



### The Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Society (OEA NS)

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### By Employers, For Employers



Bernadine MacAulay, President

On behalf of the OEA NS Board of Directors it is my pleasure to present our Annual Report for the calendar year 2016; marking nine years of Navigating Employers in Nova Scotia. The OEA NS Society was developed to address needs of employers in the areas of Workplace Health and Safety, Workers' Compensation and intersecting employment legislation. Our Board's Strategic direction continues to promote Advocacy, System Improvement and Accountability, Training, Education, and Return to Work to promote business success in Nova Scotia. Our ten Directors represent sectors and employers throughout the province and they bring an enormous wealth of business knowledge to OEA NS.

In 2016, the OEA NS Board subcommittees continued to focus on the initiatives of the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan, including negotiation of a new funding contract with WCB, compensation review and communications strategy. These enable OEA to remain a competitive employer in a growing and changing business environment as well as ensure employers in all sectors are aware of OEA NS programs and services. Our Communications Strategy will provide the necessary direction as we transition and communicate our Core and Core-Plus service and program delivery in 2017.

Our annual OEA Board survey considers leading and lagging indicators and provides the members with an objective review of our performance in leading OEA. Our score for 2016 was 4.3 out of five.

We experienced staff changes in 2016 with individuals leaving for new opportunities. Our Employer Advisors, completed the year with all employer file intake actively assisted, higher intake volumes compared to 2015, marked improvements in issue resolution and all delivered to the same high standards employers know and can expect of OEA! The OEA Board sincerely thanks Mary Morris and Jeannette Combes for their commitment to OEA and our client employers. Their professional dedication to the mandate of OEA NS continues to build the trust of Nova Scotia employers.



**OEA Board of Directors: 2016** 

From L-R: Tina Lane, Jordi Morgan, Juanita Spencer, Alan Angrignon, Richard Feehan, Chris Ipe, Jim Cormier, Henry Vissers Missing from Photo: Bernadine MacAulay, Board President and Christine Carruthers

Photo: Dash Creative

In 2016 OEA hosted a working committee, gathering input from the employer community about the WCB's draft policy regarding the compensability of pre-existing conditions. Fiftynine employers signed endorsements of the working committee's submission to the WCB.

OEA also applied to be an Intervenor in an appeal currently before the NS Court of Appeal regarding the disclosure of WCB documentation to the employer. We appreciate all of the employers who have provided invaluable feedback to both of these advocacy issues.

I would like to extend a very sincere thank you to my OEA Board colleagues and their employers for their volunteer time and extraordinary efforts to provide oversight and long term direction to the OEA NS Society. I very much appreciate my colleagues support to me, as President.

Thank you. Bernadine MacAulay President, OEA NS

### **OEA Board of Directors**

#### Bernadine MacAulay - Board President

Owner,

Bernadine MacAulay Law Inc.

#### **Henry Vissers - Vice President**

Executive Director,

Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

#### Rick Feehan - Treasurer

Chief Financial Officer,

Wear Well Garments Limited

#### Jim Cormier - Director

Director, Atlantic Canada, Retail Council of Canada

#### Alan Angrignon - Director

Manager,

Nova Scotia Forest ry Safety Association

#### Christopher Ipe – Director

WCB Specialist, Barrister & Solicitor Canada Post Corporation

#### Jordi Morgan - Director

Vice President Atlantic,

Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)

#### Tina Lane, CPA, CMA - Director

President & COO,

Marid Industries Limited

#### Juanita Spencer - Director

Executive Director,

Spring Garden Area Business Association (SGABA)

#### **Christine Carruthers - Director**

Director, Human Resources, Tandus Centiva

### **OEA Staff**



Mary Morris
Executive Director /
Employer Advisor



Jeannette Combes Employer Advisor



Angela Peckford Employer Advisor



Eyoab Begashaw Manager, Business Operations

# Message from the Executive Director

Work is Important. Business Success Makes it Possible.

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the year ending 2016. It was a year of positive and anticipated change in our business operations, with a number of key projects completed development of a new funding agreement and contract with WCBNS. Our discussions with WCB resulted in a new contract beginning 2017 that will bring clarity of scope of practice and continued efforts to assist employers. During the year OEA said good bye to Angela Peckford and Eyoab Begashaw from staff roles, as well as Christine Carruthers from the OEA Board of Directors. We wish them all our very best!

Jeannette Combes joined OEA full time as Employer Advisor, bringing to OEA an experienced health care background in the Princess Mary Royal Airforce Nursing Service, Midwifery, Offshore, Public Health, Emergency Care, Intensive Coronary Care, Occupational Health and Manufacturing, industry sector combined with participation on professional practice and standards committees and professional board experience. Read more about Jeannette on our website at <a href="https://www.oeans.ca">www.oeans.ca</a>.

OEA introduced new training programs in 2016 addressing PTSD and healthy workplaces practices in the hiring of transgendered workers. Employers attending our June conference appreciated two insightful presentations by employers from Norman Countway, President of Sure Courier and William Costin, Owner, Costin's Paving and Contracting Ltd. In November we held WCB/WCAT appeal training and were greatly assisted by McInnes Cooper, WCAT and Internal Appeals in this program delivery. We thank all of our guest speakers who provide training support to OEA throughout the year and in particular to the Labour and Employment Group of McInnes Cooper Law Firm.

Employers continued to identify system concerns and issues resulting in challenges to individual companies and the overall provincial economy. The concern regarding ongoing business viability from Workers' Compensation premiums resulted in many referrals from member business associations to OEA and increased individual business inquiries. Our appreciation is extended to Tom Burt, Manager, WCB Assessments, for his assistance with many of these. The employer is limited in its ability to resolve matters that will create positive impact to their premiums however, employers want to be involved in all aspects of claim management and decisions. In 2016 we received a higher number of concerns expressed about the employer's lack of notification of a PMI decision rendered, than in any other year to date. Return to work efforts were the single largest area of training and file work that OEA provided in 2016. The increasing average lost time rate, due to injuries, continues to be a major concern of all stakeholders as it directly impacts ongoing business viability. Real change must be made to the lost time rate in Nova Scotia. Injury claimants, with increasing subjective reports, are not returning to the workplace and remaining permanently out of the workforce, even in their 40's and 50's. Lifestyle issues permeate WCB claims and the employer, being held responsible for these costs creates business worry for the future. Increasingly, problem resolution requires OEA Advisors and employers to address complex employment issues interconnected to the WCB claim. The challenges are many and the work of OEA continues to provide programs and services focussed on Navigating Employers to Business Success!

Our new contract with WCB will provide clear business separation of the Core and Core Plus programs and services of OEA NS Society. We are excited about this new chapter! Thank you to employers and business associations for your trust and support of OEA. We look forward to navigating your business in the next year!

Sincerely Yours, Mary Morris Executive Director



Navigating Employers in the Right Direction.



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



OEA NS Society is guided by the following values or principles as we strive to achieve our Vision: Healthy, Safe and Engaged Workplaces in Nova Scotia: OEA NS Society delivers its mandate to assist and contribute to business success.

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.

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.

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.

**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.

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.

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

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.

**Diversity:** OEA NS promotes a working environment that is inclusive and accepting, ensuring each staff member and client is treated fairly and equally. OEA NS commits to service a diverse range of organizations from all sectors, sizes and regions of the province - making certain each client receives the same quality of attention and effort from OEA NS.

**Integrity:** OEA NS vitalizes working together with honesty between staff members and clients. OEA NS values strong moral principles in all aspects of business and day-to-day interactions.

**Respect:** OEA NS believes in a high standard of respect, respecting the dignity and value of each staff member, and respecting individual opinions. OEA NS commits to respecting and building sustainable working relationships with all stakeholders, including clients and partners.

# Strategic Themes for 2014-2017

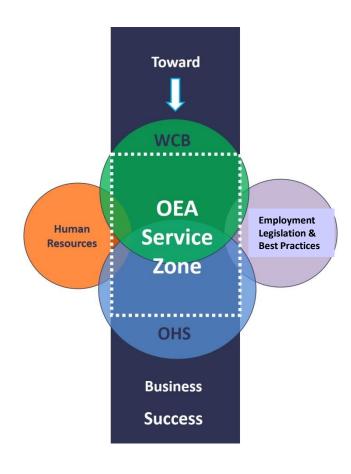
- Board Governance
- Programs & Services
  - Core
  - Core Plus
- Financial Sustainability
- Empowering Employers
- Infrastructure, Data Management & Staff Resources

The OEA 2014 Business Plan can be found on our website, using the following link: http://oeans.ca/about-us/business-plan

### **OEA Service Zone**

OEA NS meets the needs of employers and business associations by providing advice, Advocacy, Education and Training and Navigation in Core and Core Plus service areas.

OEA's Service Zone includes Workers' Compensation, Occupational Health and Safety, Employment Practices and legislations, and related and intersecting navigations.



# OEA Employer Services Plan

**Employer Navigation** 

- Core
- Core Plus

- Board Standards and Governance
- Organizational and Financial Sustainability
- Operational Excellence, Human Resources and Administration
- Employer Education & Learning,
- Advocacy and Partnerships, Communication

Year End Review

### Financials

# <u>The Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Society (OEA NS)</u> <u>Statement of Financial Position</u> <u>As of December 31, 2016</u>

	2016	2015
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	246,397	156,449
HST Receivable	15,079	7,896
Prepaid Expenses	3,347	3,326
	264,823	167,671
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	15,624	11,177
Deferred Revenue	127,863	72,025
	143,487	83,202
NET ASSETS		
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	121,336	84,469
	264,823	167,671

# <u>The Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Society (OEA NS)</u> <u>Statement of Operations and Net Assets</u> <u>For the Year Ended December 31, 2016</u>

	2016	2015
_	\$	\$
REVENUE		
Workers' Compensation Board NS	379,162	400,019
Other Revenue	36,867	18,754
	416,029	418,773
EXPENDITURES		
Administrative Expenses	379,162	400,019
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENDITURES	36,867	18,754
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS – BEGINNING OF YEAR	84,469	65,715
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS – END OF YEAR	121,336	84,469

### Service Evaluation Results

Employers contact OEA NS for assistance with Workers' Compensation, Occupational Health & Safety, Human Resources, Employment Legislation, Appeals Assistance, Advocacy, Education and Training.

At the conclusion of service with OEA, employers are asked to complete a Service Experience Survey. The survey provides performance feedback to assist in ensuring OEA's Strategic Plan and system outcomes have been met. This year there was a 30% increase in employers returning these surveys. OEA issued 116 surveys in 2016, with a return rate of 63%. In 2015 OEA issued 221 surveys with a return rate of 33%. We thank employer clients for their time to complete the survey and provide comments.

## The survey results identify 97% of employers received the assistance from OEA they were looking for and that was helpful.

Employer knowledge levels are self reported on a scale of 1-5. (5 being "Excellent")

- Pre-OEA Interaction: Reported Knowledge levels rated by employers: 42% rated their knowledge level as 4 or 5.
- Post-OEA Interaction Knowledge levels rated by employers: 91% rated their knowledge level as 4 or 5.
- Outcome: There was a 49% increase in employer knowledge reported by employers after contact/work with OEA.

### Employer rating of 4 or 5 for their knowledge level before and after contacting OEA



\*Note: 1=Poor and 5=Excellent

The Service Quality survey asks about the quality of their experience with OEA on a scale of 1-5.

The results below relate to ratings of 4 or 5.

- 100% professionalism of service when they contacted OEA
- 100% the timely handling of their enquiry
- 100% how well OEA staff listened to, understood and responded to their needs
- 100% accuracy and relevance of the information provided by OEA
- 100% overall satisfaction of their experience with OEA

OEA performed the following for employers:

- \* 5% reviewed policies and provided feeback
- 12% reviewed file information and discussed with employer
- 16% reviewed decisions and provided feedback
- 17% prepared draft correspondence for employer
- 3% participated in a case management meeting
- 8% participated in a conference call with employer
- 5% completed and filed appeal documents for employer
- 13% assisted with appeal preparation
- 20% provided advice, recommendations only

### **Employer Testimonials**

- \* "OEA was instrumental in assisting our organization to navigate a complex case. We were confident in their abilities and we came away with much greater knowledge of the system."
- "Very good assistance. Could not have dealt with the situation without you. We are still dealing with the issue but it was made more manageable with your help." Costin Paving and Contracting
- "After conversations with OEA I found I was no longer stressed about the situation. I was more able to clearly evaluate and confidently move on." David George Electrical
- "The representatives from OEA were very helpful and removed much uncertainty and "grey areas" from questions surrounding workplace policies."
- "We often deal with WCB claims and progress through them seamlessly. Occasionally a new challenging case presents itself and our support from OEA was a blessing. We gained clarity on our rights as the employer, the process was clarified, miscommunications were resolved and we have been able to move forward. Highly recommend OEA service to peers."
- \* "Thank you for your help and guidance in maneuvering through our appeal. The system seems so complex, it needs an expert to know what to do." *Tideview Terrace Nursing Home*
- "The WCB system can be complicated and daunting. The help I've received through OEA has been invaluable. Before working with OEA I felt as an employer I had no voice. This partnership has allowed me to finally speak up!" Scotian Gold Co Operative Limited
- "Without OEA's help we would not have coped with the case. With OEA we were able to produce good quality letters, a complete file for WCB and ultimately bring the worker back to work. The constant support and knowledge that Mary and Jeannette give is unmeasurable. Thank you so much!" Costin Paving and Contracting
- "Jeannette Combes is a sensational representative! Very knowledgeable, super friendly and very easy to work with. Thank you!" Ledwidge Lumber
- "As an employer it would have been nice to be represented at the actual hearing. Great info and assistance!"
- "Although we are well versed in WCB and RTW processes, Jeannette's assistance was invaluable. She provided clarity on our rights as the employer and advocated on our behalf to achieve clarification on inconsistancies within a specific WCB claim."
- "Mary Morris and Jeannette Combes have been excellent to deal with. Their response time has been very impressive." Trinity Maintenance Solutions
- \* "This service should be better advertised by the WCB. Employers should also be given the tools and representation through WCB cases."
- "The OEA is essential to helping a small employer understand the WCB system."

### **Employer Testimonials**

- "The Advisor was not only professional but also provided a different perspective to the issues at hand and this was brought to several solutions. Inspirational to be able to challenge the ideas and concepts of case management." Lindsay Construction
- "Keep up the great work and I look forward to taking some of your courses in the future." Canadian Blood Services
- "Professionalism and commitment is outstanding." Maple Hill Manor
- "OEA continues to offer sound advice with a quick turnaround."
- "I wish OEA was here a lot sooner. Business owners needed this kind of help for years and now they can receive it. Thanks OEA!"
- "OEA was a great help in navigating through our WCAT appeal. Without OEA I would never have been able to effectively put forward an appeal submission without legal counsel. The Advisor was extremely helpful, timely and took the time to explain everything to me."
- "OEA's knowledge and support through difficult WCB cases has proven to be invaluable, and a greatly valued resource."
- "The staff at OEA are always great to work with, providing timely feedback, including recommendations and draft writing or re-writing."
- "Would not know where we would have been without the OEA. The man would probably still be on WCB and not back to work." Costin Paving and Contracting
- "Excellent organization to have for employers, very knowledgable"
- "Mary & Jeannette are amazing and so knowledgeable...thank you!"
- "I was completely satisfied with all the valuable help and advice I received as an employer of the GVRC. Thank you!"
- "The OEA provides a good service but are significantly understaffed."
- "The value of the OEA cannot be overstated. We highly recommend their services to employers."
- "Exceptional staff. I could not be happier with the service and assistance I received. Very knowledgeable and very professional. Thank you!" McCarthy's Roofing

### **Employer Testimonials**

- "The OEA has always provided such a great service, even when they are extremely busy. They find the time and drop everything to ensure you are looked after. Very professional and polite."
- "After consulting with OEA, we feel that our employee returned to work at full duties with the helpful advice we received."
- "We always value the timely and professional advice offered by the OEA. Thanks very much Mary."
- \* "Mary is extremely knowledgeable and has a vast amount of experience. She has been able to provide relevant examples to help understand the issues/concerns at hand. Mary was tremendously helpful when assisting with this appeal. Overall a pleasure to work with."
- "The assistance was excellent. OEA let me know exactly what the employer had to do" Stevens Group of Companies - Rosecrest Communities - Sagewood Continuing Care Limited
- "More employers need to be introduced to the services and support of the OEA. An advocate for any company navigating today's complex employment systems and processes."
- \* "This resource is the most helpful assistance any company could ask for. The knowledge at the OEA is irreplaceable."
- "Jeannette was very helpful. She understood my issue and recommended a course of action. I did not expect it to be resolved so quickly but with Jeannette's direction it was." John Ross & Sons Ltd.
- \* "We had a complex claim and we were appealing it's recognition. Mary was extremely helpful, walking me through the appeal process. She and Jeannette were wonderful resources, extremely professional and knowledgeable." John Ross & Sons LTD.
- "The OEA service was instrumental in assisting me to navigate the employee appeals process resulting in a favourable outcome for the employer."

## New File Navigation

- OEA experienced a 50% change in staff volume with two staff leaving in Q2.
- Although there was an increase in total workload, but reduced staff numbers, they were able to resolve issues more quickly, and in less time than compared to 2015.
- In 2016 there was a 14.2% increase in new file volumes compared 2015; and this occurring with one less Employer Advisor.

## Cumulative File Navigation

There was a 15.4% decrease in cumulative file volumes in 2016 when compared to 2015, meaning that overall, OEA was successful in assisting employers to resolve issues more quickly than in 2015.

#### **Quarterly New File Volume**

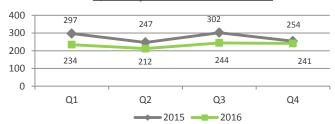


#### **Annual New File Volume**

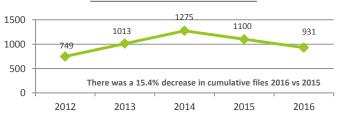


Note: Files which took less than 2 hours were not tracked until Q3 of 2012.

#### **Quarterly Cumulative File Volume**



#### **Annual Cumulative File Volume**



### **Employer Information**

#### **Initial Contact**

In 2016 27% of the employers contacting OEA did so for the first time. This was a 1% increase from 2015.

#### Time to Resolution

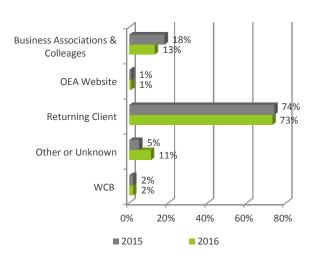
- 24% of employer issues were resolved at first contact with an Employer Advisor. In 2015 this occurred with 38% of employer issues. The issues this year required more attention and therefore there was an increase of 3% in assigned files.
- Assigned file volumes, 71% of employer issues, took more than 2 hours to resolve and therefore resulted in assignment to an Employer Advisor.

As service evaluation results show, employers are happy with the service OEA provides and continue to return when they need advice and support. A total of 73% of employer contact resulted from returning employers.

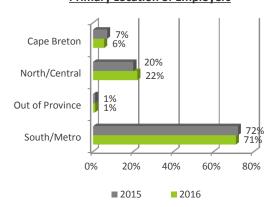
#### Regions

There was a 1% decrease in the number of employers from the South/Metro area when comparing 2016 to 2015. They have consistantly been the largest group since tracking began in 2013.

#### **How Employers Found Out About OEA**

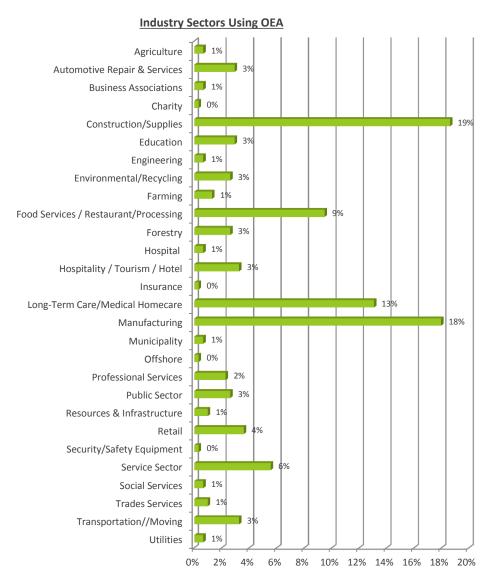


#### **Primary Location of Employers**



### Employer Business Profile

- 94% of employers were WCB assessed. There was no change when compared to 2015.
- 68% of employers were non-union. This is a decrease of 9% when compared to 2015.
- 95% of employers were privately owned businesses. This is an increase of 1% from 2015.
- Construction, Manufacturing and Health Care were the three industry sectors using OEA the most in 2016. For the past three years, Construction and Manufacturing have been the top two industry sectors contacting OEA.



### Navigation by Issue

The OEA NS Service Zone includes Workers' Compensation, Workplace/Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resources, Employment Legislation, Appeal Assistance, Human Rights, Advocacy, Consultation and Training.

This year OEA saw a shift in the reasons employers are contacting the office. The category of topic is broken down below and the issues are to the right:

- 67% Workers' Compensation
- 17% Workplace/Occupational Health and Safety
- 16% Human Resources and Employment Standards

In 2016, there was a 10% increase in WCB related issues, a 10% increase in Workplace/Occupational Health and Safety related issues and a 20% decrease in Human Resources and Employment related issues addressed by Employer Advisors.

The 10% increase in requested support and direction for Occupational Health and Safety is a result of OEA's priority focus on Workplace Health and Safety.

In 2016 OEA was directly involved in 204 WCB files. This represents 67% of OEA's workload during the year.

#### **Reasons for Contacting OEA**



Note: There may be multiple reasons
Case Management includes Duty to Accommodate and Disability Manage.

### Workplace/Occupational Health & Safety

- In 2016 there was a 22% decrease in OHS appeal files when compared to 2015.
- There was a 27% increase in general health and safety files and a 5% increase in OHS case management files when compared to 2015.
- There was a 7% increase in WCB return to work files in 2016.
- OEA participated in numerous WCB case conference meetings with employers in 2016 in support of return to work planning.

Issues in OHS Files	2013	2014	2015	2016
Appeal Files	0%	17%	26%	4%
General health & safety files	32%	17%	22%	49%
OHS case management files	6%	6%	15%	20%
Legislation, policy & process files (Includes administrative penalty files)	19%	33%	26%	20%
Compliance order/admin penalty files	3%	17%	11%	0%
Site visits requested	3%	6%	0%	0%
Return to work files	35%	6%	0%	7%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

### Worker Injury Profile

- ❖ In 2016 82% of the employees associated with appeals had one injury, only 18% presented with multiple injuries.
- The most common injuries were back and shoulder, followed by neck, hand and knee injuries.

## Appeals

- In 2016 there was a 21% increase in Internal Appeal files when compared to 2015.
- OEA involvement in WCAT Appeals reduced by 14% and OHS/Labour Board Appeals reduced by 7% in 2016.
- 53% of the overall appeals were initiated as employer appeals and 47% were worker appeals in which the employer participated.
- 70% of the appeals OEA is assisting with were still in progress at the end of 2016. The appeal decision breakdown is provided to the right on this page.

Type of Appeal	2013	2014	2015	2016
Internal Appeals	51%	41%	32%	53%
WCAT Appeals	45%	51%	58%	44%
OHS / Labour Board Appeals	4%	9%	10%	3%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

2016 Appeal Outcomes			
Appeals currently in progress	79%		
Employer's appeal denied	1%		
Employer's appeal granted	3%		
Employer's appeal granted in part	1%		
Employer appeal withdrawn	3%		
Worker's appeal denied	3%		
Worker's appeal granted	3%		
Worker withdrew appeal	7%		
Totals	100%		

2016 Appeal Breakdown by Advisor	Advisor 1	Advisor 2	Advisor 3	Advisor 4
Internal Appeals	29%	20%	3%	2%
WCAT Appeals	26%	13%	1%	5%
OHS / Labour Board Appeals	3%	0%	0%	0%
Total Appeal Files Split by Advisor	57%	32%	4%	7%

### **Employer Consultation**

OEA was involved in multiple consultation efforts in 2016, particularly around OHS and WCB policy. OEA support for employers includes advocacy, therefore consulting with employers in all sectors and throughout the province is a very important role we have to ensuring employers have involvement and are aware.

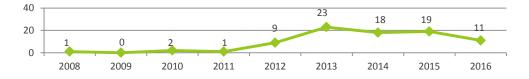
In 2016 OEA organized 11 consultations and had 175 employers in total attendance. Sessions included:

- 1 OHS Regulations Consultation
- 1 OHS Regulation Changes Consultation
- 7 Forestry Consultations
- 1 Rate Assessment Consultation
- 1 Policy Consultation Compensability of Pre-existing Conditions

Additionally OEA attended 7 consultations hosted by other organizations. Sessions included:

- 3 Consultations for OHS
- 2 Consultations for WCAT policy
- 2 Consultations with the Office of Regulatory Affairs

### Number of Sessions Held With Employers and Business Associations in OEA Sponsored Consultations Annually



### Number of Employers or Business Association Representatives Attending OEA Sponsored Consultations Annually



## 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Employer Conferences



OEA NS held two conferences in 2016; June and November. Each conference was two days in length. Our June conference marked our 8<sup>th</sup> Employer Conference. We extend a huge thank you to everyone at McInnes Cooper for another successful Employer Conference. Our November conference focussed on appeal training and we were assisted in the program delivery by McInnes Cooper, WCAT and Internal Appeals.

Seventy nine employers attended our June conference co-hosted with McInness Cooper. Survey results identified 82% of employers said their ability to navigate the WCB, OHS, and ESL improved through their attendance at the June conference.

Every year OEA NS partners with McInnes Cooper for the Annual Employer and Business Association Conference. Our success each year in delivering this educational program is due in to their contribution and ongoing support. In recognition of our guest speaker's contribution to the conference, a donation was made to Canadian Foodgrains Banks. Read more about this important organization at: <a href="https://www.foodgrainsbank.ca">www.foodgrainsbank.ca</a>.

#### Our speakers this year were:

- McInnes Cooper Labour & Employment Group
- Norman Countway, President of Sure Courier
- William Costin, Owner of Costin's Paving and Contracting Ltd.
- Patrick Hartling, President and Owner of SPL Development Solutions Inc.
- Glenn Spillett, President of Progress Investigations
- Leanne Hachey and Joan Penny, NS Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness

### Education and Learning

OEA taught twenty two courses in 2016 and held two, two day conferences.

#### **Annual Training Attendance**



### Education and Learning

OEA offers education and learning programs tailored to employers changing employment and business needs.

- In 2016 OEA hosted twenty two training sessions (14 Core and 8 Core Plus), with a total of 315 attendees. (156 Core and 159 Core Plus).
- Employers learn about OEA through direct advertising, referrals and word of mouth. Primarily, business collegues and associations refer to OEA 56% of the time, and OEA website and direct marketing is 39%.

#### **Topics**

- CSSE AGM PTSD
- Employing the Transgendered Worker
- Job Demands Analysis: Application in the Workplace
- Letter and Submission Writing 8 hours
- My Account Training
- Navigating Employment
- Navigating ESL
- Navigating OHS
- Navigating WCB
- Navigating WCB & WCAT
- OEA Who We Are Webinar for TIANS
- OEA: Who We Are
- PTSD
- WCB MyAccount
- WCB Rate Assessment
- Webinar Training for Tourism Association

- In 2016 OEA distributed 116 training quality surveys with a 71% return rate.
- 86% of employer rated their subject knowledge 4 or 5 (on a scale of 1-5) after receiving assistance from OEA. This was an increase of 51%, compared to knowledge rating prior to the training.

The Education and Learning Survey consists of questions on a scale of 1-5 (5 being "Excellent"). These results indicate the percentage of employers who rated OEA 4 or 5.

- 92% felt the stated objectives of the training course were met.
- 95% evaluated the organization and clarity of course delivery 4 or 5.
- 93% evaluated the effectiveness of any handouts used in training 4 or 5.
- 95% felt the information was current and relevant.
- 94% felt the instructor held their interest and attention.
- 95% evaluated the instructor's professional knowledge 4 or 5.
- 95% would rate the facilitator 4 or 5.
- 89% evaluated the OEA registration process for this training 4 or 5.
- 94% felt the training session meet their learning needs.
- 86% rated the cost of the training 4 or 5.

<sup>\*</sup>Note: 1=Poor and 5=Excellent

### Education and Learning: Employer Feedback

#### **Employer Testimonials about OEA Training**

- "The information is 100% relative to all the workplace issues I deal with weekly."
- \* "Great overview of OHS. Would like more information in requirements of and for your JOHSC."
- \* "Well organized. More case studies could make it easier for people to relate."
- "Very informative, questions and answers well performed. Only suggestion would be more air circulation and a couple breaks, not just one."
- "A lot of useful information covered, but more time to get into details would help."
- "Great review, tips and general advice. A great reminder of WCB policy and procedure."
- "Really enjoyed the material and examples that were given. The exercises and handouts were very helpful. Great instructor!"
- "There was a lot of overlap in information between the two presentors. Would have liked to hear more about personal experiences."
- "Best part example structure letters."
- "More time on policies and best practices."
- \* "It made me evaluate my current practives and provided a rationale for change."
- "Knowledgeable presentor. Would have preferred broader info and slightly less in-depth details."
- "Good knowledge but more to the topic of workplaces, policies, etc."
- "Great overview of all regulations and crossover."
- "The instructors knowledge on the subject and ability to answer questions using good examples was helpful. The ending of the course was a bit rushed and I would have liked to spend a bit more time on those topics."
- "More case studies and examples."
- "Very difficult to pay attention and absorb any information from the 2 speakers at the morning session."
- "Some people do need a presentation to have for the learner, helps keep their interest."
- "Wonderful to see a mock hearing, extremely helpful and valuable."
- "Excellent pair of training days, connected the dots for me and I feel much more prepared for an upcoming hearing."
- "Always an excellent experience OEA education opportunities."

### Education and Learning: Employer Feedback

#### How Employers feel they will incorporate what they have learned in to their workplace

- "This will help us when OT comes in to develop our JDA and for us to know what we are reading." Lindsey Cameron, Eastern Fence
- \* "Matrix, will have a second look to our JDA's with a different set of eyes. I feel more comfortable looking at information like this." *Ivonne Paez, HRSB*
- "Meet with RCH review policy and guidelines and application forms." Anita Cameron, SRSB
- "Daily use." Christa Rafuse, MODC
- \* "Better awareness on a daily basis." Heather Archibald, Municipality of the District of Chester
- "Train the team!! Will return and implement with the other 6 managers!!" Emily MacEachern, Valley View Villa
- "Check policies, etc and search for more education for current employers if needed."
- "Information received will assist in establishing how to move forward in our workplace."
- "This was amazing, very professional and helpful. I will implement this into my workplace. Very friendly staff."
- "Further discussion of JOHS committee."
- "Better file management."
- "Timelines and communication."
- \* "Better organizing of WCB claims files."
- "More aware of options and resourses available to employer."
- "Better prepared, keep better records."

### Meetings and Presentations

OEA participated in the following meetings and presentations:

- 2 CCANS presentations
- 8 Forestry Sector presentations
- 3 Municipality of Chester presentations
- NS Safety Council Conference presentation
- Forestry AGM
- Meeting with Deputy Minister of Labour
- Meeting With Labour Standards Exec. Director
- Meeting WSIS AGM
- Meeting with Mac Mac Mac law firm
- Meeting with Labour Standards

## Marketing and Social Media

OEA initiated the following activities to reach out to employers and business associations across the province, in order to keep them informed of the programs and services that OEA NS offers.

- 4000 newly designed OEA brochures developed and printed
- Monthly advertisement in Rural Delivery Magazine & Farm Focus Magazine – distributed to thousands
- 1 advertisement distributed in Agriculture newsletter to 2400 members
- 100 OEA information cards provided to CFIB for distribution
- 50 "New Client" packages mailed
- Advertising on allnovascotia.com

- OEA conference
- OEA training
- OEA consultation
- Guest speaking at external events
- Using Twitter and the OEA website to deliver upcoming training messages

### **OEA Service Providers**

OEA NS extends a sincere "Thank You" to all of its service providers in 2016. We are a proud to support employment and business in our business operations. We carefully source and purchase, where ever possible, from Nova Scotia employers in order to ensure employers and employees in this province are supported and recognized. We utilize unionized and non-unionized vendors. Our providers are listed below:

- ADT Security
- Altimax Courier
- Bell & Grant Ltd. Insurance Specialists
- Bell Mobility
- Brookshire Developments Limited
- Canada Post Corporation
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
- Corporate Impact Inc.
- Dash Creative
- DSM Telecom
- Eastern Building Cleaners
- Eastlink Fax & Internet Services
- Forest Safety Association of Nova Scotia
- Indoff
- McInnes Cooper Lawyers/Advocats
- Minuteman Press

- Nova Scotia Department of Labour & Advanced Education
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture
- Nova Scotia Power
- Retail Council of Canada, Atlantic Region
- Spring Garden Area Business Association (SGABA)
- Teachers Plus Credit Union
- Touchstone Bookkeeping
- MNP LLP Chartered Accountants
- Wear Well Garments Limited
- Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
- Workplace Essentials
- Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia

OEA NS would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for referring employers:

- Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
- Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (NSFA)
   Farm Safety
- Nova Scotia Forest Products

## Navigating Employers Toward Business Success