

Government departments ‘no longer have the expertise’ to produce accurate figures for compensation claims

Campaigning law firm [Thompsons Solicitors](#) has today (Monday 3 July) highlighted an extract from a report from an insurance law firm that quotes the Department for Work and Pensions admitting that they ‘no longer have the expertise...to produce robust data’ in relation to personal injury claims.

Insurance law firm Weightmans, who produce an annual report on the level of personal injury claims in the UK, disclosed that their usual Freedom of Information request to the Compensation Recovery Unit for the number of personal injury claims was denied ‘due to unforeseen circumstances’.

In an understatement, Weightmans concedes that this lack of information is ‘a concern’ and damaging to the government, given they are currently wanting to change the law so as to limit access to justice for hundreds of thousands of injured people every year.

The government alleged in the Queen’s Speech that there was a ‘rampant compensation culture’ (despite two government reports concluding that there wasn’t) and used ‘fraud’ in whiplash claims as an excuse to attack anyone injured anywhere - including at work - and undermine the well-established principle that in personal injury claims ‘the polluter pays’.

Tom Jones, head of policy at Thompsons Solicitors said: “Coming from an insurance law firm this admission is a damning indictment of the government and fundamentally undermines the credibility of their claims of a ‘crisis’. At a time when the government trying to push through major changes to the funding of claims by people injured through no fault of their own - which will impoverish the public purse and boost the already bloated profits of insurers - it confirms what we have said all along: the government has no real grasp of the figures or data.

“We now know why they are so reliant on statistics from the very insurers who stand to gain. How can they possibly assert that there is a ‘rampant compensation culture’ when the truth is that they have no evidence to back it up?

“It almost makes you feel sorry for a government that through its own cutbacks cannot produce a shred of independent evidence to justify its policies. But then you remember that being totally reliant on insurance company data suits the government’s insurer mates - as it means they swallow the industry’s propaganda hook, line and sinker.”

Thompsons' campaign, [#FeedingFatCats](#), has been tracking the insurance industry's actions since the government announced its intentions to increase the small claims limit in November 2016. The UK insurance industry is set to gain an estimated £200 million per year in extra profit from the reforms, which will top up what is already a multi-billion pound industry.

"Pursuing a policy that will restrict access to justice for thousands upon thousands of injured people is arrogant from any government, but it is shockingly so from a weak and unstable one that does not have the information it needs to make informed decisions in the best interests of the vulnerable," concluded Mr Jones.