

Workers' Advisers Program

Annual Report
For the fiscal year ending
March 31, 2015

Kenneth LeBlanc, B.A., M.A., LL.B.
Chief Worker Adviser

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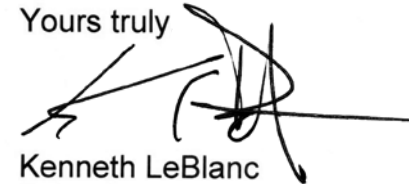
May 1, 2015

The Honourable Kelly Regan
Minister of Labour & Advanced Education
5151 Terminal Road
Halifax, NS

Dear Minister Regan:

In accordance with Section 268 of the *Workers' Compensation Act*, S.N.S. 1994-95 c.10, as am., I have the honour of submitting the Workers' Advisers Program Annual Report for the period April 1, 2014, to March 31, 2015.

Yours truly



Kenneth LeBlanc
Barrister & Solicitor
Chief Worker Adviser

copy: Duff Montgomerie, Deputy Minister
Labour & Advanced Education

copy: Barbara Jones Gordon, Executive Director
Labour Services Branch
Labour & Advanced Education



Table of Contents

Letter from the Chief Worker Adviser.....	5
Mandate and History	8
Annual Program Expenditures	9
Personnel	10
Client Services	11
Intake	11
Operations.....	13
Case Summary Statistics.....	13
Process.....	14
Service Waiting Time.....	14
Client Count by County	15
Representation.....	17
Program Statistics.....	17
Client Satisfaction	19
Client Survey Results	19
Committees and Associations.....	21
Canadian Association of Workers' Advisers and Advocates.....	21
Workplace Safety and Insurance System	21
Advisory Councils and Working Groups.....	21
Other Committees and Associations.....	22
Professional Development and Training	23

Letter from the Chief Worker Advisor

The Workers' Advisers Program had another busy and productive year in 2014/2015. At year-end the Program had 1126 active files. During the year the Program had 710 requests for service/files opened, 558 files were closed, and we provided service to 1811 clients.

In 2014/2015 the Program filed 411 appeals with the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal ("WCAT") on behalf of workers. We also filed 155 appeals to Hearings Officers of the Workers' Compensation Board ("WCB") and 5 appeals to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal.

We track the wait time from when a worker contacts the Program with a written decision to request service until the worker discusses the claim with a Workers' Adviser, which should take no more than 6 weeks. The Workers' Adviser is expected to be knowledgeable about the worker's claim at the time of this discussion. In 2014/2015, with 710 requests for service, the Program's average province-wide wait time for service was 5.5 weeks.

Last year I reported on the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal's decision in *Ellsworth v. Nova Scotia (Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal)*, 2013 NSCA 131 (CanLII), where the Program represented the worker. The Court allowed the worker's appeal from a WCAT decision. *Ellsworth* involved a worker injured before March 23, 1990 (the cut-off date in so-called pre-Hayden claims), but who continued working until

he had another injury in 2006 and who was not recognized as having a permanent-impairment rating until after the 2006 injury. The Court accepted the worker's argument that the pre-Hayden Clinical Rating System method for calculating permanent disability awards, maintained by sections 226 and 227 of the *Workers' Compensation Act*, did not apply to him and that he qualified for an extended earnings-replacement benefit. The Court's decision in *Ellsworth* diverged from the WCB's previous approach in such claims. The Court's reasons in *Ellsworth* distinguished its earlier decision in *Lowe v. Nova Scotia (Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal)*, [1998] NSJ No. 99 (QL).

The Program currently represents other workers at the Court of Appeal who were injured before March 23, 1990 but who continued working long after the current *Workers' Compensation Act* came into force on February 1, 1996. The issue for these workers is whether *Ellsworth* applies to their claims and they qualify for an extended earnings-replacement benefit. These cases highlight the relatively low level of workers' compensation benefits available to most workers injured before March 23, 1990.

In December 2014 the Court of Appeal heard arguments in *John Dale v. Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal, et al.*, C.A. No. 410753. *Dale* involves a worker's appeal from a WCAT decision which determined that the definition of "accident" in the *Workers' Compensation Act*, to

the extent it excludes coverage for stress unless it is an acute reaction to a traumatic event, does not infringe the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The Program represents the worker in *Dale*. After inviting post-hearing written submissions from counsel, the Court of Appeal reserved its decision, which we expect to receive in 2015.

In *Nova Scotia (Workers' Compensation Board) v. Rhodenizer*, 2015 NSCA 15 (CanLII), the Program represented a worker who sought to use the reconsideration/"new evidence" provisions in section 185(2) of the *Workers' Compensation Act* and WCB Policy 8.1.7R2 to review and adjust his extended earnings-replacement benefit. WCAT accepted the worker's argument, but the WCB appealed and Court of Appeal allowed the appeal. The Court agreed with the WCB's argument that a worker's extended earnings-replacement benefit could only be reviewed and adjusted under section 73 of the *Workers' Compensation Act* and, subject to section 73, that such awards were final.

The Program represents an ex-wife of a deceased worker who died in a workplace accident in January 2013. At the time of his death, the worker was making court-ordered support payments to his ex-wife. The WCB decided that under the *Workers' Compensation Act* the ex-wife was not entitled to receive survivor benefits or other benefits to compensate for her lost support payments due to her former husband's death. WCAT confirmed

this decision on appeal, rejecting the ex-wife's argument that the denial of benefits infringed the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The ex-wife's appeal, in *Deborah Lee Muggah v. WCAT, WCB, AGNS and Marid Industries Limited*, C.A. No. 432292, is scheduled to be heard at the Court of Appeal in June 2015.

The Program represents some workers dealing with requests for the WCB to cover medically-prescribed marijuana. In January 2015 WCAT issued *Decision 2014-56-AD*, 2015 CanLII 3113, which allowed a worker's appeal and directed the WCB to cover Sativex, a synthetic cannabinoid, which helped the worker cope with back pain from a workplace injury. The Program represented the worker in this appeal.

In July 2014 the Program sent a representative to the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Workers Advisors and Advocates ("CAWAA") in the Yukon. The annual CAWAA meeting and CAWAA telephone conferences throughout the year are great opportunities to network and exchange information with counterparts from across the country.

At various times in 2014/2015, I met and discussed various workers' compensation issues with staff from the Office of the Worker Counselor and representatives from Injured Workers' Associations.

I continued to serve as a member of the Heads of Agencies Committee and the Issues Resolution

Working Group as we worked to improve services to stakeholders of the Workplace Safety and Insurance System ("WSIS"). In my role as Chief Worker Adviser, I participated in the WSIS Annual General Meeting in May 2014.

I regularly attended meetings of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education's Senior Management Team and with my fellow directors from the Department's Labour Services Branch.

I also took part in various in-person and online training sessions in 2014/2015. These sessions were relevant to my work as a government employee and as a practicing lawyer in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Barristers' Society requires practising lawyers to have at least 12 hours of continuing legal education per year.

As I reported in previous years, the litigious and adversarial nature of the workers' compensation appeal process continues to be a significant factor impacting on the Program's work. Employers regularly contest and participate in workers' appeals, which has significant implications for the workers' compensation system, including contributing to delays in dealing with appeals. This matter continues to be the subject of discussion among stakeholders in the workers' compensation system.

An ongoing significant pressure for the Program's budget are the costs associated with obtaining

medical information that we request to help in the pursuit of workers' appeals. The need to obtain medical information in more cases is also related to the adversarial nature of the appeal system.

Despite these financial pressures, the Program finished the year at 92% of our budget authority.

We look forward to another busy and successful year in 2015/2016. Submitted,



Kenneth LeBlanc
Chief Worker Adviser

Mandate and History

Injured workers covered under Nova Scotia's *Workers' Compensation Act* are protected through benefits and services available under a no-fault insurance system. Through what is known as the historic trade-off, workers and their families give up the right to sue for the consequences of work-related injuries in return for compensation payable regardless of fault and without the need to pursue a lawsuit in court. The other side of the historic trade-off is that employers must pay assessments to cover the cost of the system in return for immunity from civil liability arising from work-related injuries.

The Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB), is established under Part I of the *Workers' Compensation Act*. The WCB is the policy-leader for the workers' compensation system and investigates and adjudicates workers' claims in the first instance. The WCB also administers the Accident Fund, which is made up of employers' assessments and covers the costs of the workers' compensation system.

Workers or employers may appeal WCB final decisions to the Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal (WCAT), established under Part II of the *Workers' Compensation Act*. There is a limited right of appeal from WCAT decisions to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal.

The Workers' Advisers Program was established in February 1996 when Part III, along with most of the rest of the current *Workers' Compensation*

Act, was proclaimed into force. The Workers' Advisers Program under Part III replaced the former Workers' Counselors' Program, which administered a certificate system whereby private law firms around the province provided legal representation to workers in connection with their workers' compensation claims.

The Workers' Advisers Program is an independent legal clinic that provides free assistance, advice, and representation to injured workers and their families claiming workers' compensation benefits and who meet the Program's eligibility criteria.

As a general rule, if the Program determines that a worker has a reasonable expectation of success of obtaining at least \$500 or its equivalent in an appeal of a claim, that worker will meet the Program's eligibility criteria for service.

The Program receives the funding for its operations by way of a grant from the Accident Fund.

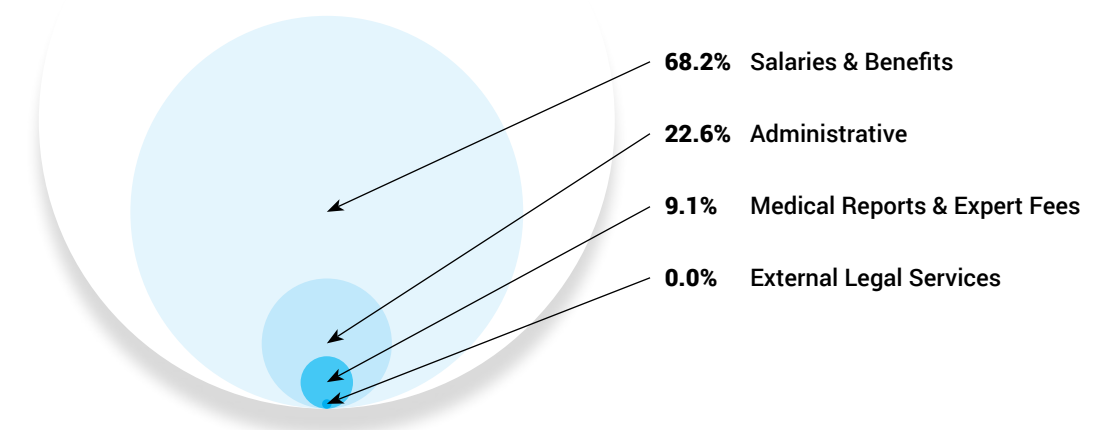
The Chief Worker Adviser supervises the Program and reports to the Minister of Nova Scotia's Department of Labour and Advanced Education. The Program's head office is in Halifax and with a second office in Sydney. The Program has maintained the Halifax and Sydney offices since May 1997, while monitoring the caseload by county to determine whether other offices in other parts of the province should be opened.

Annual Program Expenditures

The total cost associated with the operation of the Program is charged to the Accident Fund administered by the WCB. The final 2014-2015 report provided by the Department of Finance indicates the following expenditures:

	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
Salaries & Benefits	\$2,425,291	\$1,913,991	\$1,804,407	\$1,904,748	\$1,717,753	\$1,593,543
Administrative	\$803,844	\$543,765	\$470,033	\$494,228	\$534,275	\$547,932
Legal Services - External	\$246	\$6,448	\$2,886	\$6,027	\$10,731	\$2,067
Medical Reports & Expert Fees	\$324,860	\$257,976	\$300,543	\$291,871	\$275,182	\$257,401
Less Chargeable to Other Departments	(\$471,685)	(\$17,061)	(\$3,011)	\$0	(\$27,210)	(\$11,162)
Total	\$3,082,556	\$2,705,119	\$2,574,849	\$2,696,876	\$2,510,731	\$2,378,619
% of Authority Spent	92.0%	97.0%	93.6%	100.4%	102.0%	97.1%

2014-2015 Financial Expenditures

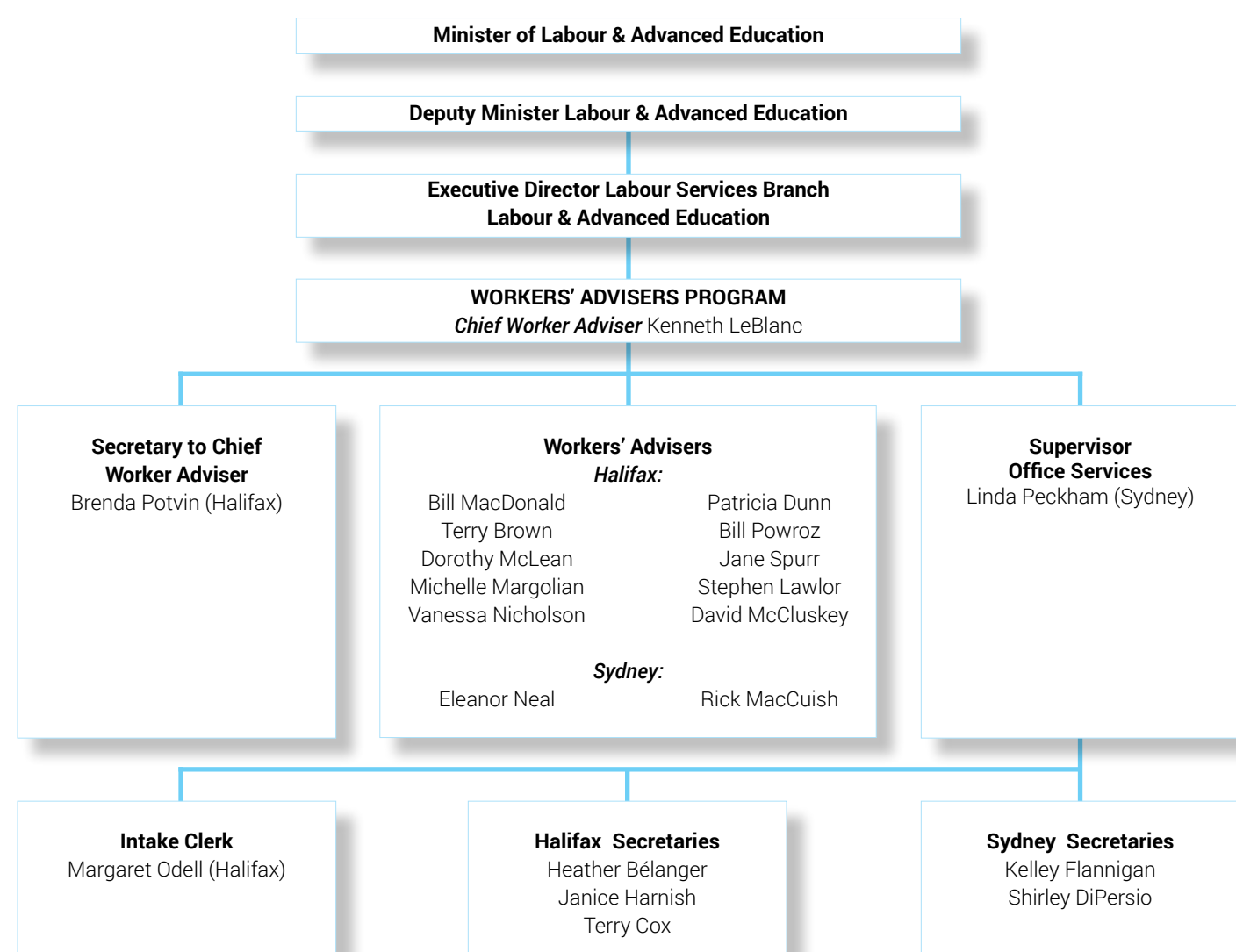


Personnel

The Chief Worker Adviser, the Secretary to the Chief Worker Adviser, the Intake Clerk, ten Workers' Advisers, and three secretaries work out of the Halifax office.

Two Workers' Advisers, the Program's Supervisor Office Services, and two secretaries work out of the Sydney office.

Organizational Chart



(Incumbents in place as of March 31, 2015)

Client Services

The Workers' Advisers Program is a public legal clinic established to help eligible injured workers and their families seeking compensation under the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

The Program provides free legal services independent of the Workers' Compensation Board and the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal. Clients of the Program are in a solicitor-client relationship with the Program and its staff, in the same way as they would be with any other lawyer or law firm in Nova Scotia.

The service provided to workers by the Workers' Advisers Program can include representation through all phases of appeal in the workers' compensation system. It can begin with the first denial at the WCB and end when an appeal is completed or the worker is no longer eligible for service.

Anyone who wants to be a client of the Program must go through our "intake process".

Intake

The Program's intake process begins with a determination of whether the worker's request for service results from a written WCB decision. If the worker does not have a written decision, the Intake Clerk will usually refuse service.

If the worker has a written WCB decision, the Intake Clerk will obtain the necessary information from the worker and open a file, which will be assigned to a Workers' Adviser. Workers' Advisers are lawyers and non-lawyers with the necessary training and experience to provide legal services to injured workers and their families relating to workers' compensation matters.

A Workers' Adviser will review the file and contact the worker to advise whether the Program will provide legal services.

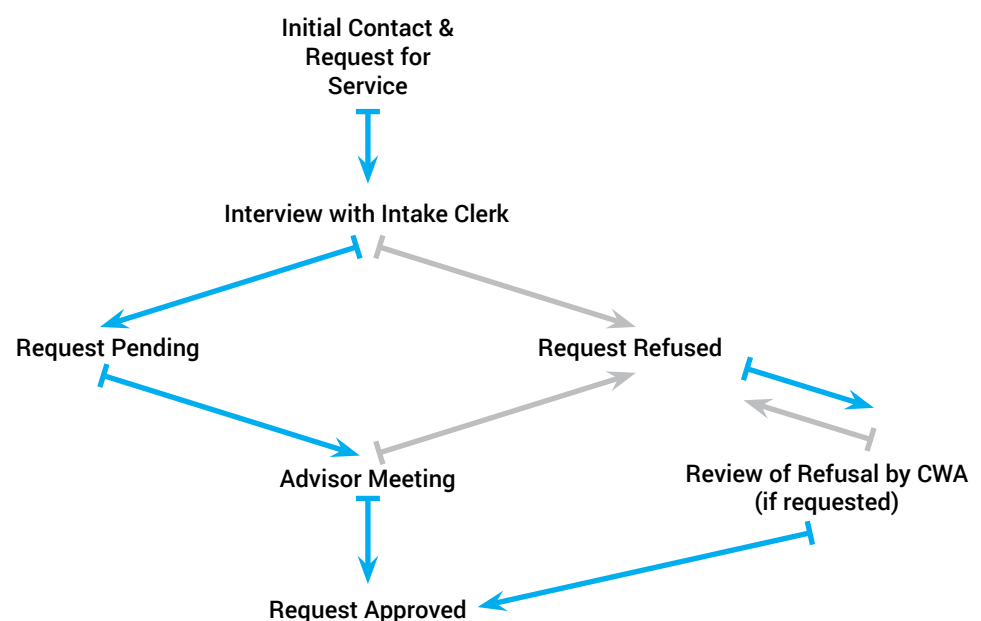
A worker refused service from the Program may request that the Chief Worker Adviser give further consideration to the request for legal services. The Chief Worker Adviser's determination in this regard is the final determination on whether the Program will provide services in the case.

A worker requesting service from the Program for the first time as a result of a WCAT decision bypasses the usual intake process and is referred directly to the Chief Worker Adviser for review and consideration. This process is followed in relation to WCAT decisions because a worker only has 30 days under the *Workers' Compensation Act* to file a possible appeal to the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal from a WCAT decision.

Operations

Case Summary Statistics

Active # files at year beginning April 1, 2014 = 1101
 Active # files at year ending March 31, 2015 = 1126



In general, in order to qualify for services, an injured worker must have a reasonable expectation in success in obtaining at least \$500 or the equivalent in an appeal from a written decision.

Part III of the *Workers' Compensation Act* states that it does not give any person a right to legal advice or representation under the Workers' Advisers Program.

If the worker is denied legal services by the Program, the worker may continue to pursue the appeal on his or her own and the worker may retain legal representation at his or her own expense. The Program's denial of services has no impact on the status of a worker's appeal.

The Workers' Advisers Program does not represent injured workers as a special interest group or lobby government for changes in legislation. The Program does not pursue other matters outside of workers' compensation claims, such as Canada Pension benefits, Unemployment Insurance, or Social Assistance.

Workers' Advisers do not represent employers and they do not advise or represent governments or other agencies.

2014-15	Requests for Service/Files Processed through Intake	Number of Requests/Representations Denied	Files closed	Number of Clients Served 2014-15
Apr/May/Jun	207	54	149	1309
Jul/Aug/Sep	191	71	214	1499
Oct/Nov/Dec	186	51	64	1685
Jan/Feb/Mar	126	39	131	1811
Total	710	215	558	1811

"Requests for Service" represents the number of calls received by the Intake Clerk for processing during each of the reporting periods. During 2014-15 we received an average of 59.8 requests for service per month.

There were 215 refusals of service.

The "# Clients Served 2014-15" represents the number of active files on April 1, 2014, combined with the total number of files opened to the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2015).

The Program carried an average of 1135 active files over the course of 2014-15.

On March 31, 2015, there were 49 pending service requests or clients that had gone through the intake process but had not yet been contacted by a Workers' Adviser to discuss their case.

After the initial intake process is complete, files are assigned to Workers' Advisers by a team leader who reviews the files to ensure eligibility. The team leader considers geographic region, type of injury or illness, and caseloads when assigning files to Workers' Advisers. In 2014-15 the Workers' Advisers each carried an average caseload of 83.4 active files.

Process

Service Waiting Time

Intake Period 2014-15	Local		Out-of-Town		
	Halifax	Sydney	Bridgewater Yarmouth	Digby Kentville Amherst/Truro	New Glasgow Antigonish Port Hawkesbury
April-May-June	6.8	5.5	6.1	7.0	7.4
July - August - September	5.0	5.8	5.1	5.5	6.4
October - November - December	3.9	5.2	5.4	4.2	5.6
January - February - March	4.4	5.2	5.1	5.2	4.6
Area Averages	5.0	5.4	5.4	5.5	6.0
Local Offices Average Waiting Period	5.2 weeks				
Out-of-Town Average Waiting Period	5.6 weeks				
Provincial Average Waiting Period	5.5 weeks				

The waiting period for service for all intake is calculated from the date the worker first contacts the Intake Clerk to the date of the worker's first appointment with a Workers' Adviser (in person or by telephone) to discuss the worker's appeal.

Factors affecting service wait times include delays in obtaining access to the WCB claim files, both paper and electronic, and the Workers' Advisers' workload and travel to out-of-town appointments or hearings.

The Program monitor the waiting time for service on a monthly basis. Our goal is to respond to requests for service by meeting with the worker within 6 weeks of their initial request. **The provincial average waiting period for 2014-15 was 5.5 weeks (includes local and out-of-town times), a decrease of one week over the previous year.**

Client Count by County

On April 1, 2014, the Program had 1101 active files. On March 31, 2015, there were 1126 active files, a 2 percent increase over the course of the year with an average of 1135 open files between April 1 and March 31.

County	Apr 1	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar 31
Annapolis	23	29	28	29	27	28	26	25	26	25	23	23	23
Antigonish	9	12	12	12	11	12	12	14	14	15	15	15	15
Cape Breton	191	191	188	191	189	191	191	187	189	186	185	187	191
Colchester	51	54	52	54	50	52	48	49	50	47	49	46	48
Cumberland	52	57	53	57	56	56	54	56	55	56	56	55	55
Digby	13	15	13	15	15	17	16	14	16	15	15	15	14
Guysborough	18	16	16	16	15	15	15	16	14	15	15	15	13
Halifax	384	409	398	409	413	414	407	405	403	400	404	399	402
Hants	52	57	53	57	56	58	56	54	55	53	53	52	49
Inverness	17	15	14	15	18	19	17	17	18	19	18	17	16
Kings	65	66	63	66	64	63	61	64	67	66	66	68	67
Lunenburg	78	89	84	89	87	91	94	95	96	95	93	92	94
Pictou	67	72	72	72	66	68	62	66	68	68	69	77	72
Queens	24	23	24	23	23	25	23	23	24	21	20	20	18
Richmond	10	9	9	9	10	10	9	9	11	10	10	9	9
Shelburne	11	12	12	12	11	11	14	13	12	12	11	11	11
Victoria	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
Yarmouth	15	16	17	16	14	14	13	12	12	11	11	12	11
Other	14	13	12	13	13	13	14	14	14	15	16	16	16
Total	1101	1159	1124	1159	1141	1160	1135	1135	1146	1131	1131	1131	1126

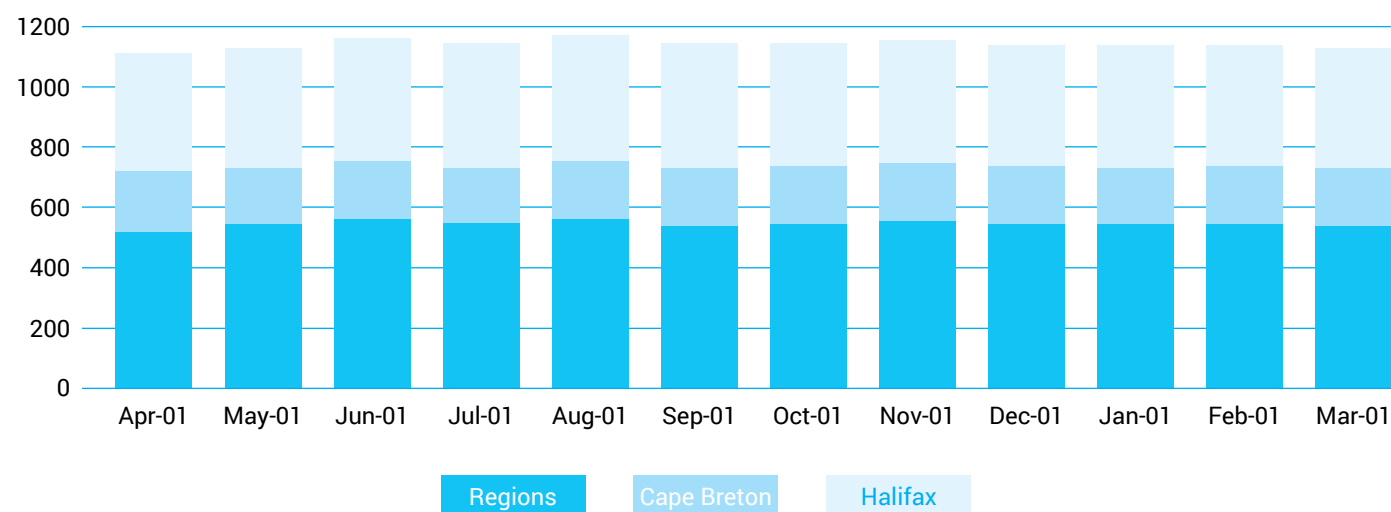
File reviews/audits are completed on an on-going basis.

The Program's primary role is to help workers with their appeals and we usually do this on an issue-by-issue basis. When a worker contacts the Program

for help, it is typically because of a particular issue relating to a claim. When this issue is resolved in the worker's favour or if the Workers' Adviser determines there is no reasonable expectation of success in an appeal, we will close the file for services.

Representation

Client Count by Area



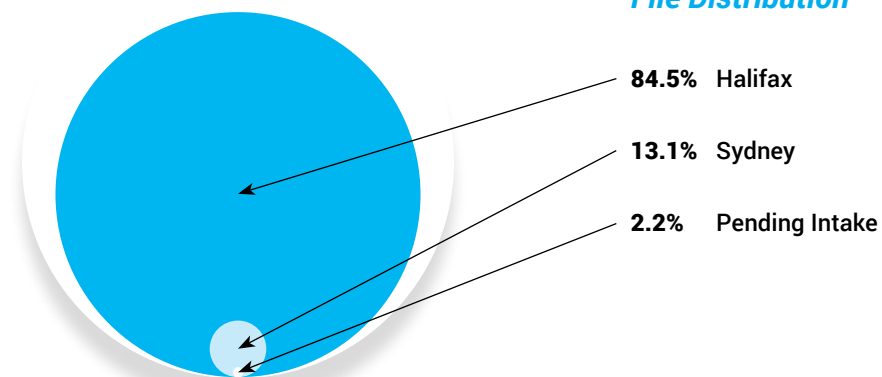
The above chart graphically displays the proportion of clients living in Halifax, Cape Breton and Out of Town. The Out of Town figures represent all clients living outside metro Halifax or Cape Breton.

An average of 35.5 percent of the Program's clients live within the Halifax Regional Municipality; 16.7

percent live within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality and 47.8 percent reside outside the CBRM or HRM areas.

Files are distributed between the Halifax and Sydney offices. One of the Advisers serving the Sydney area is located in Halifax

File Distribution



Workers' Advisers provide representation to injured workers and their families pursuing workers' compensation benefits and services. Workers' Advisers consult with workers and others regarding claims, attend meetings and hearings, and obtain evidence and present it to workers' compensation decision makers.

Workers' Advisers have access to research and other resources required to pursue appeals. They are familiar with issues and pressures affecting injured workers and strive to achieve an effective working relationship with them.

The Workers' Advisers Program does not represent injured workers as a special interest group or lobby government for changes in legislation. The Program does not pursue other matters outside of workers' compensation claims, such as Canada Pension benefits, Unemployment Insurance, or Social Assistance.

Workers' Advisers do not represent employers and they do not advise or represent governments or other agencies.

Program Statistics

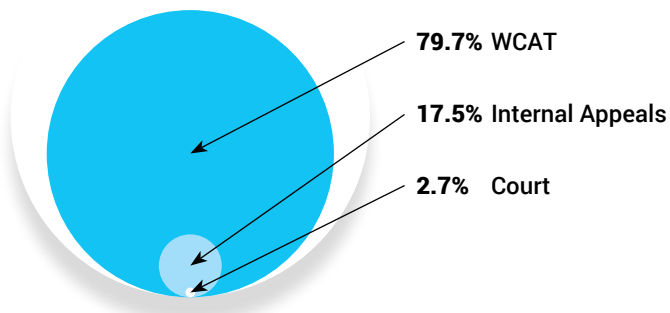
	Submissions/Hearings Done			New Appeals Filed		
	Court	Hearing Officer	WCAT	Court	Hearing Officer	WCAT
April	1	7	33	0	7	33
May	0	6	40	0	11	40
June	2	8	52	1	10	29
July	1	7	32	1	17	31
August	1	9	38	0	13	21
September	2	9	34	1	15	33
October	2	6	31	1	11	35
November	1	12	26	0	12	30
December	2	6	38	0	22	59
January	3	12	38	0	14	30
February	0	8	29	1	10	36
March	0	7	50	0	13	34
Total	15	97	441	5	155	411

* The Program's resources are mainly focussed on appeals at the WCAT level.

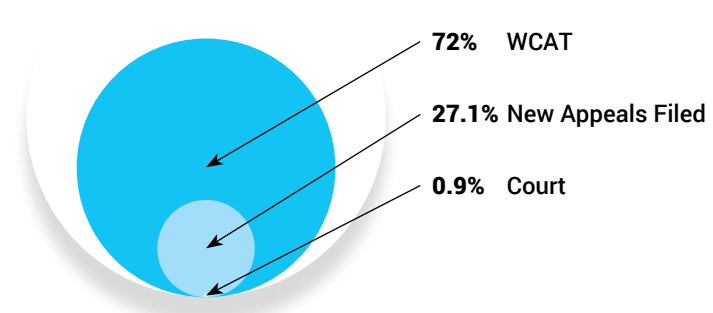
- Workers typically file their own appeals to the Hearing Officer before going through the Program's intake process.

The Program filed 5 new appeals to the Court of Appeal during the year 2014/2015. An appeal to the Court of Appeal is limited because an appeal can only be made from an Appeals Tribunal decision on a question of law or jurisdiction pursuant to s.256 of the *Workers' Compensation Act*.

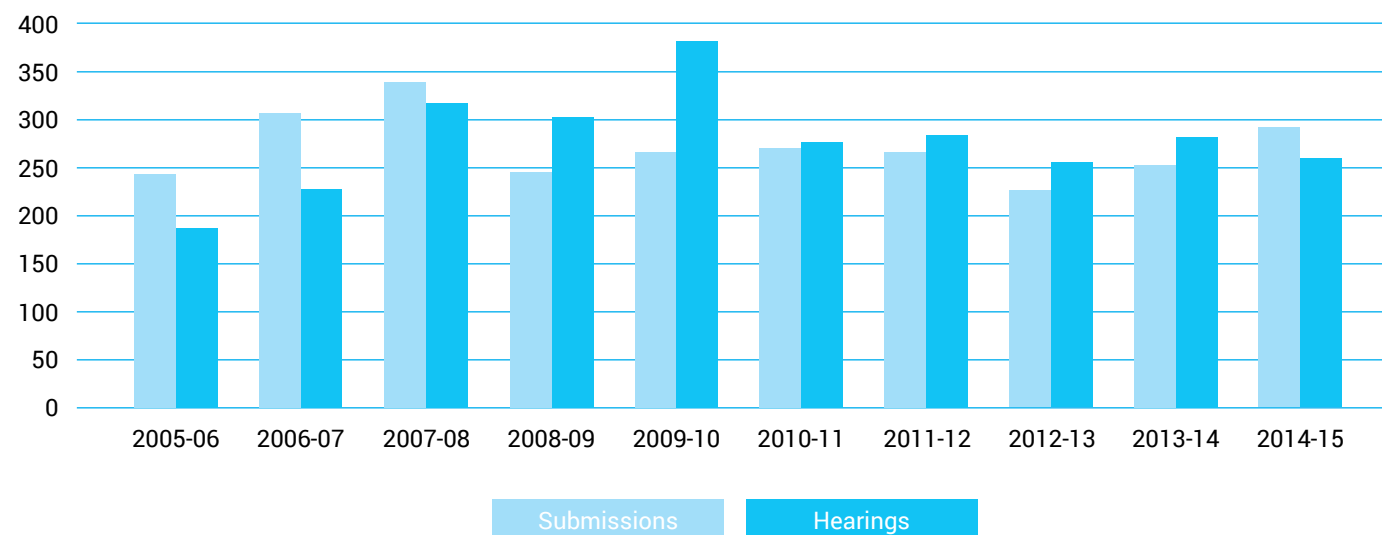
Hearings/Submissions



New Appeals Filed



Number of Hearings and Submissions



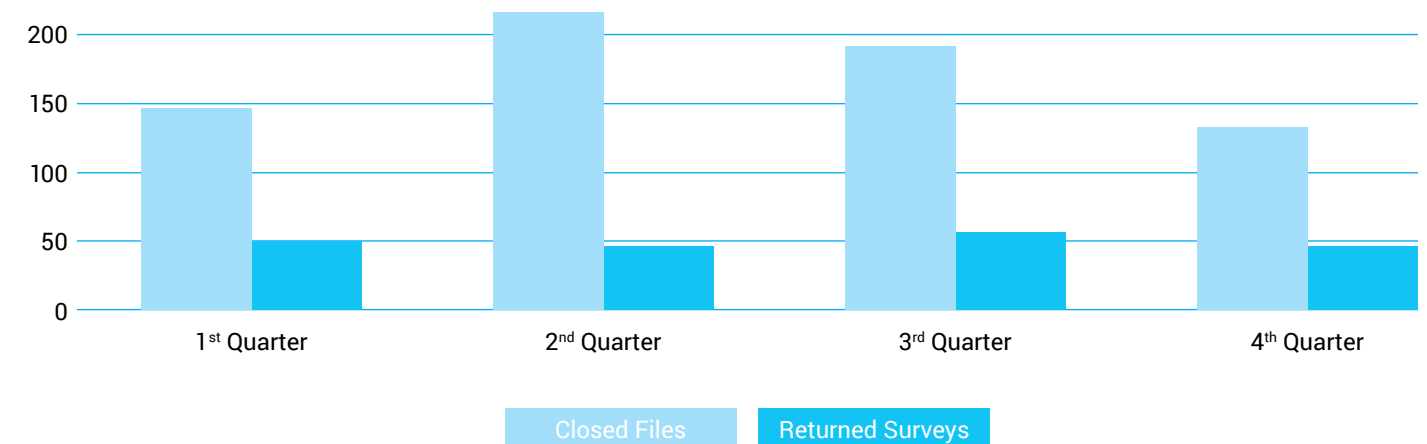
Client Satisfaction

Client Survey Results

The Program began mailing satisfaction surveys to clients with their closed files in April 2003. This practice will continue so that future results will allow us to track satisfaction trends and address service issues.

	Apr/May/ Jun	Jul/Aug/ Sep	Oct/Nov/ Dec	Jan/Feb/ Mar	Total	% Return for Year
Closed Files	149	214	189	131	683	
Returned Surveys	50	45	57	47	199	29.1%
Provided Comments	38	32	38	37	145	72.9%
Not Postive Outcome	11	5	10	4	30	15.1%
Negative Comments	1	3	5	2	11	5.5%
% Return for the Quarter	33.5%	21%	30.2%	35.9%		
Variance from previous quarter	2.4%	-12.5%	9.2%	5.7%		

Surveys Returned/Files Closed



Committees and Associations

Based on the data obtained from the returned surveys, we can determine that 94.9% of our clients “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the service provided by the Program staff satisfied their requirements.

Specific results to our questions are as follows:		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. <i>The program staff I dealt with were professional and friendly at all times.</i>	Apr/May/ Jun	89%	10%	0%	2%
	Jul/Aug/Sep	85%	13%	0%	2%
	Oct/Nov/Dec	91%	9%	0%	0%
	Jan/Feb Mar	87%	13%	0%	0%
	% for year	87%	11%	0%	1%
2. <i>In my experience, I felt the program staff had the knowledge and experience for dealing with my situation.</i>	Apr/May/ Jun	82%	14%	0%	2%
	Jul/Aug/Sep	79%	17%	2%	2%
	Oct/Nov/Dec	81%	19%	0%	0%
	Jan/Feb Mar	83%	13%	4%	0%
	% for year	81%	16%	2%	1%
3. <i>I felt the program staff did their very best to provide me with the best possible service.</i>	Apr/May/ Jun	80%	16%	0%	2%
	Jul/Aug/Sep	81%	15%	2%	2%
	Oct/Nov/Dec	79%	19%	2%	0%
	Jan/Feb Mar	85%	8%	4%	2%
	% for year	81%	15%	2%	1.5%
4. <i>My calls were returned within 24 hours.</i>		<i>All the time</i>	<i>Most of the time</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
	Apr/May/ Jun	52%	34%	10%	2%
	Jul/Aug/Sep	54%	35%	6%	2%
	Oct/Nov/Dec	61%	28%	9%	2%
	Jan/Feb Mar	66%	25%	6%	2%
% for year	58%	31%	8%	2%	
5. <i>My questions were answered to my satisfaction</i>	Apr/May/ Jun	80%	18%	0%	2%
	Jul/Aug/Sep	86%	8%	4%	2%
	Oct/Nov/Dec	82%	14%	4%	0%
	Jan/Feb Mar	77%	17%	2%	4%
	% for year	81%	14%	2.5%	2%

Satisfaction Rating

95%

Canadian Association of Workers' Advisers and Advocates

The Canadian Association of Workers' Advisers and Advocates (CAWAA) is a national organization established to develop a professional system of sharing information and best practices across jurisdictions and explore emerging workers' compensation issues relevant to workers while respecting its members' distinct workers' compensation mandates.

The Chief Worker Adviser represents the Nova Scotia Workers' Advisers Program at this association and chairs its Research Committee. Additional information on this association is available on their website: <http://cawaa.org/>

Workplace Safety and Insurance System

Advisory Councils and Working Groups

Nova Scotia's **Workplace Safety and Insurance System (WSIS)** includes workers, employers, the relevant statutory agencies (the WCB, WCAT, the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, and the Workers' Advisers Program), and others who provide services in the system. Additional information is available on the WSIS website: <http://www.wsis.ns.ca/index.php>

The **Issues Resolution Working Group** and a sub-committee, the **Appeal Issues Discussion Group**, consist of representatives from the Workers' Advisers Program, the WCB, and WCAT. These committees meet regularly to discuss workers' compensation issues and advise system partners on ways to improve issues resolution in the workers' compensation system.

The **Heads of Agencies Committee** is comprised of the heads of the four statutory system agencies:

- Director of the Occupational Health and Safety Division;
- Chief Worker Adviser of the Workers' Advisers Program;
- Chief Appeal Commissioner of WCAT; and
- CEO of the WCB.

Members of the Heads of Agencies Committee are responsible for the ongoing delivery of service to workers and employees in the system and for measuring and reporting of outcomes and progress in alignment with system goals. They are also responsible for coordinating strategic plan implementation.

Other Committees and Associations

Workers' Advisers Program staff are involved in other committees and associations to enhance their contribution to the workers' compensation system, the Department, and community. They include:

- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- Labour and Advanced Education Senior Management
- Nova Scotia Barristers' Society
- Canadian Bar Association
- Labour and Advanced Education Diversity Committee

Professional Development and Training

This year, as in the past, Program staff members took part in training programs to enhance their professional skills and personal development.

Starting in 2013 the Nova Scotia Barristers Society requires all lawyers to take 12 hours of continuing legal education per year. Workers' Advisers attended various courses put on by Canadian Bar Association, the Nova Scotia Barristers Society, and other training providers.

Throughout the year staff members attended various government mandatory and optional courses and training sessions.

The Workers' Advisers Program is committed to ensuring our people are provided with opportunities to acquire and improve their accreditations and skills.

Workers' Advisers Program

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