

Annual Report for 2022-23

Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

Letters of Transmittal



The Honourable Don Morgan, K.C.
Minister of Labour Relations and
Workplace Safety

Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

I respectfully submit the Annual Report for the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Don Morgan, K.C.
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety



Drew Wilby
Deputy Minister of Labour
Relations and Workplace
Safety

The Honourable Don Morgan, K.C.,
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

Dear Minister:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Drew Wilby". The signature is written in a cursive, slanted style.

Drew Wilby
Deputy Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety

Ministry Overview

Mandate Statement

The ministry promotes, supports and enforces safe work practices and employment standards. It fosters a fair and balanced employment environment that respects the rights, duties and responsibilities of employees and employers thereby ensuring healthy, safe and productive workplaces.

Mission Statement

The ministry supports sustained economic growth and prosperity through the provision of a range of services that encourage, promote and enforce safe work practices and employment standards, which foster a fair and balanced employment environment that respects the rights, duties and responsibilities of employees and employers, thereby ensuring healthy, safe and productive workplaces.

Divisions:

In 2022-23, the ministry employed 181.1 full time equivalents in three divisions:

Communications (COMM) assists in the flow of both internal and external communication and provides strategic advice to support senior officials within the ministry and Minister's Office. The division is also responsible for website maintenance, media relations, writes a variety of materials, liaises with cross-government communication teams and monitors current trends from media and other sources.

Corporate Services (CS) assists the divisions within the ministry to develop strategic policy and legislative initiatives that align with government objectives. CS is also responsible for financial management, budget development, annual planning and reporting, policy development and other essential administrative functions of the ministry.

Programs Division:

- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) offers programs and services for workers and employers to help encourage safer workplaces and an improved culture of safety in Saskatchewan. OHS also provides effective oversight and enforcement of occupational health and safety standards and regulations by encouraging compliance via education and prosecutions where appropriate.
- Employment Standards (ES) provides services to Saskatchewan employers and employees in support of fair and equitable workplace practices. ES enforces employment standards legislation, foreign worker legislation and regulations and ensures that employees, employers and foreign workers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under these laws.
- Labour Relations and Mediation (LRM) provides conciliation and mediation services to assist in dispute resolution and joint employee and employer training in conflict resolution, problem solving and interest-based bargaining. LRM also provides technical advisory services relating to industrial relations and promotes co-operative labour management relations.
- Office of the Workers' Advocate (OWA) works to ensure that any injured worker or their dependents receive every consideration and entitlement due to them under *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2013*. The office also works to ensure that the compensation system is fair, accountable and responsive to the needs of injured workers in Saskatchewan. OWA shares this mutual goal with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) and meets regularly with the WCB to achieve this goal.

Legislation:

- *The Chartered Professionals in Human Resources Act*
- *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*
- *The Human Resources, Labour and Employment Act, except for sections 4.01, 4.02, 4.03 and subsection 4(2)*
- *The Public Health Act, 1994 (section 19.1)*
- *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*
- *The Victims of Workplace Injuries Day of Mourning Act*

Please find the 2022-23 ministry plan at [Publications Saskatchewan](#).

Progress on Goal 1: Reduce the Provincial Time-loss Injury Rate by 25 Per Cent by 2030, with the Ultimate Target being Mission: Zero

This goal will help keep our workplaces healthy and safe and ensure that everyone comes home safely at the end of a workday. As the province looks to grow and create 100,000 new jobs by 2030, ensuring we are focused on reducing serious workplace injuries and fatalities is vital. Having a low injury rate is a competitive advantage for Saskatchewan employers and an important contributor to achieving Saskatchewan's Growth Plan objectives. The ministry will continue to promote workplace safety and ensure workplaces are following health and safety legislation.

Strategy:

Continue the targeted intervention strategy with a focus on high risk workplaces, serious injuries and vulnerable workers.

Key Actions:

- Refresh the priority employer program to focus on prevention to drive compliance.
 - Since the implementation of the targeted intervention strategy in 2012, the total injury rate has been reduced by 49.9 per cent and the time-loss injury rate has been reduced by 26.9 per cent.
 - There were 166 employers who were part of the program prior to the refresh in 2022. The employers in this group achieved on average a 38 per cent reduction in injury claims (a reduction of 3,522 injury claims). This represents a cost savings of approximately \$42.3 million to the WCB (average cost per claim equals approximately \$12,000).
- Continue directed inspections with a focus on employers with serious injuries and/or high time loss injury rates.
 - The OHS branch conducted 790 healthcare worksite visits, an increase of 24.4 per cent from 2021-22. This amounts to 14.2 per cent of the total worksite visits conducted by the branch. The total injury rate for the provincial healthcare sector decreased by 10.5 per cent from 6.96 per cent in 2021 to 6.23 per cent in 2022.
 - The branch also conducted 944 construction worksite visits, an increase of 20.9 per cent from 2021-22. This amounts to 17 per cent of the total worksite visits conducted by the branch. The total injury rate for the construction sector was 6.34 per cent in 2022, a 16.8 per cent decrease from the 2021 rate of 7.62 per cent.
 - In addition, the branch conducted 423 manufacturing worksite visits, an increase of 17.8 per cent from 2021-22. This amounts to 7.6 per cent of the total worksite visits. The total injury rate for the sector was 6.21 per cent in 2022, a 0.8 per cent increase from the 2021 rate of 6.16 per cent.

- Together with the Workers' Compensation Board develop and launch the WorkSafe Saskatchewan Fatalities and Serious Injuries Strategy 2023-2028.
 - The first three-year fatalities and serious injuries strategy was released in December 2019. The strategy resulted in progress in four key areas, including increase in asbestos awareness and in controls to prevent firefighter related cancers as well as decreases in moving vehicle crashes and falls from heights.
 - The WCB together with the ministry launched a new fatalities and serious injuries strategy for 2023-2028. More than 300 participants took part in stakeholder meetings to develop the strategy.
 - The new plan focuses on eliminating and preventing occupational injuries and disease through awareness; education; partnerships; targeting/consulting; and enforcement.
 - In 2022, the number of WCB accepted fatalities increased by 25.8 per cent from 31 in 2021 to 39 in 2022. Exposure to asbestos made up 16 of the fatality claims and six were caused by motor vehicle collisions.

Strategy:

Respond efficiently and effectively to complaints and emerging issues.

Key Actions

- Continue to respond to prescribed notifications of high-risk situations.
 - The OHS branch conducted 309 worksite visits in response to prescribed notifications of high-risk situations, a decrease of 26.8 per cent from 422 in 2021-22. There were significantly more public health occupational disease notifications in 2021-22 compared to 2022-23 due to COVID-19.
 - High-risk situations include fatality or serious injury notifications, high-risk asbestos notifications, work refusals and public health occupational disease notifications.
- Continue to conduct officer initiated and reactive worksite visits.
 - The OHS branch conducted 1,615 directed worksite visits across 41 industries and 243 priority employer worksite visits along with 759 other targeted worksite visits for a total of 2,617 targeted employer worksite visits, an increase of 29.7 per cent from 2021-22.
 - Targeted intervention activities are complemented by officer-initiated and reactive worksite visits. In 2022-23, the branch conducted 2,950 officer initiated and reactive worksite visits, an increase of 7.8 per cent from 2021-22.

Performance Measure Results:

Injury Rate:

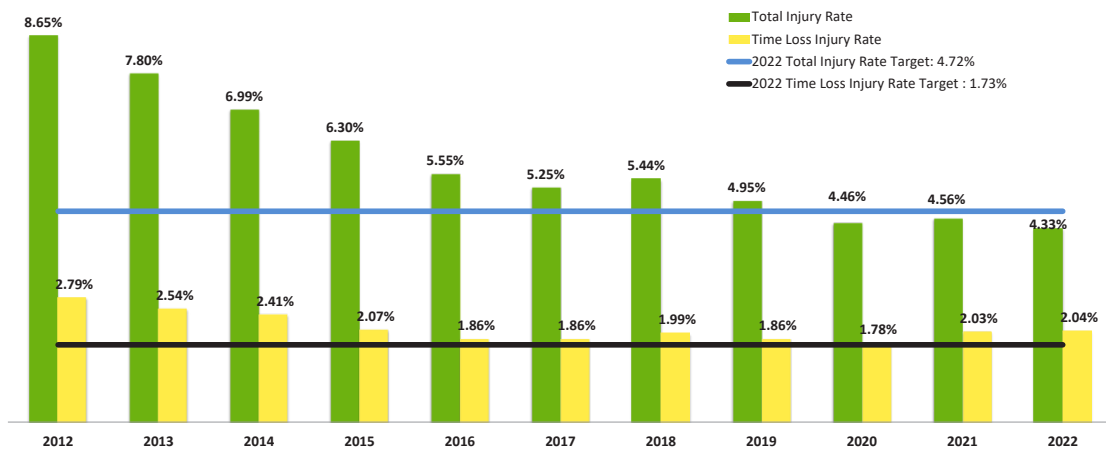
Measure Target: Reduce the total provincial time-loss injury rate to 1.73 per cent by March 31, 2023

- In 2022, the provincial time-loss injury rate was 2.04 per cent which was higher than the target of 1.73 per cent.

Measure Target: Reduce the total provincial injury rate to 4.72 per cent by March 31, 2023.

- In 2022, the provincial injury rate was 4.33 per cent which was below the target rate of 4.72 per cent.

Total Injury Rate and Time-Loss Injury Rate (per 100 full-time workers in Saskatchewan)



Source: Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

This graph shows the total injury rate as well as the time-loss injury rate for Saskatchewan. Since 2012, the total injury rate has decreased by 49.9 per cent and the time-loss injury rate has decreased by 26.9 per cent.

Progress on Goal 2: Foster a Culture of Compliance with Employment Laws to Ensure Better Outcomes in Workplaces

The ministry uses a consistent approach with stakeholders regarding employment legislation. This creates a fair and level playing field that will help create opportunities for business investment and growth in the province. Helping businesses and workers understand employment laws and their rights and responsibilities ensures that everyone will have the same competitive advantage across sectors. For Saskatchewan, this is an important part of creating a strong and diverse economy, new jobs and more opportunities for all citizens.

Strategy:

Expand outreach and education to increase understanding of legislative requirements.

Key Actions:

- Use a variety of delivery methods and technology to expand outreach and educational activities.
 - The ES branch conducted 70 presentations on employment standards and foreign worker protection topics for employers, employees and representative groups.
 - A total of 10,190 Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course (YWRCC) certificates were issued, which is a decrease of four per cent, or 444 certificates from 10,634 in 2021-22; but higher than the annual target of 10,000 certificates.
 - In addition, the YWRCC was updated to reflect changes in the definition of harassment in the occupational health and safety provisions under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*.
 - The employment standards webpage content had over 1.1 million views.
 - The ministry also prepared and published a basic information sheet in Ukrainian on employment standards, foreign worker protection and occupational health and safety, for newcomers.
- Develop and update targeted information that is relevant and accessible to clients.
 - This year, the ministry prepared webinar and website content on: protection from discriminatory action; tips for taking the Young Worker Readiness Certificate Course; understanding protections for foreign workers; modified work arrangements; the complaint, appeal and wage assessment processes; and on-call employees and *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*.
 - The guide to understanding employment standards continues to be updated to reflect legislation and regulation changes. This included reorganizing the guide for ease of understanding and consistency with website content.
 - The guide was downloaded nearly 24,000 times in 2022-23.
 - From August 2022 to March 31, 2023, the Employment Standards and Working Safely Information sheet was downloaded 6,182 times.

Strategy:

Ensure fair, impartial treatment of clients through consistent application of legislation.

Key Actions:

- Use appropriate enforcement tools to increase compliance.
 - The ES branch reviewed 55 high-claim employers, 19 of which received additional compliance action; and 14 employers were issued final warnings, a precursor to prosecution if there are further violations.
 - The ES branch assessed for \$1.45 million and collected \$1.42 million of owed wages to the employees for an overall collection rate of 98 per cent.
- Conduct targeted audits of high-risk/repeatedly non-compliant employers under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*.
 - The ES branch investigated and resolved a total of 1,470 formal complaints, an increase of 1.6 per cent from 2021-22.
 - Under *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*:
 - 4,946 employers were actively registered compared to 4,011 in 2021-22;
 - 1,960 new applications for employer registration were received and 265 were refused, compared to 1,311 new applications and 209 refusals in 2021-22;
 - 1,241 registered employers renewed their certificates, compared to 1,196 that were renewed in 2021-22;
 - 709 individuals, including 261 immigration consultants, 36 foreign worker recruiters and 412 individuals designated as both consultants and recruiters, were licensed, compared to a total of 611 active licensees in 2021-22;
 - 108 referrals and complaints were opened and 77 investigations were completed resulting in the cancellation of nine employer certificates, the suspension of one employer certificate and the cancellation of one licence;
 - 591 employer audits showed a 98 per cent compliance rate, compared to 550 audits with a 99 per cent compliance rate in 2021-22. The unit performs random and targeted post-registration employer audits to confirm that businesses continue to be in operation and employers remain compliant with the Act; employer registration applications had an average processing time of 11 days; and
 - to improve foreign worker protections and improve alignment with *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*, the ministry expanded: audit requirements for the two-year renewal; and officer on-site employer compliance audits for registered employers.

Performance Measure Results:**Rate of Compliance**

Measure Target: Maintain a compliance rate for employment standards of 80 per cent for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

- The ministry exceeded its target with a compliance rate of 88 per cent in 2022-23.

Educational Activities

Measure Target: Maintain participation in webinars at a total of 3,000 attendees or more by March 31, 2023.

- The ministry exceeded its target with a total of 3,046 participants attending outreach activities in 2022-23.

Progress on Goal 3: Ensure Legislation Remains Relevant in Changing Workplaces to Promote Growth

As part of the plan for growth, the province wants to continue ensuring that Saskatchewan is one of the best places to start and grow a small business, but also make it attractive for larger organizations and investments to succeed and flourish. A competitive business environment requires employment laws that are fair and balanced, while fostering a growth-oriented economy. The legislation that governs workers and employers needs to reflect modern workplaces in our province and meet the needs of the labour force.

Strategy:

Foster continuous improvement in legislation, regulations and policies.

Key Actions:

- Provide timely and informed legislative options to support government direction.
 - The ministry conducted a review of occupational health and safety provisions. Bill 91, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Part III) Amendment Act, 2022* was introduced on November 3, 2022.
 - Amendments were made to *The Minimum Wage Regulations, 2014* to provide a three staged increase in the minimum wage. The increases are a departure from using the indexation formula.
 - Amendments to *The Radiation Health and Safety Regulations, 2005* were in progress during 2022-23. Any new regulations are expected to be introduced in 2023-24.
- Support the Workers' Compensation Act Committee of Review.
 - The committee's report was publicly released on November 22, 2022 and consultations on the legislative recommendations concluded on January 31, 2023.

Strategy:

Ensure stakeholder engagement in legislative, regulatory and program reviews early in the process.

Key Actions:

- Collaborate with jurisdictional partners and working groups to analyze and implement leading practices; inform strategies and harmonize standards.
 - Ministry officials continued to work with federal, provincial and territorial counterparts to harmonize certain occupational health and safety standards.
 - The ministry continues to work cooperatively with counterparts on subcommittees of the Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation to identify areas of mutual interest and concern.
 - The Office of the Workers' Advocate continued to work cooperatively with jurisdictional counterparts on the Canadian Association of Workers' Advisors and Advocates to identify and implement leading practices in advocacy and representation of injured workers and families.

- Collaborate with stakeholders and others to ensure that legislation is modern, efficiently and effectively implemented and does not result in any unintended consequences.
 - The ministry conducted consultations on the legislative recommendations made by the Workers' Compensation Act Committee of Review between November 22, 2022 and January 31, 2023. The ministry sent 83 letters to stakeholders including employer groups, organized labour, safety associations and other interested parties. The ministry received a total of 31 submissions.

Performance Measure Results:

Legislative Review:

Measure Target: Percentage of legislative, regulatory and program reviews that engage stakeholders completed on schedule.

- In 2022-23, a review of the occupational health and safety provisions of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* was completed on schedule.

Financial Summary

Expense Summary

Expense Actuals

	Previous fiscal Actuals (\$000s)	2022-23 Budget (\$000s)	2022-23 Actuals (\$000s)	2022-23 Variance (\$000s)	Notes
Central Management and Services	\$4,958	\$5,213	\$4,856	(\$357)	1
Occupational Health and Safety	9,401	9,935	9,773	(162)	2
Employment Standards	3,064	3,171	3,087	(84)	
Labour Relations Board	905	1,000	991	(9)	
Labour Relations and Mediation	787	745	714	(31)	
Workers' Advocate	1,046	863	937	74	
Total Appropriation	\$20,161	\$20,927	\$20,358	\$(569)	
Capital Asset Acquisitions	0	0	0	0	
Amortization of Capital Assets	92	92	0	0	
Total Expense	\$20,253	\$21,019	\$20,450	\$(569)	

Explanation of variances which exceed \$100,000 between Budget and Actual:

1. The variance was due to vacancy management, savings in statutory review costs and contractual services.
2. The variance was due to vacancy management, savings in travel and contractual services.

Revenue Summary

Revenue

	2022-23 Budget (\$000s)	2022-23 Actuals (\$000s)	2022-23 Variance (\$000s)	Notes
Proceeds from Other Funds	\$13,705	\$13,962	\$257	1
Receipts from Federal Government	\$250	344	94	
Privileges, Licenses and Permits	9	16	7	
Sales, Services and Service Fees	58	59	1	
Other Revenue	0	0	0	
Subtotal	\$14,022	\$14,381	\$359	
Total Revenue	\$14,022	\$14,381	\$359	

Explanation of variances which exceed \$100,000 between Budget and Actual:

1. Higher than anticipated revenue from the Workers' Compensation Board due to higher recoverable expenditures from OHS, Office of the Workers' Advocate, Committee of Review, and Accommodations.

Additional financial information can be found in the Government of Saskatchewan Public Accounts located at <https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/#/categories/893>.

