

COVID-19 MATTERS

SUMMARY REPORT | SEPTEMBER 2021

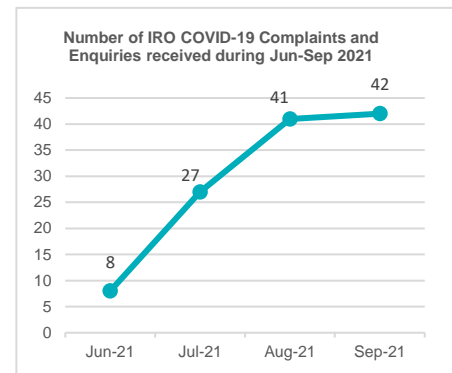


Independent
Review Office

COVID-19 Complaints and Enquiries received

Matter Type	August 2021	September 2021	1 March 2020 – 30 September 2021
Complaints	18	16	189
Enquiries	23	26	219
Total	41	42	408

Trend in COVID-19 Complaints and Enquiries



COVID-19 ILARS Funding Applications received

	September 2021	1 March 2020 - 30 September 2021
Applications for funding - ILARS	6	70

COVID-19 issues, Complaints and Enquiries

COVID-19 Issues Complaints and Enquiries	September 2021	1 March 2020 - 30 September 2021	% COVID-19 matters to date
Issues attending medical treatment/appointment	15	163	40%
Seeking general claims information	16	128	32%
Concerns about suitable duties	4	83	20%
Claiming compensation while in isolation	7	34	8%

Case Studies

Application for funding – claim for lump sum death benefit

An Approved Lawyer applied for a grant of funding on behalf of the dependent of a worker who died from a heart condition following a COVID-19 vaccination. The dependent has reported that the worker's job, which required some travelling, was the main factor in the deceased worker getting the vaccination. The IRO granted funding for the Approved Lawyer to conduct enquiries and provide legal advice.

Unavailability of suitable duties

An injured worker complained that their case manager had indicated that their weekly payments would cease at the end of September and they should apply to Centrelink. The worker had been certified fit for 18 hours work a week and had been provided with suitable duties until the employer's business had closed as a result of COVID-19.

The insurer confirmed to the IRO that it accepted the injured worker had partial incapacity for work as stated on the certificate of capacity. However, the insurer still issued a section 78 notice disputing liability pursuant to section 33 of the 1987 Act because the reason the worker could not do suitable duties (COVID-19 Order) was not related to their injury. The IRO advised the worker that they could seek legal advice from an IRO Approved Lawyer.