

## Response ID ANON-DUXZ-42QU-Q

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Do not publish my name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 was prepared for expensive insurance in Exmouth as I had already lived in Karratha and Carnarvon, but in the last few years our premiums have risen for no reason. When questioning the company I get told the huge hikes in price is because of the QLD floods, and the VIC and southern WA fires. I've had to raise the excess to try to make it more affordable, but this makes claiming for small things (like replacement aircons) too expensive and pointless. So now I don't claim anything and the premiums still rise. I have rung around for other quotes and get told they won't cover my property or the premiums are massive. It's extortion.

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)? :

I live in Exmouth, and there's choice as long as I'm prepared to pay exorbitant premiums. The coverage is different for each one especially on the fine print for floods.

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 got our insurance in 2010 and have not changed companies because I knew I simply wouldn't get insurance anywhere else. The underwriter changed since I claimed for an air con so now I'm not sure if the coverage is the same. I was told premiums increased when the Government made insurers add flood coverage.

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?:**

I've had terrible customer service from QBE. I've had to complain in the past and I have multiple policies with them. They are difficult to talk to, leave me on hold for way too long and rarely return calls for quotes. Once I was abused by a CSO and had to take my complaint to his superior.

**5. Have you seen an insurer behaving in way that you think is unfair or confusing?**

**5. Have you seen an insurer behaving in way that you think is unfair or confusing? :**

Yes. When they advertise reasonable premiums and when I call for a quote I get told they won't cover or their premiums are massive. It's false and misleading.

**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?:**

Not yet with my current company. Others I've called for quotes, yes. I get told they simply don't cover my town, type of house, or they are unaffordable because of natural disasters in other parts of the country.

**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? :**

I get a product disclosure with each renewal, but that's it unless I ring and ask for an update. I have found in the past with one insurer that they leave critical information out of the consumer PDS and then refuse to pay on a policy because their fine print is not released to the public. Yes, my renewal shows the leaps in premium, but gives no reason, nor breakdown of costs or calculation formula.

**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 days of persistence to ring around for new quotes, but none are competitive. I gave up because nothing changes. I see plenty of TV advertising with false promises. Yes, I've used tools, calculators and comparison websites, they are useless for my town. No, I don't live in QLD.

**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?:**

Thought about it, but haven't yet. I wasn't able to get any good recommendations.

**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?:**

I'm unaware of anyone to get assistance from except the insurer. There is no office here, they do not visit. Yes, mail is slow and the internet can be too in my town.

**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?:**

My title states my house is a strata, but it has no common walls or land and no body corporate. I often get told an insurer won't cover my house.

**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?:**

No.

**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? :**

Not recently. I have rung around for quotes but they were all too expensive or they wouldn't cover me. I compared it myself, it was a lot of effort for no reward. Focus was on price and coverage.

## 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?:

My home is built to a cyclone code. No further improvements will lower the premiums.

**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? :

They aren't doing anything as far as I'm aware. My house is as safe as it can be. I pay monthly, yearly is too much of a financial burden in one go.

**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 have searched for more reasonable quotes and came up empty handed. I have increased my excess to save. I will not reduce my level of coverage.

## 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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