

€200m bill for slips and sprains

But no Dempsey fracture claims yet

By Alan Sherry

ALMOST a fifth of the €200million paid out in compensation awards last year were for trips and falls on public property, according to the latest figures

The preliminary report shows that the Injuries Board processed 8,645 successful claims in 2009.

The awards included an €18,000 payout to an office worker who slipped and sprained her ankle on a floor that hadn't been properly cleaned, and €28,000 to a man who twisted his ankle and knee after slipping in a leisure centre Jacuzzi.

A farm labourer who was asked to pick up heavy bags of calf feed and damaged his back received just under €30,000.

However, Injuries Board chief executive Patricia Byron said that there had been no rise in claims for so-called 'Dempsey fractures' - those injured during the recent big freeze while the

COMPENSATION BY NUMBERS

	2009	2008	2007
No. of new Claims	25,919	24,722	23,345
No. of Awards	8,645	8,845	8,208
Total value of awards	€200m	€217m	€181m
Average award	€23,163	€24,552	€22,057
Average time to process claim	6.5 months	7 months	7 months
Awards under €38,000	89pc	88pc	91pc

Transport Minister was on holiday in Malta. She said: 'Despite the high number of injuries from trips and falls in recent weeks, the expectation is that few of these will result in claims.'

The highest award last year was €493,902, while 88 per cent of awards were for less than €38,000.

And the average award was €23,163, 6 per cent lower than 2008, but 5 per cent up on the 2007 average.

Almost three-quarters of awards related to car accidents while 11 per cent were for accidents at

work. Workplace awards averaged €32,000, considerably higher than car accidents at €21,800.

But as unemployment rose last year, the number of workplace accidents fell by almost 5 per cent, the figures show - while public-space accidents increased.

Miss Byron said: 'The volume of new motor and public liability claims has picked up in the last quarter of 2009 but there is little evidence yet of a sustained surge in personal injury claims arising from the recession.'

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