

---

## Update on Prior Years' Report Items

---

The Department indicated that regarding the in-depth review of the licensee files, the majority of those funeral homes that were written have complied with the Department's request. Follow-up has been required and continues to be an integral part of the ongoing activity associated with this program.

The Department indicated that in terms of the question concerning whether or not the *Act* provides authority for the payment of the Port aux Basques funeral home claims, the Department reviewed this matter with solicitors of the Department of Justice who say it is their opinion that the 24 May 2001 amendment does indeed provide sufficient authority to pay those claims.

---

### 3.2.8 Workplace Health and Safety Inspections (2002 Annual Report, Part 2.20)

---

#### Introduction

In 2002, we reviewed the workplace health and safety inspection program at the Workplace Health and Safety Inspection Division of the then Department of Labour. The objectives of our review were to determine whether:

- there was an adequate process in place at the Division to determine if employers were complying with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations*;
  - the Division had a process in place to monitor its administration of the program; and
  - there was adequate and appropriate reporting of workplace health and safety inspection activity to the House of Assembly.
-

---

## Update on Prior Years' Report Items

---

### Conclusions from our 2002 review

As a result of our review, we concluded that activities at the Workplace Health and Safety Inspection Division required improvement to meet the Department's responsibilities for monitoring and improving conditions in the workplace. In particular:

- Information on employer workplaces in the Province maintained by the Division was neither complete nor current.
- The required inspection activity identified by the Division as a priority was not performed. As well, regular inspections were not based on any comprehensive risk analysis.
- The Division could not demonstrate whether employers were complying with the *Act* and *Regulations* as inspection reports were not always fully completed by the occupational health and safety officers.
- Instances were found where no evidence was provided to indicate whether directives issued by occupational health and safety officers were complied with by employers. Other instances were found where there was inadequate documentation provided by officers relating to their investigation of accidents and complaints.
- Significant delays were identified in issuing inspection reports to employers after inspections were performed, forwarding completed inspection reports for review, conducting planned follow-up inspections, and completing accident investigation reports.
- Inspection reports and reports from the Central Information System (CIS) were not always being reviewed. In addition, information in the CIS was neither accurate nor updated on a current basis.
- The Division was not providing adequate and appropriate information to the Department on workplace health and safety inspection activity and there were no reports on Division activities provided to the House of Assembly.

Subsequent to our 2002 review, responsibility for the workplace health and safety inspection program was transferred to the Department of Government Services.

---

---

## Update on Prior Years' Report Items

---

### 2004 Update

In our 2004 annual report, we included an update on the Department's progress towards implementing the recommendations contained in our 2002 report item. At that time, the Department indicated that:

- Efforts were underway to improve and expand the efficiency and accuracy of employer information.
- Several procedural and organizational adjustments had been made in order to better focus inspection activity.
- An inspection checklist had been developed and was to be used by officers in their duties during the introduction of sector-specific initiatives.
- A new Compliance and Regulatory Affairs Section had been established to address compliance related activities.
- Senior officers were hired to concentrate activities along sector-specific lines.
- The addition of new management staff had resulted in a more timely review of officer activity.
- A new format for the accident investigation report was being developed that would facilitate the compilation of written reports.

---

### Update

In October 2005, we contacted the Department of Government Services requesting an update as to the progress on the comments and recommendations included in our 2002 report. The information provided by the Department in response to our request is outlined below.

---

---

## Update on Prior Years' Report Items

---

### **2002 Recommendation**

*The Department should maintain complete and current information on employer workplaces in the Province.*

### **Action Taken**

The Department indicated that considerable progress has been made respecting the improvement and expansion of information gathered on employers. The Central Information System (CIS), the software used by the Division to document and monitor inspection activity, was modified to improve capability and efficiencies.

The Department indicated that employer information in the CIS is updated annually. This has led to more accurate and up-to-date data on the employers listed with the Workplace Health and Safety Compensation Commission (WHSCC). Additionally, a compliance monitoring system has been implemented to allow the monitoring and analysis of complaints received and disposition thereof by the Division.

As well, the Department indicated that the WHSCC has implemented an electronic data management strategy (data warehousing system) which has substantially enhanced detailed employer information. The Division accesses this system and it is utilized for inspection planning purposes which will continue to improve as the data bank becomes more fully populated.

---

### **2002 Recommendation**

*The Department should ensure there is sufficient documentation to determine compliance with all areas of the Act and Regulations and ensure that inspection activity is conducted and reported in a timely manner.*

### **Action Taken**

The Department indicated that while there has been considerable emphasis on recruiting new officers, some regression has occurred due to retirements, resignations and sick leave. In 2004 four senior officers were hired, two are now vacant due to resignation and a retirement. Recruitment is ongoing and will continue until all vacant positions are filled.

---

---

## Update on Prior Years' Report Items

---

### 2002 Recommendation

*The Department should ensure that management monitors all aspects of inspection activity and that information used for monitoring is accurate and maintained on a current basis.*

### Action Taken

The Department indicated that the impact of two additional management positions is that inspection activities are more closely monitored and that an increased number of administrative programs have been implemented to enhance the ability of the division in achieving its mandate in the most efficient and effective manner. Such administrative programs include workload measurement, performance evaluation, and standard operating procedures.

The Department indicated that managers' meetings are conducted weekly to enable the review of divisional activities and the status of ongoing initiatives. Monthly staff meetings between employees and their managers permit an opportunity to further consult and communicate. The Department indicated that there has been an increase in inspection and enforcement activities, which are now higher than at any other time in the history of the Division.

The Department indicated that the Accident Investigation protocol and procedures is an area of considerable and noticeable improvement. To address shortfalls and ensure improvements within the accident investigation program, an internal committee was struck to gather information as to the best format to adopt. An Officer's Reference Manual has been developed with standard operating procedures with timelines. A future goal is to have the preliminary accident investigation report incorporated within the officer's computer system.

---

### 3.2.9 Food Premises Inspections and Licensing (2003 Annual Report, Part 2.16)

---

#### Introduction

In 2003, we reviewed the food premises inspections and licensing program at the Department of Government Services. The objectives of our review were to determine whether the Department of Health and Community Services and the GSC were complying with inspection and licensing requirements and whether deficiencies identified in our 1998 report were addressed.

---