

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY (OHS)
ANNUAL REPORT - HIGHLIGHTS
Fiscal Year 2003-2004**

To establish and enforce clear standards to reduce occupational injury and illness.

The objectives of the Division are to:

- reduce the incidence of injury and illness of employees;
- improve the understanding of occupational health and safety standards by all workplace parties;
- improve health and safety conditions in the workplace by means of research, inspection, investigation and enforcement of legislation.

Legislation

The Occupational Health and Safety Division of Environment and Labour works to maintain and improve the regulatory systems that protect the health and safety of individuals.

Meeting these responsibilities is balanced with supporting opportunities to create wealth, simplify procedures, and not create an onerous regulatory burden for employers and employees.

Law reform work during 2003/04 includes:

New Regulations

- Underground Mining Regulations
- Summary Offence Tickets Regulations

Changes to Existing Regulations

- Occupational Safety General Regulations

Current Work on Existing Regulations

- Fall Protection and Scaffolding Regulations
- General Blasting Regulations
- Occupational Health Regulations

Current Work on New Regulations

- Occupational Diving Regulations
- Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee Regulations

Enforcement Activities

Field Activities in 2003/04	
Prosecutions initiated	45
General Inspections	1460
Complaints Investigated	805
Targeted Inspections	266
Incidents Investigated	272
Discriminatory Action Complaints	41
Fatalities investigated	19
Work Refusals Investigated	15

Inquiries Recorded

The Division responded to more than 2000 inquiries and requests for information in 2003/2004.

Electronic Access to Information

Traffic on the Division's Internet site has increased 312% in just 2 years. Information was accessed 346,308 times for 2003/2004. We continue to expand the site to meet the demand.

Five Most Common Downloads 2003/04	
Occupational Safety General Regulations Reference Guide	12606
Ergonomic Sheets	10927
Fall Protection and Scaffolding Regulations Reference Guide	5163
Reference Guide to WHMIS Regulations	3,811
Reference Guide to Underground Mining Regulations	1,816

New Publications

The Division produced 11 new publications and fact sheets, including:

- Guide to the First Aid Regulations
- Toxicological Index - Data Sheet Users' Guide
- Underground Mining Regulations Reference Guide
- Regulatory Development and Review Process
- Fish Safe Guide
- Seven publications on ergonomics

Initiatives

The Division participated in the following initiatives:

- Implementation of the Workplace Safety Insurance System strategic plan
- Increased reporting to our stakeholders
- Improved Inspection Targeting System to focus on firms with the most accidents
- Implemented a new information management tool - Contact Tracking System
- Supported 5 projects through grants totaling \$108,250
- Awarded 19 organizations during North American Occupational Safety and Health Week to recognize their leadership in accident prevention.

Partnerships

The Division maintains a series of partnerships, linkages, memoranda of understanding and committee contacts with a wide array of organizations. Included among these are:

- Workplace Safety Insurance System
- Canadian Association of Administrators of Labour Legislation - Occupational Safety and Health
- Canadian Standards Association
- NS Construction Safety Association; NS Forestry Safety Association; NS Retail Gasoline Dealers' Association; NS Trucking Safety Association
- Workers' Compensation Board and Canadian Revenue Agency
- Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board
- Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations