

# Arizona Department of Insurance

## 2015 Market Monitoring

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Private Passenger Automobile Insurance

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### I. Rate System:

Arizona's "open competition" law, applicable to Private Passenger Automobile ("PPA") insurance, prohibits insurers from charging excessive, inadequate or unfairly discriminatory rates, or rates that will have the effect of destroying competition, or establishing a monopoly. By statute, a rate is not excessive if "a reasonable degree of price competition" ("RDPC") exists at the consumer level. The law presumes a competitive market exists unless the Director, after a public hearing, determines that a RDPC does not exist in the market.

### II. Market Monitoring Methodology:

The Department relies upon annual statements filed with the Department, insurers' responses to an annual Department survey, current trade press articles, and A.M. Best data to monitor the market.

The purpose of market monitoring is twofold: to assist the Director in determining whether competition exists; and to assist consumers with their questions and concerns about the availability of insurance.

### III. Annual Statement Data:

The 2014 annual statements for all PPA segments evidence that:

- In 2014, insurers' direct written premiums increased 6.11% from 2013 and their direct incurred loss ratio increased by 1.08%.
- Only 19 insurers wrote more than 1% of the market.
- There are 289 insurers that reported PPA data in 2014, but of these only 126 are actively seeking new business.
- The Top 25 PPA insurers wrote 77.86% of the market.

#### Historical Experience (All Insurers' Arizona State Page, Lines 19.1, 19.2 and 21.1, Annual Statement Data, Year Ending December 31)

CY	1	2	3
	Written Premium	Earned Premium	Paid Losses
2014	\$3,779,100,908	\$3,711,777,598	\$2,293,604,609
2013	\$3,561,661,054	\$3,497,933,533	\$2,214,153,319
2012	\$3,373,608,055	\$3,325,621,512	\$2,084,364,945
2011	\$3,269,648,568	\$3,281,922,687	\$2,037,060,148
CY	4	5	
	Incurred Losses	Incurred Loss Ratio (Col 4/ Col 2)	
2014	\$2,379,187,788	64.10%	
2013	\$2,280,123,492	65.18%	
2012	\$2,081,911,255	62.60%	
2011	\$2,062,313,040	62.80%	

### IV. Survey Responses:

In 2015, 175 insurers responded to the Department's PPA survey. These insurers had a 2014 market share of 99.07%. Overall, their response regarding current PPA market conditions was favorable and positive.

- **The majority of surveyed insurers said that:**
  - Competition is intense in the PPA market;
  - Price is important;
  - Coverage availability is not a problem;
  - Current pricing levels are just about right; and,
  - Reinsurance is not problematic for 50.46% of the market.
- **The majority of the surveyed insurers said that their particular company:**
  - Considers the PPA line to be very important to their presence and success in Arizona;
  - Is competing in the market with much intensity;
  - Has had neither historical underwriting profitability nor unprofitability in PPA in Arizona;
  - Will maintain their current underwriting and risk-eligibility approach at least through year-end 2015;
  - Is actively seeking new business;
  - Has not materially increased its declinations in 2015 as compared to 2014;
  - Considers Arizona's "open competition" rate law to be highly or very effective; and
  - Considers PPA to be a major line nationally.

## V. Major PPA Market Trends:

**Trend # 1. PPA market concentration continues in the Top 25 insurers and their market share increased slightly in 2014.** The Top 25 market share increased to 77.86%, an increase of .45% from 2013. Two insurers maintained their top two positions. State Farm Mutual Automobile IC increased market share by .16%, while Farmers IC of AZ decreased its market share by .74%. GEICO Casualty Co. with 6.92% of the market overtook Progressive Advanced IC who had 5.96%.

The top three 2015 insurers' market share rank is as follows:

Rank	Company	2013 Market Share
1.	State Farm Mutual Auto IC	15.59%
2.	Farmers IC of AZ	7.83%
3.	GEICO Casualty Co.	6.92%
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>30.34%</b>

The top three insurers' 2014 market share (30.34%) is up from 29.85% in 2013.

**Trend # 2. Market concentration has not discouraged new insurers from entering the Arizona market.** Ninety-nine percent of insurers responded that it is easy to enter the Arizona market and to obtain a certificate of authority. Of the 289 insurers reporting data on their annual statements, 163 are latent insurers that could reenter the market at any time.

**Trend # 3. The majority of the market is actively seeking new business.** In 2015, 91.69% of the market responded that it was highly or intensely seeking new business.

**Trend # 4. Intense competition continues.** The majority of the market (94.31%) responded in 2015 that market competition is high. The market share of nonstandard insurers has increased (9.15%, 2014; 8.94%, 2013). The continued low level of activity in the Arizona Assigned Risk Plan (the involuntary market) indicates the nonstandard market is writing risks that would otherwise go into the Assigned Risk Plan. There is only one PPA policy written in Arizona's Assigned Risk Plan in 2014; it is the same policy that was there since 2012.

**Trend # 5. It appears that a few large groups will dominate the market and smaller, non-group affiliated insurers will have difficulty competing with them.** All Top 25 insurers are members of 11 groups. In 2014, there was an overall market share net gain of .45% for the Top 25 insurers.

**Trend # 6. Total written premiums and rates increased for Arizona's insurers in 2014, while insurer participation diminished.** Arizona's Direct Written Premium (DWP) increased 6.11% in 2014 compared to an increase of 5.57% in 2013. Insurer rate changes during 2014 resulted in a weighted average total rate change of 3.58%, down from the 4.35% in 2013. Increased DWP and rates, coupled with diminished insurer participation suggests a tightening of the market.

**Trend # 7.** The average policy premium increased. In 2014, the average policy premium increased to \$1,171 from \$1,123 in 2013 and the average per vehicle premium increased to \$826 from \$785 in 2013.

**Trend # 8.** Fewer insurers report historical unprofitability for the PPA line. In 2015, 11.96% of the market viewed PPA as unprofitable, compared to 12.39% in 2014. The overall PPA incurred loss ratio decreased from 65.18% in 2013 to 64.10% in 2014 while the combined loss ratio increased from 104.73% in 2013 to 105.91% in 2014.

**Trend # 9.** Frequency of losses decreases, while severity increases. The number of paid losses decreased. The amount of paid losses increased and the average dollar amount of a paid claim increased. This could be due, in part, to a 3.2% decrease motor vehicle traffic fatalities as reported in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Report. According to the NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, 2012 was the first year with a year-to-year increase in fatalities since 2005.

Another possibility comes from a study from the Insurance Research Council (IRC) which reveals the ever present concerns surrounding medical care costs and a shift toward more expensive treatment and diagnostic alternatives, as well as, increases in billed charges for visits to many types of medical providers. The use of pain clinics, attorney involvement and claim abuse were also found to exacerbate medical care expenses.

**Trend #10.** Underwriting is becoming less liberal. Insurers (.25%, 2015; 2.24%, 2014) continue to take a less liberal underwriting stance as losses and underwriting expenses continue to climb. More insurers are turning to predictive analytics and other innovative technologies to help analyze risk selection, better identify and price risks, fight fraud, retain profitable customers, and attract new customers and growth. Insurers continue to modernizing policy administration systems,

establishing web-based portals and mobile platforms, offering high-tech mobile applications and telematics devices/services to attract and develop stronger customer relationships. Competition and underwriting both have an effect on insurers and the approach they take to increase their market share while remaining profitable.

## **VI. Conclusions:**

The Arizona PPA market remains healthy and competitive, and insurers view the Arizona market favorably. This environment attracts new insurers to enter the market, even though the intense competition makes it more difficult for new, independent insurers to write sufficient premium volume to offset expenses, pay claims, and remain profitable.

Competition among the Top 25 and insurer groups is intense. The public is benefiting from rates that remain relatively stable and from competition for increased market share. Very few drivers need to seek coverage in the higher priced Assigned Risk Plan as the standard and nonstandard marketplace is willing to insure the higher rated risks.