

## **Our Guiding Principles & Premises**

A shared internal consensus and understanding on key guiding principles, premises, and operating assumptions is an essential element in the strategic performance of an enterprise. In an organization like the WCB, whose primary activity is in the area of human services and enforcement, direct attention to these fundamental understandings is especially critical to a unified organizational effectiveness.

**We, the officers and agents of the B.C. Workers' Compensation Board, believe:**

- That our principal focus, as an organization, is WorkSafe -- the promotion of healthy and safe workplaces in B.C. It follows that safety and prevention of injury, occupational disease, and fatalities are our primary concerns and that all other concerns are supportive to our WorkSafe commitment to workers and employers in their sustaining workplace health and safety.
- That societal change is essential to creating a culture where workplace injuries, diseases and fatalities are seen as extraordinary, but preventable, events and where workers are entitled to return home in the same condition in which they went to work. We play a principal role in promoting public awareness of matters related to occupational health and safety and occupational environment to effect this societal and cultural change.
- That we must uphold and preserve the financial integrity and stability of the workers' compensation system by performing in a financially responsible and forward planning manner.
- That in carrying out our functions and duties, we look to add value to the workers' compensation system and to its stakeholders and that we foster a cooperative and consultative relationship with workers and employers that encourages ongoing feedback and advice to ensure that our value add is maintained. It is our intention to be an asset to the Province of B.C.

- That WorkSafe is really a system, driven by a number of essential partners -- workers; employers; and (by extension) their professional, labour, industry and safety associations; and government. In this alliance -- as a legislatively mandated participant -- the WCB will assume important support, enforcement and direct service roles.
- That, as a provincial public sector agency, we must remain sensitive to the strategic priorities and comply with the legislated directions of the B.C. Government in our development and implementation of plans, policies and programs.
- That the best service we can provide to workers and employers is to do everything we can to prevent injuries, diseases and fatalities from occurring in the first place; thus, the prevention of workplace injury, death and disease is our top organizational priority. However, prevention can only succeed through the independent and lead performance of the workplace's direct agents -- employers and workers. In this configuration, the WCB is most effective when it is dedicated to the WorkSafe initiative and in facilitating the cooperation of employers, workers and their associations.
- That when a worker is injured or becomes ill as a result of their work, the priority of the system must be employability of that worker. The no-fault "historic compromise" whereby workers gave up their right to sue in return for a legislated benefit scheme funded by employers remains as the most effective response to such incidents and their conditions. Each of the system's "partners" must assume key roles in this prerogative -- a collaborative exercise of the worker's will and efforts towards rehabilitation and return to work; the employer's duty to accommodate return to work and work continuity; and the Board's expertise in marshalling rehabilitative and compensation measures.
- That a primary expectation of government organizations is to support service to citizens as customers, enhanced through one-window organizational structures and management practices. Thus, as a public sector agency, the WCB's role must be driven by

such a service orientation and attained through a commitment and support by all parts of the organization to the effective front-line delivery of WCB programs and services. Since front-line staff will be the WCB locus of a customer-focused service delivery, they must be delegated a high level of situational program authority and management support in performing such a role.

- That we must focus our organizational energies and resources on our core mandates -- prevention, rehabilitation and compensation - - and that other program and support functions, subsidiary to these core functions, must be managed in such a way as to not distract the energies and attention of the WCB organization and resources from its core functions.