

**Workers' Advisers Program
Report For
October/November/December 2005**

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 2.6 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 507 Resource/Early Assistance calls during this quarter with the majority of calls (188) received in November.

Financial

Budget figures ending December 31, 2005 from the Department of Finance indicate we have spent 52.23 % of our authority and 55.47% of our present forecast.

Client Operations

Surveys continue to be sent to all workers when we close their files. The Program closed 200 client files during this period and received 34 returned surveys representing 17.0% of those sent out. The return rate for the April/May/June was 20.13% and for July/August/September was 16.4%.

Of the 34 surveys returned during this quarter, 23 had a positive outcome and 11 were not successful. In general, we continue to receive detailed and valuable information. Only one returned survey contained a negative comment in relation to the services provided by the Workers' Advisers Program.

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
October:							
2005	692	51+65=116	52	54	6	0	1168
2004	1232	72+87=159	69	78	8	0	1728
November:							
2005	700	100+166=266	75	67	31	0	1243
2004	1211	62+168=230	66	87	4	0	1794
December:							
2005	654	63+62=125	33	79	10	0	1276
2004	1159	71+89=160	73	126	8	0	1867
Oct/Nov/Dec Quarter							
2005	654	214+293=507	160	200	n/a	0	1276
2004	1159	205+344=549	208	291	n/a	0	1867

*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

Service Waiting Time Local Offices

Intake Period	Halifax		Sydney	
	2005	2004	2005	2004
October	2.39	2.6	1.64	1.4
November	3.08	3.3	1.46	1.3
December	3.2	3.0	1.5	1.6
Average	2.9	2.9	1.5	1.4
Local Offices Average Waiting Period	Oct/Nov/Dec 2004 2.2 weeks		Oct/Nov/Dec 2005 2.2 weeks	

Service Waiting Time Out of Town

Bridgewater/Yarmouth

October 2.6 weeks
 November 1.6 weeks
 December 3.2 weeks
 Quarterly Average - 2.5

Digby/Amherst/Kentville/Truro

October 2.9 weeks
 November 3.3 weeks
 December 2.2 weeks
 Quarterly Average - 2.8

*New Glasgow/Antigonish/
 Port Hawkesbury*

October 2.6 weeks
 November 2.7 weeks
 December 4.1 weeks
 Quarterly Average - 2.8

Average wait times for all out of town clients is 2.8 weeks.

Client Count by County

County	Oct/05	Oct/04	Nov/05	Nov/04	Dec/05	Dec/04
Annapolis	9	25	11	22	11	18
Antigonish	7	10	8	8	8	9
Cape Breton	209	336	228	330	214	326
Colchester	15	37	12	35	9	34
Cumberland	29	49	32	47	25	51
Digby	5	17	5	16	5	14
Guysborough	4	6	7	8	7	8
Halifax	186	351	181	345	172	324
Hants	22	37	21	38	17	37
Inverness	13	13	13	12	12	11
Kings	34	67	34	65	35	63
Lunenburg	72	102	71	107	68	103
Pictou	22	63	20	67	17	63
Queens	10	14	10	15	9	13
Richmond	11	27	11	24	12	20
Shelburne	11	17	9	16	8	14
Victoria	5	15	5	15	3	14
Yarmouth	13	18	8	17	9	16
Other	15	28	14	24	13	21
Total	692	1232	700	1211	654	1159

During October, November and December 2005, the Program carried less than 60% of the files carried in 2004 during the same quarter. File audits are completed quarterly to confirm that all files carried meet eligibility criteria and have active appeals.

Program Statistics

	Submissions/Hearings Done			New Appeals Filed		
	Court	Hearing Officer	WCAT	Court	Hearing Officer	WCAT
October						
2005	1	3	36	0	14	17
2004	0	6	39	0	17	21
2003	4	20	70	5	13	35
November						
2005	1	8	34	1	9	25
2004	1	4	42	0	20	48
2003	2	19	38	0	24	47
December						
2005	0	1	18	0	24	21
2004	*2+1	12	24	0	22	39
2003	1	12	32	0	21	63
Oct/Nov/Dec Quarter						
2005	2	12	88	1	47	63
2004	**3+1	22	105	0	59	108
2003	7	51	140	5	58	145

*2 plus 1 Chambers

**3 plus 1 Chambers

Resource/Early Assistance

	October	November	December	Program Total
# Calls Taken	89	188	103	380
Time Recorded (hours)	24.5	54.6	39.2	118.3
Questions/Categories	#	#	#	#
General	89	188	103	380
No Written Decision	6	4	1	11
Needs More Evidence	0	0	0	0
Assist with Forms	5	43	29	77
Calls by WAP	2	2	0	4
Resolved at EA	0	0	0	0
Ancillary Issues (ie CPP/EI)	0	1	0	1
Referred to Intake	24	22	41	87
Proforma plan **	3	2	6	11

Each call may deal with multiple questions/categories

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

As demonstrated in the data above, 89 calls were received in October; 188 calls in November (an increase of 211%); and 103 calls were received in December (down 45.7% from November but 15.7% higher than October). According to the Early Assistance Program (EAP) Report, the increase in calls and the timing thereof is linked to the release of chronic pain decisions by the Board.

Financial

The December 31, 2005 report provided by the Department of Finance indicate the following expenditures:

	2005	2004
Salaries & Benefits	\$927,520.33	\$925,854.00
Administrative	\$157,587.21	\$297,447.00
Medical Reports & Expert Fees	\$83,117.06	\$178,707.00
External Legal Fees & Disbursements	\$461.59	\$36,651.00
Consulting Fees	\$26,874.69	\$61,866.00
TOTAL	\$1,195,560.88	\$1,500,524.00
% of Authority Spent (\$2,289,000)	52.23%	65.55%
% of Present Forecast (\$2,155,400)	55.47%	69.62%

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.

	October 2005	November 2005	December 2005	Total	% Return for 3 rd Quarter
Closed Files	54	67	79	200	
Returned Surveys	8	6	20	34	17.00%
Provided Comments	5	5	18	28	82.35%
Not Positive Outcome	4	2	5	11	32.35%
Negative Comments	0	0	1	1	2.94%
% Monthly Return	14.81%	8.96%	25.32%		

Although only 67.65 percent of the client's returning their survey had a positive outcome with respect to their appeal, only 1 negative comment was received (2.94%).

Specific results to our questions are as follows:

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
<i>1. The program staff I dealt with were professional and friendly at all times.</i>	Oct	75.0%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	100%
	Nov.	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Dec	85.0%	10.0%	0.0%	5.0%	100%
	% for Quarter	85.3%	8.8%	2.9%	2.9%	100%
<i>2. In my experience, I felt the program staff had the knowledge and experience for dealing with my situation.</i>	Oct.	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0.0%	100%
	Nov.	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Dec.	75.0%	20.0%	0.0%	5.0%	100%
	% for Quarter	73.5%	20.6%	2.9%	2.9%	100%
<i>3. I felt the program staff did their very best to provide me with the best possible service.</i>	Oct.	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%	0.0%	100%
	Nov.	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Dec.	80.0%	15.0%	0.0%	5.0%	100%
	% for Quarter	73.5%	20.6%	2.9%	2.9%	100%
<i>4. My calls were returned within 24 hours.</i>		All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Never	Total
	Oct.	62.5%	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%	100%
	Nov.	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Dec.	55.0%	40.0%	0.0%	5.0%	100%
	% for Quarter	58.8%	35.3%	2.9%	2.9%	100%
<i>5. My question were answered to my satisfaction.</i>	Oct..	62.5%	25.0%	0.0%	12.5%	100%
	Nov.	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
	Dec.	75.0%	20.0%	0.0%	5.0%	100%
	% for Quarter	73.5%	20.6%	0.0%	5.9%	100%

Based on the above data, we can determine that **94.12%** of our clients (32/34) “**strongly agreed**” or “**agreed**” that the service provided by the Program staff satisfied their requirements.

A sample of comments contained in the returned surveys:

I am very happy with the level of courtesy and professionalism afforded me by the staff of the Workers' Adviser Program. Thank you.

Thanks toand staff for your help and guidance as I couldn't have done this without you.

Great work - Workers' Advisers!

Submitted to: The Honourable Kerry Morash
Minister of Environment and Labour

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

Submitted on: January 25, 2006

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