been removed from the Disclosure Index if the specific FRDs do not contain requirements that are of the nature of disclosure.		
Legislation		
<i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>		Page 31
<i>Building Act 1993</i>		Page 31
<i>Protected Disclosure Act 2012</i>		Page 32
<i>Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003</i>		Page N/A
<i>Financial Management Act 1994</i>		Page 21

Compliance Statements

Freedom of Information Act 1982

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act allows the public a right of access to documents held by the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (ACCS). The purpose of the Act is to extend as far as possible the right of the community to access information held by government departments, local councils, Ministers and other bodies subject to the Act.

An applicant has a right to apply for access to documents held by the ACCS. This comprises documents both created by the ACCS or supplied to the ACCS by an external organisation or individual, and may also include maps, films, microfiche, photographs, computer printouts, computer discs, tape recordings and videotapes.

The Act allows the ACCS to refuse access, either fully or partially, to certain documents or information. Examples of documents that may not be accessed include: cabinet documents; some internal working documents; law enforcement documents; documents covered by legal professional privilege, such as legal advice; personal information about other people; and information provided to the ACCS in confidence.

From 1 September 2017, the Act has been amended to reduce the FOI processing time for requests received from 45 to 30 days. In some cases, this time may be extended.

If an applicant is not satisfied by a decision made by the ACCS, under section 49A of the Act, they have the right to seek a review by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) within 28 days of receiving a decision letter.

Making a request

Access to documents can be requested by making a written request to the ACCS.

When making an FOI request, applicants should ensure requests are in writing, and clearly identify the types of material/documents being sought, including a conciliation case file number if relevant. An application fee of \$28.90 applies and must be provided with the request. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large, and the search for material is time consuming.

Requests for documents in the possession of the ACCS should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Team
Accident Compensation and Conciliation Service
Level 1, 215 Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Email: info@conciliation.vic.gov.au

FOI statistics/timeliness

During 2017-18, the ACCS received three valid FOI applications from the general public.

The ACCS made three FOI decisions during the 12 months ended 30 June 2018.

One decision was made within the statutory 30-day time period, one decision was made within an extended statutory 30-45 day time period, and one decision was not yet finalised at 30 June 2018.

The average time taken to finalise requests in 2017-18 was 32 days.

During 2017-18, no requests were subject to a complaint/ internal review by OVIC and no requests progressed to the Victorian Civil and Administration Tribunal (VCAT).

Further information

Further information regarding the operation and scope of FOI can be obtained from the Act, regulations made under the Act, and foi.vic.gov.au.

Compliance with the Building Act 1993

The ACCS does not own or control any government buildings, and consequently is exempt from notifying its compliance with the building and maintenance provisions of the Building Act 1993 [for publicly owned buildings controlled by the Department].

Compliance with the Competitive Neutrality Policy

The ACCS does not compete with the private sector. Consideration of this policy is therefore not applicable.

Compliance with the Protected Disclosure Act 2012

The Protected Disclosure Act 2012 encourages and assists people in making disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies. The Act provides protection to people who make disclosures in accordance with the Act and establishes a system for the matters disclosed to be investigated and rectifying action to be taken.

The ACCS does not tolerate improper conduct by employees, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct. It is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices and supports the making of disclosures that reveal corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety or the environment.

The ACCS will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making the disclosure. It will also afford natural justice to the person who is the subject of the disclosure to the extent it is legally possible.

Reporting procedures

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by:

- The ACCS or any of its employees may be made in writing to the Senior Conciliation Officer/Chief Executive Officer, using the postal address on the back page of this annual report or by sending an email to complaints@conciliation.vic.gov.au, which the Senior Conciliation Officer/Chief Executive Officer will access.
- The Senior Conciliation Officer/Chief Executive Officer may be made in writing to the Board Secretary and Corporate Counsel, using the postal address on the back page of this annual report or by sending an email to BoardACCS@conciliation.vic.gov.au, which the Board Secretary and Corporate Counsel will access.

Alternatively, disclosures may also be made directly to the Independent Broad based Anti-corruption Commission:

Level 1, North Tower, 459 Collins Street

Melbourne, VIC 3000

Phone: 1300 735 135

Internet: www.ibac.vic.gov.au

Email: [see the website above for the secure email disclosure process, which also provides for anonymous disclosures.]

Further information

Disclosures under the Protected Disclosure Act 2012:

	2017-18 number	2016-17 number
The number of disclosures made by an individual to the ACCS and notified to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission	0	N/A
Assessable disclosures		

Compliance with the Disability Act 2006

The Disability Act 2006 reaffirms and strengthens the rights of people with a disability and recognises that this requires support across the government sector and within the community.

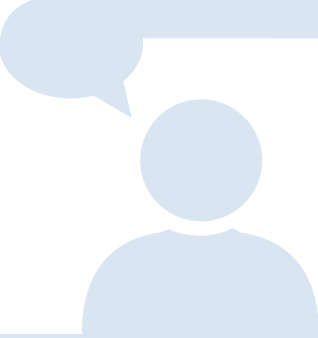
The Disability Act requires that public sector bodies (including all government departments) prepare a disability action plan and report on its implementation in their annual report.

A disability action plan is a strategic plan which helps an organisation to remove barriers that prevent people with a disability from using the organisation's goods, services and facilities, and from gaining and keeping employment. Disability action planning also strives to promote inclusion and participation in the community, and achieve changes in attitudes and practices that may result in discrimination.

The *state disability plan for 2017-2020* is the Victorian Government's framework for enabling people with a disability to participate in and contribute to the social, economic and civic life of their community. Over time the government will consider ways to align disability action plans to the state plan.

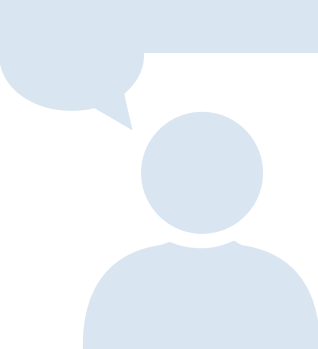
The current Human Resources Plan includes the development of a diversity and inclusion strategy that will ensure that the ACCS complies with the Act.

Compliments




*I would like to compliment Conciliation services and in particular the **highly professional** and **courteous** way my case was handled since lodging my application. Experiencing the high level of quality service **exceeded my expectations** within a challenging system. The collaboration between Conciliation and WorkCover Assist provided great relief. Your thorough and clear explanation of the process was outstanding, providing timely guidance and support. Thank you for your assistance.*

Worker - via email.




*I would just like to say a big Thank You to the Conciliation Officer. I found her to be **very understanding** of my situation, the Conciliation Officer is a lovely caring lady. I appreciate the way she conducted the conference. The Conciliation Officer is also **very knowledgeable**, I couldn't have asked for a better conciliator. I felt like I wanted to give her a hug but realised that is not very professional.*

Worker - email




*Thank you for the response and the professional and considered like manner which this issue was resolved. I believe that ACCS is a **fair and professional organisation** through my experience that I have from the third visit there and I hope it continues to provide the service it has to mediate between injured workers that are already under so much stress and pressure not been able to pursue their goals in life due to crippling injuries. I will continue to work within my capacity and at the same time try to personally with the help of my doctors improve my condition if I can.*

Worker - email



*I wanted to just say a big Thank You to you for your **dedication, support and care** with my case. Whilst I understand there are processes that must be followed, some compassion is still key. I have to say, you have by far shown me that I am not just another number but that I am a real person*

Worker - Email



*Worker would like to thank you for all your **hard work and effort** you did for her. She is very thankful.*

Worker - Phone Message



For information regarding this report, please contact the

Accident Compensation Conciliation Service

Level 1 215 Spring St

Melbourne Vic 3000

GPO Box 251

Melbourne, VIC 3001

telephone: (03) 9940 1111

fax: (03) 9940 1000

freecall: 1800 635 960

email: info@conciliation.vic.gov.au

website: www.conciliation.vic.gov.au