

## WSCB Strategic Plan – What We Heard

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### Message from the Chair

The Board of Directors of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board (WSCB) believes that what we heard from stakeholders as we enter into our new set of strategic priorities will guide our work whilst still allowing us the flexibility to adapt to emerging issues as new challenges arise. When conducted in true partnership with our stakeholders, such conversations are a guarantee of progress and success. The feedback we received served to reinforce the key tenets of our previous strategic plan and provided insights to help us refine our goals and set new priorities.

This What We Heard document is the result of months of reflection and engagement with WSCB staff and worker and employer stakeholders. WSCB shares the desire to adapt to emerging issues and move closer to Vision Zero – zero work related injuries, illnesses or fatalities. We also heard several key themes emerge, including prevention, shifting workplace demographics and the need to keep abreast of rapid technological changes. Through the life of this Strategic Plan, we reinforce our commitment to prevent work related injuries and disabilities.

On behalf of the Directors, I am excited to share this What We Heard report for our new strategic plan which builds on the strength of our mission statement and lays the groundwork for the upcoming years.

Mark Pike

Chair, Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

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### Strategic Plan Process

The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board (WSCB) is proud that many of the goals outlined in the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan have been realized, including the passage of the new *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act* (the 'Act').

The collaborative process behind this new Strategic Plan involved input from various stakeholders, including WSCB staff, senior management, the Board of Directors, and external partners. Key themes emerged during this process, such as prevention, rapid technological changes and shifting demographics. These insights were invaluable in shaping the Strategic Plan.

WSCB remains committed to preventing work related injuries and disabilities and maintaining the sustainability of the workers' compensation and workplace health and safety systems in Yukon. This Strategic Plan is not rigid; rather, it represents the continuation of an ongoing review and renewal process allowing WSCB to adapt to emerging issues and move closer to Vision Zero – zero work-related injuries, illness or fatalities.

### Environmental Scan

The following economic forecasting represents a snapshot in time. As months and years unfold, the elements of this environmental scan may evolve significantly.

Yukon's outlook is relatively strong, buoyed by a busy construction sector, elevated levels of international migration, and growth in the tourism sector.

- **Growth Factors**
  - Busy construction sector
  - Elevated international migration
  - Tourism sector growth
  
- **GDP Growth**
  - Real GDP expected to grow by an annual average of 4.0% between 2024 and 2030
  
- **Mining Sector**
  - The mining sector is currently experiencing some challenges, however, there are some advanced projects with the potential to develop into mines

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- **Construction Projects**
  - Large government-funded non-residential capital projects will keep Yukon's construction sector active
  
- **Labour Market**
  - Yukon is expected to maintain a relatively low unemployment rate
  - A strong economy and tight labour market will support wage growth and household income
  
- **Population Growth**
  - Addressing low housing affordability is crucial to attract young and core-aged (25-54) workers through national and international migration

### What We Heard – Staff

The total number of staff who provided input was 54. The following questions were asked:

#### SWOT Analysis Questions:

1. What strengths does your organization have that allow it to make progress towards its vision and mission?
  
2. What might be all the weaknesses you have as an organization or all the internal challenges that might get in the way of success?
  
3. What's happening in the Yukon, in the rest of the country and in the global context that might present opportunities in the coming years?
  
4. What's happening in the Yukon, in the rest of the country and in the global context that might present challenges over the next few years?

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### Organizational Strengths

When it comes to strengths of the organization, key themes revolve around the human capital of the organization, including the skills, experience, commitment, and passion of staff members. There is a consistent recognition of a positive work culture characterized by care for the organizational mission, good stakeholder relationships, a supportive work environment, and a strong sense of teamwork. A nimble structure is also seen as an advantage, allowing for quick reaction times, further learning, and efficient communication. Leadership and strategic direction are also commended, together with financial stability, flexibility, and a robust approach to policy and decision-making.

### Organizational Weaknesses

Participants reflected on an array of challenges faced by the organization. Workforce issues such as difficulty in staff recruitment and retention, especially in the current job market, are prominent. Resources are strained due to a combination of outdated technologies, processes, and regulations, coupled with an overwhelming workload. Participants expressed concern over the organizational culture, specifically around succession planning, communication, and training. There is a noted desire for proactive planning that would include business intelligence and multi-departmental collaboration. Additionally, the need for digital transformation is evident, as is the need for a shift towards a culture that values connection, well-being, training, and empowerment at all levels of the organization.

### Global Strengths

The participants identified a plethora of opportunities that the organization could leverage in the face of current and future changes in the Yukon, the country, and the global context. The advent of AI and improvements in technological infrastructure are seen foremost as significant opportunities, particularly for data management and enhancing operational efficiency. The mentions of the global labour shortage hint at both a potential challenge and an opportunity. The growing population and demographic shifts present chances for staff diversification and succession planning. Participants suggest fostering flexibility within the organization, such as instituting flexible work schedules, part-time opportunities for retirees, and the possibility of a four-day workweek to improve work-life balance, attract a diverse workforce, and improve staff retention. Cross-organizational collaboration, both locally and broadly, is another recurring theme, suggesting sharing of resources and practices to achieve cost-savings and enhanced

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safety programs. Enhancing workplace inclusivity and accessibility, in line with federal directives, are also seen as vital to shaping an empathetic and future-ready organization.

### Global Weaknesses

Finally, participants highlighted a multifaceted spectrum of threats that could affect the organization over the coming years. These concerns span economic, environmental, technological, cultural, and workforce-related issues. A significant worry is the impact of the high cost of living in Yukon, which participants believe could exacerbate staff shortages and prevent the relocation of potential employees. The consequences of an aging workforce, notably due to the retirement of baby boomers and Gen X, include knowledge gaps and increased occupational injury claims. Participants are also apprehensive about the rise in mental health challenges within both the staff and client base. Concerns about inflation, economic instability, and global unrest highlight a perceived volatile operating environment. Technological threats, such as cybersecurity and the disruption caused by AI, are also cited, alongside fears of privacy risks associated with cloud-based solutions.

### What We Heard – Stakeholders

All members of the WSCB Stakeholder Advisory Committee and Prevention Group (“the stakeholders”) were invited to participate in a virtual consultation followed by an in-person meeting. These consultation committees include representatives from 15 Yukon worker and employer organizations.

#### SWOT Analysis Questions:

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### Overarching Opportunities

Stakeholder inputs revealed opportunities present to WSCB related to demographic changes, technological advancements, and evolving workplace needs. Key opportunities include expanding WSCB's services to cater to federally regulated workers in Yukon, addressing the growing need for psychological injury care, and leveraging AI and digital tools for effective response and training. The fast growth of Whitehorse and the Yukon population presents both a challenge and an opportunity, particularly in managing the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce and an aging population. Emphasis was also placed on updating regulations, enhancing training (especially for new Canadians, and younger workers), leveraging digital training opportunities, and promoting a safety-focused workplace culture over productivity.

### Overarching Challenges

Stakeholders identified several challenges associated with rapid population growth, increasing workforce diversity, and evolving work paradigms. Whitehorse's status as the fastest-growing city and Yukon's population increase significantly impact the number of workers. The increasing diversity, especially among new Canadians, poses challenges in ensuring these workers understand their rights and workplace safety, particularly if English is not a first language. The labour shortage across Canada, coupled with the evolving nature of work (such as remote work and the influence of AI), are creating new challenges in maintaining workplace safety standards. Increased stress levels, both in and out of the workplace, are identified as a risk factor for injuries. The unique vulnerabilities of foreign workers on temporary permits are also highlighted, emphasizing the need for equal rights awareness and protection. Additionally, the healthcare crisis, particularly the lack of family doctors in Yukon, is seen as a barrier to providing timely and effective care for injured workers.

### Moving Forward

WSCB is confident that this Strategic Plan will allow the organization and its stakeholders to capitalize on opportunities and address new challenges that may arise. In developing this Strategic Plan, the Board of Directors carefully considered the input provided from staff and stakeholders along with various factors and trends that will impact its implementation. We are confident that this new Strategic Plan reflects a sound path forward to continue to meet the needs of the organization and all the people who depend on WSCB.