

## Chapter 6

# Labour Relations and Workplace Safety—Implementing Strategies to Reduce Workplace Injury Rates

### 1.0 MAIN POINTS

By November 2017, the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety's targeted intervention strategies were making a difference. The Ministry has a goal to reduce provincial injury rates to 4.32% by 2020 (reduction of 50% from 2012 rate). The provincial rate of workplace injuries has declined from 8.65% to 5.25% between 2012 and 2017.

Since 2013, the Ministry's targeted intervention strategies include working directly with employers identified as having higher than industry average injury rates, proactively and reactively inspecting workplaces, implementing key enforcement activities (including issuing summary offence tickets), and promoting the importance of reducing workplace injuries. It has partnered with the Workers' Compensation Board on a number of these strategies.

Our Office found that the Ministry had effective processes to implement strategies to reduce provincial workplace injury rates, other than it needs to issue summary offence tickets for workplace violations faster. Promptly issuing summary offence tickets reinforces to employers with workplace violations the importance of addressing the identified violations.

Effective processes to reduce workplace injuries contribute to fewer Saskatchewan workplaces having unsafe practices that place workers at risk. In addition, lower workplace injury rates (along with lower total days lost) reduce the cost to businesses through lower premiums for workers' compensation insurance.

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the results of our audit of the Ministry's processes to implement strategies to reduce provincial workplace injury rates to 4.32 per 100 full-time workers by 2020.

### 2.1 Workplace Safety Responsibilities Set in Law

The Ministry's mandate is to encourage, promote, and enforce safe work practices and employment standards to ensure healthy, safe, and productive workplaces.<sup>1</sup> *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* governs the responsibilities of the Ministry related to occupational health and safety. The Ministry is responsible for:

- Creating, developing, and implementing policies and strategies respecting occupational health and safety

<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Plan for 2017-18*, p. 5.



- Preparing and maintaining data on occupationally-related injury and illness respecting both workers and the self-employed
- Promoting and conducting studies and research projects relating to the health and safety of workers
- Encouraging or conducting educational programs for promoting the health and safety of workers<sup>2</sup>

In 2016-17, the Ministry's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) division spent almost \$8 million on projects including education, training, inspections, investigations, and enforcement of workplace safety standards (2017-18: \$8.5 million budgeted).<sup>3</sup> As of February 2018, the Ministry employed 83 full-time equivalent positions including 58 occupational health and safety officers. The Ministry's OHS division offers programs and services for workers and employers to help ensure safer workplaces and improve the culture of safety in Saskatchewan.<sup>4</sup>

Under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, an employer is required to:

- Provide a safe and healthy workplace
- Ensure managers and supervisors are trained, supported and held accountable for fulfilling their workplace health and safety requirements as well as oversee their health and safety performance
- Ensure workers have appropriate training, certification, and experience to do their jobs safely as well as provide medical/first aid facilities
- Establish and maintain an effective health and safety program in co-operation with internal occupational health committees as well as other external parties, and keep minutes of meetings on file and readily available

## 2.2 The Costs of Workplace Injury Rates

Fatalities cause irreversible and immeasurable harm to those affected. Injuries result in time loss that affects the injured workers, their employers, and is a cost to society.

For example, in 2016 in Saskatchewan, there were 31 fatality claims accepted<sup>5</sup> and 7,813 time loss claims.<sup>6</sup> On average, in 2016, 43 days were lost for these time loss claims.

As shown in **Figure 1**, the average duration of time loss (in days) has fluctuated between 2012 to 2016 from almost 39 days in 2012 to just over 43 days in 2016. Over this same period, the average duration of time loss has increased overall. Also, over the same period, as shown in **Figure 2**, the number of fatalities has decreased from 56 in 2012 to 31 in 2016.

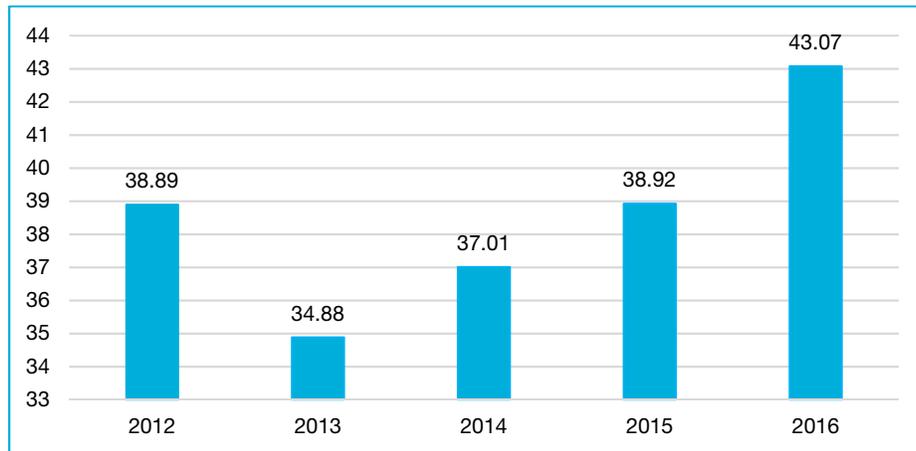
<sup>2</sup> *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, s. 3-2(2).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.finance.gov.sk.ca/budget17-18/2017-2018Estimates.pdf> (1 June 2017).

<sup>4</sup> *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17*, p. 3.

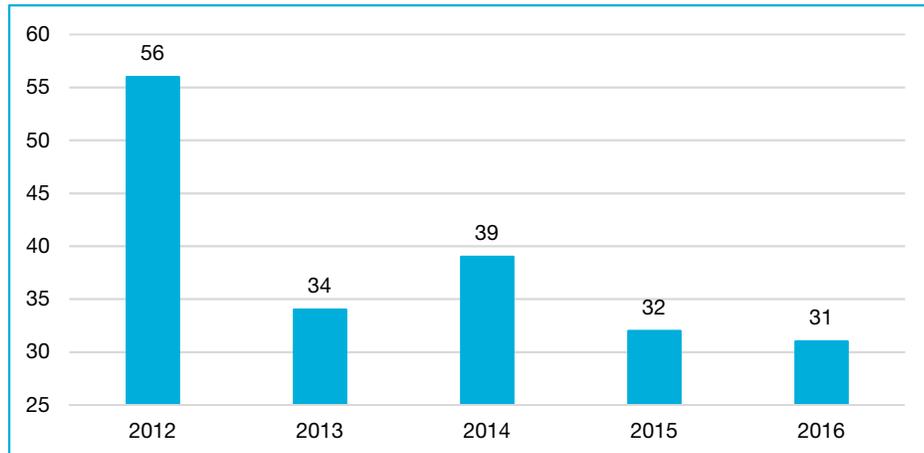
<sup>5</sup> Claim accepted under *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2013*.

<sup>6</sup> *Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board Statistical Supplement 2016*, p. 4.

**Figure 1—Average Number of Days of Claim Duration<sup>A</sup> from 2012 to 2016**

Source: Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board Statistical Supplement 2016.

<sup>A</sup> Average claim duration in days equals total days lost divided by claims with time lost.

**Figure 2—Workplace Fatality Claims Accepted<sup>A</sup> from 2012 to 2016**

Source: Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board Statistical Supplement 2016.

<sup>A</sup> Accepted claim where worker died due to workplace injury. Total includes claims reported prior to the year but accepted by WCB in the year.

The Ministry initiated its targeted intervention strategy to reduce the rate of workplace injuries in 2013.<sup>7</sup> In 2012, Saskatchewan's total workplace injury rate was 8.65 per 100 full-time workers.

In its *2015-16 Annual Plan*, the Ministry set a goal to reduce provincial workplace injury rates by 50% by 2020—that is, reduce total workplace injury rate to 4.32 per 100 full-time workers by 2020. At December 2016, Saskatchewan's total workplace injury rate was 5.55 per 100 full-time workers. As noted in its *2017-18 Annual Plan*, the Ministry continues to have this goal.<sup>8</sup>

Without the Ministry having effective processes to reduce workplace injuries, workplaces may continue to have unsafe practices, placing workers at risk. High workplace injury rates may negatively affect Saskatchewan's reputation as a place to work, as well as

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17, p. 5; Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Plan for 2012-13, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Plan for 2017-18, p. 5.



negatively affect Saskatchewan's economy through increased health/social costs. Lower workplace injury rates (along with lower total days lost) would reduce the cost to businesses through lower premiums for workers' compensation insurance.

## 3.0 AUDIT CONCLUSION

**We concluded that for the 15-month period ended November 30, 2017, the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety had, except in the following area, effective processes to implement strategies to reduce provincial workplace injury rates to 4.32 per 100 full-time workers by 2020.**

**The Ministry needs to issue summary offence tickets under occupational health and safety legislation consistent within its policy (within one calendar month from date of the workplace offence).**

**Figure 3—Audit Objective, Criteria, and Approach**

**Audit Objective:**

To assess the effectiveness of the Ministry's processes, for the 15-month period ended November 30, 2017, to implement strategies to reduce provincial workplace injury rates to 4.32 per 100 full-time workers by 2020.

**Audit Criteria:**

Processes to:

1. Identify strategies to reduce injury rates
  - 1.1 Identify root causes for injury rates
  - 1.2 Select strategies to address root causes
  - 1.3 Set expectations (i.e., incremental targets, action plans)
2. Support implementation of strategies to reduce injury rates
  - 2.1 Engage key stakeholders to support strategies (e.g., WCB, employers)
  - 2.2 Allocate resources for strategies (e.g., tools, training, support)
  - 2.3 Monitor implementation of strategies
3. Determine if strategies reduce injury rates
  - 2.1 Measure progress regularly
  - 2.2 Analyze successes and barriers
  - 2.3 Adjust strategies as required
  - 2.3 Keep key stakeholders informed of progress

**Audit Approach:**

To conduct this audit, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance* (CSAE 3001). To evaluate the Ministry's processes, we used the above criteria based on our related work, reviews of literature including reports of other auditors, and consultations with management. The Ministry's management agreed with the above criteria.

We examined the Ministry's relevant strategies, policies, and procedures. We observed a worksite inspection and tested a sample of priority employers, worksite inspections, and summary offence tickets.

## 4.0 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 Partnered with WCB on Prevention Strategy – WorkSafe

To reduce injury rates, the Ministry has identified Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) as a key stakeholder. It actively and collaboratively works with WCB on strategies to promote workplace health, safety, and prevention.

In 2002, the Ministry entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with WCB to partner in a prevention initiative called WorkSafe Saskatchewan (WorkSafe). In 2008, the MOU expanded to include further collaboration, such as setting targets for the reduction in the lost time injury rate and targeted inspections. See **Figure 4** for details on the mission of WorkSafe. This collaboration facilitates their mutual goal of reduced workplace injuries.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 4—WorkSafe Saskatchewan Mission**

To ensure the execution of an integrated provincial prevention strategy, WorkSafe will:

- Promote the continuing collaborative development of the partnership
- Promote health, safety, and prevention
- Harmonize the planning process
- Share and maximize available resources and information
- Engage all stakeholders from all sectors of our economy, in active participation
- Facilitate education and training
- Use standardized data, research, and analysis to focus the prevention effort

Source: *WorkSafe Saskatchewan 2015-2017 Strategic & Operational Plan*, p. 2.

The WorkSafe MOU requires regular collaboration of the Ministry and WCB on provincial strategies and initiatives. It creates a steering committee and working group made up of representatives from the Ministry and WCB. It requires the steering committee and working group to meet regularly.<sup>10</sup>

WorkSafe promotes collaborative strategies and sharing of resources. It maintains a website that includes information about its key initiatives. For example, each year, it issues awards to a best practice employer who builds safety into every task (Safe Employer Award), and to workers who go beyond the expectations of their position to make their workplace safer and increase awareness for others (Safe Worker Award).<sup>11</sup> It makes posters promoting workplace safety available free of charge. WorkSafe gives employers information on common workplace injuries, and how to prevent them. Also, through use of the University of Regina, it surveys workplaces on safety culture and publishes the results. These results provide employers with insight into their safety performance relative to their peers. The most recent report is dated June 2016.<sup>12</sup>

We found that the Ministry was an active participant and contributor to WorkSafe. It worked jointly with WCB on developing and implementing provincial strategies (e.g., the priority employer program) as the MOU expects.

<sup>9</sup> [www.worksafesask.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WSS-MOU.pdf](http://www.worksafesask.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/WSS-MOU.pdf) (14 February 2018).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, (14 February 2018).

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.worksafesask.ca/> (20 February 2018).

<sup>12</sup> [www.worksafesask.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SK-Leadership-Charter-Project\\_Final-Report\\_final-version.pdf](http://www.worksafesask.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SK-Leadership-Charter-Project_Final-Report_final-version.pdf) (20 February 2018).



## 4.2 Injury-rate Reduction Strategies Based on Data Analysis

The Ministry designed its injury-rate reduction strategies based on analysis of Saskatchewan statistical data about workplace injuries (evidence-based).

The Ministry obtains statistical injury data from WCB monthly and the University of Saskatchewan periodically. Data from WCB includes injury claim details, total injury rate, time-loss injury rate,<sup>13</sup> occupations, cause of injury, and nature of injury. The University studies farm injuries through its Saskatchewan Farm Injury Project. The purpose of this Project is to gain further understanding into the potential causes and consequences of farm injuries.<sup>14</sup>

The Ministry indicated that it does not receive certain detailed information on the injuries. For example, it does not receive detailed information about location within the facility or the employee's task at time of the injury. It recognizes that additional detail on the injuries may enable refined identification of injury root causes.

We found the data it received was robust and up-to-date, and comparable to that available in other jurisdictions.

We found that the Ministry regularly and systematically analyzed injury data. To analyze the data, the Ministry developed its own IT program (ProfileBuilder). It took steps to keep the data within this program complete and accurate.

Using this program, the Ministry identified common factors (root causes) of workplace injuries (e.g., occupations with higher injuries, most common type of injury). It considered injury rates by specific employer, industry class, industry group, and industry rate code. See **Figure 5** for examples of industry classifications. It used its routine analysis to inform its decisions about injury-rate reduction strategies and workplace inspections.

**Figure 5—Examples of Industry Classification**

Classification of Industries	Examples
Industry Class	Agriculture Building construction Transportation, warehousing
Industry Group	Light agricultural operations Residential construction Commercial air transportation
Industry Rate Code	Riding academies, stables Fence erection Water bombing

Source: Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board 2018 Assessment Rate Classification of Industries.

The Ministry's regular analysis of current statistical injury data allows it to make timely adjustments to strategies and effectively focus efforts.

<sup>13</sup> Time-loss injury rate refers to the number of lost time injuries that occurred in the workplace that resulted in an employee's inability to work the next full workday.

<sup>14</sup> [www.cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/skfarminjuryproject/index.html](http://www.cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/skfarminjuryproject/index.html) (23 February 2018).

### 4.3 Targeted Strategies Reduce Injury Rates

The Ministry identified several key strategies to reduce injury rates; it developed some of these strategies as part of its WorkSafe partnership. It uses them to target workplaces with high injury rates. It refers to these strategies as targeted interventions.

Its strategies include:

- Directly working with employers with high injury rates (the Priority Employer Program)
- Inspecting workplaces proactively and reactively
- Levying charges against employers with workplace offences
- Promoting the importance of reducing injury rates

Each year, the Ministry confirms its strategies to address its goal of reducing the provincial total injury rate during its strategic planning process. During planning, the Ministry also identifies risks to achieving its goals and adjusts its strategies to mitigate them. The Ministry identified incremental targets each year until 2020 to help it assess its progress towards its injury reduction target.

Various acts and regulations identify the Ministry's responsibilities and provide it with the authority to carry out its strategies to reduce workplace injuries. For example, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *The Summary Offences Procedures Regulations, 1991* give the Ministry the authority to inspect workplaces and levy charges against employers with workplace offences.

As shown in **Figure 6**, the Ministry's public annual plan sets out its overall strategies, related key actions, and annual target (i.e., to reduce total provincial injury rate to 5.1% at March 31, 2018).<sup>15</sup> The actual total provincial injury rate was 5.5% at March 31, 2017.<sup>16</sup>

**Figure 6—2017-18 Annual Plan for Reducing Workplace Injuries**

<p><u>Ministry Goal</u></p> <p>Reduce provincial total injury rate by 50 per cent by 2020.</p> <p><u>Strategy</u></p> <p>Expand the targeted intervention strategy to reduce workplace injuries. Expand evidence-based and sector-specific inspections. Continue <i>WorkSafe Saskatchewan</i> partnership to focus on injury rate reduction.</p> <p><u>Key Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to target larger employers with higher-than-average injury rates and expand to smaller employers with higher-than-average injury rates.</li> <li>- Continue to work with targeted employers whose injury rates have declined to ensure the reduction can be sustained.</li> <li>- Review and report on <i>WorkSafe Saskatchewan</i>'s detailed plan of initiatives and target deadlines.</li> </ul> <p><u>Performance Measures</u></p> <p>Total Injury Rate—Reduce the total provincial injury rate to 5.1 per cent at March 31, 2018.</p>
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Source: *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Plan for 2017-18*, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Plan for 2017-18*, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17*, p. 4.



## WorkSafe Priority Employer Program Targeting Employers with High Injury Rates

Since 2013, the Ministry effectively uses the Priority Employer Program to target certain employers with high injury rates, and works with them directly to reduce their injury rates. The priority employer program is part of the WorkSafe Saskatchewan partnership between the Ministry and WCB.

The Ministry and WCB maintain a manual for the Program. We found the manual was up-to-date and understandable. It clearly sets out the Program's purpose, and provides detail on delivering the program (including who is responsible for what, key metrics [e.g., compliance to applicable occupational health and safety legislation], and tools [e.g., compliance matrix]).

The manual describes each of the Program's three phases and objectives for each phase:

- Phase 1 – Regulatory Compliance and Injury Reduction is to ensure compliance with occupational health and safety legislation, and reduce workplace injuries and incidents; Ministry staff are primarily responsible for interventions in this phase
- Phase 2 – Improvement in the Employer's Safety Management System (SMS) is to see improvement in the employer's processes to measure and track their safety efforts and performance; WCB staff are primarily responsible for the interventions in this phase
- Phase 3 – Sustainability of the Employer's SMS is to review an employer's statistics and ensure items on the employer's action plan continue to be implemented; WCB staff are primarily responsible for the monitoring

Each employer is typically in the Program between 36 and 48 months.

The Ministry identifies employers with high injury rates using a standard definition of priority employers and through analysis of the up-to-date injury data. WorkSafe defines priority employers as those with injury rates above the provincial average, the industry average, or with over 30 injury claims.

Once identified, the Ministry assigns each employer to an occupational health officer. It provides its officers with training in-house. We found this training focused on the technical knowledge needed to do occupational health and safety investigations and inspections.

Officers, using WCB data, analyze the workplace history of assigned employers. This includes analyzing the injury rate history for the past five years against the related industry and provincial rates, and the most common types and causes of injuries and occupations affected. Officers use this analysis to focus their intervention efforts on common injuries.

Officers then systematically inspect assigned worksites using a compliance matrix before including the employer in the Priority Employer Program. The matrix helps the officer measure an employer's compliance with applicable regulations based on the officer's on-worksites observations.

The Ministry uses the results of inspections to decide whether to include the employer in the Program. About annually, the Ministry identifies new potential priority employers. At

that time, the Ministry compiles the officers' recommendations for all the new priority employers and suggested next steps (e.g., continue to complete inspections). If it decides to include the employer in the Program, it informs the employer of its decision in writing. At February 2018, there were over 200 priority employers in the Program.

As part of the Priority Employer Program, the enrolled employer must create an Employer Health and Safety Improvement Plan. The Plan is to outline actions the employer will take to address the specific causes and types of injuries occurring in the workplace.

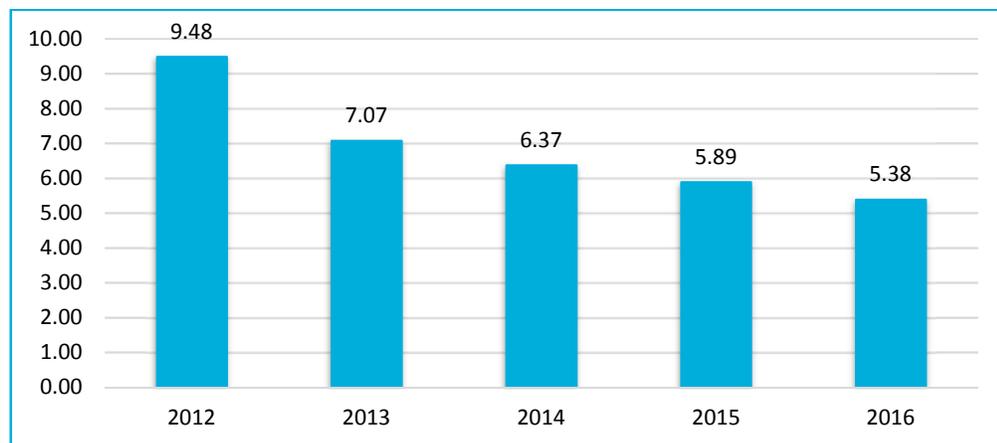
For each priority employer, the Ministry completes a minimum of three worksite inspections, continues to assess the employer using the compliance matrix, and monitors progress in reducing injury claims.

The Ministry decides when a priority employer is ready to pass into the second phase of the Program. Employers must pass the compliance matrix assessment, and have reduced injury claims by 25%. The Ministry advises the employer and WCB, in writing, of employers ready for the second phase.

Our testing of six priority employers found that the Ministry followed its established process for all of them.

Statistics on injury rates suggest that the Program is helping reduce the rate of workplace injuries at priority employers. As shown in **Figure 7**, the total injury rates of all priority employers declined from 9.48% in 2012 to 5.38% in 2016. Also, from 2012 to 2015, the workplace injury rates for 24 priority employers with the highest injury rates across the province was roughly double that of the Saskatchewan average. During that period, the injury rates of those 24 priority employers declined from 20.22% in 2012 to 12.23% in 2015.<sup>17, 18</sup>

**Figure 7—Total Injury Rate Per 100 Full-Time Workers in Saskatchewan for All Priority Employers<sup>A, B</sup>**



Source: *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17*, p. 5.

<sup>A</sup> Annual injury rate is for January 1 to December 31

<sup>B</sup> The 2017 injury rate for priority employers was not available at February 20, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> 2016 information for these priority employers is not available.

<sup>18</sup> *Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Plan for 2015-16*, p. 5.



## Worksite Inspections Strategy Includes Proactive and Reactive Inspections

Since 2013, the Ministry uses worksite inspections to identify worksites that present unsafe working conditions and assess their compliance with *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996*.

The Ministry selects employers for inspection in two different ways—directed inspections and occupational health officer-initiated inspections.

- For directed inspections, similar to the WorkSafe Employer Priority Program, the Ministry takes a targeted approach. It identifies specific employers and industry classifications with high injury rates through analysis of the injury data. It assigns each employer to an occupational health officer.
- For officer-initiated inspections, the Ministry does unplanned worksite inspections both reactively and proactively. It reactively inspects in response to a public concern or an accident. It proactively inspects when an occupational health officer completes a directed inspection in close proximity to another employer.

Each year, the Ministry sets its annual targets for the number of worksite inspections, and, each month, it monitors its progress. In 2016-17, OHS performed about 3,832 worksite inspections (2015-16: 2,491 inspections; 2014-15: about 1,220 inspections).<sup>19</sup> It expects to complete about 4,200 inspections in 2017-18 (comprised of about 1,800 directed, 700 priority employer, 1,100 reactive, and 600 proactive).

The Ministry provides staff with well-defined policies and procedures about types of interventions, inspecting, investigating, collecting evidence, and issuing notices or stop work orders. We found that these policies clearly assigned responsibility.

Occupational health officers use standard checklists specific to the industry (e.g., residential construction) to gather data during worksite inspections. The checklists list regulations from *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996* specific to the industry for the officer to consider and assess compliance with during the inspection.

When the occupational health officer identifies an employer is contravening relevant laws, the officer can require the employer to complete remedial action within a specified period (i.e., require a compliance undertaking) or stop work (i.e., issue a notice of contravention or stop work order).<sup>20</sup> In 2016-17, the Ministry issued 1,064 notices of contravention (2015-16: 596), 328 compliance undertakings (2015-16: 372), and 185 stop work orders (2015-16: 57).<sup>21</sup>

Our testing of 30 inspections found that, in all cases, the Ministry followed its established process for inspections, including giving employers the inspection results report.

## Faster Issuance of Summary Offence Tickets Needed

The Ministry uses summary offence tickets<sup>22</sup> as an additional enforcement strategy to prevent future injury. However, it does not consistently issue them as fast as its policy

<sup>19</sup> Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> The Saskatchewan Employment Act.

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17, p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> A summary offence ticket is a penalty for an employer, contractor, or employee who contravenes a particular provision of legislation. A summary offence is not a criminal charge.

expects. The Ministry's policy is to issue tickets within one calendar month of the date of the offence.<sup>23</sup>

Under *The Summary Offences Procedures Regulations, 1991*, the Ministry has the authority to penalize employers for contravening *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. The Ministry may issue a summary offence ticket before or after an injury occurs. Fines range from \$250 to \$1,000 depending on the offence.<sup>24</sup> The Ministry can issue summary offence tickets for 12 offences listed in the Regulations. For example for:

- Failing to supply approved personal protective equipment
- Failing to ensure that workers use personal protective equipment
- Failing to ensure that workers use a fall protection system where a worker may fall three metres or more
- Failing to ensure that any opening or hole is covered and clearly marked or otherwise protected

Under *The Summary Offences Procedure Regulations, 1991*, the Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety can appoint occupational health officers as peace officers with authority to issue summary offence tickets for offences under occupational health and safety legislation. At November 2017, six occupational health officers were appointed as peace officers.

The Ministry maintains policies and procedures that detail the circumstances under which an officer designated as a peace officer can issue a summary offence ticket. For example, it requires officers to consider the use of other enforcement tools (e.g., compliance undertakings, notices of contravention) before issuing a summary offence ticket.

Also, the policy requires officers to issue summary offence tickets within one calendar month from the date of the offence. This is quicker than the requirement under *The Summary Offences Procedure Act, 1990*. The Act requires issuance of summary offence tickets within six months of the offence.

As of February 2018, the Ministry issued 24 summary offence tickets in 2017-18 (2016-17: 34) and levied fines totalling \$20,050 (2016-17: \$24,450). Also in 2016-17, the Attorney General used the Ministry's work to initiate 38 prosecutions related to workplace safety with 25 prosecution convictions resulting in \$870,996 in fines.

For ten summary offence tickets issued between September 1, 2016 and November 30, 2017 we tested, the Ministry issued all of them consistent with *The Summary Offences Procedure Act, 1990* and issued tickets within four calendar months. However, for three of ten tickets we tested, the Ministry did not issue them within one calendar month from the date of the offence as its policy requires.

Prompt issuance of summary offence tickets reinforces the importance to employers of addressing the identified violation. A summary offence ticket issued prior to an injury would assumedly have a higher likelihood of injury prevention.

<sup>23</sup> The Ministry updated its policy to 20 business days effective August 31, 2017 (i.e., one calendar month).

<sup>24</sup> [www.saskatchewan.ca/business/safety-in-the-workplace/enforcements-prosecutions-and-investigations/summary-offence-ticketing#step-1](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/safety-in-the-workplace/enforcements-prosecutions-and-investigations/summary-offence-ticketing#step-1) (20 February 2018).



1. We recommend that the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety issue its summary offence tickets under occupational health and safety legislation consistent with its policy.

## 4.4 Prevention and Reduction of Injuries Actively Promoted

The Ministry actively promotes the importance of reducing workplace injuries primarily through the WorkSafe partnership.

WorkSafe highlights industry-specific risks to employers (e.g., health care—back-related injuries and strains), tips and tools for employers, and access to training. WorkSafe also promotes the importance of reducing injury rates through speaking engagements (e.g., regional WorkSafe workshops)<sup>25</sup> and advertising (e.g., Mission Zero commercials, radio advertisements).

## 4.5 Strategies to Reduce Injury Rates Monitored

The Ministry regularly measures and reports both internally and to the public on its progress in reducing workplace injury rates.

Ministry staff meet monthly to review and discuss progress of priority employers, number of inspections completed, quarterly workplace injury rates, and other monthly statistics (e.g., number of stop work orders issued, training course participants). To engage its staff about its progress, the Ministry posts key statistics and workplace injury rates (e.g., provincial time loss injury rates) on a wall in its office. It updates this information quarterly.

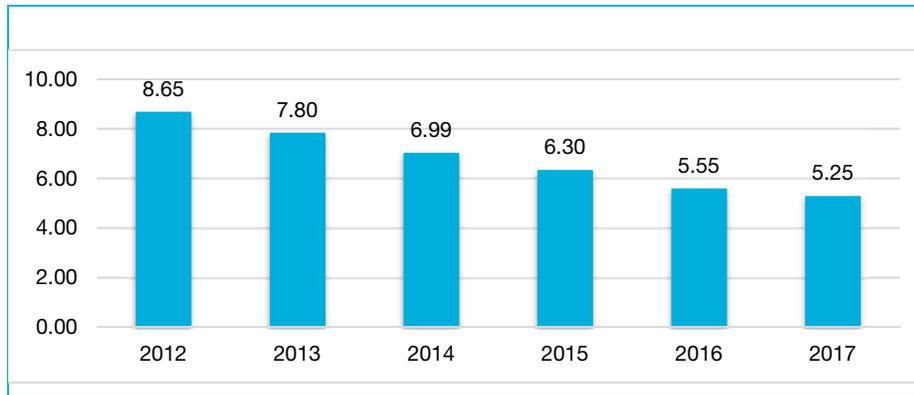
The Ministry gives monthly statistics to the Deputy Minister. This includes various information, such as information on priority employers, inspections, prosecutions, and public inquiries.

The Ministry surveys priority employers for their level of satisfaction with the Priority Employer Program on a quarterly basis. The survey identifies, for example, if the priority employers understand the expectations of the Program and if they are satisfied with the Program. Generally, the survey indicates positive results from the priority employers.

In the Ministry's annual report, the Ministry reports the progress made on reducing workplace injuries. The report includes a comparison of the actual provincial total annual injury rate to the annual target. It indicates that the total number of claims for priority employers and the total injury rate significantly decreased since the Ministry implemented targeted intervention (in 2013).

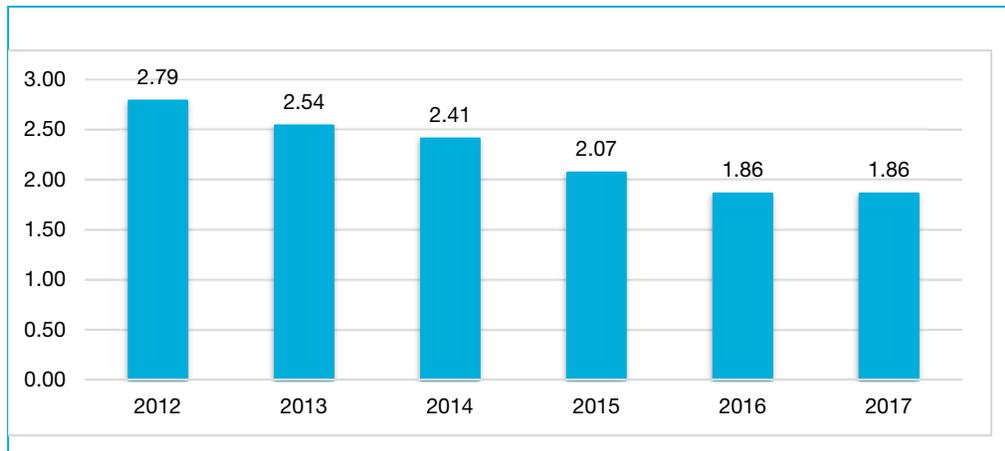
In addition, statistics on injury rates suggest that the Ministry's targeted strategy to reduce injury rates is making a difference. As shown in **Figure 8**, the provincial rate of workplace injuries has declined from 8.65% to 5.25% between 2012 and 2017. As well, as shown in **Figure 9**, over the same period, the provincial time-loss injury rate has declined from 2.79% to 1.86%.

<sup>25</sup> <http://worksafesask.ca/worksafe-regional-workshop/> (20 February 2018).

**Figure 8—Provincial Injury Rate Per 100 Full-Time Workers in Saskatchewan<sup>A</sup>**

Source: Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Annual Report for 2016-17, p. 5; [www.wcsask.com/saskatchewan-2017-total-workplace-injury-rate-declines-again/](http://www.wcsask.com/saskatchewan-2017-total-workplace-injury-rate-declines-again/) (26 February 2018).

<sup>A</sup> Annual injury rate is for January 1 to December 31

**Figure 9—Provincial Time Loss Injury Rate Per 100 Full-Time Workers in Saskatchewan<sup>A</sup>**

Source: Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board Annual Report for 2016, p. 3; <http://www.wcsask.com/saskatchewan-2017-total-workplace-injury-rate-declines-again/> (26 February 2018).

<sup>A</sup> Annual injury rate is for January 1 to December 31

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