

# Accident payouts outside courts up 600pc

MORE than €115million was awarded last year to accident victims outside of the courts system, new figures reveal.

This marks a 600 per cent increase on 2005, according to the Personal Injuries Assessment Board, which said it processed claims three times faster and 70 per cent cheaper than the courts last year.

The average payout per person was €19,610, while the highest was €408,415 according to the Board's annual report.

Workplace accidents – the most common of which were falls – accounted for the most

claims, with the average award totalling €23,141.

The Injuries Board's chief executive, Patricia Byron, said: 'Since our establishment in 2004, we have delivered a reduction of €45million in processing costs.

'We plan to enhance our service to include an online system allowing customers to complete and track their applications electronically.'

The Board was set up as part of the Government Insurance Reform Programme to tackle the high costs associated with paying compensation to victims of accidents.

Most injuries cases processed by the Board were done three times faster than through the courts, while €26million in costs was saved.

Enterprise Minister Micheál Martin praised the Injuries Board for its work.

'Behind these statistics there are real people who have suffered injuries.

'The PIAB enables these people to receive the same level of compensation they would receive in the courts, in a fraction of the time.'