

# ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

*Effecting positive change and ensuring sustainability of the workers' compensation system through the views of Alberta employers*

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## **WCB Policy Development/Consultation**

The WCB held a second information session on May 25<sup>th</sup>. Darren Ferleyko, Craig Hrynychuk and Michael Johnstone attended in person with other members attending virtually. The purpose of this session was for the WCB to provide answers to a series of questions ITF had following the April 19<sup>th</sup> session. There was also an ITF sponsored member education session held on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

The ITF Executive and Funding Policy Subcommittee met on May 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss the information made available to date, and to identify priority issues and recommendations for review by the membership at the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

The WCB draft policy reverts to pre-2019 wording and indicates any surplus above 128% may be returned to employers at the discretion of the Board of Directors. It is recommended that the policy be specific in stating surpluses in the Accident Fund are recognized as funds that will be returned to employers and that distributions will be made within a set period of time.

The WCB draft policy removes the provision that allowed a drawdown of the Accident Fund to cover premium rate subsidies. This amendment addresses previous concerns raised by ITF members regarding the appropriateness of using the Accident Fund to subsidize rates. It is recommended ITF support removal of this provision with the stipulation that the current rate gap be addressed over a period of 3-5 years. It is not practical for WCB to address the current rate gap in one rate setting period due to the financial implications for employers.

The sub committee also recommends ITF support the proposal to lower the threshold to release surplus distributions from 1% of liabilities to 0.5%, as well as the proposal to clarify that claim benefit liabilities will continue to be calculated on a funding basis which will reduce volatility in the calculation.

A reduction in the target funding range and in particular that the top end of the target range be lowered to 124% is also being recommended.

These points are covered in greater detail in the discussion document included in the June 1<sup>st</sup> agenda package. The deadline for consultation is June 20<sup>th</sup>. The intention is for an ITF position to be confirmed on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Bill 47 Stakeholder Group**

ITF representatives met with the WCB and Labour Coalition on May 5<sup>th</sup> to continue discussion of the egregious conduct and duty to cooperate policies. Draft FAQs for these topics were reviewed and WCB will update these and make them available on the website. There was no discussion of additional scenarios. WCB heard stakeholder feedback on the merits of discussion scenarios that include limited details and the low number of actual scenarios brought forward for discussion. This was a final/wrap up meeting for the working group.

## **Psychological Injury Working Group**

The working group met on May 19<sup>th</sup> for a final review of the Psychological Injury Data Dashboard and to begin discussion regarding claims involving secondary psychological issues. The new data dashboard was presented to ITF members at the May 26<sup>th</sup> webinar. Work on assessment of cognitive demands and identification of work restrictions continues and new processes and reports are being piloted by WCB. Process flow charts developed in 2021 are being reviewed to validate whether new processes are being consistently followed.

## **Lost Time Claim Recording**

The WCB presentation from April 19<sup>th</sup> and their discussion document was distributed to members on May 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be a follow-up meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss this in more detail. The WCB is not contemplating major changes however they are considering excluding hearing loss claims from LTC recording. Members are asked to email Melanie with any questions or concerns they have pertaining to this topic or if they wish to join this subcommittee.

## **Upcoming ITF Association meetings**

The next quarterly meeting is on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 and will be a hybrid virtual and in person meeting. The AGM and fall quarterly membership meeting is on Wednesday September 7<sup>th</sup>. Planning is underway for another hybrid in-person and virtual meeting, but this will be confirmed closer to the meeting date. The in-person meeting will be held at the Acclaim Hotel in Calgary.

May 2022