

70% OF CLAIMS GO TO WOMEN

By ED CARTY TWICE as many women as men have successfully sued for injuries suffered in a public place, new figures revealed yesterday.

Out of 2,860 awards against businesses, state agencies and local authorities more than 70% were made to women. The Injuries Board revealed the vast majority of accidents were slips, trips and falls while just over a 10th were caused by falling or flying objects.

Some €65.4million was paid out during 2006 and 2007 with the average award €22,865.

The board's chief Patricia Byron warned businesses of cutting corners to save money in the recession.

She said: "During these tough economic times, some companies and organisations who admit the public to their facilities may be tempted to cut their investment in health and safety. That kind of approach can backfire, particularly, if you operate in a very competitive and accident-prone sphere such as retail."

The Injuries Board two-year review detailed the areas most claims were made. More than half of accidents were in privately owned establishments with a quarter in shops and a fifth in pubs and restaurants.

Half of all awards went to persons over 45, even though they account for just one third of the population.

Ms Byron added: "Accident prevention is always important and can save money in the long run."