

# Operational Plan

New systems, new processes, and new service approaches



# 2019

## INTRODUCING THE NEW WCB NOVA SCOTIA

In 2019, WCB Nova Scotia begins doing business the way our province needs us to for the future.

Beginning early in the year, our systems will be powered by the world-class insurance suite, Guidewire. The change is monumental, and it is the product of stakeholder direction, of long-term strategic planning, and of years of work by our teams, and by experts in the field. Every step along the way has been defined by strong planning, and is grounded in a vision for an improved, more efficient, modernized WCB.

It is much-needed investment in our internal systems, and in our people. The changes will mean that we will operate more quickly and more efficiently – reducing the overall impact of workplace injury in our province and providing the service workers and employers deserve.

In developing the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, stakeholders told us that our processes and systems needed to evolve, to better serve an evolving population, a changing workforce, to meet expectations and improve outcomes. In 2019, we deliver the largest piece of that transformation. We'll also continue building on the investments and changes we've already made – like continuing to encourage adoption of WCB Online.

More importantly than any software system, we will also continue to support our people through this transformation, as their work changes. As our technology and business processes change, our workforce will evolve as well, to ensure we are aligned to support our organization of tomorrow. Over time, we do expect our workforce to be smaller as a result of this transformation.

Our new systems and processes will better enable us to deliver on our core business – the prevention of workplace injury, and the support of workers, their families, and employers – wherever possible, supporting the safe and timely return of workers to the job. Claim durations continue to increase, and while our improved systems and processes will help us meet these performance challenges over the long-term, we know that in the short-term we will need to be mindful of time lost to workplace injury, and do all we can to support workers, employers and their families in accomplishing a safe and timely return to work.

### Financial sustainability becomes even closer

A legacy of workplace injury in Nova Scotia has created an imbalance between assets in the system, and benefits owed to workers and their families into the future. We're making progress toward eliminating this unfunded liability, because of strong investment management, and because Nova Scotians are making injury prevention and return-to-work a priority.

At the end of 2017, the WCB's financial position had improved, to a funded percentage of 89%.

In 2019, we will continue to engage stakeholders in conversations about what funded ratio is adequate to ensure sustainability into the future.

*Cover: In 2019, we'll be interacting with employers through new technology – but we'll also continue to have face-to-face conversations about improving workplace safety and return to work. Here, WCB Nova Scotia workplace consultant Cindy Shupe speaks with Luke Freeman, with Harry Freeman and Son Limited Sawmill in Greenfield, Nova Scotia.*



*Tracey Newman (l) and Lynn Ferguson are part of the WCB team making the best-in-class insurance software suite Guidewire work for Nova Scotia's workers' compensation system. Here, they oversee a demonstration of new and improved employer account functionality.*

This is particularly true in some parts of the health care sector. This year, we will support implementation of the *Report and Recommendations for Workplace Safety in Nova Scotia's Home Care, Long-Term-Care, and Disability Support Sectors*. We will also respond to new presumptive Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) regulations that will come into effect in October 2018 by working with stakeholders to develop a new mental health prevention program for frontline and emergency response workers. We will also introduce a new care model for workers with psychological injuries. And, we will improve the way we work, by taking steps to improve our service, particularly in more complex claims. Finally, we will continue to leverage social marketing to support our core business in both injury prevention and return-to-work.

Overall, 2019 is a year of renewal for the WCB. Powered by new state-of-the art systems, we will work to provide the service Nova Scotia's workers and employers deserve, as we continue our journey toward reducing the impact of workplace injury, and achieving financial sustainability for the system.



*Workplace injuries hurt the most at home. In 2019, we will continue building a safety culture in Nova Scotia, with new social marketing awareness material produced cost-effectively in partnership with all Atlantic Canadian workers' compensation jurisdictions.*

## 2019 AT-A-GLANCE

### Our core business

There has been significant progress over time in injury prevention and return-to-work.

However, further progress is slowing as we tackle ongoing challenges in the health and community services sectors, deal with realities of changing demographics in our province, and navigate unprecedented internal changes as we continue to modernize our business. Our time-loss volume has hovered around 6,000 claims since 2013, and the number of time-loss days paid, although still lower than it once was, has been increasing in recent years as well. Based on experience in other jurisdictions, we expect the implementation of Guidewire will compound operational performance challenges through 2019, together with ongoing challenges in long-term care and home care.

Given this reality, we have added resources and made other strategic resource changes on our prevention and service delivery teams. Internal changes to the way we work, which began in 2018, will increase throughout 2019. We will also continue to promote adoption of our new online service channels to both workers and employers.

Other supports to our core business include new social marketing awareness material, developed in partnership with all four Atlantic Canadian provinces. This partnership has saved millions of dollars over the years, and delivered proven social marketing results – both in prevention awareness campaigns, as well as through the *Working to Well* campaign and materials supporting return-to-work.

### Our projects

#### • Business Transformation: Guidewire implementation

- The implementation of Guidewire early in the year and the support that will follow will be, by far, our most significant project work in 2019.
- While the technology itself is a major factor in our modernization program, the support of its implementation – guiding our own people and those we serve through resulting changes to business processes, and aligned improvements to customer service expectations – is equally critical, and a big part of our work in 2019.
- A number of other projects related to the transformation, such as information architecture and security, will also continue. We will also plan for final projects in our business transformation slated for 2020.
- It is imperative that we make the most of this investment. We are committed to achieving the benefits this transformation offers to workers, employers, service providers, and our own employees. The changes will ultimately lead to reduced claim costs and reduced administrative costs.

#### • Safety for those who care for others

- Our work will continue in the long-term care, home care, and disability support sectors, which together comprise a significant part of claims costs. In 2019, we will do our part to support the implementation of the *Report and Recommendations for Workplace Safety in Nova Scotia's Home Care, Long-term Care, and Disability Support Sectors*.



*For Ashley Schaffner (right), Continuing Care Assistant at Rosecrest Communities Nursing Home the Sagewood, coming to work every day is a joy. Taking care of residents like Laraine Gellatly is the reason she loves her job, and also the reason she keeps her own safety top of mind.*

- **Supporting workplace mental health for first responders**

- PTSD presumption legislative changes become law in October, 2018. As part of our response to these changes, we will work with stakeholders to develop a PTSD prevention program for frontline and emergency response workers in Nova Scotia. Leveraging strong partnerships with other jurisdictions where such programs are in place, we will learn from their positive experiences. We will engage stakeholders, ensure the right people are at the table, and make mental health best practices and resources available for employers, supervisors and workers.

- **Improving our service**

- Changing the technology that powers our service to workers and employers is only the start. We also know that along with the process changes that will come with new systems, we need to change the way we deliver that service, on a human level. The face of workplace injury is changing, and we need to change, too. Claims today are often more complex, requiring different levels of service. The population is older, and the injury itself is often not straightforward – much more likely to be a sprain or a strain, coupled with mental health considerations, than a purely physical cut or a bruise.
- We are making service improvements based upon a number of different stakeholder conversations and feedback from those we serve. We will monitor and, where appropriate, refine these improvements with a view to better service and better return-to-work outcomes for workers and employers.

- **Auditor General review**

- In 2018, Nova Scotia's Auditor General will conduct a two-stage review of the WCB, with reports to follow in two chapters. The first chapter will be reported in late fall of 2018 and will examine governance and sustainability. The second chapter will be reported in the spring of 2019 and will focus on operational performance, including claims and benefit administration, the appeal process, return to work, and service provider contract management. The goal of AG audits is better managed, more accountable departments, agencies, boards and commissions. While we're confident in our people and our processes, we believe a third party review is an important opportunity to identify areas for improvement. In 2019, we will move to consider how best to implement any recommendations that may come from the review.

## CONCLUSION

In 2019, a new chapter begins for WCB Nova Scotia and the workers and employers we serve.

There has been progress over time in reducing the impact of workplace injury. Compared to a decade ago, time-loss injuries have decreased by more than 30 per cent. There are pockets of incredible success, but, at the same time, there is also much opportunity.

The face of workplace injury is changing, and we need to change, too. Our processes and systems need to evolve, to better serve an evolving population, a changing workforce, to meet expectations and improve outcomes.

In 2019, the biggest part of our multi-year business transformation becomes reality. The changes will mean that we will operate more quickly and more efficiently – ultimately, reducing the overall impact of workplace injury in our province and providing the service workers and employers deserve.

At the same time, together with our partners, we will navigate the impact of changing legislation, we will respond to challenges in priority sectors, and we will ensure we understand the needs of those we serve, and respond to them with the right kind of service, delivered in the right way.

It is all part of our ongoing, important contribution to the province's workplace safety culture, and the overall reduction of the human impact of workplace injury in our province.

## OUR VISION

Nova Scotians – safe and secure from workplace injury.

## OUR MISSION

We set the standard for workplace injury insurance. We inform and inspire Nova Scotians in the prevention of workplace injury, but if it occurs, we support those whose lives it touches by championing a timely return to safe and healthy work.

## OUR GOALS

Working in collaboration with workers, employers and our partners, the WCB's goals are to:

- Build a **workplace safety culture**;
- Improve outcomes for **safe and timely return to work**;
- Be **financially stable and sustainable**;
- **Expand strategic relationships** to enhance the commitment to workplace health and safety and return to work across the province;
- Provide **excellent and efficient service**, leveraging technology to meet worker and employer expectations.

**PROPOSED WCB 2019 BALANCED SCORECARD**

QUADRANT	MEASURES	ACTUAL RESULTS					TARGETS		
		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2023
<b>Service</b>	Worker Satisfaction Index <sup>1</sup>	73%	75%	72%	74%	74%	70%	70%	70%
	Employer Satisfaction Index	79%	79%	81%	79%	79%	70%	70%	70%
<b>Operations</b>	Time Loss Injuries per 100 Covered Workers	1.86	1.82	1.84	1.74	1.76	1.76	1.68 - 1.81	1.59
	Return to Employability	96%	96%	95%	95%	94%	95.4%	94.6% - 95.8%	95.2%
	Duration Index (composite, in days)	99	102	108	110	117	117	114 - 130	120
	Time Loss Days Paid per 100 Covered Employees	226	226	236	232	241	241	228 - 273	227
	Cost of New EERBs (\$M)	\$53.1	\$46.8	\$54.5	\$59.2	\$67.8	\$57.7	\$51.5 - \$72.0	\$63.5
<b>Employee</b>	Employee Satisfaction Index	75%	73%	73%	71%	70%	70%	70%	70%
<b>Financial</b>	Claims Payments for the last 3 years per \$100 of Assessable Payroll	\$0.653	\$0.656	\$0.657	\$0.664	\$0.667	\$0.6649	\$0.6270 - \$0.7326	\$0.6737
	Administrative Costs per \$100 of Assessable Payroll (excluding prevention costs)	\$0.37	\$0.38	\$0.38	\$0.40	\$0.41	\$0.48	\$0.46	\$0.37
	Return on Investment Five-Year Rate of Return	9.8%	9.6%	8.8%	9.8%	9.6%	Exceed Benchmark Portfolio Return		
Five-Year Benchmark Portfolio Return	10.1%	9.1%	8.1%	9.3%	9.3%				

1 The Worker Satisfaction Index does not include workers on long-term benefits or those with claims for claims with little or no time-loss.