



2014

Office of Workers' Compensation Administration Annual Report



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Office of Workers' Compensation Administration Annual Report

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), Office of Workers' Compensation Administration (OWCA), respectfully submits its 2014 Annual Report. This report, past annual reports and other OWCA information are available on the LWC's website www.laworks.net and at the Louisiana State Library. In accordance with the Executive Order BJ-08-08, the OWCA will disseminate this Annual Report via electronic means whenever possible. However, 75 hard copies of the 2014 Annual Report have been published, at a cost of \$685.19. LA. R.S 43.31 requires copies to be made available upon request to individuals without the ability to receive this information in an electronic format. This document was published by the Louisiana Workforce Commission and OWCA, Post Office Box 94040, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9040.

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Office of Workers' Compensation Administration Annual Report

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Introduction

The Louisiana Office of Workers' Compensation Administration (OWCA) was created in 1983 to administer the Louisiana Workers' Compensation Act. Although many significant changes to the law's provisions have occurred since then, the basic premise has remained the same: that employees injured in the workplace should be compensated regardless of who is at fault. The purpose is to provide protection to the injured employee through employer safety efforts, medical treatment, and partial compensation for lost income. The office exercises its authority under Chapter 10 of Title 23 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes and is established within the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). The OWCA is administered by a director of the LWC pursuant to R.S. 36:307. The OWCA operates on a fiscal year that begins July 1 each year and ends June 30 of the following year.

RS 23:1310.10, Subsection 1310.10, provides that the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC), Office of Workers' Compensation Administration (OWCA) shall:

Prepare and submit a report for the prior calendar year to the Governor, the State Supreme Court, and the Legislature annually on or before the first day of April. This report shall include a statement of the number of awards made and the causes of the accidents leading to the injuries for which the awards were made, total workload data of the workers' compensation judges, a detailed report of the workload of each workers' compensation judge, a detailed statement of the expenses of the offices of the director of workers' compensation and the workers' compensation judges, together with any other matter which the director deems proper to report, including any recommendations he may desire to make.

This 2014 Annual Report includes all of the requirements to satisfy §1310.10 in addition to an overview on the progress the OWCA has made in the past calendar year. It demonstrates its dedication to the LWC's mission to promote workforce development and improve workplace safety and health throughout Louisiana.

Detailed information is available upon request by contacting owca@lwc.la.gov.

Executive Summary

In 2014, the Office of Workers' Compensation Administration (OWCA) continued to redirect its focus to the improvement of services by subjecting internal processes to detailed reviews and rolling out new delivery models.

In 2014, the Hearings Section received 4,671 disputed claims for compensation, 302 fewer than 2013. The section continues to assist parties in resolving their disputes through both adjudication and mediation. In 2014, the Hearings Section conducted 2,604 trials and mediated 2,087 disputes. Additionally, 5,374 settlements were approved. The average delay for resolving disputed claims for compensation was seven months. Despite this accomplishment, the Hearings Section strives to reach a goal of 180 days, or six months, for resolving disputed claims.

The Finance and Audit Section conducted 85 audits of self-insured employers and group funds in 2014, reflecting an increase of 31 audits over the prior year utilizing both site and desk audits. An emphasis on data integrity resulted in greater accuracy of records. In addition, the unit continued to aggressively pursue collection of delinquent assessment accounts, reducing OWCA and Second Injury Board receivables to a negligible amount. The minimal number of delinquent accounts will be reported to the newly formed Louisiana Office of Debt Recovery. The unit also initiated an aggressive review of posted securities on all self-insured employers, which will be continued into 2015 and beyond. It has resulted in numerous security increases to ensure injured workers receive benefits should the self-insured employers default on their obligations.

The Fraud Section provides the OWCA with a strong program to fight fraud. During 2014, the Fraud Section continued high standards of investigation and ensured the continued prosecution of criminal activity. The section participated in training seminars to educate the public about the penalties for workers' compensation fraud and encouraged the use of its nationwide toll-free hotline (800-201-3362) and online resources to report suspected fraud directly to the OWCA. This section continued to work cooperatively with the Office of Unemployment Insurance Administration on both claim and tax fraud investigations. These joint efforts should result in an increase in fraud detection in coming years. In 2014, the Fraud Section performed 1,978 investigations of individuals, self-insured entities and employers, and submitted 22 referrals for prosecution to the Attorney General's Office to determine whether further investigations were warranted. Seventeen people were arrested.

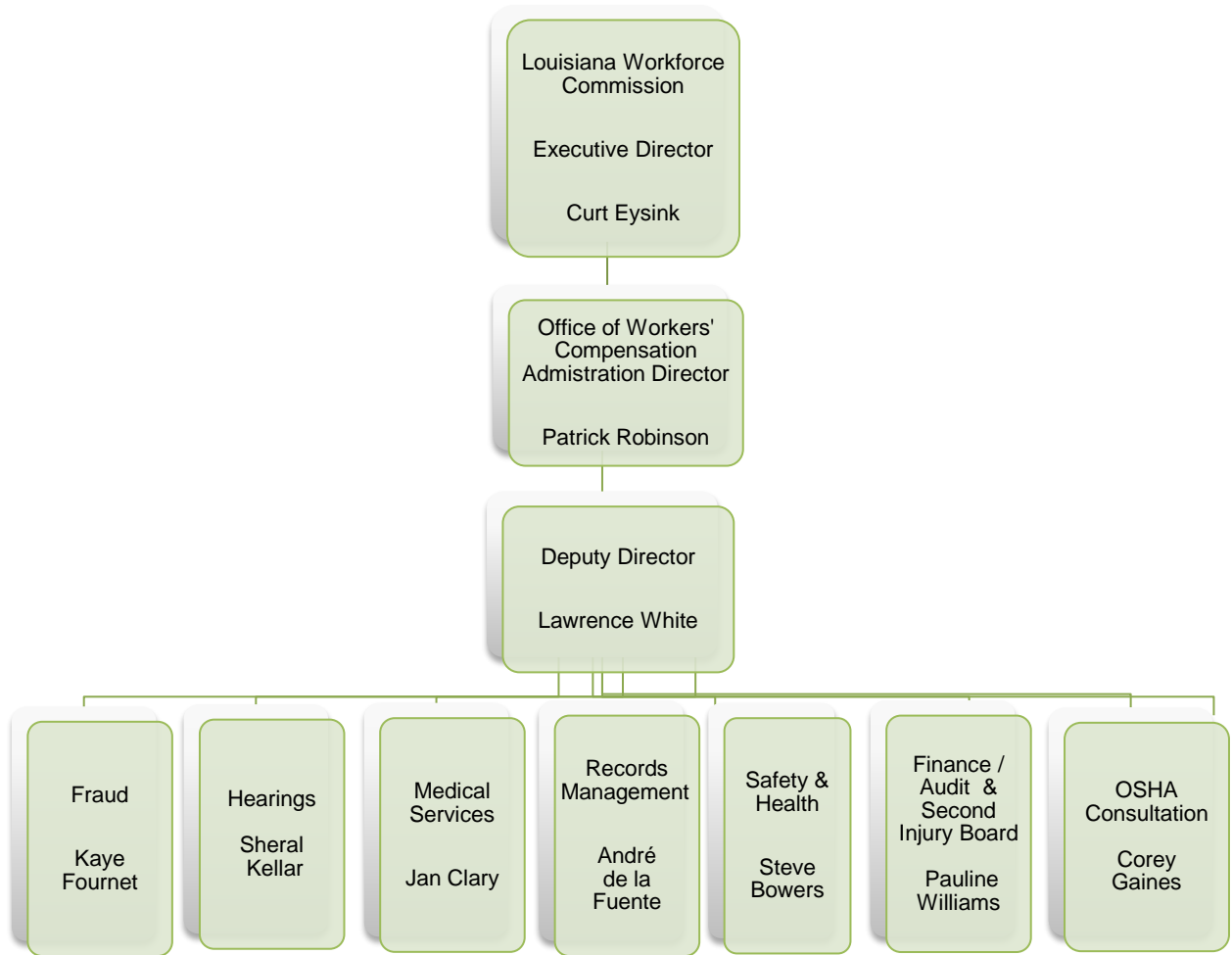
The Records Management Section responded to more than 17,000 requests for public information, a 36% increase over the year, with a response time goal of less than three days. There were 25,660 workers' compensation reporting claim forms mailed to the section, a decrease of 14% from the previous year. The Records Management Section publishes the OWCA Annual Report and Quarterly Activity Reports, which highlight accomplishments of the OWCA concerning workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses. The LWC-WC-1002 form became effective August 2013, which drove a 40% over-the-year increase in the number of hard-copy 1002s processed in 2013, and the 36% over-the-year increase in 2014. In addition, the Louisiana Legislature passed laws mandating that trading partners including insurers, self-insured employers, and claim administrators submit the First Report of Injury (FROI) by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) effective Jan. 1, 2014. As of February 2015, approximately 150 Trading Partners have reported for almost 1,200 subsidiaries. In 2014, the OWCA received 9,414 FROIs with more than seven days of lost time via EDI. In 2015, the office anticipates 100% FROI EDI compliance via <http://lwcedi.info/>.

The Second Injury Board Accounting Unit successfully reduced outstanding reimbursement requests from 1,552 at the end of 2013 to a total of 188 in 2014. Of the 188 requests to be audited, 79% are less than 30 days old. The Compliance Unit had a 10% increase in the number of Pending Claims over prior year counts, which will be addressed in 2015 with emphasis on timely closure of claims as well as timely recommendations to the Board. Litigation volume changed little in 2014. The Second Injury Board is in the very early stages of acquiring a new Risk Management Information System (RMIS), automating not only the claims processes but also OWCA annual reporting and assessment processes.

In 2014, the Workplace Safety Section distributed thousands of quarterly safety reports, (LWC-WC-1017A), which are forms that help identify employers who are experiencing above-average levels of injuries for their industry classification. This section also provided on-site facility inspections to ensure compliance with workplace safety provisions.

The Louisiana On-Site OSHA Consultation Program continues to provide a quality product with overall consultation visits, effective outreach, and employee training. The numbers of employees the program reaches has greatly increased and several new initiatives have been put in place. Injury and illness rates in Louisiana continue to be low.

Organizational Chart



Biographies

Curt Eysink

Curt Eysink has led the Louisiana Workforce Commission through five years of reforms intended to make Louisiana the best state to get a job or grow a business. Appointed by Governor Bobby Jindal in 2009, Eysink has cut red tape to enable all agency staff to strengthen the workforce and improve Louisiana's business climate. Through partnerships with employers and educational systems, the LWC continues to gain deeper understanding of Louisiana's employment demands.

Under Eysink's leadership:

- Louisiana has become one of the top 10 states for people served by its Workforce Investment Act program;
- The LWC has expanded its workforce development programs to include Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and re-engineered the unemployment insurance system into a re-employment program;
- Louisiana's Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund is now one of the strongest in the nation;
- The LWC has implemented workers' compensation medical treatment guidelines, which has contributed greatly to recent reductions in average workers' compensation rates.

Patrick Robinson

Patrick Robinson is the Director of the Office of Workers' Compensation Administration (OWCA). He joined the Louisiana Workforce Commission in May 2011 as the workers' compensation judge for OWCA District 1W in Shreveport, and was appointed Director in February 2015. A Shreveport native and U.S. Army veteran, Patrick was an infantry officer from 1989-1991. A 1988 graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University, he received his law degree from LSU Law School in 1994. Before becoming a judge, Patrick represented employees, employers and insurers on workers' compensation matters for many years.

Larry White

Larry White was named Deputy Director, Office of Workers' Compensation Administration in January 2009. Previously, White served as the I.T. Management Consultant for the office beginning in 1986. Prior to coming to the OWCA, he served in various capacities in the LWC IT Department and has been with the agency for 47 years.

Office of Workers' Compensation Funding and Expenditures

The OWCA's sole source of funding is a tax assessment paid by workers' compensation insurance carriers and the self-insured. The fund is considered to be self-generated and dedicated, and the OWCA's budget and expenditures are subject to legislative oversight and approval.

All insurers and employers who pay Louisiana workers' compensation benefits submit a report annually to the OWCA on a form showing the amount of actual Louisiana workers' compensation benefits paid the previous calendar year. While this assessment funds the operation of the OWCA, it does not pay workers' compensation benefits for injured workers.

The approved budget for fiscal year 2014 was \$14,513,298, including revenue increases, expenditure reductions and service restructuring with the intent to deliver the best results. The increases in expenditures are attributed to the office maintaining administrative service levels in most areas and making significant improvements in technology. During 2014, sections within the OWCA remained strong in the face of state budget deficits.

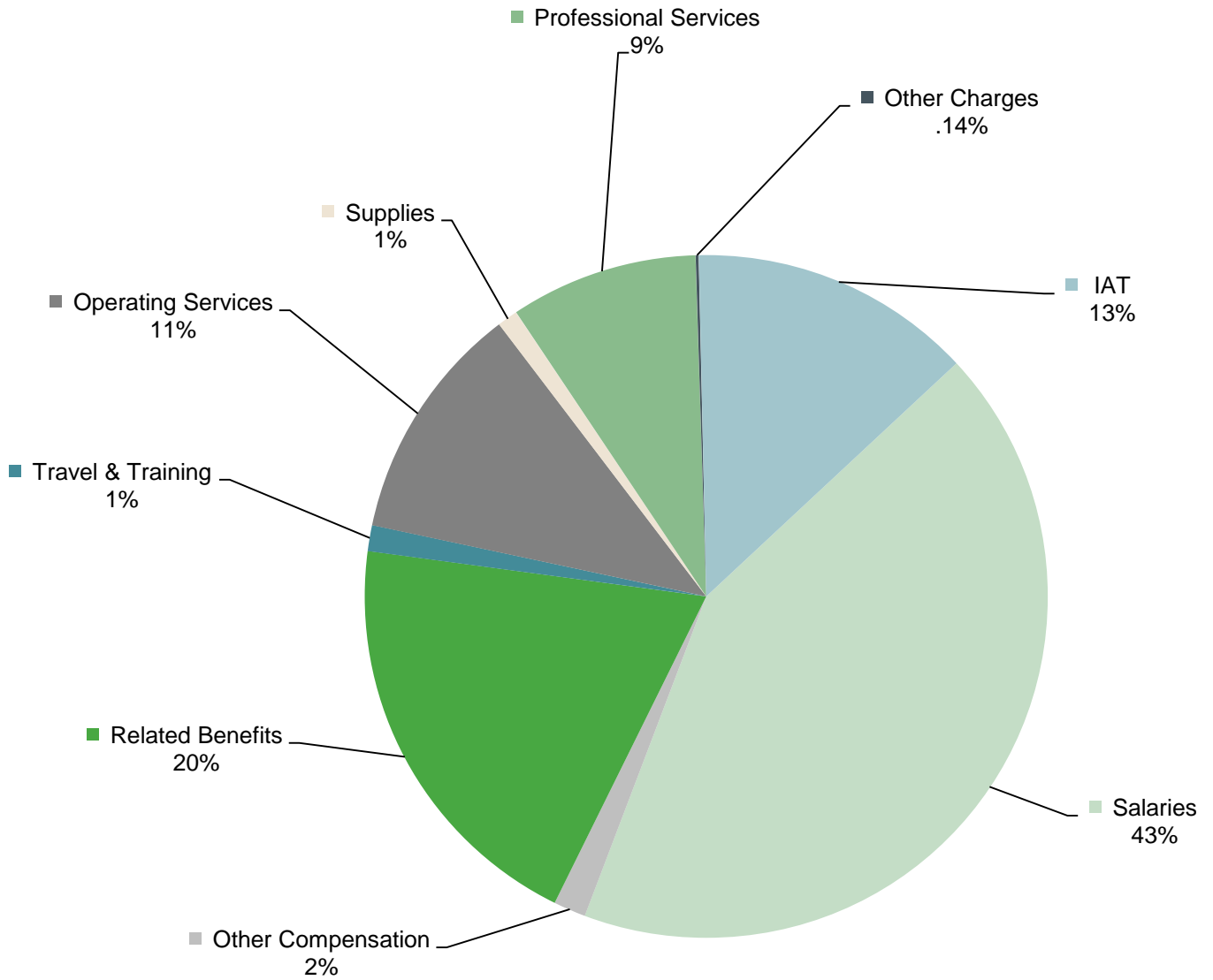
Table 1 shows OWCA expenditures for the past five years.

TABLE 1
Estimated Expenditures to Administer the Workers' Compensation Act Fiscal Years 2010 – 2014

Description	Fiscal Year 2010	% of Total	Fiscal Year 2011	% of Total	Fiscal Year 2012	% of Total	Fiscal Year 2013	% of Total	Fiscal Year 2014	% of Total
Salaries	\$ 6,190,146	48	\$ 6,143,302	46	\$6,172,183	43	\$6,145,293	43	\$6,200,538	43
Other Compensation	\$ 190,127	1	\$ 171,508	1	\$223,190	2	\$391,508	3	\$223,190	2
Related Benefits	\$ 2,149,376	17	\$ 2,218,945	17	\$2,735,225	19	\$2,729,988	19	\$2,874,351	20
Travel & Planning	\$ 84,405	1	\$ 109,704	1	\$198,387	1	\$198,387	1	\$178,387	1
Operating Services	\$ 1,381,096	11	\$ 1,425,573	11	\$1,639,342	12	\$1,639,062	11	\$1,639,062	11
Supplies	\$ 120,783	1	\$ 140,740	1	\$202,656	1	\$202,656	1	\$140,619	1
Professional Services	\$ 1,115,918	8	\$ 960,734	7	\$1,390,452	10	\$1,390,452	10	\$1,290,452	9
Other Charges	\$ 1,566,748	12	\$ 1,126,567	8	\$1,019,867	7	\$20,147	0	\$20,147	.14
Acquisitions	\$ 68,032	1	\$ 203,463	2	\$00	0	\$00	0	\$00	0
IAT			\$ 885,623	6	\$721,991	5	\$1,488,181	10	\$1,946,552	13
Total	\$ 12,663,455	100	\$ 12,866,631	100	\$ 13,386,159	100	\$14,205,674	100	\$14,513,298	100

OWCA Expenditures for Calendar Year 2014

\$14,513,298



Administration

The OWCA is headquartered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Its mission is to ensure a manageable, cost-effective workers' compensation system. It is led by a strong administration team that meets the day-to-day challenges with a focus on customer service and driving employment.

Sections within OWCA:

Administrative Section

Patrick Robinson, Office of Workers' Compensation Director

The OWCA is headed by a director who is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Governor.

Contact Information

Telephone: 225-342-7561

Fax: 225-342-5665

Email: probinson@lwc.la.gov.

Finance and Audit Section

Pauline Williams, Manager

The Finance and Audit section is made up of a manager, supervisor, two auditors and an administrative coordinator. The unit is responsible for evaluating and recommending approval or denial of applications to become authorized self-insured employers or approved Third Party Administrators for workers compensation programs. The unit determines appropriate levels of self-insurance retention and appropriate levels of security to be posted with the OWCA. This unit also collects and maintains records to ensure that self-insured employers remain financially sound, maintain proper levels of retention and security and remain in compliance with all self-insurance requirements. The unit is responsible for recommending annual assessment rates for the OWCA Administrative assessment and the Second Injury Board assessment. Following approval of the assessment rate, Finance and Audit issues the assessment notices, posts receivables and acts on delinquent collections.

In 2014, the unit increased the total number of audits by 65% to 85 audits through both site and desk audits. Collection of delinquent assessment accounts continued into 2014 resulting in a negligible number of delinquent accounts that will be turned over to the Louisiana Office of Debt Recovery. In 2013, the process of scanning checks and using a bank lock box was implemented for all deposits. In addition, document scanning for electronic storage has proven to be an efficient administrative change, with a collection of 99.8% of all delinquent assessment payments.

Contact Information

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Toll Free: 800-201-3448

Fax: 225-342-7578

Manager: Pauline M. Williams pwilliams2@lwc.la.gov

Supervisor: Jessica G. Griffis jgriffis@lwc.la.gov

Fraud Section

Kaye H. Fournet, Manager

The Fraud and Compliance Unit investigates allegations of workers' compensation fraud by any person or entity and monitors the compliance of employers with respect to the workers' compensation laws of Louisiana.

Prohibited activities investigated by the Fraud Division include, but are not limited to:

- Any person knowingly and willfully making a false statement or representation for the purpose of obtaining or defeating any workers' compensation benefit or payment as outlined in R.S.23:1208;
- Any employer knowingly or willfully failing to provide security for compensation required by R.S.23:1168;
- Any employer knowingly or willfully providing false information to misrepresent the fact that he has provided or provides security for workers' compensation insurance as required by R.S.23:1168;
- Any person assisting, aiding, or abetting another to commit a violation of the Workers' Compensation Act.

All referrals for criminal prosecution are made to the State Attorney General's Office. Criminal penalties for violations of the workers' compensation statute include, but are not limited to, fines of \$500 to \$10,000 and imprisonment, with or without hard labor from one to 10 years.

All records, reports, and other documentation obtained during the course of investigation by the Fraud Division are confidential and are not subject to subpoena or public records requests.

The Compliance Division is responsible for monitoring Louisiana's employers for compliance with the Workers' Compensation Act. Civil fines are assessed by the workers' compensation courts, collected by the Compliance Division, and deposited into the Workers' Compensation Administrative Fund. Any employer can appeal any penalty assessment to the appellate courts.

Employers who are found to be in violation of Louisiana's compliance laws on multiple occasions may be served with a cease and desist order to prohibit operations until proof of compliance can be provided, in addition to being subject to criminal sanctions for willful violations.

In 2014, the Fraud Division continued its efforts to combat fraud in the workers' compensation system, and engaged in successful partnerships with other state and federal agencies including the Office of Unemployment Insurance, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Louisiana Attorney General's office. During 2014, a total of 1,968 investigations were opened, and 1,849 completed and closed.

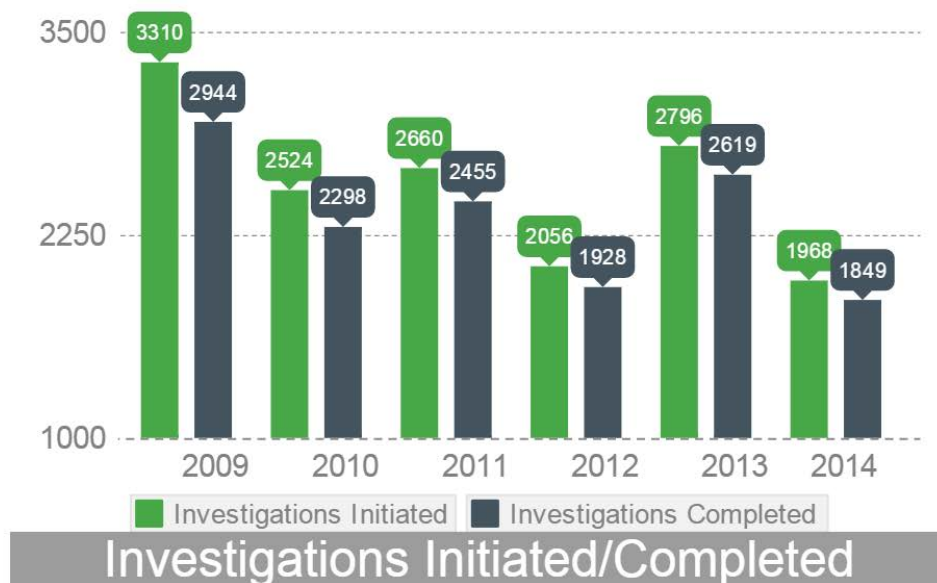
The Fraud and Compliance Unit continues to offer training seminars to educate the public about the penalties for workers' compensation fraud and non-compliance and to encourage the use of the nationwide toll-free fraud hotline (800-201-3362) and online fraud reporting.

Contact Information

Telephone: 225-342-7558

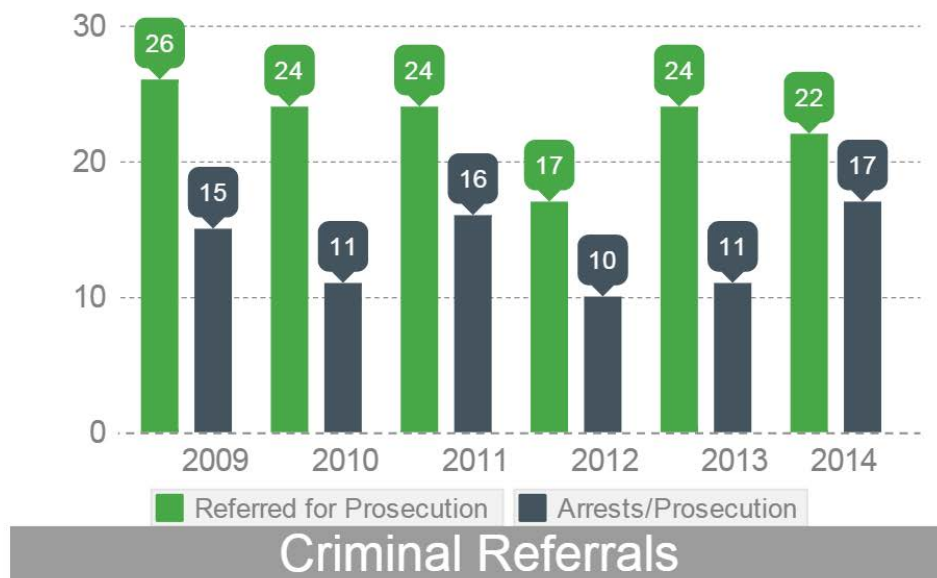
Fax: 225-342-1880

Manager: Kaye Fournet kfournet@lwc.la.gov



A review of prior data identified additional cases potentially appropriate for investigation, and the OWCA anticipates that the number of investigations will return to a more typical volume in future years.

During 2014, the Fraud Division made 22 criminal referrals to the Louisiana Attorney General's Office. Of these referrals, 17 were injured workers with a fraud amount totaling \$508,689.09. Five referrals were from employers with a fraud amount totaling \$147,621.00.



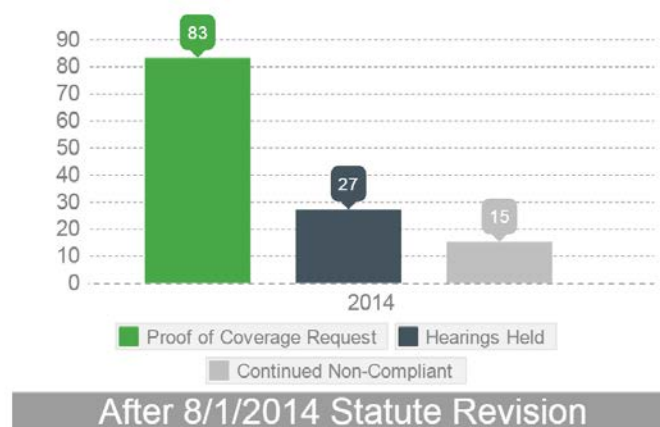
The OWCA continues to focus on employer compliance. Employers who fail to provide the necessary workers' compensation insurance put employees at risk of receiving no medical or wage loss benefits if they are injured on the job. Non-compliant employers may also have an unfair advantage over competitors by not securing coverage as required by law.

During 2014, legislative changes were made to the workers' compensation statute, streamlining the enforcement process of employer compliance. Louisiana employers that conduct business without mandatory workers' compensation insurance are now penalized by a workers' compensation judge.

Penalties collected are deposited into the workers' compensation administrative fund. Prior to the 2014 statute revision, 89 employers were contacted to provide evidence of workers' compensation coverage. Of these contacts, 42 employers were assessed civil penalties for non-compliance. Twenty-six employers continued to be non-compliant, and further action is pending.

The Fraud and Compliance Division began new procedures beginning August 1, 2014, in accordance with recent legislative changes. A total of 83 employers were contacted to provide proof of workers' compensation coverage. There were 27 hearings held through the workers' compensation district courts resulting in the assessment of civil fines and orders for employers to provide proof as required by statute. Of the 27 employers fined by the courts, 15 remain non-compliant and face further legal action.

The Office of Workers' Compensation created an automated system to aid in the tracking and recording of all compliance activities. The Mandatory Insurance Compliance System (MICS) was created in-house utilizing the same software and docketing system operating within the workers' compensation courts.



Employers, employees, insurers, and other interested parties are encouraged to use the online Coverage Verification System located on the Louisiana Workforce Commission's website to assist in determining whether an employer has workers' compensation insurance in the State of Louisiana. This tool is also available through a smart phone app offered free of charge.

Any questions concerning workers' compensation fraud or compliance should be directed to Kaye Fournet at 800-201-3362 or kfournet@lwc.la.gov.

Hearings Section

Sheral Kellar, Workers' Compensation Chief Judge

The Hearings Section's primary duty is to resolve disputed workers' compensation claims filed with the OWCA. A claim for benefits, the controversion of entitlement to benefits or other relief under the Workers' Compensation Act is initiated by filing the appropriate form, Disputed Claim for Compensation ([LWC-WC-1008](#)), with the office. There are 10 district offices located statewide: [Alexandria](#), [Baton Rouge](#), [Covington](#), [Harahan](#), [Houma](#), [Lafayette](#), [Lake Charles](#), [Monroe](#), [New Orleans](#), and [Shreveport](#).

In 2014, the Hearings Section received 4,671 disputed claims for compensation, a decrease of 302 from 2013. The section continues to assist parties in resolving disputes through both adjudication and mediation. In 2014 the Hearings Section conducted 2,604 trials and mediated 2,087 disputes. Additionally, 5,374 settlements were approved in 2014. In 2014, the average delay for resolving disputed claims for compensation was seven months. The Hearings Section is striving to reach a goal of 180 days, or six months, for resolution of disputed claims.

Contact Information

Telephone: (225) 342-7970

Toll Free: (800) 201-2499

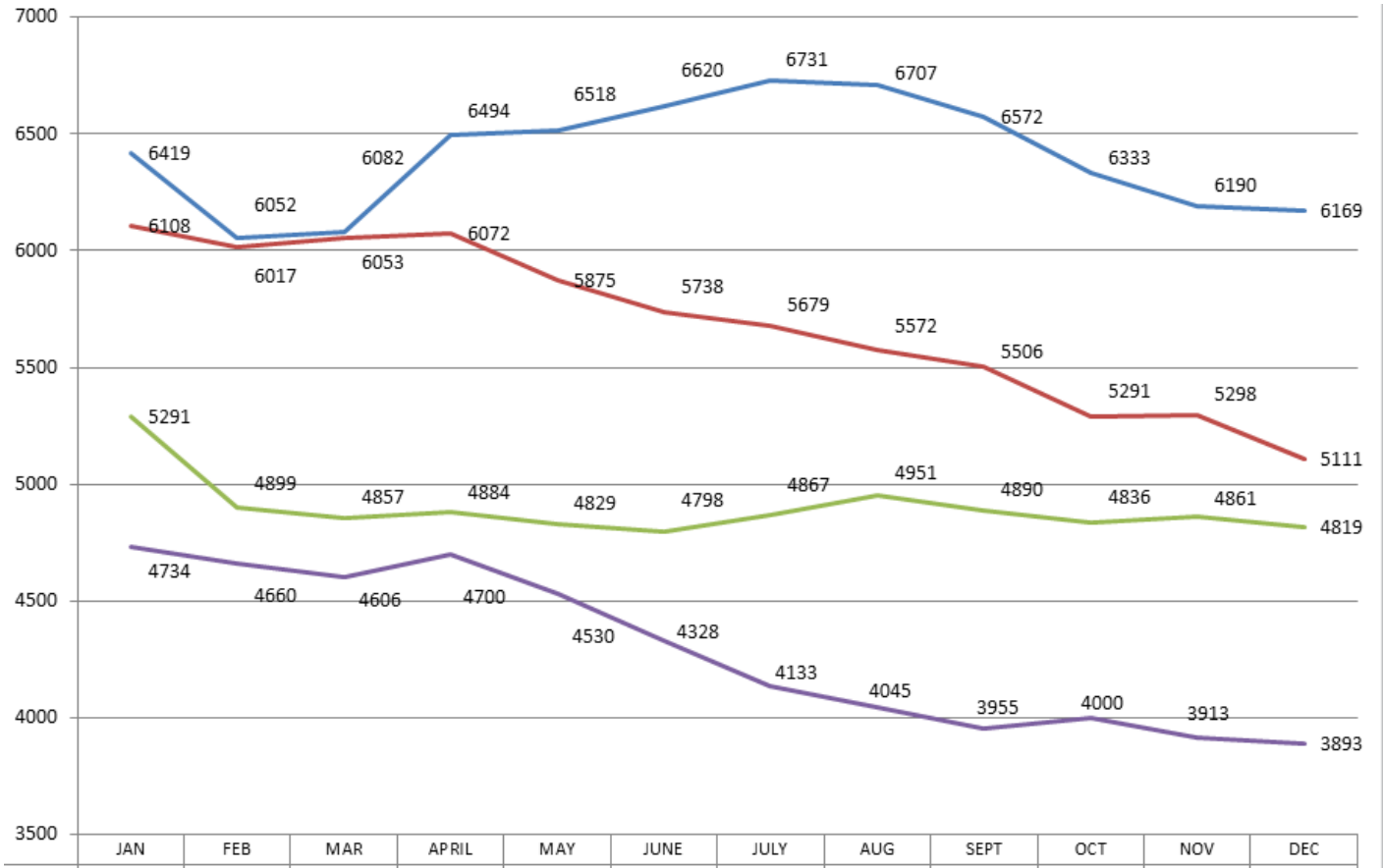
Fax: (225) 342-4790

wchearings@lwc.la.gov

Overview of OWCA Hearings Section Activities, 2010-2014

Hearings										
Year	Disputed Claims Filed	Mediation Conferences Held	Claims Resolved Prior To Trial	Trials Held	Claims Closed	Decisions Rendered	Appeals Filed	Settlements Approved		
2010	5,045	3,674	5,302	3,035	4,512	2,856	192	4,382		
2011	5,270	2,394	5,107	3,081	5,457	2,423	217	4,836		
2012	5,178	2,126	3,597	2,793	3,597	2,189	200	5,207		
2013	4,973	2,136	1,583	2,649	5,506	2,459	182	5,353		
2014	4,668	2,087	1,646	2,604	5,613	2,416	181	5,374		
Number of Disputed Claims Received by OWCA Offices										
Year	1W Shreveport	1E Monroe	2 Alexandria	3 Lake Charles	4 Lafayette	5 Baton Rouge	6 Covington	7 Harahan	8 New Orleans	9 Houma
2010	365	289	501	760	590	708	495	499	401	437
2011	457	347	359	532	1,069	625	496	538	439	408
2012	560	317	326	654	770	649	521	574	389	418
2013	635	262	294	639	575	613	501	583	424	447
2014	429	274	296	524	618	593	491	554	472	417
Number of Mediation Conferences Held by OWCA Offices										
Year	1W Shreveport	1E Monroe	2 Alexandria	3 Lake Charles	4 Lafayette	5 Baton Rouge	6 Covington	7 Harahan	8 New Orleans	9 Houma
2010	287	206	649	373	399	321	368	390	350	331
2011	235	151	406	286	241	405	146	133	212	179
2012	246	183	251	289	116	366	138	217	164	156
2013	270	156	246	312	102	358	138	160	209	185
2014	264	134	305	283	81	344	223	137	155	161
Number of Trials Held by OWCA Offices										
Year	1W Shreveport	1E Monroe	2 Alexandria	3 Lake Charles	4 Lafayette	5 Baton Rouge	6 Covington	7 Harahan	8 New Orleans	9 Houma
2010	108	115	317	192	402	312	464	273	587	265
2011	221	133	158	270	427	240	563	320	473	276
2012	177	109	146	202	427	250	310	356	537	279
2013	166	125	186	218	378	216	351	292	465	252
2014	159	100	150	187	393	241	287	260	573	254
Number of Decisions Rendered by OWCA Offices										
Year	1W Shreveport	1E Monroe	2 Alexandria	3 Lake Charles	4 Lafayette	5 Baton Rouge	6 Covington	7 Harahan	8 New Orleans	9 Houma
2010	44	117	208	189	304	290	439	384	612	269
2011	221	132	171	234	342	194	384	298	205	242
2012	112	108	145	185	376	137	198	458	189	281
2013	139	109	151	148	357	133	228	362	606	226
2014	136	100	142	156	332	101	199	326	738	186
Number of Appeals Filed by OWCA Offices										
Year	1W Shreveport	1E Monroe	2 Alexandria	3 Lake Charles	4 Lafayette	5 Baton Rouge	6 Covington	7 Harahan	8 New Orleans	9 Houma
2010	22	11	41	16	9	27	23	23	15	5
2011	10	14	18	53	29	22	25	17	15	14
2012	4	14	18	49	22	11	17	35	15	15
2013	11	10	15	62	25	15	16	8	12	8
2014	9	12	14	39	21	22	14	21	18	11
Number of Settlements Approved by OWCA Offices										
Year	1W Shreveport	1E Monroe	2 Alexandria	3 Lake Charles	4 Lafayette	5 Baton Rouge	6 Covington	7 Harahan	8 New Orleans	9 Houma
2010	233	362	267	432	631	741	469	508	376	363
2011	317	391	244	417	706	979	527	507	357	391
2012	478	401	429	401	794	986	432	503	380	403
2013	461	381	507	424	791	1,040	457	503	400	389
2014	556	346	352	395	755	1,164	539	489	401	377

Number of Active Disputed Claims 2011 – 2014



Medical Services Section

Jan Clary, BS, RN, Manager

The Medical Services section manages Disputed Claims for Medical Treatment through the Medical Guidelines Disputes MGD form 1009 and evaluates Disputed Medical Reimbursement DMR and Outlier appeals. In addition, Medical Services reviews requests for Independent Medical Exams IMEs (form 1010) and schedules them when disputes exist regarding an injured worker's physical condition and/or work status. Online 1010 and 1009 training courses are available at:

http://www.laworks.net/WorkersComp/OWC_Courses.asp

LA RS 23:1203.1 subpart J states, "The medical director shall render a decision as soon as is practicable, but in no event, not more than thirty calendar days from the date of filing." Since inception of this statute, the Medical Director has averaged 5.6 days to render a decision regarding a Medical Guidelines Dispute (MGD or form 1009). In addition, appeals of the Medical Director's decisions are expedited, resulting in a significant decrease in the time required to resolve medical treatment disputes.

Contact Information

Telephone: (225) 342-7555

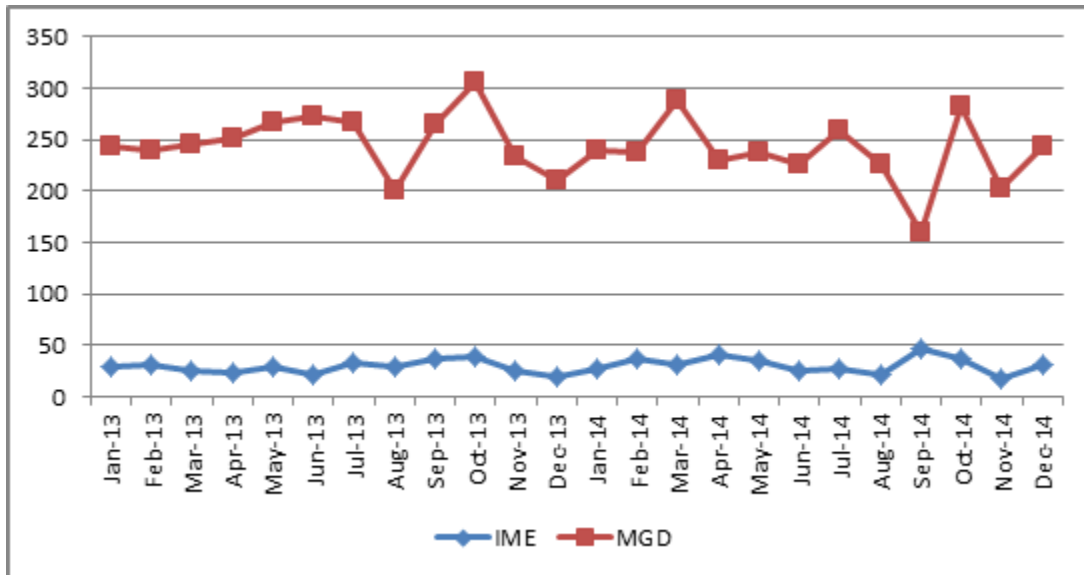
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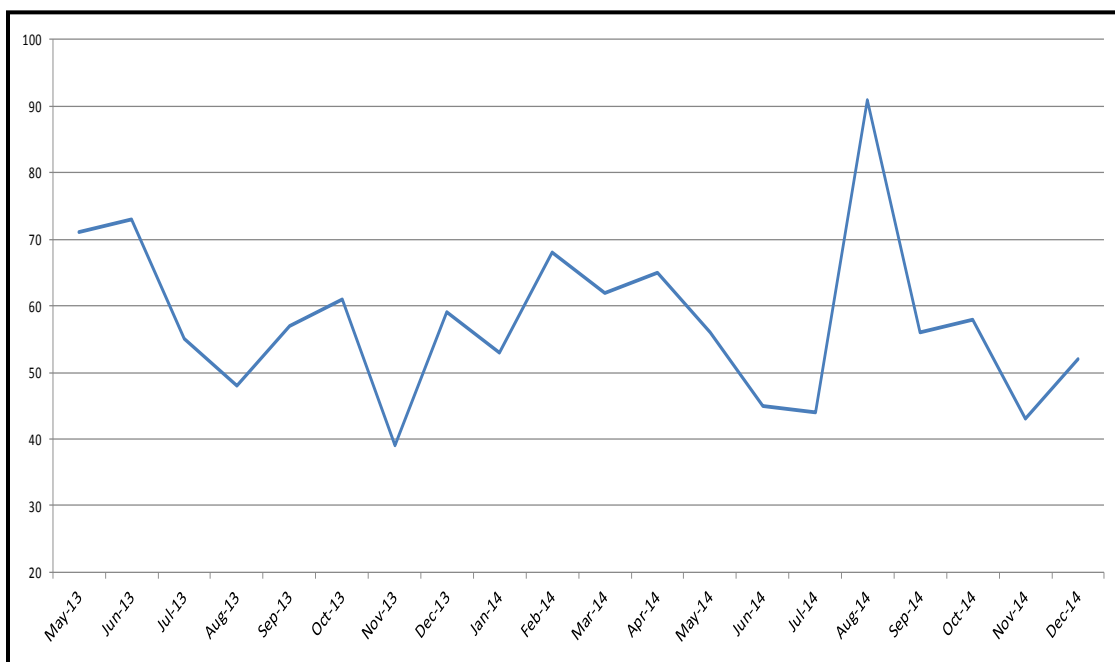
medicalservices@lwc.la.gov

Medical Guidelines Disputes

Medical Guidelines Disputes (MGD or 1009) and Independent Medical Examinations (IME) Comparison
January 2013 – December 2014



Medical Guidelines Disputes Rejected May 2013 – December 2014



Records Management Section

André de la Fuente, Manager

Records Management is a support section for the OWCA and is comprised of four units: Audit and Publication, Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), Operations and Uncontested.

The Audit & Publication Unit publishes the OWCA Annual Report and Quarterly Activity Reports, highlighting accomplishments of the OWCA concerning workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses prevention and treatment legally and medically. This unit also responds to requests asking if an employee has been involved in a Workers' Compensation dispute and if an LWC-WC-1008 (Disputed Claim for Compensation) or an LWC-WC 1009 (Disputed Claim for Medical Treatment) has been filed. A total of 17,133 requests were made in 2014. Parties to a disputed Workers' Compensation case are provided copies of their records. The unit makes every effort to respond to requests in less than three days.

The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Unit partners with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to provide nationally comparable, work-related fatality counts and estimates of work-related injuries and illnesses to aid in communicating where safety resources can be allocated more effectively. The number of work-related fatalities in 2013 in Louisiana declined to 114, according to a preliminary count by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in its Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. The figure was down slightly from the revised total of 116 in 2012. Louisiana ranked second-best among 41 states and the District of Columbia in 2013 for the rate of non-fatal work-related injuries and illnesses, according to new data from a voluntary Bureau of Labor Statistics survey. Louisiana's rate improved to an estimated 2.2 incidents per 100 full-time workers, down from 2.3 the previous year. The national average was 3.3. Visit BLS at <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshstate.htm#LA> and get more detailed Louisiana statistics at http://www.laworks.net/Downloads/Downloads_OSHS.asp.

The Operations Unit serves as a repository for workers' compensation records and oversees the imaging of records of the office. It also processes records requests from internal stakeholders such as the Hearings offices and external stakeholders.

The Uncontested Unit processed 25,660 hard copy work-related injury claim forms in 2014, a decrease of 4,191 or 14% from the previous year's total of 29,851. This includes a total of 1,058 hard copy 1007 forms received in 2014 and returned to trading partners (insurers, self-insured employers, and claim administrators). In accordance with Chapter 10, Title 23 §1306 Employer Reports (B) (1) (a), a total of 9,414 First Reports of Injury (FROIs) were submitted and accepted via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) in 2014 based on the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commission (IAIABC) standards—an increase of 8,979 from 2013's voluntary submissions of 435. Trading partners enroll in mandatory electronic submission at <http://lwcedi.info>. When these 9,414 forms received via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) are added to the 25,660 hard copies, 35,074 forms were processed—an increase of 4,788 or 16% from 2013's total of 30,286. Data generated from all forms are used in accident prevention and compliance efforts. In the future, the Notice of Payment (Form 1002) and Stop Payment (Form 1003) will be reviewed for feasibility to transition to EDI and renamed the Subsequent Reports of Injury (SROIs). The Uncontested Unit is transitioning from data collection to data compliance and analysis.

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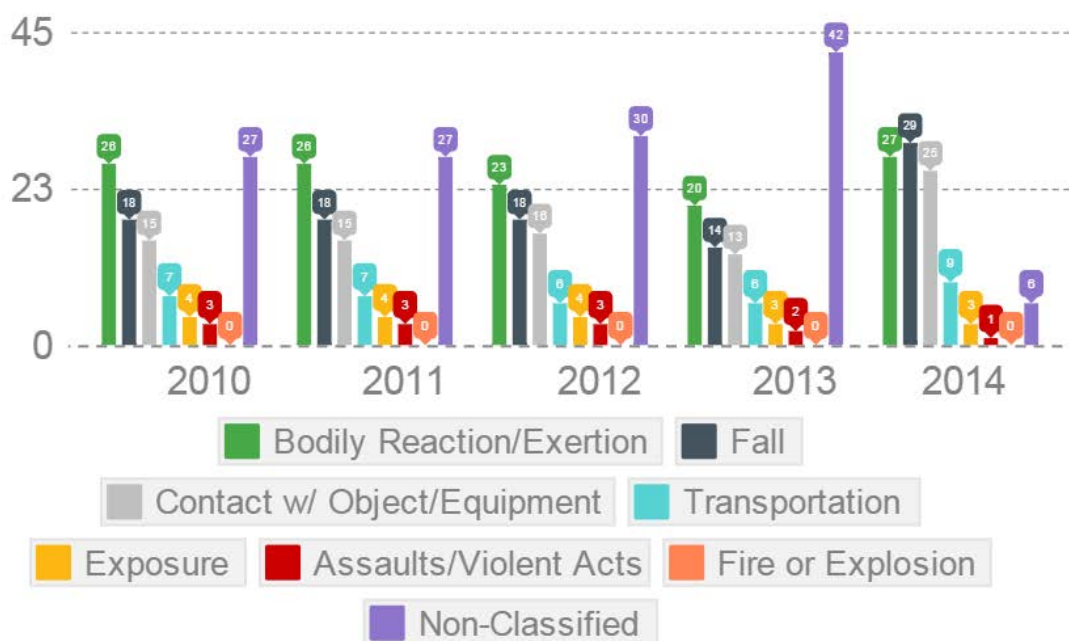
STATISTICAL REVIEW

For the past five years, the OWCA has been reviewing the manner in which injuries and illness occurred in the workplace. Over a five-year period, there were 72,098 workers' compensation cases (LWC-1007: Employees First Report of Injury) reviewed for cause of injury and illness. According to the table below for classified injuries reported in 2014, falls were cited as having the highest percentage of cases (29) in 2014. Bodily reaction/exertion makes up the second most common cause of injury followed by Contact with Objects or Equipment. This year, 9% of the cases reported resulted from Transportation Accidents. Exposure and Assaults/Violent Acts had the least percentage of injuries.

Percentage of Workplace Injury by Cause, 2010 - 2014

Cause of Injury	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Bodily Reaction/Exertion	26	26	23	20	27
Fall	18	18	18	14	29
Contact w/Objects or Equipment	15	15	16	13	25
Transportation	7	7	6	6	9
Exposure	4	4	4	3	3
Assaults/Violent Acts	3	3	3	2	1
Fire or Explosion	0	0	0	0	0
Non Classified	27	27	30	42	6

Note: The claims reported are workplace injuries that are identified through the filings of the LWC-WC-1007 form (2010–2013) or electronic LWC-WC-IA-1 forms (2014). The 2010–2013 claims utilize the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Injury & Illness Classification System (OIICS). The 2014 claims utilize the Workers' Compensation Insurance Organization (WCIO) Injury Description codes submitted via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI).



Percentage of Workplace Injury by Cause

Records Management

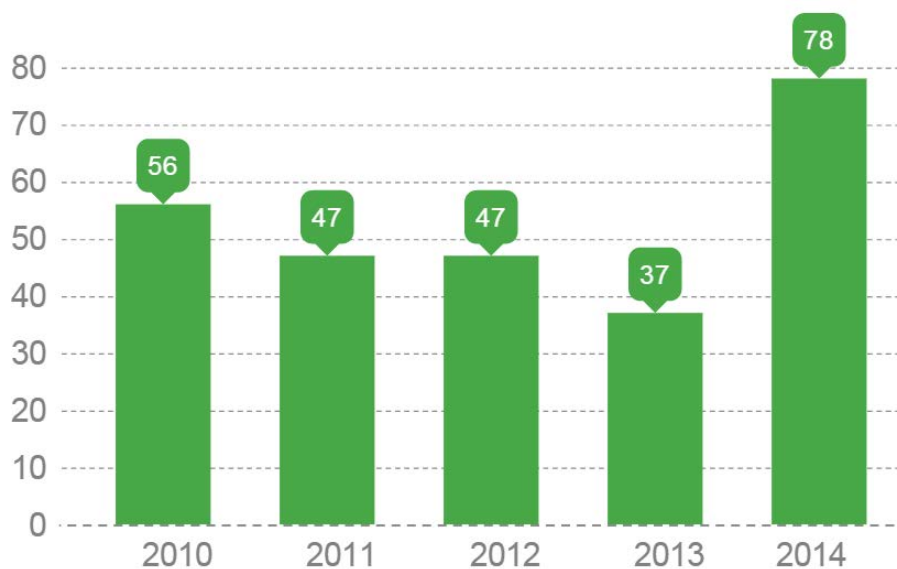
Year	Printed Forms	Records Requests
2010	28,178	18,423
2011	29,567	19,169
2012	27,229	14,444
2013	29,851	12,611
2014	25,660	17,133

Workplace Fatalities

Each year, a small number of workplace incidents result in the tragic death of workers. The number of workplace fatalities reported in 2014 increased by 39% from 2010 and by 111% from 2013. There is no single event that explains the increase. The number of workplace fatalities was calculated by using data from the LWC-WC-1007 form and the electronic LWC-WC-IA-1 forms submitted to the office. Beginning in 2014, the office now requires electronic submission of the forms.

Workplace Fatality Reported Claims, 2010 – 2014

Year	Number of Fatalities	Percentage of Change from Prior Year
2010	56	-10%
2011	47	-16%
2012	47	0%
2013	37	-21%
2014 *	78	111%



Workplace Fatality Reported Claims

Cause of Workplace Fatalities

The table below represents the cause of workplace fatalities over a five-year period.

Cause of Workplace Fatalities, 2010–2014

Year	Contact With Object & Equipment	Falls	Bodily Reaction & Exertion	Exposure to Harmful Substances or Environment	Transportation Accidents	Fires & Explosions	Assaults & Violent Acts	Non Classifiable	Total
2010	6	5	12	9	18	1	2	3	56
2011	2	7	10	8	12	2	4	2	47
2012	10	5	13	3	12	1	3	0	47
2013	3	5	8	0	14	1	4	2	37
2014	10	5	4	2	27	0	0	30	78
Total	31	27	47	22	83	5	13	37	265

Note: The claims reported are workplace fatalities that are identified through the filings of the LWC-WC-1007 forms prior to 2014 and mandatory EDI submission beginning in 2014. Data has been revised for all years as additional information is processed or duplicates eliminated.



Transportation accidents registered the highest claim rate of 31%. Bodily Reaction and Exertion, a non-impact injury primarily associated with lifting and body motions, which causes stress or strain to some part of the body, amounted to 17% of the claims. Over a five-year period, motor vehicle accidents accounted for a total of 83 cases. More than 80% of all transportation accidents were caused by motor vehicles. Aircraft crashes accounted for a total of nine cases and railway accidents accounted for a total of three cases.

Second Injury Board Section

Pauline Williams, Director

The Second Injury Board (SIB) section is made up of a manager, supervisor, three Compliance Officers, two Accounting Technicians, three Administrative Assistants and three Attorneys.

The SIB is an employer/insurer funded program with the purpose of encouraging the employment of individuals with pre-existing permanent partial disabilities that are an obstacle to obtaining employment. The SIB promotes the hiring of these individuals by protecting employers from excess liability for workers' compensation costs resulting from a job injury when statutory requirements are met. The SIB reimburses employers or their insurers for excess benefits paid to these employees on claims meeting those requirements and makes electronic fund transfer (EFT) options available to employers or their insurers for the payment of reimbursements.

The SIB annual assessment rate for 2014 was 5.75%, for a total assessment of \$50,528,321.

In 2014, the Compliance Section experienced a slight increase of 8% in pending claims while the Legal Unit remained static with no significant increase or decrease in open litigated cases.

The Accounting Unit experienced the most significant improvement by bringing outstanding reimbursement requests current. Of the 188 unaudited requests, only 40 are older than 30 days. The total number of outstanding requests was reduced to 188 at the close of 2014 – a significant decrease from 1,552 requests at the close of 2013.

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Second Injury Board

Year	Claims Received	Claims Closed	Decisions Rendered	Claims Pending	Ongoing Claims	Assessment Actual	Reimbursement	Total Administrative Costs
2010	981	1,201	1,035	3,281	1,888	\$45,754,077	\$43,690,296	\$1,085,819
2011	985	955	977	3,189	1,710	\$47,234,806	\$49,605,570	\$1,250,631
2012	1,049	1,086	1,022	3,298	1,719	\$46,906,356	\$37,755,535	\$816,394
2013	842	1,941	1,054	2,903	1,732	\$49,085,256	\$32,394,616	\$939,927
2014	941	797	791	3203	1560	\$45,379,348.	\$45,379,348	\$838,800

Workplace Safety Section

Steve Bowers, Manager – Safety & Health

Corey S. Gaines, Manager – OSHA Consultation

The Workplace Safety section is responsible for the distribution and processing of quarterly reports ([LWC-WC-1017A](#)), which identifies employers who are experiencing above-average injuries for their industry classification. The report is due one month from the quarter reported. The unit processed 8,364 1017A forms in 2014. In addition, the section provides on-site facility inspections to identify hazards and assess written program elements to ensure compliance with workplace safety provisions. The Louisiana Workplace Safety Program's objective is to continuously improve the efficiency, quality and effectiveness of service to Louisiana employers and employees. To this end, the Louisiana Workplace Safety Section completed 669 on-site visits in 2014. Additionally, the section provided telephone assistance to 620 employers during this period. This section also oversees the Office of Risk Management's Loss Prevention Program as it applies to the Louisiana Workforce Commission. To accomplish this, the unit works closely with 60 Safety Coordinators located at each of our offices throughout the state.

The Louisiana OSHA Consultation Program

The Louisiana OSHA Consultation Program, which entered the 21(d) consultative program in 1987, is a unit of the Office of Workers' Compensation Administration of the Louisiana Workforce Commission located at 1001 North 23rd Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70802. The Project Manager is Corey S. Gaines. Consultation services are provided through facility on-site consultative visits upon the request of the employers in Louisiana, with special emphasis given to the employers who are listed as high hazard industries based on their occupational exposure and illness and injury experiences. Decreases in Louisiana industry workers' compensation premiums, as mandated by the Workers' Compensation Cost Containment Act (Cost Containment Program), LSA R.S.23: 1175 et seq., as amended by Act 1992, No. 794, are promoted by on-site annual training. Employer facility exemptions from programmed Federal OSHA Compliance inspections are considered under the National Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program. Additional training and education are supplied to employers through outreach programs; participation in employer/employee organizations and employer/employee association seminars; safety and health program packages; promotional materials and LWC's web page, [laworks.net](#).

The program conducted a total of 521 visits, of which 297 were Initial, 88 were Training and Education, and 103 were Follow-Ups. The program identified 1,373 serious and imminent hazards and removed over 60,000 workers from serious risk and another 3,892 from other than serious risk. For the second consecutive year, the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) recently recommended that Louisiana cut workers' compensation rates because of fewer workplace claims, among other factors. Last year in 2013, The NCCI recommended additional cuts in manufacturing by 7%, contracting by 5%, office and clerical by 6% and miscellaneous industry groups by about 3%. NCCI also reported in a separate medical study that from 2010 to 2011, Louisiana employees saved an average of \$2,000 per case in overall worker's compensation medical coverage. This was the first annual decrease in the last 10 years of records. (On December 27, 2013, the Louisiana State Insurance Commissioner approved a 5.1% decrease in worker's compensation loss cost submitted by the NCCI. The Commissioner cited that improved safety resulted in fewer workplace injuries across most employment classes. The 2014 loss cost reduction marks a cumulative drop of 35% since 2004. The most recent reduction in workers' compensation loss cost was 4.3% in 2010. Prior loss reductions include a 17.4% decrease in 2009, an 8.6% reduction in 2008 and a 15.8% reduction in 2007. This huge accomplishment has been formally recognized on the state level.

Louisiana companies are reporting fewer injury and illness claims and worker's compensation rates continue to decrease as a result. The Louisiana On-site Consultation Program continues to provide a quality product in terms of overall consultation visits, effective outreach, and employee training. The increasing number of employers the program reaches has greatly increased and several new initiatives have been put in place. Injuries and illness rates in Louisiana continue to be low. The section was recognized nationally for developing its "H2OSHA" program, raising awareness of the risk of heat injuries throughout the state. The program is strong and plans to continue improving.





Each year, the OSHA Consultation program sets a number of visits to complete for the year as a general goal. The following chart reflects the program's success at achieving this goal each year. 2013 was an exceptional year in which the program exceeded the set goal to complete a record number of visits.



Workplace Safety

Year	Clients Assisted*	Facility/ On-site Inspections	Seminars, Training & Speaking Engagements	Number of Safety & Health Hazards Identified	Number of Serious Health Hazards Identified	Consultation Inquiries	Requests Received for Services
2010	15,075	1,127	92	1,035	1,004	1,104	189
2011	14,425	1,131	65	1,309	1,010	449	409
2012	13,771	1,045	66	1,460	1,359	367	261
2013	12,083	1,227	68	1,373	345	296	396
2014	9,133	1,190	63	1,314	1,373	476	481

*This number includes all phone calls handled by the clerical department and the number of 1017As processed.

Workers' Compensation Councils

Workers' Compensation Advisory Council

Patrick Robinson, Chairman

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's website, www.laworks.net, displays the Workers' Compensation Advisory Council web page, which includes a listing of past scheduled meetings and locations. The Council includes representatives from all facets of workers' compensation, including injured workers, employers, insurers, and healthcare providers.

Visit the Louisiana Legislative Website for further information and a full list of the Council's membership: <http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/BoardMembers.aspx?boardId=820>

Workers' Compensation Medical Advisory Council

The Medical Advisory Council reviews current guidelines and provides recommendations for a medical treatment schedule to guide treatment for workplace illnesses and injuries. It is made up of at least one of the following: orthopedic surgeon, neurosurgeon, neurologist, interventional pain management physician, family practice physician, physical and occupational therapists, psychologist and psychiatrists and a representative from the Chiropractic Association of Louisiana. Members of the council are appointed to two-year terms by the director of the OWCA.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission's website, www.laworks.net, displays the Workers' Compensation Medical Advisory Council's scheduled meetings and locations.

Statewide District Directory

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