



Accountability Report

Third Quarter 2015

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Staff Satisfaction and Engagement



Meet WorkSafeNB's new Vice President of Communications and Human Resources

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us. We'd love to hear from you!



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Engaged Employees, Better Service

In 2013, the provincial government launched a comprehensive review of New Brunswick's workers' compensation legislation. It had been more than 20 years since it was last reviewed and WorkSafeNB welcomed the opportunity to modernize and improve the system for all New Brunswickers.

As a result, today we are pleased to announce that WorkSafeNB has established an Issues Resolution Office (IRO). The IRO will build relationships with and act as the primary point of contact for clients and other interested parties in receiving, investigating and reporting concerns. This further aligns with our Service Goal commitment of providing services that are caring, compassionate, efficient, prompt and fair. In this report, the IRO's new manager, Tim MacFarlane, will explain what this will look like in practice.

In the spirit of modernization, and with the unprecedented evolution of technology in recent years, we recognized the need to revamp our communications and human resources departments. Last year we created a new position of vice-president of communications and human resources, hiring Mario Patenaude to fill the role. As a senior human resource and communications executive, he has successfully played a leadership role in setting and delivering the transformational and growth agendas of similar departments in various organizations.



Gerard M. Adams, President & CEO

He not only believes in the performance impact of a simple, model-based, and integrated HR program driven by a high-performance team, he has experienced it. In this issue Mr. Patenaude will share his ideas for modernizing our communications and human resources departments, and how it will positively impact workers, employers and our staff.

At WorkSafeNB, we are committed to creating a positive experience, both for our clients and our employees. If you have any questions or suggestions on how to improve our services, please contact us. We would love to hear your ideas.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerard M. Adams".

Gerard M. Adams
WorkSafeNB President & CEO



SERVICE GOAL

We will provide effective programs and services, implemented with care, compassion, efficiency, promptness and fairness, to benefit both workers and employers.

WorkSafeNB's Issues Resolution Office will ensure clients are heard

Client service, impartiality, and fairness.

These are the principles that will guide WorkSafeNB's new Issues Resolution Office (IRO), an office working to ensure fair practices for WorkSafeNB's clients – the workers and employers of New Brunswick.

Gerard Adams, WorkSafeNB's president and CEO, said the new office will achieve two key objectives.

"In addition to offering injured workers, their dependents, and employers a secondary review of a claim decision they might disagree with, this new office will act as an ombudsman of sorts to help them resolve service issues they may have with WorkSafeNB. This, in turn, will also help us improve the quality of our services to all clients."

Scheduled to begin operations early in 2016, the IRO is an indirect result of the provincial government's multi-phase review of workers' compensation legislation that began in 2013. Recommendations from the first phase of the review resulted in the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal becoming an independent, external organization.

This system for appeals also provided the impetus to create a new internal review process, which the organization has been busy preparing over the past year, Adams said.

Service Target

WorkSafeNB's target is that satisfaction with service delivery will meet or exceed the previous years average. At the end of 2014 injured workers satisfaction was 67.2 % (target 69%) and registered employers satisfaction was 79.8% (target 80.2%).



Click for more Service data



SERVICE GOAL

“Since the new office will be an integral part of WorkSafeNB’s claim-management and client service processes, one of our priorities was to hire the right manager to lead the team. We were very pleased that Tim MacFarlane accepted this new challenge – he has the experience needed for the job and has always demonstrated a high level of personal integrity.”

For his part, MacFarlane said he’s always been motivated to help people.

“I’ve always liked serving people and have a strong desire to arrive at the right decision. For me, it was always critical to uphold the fundamentals of natural justice. I knew that if the decision was just and the worker was treated with the respect and dignity they deserve, I could sleep at night.”

Before joining WorkSafeNB as a case manager in 2005, a role that has seen him help hundreds of clients navigate the system, MacFarlane worked at what is now the Department of Social Development in a similar case management role. He said the manager position at the IRO seemed like a natural career progression.

“At Social Development I helped with their internal review process and I know the value it brings to the table, and 13 years in case management has taught me a lot. Oftentimes, people just need someone to listen. When you can clearly explain the reason for a decision while showing them you care, it can make all the difference in the world.”

With several other jurisdictions having established an internal review system, MacFarlane said WorkSafeNB was able to study a broad range of models and design a system to address the specific needs of our clients, here in New Brunswick.

Unlike in other jurisdictions, internal review is not a mandatory step in the appeal process in New Brunswick and one of its primary functions is to resolve concerns related to the service our clients received. Any time an appeal is initiated, the IRO will be notified and a review will take place regardless of whether the client requested it.

“If at that point we note any issues in the original ruling, we will notify that individual and save them any additional time waiting for their hearing. This will also help free up resources at the appeals tribunal, which is really a win-win for everyone.”



SERVICE GOAL

In 2014, WorkSafeNB staff adjudicated more than 11,000 claims. Of those, more than 93% were accepted. In addition to adjudication, over the life of a claim there could be dozens, if not hundreds, of case management decisions with respect to benefits and rehabilitation. MacFarlane reiterated that the IRO is not an enforcement department designed to highlight bad decisions or to single out any WorkSafeNB employees.

“In fact, our employees do a great job, they care about their clients, and we have a low number of appeals as a result. I see this department evolving a coaching model where we collaborate with employees so we can strengthen the entire system.”

Since being named the IRO manager, MacFarlane has been busy with preparations, including hiring the new positions, which concluded in October.

“The employees who will serve clients in the IRO are experienced in the fields of policy, adjudication and case management. They also bring other intangibles to their roles. I personally feel they have the right values needed for the job – a strong commitment to customer service and a desire to help people and do what’s right.”



SERVICE GOAL

Helping clients and improving service is a priority for WorkSafeNB's board of directors. Chairperson, Dorine Pirie, said the creation of the new office reflects WorkSafeNB's commitment to ensuring fair and effective services to injured workers, employers, and other stakeholders.

"Resolving concerns and improving satisfaction with our programs and services is obviously a huge part of the IRO's mandate, and caring service is one of our core values. The IRO is modeled after some of the country's leading fair practices offices and will establish a comprehensive system to not only resolve issues, but to really build relationships with our clients.

"WorkSafeNB's board of directors is committed to continuously improving the workers' compensation system we oversee. On behalf of the board, we look forward to supporting the IRO and are excited by this opportunity to improve the system for all New Brunswickers."



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STAFF SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT GOAL

Our employees will feel their work is valuable and makes a difference, motivated by the understanding of how their role and individual contribution is critical to achieving our Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values, and Goals.

Q&A with Mario Patenaude, WorkSafeNB's new Vice-President of Human Resources & Communications



Mario Patenaude joined WorkSafeNB in June 2015 as the organization's first Vice-president of Human Resources and Communications. We caught up with Mr. Patenaude for a few moments to find out more about his plans for these departments.

You join the team as WorkSafeNB's first Vice-president of Human Resources and Communications. What are your first impressions?

WorkSafeNB is a mature organization run by competent, diligent and passionate people. Protecting New Brunswickers from workplace injuries and diseases is a very honourable mission and one that we've been working at for a long time. And we do a good job of this. However, I believe the current economic context and changing stakeholder expectations are impacting how we're perceived. There are a lot of things we do very well, but at the same time there are a few things we could do better. As a Crown corporation, and the sole provider of workplace accident prevention and insurance that covers more than 90% of the provincial workforce, it's imperative that we are the best at what we do when it comes to the four pillars of our business – prevention, enforcement, rehabilitation, and certainly compensation. Our clients don't have an option to switch to another provider.



STAFF SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT GOAL

What is your vision for WorkSafeNB's human resources and communications departments?

I have always recognized and endorsed the value of shifting HR and communications departments away from the traditional administrative roles to a more strategic one. The emergence of new technologies has helped to significantly reduce the time it takes team members to perform various administrative tasks, freeing resources and allowing them to focus more on strategic business topics. Our people bring with them specialized skillsets and expertise that, when used efficiently, add real value to long-term business initiatives. It's about more than just writing a news release or making sure the employees are paid – which still needs to be flawlessly executed. With strategic HR and communications, it's about recognizing these departments as strategic partners within the company. They work alongside leaders and their teams to determine how to best fit HR and communications initiatives within WorkSafeNB's overall strategic plan. Rather than being brought in at the end of an initiative to execute transactional tasks with tight deadlines, I envision a more consultative partnership where we all contribute from the outset.

What do you see as being the main challenges facing your teams?

Anytime a business support team goes through a transformation from transactional to strategic, the challenges are pretty well the same. The first one is to install the right technology and optimize the processes to support the plan. We are in the final stages of implementing a new HR Information System (HRIS) which should be operational by February. The second is about identifying the learning and development needs of each member relative to the new expectations of their respective roles. The next challenge will be the installation of a new service-delivery model which will enable the creation of Business Partner roles, who will be the generalists or "account leaders" assigned to support specific functions or teams within the organization. Finally, the critical success factor in being successful will be my colleagues' willingness to ask us to partner with them and their respective teams in addressing important HR or Communication issues and initiatives facing them. In the end, this will allow us to effectively develop and implement the right Communications and HR business strategies to support the achievement of WorkSafeNB's vision.

Staff Satisfaction and Engagement Target

WorkSafeNB's target for employee satisfaction and engagement levels are to meet or exceed the previous five-year average. At the end of 2014 satisfaction was 91% (target 90%) and engagement was 94% (target 93%).



[Click for more Staff Satisfaction and Engagement data](#)



STAFF SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT GOAL

What are your biggest priorities for the upcoming year?

A big initiative that will add a lot of value to WorkSafeNB is the new employee engagement survey. Before this our employees had been completing the same survey for over a decade. The reporting capabilities were unsophisticated by today's standards. The main shortcoming is that it only allowed us to compare ourselves to past performances, which made it difficult to form an objective view as to where we could improve. In the end it resulted in very little variation over a long period of time. With a new staff survey, we will be able to see how we measure up with other organizations. These benchmarks are critical in developing plans to continuously improve our services. The results will serve as the building blocks for our action plan moving forward, and I'm excited to see what we learn from this exercise. As I've said, we want to compare ourselves to the most employee and client-engaged organizations in the world.

So what helps foster an environment of high employee engagement?

WorkSafeNB recognizes that these are more than just buzzwords. While employee satisfaction measures how happy employees are with their jobs and work environment, engagement takes it a step further, measuring the passion they feel for their work, their commitment to the organization, and their willingness to go the extra mile. While salary, benefits and job security will always play an important role in attracting and retaining employees,

Getting to know Mario Patenaude

- Has left his mark for a number of high profile Canadian companies and organizations including Canada Post, High Liner Foods, Pfizer, Bell Mobility, Irving, Spar Aerospace and the Canadian Forces
- President of the Halifax-based Integral HR Management Consulting firm
- A graduate of the Harvard Business School's Executive Education Program (2000)
- Author of *Performance Equation: The Rocket Science (Not!) Behind How Great People, Teams and Organizations Work* (2013)

one of the most critical elements that drive engagement is leadership. Great leaders are effective not only at growing a business and reaching goals. They recognize that the best way to do this is by empowering their employees. They provide them with the tools and development they need to be successful, they foster a work environment that supports their physical and mental well-being as well as work-life balance, and they involve them in decisions that affect them. When you demonstrate your commitment to your employees, they will reciprocate.



STAFF SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT GOAL

It certainly sounds like you're busy in your new role. So tell us more about yourself – what are your hobbies, how do you relax, and how are you enjoying New Brunswick?

I live uptown Saint John with my wife, Trinda, and we really like the city. In the summer we enjoy hiking, golfing and boating. We both walk to work almost every day. We also have our snowshoes in case we have another winter like we did last year.

I want New Brunswickers to know that my new role at WorkSafeNB is by far the one I wanted most in my entire career. I'm passionate – not only about organizational performance, but also about health, safety and wellness. I feel our mandate is very worthwhile – WorkSafeNB is part of New Brunswick's social and business fabric. I plan on making WorkSafeNB the final stop in my career, and I definitely plan on retiring on a high note. So for my teams, colleagues and I, not succeeding is definitely not an option.



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**Staff Satisfaction and
Engagement**



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