



Meeting Report

August 8, 2014 Quarterly Members' Meeting

Statistics Report

General

SASM is now serving almost 250 firms with over 9,300 workers
Over 130 members did not have any WCB claims in 2013
Over 150 members did not have a lost time claim in 2013
115 Member firms are receiving discounts on their WCB Premiums
43 firms are receiving surcharges on their WCB Premiums

2014 (Stats to June 30/14)

Over 180 members have not had a WCB claim of any type
Only 34 members had a lost time claim
Members' claims are down as compared to the same time last year

Other items

Members have been getting air quality testing done but still are not using the noise dosimeter testing to full benefit. Noise induced hearing loss (NIHL) claims are increasing. The average claim can cost a firm approx. \$2,000 per year for decades. Only firms that have been performing audiometric testing, noise level testing, noise dosimeter testing, enforce PPE use, and have proof of those items have much chance of avoiding NIHL claims.

SASM no longer uses the "days lost" figures reported to SASM by the WCB as a determining criteria due to the inaccuracy of the figures. WCB's reporting software has significant issues when it comes to tracking lost time and there does not seem to be a repair in the near future.

As an example when a worker leaves 2 hours prior to the end of shift to attend physiotherapy for a work related, previously reported injury the software counts this as a lost day. Additionally, the software doesn't seem to be able to be adjusted for different lengths of shifts (i.e. 8 hour, 10 hour, 12 hour). Thus, a "lost day" may in fact be a lost hour. It seems a simple fix for both issues could be to count hours rather than days.

There are other issues with “lost time” as well. The WCB pays either the worker or the firm for the lost time. If the worker is paid by the employer for the time taken to attend physiotherapy or other medically required session, the WCB still pays the employer for the time assessing both a “lost time” and adding the wage compensation to the claim costs.

As examples:

A firm has at least 1 worker go for physiotherapy for 2 hours during each work day for 10 days. The worker gets paid the average wage in Saskatchewan’s manufacturing sector of \$27.50 per hour.

Example A: (wage compensation calculations only)

The employer pays the worker for the time the worker is away for the medical care.

10 “lost days” on the firm’s WCB “score card”	
20 hours at average wage of \$27.50 =	\$ 550.00
Plus mandatory employment costs (approx. 16%)	88.00
Minus amount paid by WCB ($\$27.50 \times 90\% \times 20$)	(\$ 495.00)
	\$ 143.00
Plus WCB’s costs to premium relationship (\$2.04 to \$1.00 based on 2009 – 2013 premium and cost totals for M72, M91 and M94)	\$1,009.80
	Net cost to Employer \$ 1,152.80

In this case the worker experiences no loss or any interruption to their pay. However, the cost to the employer is higher and 10 “lost days” appear on the WCB’s statement for the firm rather than 20 lost hours.

Example B:

The employer does not pay the worker for the time the worker is away for the medical care.

10 “lost days” on the firm’s WCB “score card”	
WCB wage compensation provided to worker ($\$27.50 \times 90\% \times 20$)	\$ 495.00
Plus WCB’s costs to premium relationship (\$2.04 to \$1.00 based on 2009 – 2013 premium and cost totals for M72, M91 and M94)	\$1,009.80
	Net cost to Employer \$ 1,009.52

In this case the worker can expect a disruption in their pay (i.e. some from employer, some from the WCB). Additionally the worker must pay the CPP and Income Tax on the funds received from the WCB. There is no provision for the worker to contribute to EI.

Example A indicates that the worker is better off (subject to Income Tax deductions, etc.) but the employer is penalized for allowing the incident even though they are fully supporting the workers' recovery. Example B indicates that the employer is better off having the WCB pay the worker but it means the worker is penalized somewhat.

Example A is clearly better for the worker. Many of Saskatchewan's better firms pay their workers to attend physio and other medical appointments. Certainly the best practice would be to not have the injury causing incident in the first place. It just seems unfortunate that the better employers are being penalized for being supportive of an injured worker.

The issue of the WCB insisting on paying could be taken further. Where do the Return To work principles fall into this question? If an employer sends an injured worker offsite for safety training provided by a third party as part of the healing period will WCB insist on paying the wages for those days also?

Paying the employer when the employer has already paid the worker is unnecessary to protect the worker and generally just adds to the employer's premiums. It does little to make the work place safer.

It has been said the current system ensures that workers are paid and that the injuries are reported. In fact the system encourages employers and workers to not report because both are penalized to a greater or lesser degree. The only group not penalized is the medical profession that gets paid a premium for attending work related injuries.

Member comments at the meeting; (summarized)

Air quality reports and noise dosimeter reports are very detailed and of scientific quality. Recommendations are made for improvements where necessary. The recommendations are based on the cost effectiveness of the action.

What can we do to get the unsafe firms to start investing in safety? It appears that the firms that are trying to be safe invest way more time, effort and dollars into safety only to have the unsafe firms get a free ride.

Who do we contact to get the WCB and Labour Relations & Workplace Safety (LRWS) to be more supportive of firms that are trying and more active with the ones that aren't?

Should we contact Cabinet Ministers and MLA's to get changes to the manner in the WCB and LRWS operate?

Items for members to contemplate when drafting a letter to key persons in Saskatchewan:

The LRWS is funded by employers through the WCB. Safety and prevention programs receive almost 20 times the amount the LRWS receives. Some of the other provinces have put a greater emphasis (i.e. higher funding) on enforcement but usually fund prevention more than enforcement.

Obviously prevention programs are the key to becoming safer. However, prevention programs only work when the employers “buy-in” and embrace safety. Should more attention be placed on those that don’t “buy-in”?

ISN and other safety registries

General

Safety registries have developed to assist large firms, governments, Crown Corporations, etc. to manage the procurement process. The registry basically performs an off-site paper audit of a firm to see if the supplying firm’s safety policies, programs and plans for any work that they do will align with the requirements set by a purchasing firm.

Supplying firms need to be very careful when registering. Do not indicate that you do any business activity for which you do not have policies, programs and plans already formulated and in place. Your first registration should be for the exact activities for which you are bidding upon. An example is that if your firm is not required to paint the product you are supplying do not even mention paint, or, if you are going to be welding only mild steel do not mention that you also fabricate in aluminum and stainless steel.

SASM’s Bronze Level Certification is accepted by ISN as the “COR” required by firms such as Agrium, PCS, Mosaic, etc.

Member comments at the meeting (summarized)

Purchasing firms are using ISN and others to pre-check suppliers but the system adds a lot of time and expense to any particular contract. If you have a very unique product or position in the market the buyers may bypass ISN and approve you anyway.

ISN presents itself as a “software” company not a safety registry. They have a very “polished” sales team but are exceedingly difficult to reach by phone after the initial sale.

One “purchasing” member (i.e. signed on to ISN as a purchaser) indicated that their other locations in Canada have commented that SASM offers more services than any other safety association in Canada.

Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME)

SASM and the CME have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The purpose is to improve the human resource development services offered to manufacturers in Saskatchewan. The CME is the lead organization in the development of Saskatchewan's Manufacturing Centre of Excellence which will be announced in the upcoming weeks. SASM's purpose in the MOU is to ensure that safety is close to the forefront in all things as we can make it.

The Centre of Excellence is funded by Western Diversification and has funds for the development of workers. While the CME uses Training Within Industry (TWI) and Lean as the primary worker developmental training initiatives, SASM wants to ensure that worker safety training is always included.

Unfortunately, to date, the CME rarely, if ever, specifically mentions worker safety, workplace safety, or SASM. A number of Briefing Notes sent to Saskatchewan's Cabinet Ministers did not mention either safety or SASM.

Member comments at the meeting (summarized)

What can we do to ensure that the CME more actively promotes workplace safety and even SASM? Can SASM provide "speaking / writing" notes for the Members to use if we contact the CME or the CME's Board?

Items for members to contemplate when drafting a letter to the CME's key persons in Saskatchewan:

The CME and SASM have signed a MOU that espouses mutual support to the organizations and their respective Members to develop Saskatchewan's manufacturing workforce and workplaces to become safer.

The CME has stronger and deeper contacts in the political arena while SASM has stronger and deeper contacts in the actual workplace.

The CME and SASM both need to ensure that workplace safety is a key message in every communication piece developed by either organization.

Stronger emphasis needs to put on developing safety culture in the workplace as opposed to forcing safety onto the workers and workplaces.

Key persons

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bglanville@bourgault.com

Using data to become safer

Lagging data (i.e. reports of injuries, near hits, near misses, etc.) can be used to develop your safety program. The lagging data can help you design leading indicators that you can measure.

An example can be to assess your reporting and investigating procedures or standards.

What is your firm reporting?

Near misses / Near Hits / First Aids / Injuries / Good Catches?

Are you investigating after the report is received?

How soon is the investigation complete?

How many hours / days until it is done?

Is the investigation done well?

Are you sending back poor investigations?

Are you doing anything with the data reported?

Workers won't report anything if they feel you aren't doing anything with the report.

How soon are corrections implemented?

Are you measuring the time to implementation and trying to shorten the cycle?

All of this data is quantifiable and can be used to improve your safety standard. Some firms have reward systems that encourage reporting and fixing problems. The better systems adjust the rewarded actions to achieve what they feel is needed to improve their safety management system. The "rewards" typically have a low cost but a high "feel good" value.

Discussion with the Board and "round table" topics

Special thanks to Directors Brenda Wasylyw, Claude Rouault, Gord Secuur and Trent Kolbe for their participation.

On-line discussion group

A location where questions can be asked of other manufacturers, general discussions of safety issues, etc. "On-line" locations can take a lot of resources to develop and monitor. Webinars and a contact list may be the way to go.

SASM will investigate.

What is happening to the Manufacturing Safety Officer program?

SASM "dropped the ball" on this project. A Manufacturing Safety Professional Program will be finalized and announced within the next three weeks.

Is SASM going to increase staff?

Only by the amount we can afford. As members and rate codes are added more staff will be hired. Current target is for one more safety trainer to be added November, 2014.

What keeps you up at night regarding safety?

- Labour relations
- Drug testing
- We invest money in safety but so many firms seem to get away with little or no safety investment.

Rent – an – advisor

The rent an advisor program is working really well for some members. Others are encouraged to try the program. If enough Members use the program more advisors can be hired.