WORKERS' SAFETY AND COMPENSATION COMMISSION NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND NUNAVUT





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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
ABOUT THE WSCC	6
VISION MISSION VALUES	8
THE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN	9
THE PROCESS	10
CURRENT RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES Risks Opportunities	12 13 13
STRATEGIC PRIORITES AND OBJECTIVES	14
THE ROADMAP FOR 2015 – 2017 Strategic Priority 1: Advancing the Safety Culture Strategic Priority 2: Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes for Employers and Workers Strategic Priority 3: Sustaining the Workers' Protection Fund	
ENABLERS	26
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	28

Introduction



Joint Message from the Chairperson and President

The Vision of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) is to eliminate workplace diseases and injuries. While developing our new three year strategic plan we discussed and researched many issues and topics However, when it came time to make the tough decisions about where our strategic priorities lay, we never lost sight of our Vision.

As the WSCC renews itself at the start of this new strategic cycle we have time to reflect on our success, evaluate

workplace trends and take advantage of new opportunities. We believe that all workplace injuries are preventable and our three strategic priorities are chosen to achieve this goal. We continue to advance the safety culture, deliver quality services and outcomes for both employers and workers, and sustain the Workers' Protection Fund.

The successes of the WSCC are the result of continuous collaboration between the Governance Council and administration. The 2015-2017 Strategic Plan is evidence of this collaboration. This plan builds on our successes over the last three years and continues to move us in a direction of keeping northern workplaces safe. Together the WSCC and our stakeholders can ensure that workers across the Northwest Territories and Nunavut safely return home to their loved ones.

Our stakeholders are the reason our organization exists and you are the ones who inspire us every day. We hope this plan also inspires you.

Together, we are excited to present our 2015-2017 Strategic Plan.

DAVID TUCKER, CHAIRPERSON	DAVE GRUNDY, PRESIDENT & CEO

About The WSCC

Like all workers compensation systems in Canada, the Meredith Principles are the foundation of the Workers Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Sir William Meredith tabled a report in the Ontario Legislature over one hundred years ago, establishing the principles that are still relevant and stand true today. The Meredith Principles are a historic compromise in which employers fund the compensation system and share a liability for injured workers. In return, injured workers surrender their right to sue and are provided benefits while they return to health and work. The workers compensation system in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is an essential part of life in the north, contributing to social and economic stability, and positively impacting the quality of life of northern workers.

The WSCC is an independent statutory agency governed by a Governance Council appointed by the Governments of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The WSCC is responsible for administering the *Workers' Compensation Acts, Safety Acts, Explosives Use Acts* and the *Mine Health and Safety Acts*. The organization is divided into six divisions and includes: the President's Office, Stakeholder Services, Corporate Services, Executive Services, Financial Services and Prevention Services. Together, with their partners, the WSCC provides services to almost to 40,000 workers and 4000 employers across the Northwest Territories and Nunavut; processing over 3000 claims and conducting over 1000 inspections a year to keep workplaces safe.

Sir William Meredith's report is based on the following key principles:

1. NO FAULT COMPENSATION:

Workers are paid benefits regardless of how the injury occurred. The worker and employer waive the right to sue. There is no argument over responsibility or liability for an injury.

2. SECURITY OF BENEFITS:

A fund is established to guarantee benefits are paid.

3. COLLECTIVE LIABILITY:

Employers, on the whole, share liability for workplace injury insurance. The total cost of the compensation system is shared by all employers, who contribute to a common fund. Financial liability becomes their collective responsibility.

4. INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION:

The organizations who administer workers' compensation insurance are separate from government.

5. EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION:

Only workers' compensation organizations provide workers' compensation insurance. All compensation claims are directed solely to the compensation board. The board is the decision-maker and final authority for all claims.

Vision Mission Values

Our Vision

Eliminate workplace diseases and injuries.

Our Mission

In partnership with stakeholders, we ensure workplace safety and care for workers.

Our Values

Respect — We demonstrate care, compassion, honesty and fairness.

Engagement — We work with others to ensure meaningful participation and collaboration.

Integrity — We honour our commitments.

Openness — We are clear and transparent in everything we do.

Excellence — We are efficient and service focused.

What are an organization's Vision, Mission and Values?

Vision: A clear, concise and compelling picture of what success looks like to the Commission. The vision needs to motivate and inspire.

Mission: A brief explanation of why the Commission exists, what it provides for and for whom.

Values: Expressions of fundamental beliefs that guide the behaviours of staff in how they act toward each other and with stakeholders.

The Role of The Strategic Plan

This strategic plan is a roadmap. It is a direction setting document that provides the framework for planning for 2015 – 2017. Together the Governance Council and the Senior Management Team developed this plan, which is geared toward achieving results and the creation of an environment that encourages and supports a commitment to stakeholders.

Together, with the annual Corporate Plan, the Strategic Plan outlines the organization's priorities with stakeholders.

This strategic plan is not an end to itself, but rather a fluid and flexible guide that allows for the yearly development of a focused list of valid, necessary and measurable actions that advance the organization towards its objectives. As such, this plan is not a standalone document. Together, with the annual Corporate Plan, it outlines the organization's priorities with stakeholders. Internally, it provides the basis for more detailed divisional operational plans to ensure that all organizational activities connect to the Vision to Eliminate Workplace Diseases and Injuries.

The Process

The development of this plan is the result of collaborative discussions and research among staff, senior management and the Governance Council over the months of November 2013 to April 2014. The planning process provides an opportunity to critically examine the WSCC's operations and assess how the organization is progressing towards its vision. This plan builds on the progress made since the last strategic plan in 2014,

The strategic planning process challenges the organization to prioritize competing initiatives – to choose what to do and what not to do – and it ensures all actions are a fit with the organization's Vision, Mission and Values.

recognizes the factors contributing to the WSCC's successes and reflects on areas that can improve. The strategic planning process challenges the organization to prioritize competing initiatives – to choose what to do – and what not to do and it ensures all actions are a fit with the organization's Vision, Mission and Values.

The planning process began with preliminary discussions among the WSCC's Senior Management Team and the Governance Council. An environmental scan using SWOT and PESTLE analysis tools identifies the trends, events and issues that could impact the WSCC in the future. A SWOT analysis is a technique for understanding the strengths and weaknesses of an organization as well as the opportunities and threats. A PESTLE analysis is a technique for assessing an organization's environmental influences. The analyses are subsequently used to guide strategic decision-making.

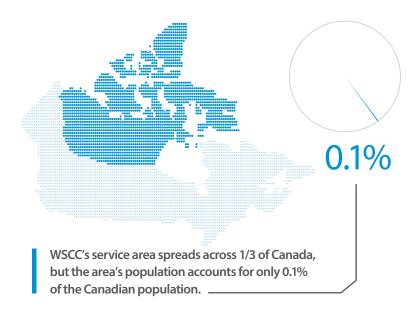
Inputs for the SWOT and PESTLE analyses were:

- Independent consultation with Governance Council members;
- Independent consultation with senior management team members and management;
- WSCC employee surveys;
- Stakeholder Services historical activities and trends, including claims characteristics;
- Current states of safety and prevention;
- Past stakeholder surveys;
- Documentation an analysis of WSCC programs; and
- Reviews of other Canadian safety and compensation organization's strategic plans.

SWOT Analysis	PESTLE Analysis
 S – Strengths W – Weaknesses O – Opportunities T – Threats 	P – Political E – Economic S – Sociological T – Technological L – Legal E – Environmental

Current Risks And Opportunities

The WSCC completed an environmental scan as a part of its strategic planning process. The environmental scan confirms that the WSCC faces many of the same challenges experienced by jurisdictions throughout Canada as well as challenges unique to the north. In particular, the vast geography of the north and the dispersion of remote communities make it extremely challenging to manage limited resources and ensure reach of services to stakeholders. With a landscape equivalent to 1/3 of the Canadian land mass, but a population accounting for approximately 0.1% the Canadian population, there is a compelling case for action and prioritization of scarce resources to ensure a balance of value and service to stakeholders. Managing scarce resources highlights the importance of leveraging the strengths of partners and to ensure systems and tools are in place to best service the varying needs of WSCC stakeholders.



Risks

Internal and external risks that the WSCC must work diligently to mitigate include:

- Operating in an unpredictable economy, impacting both the number of employers and workers in the compensation system;
- Ensuring access to medical care remains at a suitable level;
- Managing increasing costs associated with providing medical treatments;
- Managing potential increases in claims volumes as a result of ongoing changes to the scope of defined injuries and diseases;
- Appropriately addressing the needs of workers who reside in other jurisdictions;
- · Adapting to rapid technological change; and
- Ensuring WSCC management has access to robust internal information to allow for informed management of the organization.

Opportunities

The environmental scan also confirmed there are many opportunities that the WSCC can capitalize on; the most significant of which include:

- Expanding safety training and educational outreach activities by the WSCC and partners in order to advance the safety culture;
- Expanding the implementation of internal process efficiencies;
- Ensuring industries (i.e. Oil & Gas) impacted by devolution in the Northwest Territories receive support;
- Fully implementing an e-Business strategy;
- Enhancing internal information technology infrastructure and capacity; and
- Focusing on return to work services.

Strategic Priorites And Objectives

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Objectives	
Advancing the Safety Culture	 Take a proactive approach to the workplace incidents through description. Strengthen targeted inspection and enforcement efforts. Target safety awareness for his populations and injury types. Develop and implement an editraining framework for employ. Drive awareness of incidents are Continue the evolution of safety programs for employers. 	irected services on, compliance igh risk ucation/ ers nd information sharing
Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes for Workers and Employers	 Promote safe and timely return Review WSCC legislation Increase access of WSCC service Implement the e-Business strate Continue and expand implement excellence initiative 	es tegy
Sustaining the Workers' Protection Fund	 Provide responsible stewardshi Ensure stable rates for employe 	ip of the workers' protection fund ers
	Enablers	
People: our people are integral to WSCC success. Fully engaging our employees expertise, commitment and passion allows our organization to excel.	Organizational Capacity: information management, financial resources and internal processes that allow for the delivery of the most appropriate and efficient care and compensation services.	Partnerships: that allow for collaboration and achievement of common goals.

The Roadmap for 2015-2017

The WSCC provides a vital service to the employers and workers of the north. Workplaces are safer today because of the work of the WSCC, our partners and stakeholders. The progress achieved to date must not stop. The organization needs to continually adapt to emerging trends and develop plans to mitigate identified risks and capitalize on opportunities.

The planning process identifies three strategic priorities, two of which continues on the work established during the last strategic plan: Advancing the Safety Culture and Sustaining the Workers' Protection Fund. The remaining priority, Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes for Workers and Employers ensures that services are provided in areas and in ways that address stakeholders' diverse needs.



Strategic Priority 1: Advancing the Safety Culture

Economic development in the north continues to grow, with the mining industry remaining a stronghold of the economy in both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Expansion and access to the north is broadening, with projects such as the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway. As a result, the northern workforce continues to fluctuate. Therefore, it is critical that **Advancing the Safety Culture** remains on this strategic plan to ensure that progress towards safety is continually maintained in order to mitigate the turnover and influx of new northern workers.

A total of four objectives are in place to support **Advancing the Safety Culture:**



OBJECTIVE

Take a proactive approach to the prevention of workplace incidents through directed services

- Strengthen targeted inspection, compliance and enforcement efforts
- Target safety awareness for high risk populations and injury types

ACTIONS

- Support internal management decision making by improving access to data with the development of management reporting and business intelligence tools.
- Develop a strategy for directed inspections by assessing the risk of industry and injury types.
- Identify high risk populations through data analysis and deliver targeted safety awareness campaign to these groups.

In an environment with limited resources, directed services ensure resources are applied to areas most in need and to areas that will see the greatest impact. **Advancing** Directed services ensure resources are applied to areas most in need and to areas that will see the greatest impact.

the Safety Culture in the north is not an easy task. The vast geography already mentioned, the constant fluctuation of workers and cultural differences all affect the WSCC priority of Advancing the Safety Culture. Everyone at the WSCC are ambassadors for Advancing the Safety Culture, but the bulk of the work lies with the Safety Officers in the Prevention Services Division and the Communications Team in Executive Services.

Safety Officers are direct touch points for the stakeholders. They are in the field, directly working with stakeholders by conducting safety inspections, ensuring legislation is followed and taking preventative measures such as issuing orders to ensure workplace safety. With the ground that needs to be covered in the north and challenging travel distances and conditions, it is important that Safety Officers' time in the field are strategically directed. To support the decision on where the efforts the Safety Officer should lie, the WSCC commits to supporting internal management decisions with improved access to data and data intelligence tools. This includes developing reports that can identify high risk population and injury types, as well as ensuring data access is supported with business intelligence systems and software.

Awareness of workers' rights and the promotion of safety information is supported by the Communication Team. Along with Prevention Services, they identify and target their communication needs, develop a relevant message and find the communication vehicles to best reach their audience.

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Develop and implement an education/training framework for employers	 Support employers in meeting their legislated requirements by identifying education and training needs and best practices.
	 Evaluate how to provide education and training delivery.
	 Develop relationships with new training providers and strengthen partnerships with existing training partners.

In the recent past, the WSCC has not differentiated between the terms education and training. However, in order to best utilize WSCC resources and leverage their partners' strengths, the need to differentiate between the subtleties of education and training has become evident.

Training is the practical and hands-on course driven explanation of how something is done. For example, when a worker is working at heights at or above three metres, they will need to know how to perform in order to work safely and will need practical and hands-on training to learn how to use fall protection equipment.

Education explains why something is the way it is and the ways an individual or team are able to complete a task. Again, using the example of fall protection, education or educational materials will provide an individual with knowledge about why fall protection is necessary and the various materials and resources available to stakeholders to help them comply with territorial occupational health and safety legislation.

As a part of this strategic plan, the WSCC is establishing an education and training framework for employers. This includes identifying education and training needs and

The WSSC's education efforts will provide guidance for employers on safety best practices.

best practices for areas where employers have gaps in meeting legislation. After that will be an evaluation of the best way to provide the identified education and training, which will involve finding new training providers, fostering new relationships and strengthening partnerships with existing partners.

In a geography as vast and complex as the north, it is difficult to focus efforts on all areas of training and education. Where possible, the WSCC will focus its efforts on education, while leveraging partnerships to expand training reach. The WSSC's education efforts will provide guidance for employers on safety best practices, including Codes of Practice and Safety Toolboxes for northern employers.

3 OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Drive awareness of incidents and information sharing	 Establish an online portal for employers to facilitate WSCC information sharing and awareness of hazard alerts. Leverage partnerships and stakeholders to expand reach of occupational health & safety information.

The WSCC is a centralized resource for safety information, holding vast amounts of data on claims, hazards, incidents and legislation knowledge. This objective aims to disseminate this knowledge to stakeholders. This includes leveraging the WSCC's online resources, in particular, the WSCC website, to facilitate information sharing from the WSCC to stakeholders. In addition, relationships are forged with partners, such as trade associations and communities, to leverage their communication vehicles to expand the reach of occupational health & safety information.



OBJECTIVE

Continue the evolution of safety incentive programs for employers

ACTIONS

- Continue to implement recommendations from the *Safe Advantage* program evaluation.
- Evaluate the viability of a safety incentive program for small business; implement recommendations as required.

Safe Advantage is the WSCC's experience rating program that rewards employers' safety culture. Experience rating is a common feature of workers' compensation insurance programs across North America and around the world. It permits financial incentives for employers with proven health and safety management practices, low claims experience costs and positive return to work practices. As a part of the Safe Advantage launch in 2007, a five-year program evaluation was scheduled for 2013.

A number of recommendations came out of the *Safe Advantage* evaluation that support the evolution and growth of the program within the 2015 – 2017 strategic planning cycle. In particular, the evaluation recommends the assessment of an experience rating model for small business employers who do not currently qualify for *Safe Advantage*.



Strategic Priority 2:

Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes for Employers and Workers

As a service-based organization, The WSCC exists to meet the needs of their stakeholders. This strategic priority ensures that the interests of stakeholders are top of mind and that systems and tools are in place to support stakeholder needs.

A total of five objectives are in place to support **Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes for Employers and Workers**.

1 OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Promote safe and timely return to work	 Increase employer's and workers' understanding of the benefits of early and safe return to work. Leverage partnerships and stakeholders in supporting early and safe return to work. Develop programs to support return to work On an annual basis determine directed services initiatives based on analysis of historical claims trends.

Workers and employers benefit from early and safe return to work. It's been proven that early intervention and maintaining the worker-employer relationship help speed

recovery, while helping the employer retain trained and skilled staff. Thus, within this objective, it is important that the WSCC help stakeholders understand the benefits of early and safe return to work. WSCC will leverage partnerships with stakeholders,

Early intervention and maintaining the worker-employer relationship help speed recovery, while helping the employer retain trained and skilled staff. such as medical providers and employers, to develop programs that support return to work. Compassionate, caring and timely service must be a part of what the WSCC does, as return to work programs must address the need to safely introduce a worker back into the workplace, to prevent avoidable disability that can occur after a worker is injured.

Directed Services is applied to the return to work objective to help identify the initiatives that best suit employers and injury types that requires the WSCC's focus.

ОВЈЕСТІVЕ	ACTIONS
Review WSCC legislation	 Develop a methodology to identify priority issues for legislative review. Develop and implement a plan to conduct ongoing legislative reviews.

As new research into occupational health and safety emerges and the definition of workplace injuries and diseases evolves, the WSCC needs to stay at the forefront of changes that can impact stakeholders. While legislation ownership lies with the Northwest Territories and Nunavut governments, conducting legislative reviews and staying current in changes and trends to workers' compensation systems will support the strategic objective of **Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes** for WSCC stakeholders.

3 овјестіче	ACTIONS
Increase access to WSCC Services	 Optimize access to WSCC services by evaluating stakeholder needs.
	 Develop and implement communication strategy to increase understanding of WSCC services and how stakeholders can access them.

WSCC stakeholders span a wide geography and have varying degrees of access to WSCC services. A worker or employer in Yellowknife or Iqaluit have very different access to the WSCC than a worker or employer in Gjoa Haven. Within this objective the WSCC will evaluate stakeholders' needs in order to optimize their access for stakeholders. This includes ensuring official language access is available and that the proper technology tools are in use.

Based on past stakeholder surveys, 58% of employers and 77% of workers agree that the WSCC needs to improve their communication about the services they provide (2013 WSCC Stakeholder Survey). This provides a clear directive for the WSCC to develop and implement a communication strategy to increase understanding of WSCC services and how stakeholders can access them.

4 OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Implement the e-Business strategy	 Implement internet-based self-service tools for employers and workers by conducting ongoing evaluation of stakeholder e-Business needs. Ensure internal readiness for e-Business with systems infrastructure and human resources planning.

Conducting business using internet-based tools and providing web-based service options is standard in most public and private sectors. The WSCC already employs some e-Business tools, but recognizes that more is needed to meet stakeholders expectations. Within the last strategic plan, an e-Business strategy was developed that evaluated the current state of WSCC e-Business, in addition to an evaluation of the readiness of the WSCC to provide more e-Business service options to stakeholders. In this strategic planning cycle, the implementation of the e-Business strategy will occur. In addition, the WSCC will ensure internal readiness, including implementing systems and infrastructure and the human resources planning required to support e-Business.

5 OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Continue and expand implementation of the Continuous Excellence (CE) initiative	 Ensure sustainability of the CE initiative by continuing to build internal Lean expertise. Continue to implement process improvements events. Incorporate Lean principles into management practices and planning.

Continuous Excellence (CE) is the WSCC's commitment to continually improve service to stakeholders. CE is an initiative using Lean principles to improve business processes and customer service by maximizing flow and minimizing waste. The CE program was launched in the last strategic cycle and already various front line services for stakeholders have been identified and positively impacted. This strategic plan will continue to implement process improvement projects, while ensuring sustainability of the CE initiative. Turnover of staff occurs in any organization, therefore, building a sustainable culture of continuous improvement and the development of a system for building internal Lean expertise is important for the longevity of the program.

Until now, CE has been focussed on front-line services, resulting in direct and immediate results for stakeholders. As the CE program evolves and matures, Lean principles will be incorporated into management practices and planning.



Strategic Priority 3: Sustaining the Workers' Protection Fund

The WSCC is solely funded by employers' assessments. Protecting the Workers' Protection Fund is a direct outcome of one of the Meredith Principles: Security of Benefits. Responsible stewardship of the Workers' Protection Fund ensures value for employers' money and care for injured workers when they need it. Within the last strategic plan, the WSCC's funding strategy was refined to ensure stability for employers' assessment rates and financial risks are mitigated and controls are in place. This strategic plan continues on the work of the last plan.

Responsible stewardship of the Workers' Protection Fund ensures value for employers' money and care for injured workers when they need it.

A total of two objectives are in place to support **Sustaining the Workers' Protection Fund.**

1 OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS
Provide responsible stewardship of the Workers' Protection Fund	 Incorporate risk-management into management practices. Conduct ongoing, control-based internal audits. Adjust investment risk profile by conducting an asset/liability study.

To provide responsible stewardship of the Workers' Protection Fund, the WSCC will incorporate risk-management into management practices. This includes actively identifying, classifying and managing risk. Control-based internal audits will continue to ensure proper checks and balances are in place to protect funds.

The WSCC implemented a revised funding strategy during the last cycle of its strategic plan. The funding strategy provides directed actions to take if the funded position falls above or below a prescribed zone. To ensure the most appropriate investment portfolio asset mix to fund the benefit liability exists, an asset/liability study is necessary. The asset/liability study will provide direction to minimize investment risk while targeting WSCC investment returns required to fund the benefit liability.



OBJECTIVE

ACTIONS

Ensure stable rates for employers

• Continue implementation and adherence to the funding strategy.

Stability in assessment rates is necessary for employers to confidently conduct business in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Rate stability reduces their exposure to financial risk and volatility. The funding strategy was developed with the objective of providing a balanced funding system that is sustainable for the future, in addition to providing stability for stakeholders. Under the funding strategy, there is a built in tolerance for market fluctuation; a funded position of 105% - 135% (assets over liabilities) directs stable rates for employers. The funding strategy is continuously monitored to ensure the responsible stewardship of the Workers' Protection Fund.

Enablers

There are two critical elements that together, provide the framework for the WSCC strategic plan: enablers and strategic priorities. There is an interdependent relationship between the two elements and they both drive the organization towards its vision.

Enablers form the foundation upon which the WSCC launches its strategic priorities and achieves its objectives. Enablers can both limit and help the organization. Although these enablers are participants in other areas of the strategic plan, regardless of their strategic importance, it is the enablers who ensure the success of everyday operational requirements.

People

People are integral to the success of the WSCC. Fully engaged employees and their expertise, commitment and passion allow programs and services to excel.



Organizational Capacity

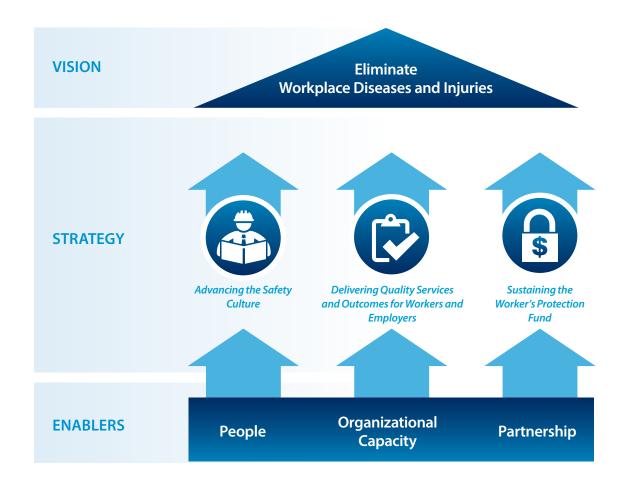
Information Management Capacity – information systems are required to conduct the service and processes of the organization.

Financial – financial resources are required to support daily operational and maintenance expenses of the organization.

Process – internal processes allow for delivery of the most appropriate and efficient care for stakeholders.

Partnerships

The Mission states, "In partnership with stakeholders, we ensure workplace safety, and care for workers". WSCC partners allow for collaboration and achievement of common goals.



Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Priorities	Key Performance Indicators	Metric	2015	2016	2017
Advancing the Safety Culture	1. Time loss frequency	TL claims per 100 workers			
	2. No time loss frequency	NTL claims per 100 workers	5.53	5.53	5.53
	3. Directed inspections	% total inspections that are directed	70%	75%	80%
	Safe Advantage employers in penalty position	% of Safe Advantage employers receiving a penalty	19%	18%	17%
	5. Employers passing the Prevention component of Safe Advantage Management Practices Questionnaire*	% completed questionnaires that pass the Prevention component	86%	87%	88%
Delivering Quality Services and Outcomes for Workers and Employers	6. Time loss duration	days	Less than past 5-year rolling average		
	7. Time to first compensation payment	% of payments made under 20 days	90%	90%	90%
	8. Employers passing the Return to Work component of the Safe Advantage Management Practices Questionnaire*	% completed questionnaires that pass the return to work component	88%	89%	90%
	9. e-Business client satisfaction	% very satisfied and satisfied	n/a	Employers: 80% Workers: 80%	Employers: 80% Workers: 80%
	 Stakeholder satisfaction with overall WSCC services (Stakeholder Survey available in 2016 only) 	% very satisfied and satisfied	n/a	Employers: 80% Workers: 80%	n/a
	11. Stakeholder agreement that WSCC needs to improve communication of WSCC services (Stakeholder Survey available in 2016 only)	% stakeholders strongly agree or agree	n/a	Employers: 30% Workers 40%	n/a
Sustaining the Workers' Protection Fund	12. Funded position	Assets as a percentage of liabilities	105% - 135%		
	13. Bad debts ratio	Bad debts as a percentage of assessment revenue	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%

* includes COR certifications

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2015-2017 STRATEGIC PLAN