

Workers' Advisers Program
Report For
April/May/June 2006

General Summary

(Full details for each summary are contained in the body of the Report)

Operations

The Program continues to monitor the waiting time for service on a monthly basis. The target remains as 2-4 weeks. Subject to delays requested by the worker or extraordinary circumstances, we are able to maintain a reasonable wait for service that is well within this range. The provincial average is **2.75** weeks (includes local and out of town wait times).

In accordance with s. 263 (b) we continue to monitor the caseload of the Program by County to determine if the numbers warrant an office in another area of the Province. The numbers do not warrant the opening of an additional office at this time.

Resources/Early Assistance continues to provide service to workers and others who require general information and assistance. We received **399** Resource/Early Assistance calls during this quarter.

Financial

Budget figures ending June 30, 2006 from the Department of Finance indicate we have spent **16.57 percent** of our authority (\$2,262,000).

Client Operations

Surveys continue to be sent to all workers when we close their files. The Program closed **416** client files during this period and received **67** returned surveys representing **16.1** percent of those sent out.

Of the 67 surveys returned during this quarter, 38 surveys were from clients who did not have a positive outcome (56.7 percent) in his/her appeal. In general, we continue to receive detailed and valuable information.

Operations

Case Summary Statistics

	# Active Files	*Requests for Service + Resource Calls	Files Opened	Files Closed	Pending Files	Second Opinions Approved	# Clients Served to Date this Year
April							
2006	899	*145+96=241	142	132	13	0	1041
2005	838	*67+60=127	70	96	2	0	908
May							
2006	909	*143+85=228	148	148	8	0	1189
2005	776	*56+41=97	58	121	8	1	966
June							
2006	907	*140+110=250	133	136	15	0	1322
2005	710	*14+72=86	20	86	2	0	986
April, May, June Quarter							
2006	907	428+291=719	423	416	n/a	0	1322
2005	710	137+173=310	148	303	12	1	986

*Includes Requests directly to intake + calls referred to resource not forwarded to intake

On a monthly basis, the figures listed under pending files represent requests for service that have not been assigned by the end of the month. These files do not accumulate and therefore are not reported for the quarter.

Process

The waiting time for service for all intake is calculated from the date the worker first contacts the Program to the date of the worker's first appointment with an adviser. The only exception is intake involving appeals for "chronic pain". For "chronic pain" files, the wait time for service is calculated from the date the file is received by the Workers' Advisers Program to the date when an Adviser contacts the worker (in person or by telephone) to discuss the worker's appeal.

Service Waiting Time Local Offices

Intake Period	Halifax		Sydney	
	2006	2005	2006	2005
April	3.29	2.40	1.86	1.20
May	2.28	2.25	2.51	1.50
June	3.32	2.20	2.14	1.20
Average	2.96	2.28	2.17	1.30
Local Offices Average Waiting Period	Apr/May/June 2005		2.3 weeks	
	Apr/May/June 2006		2.50 weeks	

Service Waiting Time Out of Town

Intake Period	Bridgewater/ Yarmouth	Digby/Kentville Amherst/Truro	New Glasgow/ Antigonish/ Port Hawkesbury
April	3.23	2.23	2.81
May	2.20	3.48	3.60
June	2.45	2.70	3.60
Quarterly Average for area	2.63	2.80	3.34
Out of Town Average Waiting Period for the Quarter			2.92

Client Count by County

County	Apr 06	Apr 05	May 06	May 05	Jun 06	Jun 05
Annapolis	16	14	17	14	17	11
Antigonish	11	9	8	8	8	9
Cape Breton	298	248	301	225	287	206
Colchester	31	25	30	24	29	19
Cumberland	36	35	41	28	44	27
Digby	3	8	2	7	2	8
Guysborough	11	7	10	7	12	3
Halifax	256	227	248	211	252	191
Hants	28	26	30	26	30	22
Inverness	10	8	11	7	8	18
Kings	40	48	38	48	40	45
Lunenburg	72	78	78	76	82	71
Pictou	26	39	26	29	29	28
Queens	13	8	14	8	13	8
Richmond	17	14	14	15	10	14
Shelburne	7	11	9	11	10	11
Victoria	5	4	5	4	7	4
Yarmouth	8	13	9	15	10	13
Other	21	16	18	13	17	13
Total	909	838	909	776	907	704

Advisers conduct file reviews quarterly to confirm that all files they are responsible for meet eligibility criteria . The Chief Worker Adviser audits randomly selected files twice a year to monitor quality and compliance.

Program Statistics

	Submissions/Hearings Done			New Appeals Filed		
	Court	Hearing Officer	WCAT	Court	Hearing Officer	WCAT
April						
2006	2	8	21	0	11	34
2005	2	7	38	15	0	22
2004	0	12	21	31	0	27
May						
2006	2	9	30	0	23	40
2005	1	7	25	19	0	19
2004	0	22	44	24	1	28
June						
2006	0	6	30	0	37	55
2005	2	5	37	12	0	24
2004	0	18	31	23	0	39
April/May/June Quarter						
2006	4	23	81	0	71	129
2005	5	19	100	46	0	65
2004	0	52	96	78	1	94

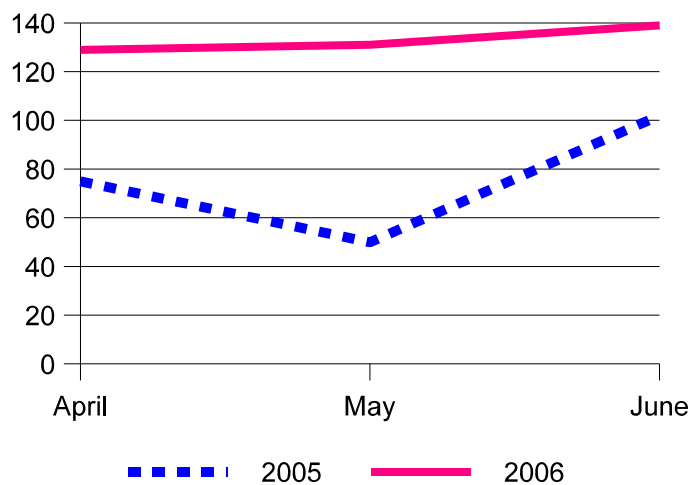
Resource/Early Assistance

	April	May	June	Program Total
# Calls Taken	129	131	139	399
Time Recorded (hours)	46.4	46.4	43.4	136.2
Questions/Categories	#	#	#	#
General	129	131	139	399
No Written Decision	4	5	2	11
Needs More Evidence	0	5	0	5
Assist with Forms	24	25	21	70
Calls by WAP	0	3	1	4
Resolved at EA	0	0	0	0
Ancillary Issues (ie CPP/EI)	5	0	0	5
Referred to Intake	33	46	29	108
Proforma plan **	10	9	1	20

Each call may deal with multiple questions/categories

** Refers to assistance WAP could have provided had mandated and resources existed to do so.

Number of Calls



Financial

The budget authority for 2006-2007 is \$2,262,600.00, which is 1 percent (\$26,400) less than the approved budget for 2005-06. The June 30, 2006 report provided by the Department of Finance indicate the following expenditures:

	2006	2005	2004
Salaries & Benefits	\$314,015.68	\$280,697.80	\$301,875.00
Administrative	\$49,871.21	\$52,377.06	\$48,242.00
Medical Reports & Expert Fees	\$11,052.50	\$30,703.05	\$65,442.00
External Legal Fees & Disbursements	\$63.00	\$0.00	\$15,750.00
Consulting Fees	\$0.00	\$26,849.69	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$375,002.39	\$390,627.60	\$431,309.00
% of Authority Spent	16.57%	16.6%	18%

For comparison purposes only, the budget figures for the same quarter in 2005 and 2004 have also been included.

Client Satisfaction

Client Survey Results

The Program began mailing satisfaction surveys to clients with their closed file in April 2003. This practice will continue so that future results will allow us to track and address any satisfaction trends.

	April 2006	May 2006	June 2006	Total	% Return for Quarter
Closed Files	132	148	136	416	
Returned Surveys	14	34	19	67	16.1%
Provided Comments	10	27	10	47	70.1%
Not Positive Outcome	9	17	12	38	56.7%
Negative Comments	1	4	0	5	7.5%
% Monthly Return	10.6%	23.0%	14.0%		

Based on the above data, we can determine that **84.72 percent** of the clients responding to our survey either “**strongly agreed**” or “**agreed**” that the service provided by the Program staff satisfied their requirements. We note that the percentage of clients who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” was lower than in previous quarters. We also note that the percentage of clients who did not have a positive outcome in their appeals also increased (56.7 percent) during this period.

Specific results to our questions are as follows:

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Question Not Answered	Total
<i>1. The program staff I dealt with were professional and friendly at all times.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	50.0%	28.6%	7.1%	14.3%	0%	100%
	<i>May</i>	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0%	100%
	<i>Jun.</i>	63.2%	26.3%	10.5%	0.0%	0%	100%
% for Quarter		62.7%	26.6%	5.9%	4.8%	0.0%	100%
<i>2. In my experience, I felt the program staff had the knowledge and experience for dealing with my situation.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	50.0%	28.6%	21.4%	0.0%	0%	100%
	<i>May.</i>	70.6%	20.6%	5.9%	2.9%	0%	100%
	<i>Jun.</i>	47.4%	42.1%	10.5%	0.0%	0%	100%
% for Quarter		56.0%	30.4%	12.6%	1.0%	0.0%	100%
<i>3. I felt the program staff did their very best to provide me with the best possible service.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	42.9%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	0%	100%
	<i>May</i>	73.5%	17.6%	8.8%	0.0%	0%	100%
	<i>Jun.</i>	47.4%	42.1%	10.5%	0.0%	0%	100%
% for Quarter		54.6%	29.4%	11.2%	4.8%	0.0%	100%
		All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Question Not Answered	Total
<i>4. My calls were returned within 24 hours.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	57.1%	28.6%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	100%
	<i>May</i>	67.6%	23.5%	2.9%	5.9%	0%	100%
	<i>Jun.</i>	52.6%	26.3%	10.5%	5.3%	5.3%	100%
% for Quarter		59.1%	26.1%	6.8%	6.1%	1.8%	100%

		All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Question Not Answered	Total
<i>5. My question were answered to my satisfaction.</i>	<i>Apr.</i>	35.7%	35.7%	14.3%	14.3%	0%	100%
	<i>May</i>	73.5%	14.7%	11.8%	0.0%	0%	100%
	<i>Jun.</i>	63.2%	15.8%	21.1%	0.0%	0%	100%
% for Quarter		57.5%	22.1%	15.7%	4.8%	0.0%	100%

A sample of comments contained in the returned surveys: The names have been omitted to ensure confidentiality.

The hard work and perseverance by [adviser] and his staff paid off. We can't thank you enough.

I just want to thank [adviser] for not giving up on me and really did a great job representing me. Thank you.

Great moral support.

A great job and very helpful toward me.

I found that everything was done quite efficiently. It was the Compensation Board I feel could have done more and been more considerate as I lived in PEI and was working in Halifax. I thank you for your time and consideration.

[Adviser] was extremely helpful, friendly and professional. . .

Thank you doesn't say enough! My experience dealing with the WCB was a nightmare and [adviser] helped me sort thru it all and won me my benefits. As I said thank you.

The lady I dealt with was very professional although she cannot overrule the compensation board's decision. Very good people to deal with.

I received what I thought I was going to get (nothing). When you are on what WBC calls a meat chart you don't get anything no matter what you do. Appeal or whatever.

The people there should have been on the Late Johnny Cochran's team. Keep up the good work!

[Adviser] was professional when he had to be, but kind and friendly too, a very nice man. He answered all our questions and helped us deal with our situation, we thank him for all the help he gave us.

I had [adviser] (Barrister & Solicitor). Please give him a "recommendation" on my behalf as he was most helpful and very supportive and always received my phone calls.

I am pleased with the service I received.

You did a good job for me. I know in my own mind I wouldn't get it. So Thank you for trying. I will live with the pain.

Very understanding and caring he made us feel that what we had to say was important even down to the smallest detail or concern.

[Adviser] was an excellent advisor to both my wife and myself in helping us on the right track to obtain legal advice and WC advice.

[Adviser] was friendly and did a great job. I thank him.

I feel in my opinion, the dissension [sic] reached by WAP was very abrupt. I received one letter stating it would be 4 to 5 weeks before a dissension [sic] would be made, it was just within a week top's, I received a letter stating the appeal would not proceed. Based on WCB reports?

I was very pleased with the service and the outcome of my appeal. I thank you very much.

Real pleased!

My appeal was not overturned and I am very disappointed of this for the condition I am in. The people at WCB need to be retrained or get a real job so they might understand injuries better. This is no reflection on the help from Workers' Advisers and thank you for all that you have done. It helps a little to know there are a few understanding people out there yet. Once again, job well done and thank you and a special thanks to [adviser] who is very understanding.

I am very grateful to the workers' Advisers program and specifically to [adviser]. Without your help my claim would not have been recognized. Thanks so much!!!

I really don't think all the information from the doctor's report were considered. I feel the WBC did not give all the information only what they want you to know. I feel strongly about this.

I was pleased with the help. I felt no one was listening to me until Workers' Advisers program stepped in. Thanks for all your help. It was greatly appreciated. Your work is truly needed. Thanks again.

[Adviser] was always pleasant and knowledgeable in my enquiries.

I would like to take this time to say thank you for all the help and advice that was given to me by your office. It certainly helped to reduce the stress of dealing with WCB of Nova Scotia. Thank you.

Although I was unsuccessful, my experience with the WAP was satisfying.

Service satisfaction.

Can't say enough, the people that I talked to have been very kind and patient with me, have always called back when I left a message.

I appreciate all the help I received. Thank you.

I feel like I've been left by the wayside by the Government of Nova Scotia with their rules and regulations on chronic pain. If I don't have chronic pain, I would surely like to know what chronic pain is!

I am very grateful of the team at the workers' advisory [*sic*] for doing an excellent job in helping me and without them I wouldn't had any help. Thank you all.

Submitted to: The Honourable Mark Parent
Minister of Environment and Labour

Submitted by: _____
Anne Clark, Chief Worker Adviser
Workers' Advisers Program

Submitted on: _____

copy: William Lahey, Deputy Minister of Environment and Labour
Coordinator, Workplace Safety and Insurance System