

## Injured Worker Advisory Committee Terms of Reference





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# BACKGROUND

The Injured Workers' Advisory Committee (IWAC, or the Committee) is a forum for discussing issues relevant to injured workers, and the families of injured or deceased workers in New Brunswick, especially issues related to, programs, and services. The Committee provides recommendations to WorkSafeNB to improve benefits and the service experience when interacting with WorkSafeNB.

# MANDATE

- The Committee will develop an annual plan to facilitate timely and relevant recommendations.
- The Committee provides a forum to discuss concerns of a general nature affecting, or expressed by, injured workers and to develop a plan for recommendations to WorkSafeNB.
- One meeting per year will be dedicated to understanding WorkSafeNB's year-end results.
- The Committee will provide WorkSafeNB with feedback on service experience and may be invited to act as a focus group for developing service-related strategies, new programs, or services.
- Members are encouraged to discuss issues raised at the meetings with injured workers, their representatives, or their representative associations and to provide feedback to the IWAC or through online consultation opportunities.
- While each member's experience may be reflected in opinions and viewpoints, the Committee is not the forum for solving specific claim-related issues.

# OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Committee are to:

- Serve as a forum for open dialogue between WorkSafeNB and the interests and concerns of injured workers.
- Complement other WorkSafeNB communication processes and increase public awareness with respect to WorkSafeNB's initiatives as it relates to injured workers.
- Gain insight and input regarding the concerns of injured workers.
- Provide constructive input on how to address and respond to injured workers' needs and concerns.
- Become more familiar with the particulars of WorkSafeNB's business to suggest means of supporting WorkSafeNB initiatives in the province.

# SCOPE

The IWAC will function at a strategic level and will not serve as a reviewer of individual management, business transactions, or other stakeholder interactions.

- WorkSafeNB will respond to IWAC input, which may include:
  - Helping to identify issues.
  - Identifying gaps in communication and consultation, suggesting who should be consulted and engaged in dialogue, suggesting factors WorkSafeNB could consider. IWAC members may suggest alternatives that should be studied and considered. IWAC members may also make recommendations to WorkSafeNB management.

# ACCOUNTABILITY

IWAC is not a decision-making body. There will be no voting. The Committee is expected to provide input, knowledge and, in some cases, advice to WorkSafeNB.

# MEMBERSHIP

- Committee membership will provide for equitable representation of community interests within the Province of New Brunswick, which will be comprised of approximately 5-8 members who have background and experience to enable them to help WorkSafeNB obtain a broader understanding of the needs and concerns of injured workers.

# STRUCTURE, ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## COMPOSITION AND ADMINISTRATION

- A WorkSafeNB representative will co-chair the IWAC, along with an IWAC member to be nominated by other members of each Committee. The co-chairs will be responsible for convening IWAC meetings, for conducting those meetings, ensuring questions and concerns raised during and outside of meetings are answered and followed-up and for overseeing the function of the whole Committee. The meeting co-chairs will allow full freedom of expression of views and opinions while maintaining a focus on the Committee objectives as described in the terms of reference.
- WorkSafeNB's designated representative will provide IWAC members with proper notice of meetings and information pertinent to the meetings as soon as possible, as well as tracking outstanding issues.
- WorkSafeNB will appoint Committee members. Committee membership will provide for equitable representation of geographical and special interests within the Province of New Brunswick. Members will normally be appointed to serve and make a commitment for a period of four years. This may be varied to ensure reasonable continuity for the Committee or to ensure appropriate geographic or special interest representation is maintained.

## MEETINGS

- The IWAC will meet on a schedule agreed on by WorkSafeNB and the Committee. It is anticipated that the IWAC will meet at least four times per year.
- Meetings will be held at locations agreed upon by Committee members.
- Agendas will be sent out in advance of the meetings. Summary notes will be kept at each meeting and circulated to Committee members. Comments made by Committee members at meetings will not be attributed in the minutes, and Committee members will respect that confidentiality when speaking with persons who are not members of the Committee. The Committee co-chairs will jointly determine the content of the agenda. Agenda items may include:
  - presentations on information relevant to WorkSafeNB projects
  - working sessions to establish framework for IWAC processes (agreed goals, objectives, guiding principles, technical information, etc.)
  - project updates, etc.
- Agenda items may be referred by WorkSafeNB management or proposed by the Committee members. The IWAC, through the co-chairs, may invite guest speakers to provide a technical presentation, or to respond to questions on a subject relevant to the Committee. The guest presentation will be scheduled as an agenda item at an upcoming meeting.
- Observers may have an opportunity to present or provide comments to the IWAC, with advance notice and providing that the meeting agenda can be adjusted to accommodate the presentation.

## COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

For the efficient and smooth functioning of the IWAC, Committee members are responsible for:

- Regularly attending scheduled meetings and preparing for meetings.
- Actively participating in Committee discussions and activities.
- Developing a clear understanding of:
  - purpose and objectives of the Committee.
  - ground rules and operating guidelines.
- Channeling input and opinion from their communities and/or special interests and reporting to each meeting of the Committee on relevant issues. It is not expected that members will undertake any formal process to solicit input.
- Act honestly and with integrity.
- On important issues, be balanced in one's effort to understand other members and to make oneself understood.
- During meetings, directors should uphold the values of mutual respect, courtesy, and professionalism.
- Reporting back to their community or special interest as appropriate on Committee discussions and activities. It is not expected that members will undertake any formal process of reporting.
- Developing practical and workable advice for WorkSafeNB's consideration.
- Respecting confidentiality of certain information as may be required from time to time.
- Being polite and cordial to other Committee members.
- Submitting an expense claim form, together with applicable receipts, detailing all disbursement of expenses claimed in support of Committee activities.

## **WORKSAFENB ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES**

- WorkSafeNB is represented on the Committee by a designated representative. The designated representative is responsible to WorkSafeNB for the IWAC and will be the primary communications channel between the Committee and WorkSafeNB. The involvement of other company personnel as participants in Committee meetings is encouraged; and will be coordinated by the designated representative.
- Senior management supports the IWAC's mandate and is open to Committee input. WorkSafeNB is responsible for:
  - Scheduling regular meetings and ensuring appropriate WorkSafeNB representatives are present.
  - Responding in a timely manner to IWAC questions and advice.
  - Responding directly to citizen questions or concerns received from Committee members in a timely manner, reporting back to the Committee member of the outcome, and reporting the concern and result at the next IWAC meeting.
  - Properly evaluating advice and implementing actions determined to be in the best interests of injured workers, employers, and WorkSafeNB.
  - Paying all travel, meals and incidental expenses of the members as established by WorkSafeNB policy.
  - Providing administrative support as required.
  - Being polite and cordial to other IWAC members, respecting that any concerns brought up for discussion are, at a minimum, important to the individual who raised them.

## **COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS**

### **INTEREST-BASED DISCUSSIONS**

Committee members will focus on interests and needs rather than positions. Focusing on interests and needs creates more opportunities for all-inclusive, long-lasting solutions than does focusing on positions. Positions are pre-determined solutions that do not necessarily consider the needs of others. Interest-based decision making includes:

- Focusing on interests, not positions.
- Focusing on the issues, not the messengers
- Generating criteria (objectives) for what the Committee wants the solution to achieve.
- Generating a variety of possible solutions ideas
- Evaluating the solutions against the criteria/objectives
- Selecting the solution that best meets everyone's needs; and
- Taking into consideration the legislation and regulations that guide WorkSafeNB's operations.

## GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION

- Separate the problem from the person. Focus on the issue, not the individual.
- Listen to understand before speaking.
- Explore other points of view and ask clarifying questions.
- Contribute to and participate in collaborative learning.
- Differences of opinion are OK.
- Accept that concerns and interests of others are legitimate and real.
- Respect each other.
- One speaker at a time. Let others finish speaking before talking.
- Respect the Committee's time. Recognize when discussions drift off-topic.
- Work cooperatively toward solutions that best meet as many interests and needs as possible.

## MINUTES

- A summary record of Committee meetings will be prepared by the designated representative and distributed to Committee members and WorkSafeNB. Comments made by Committee members at meetings will not be attributed in the minutes, and Committee members will respect that confidentiality when speaking with persons who are not members of the Committee. The content of comments is open to discussion with anyone at any time. There is no formal process for the adoption of minutes. Errors and omissions in the minutes should be reported to WorkSafeNB's designated representative directly, and that individual will either issue a correction or raise the question for further discussion at a subsequent meeting, as appropriate.
- When confidential matters are brought before the Committee, WorkSafeNB (or other Committee members) will make that fact explicit. Persons unwilling to respect the confidentiality of the item in question will leave the room for the duration of that discussion.

## PROCESS

- The existence of the IWAC is a matter of public record. Committee member's names are public.
- Additional comments from Committee members or a selection of Committee members may be gathered between meetings by the facilitator on any topic concerning subjects of interest to the Committee. This process will be used to increase the efficiency of Committee meetings, or to ensure that Committee comments can be included in WorkSafeNB's decision-making process on matters arising and requiring resolution between meetings. The facilitator will submit copies of any reports prepared in this manner to the full Committee.
- When there is consensus on an issue before the Committee, that fact will be noted explicitly at the meeting and in the minutes. Otherwise, it should be assumed that there is a range of views around the table on the topic under discussion. The Committee should avoid the formality of voting in reaching consensus.
- IWAC members are encouraged to discuss issues with and disseminate information about WorkSafeNB to the wider community, including special interest groups.
- Any statements released on behalf of the IWAC, or comments representing the Committee, must be endorsed by all Committee members, and approved by the IWAC co-chairs.
- If IWAC members receive requests from the media, they are asked to attempt to notify the designated WorkSafeNB representative before responding if representing the Committee. This will ensure that Committee members have the most current information.