



Australian Government
Comcare

Comcare information session: Understanding your 2026-27 premium

Thursday 11 June 2026
1.00pm – 2.15pm AEST





Australian Government

Comcare

Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of artist
Healing Hands – Cover artwork by Dion Devow of DD Designs



Housekeeping



The session is being recorded

Available on our website in the coming week - search for 'Comcare webinars'



Chat function available

Use the chat for discussion and questions



Manage chat notifications

Click '*More*', then '*settings*', select '*Don't show chat bubbles*' and '*mute notifications*'



Please complete survey at the end of the Forum

Access using a QR code or link



Australian Government

Comcare

Session overview



- **Liability and the premium pool**
Ash Evans, Taylor Fry
- **Premium process and key drivers of premiums**
Hansen Chen, Comcare
- **Key observations, trends and initiatives in claims**
Lachlan Vivian-Taylor, Comcare
- **Key actions agencies can take to manage premiums**
Lynn Gunning, Comcare
- **Q&A**





Australian Government

Comcare

Liability and the premium pool

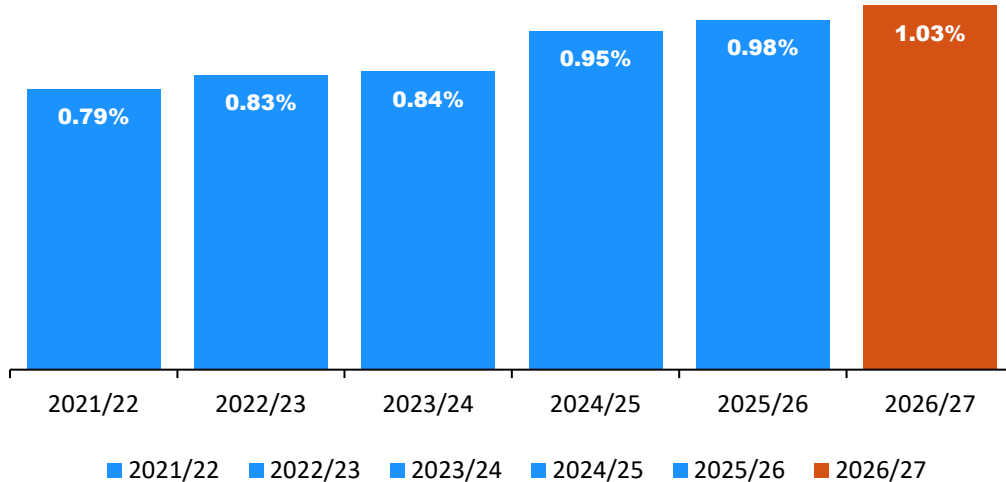
Ash Evans
Principal, Taylor Fry



Premiums

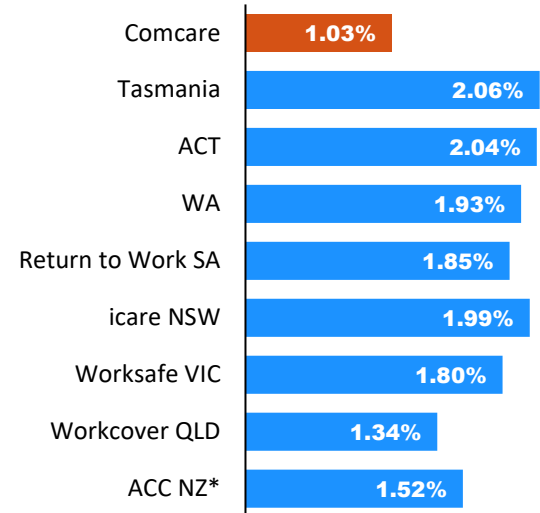
▾ We advise a central estimate premium rate of **1.03%** of wages for 2026/27

Comcare premium rates



Premium rates shown exclude GST

Other scheme rates

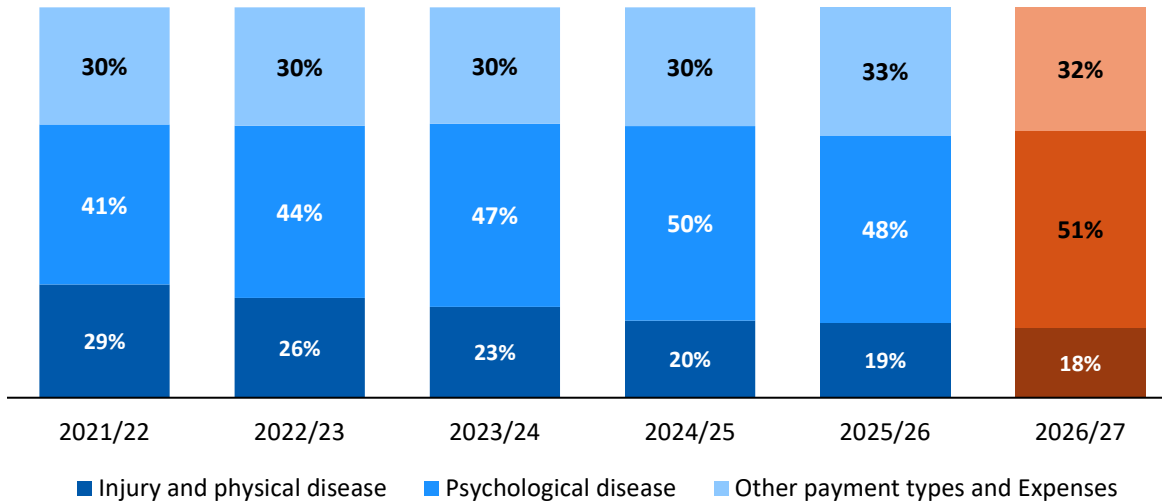


*Effective from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 Rates for WA, icare NSW and Comcare relate to the 2026/27 year, all other rates shown relate to the 2025/26 year

Premiums

Psychological disease claims have comprised an increasing proportion of premiums over time

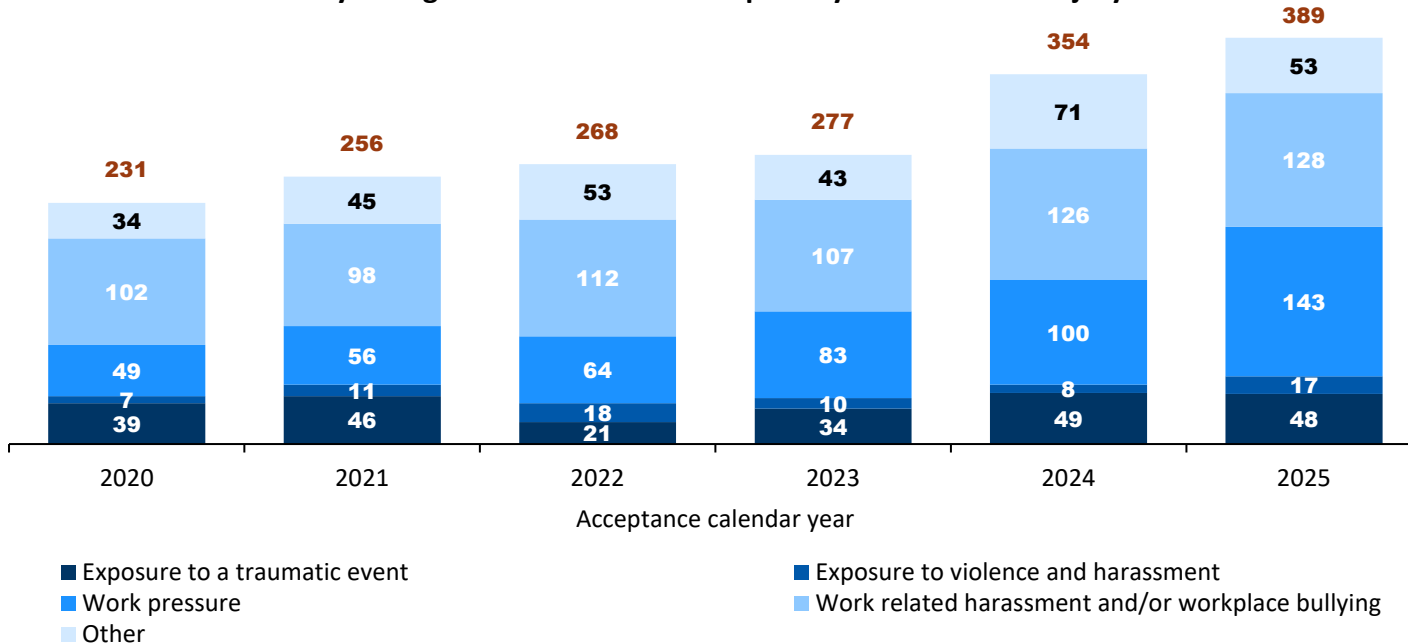
Comcare premium rate breakdown



Driver of premium rates

▾ Increasing incidence of psychological disease claims, driven by an increase in work pressure claims

Psychological disease claims accepted by mechanism of injury



Sensitivity of premiums to psych claims

Premiums responds to the **past and future costs of every accepted claims**

→ The more costly the type of claim, the more benefit by reducing incidence or getting the employee back to work quickly

The average accepted psychological disease claim is valued at **~\$370K** at acceptance, plus claims management cost

Ultimately **premiums adapt to this:**

- ▶ Preventing **1** average psychological disease claim each year reduces your premium by more than **\$400K**
- ▶ Returning **1** average psychological disease claim to work **quickly** each year also reduces your premium by more than **\$400K**

After two years off work, the average accepted psychological disease claim is valued at **>\$700K** because their prospects of returning to work soon have diminished

Headwinds and volatility

↳ Economic conditions

Economic conditions are outside of Comcare's control. These have a large effect on Comcare's liability because many costs are forecast to occur years in the future

- Comcare's premium and liability is especially vulnerable to the changes in the economic environment because of the long-term nature of the liability
- Both inflation and interest rates (and thus investment returns) have increased over the last year. Depending on the relative size of changes in inflation rates compared to interest rates, the premium could increase or reduce.

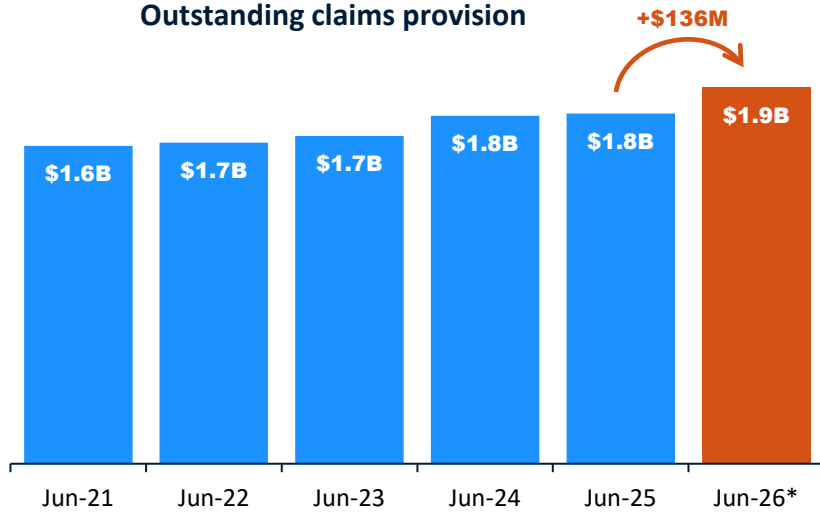
*A 1% increase in investment returns
reduces premiums by 6%*

Outstanding claims liability and funding

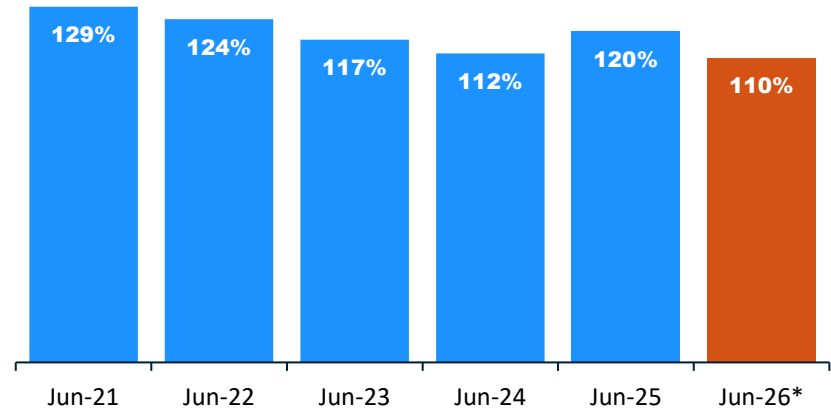
▾ Our preliminary estimate of Comcare's Premium Scheme outstanding claims provision as at 30 June 2026 is **\$1.9B**.

▾ Our preliminary estimate of Comcare's funding ratio as at 30 June 2026 is **110%**.

Outstanding claims provision



Funding ratio



**Preliminary 30 June 2026 valuation*

**Preliminary 30 June 2026 valuation*



Australian Government
Comcare

The premium process and key drivers

Hansen Chen

Director, Premiums and Cost Recovery
Comcare





Australian Government

Comcare

Context



Key drivers of premiums:

- **Time off work** ('incapacity' payments)
- **Prevention**
- **Return to work**



2026-27 indicative scheme premiums

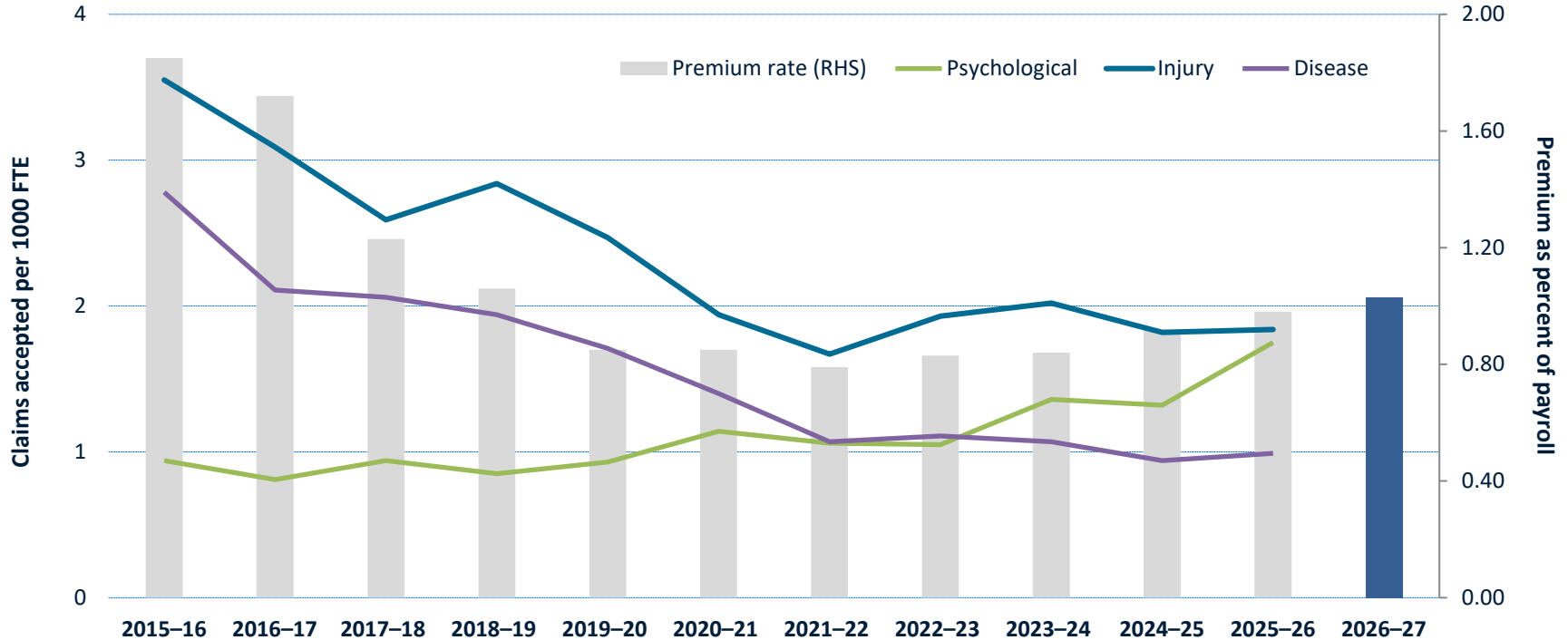


The 2026–27 average premiums have increased from **0.98% of payroll to 1.03% of payroll**

- The increase is mainly attributable to growth in psychological disease claim frequency
- Offset slightly by decreases to:
 - projected claim administration expenses
 - change in economic conditions

Safe Work Australia: Comcare's premium remains the lowest across Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions.

Average premiums over the past decade

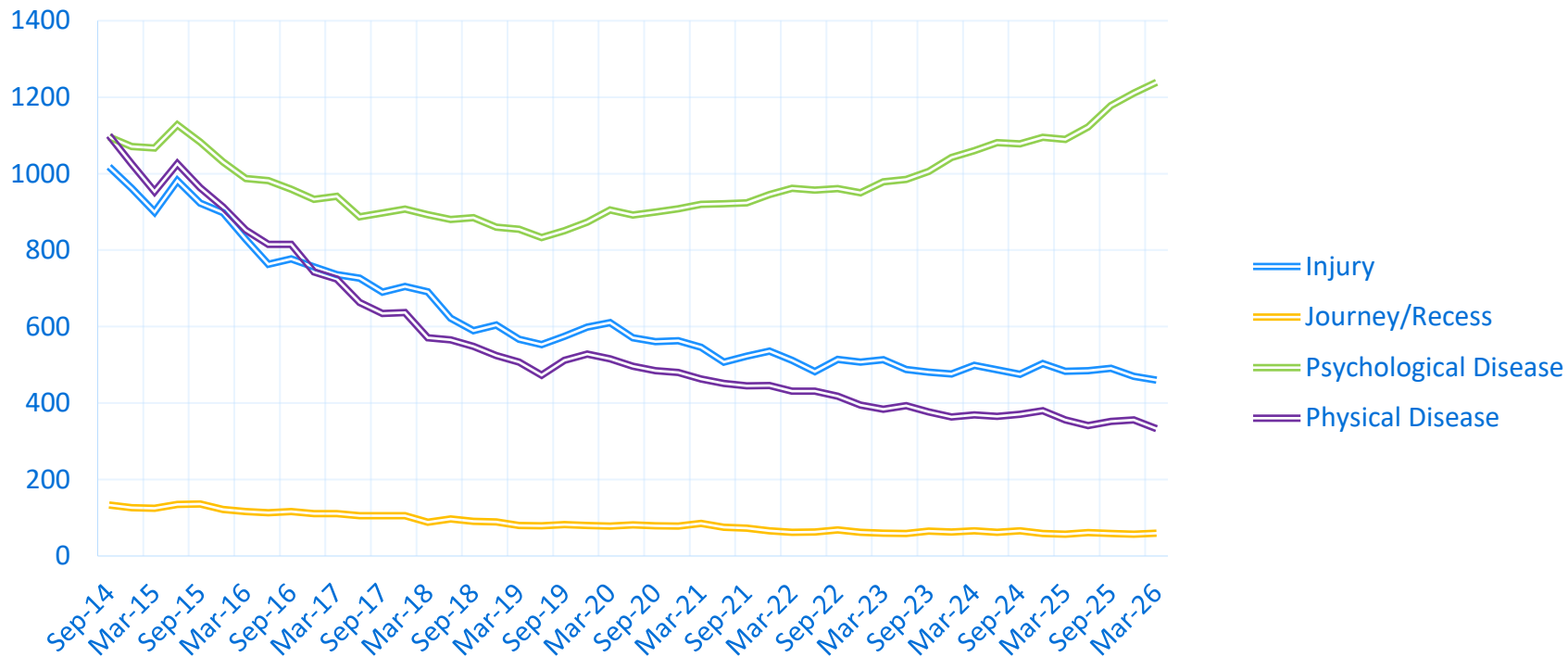




Australian Government

Comcare

Count of claims receiving incapacity benefits in quarter



What does your 2026–27 premium cover?



- **The premium is set to fully fund the forecast lifetime cost of claims sustained in 2026–27**
- **Costs include payments for:**
 - Time off work
 - Medical and rehabilitation expenses
 - Lump sums for death or permanent impairment
 - Legal services
 - Claims administration
- **Lifetime cost of 2026–27 injuries and diseases will emerge over decades**



Key elements of premium calculation



- Premium calculation uses accepted claims with date of injury in the last four financial years: 2021–22 to 2024–25 (**‘premium window’**)
- Estimates of future payments are calculated using a **statistical case estimate (SCE) system**



What makes up the premium calculation?



Premium calculated as the sum of two components:

- **Prescribed amount** = is your entity's share of the premium pool for the financial year
 - **Prescribed rate** = prior year's prescribed rate x pool trend x performance adjustment
- **Bonus/penalty** = an adjustment to your entity's contribution to the prior year's premium pool, based on an additional year of claims data

Pool trend factor



Reflects the changes in the scheme's claim performance since the previous year's premium pool (as percentage of payroll)

- The same **factor applies** to all insured entities
- **Pool trend for 2026–27** is 107.3%*

**Trend excludes amounts applied to specific agencies affected by presumptive PTSD legislation*

Performance adjustment



- *Reflects changes to **incurred cost rate** relative to the overall scheme since last year*
- **Incurred cost rate** (estimated lifetime cost of claims / payroll) is used to measure claims performance:
 - reported and accepted claims only
 - “**premium window**” spans the last four full financial years
 - lifetime costs uses SCE system to estimate likely future costs for claims

Performance adjustment



Common drivers of entity performance adjustments are:

- The 'premium window' moves forward
- Changes in existing claims
- Processing backlogs
- Claims accepted late



Bonus / penalty



- Each entity's share of the prior year's final premium pool is adjusted by changes in your entity's incurred cost rate
- The difference between revised and initial prior year's prescribed rate multiplied by the prior year's estimated payroll



Pool 'discount' or 'loading'



Funding ratio

~110%

2026-27 premiums

- No premium discount or loading applied
- Scheme is now at the low-end of the target funding range

Future outlook

- Funding position will continue to be monitored closely
- Future loadings may apply if the funding position deteriorates
- Loadings support the long-term financial sustainability of the scheme

How can you affect your entity's premium?



*The best way for entities to reduce claim costs is to **prevent injury** and **manage the early and sustainable return to health and work** of injured employees.*





Australian Government
Comcare

Key observations, trends and initiatives in claims

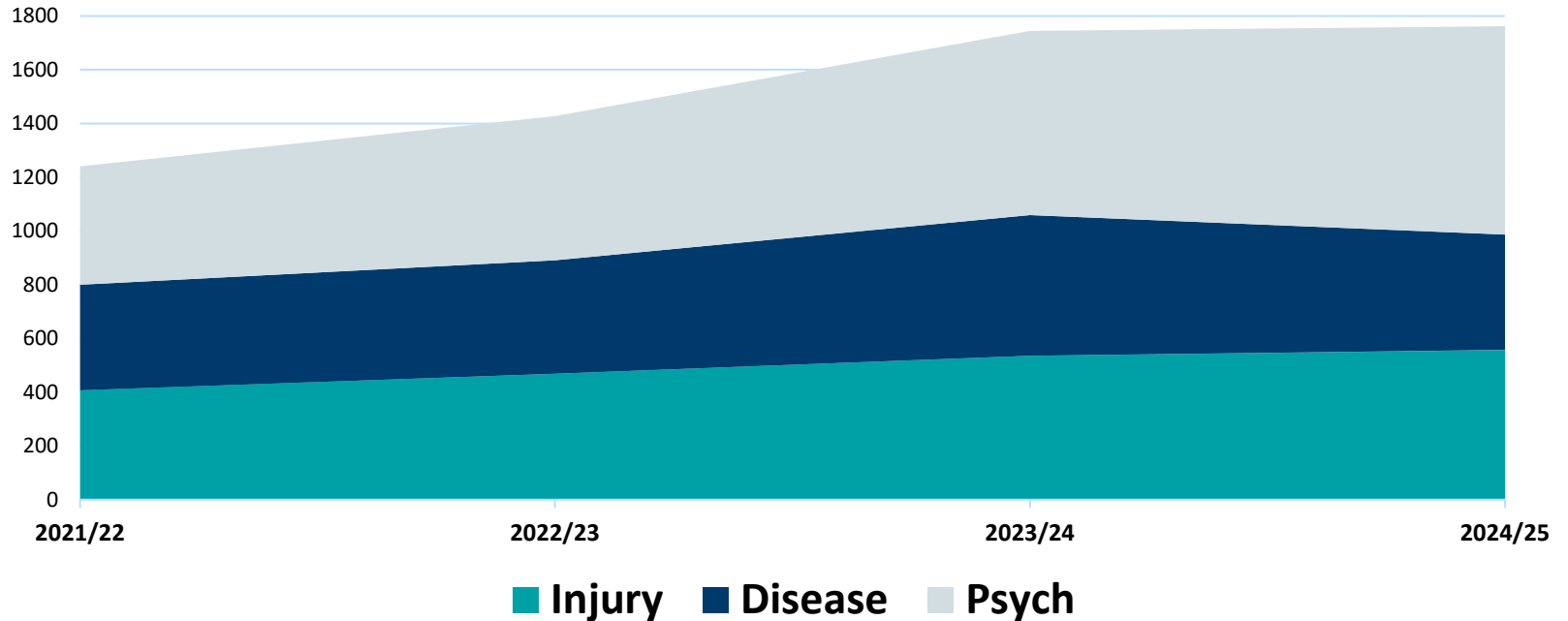
Lachlan Vivian-Taylor
General Manager
Claims Management Group, Comcare



Trend in claims received



Premium scheme – claims received



Return to work



RTW RATE	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 YTD
PREMIUM SCHEME	77%	77%	73%
INJURY	92%	92%	91%
DISEASE	88%	92%	88%
PSYCH	57%	57%	54%



Australian Government

Comcare

Return to work



Return to work for psych claims is an ongoing challenge



Employer role is critical



Importance of acting early



Communication is key



Return to work support team is available to assist



Comcare's focus



- Provision of **suitable duties** where capacity exists
- **Early intervention** is key
- **Injury management** support
- Focus on **client experience**: telephony and coaching
- **Engagement and education** of key stakeholders





Australian Government
Comcare

Key actions agencies can take to manage premium costs

Lynn Gunning

*Director Education and Engagement Group
Comcare*



Three key levers



Three most powerful levers to influence claims outcomes:

- ***Prevention*** – reduces the likelihood of injuries
- ***Early intervention*** – reduces human and organisational impact of incidents or injuries
- ***Effective injury management*** – supports earlier and more sustainable recovery



Prevention – managers and supervisors



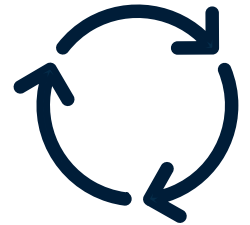
Manager knowledge and capability – the interface between worker and organisation

A manager's role:

- Creates safe and productive workplaces
- Designs good work
- Identifies and responds to issues early
- Supports workers through recovery

Capabilities to invest in:

- Psychosocial risk management
- Psychological safety
- Good work design
- Safety leadership



Prevention – Good Work Design



30 Jul 2026

Knowledge session: *Words that work – using SMART language for better work design conversations*

14 Sep 2026

In-person workshop: *Fix the work, not the worker – using the SMART Work Design model in everyday leadership*

Recording

Knowledge session: *SMART work design essentials for people leaders*

Training

APS Academy: *Leadership Edge* and *Management Edge* programs



Early intervention



Early intervention and proactive conversation can put supports in place before issues compound



Temporary adjustments and flexibility



Support from HR, WHS and RTW teams



Do not leave concerns unspoken



Coaching, mentoring and training

Action changes outcomes

Early intervention – support for workers



Visit comcare.gov.au/beforeblue
Email beforeblue@comcare.gov.au

- Evidence-based early intervention mental health program delivered by Beyond Blue
- Provides holistic support with day-to-day work or life pressures before things get worse

Participant insights:

- **91%** mental health improved
- **96%** more able to cope with mental health challenges
- **88%** productivity improved

Effective injury management and rehabilitation



Supporting recovery outcomes:

- **Psychological safety** is critical
- Ensure case managers, supervisors and other relevant personnel are **trained, resourced and supported** to respond well
- **Quarterly forums** assist with building on existing knowledge and sharing contemporary information

Quarterly forums

Workplace Rehabilitation Providers Forum

23 Jun 2026

Rehabilitation Case Managers Forum

28 Jul 2026

Claims Managers Forum

03 Sep 2026



Australian Government

Comcare

Q&A





Australian Government

Comcare



Contact us:

EmployerAccountManagement@comcare.gov.au

Premiums@comcare.gov.au

Visit: [comcare.gov.au](https://www.comcare.gov.au) for more

Follow us:



2026

Comcare
National Conference



14-16 September 2026
Canberra

Early bird tickets now on sale!

Register by 31 July to save \$175 on a two-day ticket including the conference dinner

- two-days of conference sessions
- access to the Exhibition Hall
- a ticket to the Gala Dinner
- a ticket to the Welcome Reception

Conference highlights

- Workshops and exhibition sessions
- Welcome Reception with partners and delegates
- Gala Dinner at the iconic National Museum of Australia

Keynote speakers

- Jelena Dokic
- Kath Koschel
- Mitch Brown
- Dr Ben Hamer
- Tony Armstrong