

Response ID ANON-DUXZ-42G1-9

Submitted to Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry
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About you

What is your name?

Name:

[REDACTED]

I do not want my name to be published.

Do not publish my name

What is your email address?

Email:

[REDACTED]

What is your suburb/town and postcode? (Only one is required.)

Suburb/town::

[REDACTED]

Postcode::

[REDACTED]

If you live in northern Australia, please tick all descriptions that apply to you.

[REDACTED]

What type of residence do you live in?

[REDACTED]

What insurance do you currently have? Please tick all descriptions that apply to you.

[REDACTED]

What is important in your decisions about insurance?

1. How important is the price ('premium') in your decision?

You could also tell us: Did you know about the price of insurance in your town before you moved there? Has price changed a lot? Have you tried to get a lower price? :

I wasn't aware of the high cost of insurance, among other things, before I moved here, and have been astonished by the rises through each Karratha suburb (ie I have lived in Bulgarra, Millars Well and Baynton). The price continues to go up, even though we haven't made a claim up here. I've shopped around but most companies won't even look at us because of cyclone risk. This year I negotiated with Coles Insurance who did come to the party and gave me a lower premium.

2. How much choice of insurers do you have?

You could also tell us: Where you live, how much choice is there between insurers? Do you think different insurers offer different policies (i.e. is coverage different)? :

There are very few insurers who will sell policies to people in Karratha ... and funnily enough, of those that will, they only offer some policies (ie some would insure contents but not car). I couldn't focus on coverage type as I had to take a punt on what I could afford. Unfortunately Insurance Companies like ALL businesses who have Pilbara clients, there is a continual misconception that EVERYONE is on a miners wage!!!

3. What are you covered for?

You could also tell us: Can you get the sort of insurance you want? Do you want flood insurance? How confident are you that you know what you are covered for and what limits you have? If you have made a claim, were you covered for what you thought you were?:

I actually cannot tell you what I am covered for and will just have to pray that we never have to make a claim.

4. How important is customer service and claims handling reputation?

You could also tell us: How much does an insurer's reputation matter? How much does customer service matter? Have you seen an insurer behaving in a way that you think is unfair or confusing?:

Customer service matters a whole heap, because you know that if you every need to make a claim, you will need it to be quick, simple, and the assistance of someone with empathy and understanding.

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Just victimising us because we live above the 26th parallel - in a cyclone prone area - apparently.

6. Has an insurer told you that they won't insure you or renew your insurance policy? If they have, what were the reasons they gave you?

6. Has an insurer told you that they won't insure you or renew your insurance policy? If they have, what were the reasons they gave you?:

When I started looking for insurance, I just rang a whole lot of companies and was continually told they I was uninsurable because I lived in a high risk area. A cyclone area. Well for all those idiot companies - in 5 years I've seen 1 cyclone that did SOME damage to SOME residences and businesses. Most survived without a problem. Now compare this with the fact that I previously lived in Mandurah for more than 20 years, and they suffer severe storm damage multiple times every year ... yet my insurance down there was half the price!!!

How you get information about insurance and how easy it is to understand?

7. What information does your insurer give you and how useful is it?

You could also tell us: Does your renewal notice say if price has changed and the reason? Does it say how premiums are calculated? What could insurers do to make it easier to understand their products? :

8. Where else do you see or look for information?

You could also tell us: How much effort is it to look for better or cheaper policies? What sort of advertising do you see? Have you used websites, tools or calculators? If you live in Queensland, have you heard about or used the North Queensland Home Insurance website? What did you think about it?:

It's too hard with minimal choices. Can't say I will be shopping around again any time soon.

9. Have you used, or thought about using, a broker? Why or why not?

You could also tell us: Did it make it easier for you to get a policy that you were more confident suited your needs?:

No - I haven't thought or considered this for no other reason other than it never crossed my mind. In the day of technology, I really though it would be easy enough to google.

10. Is there information to meet the needs of all consumers?

You could also tell us: Who can you ask if you need help understanding insurance? Is there information for people who are unable to read or write or use a language other than English? Do insurers have an office in your area or do they visit? Is mail, phone or internet access an issue in remote areas?:

There is no chance that ANY BUSINESS would ever have an office in the City of Karratha who are the first point of responsibility for everything be so expensive. There is some, but little help for illiterate people, and those who choose to migrate here to work and live should be responsible for learning the language. What concerns me in the future though is, in the event of an emergency in a regional town whereby there is no power for days and all mobile lines are down, with the compulsory introduction of NBN where the home phone will no longer operate in a power outage, how will anyone be able to get assistance from the insurer (or anyone else) at all??? Australia really is a Country going backwards - because of stupidity and greed.

11. What special information do owners or managers of strata units need?

You could also tell us: How difficult is it to get clear and useful information about strata insurance? How transparent is the information provided to strata unit owners?:

12. Have you seen examples of tools, technology or information in other industries that should be used to make insurance easier to understand?

Have you seen examples of tools, technology or information in other industries that should be used to make insurance easier to understand?:

Have you switched insurers?

13. Have you considered switching insurance in recent years? Did you go ahead and switch? Why or why not? Please tell us about your experience.

You could also tell us: Did you consider switching policies with the same insurer, to a different insurer, or both? How did you find and compare policies? How many quotes did you compare? Was it a lot of effort? How does the use of standard definitions, such as for 'flood', make it easier to compare? Was your focus on price or coverage or both? Did you use a broker to help you? :

Yes I did change companies because the price matched AND I could do my car and contents with the same company. And because they didn't treat me like an alien because I didn't live in a Capital City. It was a painful task that took several days, but happy.

What can households and insurers do to make insurance more affordable?

14. Have you considered renovating or altering your home, or building a new home to, to reduce the risk of storm or cyclone damage? Did you go ahead?

You could also tell us: How did you find out about building for your local conditions? How did you decide that it was a 'worthwhile' investment? If you made any alterations, did this have any impact on your insurance premium? Has it already, or will it, save you money in the long run?:

I would never own a home in Karratha because I could not afford the high insurance cost for the property.

15. What are insurers doing to make it easier and could they do more?

You could also tell us: Would your premium be lower if you made your house or belongings safer? Can you pay fortnightly or monthly and how much extra does it cost to do so? Does your insurer offer Centrepay to eligible customers? Have you seen new or different policies to target particular consumers, such as tenants, households on a low income, or people with only a small amount to insure? :

I hate that you are charged more for monthly payments ... that is just a disgrace and again targeting lower income families!!! Very disappointing ...

16. What are you doing to manage the cost of insurance?

You could also tell us: Have rising premiums motivated you to spend more effort looking for better policy options? Have you, or would you, reduce your level of coverage to save? Who else can you get help from?:

I pay monthly - it's my only option and the only way I can be insured. However, I also reduced the amount I am insured for in order to be able to afford insurance.

Other issues

17. If you have a view or experience to share that you haven't already covered in another question, please tell us about it. (Optional)

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