

**Jill Hutcheon**  
President  
Présidente-directrice générale



200 Front Street West  
Toronto Ontario  
Canada M5V 3J1

200, rue Front Ouest  
Toronto (Ontario)  
Canada M5V 3J1

416 344-4000  
1-800-387-0750  
Fax: 416 344-4023  
TTY: 1-800-387-0050

416 344-4000  
1-800-387-0750  
Télécopieur : 416 344-4023  
ATS : 1-800-387-0050

September 18, 2007

Ms. Laura Bradbury  
Fair Practices Commissioner  
Fair Practices Commission  
123 Front Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M5J 2M2

Dear Ms. Bradbury:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the *Final Report of the Commission's Investigation into Occupational Disease Process Issues* that you presented to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) Board of Directors on July 25, 2007. We are pleased that you have expressed to the Board of Directors your satisfaction with the WSIB's progress that commenced prior to the review and subsequent to the report.

I would like to start by thanking you and your staff for your work on reviewing the processes involved in adjudicating occupational disease claims. The WSIB is always looking for innovative ways to improve our services and build on our strengths. The WSIB is supportive of the recommendations and will continue to implement and enhance our processes as we move forward.

Occupational disease has always been a high priority for the WSIB and our Occupational Disease staff are deeply committed to providing excellent service. We have a three pronged approach to our continuous improvement plan in occupational disease: timely and quality support to workers and their families; the enhancement of WSIB accountability and results through efficient and effective processes; and prevention.

We have demonstrated our continual commitment through various initiatives such as the Occupational Disease Response Strategy and the Occupational Disease Advisory Panel. We have worked hard to create strong partnerships with our stakeholders in order to ensure we are following best practices.

In addition to the work that is done at the WSIB, we also devote significant resources to research to identify and promote breakthroughs in treatment and prevention, and to provide a scientific basis for future policy development. We are also funding a number of research projects focused on the prevention, identification, and treatment of occupational diseases as well as funding a Centre of Research Expertise in Occupational Disease at St. Michael's Hospital.

Earlier this year, the WSIB launched a new Occupational Disease Services Division (ODSD) to bring together occupational disease experts to align the way we deliver our programs and services. The staff of ODSD are dedicated, hardworking professionals who understand that occupational diseases have devastating and far-reaching effects on workers, their families, their co-workers, and their employers.

With the creation of the new division, we are enhancing early contact and are improving communication with workers, worker representatives and employers during the early stages of a case, and on an ongoing basis. These approaches reinforce our commitment to person to person communication, customized to reflect the needs and issues of the workers and their families in a thoughtful and timely manner.

We remain committed to ensuring that workers and their families are at the heart of our work and we are dedicated to treating them with the dignity, fairness, and respect that they deserve.

The WSIB has a vital role to play in making a positive difference in the working lives of the people of Ontario. We are dedicated to the prevention of all workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities and to ensuring a strong and sustainable workplace insurance system that will continue to serve the people of Ontario. As an organization, we are committed to continually improving our services and accountability to meet the needs of workers and their families.

Once again, we would like to thank the Fair Practices Commission for the work that was put into creating your report and its recommendations.

Sincerely,



Jill Hutcheon  
President & CEO