

# Injuries Board claims ease for first time in five years

By Charlie Weston Personal Finance Editor

THE volume of compensation cases coming before the state body that processes claims has levelled off, it emerged yesterday.

Chief executive of the Injuries Board Patricia Byron said the volumes of cases it is dealing with has eased off for the first time in five years.

This should take pressure off insurance companies, which have pushed up motor insurance premiums by 15pc in the past year.

Insurers have used a claimed 24pc rise in the volume of motor claims as a justification for hiking premiums.

Ms Byron said €105m was paid out in personal injuries by the board in the first six months of this year. This compares with €217m for all of 2008.

The board said that there was an increase of just 6pc in motor injury claims. Most of the board's claims relate to motor accidents.

Some 4,402 people received awards, compared with 8,845 for 2008.

## Negligence

All personal injury claims in Ireland (excluding medical negligence) must be processed through InjuriesBoard.ie.

Ms Byron said the volume of cases had been building up since the board was set up in 2004, but was now showing signs of levelling off.

"The number of awards we will make this year will be in the line with our 2008 output," she said.

The lowest and highest awards in the period were €1,000 and €493,902 respectively.

"In the first nine months of 2009, we have seen a modest increase of less than 4pc in the volume of new claims. It is probably a reflection of the current economic climate that workplace accident claims in this period are down 3pc on the same period last year.

"Motor and public liability claims are up by 6pc and 3pc respectively," Ms Byron added.

The Injuries Board is on track to deliver total cost savings for the year of over €100m.