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2007-2012

WHSCC Strategic Plan & Risk Assessment

Our Future:
Healthy and Safe Workplaces in New Brunswick





VISION:
Healthy and Safe Workplaces in New Brunswick

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Effective Governance

Message from the Chairperson of the Board of Directors

The 2007-2012 *Strategic Plan and Risk Assessment* guides the Commission into the future – a future where all workplaces in New Brunswick are healthy and safe. The *Strategic Plan and Risk Assessment* represents each board member's commitment to ensuring that the compensation system is affordable for employers, that benefits are appropriate and secure for workers, and that the system is sustainable in the years to come. It represents our commitment to examine the internal and external issues facing the Commission and the Board's responsibility to: identify risks; determine if the risk is at an acceptable, cautionary, or unacceptable level; and guide the Commission's decisions for allocating resources to initiatives that will mitigate the risks, further the Strategic Goals, and achieve our Vision.

This plan, and the process undertaken by the Board, creates a strong link between governance and administration. The Board has refined the Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values, Goals, and Strategies and has determined where resources should be allocated. The President & CEO is then responsible to take the Board's Vision of the future and make it an operational reality. Managing the day-to-day operations of the Commission and reporting to the Board on the Commission's progress towards achieving the goals are also the responsibilities of the President & CEO.

The *Strategic Plan and Risk Assessment* is our commitment to the workers and employers of New Brunswick – our commitment to clearly communicate our five Strategic Goals and how we intend to achieve them. The Commission's results and progress can be reviewed on our website through our corporate accountability document – *Being Accountable: Working Toward Healthy and Safe Workplaces in New Brunswick*. These results are also published in the *WHSCC Stakeholder Report* and the *WHSCC Annual Report*.

Should you have questions about this document, any member of the Board of Directors would be happy to speak with you about these results and our Vision for the future.



Roberta Dugas,
Chairperson

Douglas C. Stanley,
President & CEO

Working Together

Brad Brinston

Lin Hupman

Ron Hyson

Paul M. LeBreton

John Mahar

Dr. Morris Mendelson

Conrad Pitre

Sharon Tucker

Excellence in Administration

Message from the President & CEO

The Board of Directors has provided strong leadership and governance for the Commission's administration. Through the strategic planning and risk assessment process, the Board has carefully considered the risks facing the Commission and allocated resources to initiatives which when implemented will help to mitigate those risks. This process has allowed the Board to thoroughly analyze the strategic direction of the Commission and refine the Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values, Goals, and Strategies to better respond to the internal and external factors that may impact the system.

Our Goals and Strategies are the foundation upon which the Commission sustains its business. They guide our operations and provide focus for allocating resources. The strong link between governance and administration means that the Board establishes our direction through goals, approves the strategies to achieve those goals, and the administration implements, monitors, measures, and reports to the Board of Directors on the Commission's progress.

We regularly measure our success related to the five Goals and report to the Board of Directors on our progress in implementing their strategic direction. The Commission's results continue to be positive. The strategies used by the Commission have led to improved benefits for injured workers, reduced assessment rates for employers, a reduction in accident frequency, and a health, safety, and compensation system that is fully funded. Despite this success, we continue to look at ways to improve the operations of the Commission and to provide quality services to the stakeholders of New Brunswick.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the Commission's Goals, Strategies, and Results with you as we strive to create healthy and safe workplaces in New Brunswick.

Accountable to You

The Board of Directors has developed the *Strategic Plan and Risk Assessment* within the context of its legislated responsibilities. The plan is a results-focused document that:

- ▶ States the Commission's long-term goals;
- ▶ Identifies measures that allow stakeholders to understand if the Commission is achieving the goals; and
- ▶ Identifies initiatives to which resources have been allocated.

The Board of Directors has also established eight Key Strategies (page 8) that will move the Commission toward the achievement of the Strategic Goals.

Safety

GOAL:

Our vigorous pursuit of a safe work culture will lead to a decline in the overall frequency of accidents and a significant decline in the overall frequency of accidents in industries and firms where our resources are focused.

MEASURE:

A decline in the overall accident frequency rate:

- ▶ Within the province
- ▶ Compared to other workers' compensation jurisdictions
- ▶ By payroll

Service

GOAL:

We will provide prompt, effective, efficient, just, fair, and caring services to each of our clients.

MEASURE:

We will continue to maintain or exceed the high level of satisfaction, in excess of 80%, that both our injured worker and employer clients have come to expect.

Return to work

GOAL:

We will decrease the time by which injured workers return or are ready to return to employment.

MEASURE:

The median of paid compensation days for claimants with a return to work goal.

Efficiency

GOAL:

We will hold the assessment rates to employers at the lowest level possible, consistent with the best possible benefits to clients.

MEASURE:

At a minimum, we will maintain a fully funded liability.

Staff satisfaction

GOAL:

Our employees will consider the Commission a good place to work.

MEASURE:

We will continue to maintain or exceed the high level of satisfaction, in excess of 80%, that our employees have come to expect.

In addition, other indicators that will be measured in support of the goal and compared to the most recent five-year average include:

- a) Absenteeism;
- b) Internal promotions;
- c) Health and safety; and
- d) Staff turnover.

The Board of Directors is accountable to the stakeholders of New Brunswick to achieve the Goals outlined in the strategic plan. These results are communicated openly and regularly through the following documents:

- ▶ *Being Accountable: Working Toward Healthy and Safe Workplaces in New Brunswick;*
- ▶ *WHSCC Report to Stakeholders;* and
- ▶ *WHSCC Annual Report.*

INITIATIVES:

We will experience a decline in the accident frequency rate by:

- ▶ Ensuring compliance with the *OHS Act* and its regulations through inspections, the accident review process, and zero tolerance campaigns.
- ▶ Providing consulting services that focus resources on high-risk industries.

- ▶ Providing education to workers, employers, and the public that focuses on key health and safety issues, training Joint Health and Safety Committees, and preparing young workers to safely join the workforce.
- ▶ Partnering with industries and safety associations to provide education, workshops, publications, and presentations that promote the WorkSafe brand and instill a safe work culture in New Brunswick workplaces.

INITIATIVES:

We will continue to maintain or exceed the high level of satisfaction that our clients have come to expect by:

- ▶ Centrally adjudicating claims to reduce the number of days it takes for an injured worker to receive their first benefit payment.
- ▶ Providing clients with a pre-authorized prescription medication formulary.
- ▶ Monitoring clients' awareness and satisfaction with Commission programs and services through the Client Satisfaction Survey.

- ▶ Continuing to partner with organizations that help increase injured workers' and employers' access to Commission information and services, such as access to clearance certificates through Service New Brunswick.
- ▶ Providing employers with the opportunity to pay assessments through MAAP, rather than annually.
- ▶ Pursuing third-party actions that provide employers with cost relief and workers with excess funds.

INITIATIVES:

We will decrease the median of compensation days paid for clients with a return to work goal by:

- ▶ Providing decentralized case management services to individual clients in the region in which they reside.
- ▶ Providing effective medical management through a continuum of care approach.

- ▶ Providing clients who have a work restriction with the opportunity to learn new skills and prepare them to re-enter the workforce.
- ▶ Partnering with the Government of New Brunswick to educate workers, employers, and the public on the duty to accommodate requirements.

INITIATIVES:

At a minimum, we will maintain a fully funded liability by:

- ▶ Regularly reviewing policies and legislation to determine the most appropriate benefits for injured workers while balancing assessment rates to employers.
- ▶ Performing internal audits.

- ▶ Dedicating resources to policy governance, investment management, and financial management to ensure the highest standards in governance and administration.
- ▶ Investigating claims for possible fraud and/or abuse.

INITIATIVES:

We will continue to maintain or exceed the high level of satisfaction that our employees have come to expect by:

- ▶ Continuously evaluating the competitiveness of employee wages and benefits.
- ▶ Managing a return to work and disability management program for employees.

- ▶ Monitoring, evaluating, and improving the Commission's health and safety program for employees.
- ▶ Planning for employee succession and providing staff with professional development opportunities through the Growing Leaders program.



Our Business

Our Mission

The Commission will promote a safe and healthy work environment to the workers and employers of New Brunswick, and efficiently provide quality services, just adjudication, and fair administration of the legislation.

Our Mandate

Promote the creation of a workplace culture in which all employees and employers view all occupational diseases and accidents as being preventable.

Provide timely compensation benefits including rehabilitation, medical aid, vocational counselling, and safe return-to-work services to injured workers.

Provide sustainable insurance and insurance-related services to the employer community.

Provide recommendations and advice to government with respect to legislation and publish such reports, studies, and recommendations, as the Commission considers advisable.

The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission of New Brunswick is a public body serving employers, workers, injured workers, and injured workers' dependants. The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring the Commission meets its legislated responsibilities, this includes identifying the corporate Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values, Goals, and Strategies.

The Commission's authority is derived from the *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission Act (WHSCC Act)*, the *Workers' Compensation Act (WC Act)*, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS Act)* and regulations. The Commission has dual responsibility for compensation, as well as health and safety in New Brunswick workplaces.

The New Brunswick *WC Act* provides medical aid, rehabilitation, and wage loss benefits to workers who are injured by an accident arising out of and in the course of their employment. In addition, employers and workers receive protection from litigation.

Under the *OHS Act*, the Commission has the authority to interpret the health and safety responsibilities of New Brunswick workplace parties, communicate the health and safety responsibilities of workplace parties, and enforce employer and worker compliance with the *OHS Act*.

The workers' compensation system and the occupational health and safety system of New Brunswick are funded by assessments paid by registered employers for the cost of accidents today and the future liability of these accidents. There are approximately 13,600 assessed employers who contribute to the system. Their contributions provide workplace accident insurance to approximately 291,900 workers and health and safety services to approximately 333,700 workers.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors provides governance and strategic leadership to the Commission. It strives to maintain a delicate balance between an affordable health, safety, and compensation system for employers, while providing fair benefits for injured workers. The Board achieves this balance by annually reviewing its *Strategic Plan and Risk Assessment*.

One of the primary purposes of strategic planning is to allow the Commission to effectively allocate resources. Achieving the five Strategic Goals takes people, time, and money. In order to use resources responsibly, the Board has prioritized how it intends to achieve the Strategic Goals by identifying eight Strategies.

President & CEO

Accountable to the Board of Directors, the President & CEO is responsible for implementing the Board's Strategies and turning Strategic Goals into reality. The President & CEO's focus is operational, dedicating the resources of the Commission toward achieving the results identified by the Board as fundamental to the success of the organization.

Organizational Structure

Through the direction of the Board, the President & CEO delegates responsibilities to staff who manage the activities of the organization. The operational structure consists of two divisions managed by the Vice-Presidents of the Commission. These divisions are:

- ▶ WorkSafe Services
- ▶ Corporate Services

The WorkSafe Services division is responsible for providing compensation and rehabilitation services to injured workers, as well as health and safety services to New Brunswick workplaces. Frontline services are delivered primarily by:

- ▶ Adjudicators
- ▶ Occupational therapists and physiotherapists
- ▶ Education consultants and ergonomic consultants
- ▶ Medical advisors
- ▶ Health and safety officers
- ▶ Case managers, long-term disability coordinators, rehabilitation specialists

The Corporate Services division is responsible for the Commission's administrative services and revenue-generation process. The division provides support services to the Board of Directors, including strategic planning, policy development, and financial reporting. It also provides:

- ▶ Rate setting
- ▶ Technology services
- ▶ Asset management
- ▶ Employer services and assessments

Human Resources, Communications, Internal Audit, and Corporate Secretary and General Counsel support the President & CEO's office.

In addition, the nationally accredited Workers' Rehabilitation Centre provides rehabilitation and return to work programs, including work recovery, vocational evaluation, and assistive devices services.

Strategic Context: 2007 Risk Analysis

The Board of Directors ensures that the strategic direction of the Commission remains relevant by regularly:

- ▶ Reviewing the results related to the five Strategic Goals;
- ▶ Reviewing the strategic plan; and
- ▶ Conducting a risk analysis.

This process enables the Board to refine its strategic direction and respond to risks facing the Commission. The analysis of information and data related to continually changing factors such as the economy, the workforce, the age of the population, and the cost of services such as health care and prescription medication form the basis for this process.

In 2007, the Board of Directors analyzed both internal and external sources of information to ensure effective oversight and monitoring, and to determine where resources should be allocated so that the greatest impact on the Commission's Strategic Goals would be achieved.

Information the Board considered included:

- ▶ The Commission's current funding status including assessment revenue, investment revenue, and the impact of volatile investment markets;
- ▶ The complete range of benefits available to injured workers in New Brunswick and how the WHSCC compares to other jurisdictions;
- ▶ Claims costs and volumes, including the trend of longer claim duration versus short duration and how other programs such as CPPD impact these costs;
- ▶ The availability and cost of health care and prescription medication and how those costs compare to the rising costs in the public health care system;
- ▶ The results of the review of the WHSCC's governance practices commissioned by the Board of Directors in 2006; and
- ▶ The WHSCC's administrative practices including business continuity planning and succession planning.

The Board also understands that factors in our community, the province of New Brunswick, across Canada, and around the world can impact the Commission's ability to meet its legislated mandate. Therefore, the Board also examined:

- ▶ The importance of cultural change to influence a reduction in accident frequency rates;
- ▶ Trends in socio-demographics such as the aging population, health status, and literacy levels of New Brunswick workers;
- ▶ The status and forecasted growth of the New Brunswick economy, labour force, and industry sectors;
- ▶ The Commission's role with respect to occupational diseases, emerging technology, or a potential pandemic outbreak; and
- ▶ The legal landscape in New Brunswick and across Canada.

This analysis provided the Board of Directors with a forum to assess opportunities available to the Commission and to use these opportunities to advance the Strategic Goals. The Board was also able to respond to the risks facing the Commission by evaluating and prioritizing the probability of each risk becoming reality; by estimating the possible effects and costs of each risk to the organization; and by determining the most appropriate strategy to manage the risk.

Through this process, the Board of Directors identified 17 strategic risks and formulated responses based upon whether they determined the risk to be at an acceptable, cautionary, or unacceptable level. The Board of Directors manages these risks through their policy decision-making process, evaluation committees, and by monitoring management's accountability through regular reports to the Board of Directors.

Our Values

We dedicate ourselves to the provision of prompt, effective, efficient, and caring services to each of our clients.

We believe that a team approach ensures that all members of the Commission are working towards a shared Vision, Mission, Values, and Goals.

We are committed to providing competent and energetic leadership that is focused on a clear direction for the Commission.

We ensure that our decisions are made with integrity, credibility, and accountability.

We ensure that our communications are based on trust, mutual respect, openness, and clear and reliable information.

We manage our human, material, and financial resources effectively in responding to our mandate and established priorities.

Our Goals

SAFETY

Our vigorous pursuit of a safe work culture will lead to a decline in the overall frequency of accidents and a significant decline in the overall frequency of accidents in industries and firms where our resources are focused.

RETURN TO WORK

We will decrease the time by which injured workers return or are ready to return to employment.

STAFF SATISFACTION

Our employees will consider the Commission a good place to work.

SERVICE

We will provide prompt, effective, efficient, just, fair, and caring services to each of our clients.

Healthy and Safe Workplaces in New Brunswick

EFFICIENCY

We will hold the assessment rates to employers at the lowest level possible, consistent with the best possible benefits to clients.



Achieving our Goals: Eight Strategies



1

Leveraging best practices in prevention, compensation, and rehabilitation

The Commission is able to promote a WorkSafe culture among New Brunswick workplaces, identify its role in health and safety, and offer improved services to workers and employers through its research and implementation of best practices.

2

Knowing New Brunswick workplaces

A sound understanding of New Brunswick workplaces allows the Commission to allocate its resources where they are most needed and provide improved opportunities for return to work.

3

Ensuring the highest standards in governance and administration

The Commission maintains high standards and transparent relationships with stakeholders by ensuring the effective stewardship of the Commission through policy governance and diligent oversight. The Board of Directors works closely with the administration to ensure operations reflect their strategic direction. The Board of Directors establishes the Strategies of the Commission and the President & CEO makes their Vision a reality.

4

Expecting the unexpected

By understanding the health status of New Brunswickers and anticipating the emergence of occupational diseases and pandemics, the Commission is able to plan for and mitigate the risks these issues may have on service delivery.

5

Balancing the system

The Commission strives to provide comprehensive benefits to injured workers while maintaining the lowest assessment rates in Atlantic Canada. The Board of Directors maintains this balance by focusing benefits where the needs are greatest and overseeing the Accident Fund.

6

Purchasing the right medical services, by the right provider, at the right cost

As the cost of public health care rises, the Commission must ensure that injured workers receive timely treatment that is appropriate for their injuries and is attained at a reasonable cost. The right care, by the right provider, for the right cost helps to maximize return to work opportunities, minimize economic loss for both workers and employers, and stabilize costs to the Commission so that comprehensive benefits can be maintained.

7

Creating long-term sustainability

To ensure that the compensation system is viable in the years ahead, the Board of Directors annually refines its strategic direction, assesses risks, and responds by allocating resources in areas that will have the greatest impact on achieving the Strategic Goals. The Commission continues to follow a disciplined approach in the management of its investments, as documented in policy. This includes periodic evaluation to ensure the investments are appropriate given the nature of the Commission's liabilities, its financial position, and the risk tolerance of the Board of Directors.

8

Educating New Brunswickers

The Commission promotes the WHSCC's legislation, policies, and services so that injured workers, employers, and the public know what to expect from the Commission and where to access the resources they need. Their knowledge helps them contribute to accident prevention and collaborate on finding timely return to work solutions.

WHSCC Contact Information

The Board of Directors and the President & CEO of the WHSCC look forward to your comments and discussion on our *2007-2012 Strategic Plan & Risk Assessment* document. You can reach us at:

Toll Free: 1 800 222-9775
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