

NEWS RELEASE

Attention Business/News Editors

WSIB Announces Review of Experience Rating Program

TORONTO, March 10, 2008 – Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) Chair Steven Mahoney, P.C., announced today that the WSIB is conducting a review of its Experience Rating program. Also, effective immediately, if a company is responsible for a workplace fatality, they won't be eligible for a rebate from the WSIB.

Experience rating is a cost-based incentive program intended to promote good health and safety practices, early and safe return to work and appropriate disability management practices. In this program employers receive rebates or surcharges according to their performance based on claims costs. Under certain circumstances, it is possible for a company to have a traumatic workplace fatality and still receive a rebate from the Experience Rating program. This is because Experience Rating is a cost-based program and some fatalities do not result in high costs; for instance, if a worker didn't have dependants.

"It is unacceptable to me that a company responsible for a fatality would still get a rebate cheque from the WSIB," said Mahoney. "Our five-year strategic plan is the *Road to Zero*, and that is the only acceptable number of fatalities."

Mahoney also called for a review of Experience Rating to find other areas of improvement and better align the program to the *Road to Zero*.

The review will make recommendations to modernize and strengthen the program, in areas such as: accounting for legislative non-compliance, creating a process to validate workplace health and safety performance, and a long-term plan to directly tie all incentive programs to proactive health and safety initiatives.

"The Experience Rating program should raise the bar by rewarding excellent results in health and safety, prevention and return to work," said Mahoney. "The program has been effective in getting the results we need, but I know more can be done with Experience Rating to improve health and safety for the workers and employers of Ontario. We are strengthening this program so that it is fairer, better leverages our partners in prevention, provides direct incentives to improve health and safety, and gets us to our goal of zero injuries, illnesses and fatalities."

Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) plays a key role in the province's occupational health and safety system. The WSIB administers no-fault workplace insurance for employers and their workers and is committed to the prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses. The WSIB provides disability benefits, monitors the quality of healthcare, and assists in early and safe return to work for workers who are injured on the job or contract an occupational disease.

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