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## Insurance fraud report “hijacked”

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### Apil claims Insurance Fraud Taskforce went far beyond its remit

The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (Apil) has accused the government and insurance sector of “hijacking” a year-long review into insurance fraud.

The Insurance Fraud Taskforce (IFT) published its final report last week. Its recommendations include greater data sharing between the insurance sector and regulatory bodies through databases such as MyLicence. It proposed that recoverable costs be reduced by 50% where a minor personal injury claim is notified six months after the accident, a system of predictable damages for soft tissue injuries and a rebuttable evidential presumption that no injury was suffered where claims are lodged after a specified period of time.

Jonathan Wheeler, president of Apil, said he welcomed the opportunity to discuss the topic with “colleagues from the other side of the fence”.

He added, however, that it was “all the more disappointing that the outcomes of those discussions were seemingly not taken seriously by the Taskforce; that the Taskforce went far beyond its remit in its approach to issues such as the small claims limit and its recommendations to effectively cut legal representation for people whose claims are brought more than six months from the date of an injury”.

“The work of the Taskforce appears to have been hijacked by the agenda of the insurance industry and this government in its plans to do away with the rights of the genuinely injured to compensation,” he said.

However, insurance lawyers welcomed the proposals. [Duncan Rutter](#), president of the [Forum of Insurance Lawyers \(FOIL\)](#), says: “In particular FOIL supports the aim of encouraging the public to regard insurance fraud as a criminal activity.

"We hope these recommendations will gain widespread support, including from organisations supporting claimants and that going forward both claimant and defendant bodies can work together to tackle dishonest claims."

Welcoming the report, the Association of British Insurers says it will do "whatever it takes to protect honest customers".

Justice minister Lord Faulks said fraudulent and exaggerated claims must be tackled.

<http://www.newlawjournal.co.uk/nlj/content/insurance-fraud-report-hijacked>