

2012 Annual Report



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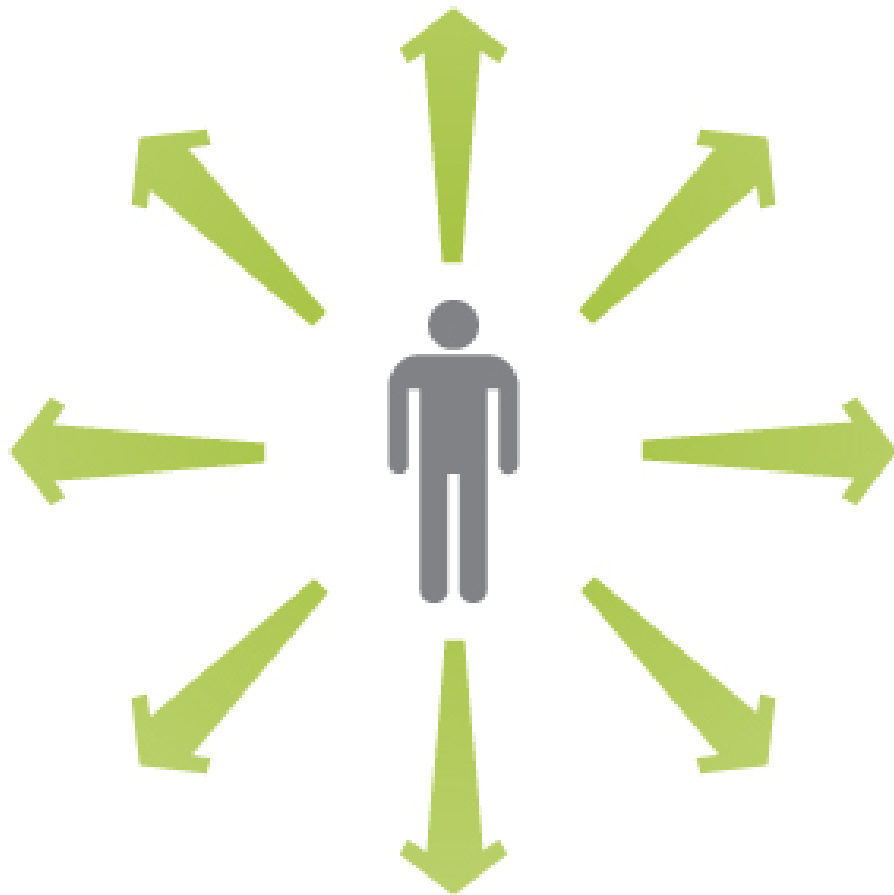


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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE OEA BOARD

On behalf of the OEA Board of Directors, I am pleased to submit the 2012 Annual Report of the Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Society.



Most notably, we began 2012 as a permanent company with a commitment from the WCB for funding until the end of 2016. The "shift" from a pilot program to a permanent organization provided to businesses, the confidence they would have navigational support, training specialized to their needs and advocacy for issues within the system. Permanence of OEA came after a lengthy evaluation process, one in which numerous employers and business associations wrote letters of support. We thank employers and business associations for their unwavering support and business advice in the development and evolving role of OEA NS.

This report provides you with an overview of our past year, the programs we taught, the employers we met, assisted, supported, and helped guide, and the issues we pursued.

2012 was the second of our four year strategic plan and we worked very hard to put in place long term policies, processes and the building blocks for a solid future for OEA.

Financially, OEA is in a very solid position to meet our needs and assist us to develop the services further.

We always seek and look for new opportunities and new ideas. Please let me know how OEA can assist the Nova Scotia business community.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bernadine MacAulay".

Bernadine MacAulay
Associate Legal Counsel, Scotia Investments Ltd.
Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Board President

MESSAGE FROM THE OEA DIRECTOR

It is my pleasure to provide you with the 2012 Annual Report for the Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Society.

This represents our first formal Annual Report, though OEA has prepared and provided ongoing progress reports to WCB, LAE and employer groups regularly since OEA first opened in May 2008.

2012 was a tremendous year of business development and project work beginning with our move to new office space, equipped with a training room, workspace and enough offices to enable us to improve OEA services. Strategically OEA has evolved much since 2008 when we began with one advisor. With dedicated business advice, support and direction from the OEA Board, employers in Nova Scotia can be assured that the operation of OEA is being done well and with their needs always at the forefront. OEA has developed and implemented a number of guiding policies and procedures to ensure quality standards are always maintained.



photo D/D Krechki

Training programs expanded substantially in 2012 with a focus towards reaching more employers by specifically targeting their needs. Employers provide program feedback through every survey and questionnaire, so staff can ensure we are delivering what employers need and expect. Thank you - we appreciate all of the feedback.

Partnerships in health and safety are a key to reducing workplace accidents. In 2012 OEA partnered again with the law firm McInnes Cooper for our 4th. annual conference. OEA staff spoke at numerous conferences, business meetings, employer annual meetings and health groups. We look forward to continuing to meet with and work with the many partners in the system.

I extend to each of the OEA Board members, OEA staff members and system partners a sincere thank you for the support of OEA NS and myself in the past year.

I hope you enjoy reading this annual report and if we can assist your business, please give us a call.

Navigating Employers,

Mary Morris

Director, Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia

OEA GOVERNANCE

Staff



Mary Morris
Director / Employer Advisor



Angela Peckford
Employer Advisor



Erica Nichols
Administrative Assistant

Board of Directors



Bernadine MacAulay - OEA Board President
Scotia Investments Ltd.



Rene Cox - OEA Board Director
Construction Association of Nova Scotia (CANS)



Leanne Hachey - OEA Board Vice-President
Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)



Luc Erjavec - OEA Board Director
Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association (CRFA)



Rick Feehan - OEA Board Treasurer
Wear Well Garments Limited



Christopher Ipe - OEA Board Director
Canada Post Corporation



Al Angrignon - OEA Board Director
Nova Scotia Forest Safety Association



Kathleen Miles - OEA Board Director
Loblaws Atlantic



Jim Cormier - OEA Board Director
Retail Council of Canada, Atlantic Region



Janet Simm - OEA Board Director
South Shore Regional Health Authority



Henry Vissers - OEA Board Director
Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

OEA EVOLUTION

The Office of the Employer Advisory Nova Scotia Society opened in 2008 and provides advocacy, individualized claim and appeal support, system navigation, advice and training programs for employers in all sectors, in all regions for the province, regardless of whether or not the employer is registered with the WCB.

Over 70,000 employers exist in Nova Scotia, each requiring different levels of attention. The regulatory challenges faced by Nova Scotia employers make OEA a necessity. With an ever-changing regulatory and business environment– the timing for such a program is evident.

Employers needed a program of support and assistance. Despite that, Nova Scotia is one of the last provinces to implement an OEA; having existed in various forms throughout Canada since the early 1980s. After 15 years of lobbying by employer groups, the Office of the Employer Advisor became a reality to employers, as a pilot program, in May 2008. In 2011, the OEA received a commitment from the OHS Division of Labour and Workforce Development and the Worker's Compensation Board to make the program permanent.

Operating with a funding agreement between WCB and OEA, the OEA is administratively separate from government and is a registered not for profit with Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies.



2008



2012

OEA MANDATE

Assist Employers to navigate WCB/OHS and related issues through advice, support, guidance, review and advocacy.

Increase employer understanding and involvement in WSIS.

Encourage and ensure the right decisions are being made.

Advocate for employers.

Make recommendations for improvement to the overall system.

Provide employer focussed training.

Support and advocate for Return to Work.

Promote healthy and safe workplaces and workplace practices.

Assist employers with appeals.

Engage employers on system issues.

Assist with program, policy, procedure review & development.

Assist with understanding, interpreting legislation, codes of practice and regulations.

BENEFITS TO EMPLOYERS AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

Services and programs are available to small, medium and large businesses; all sectors and regions regardless of registration with WCB.

Immediate support and assistance to employers and employer associations.

Experienced and knowledgeable staff in OHS, WCB, Workplace, HR Practices, Disability Management, Associated Employment Requirements, Policy, Program Development and Delivery, Training and Legislation.

Services are confidential.

Most services are free to employers and employer associations.

Program is influenced directly by employers and ongoing survey evaluations ensure quality delivery of programs and services.

2011 – 2014 STRATEGIC PLAN / BUSINESS PLAN

The Office of the Employer Advisor, Nova Scotia (OEA NS) was created in 2008 to provide leadership and expertise to employers and business associations dealing with the complexities of the Nova Scotia Workplace Safety and Insurance System (WSIS) and other employment matters.

The first strategic plan in 2008 allowed the OEA Board, (then, the “Employer’s Council”) working with our Employer Advisor(s), to establish our plans for the pilot phase of the program, which ended in June 2011.

The OEA NS Society lives its vision: ***“Navigating Employers in the Right Direction”***.

The 2011 OEA NS Society Strategic Plan builds upon both our knowledge and aspirations and what we have learned through our work with employers.

On January 18, 2010 The OEA NS Society became a registered society, under the *Societies Act of Nova Scotia*.

The proposed strategic direction in this document was validated at the March 2011 Annual General Meeting of OEA NS Society.

Mission, Vision, Values of the OEA NS Society:

1) Mission: Navigating Employers in the Right Direction.

2) Vision: Contributing to a successful Nova Scotia business community with expertise, advice, support and resources.

4) Our Customers: All Nova Scotia employers/businesses and professional employer associations, regardless of registration with WCB.

5) Our Key Values: OEA NS Society is guided by the following values or principles as we strive to achieve our Vision:

We value. . .

Healthy, Safe and Engaged Workplaces in Nova Scotia: OEA NS Society delivers its mandate to assist and contribute to business success.

We value . . .

Self Management of OEA NS Society: OEA NS Society will sustain a Governance Model, that supports and advances the mission of the Society, including Education–Support–Expertise–Communication–Advocacy, which in total produces sustainable and measurable system change and supports employers to create and maintain better workplaces in this province.

We value . . .

Change: OEA NS Society strives for necessary and effective system change to benefit Nova Scotia employers in a positive and direct way. We value the change that can occur when programs and services which meet employer's needs, are accessible, represent good value and expert quality.

We value . . .

Accountability: OEA NS Society works to provide effective, efficient governance, program and system assessment, communication and accountability to employers, partners, business associations and funding agencies.

We value . . .

Transparency: OEA NS Society gathers and maintains data within the framework of modern privacy practices, respecting access and delivery of services. We believe in keeping employers and employer associations informed on current issues and promoting open discussion.

We value. . .

Collaboration: OEA NS Society works with external agencies and departments. We recognize the value of combining strengths and perspectives to attain desired OEA NS outcomes.

We value . . .

Client Focused Approach: OEA NS Society considers all client outcomes and impacts when building and delivering programs and services.

We value. . .

Outcome Driven Approach: In the allocation of resources, OEA NS Society seeks to deliver results for clients, partners and funding agencies. Our outcomes support the Mandate, Mission, Vision and Values of the OEA NS Society.

Strategic Theme	Initiatives for 2011-14
1. Setting the Future Direction of OEA NS Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Continued Development Governance Processes and Accountability● Financial Growth and Planning● Business Planning
2. Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Advocacy● Define general outreach services● Individual/ customized programs/services
3. Articulating, Building and Living the OEA NS Society Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Leverage Partnerships● Develop/ensure communications to reach businesses
4. Property and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure adequate resources, facilities, equipment etc. to achieve the plan

2012 Business Plan

The OEA 2012 Business Plan can be found at the following link:

<http://oeans.ca/about-us/business-plan>



2012 FINANCIALS

OFFICE OF THE EMPLOYER ADVISOR STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT DECEMBER 31 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	117,476	76,926
HST receivable	5,885	15,216
Prepaid expenses	3,919	2,927
	<u>127,280</u>	<u>95,069</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	13,745	6,473
Deferred revenue	94,685	86,596
	<u>108,430</u>	<u>93,069</u>
NET ASSETS		
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>18,850</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>127,280</u>	<u>93,069</u>

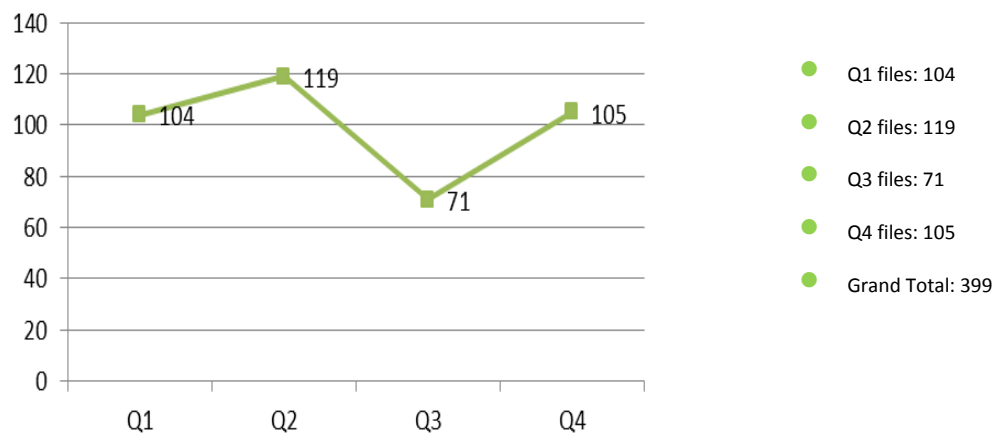
OFFICE OF THE EMPLOYER ADVISOR STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
REVENUE		
Workers Compensation Board of Nova Scotia	329,911	323,883
Other revenue	18,849	9,273
	<u>348,760</u>	<u>333,156</u>
EXPENDITURES		
Administrative expenses	<u>329,910</u>	<u>334,685</u>
REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	18,850	(1,529)
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS- beginning of year	<u>-</u>	<u>1,529</u>
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS- end of year	<u>18,850</u>	<u>-</u>

STATISTICAL SUMMARIES

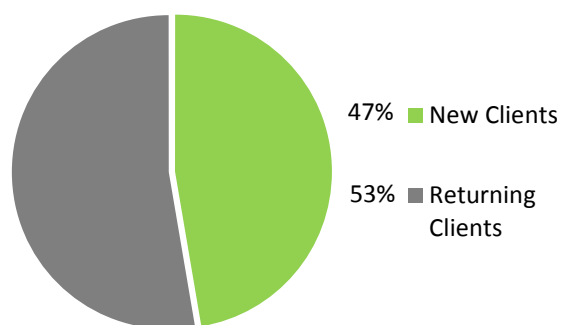
In 2012 OEA implemented a thorough policy and procedure to clarify how services are provided and when they cannot be. An Individual File represents a business issue which a specific employer has asked OEA to dedicate efforts towards.

Individual Files

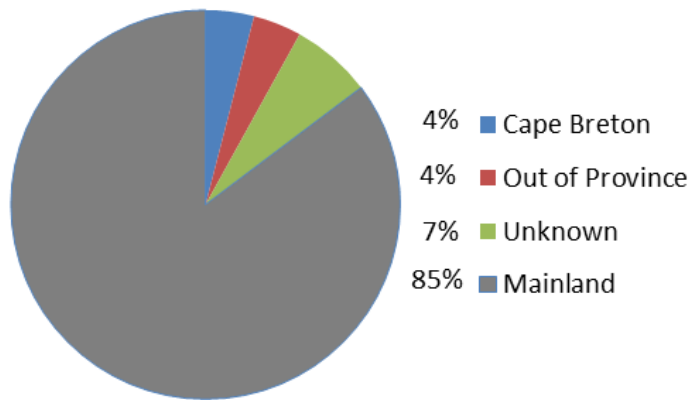


- Total emails during 2012 was 19,868.
- Total telephone calls during 2012 was 2,245.

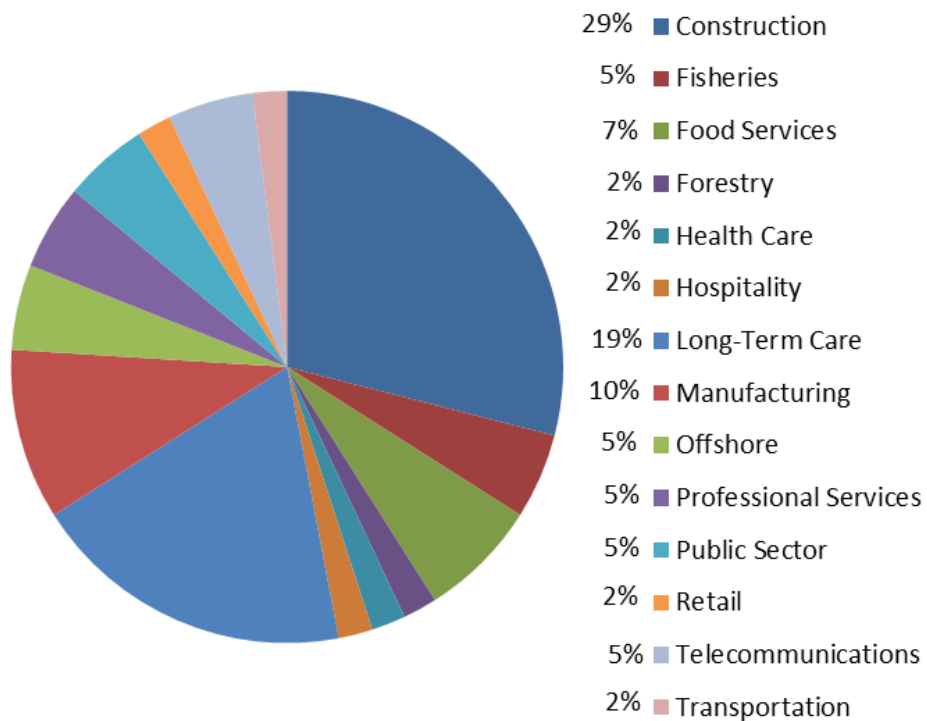
New vs. Returning Employers



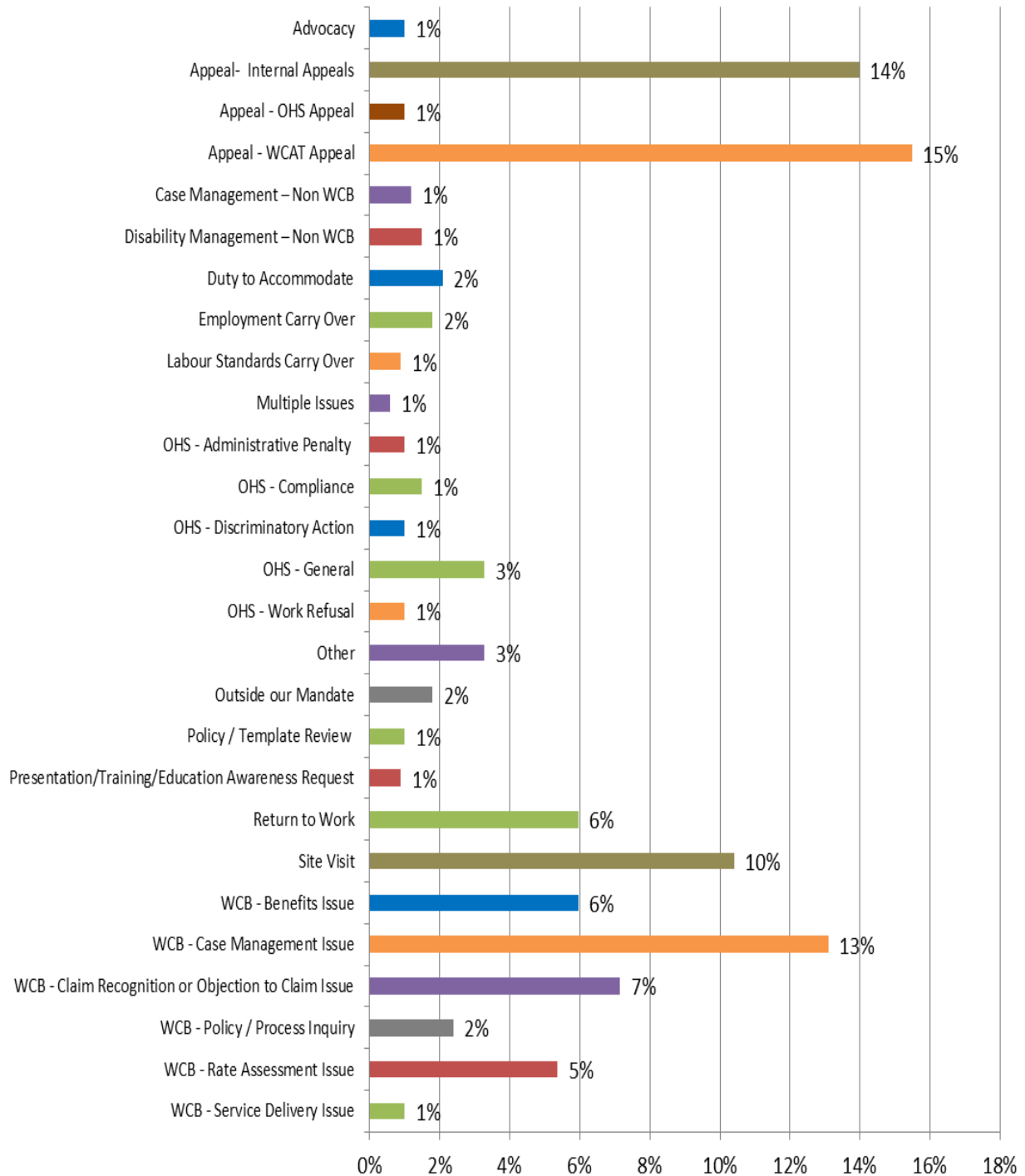
Location of Employers Using OEA



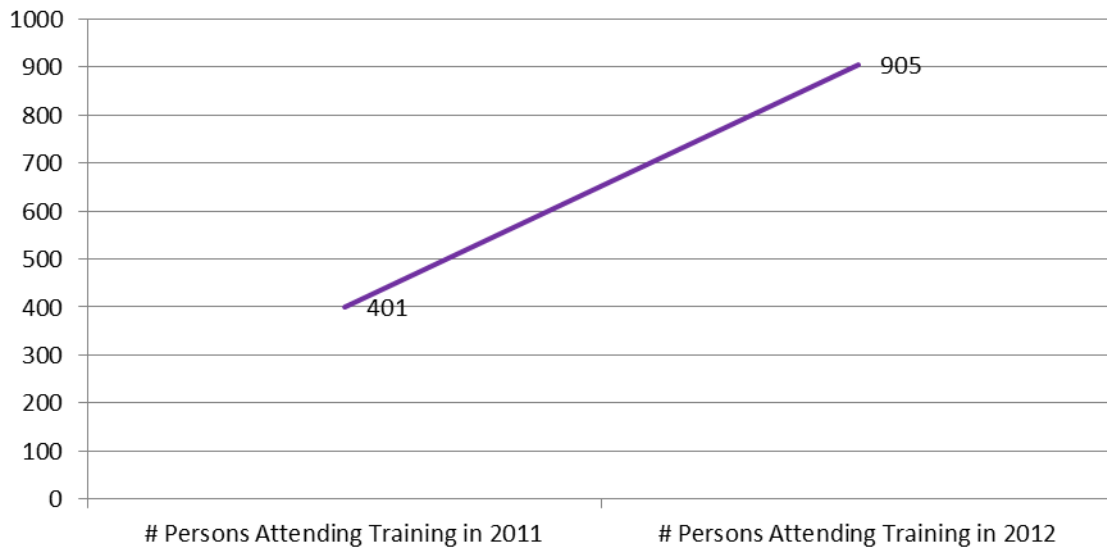
Industry Sectors Using OEA



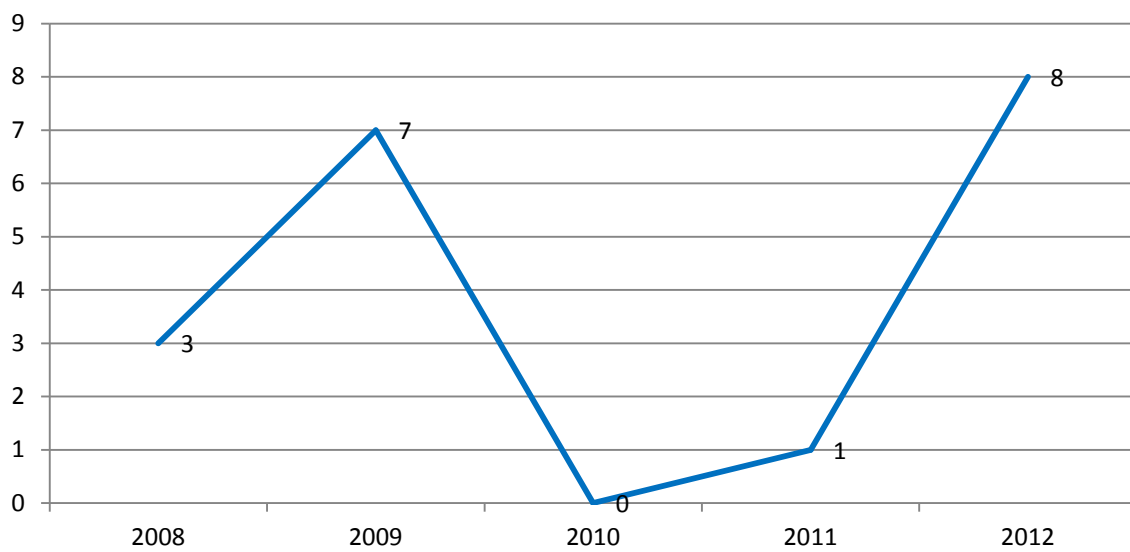
Issues OEA Dealt With



OEA Training



Regulatory Consultations Which OEA Participated In



OEA MARKETING



The OEA Newsletter

Two newsletters per year are posted to the OEA website.



Facebook

OEA launched a Facebook page in Q4 2012. Since the page launched we have posted 15 announcements.

Please visit our page at
<http://www.facebook.com/OEANS>



Twitter

OEA launched a Twitter page in Q4 2012. In 2012, we tweeted 26 messages and with the help of some business association followers, we have reached over 1500 additional followers with our messages.

We currently have 39 followers.

Please follow us [@OEANS](#)

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following for helping to advise Employers about OEA:

WORK SAFE. FOR LIFE.
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA



Annual WCB Rate Package

In August each year, OEA advertises in the annual WCB Rate Package.

In 2012, 18,500 OEA flyers were distributed to employers with the WCB Rate Assessment Information for 2013

WCAT Issued the OEA flyer to employers involved in appeals.



Business Associations

CFIB and the NS Federation of Agriculture distributed OEA flyers to all of their members either by site visits or in their newsletters.

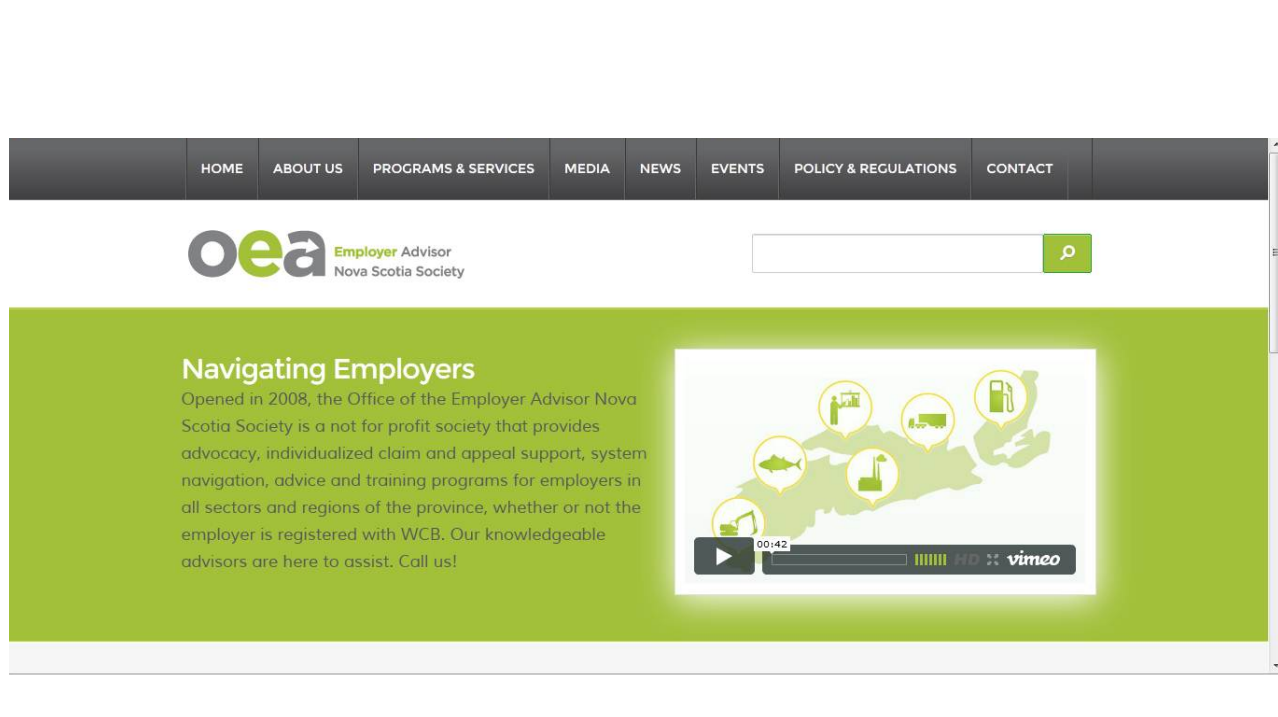
OEA conducted Training & Presentations for Business groups and associations in 2012.



Links

OEA maintains links with the WCB website and OEA's across Canada.

THE OEA WEBSITE



In August 2012 OEA launched a completely new website to showcase our new logo, new look and provide more awareness of our training calendar. The response to our new website has been great.

With three staff and a Board of Directors representing prominent business associations, the OEA has earned a reputation amongst employers and business groups for its knowledge, expertise, advocacy and training.

The OEA was designed to:

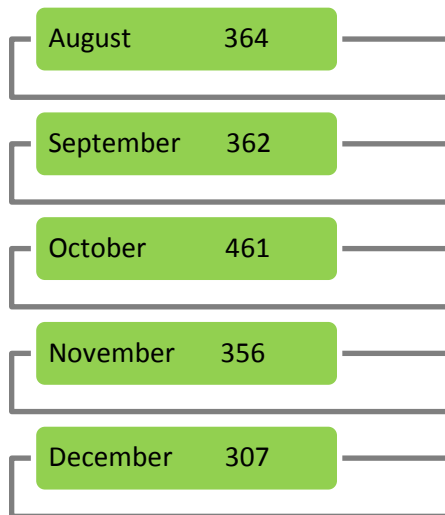
- Increase employer understanding and involvement in WSIS
- Encourage and ensure the right decisions are being made.
- Advocate for employers.
- Make recommendations for improvement to the overall system.

Navigating Employers through Advocacy, Communication and Training, the OEA provides numerous programs and services. See our Services section our website for more details, <http://www.oceans.ca>.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

We implemented the use of Google Analytics in August 2012 with the launch of our new website.

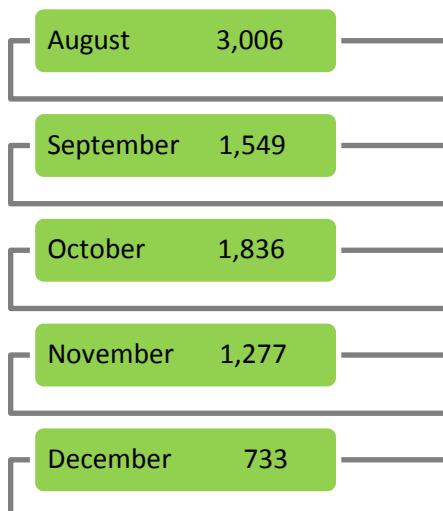
Site Visits



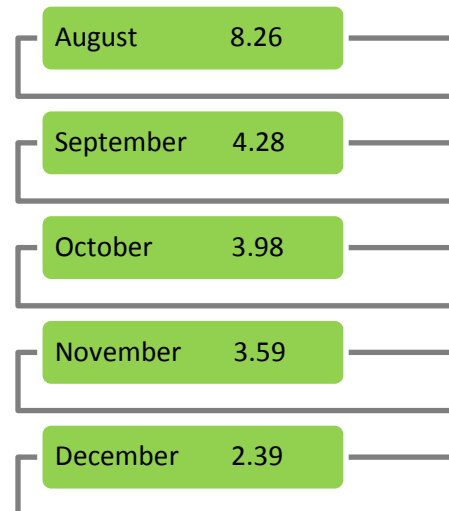
Average Visit Duration



Page Views



Pages/Visit



TRAINING, CONSULTATION AND CONFERENCE NUMBERS

January

- OEA: Who We Are / Navigating WCB
 - 320 attendees
- WCB Internal Appeals Employer Consultation
 - 14 attendees

March

- OEA Conference
 - 70 attendees
- WCB / OHS / LR / HR / Regulatory Framework for HR Personnel
 - 60 attendees

April

- OEA: Who We Are / Navigating WCB
 - 57 attendees

May

- Return to Work
 - 70 attendees
- Navigating OHS & WCB
 - 15 attendees
- Disability Case Management for Employers
 - 10 attendees
- Letter & Submission Writing for Employers
 - 10 attendees
- Duty to Accommodate
 - 50 attendees
- Prevention Strategy Employer Consultation
 - 55 attendees

June

- WCB Internal Appeals Employer Consultation
 - 10 attendees

October

- OEA: Who We Are / Navigating WCB
 - 9 attendees
- Disability Case Management for Employers
 - 12 attendees
- Navigating OSH & WCB
 - 5 attendees
- Creating Employer Accommodation Policies
 - 5 attendees
- Letter & Submission Writing for Employers
 - 7 attendees
- Dealing With Stress Claims & WCB
 - 4 attendees
- WCB Internal Appeals Employer Consultation
 - 15 attendees

November

- Letter & Submission Writing for Employers
 - 6 attendees
- Stay at Work / Return to Work Programs
 - 5 attendees
- Job Demands Analysis
 - 4 attendees
- Direct Access to Physio, WCB Protocols & Understanding Physio Reports
 - 3 attendees
- Pink Slips to Handshakes
 - 6 attendees
- Duty to Accommodate
 - 30 attendees
- WCAT Appeals Employer Consultation
 - 24 attendees

December

- OEA: Who We Are / Navigating WCB
 - 29 attendees

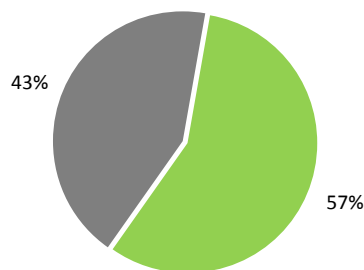
Grand Totals

- 27 Presentations
- 905 attendees

OEA EMPLOYER EVALUATIONS: PROGRAM SERVICES

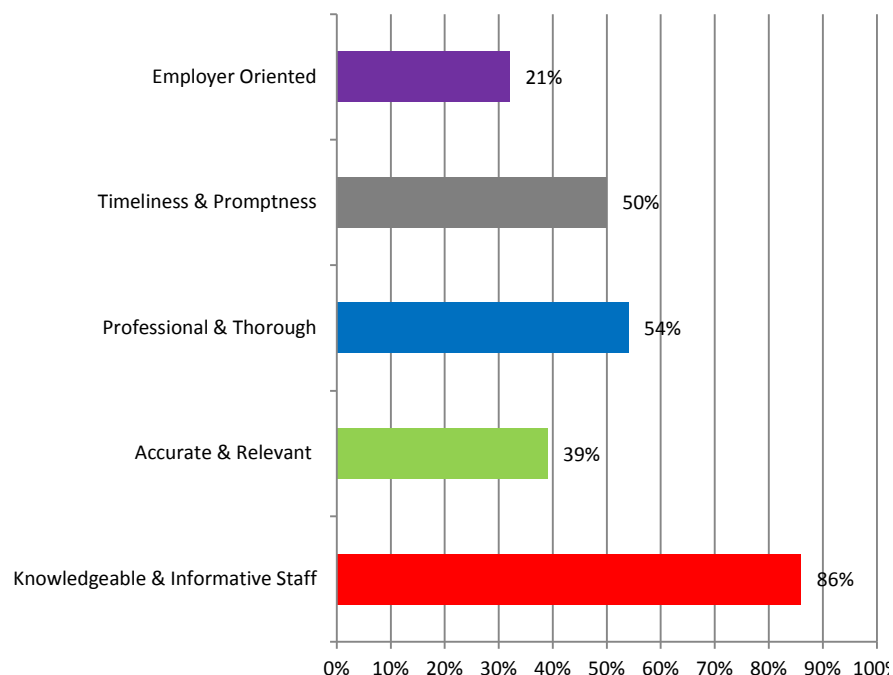
- Rate of Return of all Surveys issued in 2012: 67%
- 100% of the Employers who responded, rate OEA's service levels as "Excellent".

Employer Participation in Training



- 57% first time for training
- 43% returning for additional training

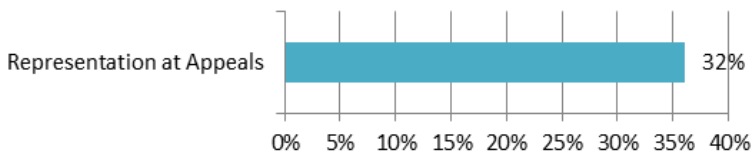
What Employers Are Looking For in Staff Service Quality



- Employers who responded, rated these items, based on the importance to them as a client.
- Some Employers did not rate each category but, instead chose the ones most important to them.

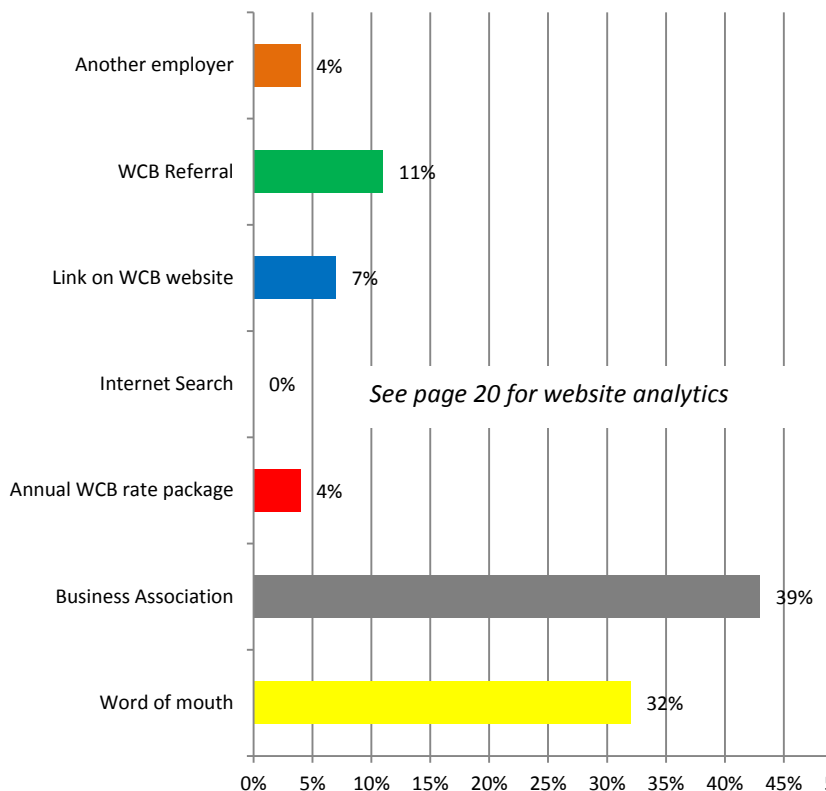
**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*

What Services Employers Want OEA to Offer



- There has been consistent feedback that Employers would like OEA to be able to represent them at appeals.

How Employers Found Out About OEA



- Each year OEA distributes approximately 22,000 information flyers, maintains an active website and present to employers through training and meeting contacts/committees.

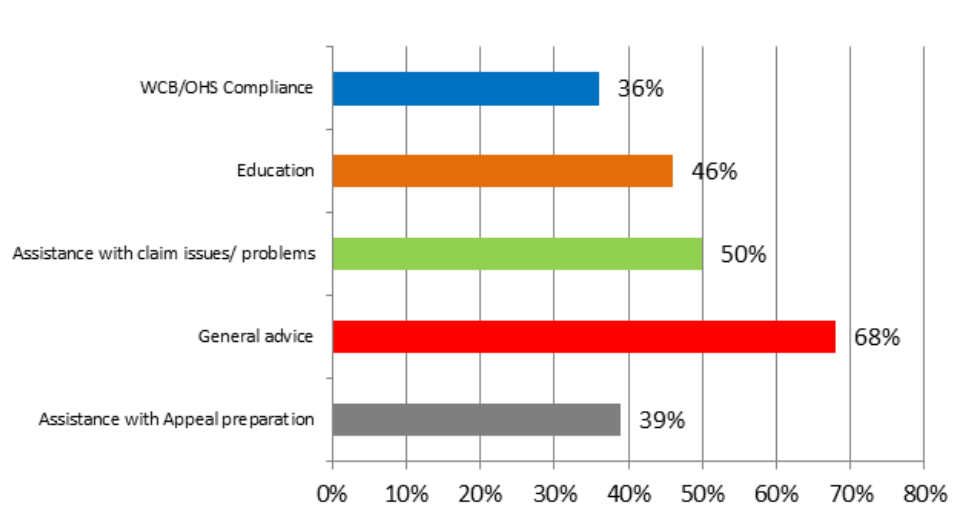
- Business Associations and word of mouth were listed as the key methods of learning about OEA.

**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*

Employers are Happy with OEA!

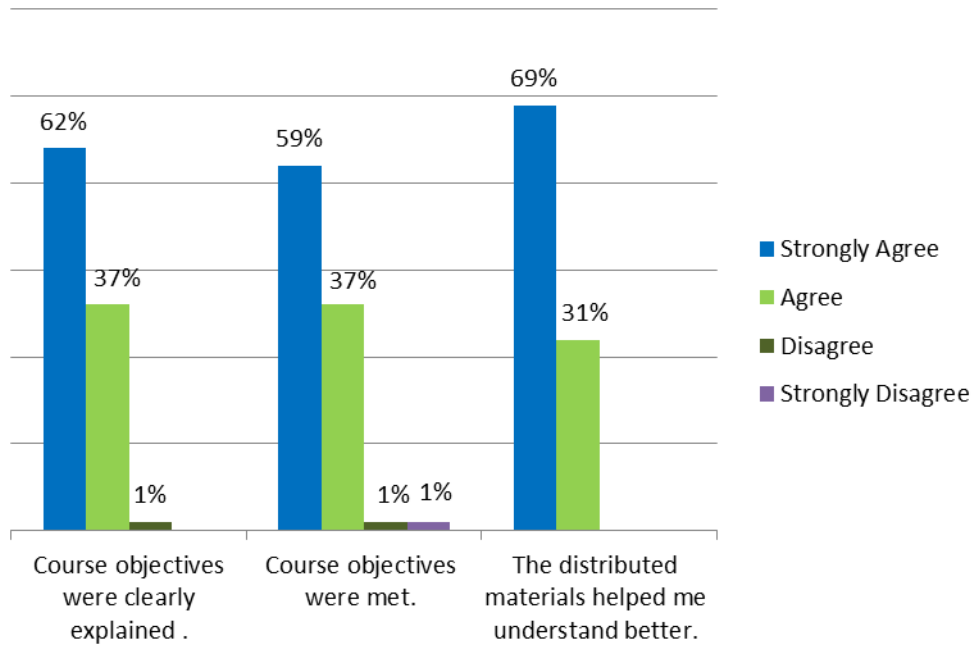
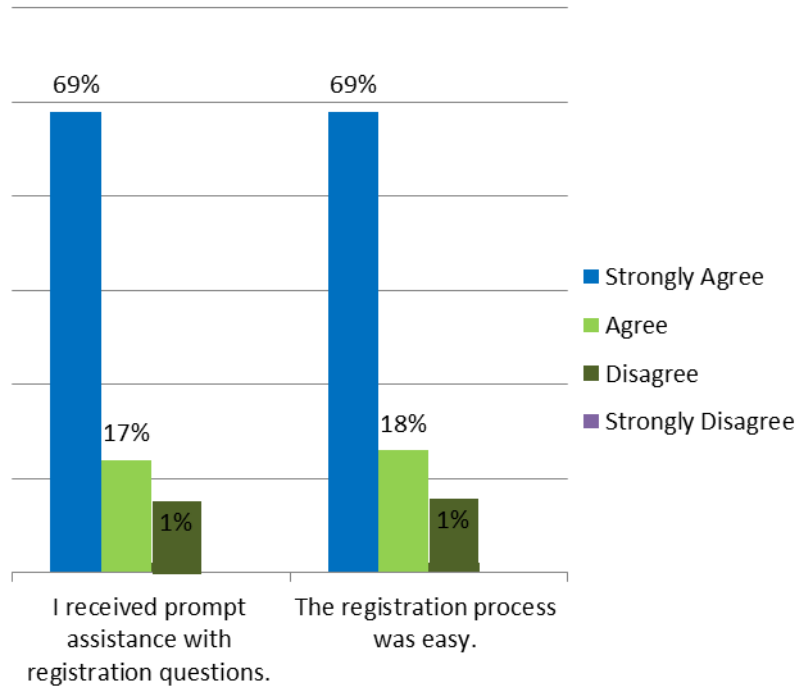
- 100% of the Employers, who responded, said they received the assistance they were looking for.
- 100% of the Employers, who responded, felt that their own knowledge level was increased through their interaction with the Employer Advisor assigned to their file.
- Although not all the Employers responded, 96% were satisfied with the work that was done by OEA.

Programs & Services Employers Value from OEA

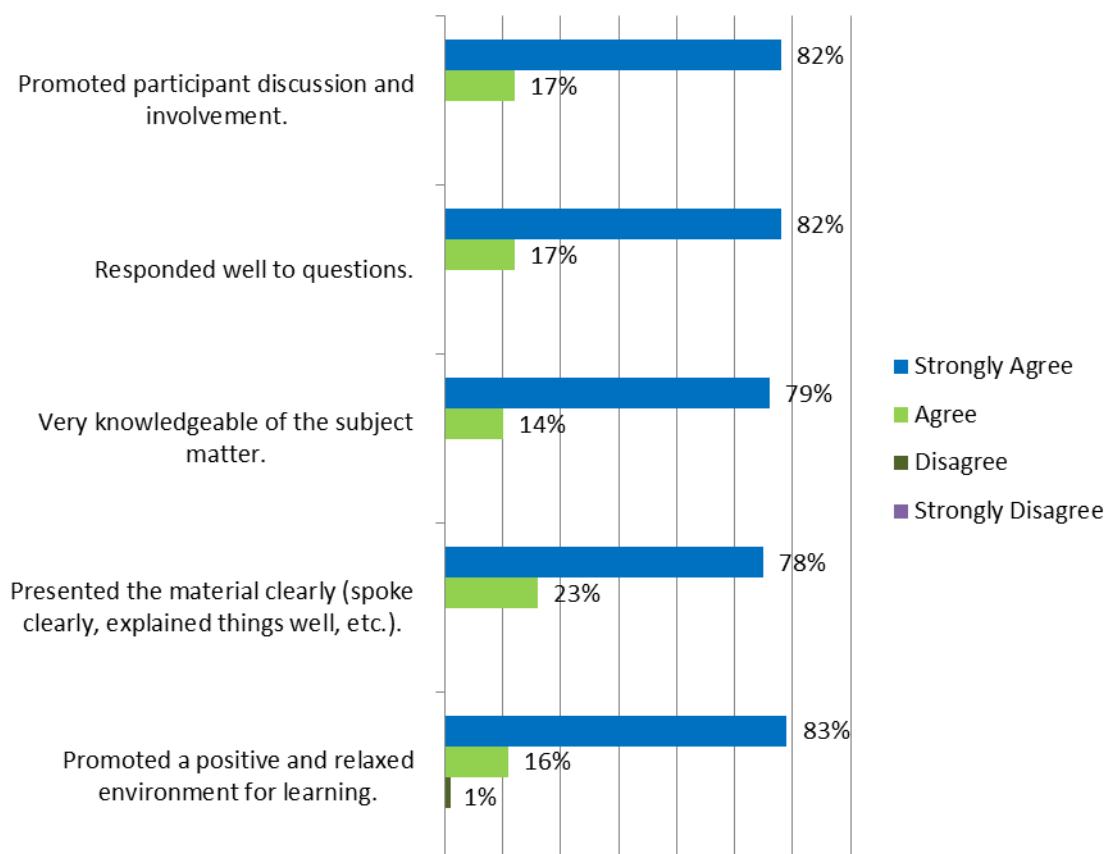


**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*

OEA EMPLOYER EVALUATIONS: TRAINING



**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*

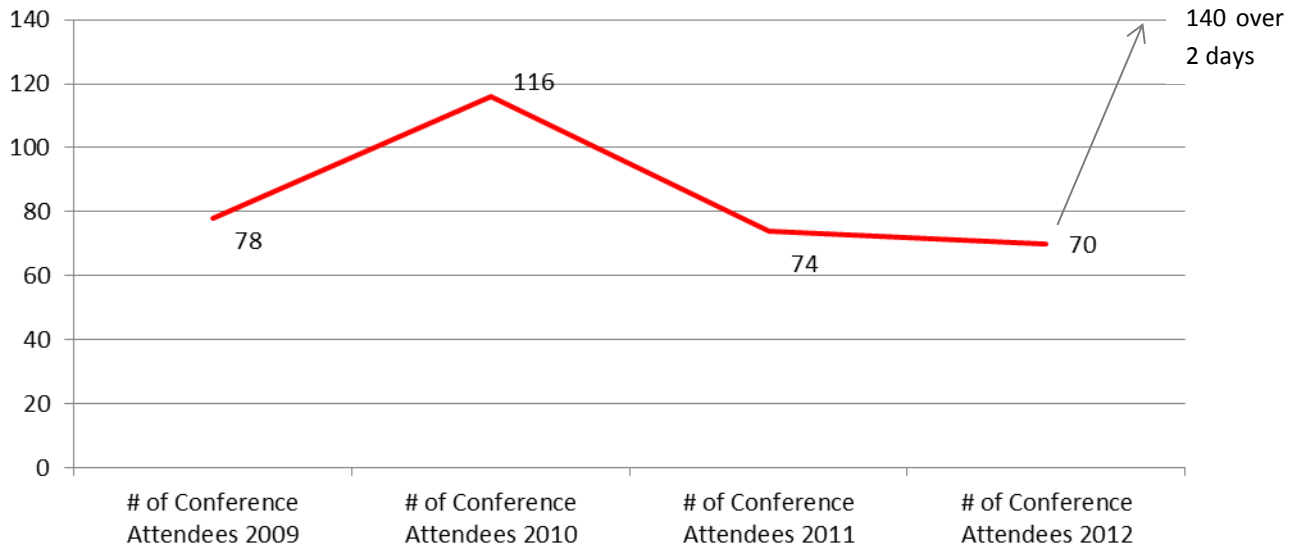


**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*

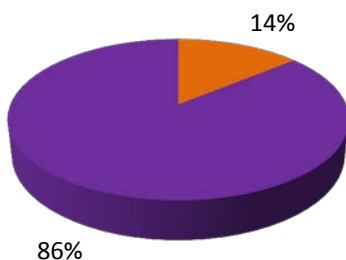
OEA EMPLOYER EVALUATIONS: CONFERENCE

Attendance

- OEA has offered an employer conference annually since 2009.
- In 2012 we expanded our annual conference from one to two days in duration.

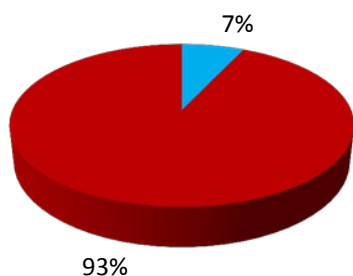


- OEA had a 27% return rate on the surveys issued at the conference. Survey answers were rated on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent.
- 100% of the respondents felt the presentations were relevant to their workplace or business.

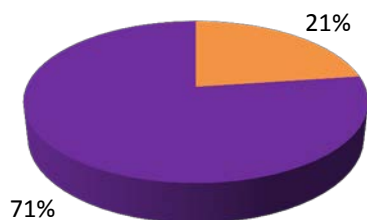


- 86% of the respondents rated their satisfaction with the location/venue as excellent, 14% rated it good.

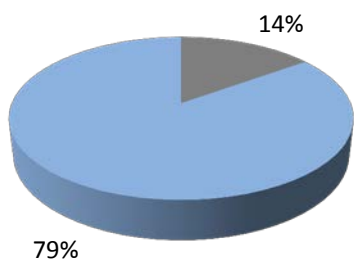
**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*



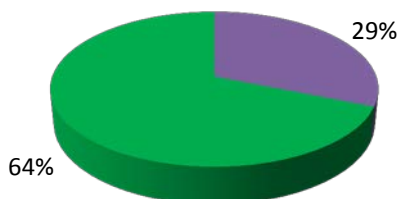
- 93% of the respondents rated their satisfaction with the registration process as excellent, 7% rated it good.



- 71% of the respondents rated their satisfaction with staff/advisor interaction as excellent, 21% rated it good.



- 79% of the respondents rated the overall knowledge and skills of staff/advisors as excellent, 14% rated it good.



- 93% of the respondents felt their knowledge level was increased by their interaction with staff/advisors at OEA with a rating of 4 or above.

**Please note: not all questions were answered by all respondents.*

-
- Great job ladies!
 - Thanks for an outstanding conference. Conference was good value for the cost of registration & it was wonderful to hear from high level speakers. Thanks for providing the slides for each presenter
 - Great conference, truly enjoyed
 - Great couple of days; thanks!
 - Enjoyed conference, keep up the excellent work & congrats on securing permanent to keep operating.
 - "Felt the information on the Duty to Accommodate very weak. Employment Contracts-Time/Presentation was well managed."
 - "Dr. Burnstein was fantastic! Excellent presentations, great references, reading materials & wonderful personality in delivering the material."
 - "Presenters were very knowledgeable & had good and logical answers to audience questions. Thank you for having such fantastic speakers."
 - "Mock call & WCAT Appeal very informative"
 - "WCB-Understanding the Appeals Process: Good Presentation, but not enough time for the subject. "
 - Expanding on knowledge of WCB and the rights of employers
 - Yes, the mock conference call & WCAT hearing was very timely
 - Dealing with appeals, the presentation on appeals process was very helpful. Dr. Burnstein was excellent, opened my eyes on RSI and give me confidence when discussing such claims with WCB.
 - Yes, the good info on how to address concerns & importance of the employer being more aggressive when seeking info on WCB claims plus steps to get the info needed to make more educated decisions.
 - Yes, good to know how to handle a WCAT appeal. What to look for, what to ask, what to expect.
 - Yes, the WCB, DTA, Hiring. Employers need the most up to date information which conference delivered.
 - "We are getting more involved in appeals and the information was relevant and helpful. Also, the accommodation info was helpful in letting us know our obligation and limits"
 - "Very relevant, excellent content."
 - "CTS claims are increasing within my workplace. Dr. Burnstein's presentation provides information to keep in our submissions for appeals."
 - "Yes, very much. In relation to legal aspects of work, health and safety"

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

During 2012, OEA Staff participated in the following professional development to maintain their knowledge and meet regulatory or professional requirements.

Mock OHS Trial

Emergency First Aid Course

Safety Services Nova Scotia Annual Conference

Advanced Incident Investigation

Diversity Dialogue

OHS Act Review

McInnes Cooper Employment Seminar

Cox & Palmer Insurance Law Seminar

Halifax Chamber of Commerce Info Session

THE COMPANIES WE PURCHASE SERVICES FROM

We support Nova Scotia businesses, large, medium and small, union, non-union, public and private sector when we select our suppliers.

OEA would like to thank all our service providers for their support and assistance in 2012.

Administrative Staffing

ADT Security

Alfred J. Bell & Grant Ltd.
Insurance Specialists

Altimax Courier

Anchor Industries: The
Ladle Restaurant

Bedford Buy and Sell

Carpenter Millwright
Trades College

Corporate Impact Inc.

Dash Creative

DSM Telecom

Eastern Building Cleaners

Eastlink

End to End
Communications

Kenmac Printing

McInnes Cooper,
Lawyers/Avocats

Safety Services Nova Scotia

Teachers Plus Credit Union

The Sackville Business
Association

Touchstone Bookkeeping

WBLI Chartered
Accountants

Worker's Compensation
Board of Nova Scotia

Workplace Essentials

By Employers, For Employers