

Response ID ANON-DUXZ-42R5-R

Submitted to Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry
Submitted on 2017-11-09 14:09:02

About you

What is your name?

Name:
Brian Doyle

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? :

Due to Cyclones YES

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)? :

Many

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?:

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?:

09-11-2017

[REDACTED]

Flamtree 4802 Qld

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir

On 28th March our family home was affected by cyclone Debbie. After the event I contacted our broker and he in turn contacted our insurance company VERO. We had a representative from the company arrive a few days later and asked me to arrange a quote to repair the premises and he would instruct their panel Builders to do the same. I phoned a local builder who came around and gave me a written quote for the amount of \$ 169k, and passed it on to Vero insurance and my Broker. After speaking to my Broker I was told that the panel builder [REDACTED] price was \$180k . I was told by the VERO representative that because of the amount of damage, a representative from [REDACTED] will be contacting me to look at the property. Once [REDACTED] viewed the property he said he would contact the panel builder [REDACTED] and get them to adjust their rates. Next I had a Scope of Works from [REDACTED] for \$ 140k. I then rang my broker and asked how a builder could discount \$ 40k of the price of the repairs. In a few days I received a phone call asking me to print out the contract, sign and send it back to them, which I did. On reading the contract I noticed that the price had been adjusted on the contract and then phoned my broker why it had increased by \$ 9k. He phoned Vero and was told it was for the contractors expenses.

After I signed the contract we were appointed a project manager from Advance building [REDACTED] and met him on sight. I also showed [REDACTED] a wall which had suffered damage during the cyclone and he contacted a Building Engineer to inspect the block wall. After the inspection I received a copy of the report and was told that a representatives from Vero and [REDACTED] would be inspecting. I then met the three people, [REDACTED] from Vero and [REDACTED] along with [REDACTED]. After discussing the wall the two men from the insurance company advised that the wall would be demolished because of the extent of damage from the cyclone and that we would not have to pay any additional monies. [REDACTED] was there at the time and agreed that it was the only solution therefore all they had to do was agree on the quoted price.

Now I am told by my broker that VERO want to give me a cash settlement for the wall only, which I find unsatisfactory. [REDACTED] where asked to quote on the wall and there first quote was 71k which was not accepted by Vero and asked to re quote. The second quote was in the vicinity of 35k which was still not accepted. I was told that the head estimator gave them the next quote of 6k which they then offered to my Broker. I was told that this quote is for a cash settlement and Advance will not do the work because they could not guarantee the work as the wall will I not comply with the existing code. I have since asked other builder's to quote and they will not look at the project. I phoned the Council building inspector and was told that the wall should be demolished and be built to existing code. I have since paid my yearly insurance premium to my Broker.

It has been 33 weeks and all I have to show for the repairs is a flat pack garage laying in my yard waiting to be erected and last week a concrete slab was put in. I am starting to get concerned as we are fast approaching the wet season and as yet nothing else has been done . The roof has to be renewed and every time we have a shower water penetrates the kitchen ceiling on to my 24mth old cupboards which are show signs of swelling and there is discolouring of the plasterboards as well as mould in the ceiling. I have tried to cover the holes myself but we are still getting water egress. There has been mould growing in the downstairs office walls since the event and the patio ceiling still have lining missing. I have mentioned it on many occasions to Advance but so called small details go out the window. I do have copies of all emails in regards to the premises.

Thank you

Brian Doyle

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

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Until now No but after cyclone Debbi Yes

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?

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no

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? :

All information is fine

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?:

Go through a broker

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?:

Find them excellent till now

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?:

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?

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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? :

no

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?:

No

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? :

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?:

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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As previous