



**YUKON WORKERS' COMPENSATION
HEALTH AND SAFETY BOARD** **COMMISSION DE LA
SANTÉ ET DE LA SÉCURITÉ
AU TRAVAIL
DU YUKON**

News Release

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Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board Welcomes Auditor General's Report

The Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (YWCHSB) is welcoming the recommendations in the report of the special examination by the Auditor General of Canada.

"We thank the Auditor General for conducting this special examination and for noting that our compensation system is fundamentally sound and responsive," said Dale Schmekel, Chair of the Board of Directors. "We welcome suggestions for improvements and we will be closely considering the recommendations over the next several weeks."

The Minister Responsible for the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board, Sue Edelman, is also considering the results of the special examination. "We've received the report and look forward to considering its recommendations," said the Minister.

The special examination is a requirement of the Workers' Compensation Act. In a joint request, the Board and the Minister Responsible had asked that the Auditor General address the issue of board governance.

"We appreciate the guidance the Auditor General has provided on the issue of governance. Having the president of the YWCHSB report only to the Board of Directors would clarify our relationship with the Yukon government, while still ensuring accountability," said Mr. Schmekel.

"We also agree – as the Auditor General has stated -- that it is very important to work collaboratively with the Yukon government for the

benefit of all workers and employers. We will actively seek opportunities to do so," Mr. Schmekel said.

The Auditor General has raised points about the YWCHSB's administration costs. As her report acknowledges, an actuarial analysis in 1999 found the YWCHSB's administration costs comparable to those of other boards, after the size of the Yukon board is taken into consideration. Factors such as collective agreements, additional responsibilities for occupational health and safety and mine safety, the establishment of the Workers' Advocate and Appeal Tribunal, and the addition of rehabilitation services have all contributed to administration costs.

Mr. Schmekel pointed out that the YWCHSB is already addressing a number of the issues raised by the special examination. It is currently developing a new policy on contracting to be in place no later than January 2003.

The YWCHSB is also addressing issues raised concerning claims, rehabilitation and prevention programs through its Achieving Better Customer Service project.

"We have anticipated that many of the issues identified in earlier reports and studies would also be identified by the Auditor General," said Mr. Schmekel. "We are already acting to address many of those issues."

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The Report of the Special Examination by the Auditor General of Canada can be found on our web site: www.wcb.yk.ca