



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Occupational Health & Safety Report End of Year 2008

Date:	February 9, 2009
To:	Employee & Labour Relations Committee
From:	City Manager
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report provides information on the status of the City's health and safety system, specifically on activities, priorities and performance during 2008. There was a 12.9% decrease in the number of lost time injuries (LTIs) relative to 2007. There was also a 6.7 % decrease in the number of recurrence injuries (REOs) and a 2.7% decrease in the number of medical aid injuries (MAs)

The City's injury frequency decreased from 9.19 to 7.98 in 2008.

The City set a 20% target for reduction in lost time injuries for the period 2004 to 2008. A number of large City divisions achieved the 20% reduction target, or greater. These included Children's Services, Fire Services, Solid Waste Management Services, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Emergency Medical Services and Facilities and Real Estate. A number of smaller divisions with typically lower injury rates also achieved the 20% reduction target. The City overall achieved a 14.1% reduction in lost time injuries and a 33.3 % reduction in recurrence injuries

The Ministry of Labour continued to visit City workplaces in 2008. There was a significant reduction in the number of Ministry of Labour (MOL) orders issued to the City as a result of those visits relative to 2007: 36 orders in 2008 compared to 75 orders in 2007.

Although there was a reduction in the number of lost time injuries in 2008, the overall Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) costs increased significantly as a result of firefighter cancer claims approved retroactively under the WSIB's presumptive legislation. Omitting fire fighter cancer claims, there was a reduction in the cost of injuries for 2008 relative to 2007.

Progress was made on all three key health and safety priority programs in 2008:
Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD) Prevention Policy implementation, Occupational Health Staff report for action - Occupational Health and Safety Report – End of year 2008

and Safety Continuous Improvement Target Zero initiative, and Health and Safety Audit Phase 2. Additional information is provided in this report.

The focus of the Ministry of Labour (MOL) for 2008 was the implementation of the Safe at Work Ontario strategy, reducing MSDs and addressing workplace violence. This is consistent with the priorities established by the City over the last two years.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. the Occupational Health & Safety Report, End of Year 2008, be forwarded to City Council.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications to this report beyond what have already been approved in the current year's budget.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of February 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 2005, City Council approved the recommendation of the Employee and Labour Relations Committee that staff report to Council quarterly on the functioning of the City's health and safety system. This report is for 2008, with particular focus on the 4th quarter.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Improved occupational health and safety performance and a strong health and safety culture continue to be key priorities for the City. This report on the City's health and safety performance is intended to enable the Mayor and Councillors to monitor the City's performance.

COMMENTS

Injury and Accident Statistics

Number of lost time and medical aid injuries and recurrences

Information regarding reported work-related injuries/illnesses by division, during 2008, is attached in Appendix A. Information is also provided for the same time period in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. Information provided includes:

- number of lost time injuries (LTIs) - injuries/illnesses that were approved by the WSIB or are awaiting WSIB adjudication, as the employee has lost time from work as a result of a reported workplace injury,
- number of recurrences - injuries/illnesses that were approved by the WSIB or are awaiting WSIB adjudication, as the employee has sought medical aid and/or has lost time as a result of a previously reported workplace injury/illness. No new incident has taken place, and
- number of medical aids - injuries/illnesses that were approved by the WSIB or are awaiting WSIB adjudication, as the employee has sought medical aid but not lost time from work as a result of a reported workplace injury.

The number of lost time injuries (LTIs) decreased by 12.9% relative to 2007. A decrease in the number of MSDs (14.6%), as well as a decrease in transportation accidents and injuries resulting from contacts with (struck by or against) objects and equipment were the most significant contributors to this overall decrease in LTIs.

The data highlights a number of areas where there have been significant changes in accident experience and associated costs from 2007 to 2008.

- Emergency Medical Services experienced a 14.8% decrease in LTIs, primarily related to a reduction in the number of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD), injuries caused by exposure to harmful substances or environments and injuries resulting from contact with objects and equipment.
- Facilities and Real Estate experienced a 16.2% decrease in LTIs, primarily related to a reduction in slips and falls.
- Fleet Services experienced a 31.6% decrease in LTIs, primarily due to reduction in injuries resulting from falls and contact with objects and equipment.
- Children's Services sustained a 25.3% decrease in LTIs, primarily due to a decrease in MSDs and a reduction in the number of employees who reported illness symptoms consistent with those that occurred during outbreaks of infectious diseases.
- Fire Services achieved a 17.9% reduction in LTIs. This is due largely to a reduction in MSDs.
- Long Term Care Homes and Services experienced a 9.6% decrease in LTIs, due primarily to a decrease in the numbers of falls, a reduction in the number of employees who reported illness symptoms consistent with those that occurred during outbreaks of infectious diseases in the Homes and a decrease in injuries as a result of contacts with objects and equipment.
- Shelter, Support and Housing Administration experienced a 47% decrease in LTIs. Reductions were noted in the number of falls, contact with objects and equipment, MSDs and assaults and violent acts. The most significant decrease was in cases of infectious disease.
- Solid Waste Management Services experienced a 11.2% decrease in LTIs, largely as a result of reduction in MSDs.
- Court Services experienced a decrease in the number of LTIs from 7 to 2, largely as a result of reduction in MSDs.
- Toronto Water experienced a 5.1% decrease in LTIs, largely as a result of reduction in MSDs. The gains achieved in MSD reduction were partially offset by an increase in slip and fall related injuries.

With Council's approval, the City adopted a measurable target of 20% reduction in lost time injuries for the 4-year period from 2004 to 2008. A number of large City divisions achieved a 20% or greater reduction in LTIs. These include Children's Services, Fire Services, Solid Waste Management Services, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Emergency Medical Services and Facilities and Real Estate. A number of smaller divisions with typically lower injury rates also achieved the 20% reduction. These include Toronto Building, Court Services, City Clerks, Policy, Planning Finance and Administration and Human Resources. Overall, the City achieved a 14.1% decrease in LTIs and a 33.3% reduction in REOs (which also typically incur lost time).

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency

LTI frequency represents the number of lost time injury events occurring per 200,000 hours worked (100 employee-years). Beginning in 2007, information with respect to time lost from work due to work-related injuries and productive hours worked by City employees was collected in a manner that enables reporting on LTI frequency. Utilization of the formula for LTI frequency will allow for:

- comparison of the performance of each City division relative to others,
- comparison of the performance of each City division with its own performance during previous years, and
- future benchmarking with other organizations that report on LTI frequency.

Frequency rates for divisions are presented in Appendix B. The City's LTI frequency during 2008 was 7.98, down from 9.19 in 2007. This number represents the number of LTIs that will occur per 100 employees in a year. It should be noted that even one LTI in a division with a small number of staff can result in a very high LTI frequency.

Injury and Accident Costs [Overall Costs (all Firm Numbers) and Invoiced New Firm Costs by Division]

Overall costs incurred under all City firm numbers during 2008 are reported in Appendix C. Comparable information is also provided for 2005, 2006 and 2007. Total costs for the year were \$34.1 million. This includes costs of \$13.7 million that continue from injuries sustained in pre-amalgamation municipalities as well as \$6.2 million related to retroactive cancer claims in firefighters: new claims are being filled and old claims are being re-opened by the WSIB under the presumptive legislation regarding occupational diseases in firefighters. These are costs borne today for workplaces of the past. Injury costs for the "current" Toronto decreased by \$562,159 from 2007.

The "WSIB Invoiced Costs" report identifies all WSIB invoiced costs for firm number 855935, by division. Appendix D(i) provides the information for divisions whose costs for 2008 were less than \$100,000. Appendix D(ii) provides the same information for divisions whose costs were greater than \$100,000. Information for 2005, 2006 and 2007 costs is also provided.

Critical Injuries

There were six critical injuries during the last quarter of 2008. In each case, a fracture of a wrist, knee, ankle or elbow was incurred. Five of these fractures resulted from falls, the sixth from stepping off a vehicle onto uneven pavement.

Additionally, one serious violent incident with the potential for serious adverse consequences occurred in Parks, Forestry and Recreation: one employee suffered a gunshot to the lower leg, one employee a broken toe and a third scrapes and bruises in an effort to get out of the way of gun shots.

In all cases, Divisions took corrective actions to reduce the risk of future incidents.

Ministry of Labour Orders

The MOL issued twenty-three orders to the City during the fourth quarter of 2008. Four of these orders related to the establishment and implementation of compliance plans for other orders issued.

The orders related to the following topics:

- Posting of legislatively-required health and safety materials
- Guardrails
- Access stairs/ladders
- Storage of materials
- Risk assessment/audits for workplace violence
- Material safety data sheets
- Machine guarding
- Maintenance of equipment
- Exit lights

All orders were distributed by Occupational Health and Safety Managers to all division heads and the unions to enable lessons learned to be broadly shared and applied.

There continued to be MOL visits throughout 2008, without orders being issued.

MSD Prevention Policy Implementation

Significant progress was made in 2008 in implementing the City's MSD Prevention policy. The focus of most divisions was on training of supervisors, joint health and safety committee members, occupational health and safety representatives and workers on the policy's requirements, recognition of MSD hazards and controls to eliminate these hazards. Although a link between the increased awareness as a result of these efforts and injury prevention cannot be definitively demonstrated, the 14.6% decrease in the number of MSDs in 2008 relative to 2007 suggests that the increased attention to MSD prevention is beneficial.

OH&S Continuous Improvement (CI): Target Zero

Divisions continued to actively pursue health and safety continuous improvement in 2008 by:

- Increasing the regularity of health and safety communications between supervisors and their employees ,
- Posting of health and safety information in workplaces,
- Enhancing the level of supervisory investigation of incidents and injuries, ensuring that corrective actions were identified and taken,
- Incorporating health and safety into the work plans and performance reviews of management/ supervisory staff,
- Placing health and safety as an agenda item at meetings, and

- Communicating lessons learned from accidents, injuries and MOL orders.

A number of divisions made significant progress in expanding on their specific health and safety continuous improvement programs.

- The scope of the joint OH&S CI project team in Solid Waste Management Services was expanded to include all districts in the division. Initial team building training was provided.
- Transportation Services established two new joint OH&S CI project teams in June 2008 to bring the “Targeting Zero Approach” to two new locations.
- The joint OH&S CI team at Central Garage had good success and Fleet Services created a second team at Ellesmere in March 2008. Creation of OH&S CI teams at two additional locations is underway.
- Toronto Water ‘s approach has been to roll out the “Targeting Zero Together” initiative ,beyond the original Ashbridges Bay OH&S CI project team to existing joint health and safety committees (JHSCs). A series of one day workshops was developed for all JHSC members (union & management), as well as OH&S staff, directors and managers (over 150 people). Consultants worked with Divisional management and staff, OH&S staff and union leaders to design and deliver six, one day, “Targeting Zero Together - Leadership Development” sessions in February and March 2008. A number of follow up actions resulted from the joint workshops.
- Both of the original joint OH&S CI teams that were established in EMS (with CUPE 416 and CUPE 79) continued to work on MSD reduction as their focus.
- The Toronto Fire/TPFFA local 3888 joint OH&S CI team continues to identify and work on projects to improve safety. This group’s work is viewed as an ongoing effort that is part of a larger joint continuous improvement process aimed at making the Toronto Fire the “Best Fire Service”.
- In an effort to enhance safety initiatives already underway in Long Term Care Homes & Services, a one day “Safety Culture Workshop” was designed and conducted in February 2008 for over 100 JHSC members from the 10 long-term care facilities the division operates.

Health and Safety Audit Phase 2

The process for conducting and reporting on Phase 2 of the Occupational Health and Safety Audit was endorsed by the OHSCC in 2008. Tools for conducting this audit phase were developed, auditors for divisions to be audited were identified and documentation review (e.g. injury history, joint health and safety committee minutes, MOL orders, etc) was initiated. Communication of the audit process with impacted divisions is now being completed. It is anticipated that inspections will be initiated by the end of the first quarter of 2009.

Ministry of Labour *Workplace Violence Prevention Consultation*

No new information has been received from the Ministry of Labour regarding the results of its Workplace Violence consultation. However, recent MOL visits to City workplaces have indicated an increased focus on workplace violence prevention. The Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario (OHSCO), comprised of representatives from the MOL, the WSIB, the Institute for Work and Health and the Health and Safety Associations, sets priorities and develops strategies for improving the occupational health and safety system

in Ontario. This group is currently finalizing resource materials to assist employers in Ontario in addressing workplace violence risks.

City occupational health and safety staff continue to monitor MOL and OHSCO activities with respect to workplace violence and will, through the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinating Committee, initiate any actions needed in response to MOL regulatory initiatives with respect to workplace violence.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A
Appendix B
Appendix C
Appendix D(i)
Appendix D(ii)