

2011 Corporate Plan



A Province Where No Workplace Is Unsafe

The WCB sets the standard for workplace injury insurance. We inform and inspire Nova Scotians in the prevention of workplace injury, but if it occurs, we support those whose lives it touches by championing a timely return to safe and healthy work. That is our mission.

The WCB is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of four employer and four worker representatives, along with a Deputy Chair and Chair. Stakeholders have input into Board appointments and Board members bring stakeholder points of view to the table.

Each year, the Board of Directors formally engages stakeholders in discussions on key issues facing the WCB and the workplace safety and insurance system. Thus, Board members have a complex responsibility to ensure all viewpoints are fairly represented, while balancing these interests for the greater good of the WCB and the system overall.

Reducing Workplace Injury

The WCB's vision is: Nova Scotians – **safe and secure from workplace injury**. Reducing human suffering and the cost associated with workplace injury is what drives us.

We focus on two key areas:

- **Reducing the number of people injured on the job.** The WCB is helping to create a workplace safety culture in Nova Scotia by working directly with employers and workers to reduce the number of people injured on the job. Our approach includes raising awareness of workplace safety among Nova Scotians and promoting safe work practices on the job. We offer rate incentives to reward employers who take positive steps to improve their workplaces, while encouraging employers who do not to take immediate action.
- **Safe and timely return to work.** The WCB assists injured workers and their employers to achieve safe and timely return to work after a workplace injury. Our approach includes working with injured workers to identify and remove barriers to their return to work, working with employers to implement return to work programs and partnering with the health care community to ensure appropriate services are available for injured workers.



Aggressive Pursuit of Workplace Safety

Based on clear input from stakeholders, the Board of Directors set aggressive goals for the WCB. By 2016, we want to reduce the number of people hurt on the job by 22 per cent, and reduce the time off work due to injury by 26 per cent from the 2006 levels. When we reach these goals, 5,000 fewer Nova Scotians will be injured on the job every year and 1,300 fewer people will lose time from work due to injury. At that point, we envision the dawn of a new day for workplace safety in Nova Scotia. Our province will be a leader in workplace safety and become a magnet for employers and employees. Workplace safety will be regarded as a key to productivity and as an essential economic driver in the fiscal health of the province.

Lowering the Price of Working

To see an improved safety culture, we must refuse to accept that workplace injuries are the price of working in Nova Scotia. They don't have to be. The WCB remains committed to helping people be safe at work. However, our goals have complexity in that they are largely out of our direct control. Achieving these goals will take the combined efforts of employers, workers, government, unions, healthcare providers and others to effect the significant cultural change that is required in Nova Scotia workplaces. We understand that to engage all Nova Scotians in achieving this cultural change, the WCB must be recognized as a true safety champion with a strong and credible voice, and the public must have a high level of confidence in us. The most effective way for the WCB to gain this confidence is to achieve the performance targets in our annual corporate plan.

This is the second year of our 2010-2014 Strategic Plan and it is an opportunity to continue to work with stakeholders to build on solid progress made to date.

The following **six key strategic themes** will guide us:

- 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.

That's how you prevent a workplace injury. That's how you stay safe.

Learn more at worksafeforlife.ca

The initiatives the WCB will undertake in 2011 reflect a continuation of much of the work that was started in previous years along with some new areas of focus related to these six strategic themes.

Externally, we will work with our partners and stakeholders to improve service by providing support for the review of several pilot initiatives – the two stakeholder counsellor programs and WSIS Liaison Officer – that are underway throughout the workplace safety and insurance system. The WCB will also continue to work to enhance delivery of key health care programs and service and to foster positive and effective working relationships with stakeholders and the community.

In 2011 we will support the system's Coordinating Committee by engaging stakeholders in a discussion about an appropriate process to develop an agenda for legislative change. This consultation process may also provide the WCB with an opportunity to hear stakeholder opinions about our strategy to reach full funding.

We will continue work that was started on the internal review of our assessment rate setting model to explore its effectiveness in motivating the behaviour change needed to support injury prevention and return to work. We will also continue to make service improvements and in 2011 our focus will be on continuing work to develop an Integrated Service Centre, leverage our new Voice Over Internet Phone (VOIP) system, and begin work to expand our online services.

Working Together We Can Save Lives

The WCB's goals are reflected in a scorecard with specific corporate performance measures. The performance measures allow us and all Nova Scotians to track our performance over time. We focus on a broad range of business areas, which is why our scorecard contains a mix of financial and non-financial measures. The 2011 corporate plan includes one and five-year targets for our performance measures that outline the progress we will make towards achieving our long term goals.

As we continue to push hard for sustainable change, the WCB remains committed to our vision of building a new workplace safety culture in Nova Scotia and supporting our system partners and stakeholders towards achieving that vision. If we are successful at the strategies outlined in this corporate plan, we will see further progress toward our long term goals. By the end of 2011 (using 2006 as our starting point) we will have:

- Reduced the number of people hurt on the job by 14%
- Reduced the time off work due to injury by 16%



Quadrant	Measure	Targets	
		2011	2014
Service	Worker Satisfaction Index ¹	70%	70%
	Employer Satisfaction Index	70%	70%
	WCB Stakeholder Engagement Index ²	70%	70%
Operations	Time Loss Injuries per 100 Covered Employees	2.36	2.22
	Time Loss Days Paid per 100 Covered Employees ⁴	250-300	212
	Duration (composite, in days)	93	80
	Return to Employability ⁴	94% - 95%	95%
	Cost of New EERBs(M) ³	\$62.7	\$65.8
Employee	Employee Satisfaction Index	70%	70%
Financial	Claims payments for the last 3 years per \$100 of assessable payroll	\$0.819	\$0.800
	Administrative costs per \$100 of assessable payroll (excluding prevention costs)	\$0.41	\$0.43
	Return on Investment Five-Year Rate of Return Five Year Target: Benchmark Portfolio Return + 0.85%	Benchmark + 0.85%	

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.

³ This is a new performance indicator that was adopted in 2010. No historical data is available.

⁴ These are new performance measures that will be adopted in 2011.

We are continuing to strive to be a leader in the delivery of quality service to workers and employers and we will work closely with them on injury prevention and safe and timely return to work so that together we can lessen the human and financial impact of workplace injuries.

The WCB is currently 62 per cent funded – an improvement over being only 27% funded in the early 1990s. We adopted a long-term strategy in 1995 is to become fully funded so future generations of employers will no longer have to make up shortfalls in the Accident Fund on top of their regular premiums. If employers and workers in Nova Scotia continue to make positive changes, the combined savings associated with reaching our goals of fewer injuries and more safe and timely return to work mean costs of the system would be reduced by \$36 million by 2016.

As for many organizations, the past couple of years have been challenging given the global economic downturn and the WCB reported significant financial losses in 2007 and 2008, primarily due to investment returns. We had much more positive results in 2009 but, unfortunately, the gains realized in 2009 were not sufficient to offset the losses of the previous two years. This has implications for our funding strategy. The economic downturn hit many pension funds hard and it is a problem that is certainly not unique to the WCB.

When considering the funding strategy, there are basically three choices the WCB can make – we can: change the level of benefits we pay to workers who are injured on the job; change the rates we charge to employers; or change the amount of time it will take to eliminate the unfunded liability. Since the funding strategy was adopted, the Board of Directors has either lengthened or shortened the period required to eliminate the unfunded liability a few times in response to annual financial results.

Appreciating the current economic environment, and understanding the hardship for workers and employers that would be caused by reducing benefits or increasing rates, based on current projections the period to eliminate the unfunded liability will be extended. The Board anticipates reaching full funding between the years 2019-2023.

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