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Insurance dispute hits a brick wall

A NARARA businesswoman has vowed to keep up her fight against WorkCover despite already registering a small win against the government agency.

June Gibson has been battling WorkCover since 2004 when the bricklaying business she ran with her husband was hit with an insurance bill of \$54,000.

WorkCover claimed the Gibsons had not paid the correct insurance for workers but the couple said the workers were contractors and therefore exempt.

By painstakingly going through records, the Gibsons were able to prove some of the workers were contractors and WorkCover has gradually

reduced the debt to about \$10,000.

In one case, WorkCover demanded the Gibsons show the Australian business number of a worker to prove he was a contractor.

However, business numbers did not exist when the man worked for the Gibsons.

WorkCover has closed the Gibsons' file and is demanding final payment.

The dispute with WorkCover has cost the Gibsons their business, but Mrs Gibson said she would continue her fight.

She is a founder of the Small Business Reform Group, which is lobbying for changes. Mrs Gibson advises other small businesses about WorkCover audits.



June Gibson said she'd fight the decision.

WorkCover: scheme ensures all pay fair share

WORKCOVER boss Jon Blackwell confirmed the final workers compensation insurance bill for the Gibsons had been decided.

"The WorkCover determination follows extensive discussions with the Gibsons and independent

audits by accounting firms to assist them with their appeal and clarify their workers compensation liability," he said.

"The Gibsons will be able to enter into a payment arrangement with their insurer to pay the outstanding debt.

"The WorkCover scheme operates on the basis that all employers pay their fair share."

Mr Blackwell said WorkCover had introduced a service to make it easier for businesses to determine if a worker was a contractor or an employee.