2023 COUNCIL REPORT - Workplace Safety

Introduction

The Winnipeg Public Service generates an Annual Report on workplace safety for Council[1]. Performance measures used in the report are Workers Compensation Board (WCB) Statistics and Lost Time Injury (LTI) Rates.

WCB statistics used in this report are provided to the City by the WCB with the exception of costs provided for this report by the City's Finance Department. All Lost Time Injury (LTI) metrics are generated internally using the organization's PeopleSoft System. All LTI metrics include those injuries that result in absence from work and have an accepted or pending WCB claim. These figures do not include time loss associated with long-term disability, or injury claims processed through Manitoba Public Insurance.

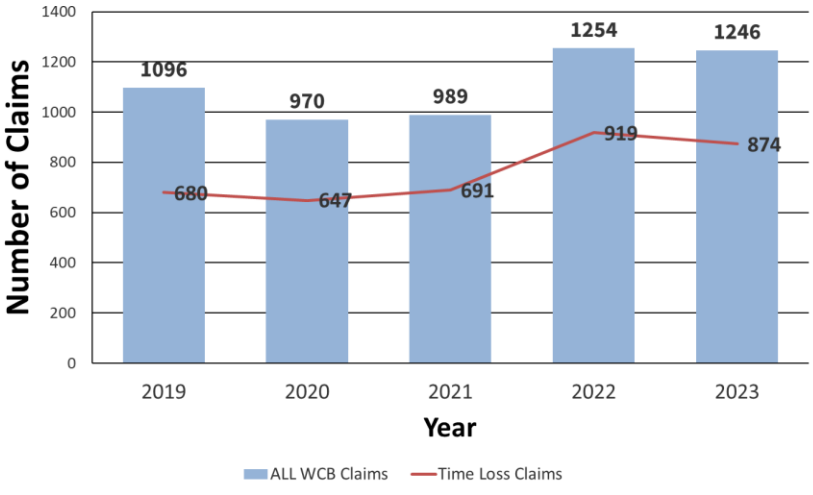
Performance Analysis

WCB CLAIMS

The total number of work-related injury and illness claims accepted by the WCB was 1246 in 2023. This represents a decrease of 1% from 2022 (1254).

The number of accepted WCB time loss claims in 2023 was 874, a decrease of 5% from 2022 (919).

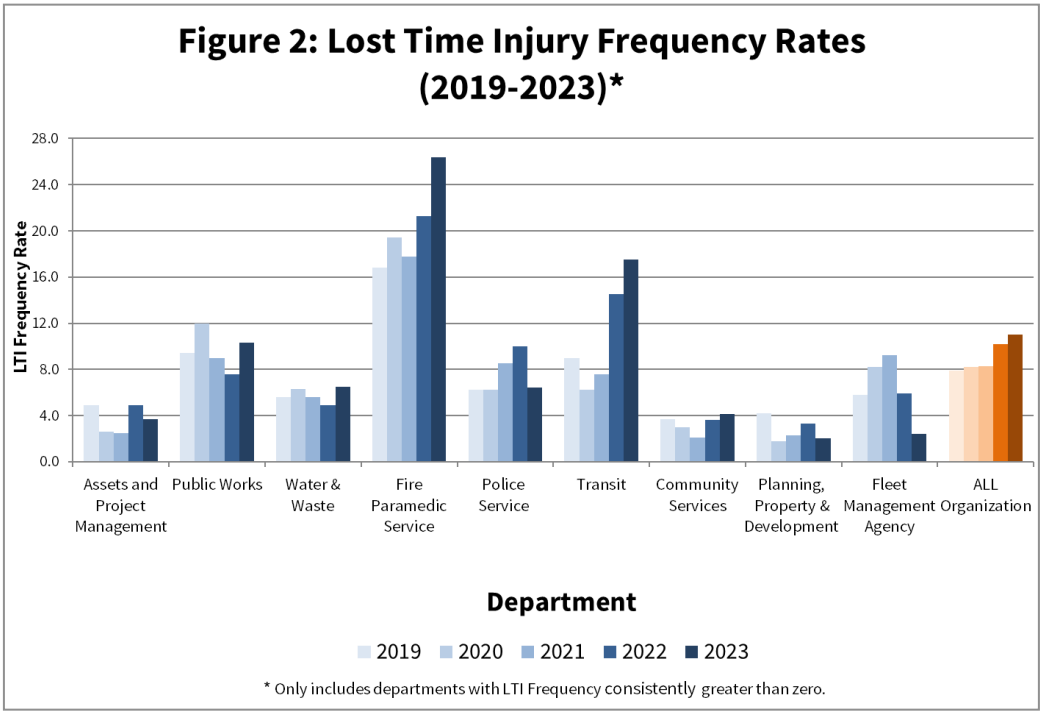
Figure 1: Organizational WCB Claims (2019-2023)



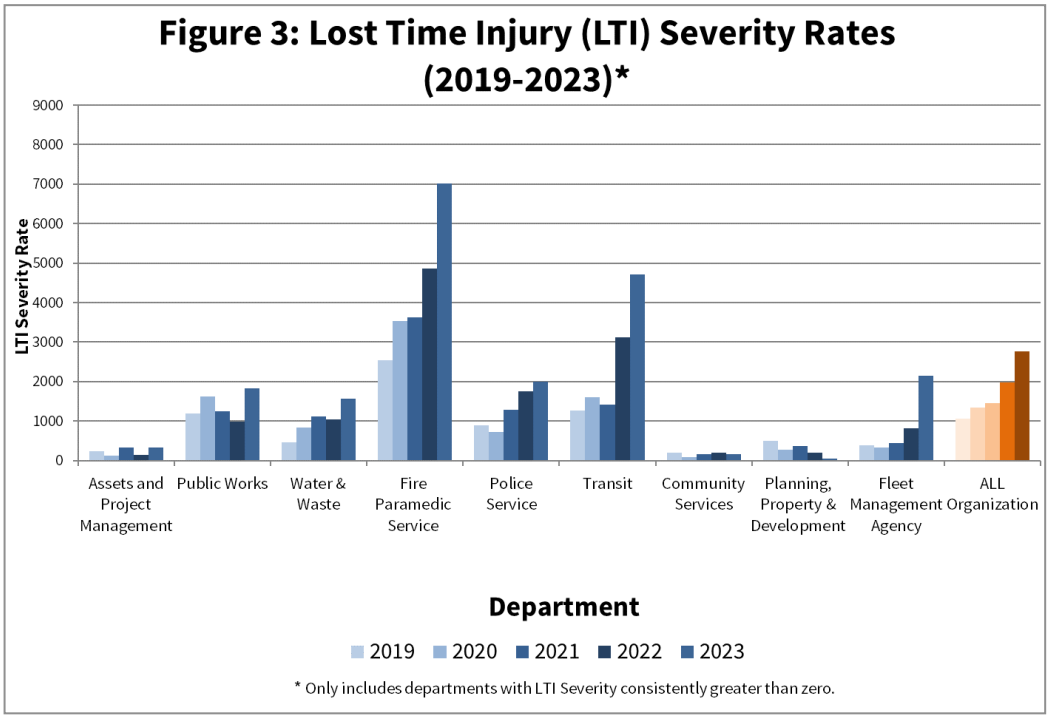
[1] In 2014, City Council received the *Workplace Safety Audit* dated November 2013 and adopted that an Annual Report be submitted to Council within 6 months of the previous year end (Council Minutes – September 24, 2014, Minute No. 752).

LOST TIME INJURY (LTI) RATES

LTI Frequency is the number of lost time injuries per 100 workers per year. The City's LTI Frequency was 11.0 in 2023; higher than year end 2022 (10.2).



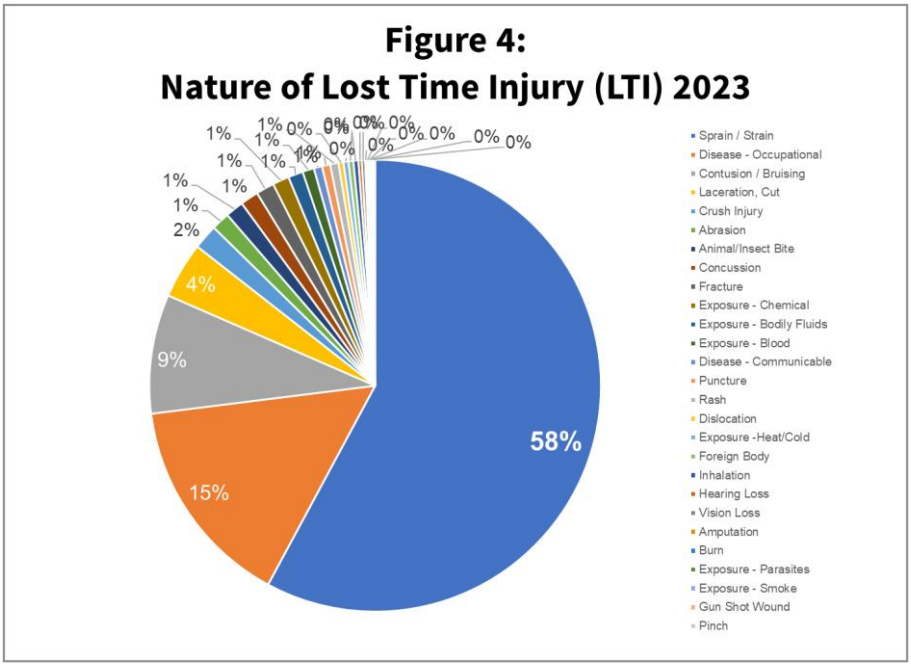
LTI Severity is measured as hours lost due to injury per 100 workers per year. It includes any hours lost in a given year regardless of the year of injury. Organizational LTI Severity was 2771 in 2023; higher than year end 2022 (1978).



NATURE OF LOST TIME INJURY

In addition to the LTI data, both at the organization level and the department level incidents are analyzed by the nature of injury. This information enables the City to focus efforts and monitor trends.

As Figure 4 illustrates the most predominant injury that led to time lost in 2023 was strains and sprains, accounting for 58% of all lost time injuries.

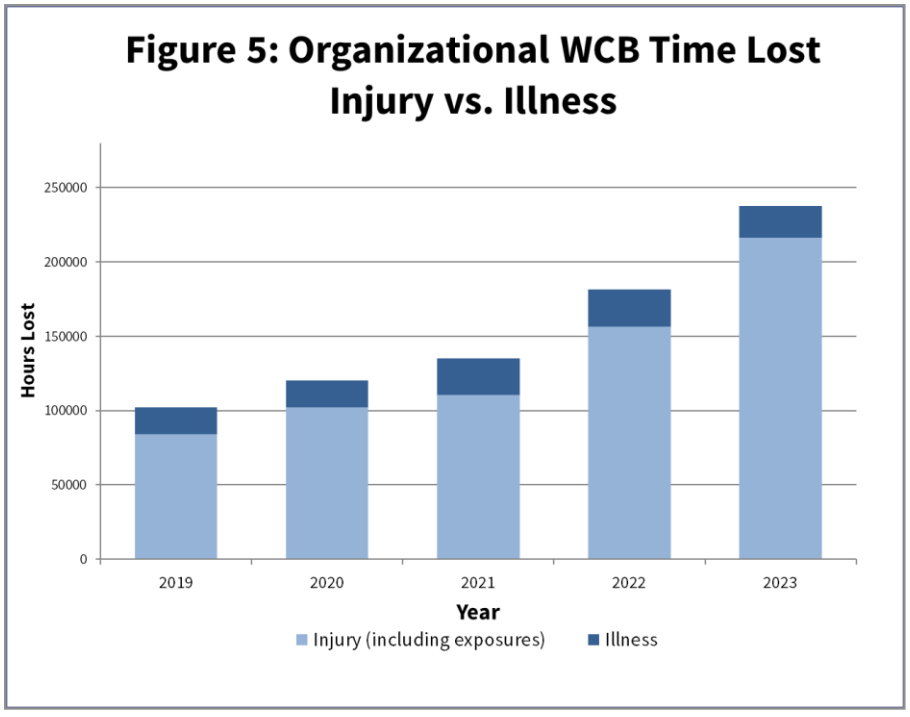


WCB TIME LOST – INJURY VS. ILLNESS

WCB time lost for incidents reported as workplace illness are compared to workplace injury (including exposures) in Figure 5.

WCB claims reported as workplace illness are not included in LTI rates because they did not result in physical injury and/or are chronic in nature.

WCB time lost associated claims reported as workplace illness in 2023 was less compared with previous year.



PSYCHOLOGICAL WCB CLAIMS

A psychological WCB claim is a claim for a psychological injury caused by a traumatic event occurring at or as a result of work. It can be caused by a chance event, a willful and intentional act by someone other than the worker or an event and/or condition related to the workers work or workplace.

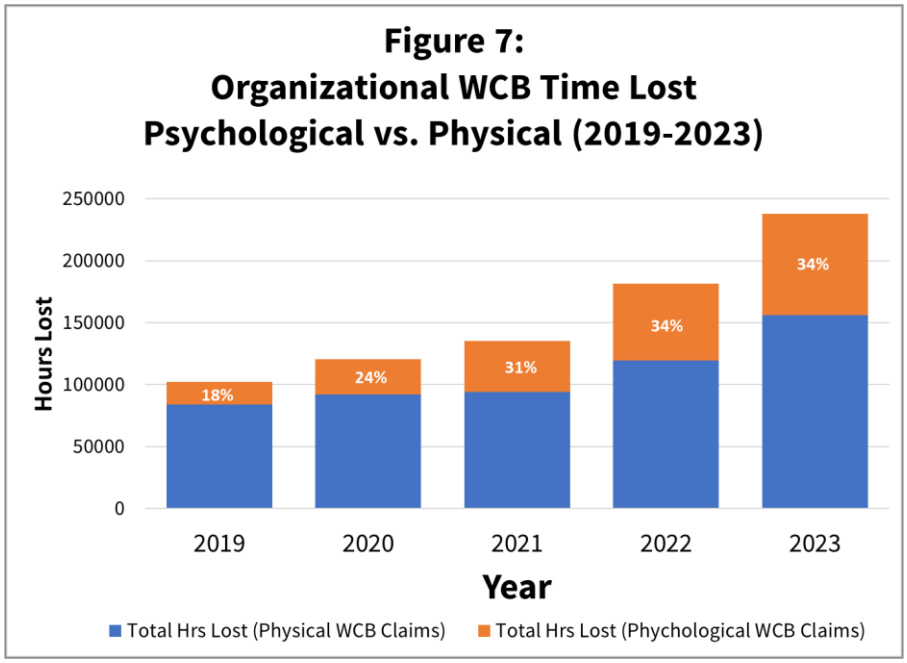
The number of psychological related claims accepted by the WCB in 2023 was 182, an increase of 31% from 2022 (139) (see Figure 6).

Psychological claims to the WCB can occur based on a number of factors, including exposure to violence, mental stress, burnout, and other critical incidents in the workplace.



WCB TIME LOST – PSYCHOLOGICAL vs. PHYSICAL

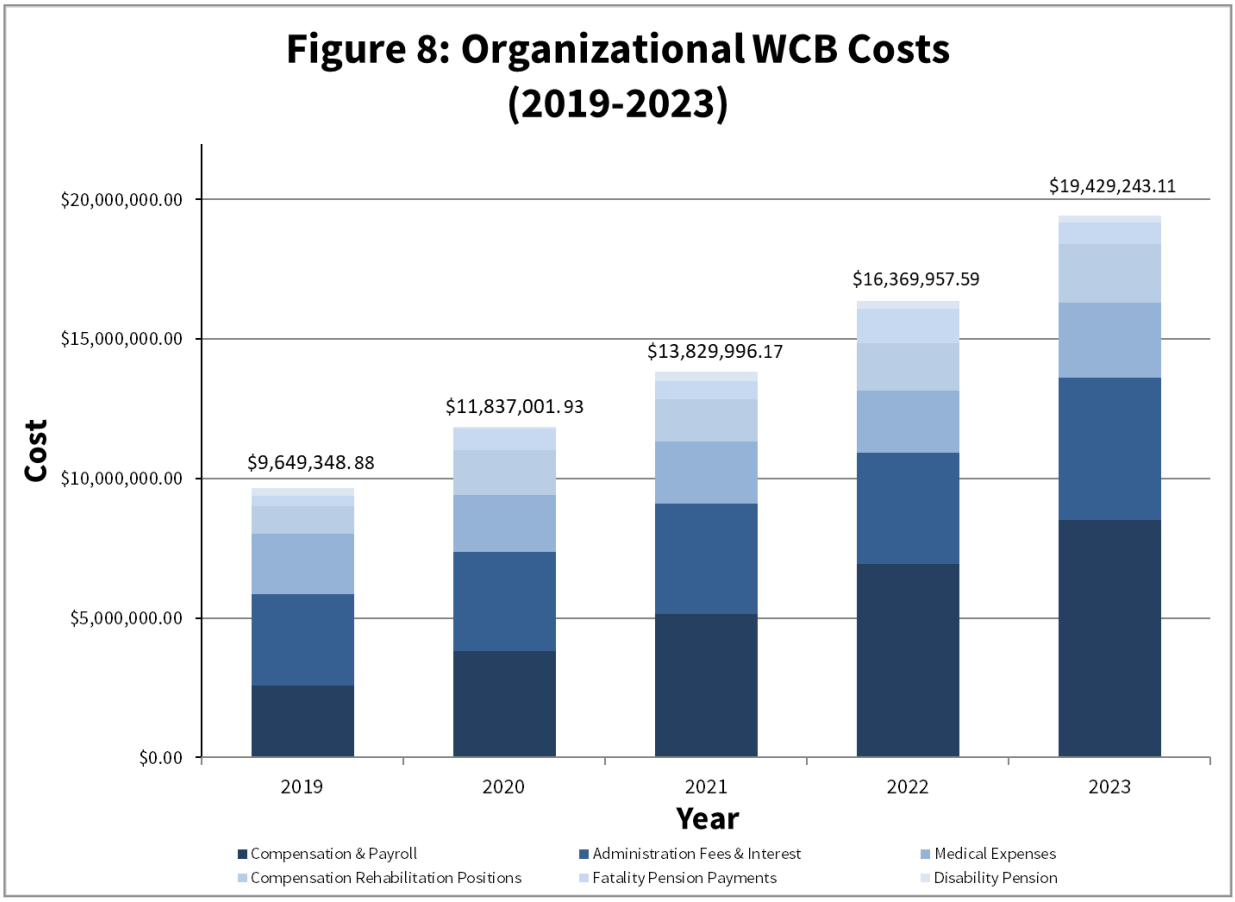
WCB time lost is broken down by psychological and physical related claims in Figure 7. Time lost associated with psychological WCB claims accounted for 34% of all WCB time lost in 2023. The same portion of WCB time lost was experienced in 2022.



WORKERS COMPENSATION COSTS

Workers Compensation Board (WCB) related costs; compensation for direct hours lost, rehabilitation and WCB claim administration fees are tracked by the Corporate Finance Department.

See Appendix A for definitions of WCB cost categories.



WCB related costs were $19.4 million in 2023; higher than in 2022 ($16.4 million). Almost half of claim costs resulted from prior year claims. Significant portion of costs in 2023 ($2.1 million ~ 11%) attributed to Compensation Rehabilitation Positions which represent hours spent in 'light duties' once employee has returned to work following a claim.

Improving Workplace Safety

The City of Winnipeg committed in April 2018 to becoming SAFE Work Certified. In 2023, the City achieved full certification making it the largest organization in Manitoba to be SAFE Work Certified. Certification through the SAFE Work program helps organizations reduce workplace injuries and illnesses as well as promote a culture of safety. The standard is built on three essential principles: leadership, hazard control, and worker participation. These principles are essential to reducing accidents, injuries, and occupational illness.

Moving forward, maintaining this achievement and level of certification is important to sustaining a healthy, safe workplace for all employees. So too is ensuring employees have access to resources necessary to support their mental health, wellness, and well-being.

In the Fall of 2021, the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) and Corporate Human Resource Services worked together to create the Behavioural Health Unit (BHU) in the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service. The BHU consists of 1 Behavioural Health Nurse and an Administrative Assistant. Throughout 2023, the BHU continued to work closely with a contracted Lead Clinical Psychologist and a team of Consulting and Clinical Service providers to provide mental health system navigation and supports including prompt access to psychological services for WFPS emergency responders and staff. The BHU also continues to work closely with the City of Winnipeg's Occupational Health Team, WFPS Health Resource Team and the WFPS Peer Support Group to provide comprehensive resources and support to all WFPS staff.

In April 2024 the City adopted *Administrative Standard HR-021 – Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* to help protect and promote employee mental health as well as address factors that affect mental health in the workplace. The City has implemented mental health self-serve resources, online learning modules, virtual training courses and a peer support toolkit.

The City continues to partner with SAFE Work Manitoba on various initiatives to improve workplace safety and has added resource in the area of business analytics to enhance injury prevention efforts.

Conclusions

- The total number of work-related injury and illness claims accepted by the WCB was 1246 in 2023. This represents a decrease of 1% from 2022 (1254). The number of accepted WCB time loss claims in 2023 was 874, a decrease of 5% from 2022 (919).

- Organizational Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency was 11.0 in 2023; higher than year end 2022 (10.2). Organizational LTI Severity was 2771 in 2023; higher than year end 2022 (1978).

- The majority of LTI in 2023 were strains/sprains (58%) most commonly caused by falls/slips/trips and overexertion.

- The number of psychological related claims accepted by the WCB in 2023 was 182, an increase of 31% from 2022. Time lost associated with psychological WCB claims accounted for 34% of all WCB time lost in 2023. Psychological claims to the WCB can occur based on a number of factors, including exposure to violence, mental stress, burnout, and other critical incidents in the workplace.

- WCB related costs were $19.4 million in 2023; higher than in 2022 ($16.4 million). Almost half of claim costs resulted from prior year claims. Significant portion of costs in 2023 ($2.1 million ~

11%) attributed to Compensation Rehabilitation Positions which represent hours spent in 'light duties' once employee has returned to work following a claim.

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APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

INJURY STATISTICS:

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency = (# of lost time injuries / total hours worked) x 200,000

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Severity = (hours lost due to LTI / total hours worked) x 200,000

The factor of 200,000 normalizes results to produce the average frequency or severity per 100 workers per year.

WORKERS COMPENSATION COST CATEGORIES:

Compensation and Payroll Costs – wage loss benefits paid to an injured employee while s/he is unable to work in their pre-injury job in whole or in part.

Administration Fees & Interest – portion of the WCB's operating costs/annual expense budget funded by the City of Winnipeg.

Medical Expenses – benefits for healthcare-related services and products used to aid an injured employee's recovery (e.g., healthcare treatment by attending doctors, chiropractors, physiotherapists, etc.).

Compensation Rehabilitation Positions – wages paid to employees who are being accommodated in rehabilitation positions, generally on a temporary and transitional basis, to support the employee's recovery and return to full, regular duties.

Fatality Pension Payments – Benefits for a surviving spouse or common-law partner and dependents of fatally injured employees.

Disability Pension – Compensation for a degree of permanent loss of function processed as a lump-sum benefit (claims after 1991) or a monthly payment (claims before 1992).