

EDITORIAL

This third edition of the International Journal of Social Security and Workers Compensation presents international empirical research and expert opinion on contemporary issues related to policy, legislation, and services within the social security and workers' compensation systems. The first three papers in this edition of the Journal discuss a variety of factors in workers' compensation systems in Australia and Canada that result in inconsistencies in compensation claims, coverage or payment for injured workers. The challenges related to the provision and adjudication of social security payments, from a human rights and equity perspective, for irregular workers and migrants in Southern Africa are discussed in the last two papers.

In their contribution, Alex Collie, Ying Pan, Helena Britt and Joan Henderson investigate the nature of occupational health conditions managed by general practitioners that are claimed via workers' compensation schemes compared to those that are unclaimed. They identify that physical health problems such as musculoskeletal conditions, and in particular back complaints, are most often associated with a workers' compensation claim; whereas psychological impairments such as stress and depression are less often managed by general practitioners as part of a workers' compensation claim. Personal, system and regional factors that may explain why some workers do not lodge a workers' compensation claim for their work-related injuries are discussed.

Inconsistencies in workers' compensation coverage for Australian workers who sustain an injury during the commute between home and the workplace are the focus of the paper by Genevieve Grant and Diana Bowman. The 'gaps' they describe include incomplete data of the magnitude of occupational commuting injuries; differences in workers' compensation provisions and exclusions across Australian jurisdictions; and a disparity in employer liability for commuting injuries against the public health evidence around the effects of work-related fatigue. Implications for workers are discussed along with a call for reform of the workers' compensation coverage for commuting injuries.

Aaron Thompson and his colleagues Alice Turcot, Sami Youakim and Ron House explore the gaps in existing legislation for hand-arm vibrations syndrome across the Canadian jurisdictions that may result in under-reporting and insufficient compensation for this occupational injury. They describe inconsistencies between the compensation boards of the various provinces and territories in the methods for assessment for entitlement and assigning an impairment rating for this condition, resulting in disproportional rates of compensation across jurisdictions.

Professor Marius Olivier's contribution highlights the need for reform of the fragmented social security adjudication systems in countries that comprise the Southern African Development Community. He discusses the current context and describes the nature of reforms required based on relevant international standards and principles grounded in a human rights perspective. He concludes his paper with recommendations for the introduction of a standardised adjudication system and some strategies for overcoming political, legal and financial challenges to its achievement.

In the second part of his two-part contribution, Professor Ockert Dupper further explores the issue of social security entitlements for irregular migrants in South Africa. Political and economic factors that result in the illegal border crossings of men, women and children from surrounding countries into South Africa are described. The exclusion of illegal migrants from access to social security, social insurance, workers' compensation coverage, emergency health care, and education for children of irregular migrants is discussed from a point of law and a social justice perspective. Dupper posits that there is a movement towards the provision of basic human rights entitlements, and not just the security issues associated with the management of irregular migrants in South Africa.

This peer-reviewed electronic journal is designed to be of service both to the academic community and to practitioners in the fields of social security and workers' compensation. It seeks to publish research articles, notes and comments. It therefore welcomes scientific contributions of an analytical, theoretical or applied nature from the academic community and practitioners in any relevant discipline. The journal, in particular, welcomes contributions on innovative approaches in the areas of social security and workers compensation. Contributions dealing with issues of policy and reform are also encouraged. Double-blind peer reviewing is undertaken by members of a distinguished editorial board and other recognised subject experts. The journal is supported by an advisory board consisting of eminent scholars and specialists from around the world. Further information on the Journal, including submission guidelines for authors, is available on the Journal's website, accessible at <http://www.business.curtin.edu.au/business/research/journals/international-journal-of-social-security-and-workers-compensation>.

The Journal is published online once per year. Contributions to the International Journal of Social Security can be sent to any of the three editors in chief: olivier@iislp.net.au; rob.guthrie@gsb.curtin.edu.au or M.Ciccarelli@curtin.edu.au

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