

2012 Corporate Plan



Continued progress in partnership, toward a safety culture

The Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia is the province's voice for the value of safe, healthy work.

Every day our 400 employees are working to inspire others in communities across Nova Scotia toward a tomorrow with reduced human and financial impact of workplace injury. We believe workplace injury can be prevented, but, when it occurs, we work together with others to foster a timely and safe return to work. And, in those tragic cases where a return to work is not possible, we provide security from the impact of injury to workers and their families. This is the core of our vision: Nova Scotians, safe and secure from workplace injury.

Stakeholder partnership, and the belief that diverse perspectives bring about better results, informs all of what we do. Our entire governance structure is premised on this principle – our Board of Directors is comprised of equal representation from workers and employers.

This principle translates into day to day strategic planning and operations. Stakeholders are part of the conversation, offering input, guidance, a working side by side with us, as together we move forward toward a true safety culture. And each day, we do move forward. Year-end results for 2010 show that over the past five years, serious workplace injury has decreased by an average of five per cent per year. This success speaks to the work of workers, employers and stakeholders across this province.

Our work in 2012 will continue to be driven by partnership, collaboration, and by our firmly held belief that Nova Scotia can and will be a safer place to work and to do business.



Every day, physiotherapist Monique Miller at Centric Health Work Able in Halifax, takes people through tasks that promote healing and prepare them to return to the workplace.

Front cover photo: Every day, professionals like Eric Vallis at Armour Transportation Systems prevent potential injuries by using three points of contact when climbing in and out of truck cabs.

A safer Nova Scotia is becoming a reality

The past few years have shown real progress with regard to workplace safety in Nova Scotia.

Workplace injury's impact on the province has been steadily decreasing. At the end of 2010, for example, the number of these injuries was lower than it had been in 15 years.

We must continue our journey toward a safety culture.

The WCB's goals, set by our Board of Directors, remain aggressive on both injury prevention and return to work.

For 2012, the total portion of the rate expected to fund current operations is \$2.16 leaving \$0.49 to offset any shortfall of investment revenue and reduce the unfunded liability. If, by 2016, we are successful in our injury prevention and return to work goals, we will be able to increase the portion of the rate directed to the unfunded liability and the shortfall in investment income.

2012: Continued progress in partnership

Our work in the third year of our strategic plan will continue the momentum gained in previous years. We will support ongoing initiatives, and we will leverage the benefits of operational change over the past few years.

In particular, our work will continue to bring us closer to workplaces, including both the workers and employers who make their livings there. Our service model, redesigned based on employer and worker feedback, brings together prevention and return to work expertise on integrated service teams for the province's largest workplaces, where most injury occurs. We have dedicated service teams to small and medium workplaces, and, we will continue to leverage technological and operational enhancements to what is now centralized service to all workers and employers.

Six strategic themes

2012 is the third year of our 2010-2014 Strategic Plan. That plan is premised upon six key strategic themes. Each frames the operational work in each year.

1. An unwavering focus on workplace injury prevention.
2. Helping injured workers and employers plan a safe and timely return to work.
3. Building confidence in the WCB by engaging workers and employers in creating safer workplaces.
4. Working with others to expand the commitment to injury prevention and return to work across the province thereby further improving outcomes for Nova Scotians.
5. Making service improvements to provide workers and employers with a higher level of service tailored to meet their needs – supportive, compassionate service.
6. Maintaining our strategy to reach full funding and bring financial sustainability to the workplace safety and insurance system.

Our Balanced Scorecard

The specific performance measures captured in our balanced scorecard reflect our corporate goals. These allow us, and all Nova Scotians, to track and measure our performance over time.

Our scorecard contains a mix of measures – some financial, some non-financial – that reflects the diverse nature of our business. Success is measured not by any one area, but by coordinated accomplishment across all of the work we do.

Proposed WCB 2012 Balanced Scorecard

Quadrant	Measure	Actual Results					Targets		
		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 ⁶	2016
Service	Worker Satisfaction Index ¹	N/A	75%	73%	72%	73%	70%	70%	70%
	Employer Satisfaction Index	N/A	81%	79%	78%	77%	70%	70%	70%
	WCB Stakeholder Engagement Index ²	N/A	N/A	64%	N/A	67%	N/A	70%	70%
Operations	Time-loss injuries per 100 covered employees	2.61	2.57	2.48	2.26	2.13	2.12	2.07	1.91
	Return to Employability ³	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	95%	95%	96%
	Duration (composite in days)	105	102	95	98	98	98	94	88
	Time-loss days paid per 100 covered employees ³	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	249	231	197
	Cost of New EERBs(M) ³	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$68.2	\$63.6	\$64.1	\$67.8
Employee	Employee Satisfaction Index	74%	74%	75%	72%	69%	70%	70%	70%
Financial	Claims payments for the last 3 years per \$100 of assessable payroll	\$0.923	\$0.961	\$0.872	\$0.803	\$0.739	\$0.732	\$0.722	\$0.733
	Administrative costs per \$100 of assessable payroll (excluding prevention costs)	\$0.36	\$0.32	\$0.34	\$0.35	\$0.36	\$0.41	\$0.38	\$0.41
	Return on Investment Five-Year Rate of Return	7.4%	9.4%	3.1%	3.9%	3.6%	Benchmark + 0.85%		
	Five Year Target: Benchmark Portfolio Return + 0.85%	8.5%	10.8%	3.9%	5.2%	4.7%			

¹ The Worker Satisfaction index does not include workers on long-term benefits or those with claims for little or no time-loss.

² This measure adopted in 2008 is reported on biannually. No survey will be conducted in 2011.

³ These are new performance measures that were adopted in 2011. No historical data is available.

⁴ This is a new performance measure that was adopted in 2010. No historical data is available.

⁵ The targets for this measure are lower than previous years reflecting the impact of the proposed budget freeze (no impact in 2012 and less escalation from the 2012 base to future years administration); and a higher than previously budgeted deduction for Future Liability of Administration Cost.

⁶ Targets for 2012 will be reviewed and confirmed by the Board of Directors in December 2011.

2012 – Operations at a glance

Our operational priorities in 2012 continue to focus on reducing the impact of workplace injury on the people, businesses, and cultural fabric of Nova Scotia. They are best expressed when framed by our six strategic priorities.

Workplace injury prevention

Our efforts in injury prevention will continue both from an overall awareness point of view, and in hands-on implementation of real change that gets results. As we reach out to partners in new ways, the WCB plans to support a strategic review and renewal of the WSIS Prevention Strategy in 2012 which necessarily will involve stakeholder input. We will work to find the right linkages and clarify roles within the system when it comes to important safety-related areas such as training. For example, in 2012 the WCB will provide support in the development of a System response to the report and recommendations of the training quality working group, established by the Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Council.

Our social marketing programs will continue to raise awareness, overall and at the workplace level. Building on the launch of mandatory health and safety curriculum content for Grade 9 students in the 2010-2011 school year, we will support continued work with the Department of Education and other education outreach.

In 2012, we will find ways to continue to leverage technology, to better use and manage knowledge and information, and to create the plans for further enhancements of our service to small and medium business. We will move forward with continued exploration of the best way to implement minor enhancements, effective on 2013 rates, to make rates more responsive and to incent positive change when it comes to workplace safety, and overall claims costs.

Return to work

The best situation for everyone is when injury doesn't happen. But when it does, helping workers, employers and health care providers facilitate an early and safe return to work is our operational cornerstone. In 2012, our return-to-work operations will be defined by enhancing operations in our new service model, and by continued education and outreach within the health care community. The implementation of improvements to the direct referral to physiotherapy program will change for the better the way soft-tissue injuries are managed – our number one cost driver from a time-loss injury perspective.

Building confidence

Confidence is earned through operational results. We will continue work with our partners in WSIS to increase awareness and knowledge of programs and services, ensuring the proper liaisons are available where needed. Guided by an intentioned partnership strategy, we will review the WCB's place in the appeals system. We will further hone practice leadership, striving to grow our position as catalysts for change, while also appropriately managing our own enterprise risk along the way.

Working with others

The path to success in creating a culture of workplace safety is one defined by collaboration and partnership. Our business model now puts WCB expertise closer than ever to the workplaces, including workers and employers, with whom we work. We will continue to support industry-specific partnerships in workplace safety, such as safety associations.

We will also continue our work with our system partners and stakeholders, including in particular our work with such groups as the Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Council and the Joint Committee of the WCB, the Occupational Health and Safety Division of Nova Scotia Labour and Advanced Education, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. Shared priority areas of focus include the Internal Responsibility System, ergonomics, training quality and education, communications alignment, return to work and workforce development, and leadership.

Through the WSIS prevention strategy and our overall outreach and partnership strategy, we will enhance the ways in which we work together with like-minded partners in the system and beyond toward goals we all share.

Service enhancements

A significant element of our current focus is to continue to improve the quality of service we offer to workers and employers. This includes changing the way we deliver service through the ongoing implementation of our new service delivery model and accompanying technological improvements that will ensure we have adequate tools and systems in place to operate efficiently and effectively. A focus on service excellence will be powered by changes and improvements to legacy-based technological systems. Our front-line service will be informed by an e-business strategy that will help us chart the next evolution of online services, as the needs of those we serve continue to change.

Financial sustainability

There was some progress with regard to our funding strategy in 2010, but the WCB's financial position as a whole remains unfunded by \$596 million. The percentage of funded liability increased to 64 per cent in 2010, from under 60 per cent in 2008.

The WCB's funding strategy allows essentially three paths to change – change the level of benefits paid, change the rates charged to employers, or change the amount of time it will take to eliminate the unfunded liability. The WCB Board of Directors has decided to extend the period, and we anticipate reaching full funding, at about the years 2019-2023. In 2012, we will implement ongoing work to make rates more responsive to workplace health and safety performance, and we will continue along the path to full funding through prudent financial stewardship and management.

Looking forward

The Workers' Compensation Board stands for safer outcomes in Nova Scotia workplaces. In 2012, we will continue to work closely and collaboratively with our partners, to empowering tangible actions to reduce the number of workplace injuries and deaths.

When an injury does happen, we work with injured workers and their employers to help get the worker back on the job as soon as safely possible.

Our goal, overall, is to reduce the human and financial impact that workplace injury has in Nova Scotia, in achieving our vision of a Nova Scotia safe and secure from workplace injury.

***Nova Scotians:
Safe and secure from
workplace injury***