



North Carolina Industrial Commission

Annual Report FY 2008

(July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008)

North Carolina Industrial Commission

In 1929 the North Carolina General Assembly created the North Carolina Industrial Commission to serve as both an administrative and quasi-judicial agency. It has seven Commissioners, one of whom is designated as the Chair.

The North Carolina Industrial Commission is vested as a Court of exclusive and original jurisdiction by the General Assembly to adjudicate and administer the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. The Industrial Commission currently processes over 64,000 Workers' Compensation accidents and claims filed annually under the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act. This responsibility includes overseeing and providing for the trial of contested cases as well as administering non-contested cases. Workers who are injured by accident on the job, or contract an occupational disease receive disability and medical benefits as ordered by the Industrial Commission. Also, the Industrial Commission is a court of original jurisdiction for trying over 500 State Tort Claims annually under the North Carolina State Torts Claims Act.

The Industrial Commission generates about \$4.3 million annually from the large number of cases it adjudicates and administers. These funds offset the total Commission appropriation of \$7.75 million.

In carrying out its various responsibilities the Industrial Commission significantly impacts the citizenry of North Carolina. It further impacts the citizens of North Carolina through more than 5,000 Safety Education classes, training over 118,000 individuals. These classes are provided in an effort to promote safety and accident prevention as well as reduce the number of accidents and injuries in the industrial workplaces of the state of North Carolina.

Additionally, the General Assembly has mandated the Industrial Commission to provide an adjudicatory process for Childhood Vaccine Related Injury claims and Compensation to Persons Erroneously Convicted of Felonies. It acts as a Court of exclusive and final jurisdiction for death claims made by families of law enforcement officers, fire fighters, rescue squad workers and civil air patrol members arising under the Death Benefits Act. Each of these adjudicatory systems requires administration of contested and uncontested claims, review of agreements and supervision of payment of benefits.

Claims Administration Section

The Claims Administration Section processes forms regarding certain events that happen during the pendency of the claim. Claimants, employers, insurers and third party administrators submit forms regarding claims for compensation and medical treatment, the first report of injury, payment of compensation, claim denials, return to work, and the amount of money paid on a claim. It processes form agreements for payment of death benefits, permanent partial disability and reviews lump sum applications. In addition, it facilitates certain aspects of occupational disease cases, such as panel exams. It monitors forms compliance and generates reports regarding different aspects of a claim. It handles interim attorney fee requests and third party requests for documents. Finally, Claims Administration is responsible for the assignment of Industrial Commission file numbers, verifying Workers' Compensation insurance on new or pending claims and answering citizen questions about claim activity.

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Claims-Report of Injuries | *64,405 |
| Form 18s Received | 8,403 |
| Form 19s Received | 44,501 |
| Form 18 plus Form 19 Received | 11,016 |
| * Some but not all claims have both a Form 18 and Form 19 filed. | |
| Death Claims | 144 |
| Form 21s [Agreement for Compensation for Disability] | |
| Form 26s [Supplemental Agreement for Compensation] | |
| Form 21/26s Received | 8,684 |
| Amount Invoiced | \$1,091,375 |
| Agreements Approved | 8,731 |
| Occupational Disease Claims | |
| Form 18Bs [Claim for Benefits for Occupational Diseases] | 473 |
| Telephone Calls | |
| Telephone Calls in the Queue Answered | 40,306 |
| Telephone Calls Abandoned | 2,197 |

Deputy Commissioners Section

Workers' Compensation cases that are not settled at mediation or bypass mediation are docketed by the Deputy Commissioners Section for a formal hearing. In addition, cases under the State Tort Claims Act, administrative appeals from Orders of the Executive Secretary and contempt hearings, which are not generally subject to mediation, are docketed for hearing. Hearings are scheduled every month throughout the State in or near the county where the injury occurred. Hearings are held in a manner similar to the civil court system, whereby the record is reviewed by the Deputy Commissioner, evidence is presented, depositions may be taken, briefs may be submitted, witnesses appear, both sides can plead their case and cross examine the parties. Written Opinions and Awards in Workers' Compensation Cases, and Decisions and Orders in claims under the State Tort Claims Act are issued by the Deputy Commissioners. Some cases conclude with a Compromise Settlement Agreement, which must be reviewed by the Deputy Commissioner to insure that it is a fair outcome for the parties involved. The Deputy Commissioners Section reviews both emergency and expedited medical motions by administrative process, occasionally leading to formal hearings. The administrative proceedings are concluded by orders of the Commission.

This report measures Section production from the perspective of docket formulation and disposition for each Fiscal Year measured.

| ALL DEPUTY COMMISSIONERS | *FY 2004 - 2005 | | FY 2005 -2006 | | *FY 2006 -2007 | | *FY 2007 - 2008 | |
|---|-----------------|--------|---------------|--------|----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| # of Hearing Days: | 733 | | 806 | | 867 | | 858 | |
| Total Dockets: | 4,553 | | 5,400 | | 5,469 | | 5,738** | |
| # of Cases Heard: | 1,293 | 28.40% | 1,420 | 26.30% | 1,478 | 27.03% | 1,641 | 28.60% |
| #Cases Continued/Removed | 1,839 | 40.39% | 2,156 | 39.93% | 1,940 | 35.47% | 1,855 | 32.33% |
| # of Cases Dismissed With Prejudice: | 84 | 1.84% | 82 | 1.52% | 66 | 1.21% | 122 | 2.13% |
| # of Cases Dismissed Without Prejudice: | 101 | 2.22% | 149 | 2.76% | 181 | 3.31% | 137 | 2.39% |
| # of Cases Settled: | 1,236 | 27.15% | 1,482 | 27.44% | 1,641 | 30.01% | 1,835 | 31.98% |
| #Pre-Trial Hearings | + | + | 111 | 2.06% | 163 | 2.98% | 147 | 2.56% |

*The Deputy Commissioners Section did not have a full compliment of Deputy Commissioners in FY 2007 – 2008, FY 2006 – 2007 or FY 2004 – 2005.

**FY 2007-2008 does not include docketing statistics for State Prisoner Tort Claim motions hearings.

+ Pre-Trial Orders are issued in non-prisoner State Tort Claims litigation. Since January 2006, all non-prisoner State Tort Claims require special setting and are subject to a pre-trial hearing. These cases were not subject to a Pre-Trial Hearing in 2005.

Deputy Commissioners Section (continued)

The chart below records the number of decisions rendered, cases settled and Pre-Trial Orders issued for each Fiscal Year indicated.

| | FY 2007 -2008 | | FY 2006 -2007 | | FY 2005 -2006 | | FY 2004 -2005 | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--|---------------|--|---------------|--|---------------|--|
| | | | | | | | | |
| # of OA/DO's | 1,329 | | 1,395 | | 1,223 | | 1,256 | |
| # of CSAs | 2,094 | | 1,763 | | 1,577 | | 1,438 | |
| Pre-Trial Orders | 132 | | 143 | | 97 | | | |
| Total Cases Written/Settled | 3,555 | | 3,301 | | 2,897 | | 2,694 | |

OA [Opinion and Award]; DO [Decision and Order]
 CSA [Compromise Settlement Agreement]

The chart below details the number of hearing hours per month on a Fiscal Year basis for the years indicated.

| | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | April | May | June | Totals |
|------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| FY '07 - FY '08* | 253.25 | 346.25 | 333.45 | 359.75 | 328.25 | 177.25 | 318.00 | 383.50 | 336.00 | 357.20 | 344.50 | 331.45 | 3868.85 |
| FY '06 - FY '07 | 280.8 | 353 | 356.75 | 280.5 | 478.2 | 248 | 284.5 | 257.5 | 270.5 | 277.25 | 318.3 | 265 | 3670.3 |
| FY '05 - FY '06 | 263.25 | 321.5 | 199.5 | 362 | 347 | 326.5 | 355.75 | 312.75 | 358.25 | 331 | 304.25 | 361 | 3842.75 |
| FY '04 - FY '05 | 317.2 | 349.75 | 266 | 344.75 | 249.5 | 129.25 | 344.75 | 331.5 | 329.25 | 306 | 229.75 | 270 | 3467.7 |

* Does not include hours of hearing related to State Prisoner Tort Claim motion hearings under the State Tort Claim Act. Prior years include hours of hearings for this purpose.

Docket Section

Requests by parties for formal hearings in Workers' Compensation cases are filed with the Docket Section. The section ensures that all parties are aware of the filing and have the opportunity to respond. After the requests for hearing have been processed, generally the cases are referred to the Mediation Section. Requests for hearing under the Workers' Compensation expedited medical motion procedure are referred directly to the Deputy Commissioners' Section. The Docket Section processes replies to requests for hearing and updates attorney information for cases that are on the docket. It maintains the Commission's database by adding new attorneys and updating the mainframe with current attorney contact information.

Appeals from Orders of the Executive Secretary's Office to the Deputy Commissioner level and appeals from decisions of Deputy Commissioners to the Full Commission are filed with the Docket Section. All parties are notified of the appeal. For appeals to the Full Commission, the Docket Section orders an official transcript for the case and provides copies to the parties. The Docket Section prepares the case for review and places it on a calendar for hearing by a panel of three Commissioners.

Tort Claims against State departments and agencies and their employees are filed through the Docket Section. Upon receipt of a Tort Claim Affidavit, the section assigns a number to the claim and provides a copy to all parties. The Docket Section receives and distributes all mail for the Tort Claim until the case is referred to the Deputy Commissioners Section by Order of a Commissioner. The Docket Section also oversees the File Room.

| | |
|---|-------|
| Form 33s Received [Request Claim be Assigned for Hearing] | 8,262 |
| Form 33Rs Received [Response to Hearing Request] | 6,870 |
| Correspondence | 5,842 |
| Form 33s for Non-Insured Cases | 213 |
| Administrative Appeals to Deputy Commissioners | 522 |
| Tort Claims Filed | 573 |
| Requests for Hearing Tapes | 859 |
| Appeals to Full Commission | 722 |
| Cases Sent for Transcription | 643 |
| Transcripts Mailed to Parties | 604 |
| Cases Prepared for Full Commission Review | 519 |
| Pro Se Inmate Tort Appeals Heard Administratively | 103 |

Executive Secretary's Office

The Executive Secretary's Office handles the administrative review for the Industrial Commission. This office is responsible for the review, approval or disapproval of the vast majority of Compromise Settlement Agreements filed with the Industrial Commission. This section is responsible for the review, disposition of and issuing of Orders on Form 24 Applications to Terminate or Suspend Payment of Compensation. Telephone hearings are often held in regard to these applications. In addition, Orders are issued after review of Medical Motions, Administrative Motions, Third Party Settlements and a variety of other issues such as Requests for Attorney Withdrawal.

| | |
|--|--------|
| Orders on Compromise Settlement Agreements | 11,707 |
| Orders on Third Party Distributions | 497 |
| Orders/Disposition on Form 24 Applications [to Terminate or Suspend Payment of Compensation] | 1,446 |
| Orders on Medical Motions | 1,598 |
| Orders/Disposition on Administrative Motions by Executive Secretary | 5,108 |
| Total number of calls and voicemails answered by Executive Secretary's Assistant | 4,618 |
| Attorney Withdrawal Orders | 1,831 |
| Certified copies of files | 32 |

Fraud Investigation Section

The Fraud Investigation Section is composed of two units, the Non-Insured Unit and the Criminal Investigation Unit.

The Non-Insured Unit handles cases involving employers who are operating as non-insured employers in violation of N.C.G.S. § 97-93 and N.C.G.S. § 97-94. An employer is considered non-insured if the employer does not carry Workers' Compensation insurance, is not self-insured, or cannot cover the medical costs and compensation due to the injured worker. The Non-Insured Unit investigates referrals to determine whether or not an employer is in compliance. Once an investigation is complete and evidence is gathered, it is presented during Industrial Commission non-insured penalty hearings. A Penalty Hearing in a non-insured case is held simultaneously with the underlying Workers' Compensation case being heard. Civil penalties can be assessed covering the entire time-frame that the employer is not insured. The Non-Insured Unit also assists the Office of Attorney General with the enforcement and collection of penalty actions.

The Criminal Investigation Unit operates as a law enforcement agency and is responsible for conducting criminal investigations into cases of suspected Workers' Compensation fraud and violations related to Workers' Compensation claims involving employees, employers, insurers, health care providers, attorneys, and vocational rehabilitation providers. Fraud Investigators investigate all criminal complaints filed with the Industrial Commission regarding failure of employers to maintain Workers' Compensation insurance (N.C.G.S. §97-94(d)), fraud on the part of employees with regard to the collection or obtaining of Workers' Compensation benefits (N.C.G.S. §97-88.2), fraud on the part of employers with regard to payment or collection of Workers' Compensation premiums from employees' salaries (N.C.G.S. §97-21), medical payment fraud, and any other claims arising out of violations of Chapter 97 by employees or employers. The Fraud Criminal Investigation Unit works with Judicial Officials and other law enforcement agencies throughout the state to resolve the above investigations in criminal court.

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Non-Insured Cases Docketed | 424 |
| Fraud Cases Reported | 398 |
| Fraud Cases Pending | 97 |
| Fraud Cases Closed | 301 |
| Amount Received in Penalties | \$50,544.83 |

Information Specialists

Workers' Compensation Information Specialists Section

The N.C. Industrial Commission created a Workers' Compensation Information Specialists Area (formerly the Ombudsman Area) to assist claimants who are not represented by an attorney, employers, and other parties in protecting their rights. In addition, the Workers' Compensation Information Specialists Area serves as the information source for the Industrial Commission, and answers general questions pertaining to all aspects of the Workers' Compensation Act, Tort Claims Against State Departments and Agencies and other statutes under the jurisdiction of the Industrial Commission and related rules.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Number of Calls Answered (English) | 19,516 |
| Number of Calls answered (Spanish) | 2,152 |
| Total | 21,668 |
| Number of Calls Returned | 4,149 |
| Number of Walk-Ins Seen | 49 |
| Correspondence (letters and e-mails) Answered | 3,122 |

Information Technology Section

The Information Technology Section is responsible for the Technology Strategy for the Industrial Commission. The team consists of IT and Scanning staff. The team develops plans for technical and operational processes, software programs and upgrades as well as maintaining agency software applications, software licenses and onsite hardware. The staff is responsible for administering databases, data security and operation management functions. Providing training and support to the staff for computer issues and desktop applications is a top priority. The staff is responsible for the scanning, indexing, verification, storage and retrieval of the agency's documents. IT Staff consists of: one IT Manager, three Systems Analysts, one Website Administrator, four Scanners, one Project Manager from Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), and two Contractors.

Accomplishments

- ITS Consolidation was completed for the Industrial Commission – Feb 2008, email scheduled for Aug 2008.
- Encrypted laptops and standardized desktops according to ITS standards.
- Implemented NCID (in anticipation of Beacon, Exchange, Documentum, and case management system).
- Consolidation of Desktop Services: Desktop Services has been absorbed by ITS. Both Desktop Support technicians have been re-assigned to ITS. They are responsible for all PC hardware and related peripherals, including refreshing old hardware on a 4-year schedule. 2 Help Desk FTEs were transferred to ITS.
- All application support has been transferred to Industrial Commission FTEs.
- Consolidation of LAN and Server Infrastructure: Major upgrades were made to the Network hardware and the 6th floor Dobbs wiring closet. Data throughput increased nearly 40% and downtime has been reduced to less than 1%.
- The Web Server and FileMaker Pro database server are now hosted at ITS on vastly upgraded hardware.
- The old FileMaker server has been re-tasked for use as the Kofax Scanning Server.
- The DNS/DHCP server and File Server have both been upgraded.
- Anti-virus server has been moved to ITS and a distribution PC has been installed on-site – managed by ITS.
- Consolidation of E-Mail: GroupWise E-Mail is being replaced by Microsoft Exchange Mail to be hosted by ITS.
- Upgraded RightFax Service: The Fax server has been upgraded and the software has been installed for use with the upcoming E-Mail consolidation.
- The Chair approved the recommendation by the IT team to implement Documentum.
- The Interim Solution for EDMS by a 3rd party Vendor (Active Data Services, ADS) is being replaced by an in-house scanning and retrieval system using a web interface built by the NCIC IT Dept and a Documentum Repository hosted by ITS.
- NCIC IT team completed documentation of the functional scanning specifications and drafted the Documentum Web UI requirements, to replace the ADS Vault. Development is in progress.
- Server backups are functional and supported by ITS, offsite copies are maintained following ITS standards.

- The Industrial Commission successfully completed the load of all recovered and indexed documents into the vendor vault repository. Completed migration of last optical device onto temporary storage, data was loaded into the vendor vault repository.
- The legacy EDMS (UNIX and Jukebox) has been retired.
- IT has developed a process to transfer mainframe and electronic documents to the ADS Vault. This process will be moved forward to Documentum.
- An indexing program has been developed to recover the remaining un-indexed documents recovered from EDMS; indexing work is in progress.
- NCIC team is investigating case management solutions, engaging other NC agencies and vendors.
- The business process requirements narrative baseline has been published and the process to accept updates is ongoing.
- Recruitment of a Judicial Systems Analyst is being addressed.
- Staff conducted and documented a lessons learned session for the NCIC System recovery activities.
- Planned user acceptance testing for the in-house scanning project. In-house production scanning scheduled for July 30, 2008.
- Rolled out VPN enabling staff to access file share remotely.
- Survey was conducted to determine staff training requirements (MS Office/File Management) and an initial training session with OSP (MS Word) was performed.
- An interim solution for the Tracking Compliance for GS97-78 was implemented.

Information Technology Strategy

- NCIC Website to be replaced, a new project is planned to redesign and develop a new Website.
- Replace the Mainframe applications.
- Additional Basic PC and MS Office tools training required for NCIC staff. Planning to schedule courses this FY.
- Identified a need for a Judicial Systems Analyst for process re-engineering and implementation of a case management system.
- Identified that current IT staff is understaffed, estimated additional 2.50 FTEs required to address operations, security, and future projects. Planning is in progress to address the issue.

Planned IT initiatives:

- Tracking Compliance for GS97-78
- Contact database for Defendants
- Replace FileMaker Pro Mediation Program
- Replace Partial Permanent Disability (PPD)
- Replace and expand NCIC Searchable Databases
- Replace the Mainframe Codes
- Replace Live Link

| Desktop / Application / Mainframe Support | 2007 Totals | 2008 Totals |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Work Orders Completed prior to consolidation (TrackIt!) Jul 07-Feb 08 | 2,623 | 1,055 |
| ITS Help Desk (Remedy) Feb 08-Jul 08 | | 2,270 |
| | | Total 3325 |
| Website | | |
| Web Pages Created/Revised | 700 | 800 |
| Image Files | 13 | 150 |
| NCIC Databases updates: | | |
| Full Commission | 842 | 450 |
| Deputy Commissioners | 1,245 | 1,412 |
| Court Decisions | 94 | 114 |
| N.C. General Statutes/NCIC Rules | 9 | 7 |

| ITS Consolidation – Oct 2007 - Feb 2008 (email pending) | |
|--|---|
| Organization Change | 2 FTEs converted to ITS Help Desk Complete |
| PC technology refresh procurement/replacement | Complete |
| LAN Implementation | Complete |
| Service Desk Implementation | Complete |
| Server Implementation | Complete |
| Email Conversion | Scheduled for August 2008 |

Mediation Section

When a claim is contested the parties are generally referred to Mediation as a way of resolving a claim without a formal hearing. When an injured worker is not represented by an attorney the case usually bypasses mediation. The Mediation Section oversees this process by ruling on any motions related to the mediation process, and by insuring that the parties and mediators adhere to certain timelines, move the case forward, and submit the required forms and reports. While the mediators who serve in these cases do not work for the state, the mediators on the Industrial Commission's appointed list must complete a formal training process and be certified by the Dispute Resolution Commission.

Hearing Requests Filed 9267

Mediation

- Total number of cases referred to mediation 9610
- The Industrial Commission exceeded 9000 cases being referred to mediation for the 7th straight fiscal year.
- Settlement rates were:
 - 71% at mediation conferences and
 - 76.5% when settlements of cases at or before mediation conferences are included.

Medical Fees Section

The Medical Fees Section is responsible for processing bills for medical services provided as a result of a Workers' Compensation claim. Medical bills are reviewed and where necessary adjusted in accordance with the Industrial Commission's Medical Fee Schedule and then mailed to the insurance carrier or self-insurer handling the claim. It responds to medical inquires, resolves medical fee disputes and assists in the review and updates of the Medical Fee Schedule.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Bills Keyed | 30,881 |
| Inpatient Hospital | 10,037 |
| Physician | 18,834 |
| Miscellaneous, Dental & Chiropractic | 2,010 |
| Monthly Average | 2,573 |
| Weekly Average | 594 |
| Daily Average | 125 |
| Bill Sent to Advisory Committee | 0 |
| Bills Awaiting a Response | 0 |

Workers' Compensation Nurses Section

The Workers' Compensation Nurses are assigned to different geographic regions of the state and assist with Workers' Compensation cases that have highly complex medical components and/or where medical rehabilitation is not proceeding in a manner that is likely to lead to the injured worker being able to make the maximum recovery possible. Often there are communications issues or misunderstandings between the worker, medical provider and the carrier. The Workers' Compensation Nurses aim to assist the injured worker through the recovery phase following the injury, often working in conjunction with Rehabilitation Professionals coordinating activities and treatment plans. They provide in-service education to companies and professional groups on NCIC Rehabilitation Rules.

| | EXISTING 7/1/2007 | REFERRALS | CLOSURES | CURRENT 6/30/2008 | % |
|--|----------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. Back | 52 | 94 | 86 | 60 | 20 |
| 2. Burn Injuries | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| 3. Extremity Injuries | | | | | |
| A. One Upper Extremity | 83 | 36 | 27 | 92 | 31 |
| B. One Lower Extremity | 39 | 33 | 23 | 49 | 17 |
| C. Two or More Extremities | 1 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| TOTAL EXTREMITIES | 123 | 77 | 57 | 143 | 49 |
| 4. Head Injuries | 15 | 23 | 16 | 22 | 7 |
| 5. Other Injuries/Occupational Diseases | 2 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| 6. Paraplegia | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Quadriplegia | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Multi Defects | 29 | 74 | 44 | 59 | 20 |
| TOTALS | 225 | 279 | 209 | 295 | 100% |
| TOTAL CASES WORKED WITH DURING YEAR | | | | | 504 |

SOURCES OF

| <u>REFERRALS RECEIVED</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Interdepartmental | 109 |
| Hospitals and Doctors | 2 |
| Carriers | 6 |
| Attorneys | 150 |
| Rehabilitation Professionals | 1 |
| Injured Workers | 11 |
| Vocational. Rehabilitation & | |
| . Other state Agencies, etc. | 0 |
| TOTAL | 279 |

TOTAL REFERRALS

| <u>MADE</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--|---------------|
| Written/Verbal Contacts | 21,021 |
| Acknowledged Form 25Ns | |
| [Notice of Assignment of Rehabilitation Professional] | 21,815 |
| TOTAL CONTACTS MADE | 42,836 |

During the 2008 fiscal year, referrals increased 10% and acknowledged Form 25Ns increased 38% through increased education and monitoring of the NCIC Rehabilitation Professionals Registry. A new nurse consultant with expertise in Brain Injury was hired in January 2007, fully staffing the section for the first time in two years. At the request of rehabilitation companies and rehabilitation professional organizations, the number of educational presentations on the NCIC Rehabilitation Rules has increased. There were six in-service training programs with 137 attendees.

Safety Education Section

The Safety Education Section offers a broad range of free accident prevention and safety programs that range from single session targeted classes in a wide range of topics to a thirty hour Accident Prevention Certificate Awareness Program. In addition, the Safety Education Section sponsors eight Regional Safety Councils that serve all of the counties of the state. It maintains a safety video library and hosts an annual North Carolina Statewide Safety Conference.

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| Individuals Trained | 118,381 |
| Contact hours | 6,275 |
| Classes | 5,327 |

The Safety Section of the North Carolina Industrial Commission was created as part of the original North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act of 1929 as an educational, training, and public relations unit to promote safety and accident prevention in the industrial workplaces of the state of North Carolina.

This approach to reducing Workers' Compensation claims and costs is proactive not reactive. The mission of the Safety Education Section of the Industrial Commission (NCIC) is to help employers reduce injury to employees as well as their Workers' Compensation costs through education and training. The goal is to reduce pain and suffering, as well as reducing the costs resulting from accidents in the workplaces of North Carolina. An injured worker, unable to work, is a cost to an employer. The best way to reduce accidents in the workplace is through active safety programs that include: education and training for all personnel; safety committees that touch all activities in the workplace; following recognized good work practices and awareness of workplace safety and health standards. Active safety programs are the best offense and best defense against rising Workers' Compensation costs.

Because the Industrial Commission's Safety Education Section is an education-based organization, rather than one organized around compliance, it is successful at opening doors where employers welcome our staff and the training services they deliver. At times the increase in demand has been overwhelming because it is a non-punitive resource. This service meets and exceeds business, government and private sector needs because its Accident Prevention and Safety Education is responsive to individual needs and has been utilized since 1929.

The Safety Education Section continues to develop new Accident Prevention Programs to better serve the citizens of North Carolina. The latest program series, Work Zone Traffic Control, is designed to further assist employees and employers in lowering both the number and cost of accidents and injuries.