

FY 2001-2002  
ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION  
AUGUST 1, 2002

HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL DATA FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT

DATA AS OF JUNE 30, 2002

Workers' Compensation Commission  
(Title of Agency)

*Administrative Head* ---- John A. Mastropietro, Chairman  
(Name and Title)

*Established* -- 1913

*Statutory Authority* -- Chapter 568, General Statutes

*Central Office* -- 21 Oak St., Hartford, CT 06106

*Telephone No.* -- 860-493-1500

*Average number of full-time employees* 147.

*Recurring operating expenditures, 2001 - 2002* - \$15,794,593.

*Capital outlay* - \$124,724.

Organizational Structure - Chairman, Chief Administrative Officer, Compensation Review Board, Business, Personnel, Information Systems, Education, Rehabilitation, and Statistical units are located in the Chairman's Office. Fifteen additional trial Commissioners preside over dispute resolution hearings at the eight district offices.

## **Agency Mission**

The Workers' Compensation Commission administers the workers' compensation laws of the State of Connecticut with the ultimate goal of ensuring that workers injured on the job receive prompt payment of lost work time benefits and attendant medical expenses. To this end, the Commission facilitates voluntary agreements, adjudicates disputes, makes findings and awards, hears and rules on appeals, and closes out cases through full and final stipulated settlements.

## **Improvements/Achievements 2001-2002**

During the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2002, the Commission moved aggressively to provide more effective and efficient service delivery.

All duties and responsibilities continue to be executed effectively and punctually with fewer full-time employees than last year.

Continual monitoring of hearing backlogs at the eight district offices, and reassignment of resources to meet heavy workloads, have resulted in a major decrease in time between initial hearing request and the date the hearing is actually held. Hearing backlog is down dramatically for both informal and formal hearings. The Chairman actively monitors cases ensuring that no cases are unnecessarily delayed.

The Compensation Review Board continues to process cases expeditiously. This year, new appeals numbered 133. Meanwhile, there were 164 dispositions, including 109 written opinions.

During FY 2002, 3,609 individuals were provided rehabilitation services, up 19 percent. A total of 1,201 initial interviews of clients were held, a 6 percent increase. Through guidance, counseling and cost-effective, short-term training programs, 786 injured workers returned to the workforce, a 4 percent increase.

This high success rate was achieved despite funding reductions and staffing limitations. Those returning to work can now support themselves and their families, and are paying taxes as a direct result of workers' rehabilitation programs.

To help monitor medical costs, (comprising more than 40 percent of total workers' compensation payments), the Commission reviews and approves applications for managed care plans. To

date, 4,223 employers with 481,853 employees have approved plans.

Safety Program Officers work cooperatively and confidentially with employers to devise and implement safety programs resulting in reduced accidents, injuries, medical costs and lost workdays. Well over 10,000 employer sites have been visited. To date, 4,552 safety committees covering 850,000 employees have been approved, meaning that their safety programs meet statutory requirements.

A steadily increasing percentage of on-line reporting of workplace injuries has resulted in more accurate data at lower cost.

The Commission's web site has expanded vastly, providing vital, up-to-date information on all aspects of the Commission's resources and services including the law, CRB decisions and late-breaking news. Additionally, the Commission's major forms are now available in fill-able PDF format.

The Commission will augment and enhance its technical resources, enforce uniformity in district procedures, and perform extensive training and cross-training of staff, all aimed at reducing the time, cost, and litigiousness of delivering medical and lost wage benefits to injured workers.

### **Information Reported As Required by State Statute**

The Commission's Affirmative Action Plan is currently in compliance. While the commission has no full time Affirmative Action Officer, its Affirmative Action Plan and Program are prepared by its personnel officer. The commission continues its commitment to the state Affirmative Action Program.

### **Key Performance Measures FY 2002**

Injuries/Illnesses -	72,883
Fatalities -	99
Informal Hearings -	38,044
Formal & Pre-formal Hearings -	8,384
Stipulations -	6,462
Voluntary Agreements -	23,727
Awards -	2,024
Dismissals -	99
Education Services Information Responses -	161,925