

**30<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

### **Injuries Board report shows average PL award €22,865**

The *Health & Safety Review* website ([www.healthandsafetyreview.ie](http://www.healthandsafetyreview.ie)) has reported that during the two year period from January 2007 to December 2008 the Injuries Board (formerly the PIAB) made 2,859 awards in public liability claims cases. The Board awarded compensation totalling €65,400,000. The average award was €22,885. This compares with an average award of €20,792 to PL claimants in 2007.

In a report issued yesterday - *A Review of Public Liability Awards 2007 & 2008* - the Injuries Board gave details of:

- awards
- location of accidents
- causes of accidents
- type of injury suffered.

The average award was €22,865. Most awards were for less than €38,000, the upper limit of awards the Circuit Court can make. While only 0.5% of awards were for over €100,000, that in fact means that 14 awards of €100,000 or more were made by the Board. Over 350 awards (12.5%) of between €38,000 and €100,000 were made. Thirty-two percent of awards (914) of between €20,000 and €38,000 were made. Fifty-five percent (1,572) of all awards were for less than €20,000.

Over a quarter of all awards (27%) were made against local authorities in relation to accidents in public places under the aegis of local authorities. Nearly a quarter of all awards (24%) were made in respect of accidents in retail and shopping outlets. The other locations of accidents were:

hotels, pubs, clubs, restaurants (19%)

leisure facilities (13%)

transport/utilities (6%)

education and health establishments (4%).

The remaining 6% of accidents occurred in a variety of locations, including construction sites and car parks.

A remarkable 67% of the accidents were caused by slips, trips and falls. The other causes of accidents were flying/falling objects (11%), injury caused by machinery (5%), cuts (3%), burns/scalds, assaults and animals (each 2%), and one percent each for poisoning and reaction. The remaining 6% were attributed to other causes.

The review shows that many accident victims sustain at least two types of injury. The most common injuries suffered are sprains (40%), bruising (32%), fractures (29%), lacerations/cuts (25%) and injuries classified as superficial (10%). Four percent of awards were for psychological disorders, with crush, intracranial, dislocation and burns each accounting for 2% of injuries. Seven percent of injuries are classified in the other category. Given that many of those injured suffer from one or more of the types of injuries listed, the total adds up to 155%.

The review reports that 70% of awards were made to women and while people of all ages suffer accidents, half of all awards went to people aged over 45.