



November 17, 2015

Workers' Compensation Act - Committee of Review
300-1870 Albert Street
Regina, SK S4P 4W1

Dear Committee:

On behalf of the Saskatchewan Safety Council I respectfully submit the following suggestions for possible enhancements to the Workers' Compensation Act.

As a registered charity dedicated to preventing injuries and fatalities in Saskatchewan for the past 60 years, we have unfortunately heard too many experiences from workers and their family members that have struggled while dealing with life after a workplace injury or loss. While we will continue to work together to achieve a safe Saskatchewan to reduce and eliminate injury, we know that when an injury does occur it can change the lives of many people beyond the injured worker.

At the Saskatchewan Safety Council we believe that injury prevention must extend beyond the focus on physical injuries. When a tragic injury or loss has occurred, it is critically important that we as a society, clearly remember that additional injuries of a physical, emotional and psychological nature are likely to occur. This chain of traumatic injury is often extensive affecting all those involved including family members, friends, coworkers, emergency responders and community members. These life changing experiences of pain, uncertainty, trauma and confusion are extremely difficult to navigate through and the ripple effects to society are vast.

Recognizing the impacts on family members of those involved in workplace injuries or losses, it is our suggestion that the Committee consider the following amendment to the Act:

Suggestion 1:

PART V Injury Fund; DIVISION I Continuance of Fund; Section 115: Payments from Fund be expanded to include:

“the expenses, including salaries and remuneration, of Family Advocates Office”

The Family Advocates office would be tasked with offering support, counseling and guidance to affected family members of injured workers. It is our belief that these services would reduce the risk of further traumatic injury that results to family members after a workplace injury. With



appropriate funding, this office may also be able to staff a Rapid Response team of counselors able to assist family members deal with the sudden loss of a loved one due to a workplace fatality.

We also know for any lasting change to occur to the consistent epidemic of tragedies in this province that the change must be proactive. We believe that Prevention is the key to reducing costs to Saskatchewan employers and as such the importance of prevention should be further recognized in the Act. To accomplish this we respectfully submit the following amendment for consideration.

Suggestion 2:

PART V Injury Fund; DIVISION I Continuance of Fund; Section 115 Payments from Fund be expanded to include:

(1) funding for injury prevention programming for high risk groups including young workers, senior workers and newly immigrated workers

I wish to thank the members of the Committee for reviewing these suggestions and for the work that has been conducted to ensure that Saskatchewan is leading the country in best practices for workplace insurance systems. I look forward to reviewing the completed report when it is made available.

Sincerely,

Ryan Jacobson
Chief Executive Officer
Saskatchewan Safety Council