

## USAGE CONSIDERATIONS FOR FIVE YEAR EMPLOYER LOST-TIME CLAIMS AND FATALITIES

### OVERVIEW

These annual reports present the occupational fatality numbers, the lost-time claim numbers and rates for employers in Alberta, allowing for the tracking of these workplace health and safety performance indicators over time. Lost-time claim rate can serve as an indicator of a company's safety performance, but it is not a conclusive measure by itself.

Human Services prepared this five-year snapshot for an employer report based on a Workers' Compensation Board-Alberta (WCB) data file, prepared on March 31, 2011. WCB's data are the most comprehensive source of data available on workplace injuries. The data collected support the WCB's role as the insurer of workplace injuries.

The data presented in this report include employers who are required to have WCB accounts. In most industries, employers must cover their workers through the WCB. In certain industries, however, employers have the option of covering their workers through WCB, using other insurance carriers, or not insuring their workers. Data for employers in these voluntary industries have been excluded from this report.

Human Services prepares this report on employer workplace safety performance indicators in order to meet the demand from industry and safety associations, labour organizations, employers and workers for incorporating this information into their plans for enhancing workplace health and safety.

If you have any concern regarding the information contained in the report, call or email the **Occupational Health and Safety Contact Centre**:

- **1-866-415-8690 (Toll-free within Alberta)**
- **780-415-8690 (Edmonton and surrounding area)**
- **Deaf/hard of hearing with TDD/TTY: 780-427-9999 in Edmonton, 1-800-232-7215 throughout Alberta**
- **whs@gov.ab.ca**

### RISK CONSIDERATIONS

**The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)** provides a right of access to records held by public bodies, and at the same time protects the personal privacy of Albertans by controlling the manner in which a public body manages their personal information.

**The Occupational Health and Safety Act** in Section 28.1 states:

“The Minister may, in order to enhance the protection of workers and the prevention of work site injuries by encouraging good and discouraging bad work site safety records,

- (a) establish indices and measurements of work site injury prevention,
- (b) maintain a register consisting of the names of employers and their performance, as determined by the Minister, in relation to those indices and measurements,
- (c) publish, or authorize a department or agency of the Government or any other entity to publish, the information contained in that register, and
- (d) collect any information needed for that register from another public body that provides the information to the Minister.”

Human Services applies confidentiality rules to all data that are released or published, to prevent the publication or disclosure of any information deemed confidential. Please refer to [www.foip.alberta.ca](http://www.foip.alberta.ca) for detailed information on Alberta's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and to [www.employment.alberta.ca/409.html](http://www.employment.alberta.ca/409.html) for Human Services' commitment to privacy.

## **USAGE CONSIDERATIONS**

While there is good comparability of the five-year snapshot of employer injury claims and rate statistics released by Human Services with those released directly by WCB, small methodological and coverage differences exist due to differing business reporting requirements. For these reasons, statistics released by Human Services and by the WCB are not expected to be identical. Consideration of when the data were last updated should also be noted by the users of this report.

WCB issues accounts to employers based on the structure of their corporations. In most cases employers operate with a single account and one assigned industry. However in other cases, particularly those of more complex organizations, employers may have more than one account in more than one industry or multiple industries on one account. As well, an employer may be reassigned to a new industry based on changes in their operations or based on changes in WCB's industry descriptions. Care should be taken in considering which operation is being referenced in the report.

Claims may be registered by an employer, an injured worker or a health care provider within two years of the incident occurring. WCB regularly audits employers to ensure they comply with reporting claims properly.

The lost-time claims (LTC) published in this report include those accepted as LTC by WCB as of March 31, 2011. Lost-time claim (LTC) rates and Certificate of Recognition (COR) information are calculated using methodology that is applied consistently across all employer records. Employer LTC rates are compared to their industry LTC rate and the provincial LTC rate as an indicator of their safety performance, relative to their industry and/or the provincial safety performance.

## PARAMETERS, DEFINITIONS AND FORMULAS

### Time Frame

The report is based on a five-year snapshot of workplace incidents that occurred between 2006 and 2010 and were accepted as lost-time claims (LTC) by the Workers' Compensation Board-Alberta (WCB) as of March 31, 2011. The report also includes occupational fatalities that occurred between 2006 and 2010 as reported by March 31, 2011.

### Parameters

This report focuses on employer performance in the compulsory industries in Alberta covered by WCB and by the provincial legislation for occupational health and safety. A five-year snapshot of employers' lost-time claims histories is included in the report.

### Measures

The **lost-time claim rate** is the number of lost-time claims per 100 person-years worked. Injury claim rates based on a small number of person-years worked are too volatile to make valid comparisons over time. Therefore, claim rates are not calculated in instances where there are fewer than 40 person-years worked.

**Industry codes** are based on WCB industry classifications and aggregation. This report excludes the industries deemed "voluntary" under WCB legislation. For more information, see:

<https://ds.wcb.ab.ca/WCB.RateManual.WebServer/alphaindex.aspx>

The **person-years estimate** is equivalent to one full-time worker working for one year, and can be assumed to equal 2,000 hours worked. The person-years estimate is not an actual count of the workers at the employer's operations.

This report provides a five-year snapshot at the employer level for the history of lost-time claims and occupational fatalities. Many of the occupational disease claims are assigned to an industry rather than to a specific employer.

## Terms and Definitions

Terms and definitions used throughout this report are described as follows:

**Lost-Time Claim (LTC)** – A claim that was accepted in the calendar year for an occupational injury or disease that causes the worker to have time away from work beyond the day of the injury. Included are claims receiving reimbursement of full or partial lost wages due to occupational illness or injury, or payment for permanent loss of function.

**Person-years estimate** – Estimates of full-time workers calculated from wage and payroll data provided to WCB by account holders. Person-years worked are estimates provided by the WCB. One person-year is equivalent to one full-time worker working for one year, and can be assumed to equal 2,000 hours worked.

**Certificate of Recognition (COR)** - A Certificate of Recognition (COR) is awarded to employers who develop health and safety programs that meet established standards. CORs are issued by Human Resources and are co-signed by Certifying Partners.

The COR is valid for three years from the date of issue, providing that all maintenance requirements are met. The date the audit is completed on-site is used as the COR issue date.

To maintain a COR, an employer is required to carry out internal audits within 12 and 24 months of the date of the COR. A new external audit must be carried out by a qualified auditor within 36 months of the original COR.

Certificate of Recognition (COR) status is obtained from two sources. Prior to 2006, an employer's COR status was point-in-time specific and verified annually on December 31. In 2006, a new system was implemented which tracks COR status on a continuous basis. Due to differences in the data collection process and system changes, these reports may not accurately reflect COR status for some employers in 2005 and 2006.

**Fatality** – An occupational fatality is the death of a worker resulting from an incident or exposure which has been accepted by the WCB for compensation. Occupational fatalities include work-related motor vehicle and workplace incidents and occupational diseases. If the death happens on the day of incident there will be no lost-time claim. Some of the fatalities accepted in a particular year arise from incidents or exposures occurring in prior years, such as is the case in many occupational disease cases.

## Formula

**Lost-Time Claim Rate** – This is calculated by dividing the number of lost-time claims by the person-years worked estimate, and multiplying the result by 100. The lost-time claim rate represents the probability or risk of an injury or disease to a worker during a period of one year of work, which will result in time lost from work. Comparisons of lost-time claim rates between industries or between years can be used to indicate changes to this risk.

$$\text{LTC Rate} = \frac{\text{Number of LTC's}}{\text{Person-Years worked}} \times 100$$

## FIELD DATA ELEMENTS DISPLAYED IN THIS REPORT

<b>Employer Name</b>	Name of company, sorted alphabetically within industry.
<b>Common Business Name</b>	Operating name or the commonly known name of the business when it is available. This name may or may not be the same as the employer name.
<b>City</b>	The city of the employer's mailing address as provided to the WCB. Although the address may be outside Alberta, this report includes only Alberta worksite claims and person-years.
<b>Account Number</b>	An identifier to distinguish an employer's WCB account or multiple WCB accounts.
<b>Year</b>	Occurrence year of the claim and person-years associated with that operating (calendar) year. The report will collect and display the past five operational years.
<b>Certificate of Recognition (COR)</b>	Indicates if an employer had a COR anytime during the reported calendar year.
<b># Lost-Time Claims</b>	Total number of accepted lost-time claims, based on definitions elsewhere in this document, as reported by March 31, 2011.
<b>Person-Years Estimate</b>	One person-year can be assumed to be 2,000 hours worked per year.
<b>LTC Rate per 100 PY</b>	The number of lost-time claims per 100 person-years. LTC Rate is not calculated if the employer has less than 40 person-years, so this field would be blank.
<b>Motor Vehicle Fatalities</b>	The number of motor vehicle fatalities accepted in that calendar year.
<b>Workplace Incident Fatalities</b>	The number of workplace incident fatalities accepted in that calendar year.
<b>Occupational Disease Fatalities</b>	The number of occupational disease fatalities accepted in that calendar year.
<b>[Year] Industry Total</b>	Statistics for the industry in the most recent year reported.
<b>[Year] Provincial Total</b>	Provincial statistics for the most recent year reported.

## NOTES:

- The UNASSIGNED Account is a general WCB-Alberta holding account used for the industry in cases where a specific employer has not been identified on a claim and could be referred as an industry claim. In the case of a fatality where an employer is no longer in operation the unassigned account will be used.
- Industry and Provincial amounts displayed for lost- time claims are the TOTALS (for the most recent calendar year reported) as assigned to each industry and in the province. [see Lost-time claims].
- Industry and Provincial amounts displayed for Person-Years Estimate are the total (for the most recent calendar year reported) of ALL Person-years worked, as reported by all employers in each industry and in the province. [see Person-Years Estimate]
- Industry and Provincial amounts displayed for LTC Rate show the Average rate for industry and province (for the most recent calendar year reported), based on LTC claims per 100 person-years. [see LTC Rate per 100PY].
- Person-years estimate includes all employers within WCB covered industries regardless of whether or not the employer had a lost-time claim or a fatality reported in the last five years.
- UNDER REVIEW appears on the Account line when an employer's data for a specific year are blank indicating that the data are being verified.
- COR certification may be site-specific, so the COR may not cover all operations of a specific employer or business.