



# Fisheries Safety Association

## Safety Sentinel

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### Moving Forward with Safety

Industry consultations have been taking place over the past number of years with respect to forming a Fisheries Safety Association. Incidents will continue to take place and WCB rates will continue their upward trend if no action is taken by industry.

**What if we do Nothing?**

**By the year 2014 your rates could look like this...**

Fish Processing-2009 rate: **\$5.19**. Projected rate- **\$6.67/\$100 of payroll-up 28%**  
 Salt Water Fishing-2009 rate: **\$7.48**. Projected rate- **\$8.87/ \$100 of payroll- up 18%**  
 Aquaculture- 2009 rate- **\$4.18**. Projected rate - **\$4.47/ \$100 of payroll- up 7%**

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It is felt by those who have been involved in this process that the time has come to take action and move forward. The mandate of the safety association would directly relate to enhancing safety, making the industry more attractive for new employees and keeping the existing employees safe and healthy. The association's work will result in a reduction of accidents/injuries, along with workers compensation rates for the fishing industry.

The objectives of the safety association would be:

- To facilitate a change process to create safer workplaces, assisting return to work and injury prevention activities
- To develop and provide tools to help reduce the number and duration of injuries occurring in the fishing industry
- To increase awareness of costs associated with workplace injury in the fishing industry

Generally it takes 3-5 years to influence change in the rates. Three years for an individual company's experience rating and five years for the industry rate. So if an association was formed tomorrow, it may take a few years to see the rates change. This doesn't mean that the Association won't see positive effects and trends can be looked at as early as year one with such an Association. Subsequently, the safety association would have the ability to analyze accident costs and trends which would help to predict if the rates will fall within 3-5 years. There are many steps involved in setting up such an Association, the details of which are outlined in the Frequently Asked Questions document on our website, [www.nsfsc.ca](http://www.nsfsc.ca).

### How Much will I Pay & Where will my Money Go?

A membership fee would be charged once a year and would be paid per Standard Industry Classification (SIC). The WCB would collect this fee from the company or individual on behalf of the Safety Association. All revenue would be turned over to the association. The membership fee will be based on the previous year's WCB premiums paid. Membership fees would be collected as outlined below:

0-\$1000 of premium	membership fee- <b>\$50/year</b>
\$1001-\$2000 of premium	membership fee- <b>\$100/year</b>
\$2001 and above of premium	membership fee- <b>\$200/year</b>

New companies entering the system would pay \$100 for the first year and subsequent years would be based on past years WCB premiums paid.

**What will the activities of the safety association involve? Where will my money be spent?**

- ❖ Full time Employee
- ❖ Safety Advocate for Industry
- ❖ Communication and Awareness
- ❖ Programming for employers around Accident Prevention
- ❖ Develop industry specific training
- ❖ Training at a reduced rate

## How will a Safety Association Help Me?

No one wants to work in an unsafe environment. A Safety Association will benefit everyone involved. Employees will have safer workplaces and over time, employers will have lower WCB rates. The industry as a whole will project a safe image which will help to recruit and retain workers.

A safety association would focus its' efforts on prevention education, communication and awareness and they would also work on behalf of industry to promote a safety culture. The following are examples of the type of work a Safety Association will do on your behalf:

- Implement an accident prevention strategy for the fishing industry. Educate the industry on accident investigation, preventing workplace injuries, ergonomics, etc.
- Undertake concrete activities that are of direct interest to industry and that have the potential to have a positive affect on rates. This can be in the form of developing educational tools.
- The association would research the cause of escalating rates. Research could also be done on the economic impact that could result from the continuation of

escalating costs that could make the fishing industry in the province less competitive.

Continue the dialogue with Workers' Compensation Board and Government. Work with the WCBNS as part of their strategy with Doctor's Nova Scotia and the Physiotherapy contract. Educate the medical community. Address issues in relation to wait times for diagnostics and surgeries.

Work with all stakeholders that have a keen interest in improving workplace safety.

Show industry wide leadership on the issue of safety.

Increase awareness of safety and celebrate success.

For more information on the benefits of a Safety Association, please see the Frequently Asked Questions document on our website at [www.nsfsc.ca](http://www.nsfsc.ca).

### Do Safety Associations Work?

There is one thing that has been learned over the past number of years by individuals in various industries and that is:

#### **Safety Associations Work!**

A number of industry safety associations have been formed in Nova Scotia. These associations have had great success in reducing accidents/injuries in their respective industry, which is reflective in their workers' compensation premiums. Safety Associations have been formed for Trucking, Forestry, Construction, Retail Gasoline and Automotive Dealers. Health Care is also exploring the option of forming a safety association. The Forestry Industry is a prime example. Through a strong commitment to safety and injured workers' early return to work and through preventing injuries, WCB assessment rates for forestry have gone **down by 40 percent** in the past five years resulting in **\$4,000,000 savings** for forestry employers and many fewer accidents!

In 2007 the fishing industry paid \$15.8 million in premiums. **IF work weeks lost due to 2007 injuries had been 10% lower (earlier return to work and/or prevention of injuries),**

**Cost Savings would be = \$1.5 million**

### YOUR OPINION COUNTS

We want to hear from you!

Would you like to see a Fisheries Safety Association formed?

Do you want to be a part of the process?

We welcome any comments you may have.

Please send us your comments by February 16, 2009 either by mail, fax, e-mail or phone using the contact information below.

### Contact Us

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