



# 2025 Annual Report for WorkSafeBC

Energy Safety Canada BC

April 2026

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

**Energy Safety Canada (ESC) is pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report for WorkSafeBC, highlighting the delivery of key initiatives in British Columbia (BC). ESC's Fort St. John office provides the energy industry in BC with safety resources and training.**

ESC supported regional industry employers by providing 34 employer consultations to help companies improve their safety performance, access training and workshops, obtain Certificate of Recognition (COR) information and services and access additional safety resources and information.

In 2025, ESC launched several new initiatives. These initiatives were intended to increase industry stakeholders' awareness and knowledge of various health and safety issues affecting the energy industry and included:

- Campaigns promoting ESC's Line of Fire and Get a Grip resources
- A partnership with the Northeast BC Producers Group to offer a 2-day health, safety and environment conference
- A research project examining factors contributing to long-duration claims in the energy industry.

To provide educational and networking opportunities for safety practitioners, ESC hosted several webinars and in-person forums, including two regulator updates and a crane safety awareness workshop.

In addition to the major initiatives identified on the 2025 workplan, ESC engaged with industry and the northeast BC community through various events, including trade shows, safety stand downs and job fairs.

In 2026, ESC will continue to enhance industry awareness and knowledge. The organization will engage with employers to address confined space and bonding and grounding hazards. Additionally, ESC plans to build on the success of the 2025 Health and Safety Conference and continues to look for opportunities to engage our Stakeholders. These engagements, along with other planned activities, will promote consistent safety improvements in Canada's energy industry.

## 2.0 Results of the 2025 Health & Safety Association Workplan

This section outlines Energy Safety Canada's progress in delivering the initiatives included in the 2025 Health and Safety Association (HSA) Workplan. It provides an overview of the support services,

outreach activities, training programs, and safety campaigns delivered throughout the year, as well as the outcomes achieved in each area.

## Industry Support Service

2.1 ESC offers 1-on-1 consultations to provide comprehensive and targeted support to its stakeholders. These consultations help industry employers identify potential areas for improvement and provide educational resources on effective solutions. Additional support services include virtual meetings, telephone consultations, data reports and presentations on relevant safety topics.

In 2025, ESC met with 34 employers from various sectors in BC, including service providers, pipeline construction companies and oil and gas production companies. Through these meetings, ESC staff strengthened stakeholder relationships by responding directly to employer concerns and connecting them with relevant information, resources and support.

## Energy Industry Conference

2.2 Building on the success of the 2024 Safety Conference—a one-day event that signaled the resumption of ESC conferences in northeast BC—ESC partnered with the Northeast BC Producers Group to deliver a two-day conference offering top-quality workshops on health, safety and environmental topics to a broad audience, including operations, safety, and environmental personnel.

The conference focused on innovations, initiatives, and advancements in the energy sector. It took place November 18 and 19, with 190 registrants and featured the following sessions:

- Strategic Direction of WorkSafeBC – Andrew Kidd, Director of Prevention Field Services
- Occupational Hygiene – Ryan Campbell, Northstar Occupational Hygiene and Safety
- Underground Damage Prevention - BC Common Ground Alliance Panel with WorkSafeBC, TC Energy, and Trench Safety BC
- Mental Health and Resilience – Jeremy Evans (“The Grizzly Dude”)
- Use of Artificial Intelligence in Industry – David Dunham, Pragmatic Safety
- Contractor Management – Shannon Donnelly and Christy Jones, ConocoPhillips
- Auditing Differently – Andy Reimer, Energy Safety Canada.

The event was well received, with strong satisfaction ratings and actionable insights that will be considered for future conferences.

## Line of Fire Awareness Campaign

In recognition of injury claim data identifying struck-by incidents as 1 of the top 4 sources of incidents in BC's energy sector, ESC hosted a workshop facilitated by George McGhie, Program Manager for ESC. The workshop promoted ESC's Line of Fire resources and encouraged discussion amongst attendees to identify common line of fire hazards in the energy sector and consider available controls options.

The workshop was held on June 3, 2025, and had 28 registrants.

In addition, a 2-page safety bulletin titled *Taking a Preventive Approach to Line of Fire Scenarios* was released in Spring 2025. The bulletin was distributed to all participants and covered concepts such as the Energy Wheel, stored energy sources, roles and responsibilities and resources.

## Safety Practitioner Meetings

ESC regularly hosts meetings for those in health and safety roles on emerging issues in BC's energy sector. The meetings include regulatory updates, information about new ESC tools, training and resources and other subjects relevant to industry employers.

### 2.4.1 Webinar: WorkSafeBC Regulator Update | January 6, 2025

A total of 256 people registered for the WorkSafeBC Regulator Update, which was facilitated by Troy Lockhart, Prevention Officer with WorkSafeBC. This webinar reviewed 2024 energy industry activities, provided an overview of energy industry incidents and compliance issues and outlined future oil and gas inspection initiatives.

### 2.4.2 Employers' Advisers Workshops | October 21 – 22, 2025

ESC partnered with the Employers' Advisers Office to offer several in-person half-day workshops to industry stakeholders, including sessions on incident investigation, due diligence and claims management fundamentals. However, minimum enrolment numbers were not achieved and these sessions were cancelled.

### 2.4.3 Introduction to BC Crane Safety | October 29, 2025

This in-person workshop was offered to raise awareness of the services of the BC Crane Safety Association (BCCS), how to become certified as an operator, and regulatory requirements for crane inspections, maintenance and operations. Experienced facilitator Trenton Grover, Field Occupational Health and Safety Advisor with BCCS, also addressed rigging and related regulations, as well as certification vs. qualification vs. competency of operators.

Due to the relevance of this topic to industry, this event was well attended, with 32 registrants.

#### 2.4.4 Webinar: WorkSafeBC Regulator Update | December 9, 2025

A total of 184 people registered for this event, which reviewed energy industry activities in 2025. The webinar was facilitated by Budd Phillips, Manager, Prevention Field Services with WorkSafeBC and provided an in-depth overview of energy industry incidents and compliance issues and outlined future oil and gas inspection initiatives.

### Long Duration Claim Research Project

2.5 This initiative involved contacting targeted employers to investigate factors contributing to long-duration claims (50+ lost days). A total of 16 employers provided feedback on their experiences managing injured worker claims in BC. Common themes with respect to challenges were identified, along with positive comments about existing supports.

A detailed briefing note was compiled and can be viewed in [Appendix C](#). The information in the briefing note may serve as a starting point for discussions aimed at resolving the issues identified by employers.

### 2.6 Get a Grip Awareness Campaign

In recognition of injury claim data identifying fall on same level and fall from elevation as 2 of the top 5 sources of incidents in BC's energy sector, the ESC Fort St. John office scheduled a workshop for October 7, 2025. The workshop was designed to promote ESC's Get a Grip resources, help participants identify and control slip, trip and fall hazards, and provide information on available traction aids. Due to low enrolment, the workshop was cancelled.

As part of this campaign, ESC also developed a bulletin titled [Preventing Slips, Trips and Falls in Cold Weather](#), which was released on October 29 to over 2,200 recipients.

## 3.0 Organizational Capacity Activities

3.1 This section follows the required reporting elements outlined in ESC's approved HSA 2025 Initiatives Workplan.

### ESC BC Advisory Committee

The ESC BC Advisory Committee comprises representatives from industry trade associations and individual employers in British Columbia. The committee meets quarterly to review injury statistics, provide insights and support for the HSA workplan and budget and share updates from industry associations and BC employers.

Highlights from the past year include:

- Addition of a new committee member from Petronas

- Introduction of the new Regional Manager
- Slight increase to the industry levy from 0.07 to 0.08
- Active efforts to fill three vacant member-at-large seats
- Addition of a new CAGC representative
- Discussion of variances for first aid requirements
- Clarification on BC Wildfire Act requirements
- Feedback on the Well Service BOP suite of courses
- Discussion and white paper on cell phone use in industry.

## **Enhance Training for BC Employers**

### **3.23.2.1 Support ESC Training Partners**

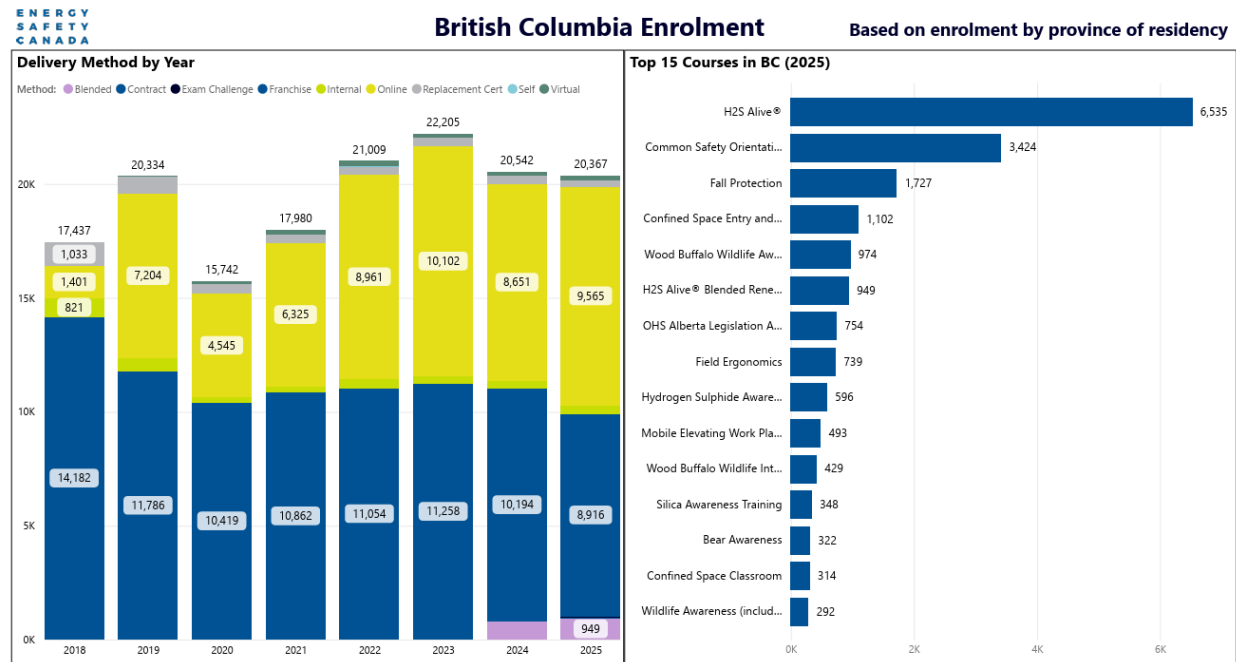
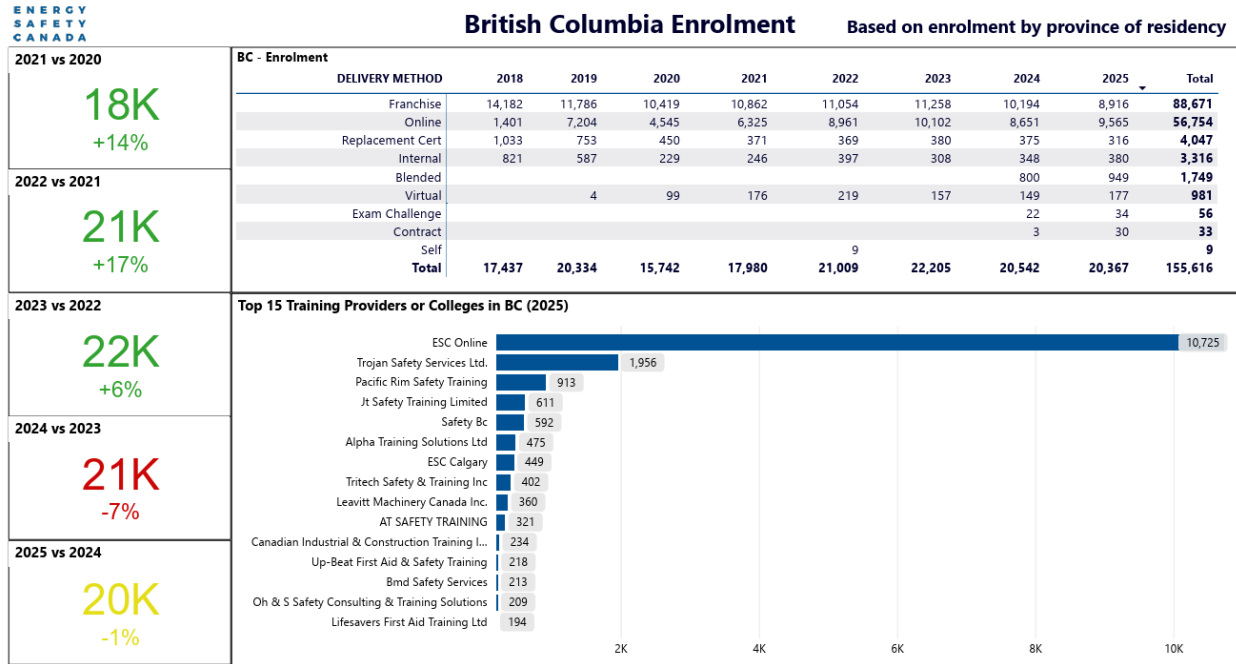
ESC conducted outreach visits to several Authorized Training Providers (ATPs) in Northeastern BC in 2025. These meetings promoted consistent training delivery, early identification of improvement opportunities increased adoption of ESC standards, potential expansion of course offerings and sourcing additional instructors to meet increased demand.

### **3.2.2 Training Course Delivery**

Energy workers play a vital role in the industry, and it is essential that they receive the proper training to ensure their safety. In 2025, ESC offered four weeks of courses throughout the year, including Incident and Accident Investigation, the Certified Health and Safety Auditor Program, Certified Auditor Renewal, Safety Program Development, Leadership for Safe Workplaces and Well Service Blowout Prevention.

ESC continues to provide instructor-led virtual courses and self-directed online courses to improve accessibility for workers. Overall, enrolment by BC-based students in 2025 decreased by approximately 1% compared to 2024. Training provided by ATPs in BC decreased, while online and internal training delivered at the ESC Fort St. John facility, increased.

**Figure 1: ESC BC Enrolment Year-Over-Year (2018-2025)**



H<sub>2</sub>S Alive® remained ESC’s most in-demand course, with more than 6,500 students completing the course in BC in 2025.

**ESC BC's Top 5 Courses:**

1. H<sub>2</sub>S Alive®
2. Common Safety Orientation (CSO) | Online
3. Fall Protection
4. Confined Space Entry and Monitor | Online
5. Wood Buffalo Wildlife Awareness | Online

### 3.2.3 Training Support Activities

ESC supports local stakeholders by selling training materials, providing access to a student computer lab for online courses and exams, issuing replacement certificates and offering its modern classroom for short-term rentals. In 2025, more than 25 individuals used the student computer lab. The BC office processed 53 orders for training materials purchased by ATPs and issued 315 replacement certificates, helping individuals return to the job site quickly.

## 4.0 Outreach Activities

ESC conducted a variety of outreach activities in 2025 to strengthen relationships with industry stakeholders, support community engagement, and promote safety across British Columbia's energy sector.

### 4.1

#### Outreach

The following outreach activities were conducted in BC by ESC in 2025.

##### 4.1.1 Northeast BC Producer Roundtable

The Northeast BC Producer Roundtable comprises key safety personnel from owner-operators in the region. Four meetings were held in 2025, bringing ESC together with industry to share new resources, field issues, regulatory changes and discuss emerging topics of concern.

Key topics discussed in 2025 included: proposed changes to benzene exposure limits; STARS ambulance services; the producer alignment pilot project; requirements for producers to respond to wildfires; fraudulent training tickets circulating in the industry; Part 9 regulatory requirements; competency of contract rescue service providers; remote activation of valves; and NORMS training.

This group continues to provide an excellent forum for ESC to promote new products and services, build relationships with regional producers and request input and support for local initiatives. In 2025, 4 additional members joined the group.

## 4.1.2 Industry Networking and Events

ESC staff took part in numerous industry outreach activities in 2025, including:

- Attended the BC Natural Resources Forum in Prince George as delegates
- Attended the City of Fort St. John Health and Safety Conference with a booth to promote ESC
- Attended the Fort St. John Chamber of Commerce “Creating Energy” Conference
- Supported the University of British Columbia by promoting a research project on ototoxicant exposure in the energy industry; ESC shared information about the study and encouraged employer participation
- Attended a pilot course developed to provide an alternative to the S100 course required for wildfire-fighting activities
- Delivered workshops on Safety Differently, Human and Organizational Performance, Life Saving Rules and the Energy Wheel to several industry stakeholders upon request
- Contractor Workshop – ESC was invited by several producers in northeast BC to discuss collaboration between producers on contractors’ expectations
- Attended a job fair to represent ESC and meet individuals interested in a career in the energy industry
- Ran radio ads throughout the year promoting upcoming training and events, winter tire requirements on regional highways, and free windshield scrapers to promote visibility in winter conditions
- Supported a Critical Risk Management workshop, facilitated by Tony Muschara, attended by approximately 50 participants
- Participated in WorkSafeBC pre-consultation regarding benzene exposure limits
- Met with LNG companies to foster relationships and discuss opportunities for ESC to support safe operations
- Attended the “Shaping the Future: Energy and Environment Forum” hosted by Northern Lights College, bringing stakeholders together to discuss labour market trends and current and future industrial training needs
- Participated in the trade show held at the Western Conference on Safety in Vancouver
- Met with regional employment centres to provide updates on ESC course offerings and discuss supports available for new workers entering the energy industry.

### 4.1.3 Support for High School Career Exploration Programs

ESC continued to support career exploration programs at regional high schools by providing complimentary access to ESC's Common Safety Orientation (CSO) course. The course introduces individuals to safe work practices and incorporates ESC's 10 Life Saving Rules, offering a valuable foundation for youth considering careers in the energy industry.

### 4.1.4 Safety Audits & Certification (SA&C) Support

In collaboration with ESC's SA&C department, current and potential COR and Small Employer Certificate of Recognition (SECOR) holders were offered opportunities to schedule 1-on-1 meetings to discuss questions or concerns related to their audits, the new COR audit software and other topics.

Additionally, the BC office hosted 2 workshops for SECOR holders in Northeast BC: Understanding SECOR Elements, and Element I: Other Affected Parties.

## Training and Information Bulletins

**4.2** ESC regularly issues bulletins as part of its ongoing communication with industry. Training bulletins provide information on upcoming courses at the Fort St. John facility, while information bulletins share updates on regulatory changes, workshops and industry events.

In 2025, ESC sent 27 bulletins to subscribers interested in training, events and informational updates. The email distribution lists now include more than 2,200 subscribers.

## 5.0 Corporate Highlights

In 2025, Energy Safety Canada (ESC) continued to deliver its core mandate: providing industry-recognized training, collaborating with industry to support continuous safety improvement, supplying safety and labour market data and insights, and serving as an industry certifying partner for the Certificate of Recognition (COR) program that is uniquely applicable across three provinces.

Throughout the year, ESC also strengthened its engagement with industry and partners, and its focus on the areas of highest risk and impact. Through ongoing delivery and engagement, 3 consistent themes emerged, helping clarify where ESC can have the greatest influence:

- Engaging industry in more deliberate and targeted ways
- Applying greater discipline to ensure efforts are focused and effective
- Sustaining a strong emphasis on Serious Incident and Fatality (SIF) prevention.

These themes informed ESC's engagement model, operational discipline and use of data and analytics throughout the year.

## 6.0 BC Priorities for 2026

ESC will work to deliver the following objectives detailed in its 2026 BC Workplan:

- Conduct 25 one-on-one consultations with companies across ESC's five funding CUs
- Delivery four safety practitioner meetings
- Organize or participate in industry engagements
- Implement a bonding and grounding awareness campaign
- Implement a confined space awareness campaign.

## 7.0 Corporate Priorities

As ESC looks ahead to 2026, the organization does so with a clear understanding of the external environment and the role it plays within the broader safety system. While overall injury rates across the energy sector have improved over time, serious incidents and fatalities continue to occur, reinforcing the need for sustained focus on prevention, learning, and system-level collaboration.

ESC's direction moving forward is informed by industry experience, stakeholder engagement with employers, workers, associations, and regulators, and insights reinforced through data and independent review.

Preventing serious incidents and fatalities remains a shared industry-wide priority. Experience continues to show that no single company or organization can address these risks in isolation. Progress depends on timely sharing of information, consistent learning and coordinated action across the system.

ESC's work will continue to support this collective effort by strengthening how serious incidents and potential serious incidents are identified, communicated, and translated into practical learning. This includes continued focus on data-informed insight, timely safety alerts, and engagement models that support both leadership-level alignment and field-level application.

### **Informing Direction Through Independent Review and External Feedback**

In preparation for 2026, ESC initiated a 3<sup>rd</sup> party assessment to evaluate aspects of its training systems, operations and delivery model. This external perspective, combined with ongoing feedback from industry stakeholders and associations, will provide valuable insight into where ESC is performing well and where greater focus or adjustment would strengthen impact.

### **Strengthening Training Delivery**

In 2026, ESC will focus on:

- Delivering training excellence
- Deepening industry engagement where it drives the greatest value

- Tailoring approaches across sectors and audiences, recognizing different risk profiles and needs
- Assessing thoroughly before building new tools or resources.

The common thread across this approach is discipline — in listening, in responding, and in prioritizing.

### **Supporting System Outcomes**

ESC will continue to work collaboratively with system partners, including WorkSafeBC and occupational health and safety regulators, to support prevention outcomes. Through improved data and analytics use, strengthened engagement models, and continued emphasis on shared learning, ESC aims to contribute to safer work and improved safety performance across the energy sector.

## Appendix A | BC 2025 Unaudited Financial Statement

| <b>Energy Safety Canada British Columbia 2025 Actuals</b> |                  |                  |                 |
|---|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>  | <b>Budget</b>    | <b>Actual</b>    | <b>Variance</b> |
| WorkSafeBC Funding (current period)                       | \$747,839        | \$747,839        | \$0             |
| Other Revenue   | \$14,000         | \$720            | \$13,280        |
| <b>Total revenue</b>                                      | <b>\$761,839</b> | <b>\$748,559</b> | <b>\$13,280</b> |
| <b>Expenses</b>   | <b>Budget</b>    | <b>Actual</b>    | <b>Variance</b> |
| Salaries - Direct & Head Office Support                   | \$309,750        | \$343,695        | (\$33,945)      |
| Benefits - Direct & Head Office Support                   | \$89,100         | \$56,176         | \$32,924        |
| Consultants & Contractors                                 | \$28,050         | \$4,602          | \$23,448        |
| Advertising & Sponsorships                                | \$26,250         | \$30,786         | (\$4,536)       |
| Board Expenses  | \$1,260          | \$309            | \$951           |
| Building Maintenance and Repairs                          | \$21,505         | \$23,947         | (\$2,442)       |
| Telecommunications and Freight                            | \$9,064          | \$3,008          | \$6,056         |
| Conference Registration and Meeting Expenses              | \$12,915         | \$9,667          | \$3,248         |
| Furniture & Equipment                                     | \$2,100          | \$42,531         | (\$40,431)      |
| Office Supplies   | \$5,775          | \$4,490          | \$1,285         |
| Property Taxes & General Insurance                        | \$550            | \$0              | \$550           |
| Publications & Materials                                  | \$1,050          | \$0              | \$1,050         |
| Rent - Office   | \$151,800        | \$127,785        | \$24,015        |
| Technology  | \$63,600         | \$28,318         | \$35,282        |
| Training - Staff  | \$2,625          | \$693            | \$1,932         |
| Travel  | \$34,870         | \$15,885         | \$18,985        |
| Miscellaneous   | \$1,575          | \$1,019          | \$556           |

|   |                  |                  |                   |
|---|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total expenses</b>                             | <b>\$761,839</b> | <b>\$692,912</b> | <b>\$68,927</b>   |
| <b>Excess (deficiency) revenues over expenses</b> | <b>\$0</b>       | <b>\$54,9270</b> | <b>(\$54,927)</b> |

## Appendix B | Strategy Articulation Map (SAM) 2023-2027

**Energy Safety Canada**      **2023-2027 Strategy Articulation Map**



| Strategic Drivers                         | Agile Operations  | Training Excellence   | Industry Impact   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Strategic Result</b>                   | Improved organizational efficiency and agility utilizing data-driven analytics.   | Positioned as training provider of choice.  | Deepen our impact and drive sustainable growth.   |
| <b>2023-2027 SAM Strategic Objectives</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen &amp; streamline core processes &amp; optimize systems to increase efficiency.</li> <li>Use analytics &amp; predictive insights to keep training &amp; resources focused on SIF prevention.</li> <li>Engage in effective marketing &amp; public relations activities with industry-wide presence &amp; worker focus.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fit-for-purpose training, resources &amp; tools that are easy to access and adopt.</li> <li>Enable worker mobility across sites through standardized training and verifiable digital credentials.</li> <li>Improve technology, online performance &amp; digital delivery.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevate resources on SIF prevention, including personal safety, process safety, worker well-being.</li> <li>Strengthen collaboration across industry amongst owner/operators, service providers, regulators, trades &amp; labour.</li> <li>Global learnings on SIF prevention into Canadian practice.</li> <li>Expansion into adjacent sectors (LNG).</li> </ul> |

Approved October 2025

# Appendix C | Long Duration Claims in the Energy Sector in British Columbia

## Injury Rate Summary – ESC Funding CUs (Top) Vs. All BC (Bottom) 10 Year - 2015 to 2024

### Injury Rate Summary - Selection

#### Injury Rate Summary - Selection

|                               | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Injury Rate                   | 0.37 | 0.34 | 0.38 | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.44 | 0.57 | 0.57 | 0.39 | 0.41 |
| Serious Injury Rate           | 0.15 | 0.14 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.10 | 0.14 | 0.10 | 0.20 | 0.11 | 0.13 |
| MSI Injury Rate               | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.13 | 0.08 | 0.05 |
| MVI Injury Rate               | 0.01 | 0.04 | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.06 | 0.04 | 0.05 |
| # Time Loss Claims            | 53   | 35   | 44   | 35   | 34   | 35   | 52   | 58   | 44   | 46   |
| # Serious Injury Claims       | 22   | 15   | 14   | 12   | 10   | 11   | 9    | 20   | 13   | 15   |
| % Serious Injury Claims       | 42%  | 43%  | 32%  | 34%  | 29%  | 31%  | 17%  | 34%  | 30%  | 33%  |
| # MSI Claims (by injury year) | 9    | 7    | 3    | 5    | 9    | 7    | 9    | 13   | 9    | 6    |
| % MSI Claims                  | 17 % | 20 % | 7 %  | 14 % | 26 % | 20 % | 17 % | 22 % | 20 % | 13 % |

### Injury Rate Summary - Comparison

|                               | 2015   | 2016   | 2017   | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   | 2022   | 2023   | 2024   |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Injury Rate                   | 2.22   | 2.20   | 2.18   | 2.19   | 2.19   | 2.13   | 2.24   | 2.40   | 2.08   | 2.03   |
| Serious Injury Rate           | 0.30   | 0.29   | 0.30   | 0.29   | 0.29   | 0.29   | 0.31   | 0.29   | 0.27   | 0.25   |
| MSI Injury Rate               | 0.79   | 0.77   | 0.74   | 0.77   | 0.77   | 0.76   | 0.79   | 0.70   | 0.71   | 0.70   |
| MVI Injury Rate               | 0.05   | 0.05   | 0.06   | 0.06   | 0.05   | 0.05   | 0.07   | 0.08   | 0.07   | 0.08   |
| # Time Loss Claims            | 48,124 | 49,087 | 50,327 | 51,726 | 53,028 | 48,005 | 53,690 | 60,359 | 53,705 | 53,165 |
| # Serious Injury Claims       | 6,434  | 6,496  | 7,023  | 6,837  | 7,043  | 6,481  | 7,384  | 7,365  | 7,044  | 6,528  |
| % Serious Injury Claims       | 13%    | 13%    | 14%    | 13%    | 13%    | 14%    | 14%    | 12%    | 13%    | 12%    |
| # MSI Claims (by injury year) | 17,144 | 17,100 | 17,060 | 18,192 | 18,556 | 17,177 | 19,031 | 17,647 | 18,258 | 18,268 |



## Background

Regulators in northeast BC have provided industry updates in past years that repeatedly stated “the energy industry doesn’t have a high claim rate, but when it injures people, it hurts them badly”. This statement was typically accompanied by a chart (below) showing the % Serious Injury Claims of the five funding classification units (CU’s) of Energy Safety Canada in BC, compared against all other CU’s in BC (e.g., oil and gas versus all other industries).

As per the chart, the percentage of Serious Injury Claims incurred by the oil and gas sector ranged from 17% - 43% (averaging 32.5%) between 2015 and 2024, while the range for all other sectors was between 12 - 14% (averaging 3.1%) for the same time period. Serious injuries are defined as those where a worker is off work with a disabling injury for 50+days).

## Rationale for Project

Based on the messaging and data from WorkSafeBC, ESC BC developed an initiative for its 2025 workplan that involved reaching out to targeted employers to investigate all the issues causing long duration claims, and offer support. ESC developed a list of open-ended questions to ask employers, and links to numerous resources developed to assist employers in developing or strengthening their Stay at Work/Return to Work programs.

An outline of the project was included in the ESC BC 2025 Workplan which was submitted and approved by both WorkSafeBC and the ESC BC Advisory Committee.

## Project Methodology

ESC compiled a list of employers in the ESC BC funding codes that had experienced long duration claims between 2019 and 2023. We also solicited feedback at various industry meetings and events, as well as an anonymous survey, inviting employers who had feedback to share directly with us.

We did have challenges getting employers to speak with us. Many were reluctant to talk about their experiences; some companies had so much staff turnover since the injury that no-one could provide any information on the claims.

Of the 44 employers identified by ESC as experiencing long-duration claims:

- 10 were out of business, or could not be contacted
- 6 declined a meeting
- 19 did not respond to repeated attempts to set up meetings
- 9 agreed to speak with us.

In addition to 9 in-depth interviews, we were able to obtain feedback from 7 more individuals through an anonymous survey distributed at an industry event.

The types of employers that provided feedback include well servicing, pipeline operation, vac truck operators, a major drilling company, general trucking, and pipeline construction.

## Findings

Most of the employers we spoke with mentioned multiple challenges in the management of injured worker claims in BC, so even though the sample size is 16 employers, the number of comments captured on the attached summary is much greater.

Most employers we spoke with seemed to want to do the right thing when a worker was injured, both for the worker's benefit as well as the company's claim ratings, but were frustrated by obstacles beyond their control that were contributing to long claim duration.

On a positive note, numerous employers shared positive comments with respect to their experiences. However, most respondents felt that WSBC claim duration numbers did not accurately reflect the severity of the injuries sustained by their workers.

The top 5 issues raised by our sample group are:

1. Communication issues with WorkSafeBC
2. Geographical challenges
3. Worker lack of cooperation
4. Challenges "caused" by medical practitioners
5. Issues getting timely and appropriate medical treatment in northern BC.

## **Recommendations from Interviewees**

The following recommendations came out of conversations held with the employers who participated in this initiative:

1. WSBC could use more caseworkers so that employers can reach one in a timely manner. Employers should have a dedicated caseworker at WSBC to allow for better communication, continuity of care, and relationship building.
2. Five of our employers had experience managing claims in both BC and Alberta, and every one of those employers said the process was much better in Alberta. It was suggested that BC should look at the Alberta model of Occupational Injury Service (OIS) clinics as a way of improving stay-at-work/return-to-work outcomes for both employers and workers.
3. Physicians need to be more willing to work with employers on SAW/RTW efforts and be aware of the impact their “not always justifiable” medical leaves have, especially on small employers.
4. More education would be beneficial for small employers who handle claims in-house, to navigate the process. Not many companies use external claims management services.
5. More education for workers on their legislated responsibilities related to participating in the recovery process.

## **Conclusion**

This initiative provided an opportunity to take a behind-the-scenes look at injury data by engaging in discussions with employers in the energy industry. These discussions highlighted claims management issues that are not necessarily reflected in data figures.

The information in this briefing note may serve as a starting point for discussions and actions aimed at resolving the issues identified by employers.

## ENERGY INDUSTRY'S SAFETY ALLY

For over 75 years, Energy Safety Canada has been the national safety association for Canada's energy industry. Created by industry, for industry, we are dedicated to keeping energy workers safe and driving safety performance.

### What We Do:



Deliver industry-recognized training to meet industry needs.



Collaborate with industry to drive continuous safety improvements.



Provide safety and labour market data, insights and tools.



Serve as the industry certifying partner for the Certificate of Recognition program.

### Proudly Serving Our Industry

We are proud to work on behalf of Canada's energy industry associations.

