



New Legislation Targets WCB

The Ministry of Skills Development and Labour has announced the introduction of new legislation designed to improve the WCB by:

- Restoring the system to financial sustainability
- Modernizing how benefits for injured workers are calculated
- Clarifying coverage for mental stress
- Restructuring Workers' Compensation Board governance
- Making the system more responsive to employees and employers
- Making it possible for the WCB to maintain employers' rates at a competitive level to other provinces

According to the Ministry, the proposed legislation establishes a new board of directors for the WCB, whose focus will be the best interests of the system overall rather than advocacy for any particular group. The new Board will be composed of a chair, one worker representative, one employer representative, one director who is a professional who provides health care or rehabilitation services to people with disabilities, one director who is an actuary, and two people appointed to represent the public interest.

The proposed changes are consistent with the Alan Winter report on WCB legislation and policy, commissioned in September 2001. Apparently this will only be the first Bill dealing with the WCB to be introduced with another to follow that will deal with the WCB appeals process. Further legislation is expected in the fall of 2002 or the spring of 2003 dealing with additional issues, such as occupational disease compensation, and survivor benefits.

Further information on these changes can be obtained on-line at the BC government website at: www.gov.bc.ca

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