



Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada
Association des commissions des accidents du travail du Canada

100 YEARS
A COMMITMENT
TO WORKERS'
COMPENSATION
1913-2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Canada Celebrates 100 Years of Workers' Compensation Meredith Principles Remains Relevant a Century Later

Toronto – Workers' compensation organizations across the country are marking an important milestone in 2013. It's been 100 years since Sir William R. Meredith tabled his Workers' Compensation report to the Ontario Legislature. From this report emerged the Meredith Principles which are the tenets upon which the Canadian workers' compensation systems were built.

"The Meredith Principles are just as relevant in shaping Canadian workers' compensation now as when they were first introduced 100 years ago," says Cheryl Tucker, Executive Director of the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC). "The Meredith Principles promote no-fault insurance, security of benefits, collective liability, independent administration and exclusive jurisdiction."

The workers' compensation system is a historic compromise in which employers fund the system and compensate injured workers. In return, workers surrender their right to sue. "The workers' compensation system is an important safeguard for Canadian workers," says Tucker. "Today, when workers are injured, they receive treatments and benefits while they return to health and work. And employers are protected by a shared liability insurance model, with protection from lawsuits."

It's a stark contrast to what workers faced in the early 1900s when crowded factories and unsafe working conditions were common. When workers were injured, great economic strain was placed on families, who were often left impoverished if the main breadwinners were injured and unable to work. Injuries also impacted employers who were faced with the risks and uncertainty of litigation.

"The Canadian workers compensation system was a remedy, one that was badly needed at the time," explains Tucker.

One hundred years after the principles which are its foundation, the workers' compensation system remains an essential part of Canadian society. To learn more, visit <http://meredithcentennial.ca>.

The AWCBC, together with WorkSafeNB, will be hosting its annual learning symposium September 17-19, 2013 for AWCBC members. The theme is the past, present and future of workers' compensation.

The Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada (AWCBC) was founded in 1919 as a non-profit organization. The Association's mission is to drive a strong Canadian leadership role in providing the safest and healthiest workplaces in the world and a fair, affordable workers' compensation insurance system.

– 30 –

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Background Information

- The Meredith Principles were introduced in Ontario in 1913. Workers' compensation legislation came into effect in each province/territory at varying points in the years following.
- The workers' compensation system is significant within the Canadian economy, covering about 8 in 10 Canadian workers in an insurance model funded by Canada's employers.
- Workers' compensation organizations support about 250,000 workers annually through lost time injuries.
- Close to one million employers in Canada are covered by workers' compensation insurance.
- Many workers' compensation organizations are also involved in injury prevention.
- Workers' compensation organizations in Canada pay over \$5 billion annually for health care, vocational rehabilitation and loss of earnings benefits.
- To learn more, visit:
 - <http://meredithcentennial.ca>
 - www.awcbc.org