



Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia

Occupational Health and Safety

Young Worker Blitz Week Survey

June 2001

Number of survey responses: 1,114

Survey Summary

Respondent Profile

- The distribution of survey respondents by WCB Prevention Region, in order of frequency, is as follows:
 - Vancouver Island South (20%)
 - Vancouver South (13%)
 - South Okanagan/Kootenay (11%)
 - Northern BC (10%)
 - Central Interior (9%)
 - Surrey/Langley/Abbotsford (8%)
 - Courtenay/Campbell River/Terrace (7%)
 - Coquitlam/Fraser Valley (5%)
 - Burnaby/New Westminster (5%)
 - Richmond/Delta (2%)
 - Note that 10% of surveys are uncoded for Region.
- 80% of the workers surveyed were 24 years of age or younger and 58% were male.
- Industries in which respondents worked most frequently were as follows: other (24%), forestry and forest products manufacturing (19%), retail (14%) and hospitality (12%).

Survey Highlights

- 56% of the workers surveyed had received workplace health and safety training at school. The workers' shop instructor (26%), CAPP coordinator (22%), or regular classroom teacher (20%) were the most common persons to have trained the workers. Of those workers who commented, 46% indicated that they found the training useful, while 45% indicated that the training increased their awareness of health and safety.
- 84% of workers surveyed had worked at a previous job. When asked whether they had received health and safety training at a previous job, 63% of respondents answered "yes" (N=960). Training consisted of a fairly even cross-section of approaches; however, safety training in the format of seminars is a variety to which the respondents have had the least amount of exposure (2%).
- 55% of workers surveyed would talk to their supervisor if they were concerned about a hazardous workplace situation, whereas 16% of them would speak to a more experienced co-worker. Respondents are least inclined to speak to a friend outside work (2%). More than half of survey respondents (54%) would most like to receive safety training from a supervisor.
- When asked the question "If you refuse to perform unsafe tasks or work in unsafe conditions, are you protected from being fired or punished by your employer?," 39% of survey respondents either do not think that they are protected (13%), or are unaware that such protection exists (26%).
- 27% of respondents felt that young workers (persons 24 years of age and younger) are more likely to be injured at work than older workers due to the element of inexperience.
- 46% of all workers surveyed felt that education/awareness about workplace health and safety is the most effective method of preventing workplace injuries.
- When asked to rate the safety-related behaviours/skills of a previous supervisor on a scale from one to five, where five is the most positive, survey respondents give the lowest rating to the encouragement of safe work behaviour (5=11%). A supervisor's tendency to praise safe work behaviour and keep workers informed of safety rules was also given low ratings by survey respondents (5=13%). On average, the ratings vary as follows:
1 = 180 (18%), **2** = 238 (21%), **3** = 275 (27%), **4** = 160 (18%), and **5** = 151 (16%).

1a. Did you receive any safety training at school?

| | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| Yes | 627 | (56%) |
| No | 446 | (40%) |
| N/A | 26 | (3%) |
| No Response | 15 | (1%) |
| TOTAL | 1,114 | |

If yes, training received from:

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| CAPP Coordinator | 202 | (22%) |
| Shop Instructor | 238 | (26%) |
| Arts Instructor | 30 | (3%) |
| WCB Officer | 79 | (9%) |
| Trades Instructor | 129 | (14%) |
| Regular Classroom Teacher | 181 | (20%) |
| Technical Skill instructor | 59 | (6%) |
| TOTAL | 918 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

1b. Any comments regarding the above in terms of its usefulness?

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| Found the training useful | 370 | (46%) |
| Increased their awareness of health and safety | 361 | (45%) |
| Worker took specific courses | 39 | (5%) |
| Other | 34 | (4%) |
| TOTAL | 804 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

2. Is this your 1st paid job in the workforce? (if yes, skip to Question 5)

| | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| Yes | 151 | (14%) |
| No | 937 | (84%) |
| No Response | 26 | (2%) |
| TOTAL | 1,114 | |

3. Did you receive any safety training at any other previous job? (e.g. Of CAPP work experience)

| | | |
|-------|-----|-------|
| Yes | 606 | (63%) |
| No | 354 | (37%) |
| TOTAL | 960 | |

4. What kind of workplace safety orientation/training did you receive?

| | | |
|------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Emergency/accident simulations | 297 | (8%) |
| Fire safety/fire drill/fire extinguisher | 426 | (12%) |
| Location of emergency equipment | 508 | (14%) |
| General awareness seminar | 288 | (8%) |
| Video/book/pamphlet | 347 | (10%) |
| Other | 61 | (2%) |
| Food safety use | 308 | (9%) |
| First aid | 417 | (12%) |
| Safety procedures | 440 | (12%) |
| WHMIS training | 406 | (11%) |
| Seminar | 80 | (2%) |
| TOTAL | 3,578 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

5. Who would you speak to about a hazardous workplace situation?

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| A co-worker, your age | 150 | (9%) |
| Supervisor | 960 | (55%) |
| A parent | 82 | (4%) |
| No one | 8 | (1%) |
| Other | 74 | (4%) |
| A more experienced co-worker | 281 | (16%) |
| The WCB | 155 | (9%) |
| Friends, outside work | 41 | (2%) |
| TOTAL | 1,751 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

6. Who would you most like to receive safety training from?

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Somebody who performs the same tasks as me | 342 | (28%) |
| Somebody who once did the tasks I do but has been promoted to a different job | 228 | (18%) |
| Somebody who supervises the tasks I do | 671 | (54%) |
| TOTAL | 1,241 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

7. If you refuse to perform unsafe tasks or work in unsafe conditions, are you protected from being fired or punished by your employer?

| | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| Yes | 658 | (59%) |
| No | 142 | (13%) |
| Don't know | 290 | (26%) |
| No Response | 24 | (2%) |
| TOTAL | 1,114 | |

8. Why do you think young workers are injured on the job more often than older workers?

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Inexperience | 876 | (27%) |
| Lack of attention | 410 | (13%) |
| Invincible | 322 | (10%) |
| Other | 99 | (3%) |
| Lack of training | 558 | (17%) |
| Lack of awareness about hazards | 572 | (17%) |
| Don't follow safety procedures | 441 | (13%) |
| TOTAL | 3,278 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

9. Which one thing is the most effective in preventing occupational disease and injuries among young workers?

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Education and awareness about workplace health and safety | 610 | (47%) |
| Develop safer work procedures | 84 | (6%) |
| Involve workers in solving health and safety issues | 136 | (10%) |
| Training workers on safe work practices | 297 | (23%) |
| Stronger enforcement of workplace health and safety requirements | 137 | (10%) |
| Develop safer equipment | 48 | (4%) |
| TOTAL | 1,312 | |

10. When you think back to a previous job, what is the best piece of advice you received from a supervisor or co-worker about safety in your workplace?

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Ask questions | 699 | (24%) |
| Pay attention | 457 | (16%) |
| Follow safe work policy | 400 | (14%) |
| Other | 53 | (2%) |
| Do not rush | 469 | (16%) |
| Use equipment safely and properly | 423 | (15%) |
| Report safety hazards immediately | 362 | (13%) |
| TOTAL | 2,863 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

11. What would you like to have been told about workplace health and safety on the first day of your first job?

| | | |
|------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Where/what dangers to be aware of | 704 | (28%) |
| Location/use of safety equipment | 509 | (21%) |
| More information about health and safety | 220 | (9%) |
| Safety hazards of specific job/equipment | 517 | (21%) |
| Orientation/safety rules and procedures | 481 | (20%) |
| Other | 33 | (1%) |
| TOTAL | 2,464 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

12. If you could tell the WCB one thing that they could do to make work safer for young and new workers what would it be?

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Provide training/education/orientation | 660 | (33%) |
| Provide more workplace H & S education in school | 354 | (18%) |
| More information about health and safety | 350 | (18%) |
| Safety hazards of specific job/equipment | 204 | (10%) |
| Orientation/safety rules and procedures | 380 | (19%) |
| Other | 48 | (2%) |
| TOTAL | 1,996 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

13. What would convince you to work safer?

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|
| Experience an accident (either self or other) | 356 | (18%) |
| Knowledge of previous accident by worker | 473 | (23%) |
| Awareness of consequences to co-workers, self, and family | 344 | (17%) |
| Already convinced | 536 | (27%) |
| Reminders at workplace (i.e. posters) | 278 | (14%) |
| Other | 30 | (1%) |
| TOTAL | 2,017 | <i>multiple responses permitted.</i> |

14. Other Comments

Respondents were invited to provide written comments in this section of the survey. A total of 87 respondents did so, however 14 responses were excluded from the analysis below because they did not pertain to the topic of young worker safety. The respondents' comments (73), are divided among the six categories as follows:

(a) Specific Recommendations on How to Improve Safety in the Workplace (52%)

A majority of respondents suggested training as a means to prevent workplace accidents among youth.

Sample comments:

First day of a new job, we're thinking, "I want to impress my boss, my co-workers, etc." "How do I do this job," "I have to remember all this stuff, where the bathroom is," etc., etc. Safety training from some high-end supervisor can slide right over. Getting co-workers who are on the floor to train might help it sink in better, as long as they themselves have been properly trained. I find some of the largest hazards aren't from locking out or how to operate things, it's the small stuff like "don't rush," "don't walk on this," and general awareness and familiarity with the area. That's why I strongly encourage peers to help each other. Supervisors also need to presence and check in once in a while. Safe behaviour, when observed, should be praised. Unsafe work habits should be corrected, but don't criticize a new worker for inexperience; show them the right way.

I think it is important to involve workers as much as possible regarding safety issues so that they understand how it directly affects them. If not, they may just see it as a rule and follow it because they are told to, not because they understand the importance of it.

(b) General Comments (15%)

Some respondents chose to make general comments, many of which referred to the 'common sense' of workplace safety.

Sample Comments:

Employers can only provide so much training to staff. All they can do is to try and sink the hazards into their minds. Workers know if they are being safe or not.

Working safe is mainly common sense.

(c) Comments About Survey (9%)

Some respondents expressed an opinion about the survey. Almost all indicated that the survey needed improvement.

Sample Comments:

Questions are very vague and optional answers too similar.

Questions are very vague; some are redundant, this quiz needs to be worded much easier.

(d) Positive Comments about Workplace Safety Committees/Safety Training Programs (6%)

Several respondents (9) made positive comments about safety programs, whether in concept, or in relationship to ones that they were enrolled in as employees.

Sample Comments:

Any and all education about Health and Safety at the workplace is most important and should be a priority everywhere.

I think that the safety committee at Port Fish is doing everything they can to promote safe work habits at work. They have brought a lot to my attention in the last 5 seasons.

(e) Reasons for Workplace Accidents (6%)

Some respondents speculated on what they thought were the primary cause of accidents among young workers.

Sample Comments:

I believe most accidents are the employers fault-pushing employees to work harder and faster. Cutbacks in my job for example – I now do the job of three people, which means far more stress, my body is more apt to injury. Employers don't provide training or updating or equipment.

Keep an eye on private businessmen, for example farmers. They rush their workers to get the job done first. Safety is of little concern . . .

(f) Motivational and Educational Material to promote workplace safety (6%)

Four respondents specifically argued for the use of various forms of material to raise awareness about workplace safety issues.

Sample Comments:

I think you should show graphic pictures of accidents.

Videos and seminars of real life.

15. Think about a supervisor you had at a previous job. Do you agree or disagree that each of the following words or phrases described that person.

(1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree)

Totals

multiple responses permitted.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
|------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Praised safe work behaviour | 188 | 234 | 293 | 168 | 134 | 1017 |
| Encouraged safe behaviours | 257 | 255 | 222 | 166 | 116 | 1016 |
| Kept workers informed of safety rules | 197 | 206 | 301 | 174 | 132 | 1010 |
| Rewarded safe behaviour | 119 | 154 | 273 | 237 | 222 | 1005 |
| Involved workers in setting safety goals | 118 | 167 | 274 | 218 | 229 | 1006 |
| Discussed safety issues with others | 156 | 246 | 277 | 185 | 145 | 1009 |
| Updated safety rules | 161 | 187 | 284 | 209 | 165 | 1006 |
| Trained workers to be safe | 232 | 234 | 237 | 155 | 150 | 1008 |
| Enforced safety rules | 194 | 224 | 272 | 172 | 150 | 1012 |
| Acted on safety suggestions | 180 | 238 | 275 | 160 | 151 | 1004 |
| TOTAL | | | | | | 10,093 |

15. (cont.)

Percentages

multiple responses permitted.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
|------------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Praised safe work behaviour | 18% | 23% | 29% | 17% | 13% | |
| Encouraged safe behaviours | 25% | 25% | 22% | 16% | 11% | |
| Kept workers informed of safety rules | 20% | 20% | 30% | 17% | 13% | |
| Rewarded safe behaviour | 12% | 15% | 27% | 24% | 22% | |
| Involved workers in setting safety goals | 11% | 17% | 27% | 22% | 23% | |
| Discussed safety issues with others | 16% | 24% | 28% | 18% | 14% | |
| Updated safety rules | 16% | 19% | 28% | 21% | 16% | |
| Trained workers to be safe | 23% | 23% | 24% | 15% | 15% | |
| Enforced safety rules | 19% | 22% | 27% | 17% | 15% | |
| Acted on safety suggestions | 18% | 24% | 27% | 16% | 15% | |
| AVERAGE | 18% | 21% | 27% | 18% | 16% | 100% |

Age of worker interviewed.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| 15-19 years | 385 | (34%) |
| 20-24 years | 506 | (46%) |
| 25 years and over | 133 | (12%) |
| No Response | 90 | (8%) |
| TOTAL | 1,114 | |

Worker's gender.

| | | |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| Male | 645 | (58%) |
| Female | 346 | (31%) |
| No Response | 123 | (11%) |
| TOTAL | 1,114 | |

Industry.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Construction | 135 | (12%) |
| Forest Products Manufacturing | 168 | (15%) |
| Hospitality/restaurant | 95 | (9%) |
| Retail/supermarket | 62 | (5%) |
| Retail/other | 45 | (4%) |
| Other | 263 | (24%) |
| Forestry | 43 | (4%) |
| Health Care | 28 | (3%) |
| Hospitality/other | 38 | (3%) |
| Retail/general retail | 53 | (5%) |
| Manufacturing | 79 | (7%) |
| No Response | 105 | (9%) |
| TOTAL | 1,114 | |