

WCB Update

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VOL. 1, ISSUE 4 OCTOBER, 2000

Claims to be managed by industry sector *Preventing accidents a key objective*

Employers and workers have told the WCB that they want people who manage their claims to understand their business, and that they want to work with fewer WCB staff for claims management. Changes to meet those needs took place on October 30th.

"It's a whole new way of doing business," says Don Paul, Vice-President of Rehabilitation and Compensation.

"We're now assigning claims by industry sector such as mining, manufacturing or transportation. Rather than having staff working on claims from a variety of industries, they'll become more knowledgeable about one or two."

"As we learn more about each industry, we'll learn about what's causing accidents and



"It's much easier for us to deal with two or three WCB employees for all claims," says Diane Gantzel (right) of Deer Lodge Centre with the WCB's Anita Olafsson.

work with employers to prevent them."

Full service teams dedicated to each industry will manage claims, but one individual will be accountable to both the worker and the employer. Employers will now talk to one or two people about claims lasting eight weeks or less and one person about claims lasting longer. Workers

will see fewer hand-offs and they'll know whom to call with questions or concerns.

The WCB has already done pilot projects in areas such as healthcare. One person has been looking after Deer Lodge Centre claims for more than a year now. "We may have eight to 10 people on workers' compensation at any one time," says Diane Gantzel, Occupational Health Nurse at the Centre.

"It's much easier for us to deal with two or three WCB employees for all claims instead of several different people."

Much has taken place since April 1999 to prepare for this new way of doing business. New jobs have been developed, 200 staff have been involved in over 50,000 hours of training, new computer programs have been designed, financial and human resources systems have been modified.

Claims services to be more personalized

WCB to spend more time building relationships with employers

The WCB now has full service claims management teams dedicated to specific industries that will work much closer with workers and employers.

This new way of handling claims should help workers recover from their injuries and get back to work sooner. Under this new system, one individual from the team is accountable to both the worker and the employer.

“In the former system, claims were passed from department to department for service. Workers and employers had to deal with several different staff members,” says Don Paul, Vice-President of Rehabilitation and Compensation.

The WCB's experience is that when workers are quickly assessed and treated, they return to work sooner.

Now as soon as a claim is accepted, the claims management team can ensure wage loss benefits and treatment plans are organized at the same time rather than one after the other.

The WCB's experience is that when workers are quickly assessed and treated, they return to work sooner.

Workers will have one main contact at the WCB who will call them to make sure they

understand what wage loss and medical aid benefits they're entitled to, what steps will be taken to help them recover and answer any other questions.

The WCB will also spend more time communicating and building relationships with employers.

“We'll get to know more about the

type of work they do, and how the jobs can affect accident rates and their return to work,” says Rob Campbell, Director of Case Management.

“We'll work more closely with employers, workers, labour representatives, and healthcare professionals on what is and is not possible in term of modified work and return to work options.”

WCB Sends Team to Flin Flon in Response to Tragedy

The WCB sent a multi-disciplinary team to Flin Flon on August 12 to assist in processing claims and answering any questions arising from the August 8 accident at the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting facility (HBM&S).

Thirteen workers were injured in the accident, one fatally. Most of those affected by the tragedy are now back to work in some capacity.

“We wanted those who have been injured to have all benefits and services that are available to them as quickly as possible,” said John Strickland, Director of Sector Services.

“The claims process involved is very complex. The accident, which consisted of a series of blasts, actually occurred on the Manitoba/Saskatchewan border.”

“The decision we made is to render any assistance that we can immediately, and sort out the jurisdictional paperwork later. We will be working closely with the Saskatchewan and Alberta boards to help those who have been injured.”

In Flin Flon, team members met with representatives from HBM&S, the United Steelworkers of America and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers as part of the claims management process.

Time loss accidents increase for first six months



Time loss accidents for the first six months of 2000 have surpassed the growth in the economy.

Reported time loss accidents for the first six months of this year were up 4.4 percent from the same period in 1999, according to the WCB's second quarter financial statements.

"We are concerned about this trend in reported accidents," says WCB President and CEO Pat Jacobsen. "Accident volumes drive claims costs. We need to work together to prevent these accidents, and to establish a workplace culture that is safe and healthy."

Time loss accidents for the first six months of 2000 have surpassed the growth in the economy. For the first six months of 2000, there were 10,314 time loss accidents – up 431 claims (4.4 percent) from the same time last year.

Total premium revenue for the first six months of 2000 was \$66.0 million, and investment revenue for the same period was \$33.4 million. Total claims costs for the six months of 2000, including compensation, medical aid, rehabilitation, pension, and allowance for future claims, was \$79.1 million, an increase of 15% from 1999. Total recurring expenses for the first half of 2000 increased by \$14.6 million, due primarily to an increase in the Future Cost Provision allowance.

The WCB covers about 70 percent of Manitoba's workforce, or about 325,000 Manitoba workers at 22,000 firms.

Who is a worker for WCB Purposes?

Any person who enters into or works under a contract of service or apprenticeship (manual labour or otherwise) is considered a worker. This may be written or oral, expressed or implied. This includes the following:

- Full-time staff
- Part-time staff
- Office/admin.staff
- Casual workers
- Executive officers
- Shareholders who work for the firm but are not directors of the firm
- Persons undergoing training
- Clerks
- Sales staff
- Some contract workers
- Staff paid on commission
- Staff paid on piece work
- Anyone with Special Coverage
- Anyone the WCB considers your worker

Look for more information designed to help employers better understand WCB processes in future Updates.

WCB: WHO TO CALL

All departments 954-4321
 1-800-362-3340
(Toll-Free Fax) 1-877-872-3804

Employer Services

- firm classification
- assessment rate system
- Employer's Statement of Workers' Earnings form

Phone **954-4505**
Fax **954-4900**
Toll-Free Fax **1-888- 504-1339**

Experience Rating

- identification and explanation of compensation costs
- questions concerning claim experience or industry group
- how rates are determined

Phone **954-4343**

Clearance Certificates

Phone **954-4988**
Fax **954-4983**

Employment Services

- to hire a formerly injured worker

Phone **954-4501**

Claim Information

- reporting a claim
- assistance filling out forms
- questions about an existing claim
- general information
- reporting suspected fraud

Phone **954-4922**
Fax **954-4999**

WCB Policy

- questions related to WCB policy
- to obtain a copy of policy

Phone **954-4395**

Fair Practices Advocate

- specific concerns from workers, employers & the public

Phone **954-4467**

24 Hour Worker Distress Line

- a confidential service provided free-of-charge by KLINIC

Phone **786-8175**
Toll-free **1-800-719-3809**

Attention Occupational Health and Safety Consultants

Would you like to be included in a list of consultants to be made available to **over 20,000 Manitoba employers**?

The WCB of Manitoba and the Workplace Safety and Health Division of Manitoba Labour are putting together an **Occupational Health and Safety Consultant List** – and we want to include you.

Our organizations receive many calls requesting testing and consultation services for a variety of occupational health and safety issues. Unfortunately, we can't respond to all of these requests ourselves. As an alternative, we are creating a booklet of occupational health and safety consultants for employers who want to reduce their WCB costs and make their workplaces safer.

We are looking for all types of occupational health and safety consultants - from accident investigators to ergonomics professionals to ventilation designers - and everything in between.

If you are interested in joining our list, free of charge, contact:

Jean Van Walleghem
Client Resource Officer
Workplace Safety and Health Division
200-401 York Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0P8
Ph: 204-945-0580; Fax: 204-945-4556

Refer to the WCB web site (www.wcb.mb.ca) for an on line form as well.

When you contact us, include your:

- specialty
- address
- business name
- phone number
- contact name
- e-mail and web site (if applicable)
- fax
- a brief description of your services

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