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October 8, 2015

Workers Compensation Law Changes – Bill 35

Today the provincial government tabled changes to the *Workers Compensation Act* to address recommendations made by two coroner juries, arising from the two sawmill explosions in 2012 which killed four workers and injured dozens more. The new legislation provides:

- Employers to immediately report any instance that involved a fire or explosion that had a potential for causing serious injury to a worker to WSBC.
- Joint Committee members have enhanced opportunities to participate during investigations.
- A WSBC officer may investigate and attempt to resolve a matter if a Joint Committee cannot reach agreement on a matter relating to the health or safety of workers at the workplace.
- The Joint Committee may advise the employer on proposed changes to the workplace, including significant proposed changes to equipment and machinery, or the work processes that may affect the health or safety of workers.
- The employer must, within 30 days of completing the investigation report, provide the Joint Committee or worker health and safety representative with a copy of the report, or if there are none, post it in the workplace.

The changes are unlikely to significantly impact CLR members' day to day operations, but members should take this opportunity to review their OH+S programs and processes to ensure that these elements will be addressed.

The legislation is not yet effective; members should anticipate these requirements to come into force early in the New Year.

Should you or any of your staff have any questions with respect to these changes or any other WSBC related issue, please contact Dave Earle at CLR (604-524-4911) without delay.