

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 THURSDAY, MAY 20**



**AP 248**

## **TOP PERSONAL INJURY LAWYER FIRES BROADSIDE AT CLAIMS CRITICS**

Moves to undermine the personal injury claims process and the rights of victims of negligence must be treated with zero tolerance, personal injury lawyers will be told this week.

In his speech to delegates at the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers' (APIL's) annual conference, in-coming president Colin Ettinger will warn lawyers that they must put up a fight to protect the rights of injured people.

"Never before has there been such an onslaught by the insurance industry in trying to undermine the veracity of the claims process...the litigation process should not be discarded. It is often the only way that we can ensure people recover the full compensation to which they are entitled," he will say.

Challenging those who pedal the so-called 'compensation culture' myth, he will tell delegates that he finds it "particularly disturbing" that in other fields making claims is not only seen as routine, but is actually encouraged.

"In respect of the Equitable Life debacle, for instance, much publicity was given to how badly the investors have been treated. Many are making claims. There is no suggestion in the media that this should be discouraged, the contrary is the case. Yet people who are injured and then claim, are alleged to be part of a compensation culture which is frowned upon."

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Ettinger will also voice his concerns about the standards of health and safety in this country, telling delegates: “Never mind the compensation culture, what we really need is a safety culture. It concerns me that we do not have one in this country...” He will go on to say that there is no real evidence that we are moving towards a safety culture, and that “...far too much emphasis is being placed on the economic cost of the claims process, rather than focussing on protection, rehabilitation and proper compensation ...”

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