

Injuries board pays €113m in first half of year

by Dan Collins

A TOTAL of €113 million was paid out in the first six months of this year by the injuries board (formerly known as the Personal Injuries Assessment Board, or PIAB).

The board will shortly reach the €500m mark in awards made since 2004.

The payments from January to June ranged from a low of €1,000 to a high of €519,784 in respect of 4,652 personal injury claimants. Personal injury claims are now processed through the injuries board rather than through the courts and 87% of all cases assessed by InjuriesBoard.ie secure awards of less than €38,000, a figure that is in line with court awards.

"The injuries board's objective has always been to reduce the number of cases which went to litigation to around a third of the pre-board period. This objective is being met. In addition to the awards which the board makes, a similar number of claims are settled, facilitated by the board, but without recourse to our full assessment process," said

board chief executive Patricia Byron.

She said it has continued to fulfil its mission to deliver personal injuries claims fairly, promptly and transparently. "In recent months we made our 20,000th award and, shortly, we expect to have awarded half-a-billion euro since first opening our doors in 2004".

By mid-year, the board

was well on track to deliver total cost savings for the year of more than €100 million, €40m in direct savings plus €60m by facilitating early settlements.

In June this year, the board launched a range of web-based services including online applications and multilingual services.

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process," said Ms Byron.

The increase in average award values made by the board in the first half of 2008 — from €22,057 in 2007 to €24,320 — was a direct result of a greater proportion of higher value claims being assessed.

In terms of the values of awards made in the first six months of 2008, 7% were for amounts under €10,000, 52% were between €10,000 and €20,000, 21% were between €20,000 and €30,000, 7% between €30,000 and €38,000, and 12% between €38,000 and €100,000, with just 1% surpassing €100,000.

The number of awards has risen from 951 in 2005 to 8,208 in 2007, to 4,652 for the January to June period of this year.