

MISSISSAUGA, Nov. 3, 2011 – Ontario’s workplace is safer today, thanks to the continued efforts of the staffing industry and the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB).

Following another successful WSIB Safety Group Program, members of the Association of Canadian Search, Employment & Staffing Services (ACSESS) sponsored safety group will receive rebates totalling \$905,681.07. The safety group, comprised of 65 ACSESS member firm accounts, will be awarded the rebates for initiatives that reduced both the severity and frequency of workplace injuries in 2009.

“I think this speaks volumes to the commitment our members have in ensuring a safe work environment for Ontarians,” says Mary McNinch, Director of Government Relations for ACSESS.

The staffing association has been an active sponsor in the WSIB Safety Group Program since 2001, when it was the only group within the services sector to be selected from 18 candidates to enter the program.

The WSIB Safety Group Program promotes health and safety in the workplace through pooling of resources and sharing of best practices between member businesses. In addition to financial rebates, ACSESS members’ participation improves safety records, productivity and morale among temporary employees. There are currently more than 50 industry safety groups in the province of Ontario.

WSIB Safety Group Program:

The WSIB began piloting the Safety Group Program in 2001 to promote workplace self-reliance in health and safety and to give Ontario industries more control over their WSIB premiums.

“We recognized this program as a vehicle to help our members improve safety practices and lower their WSIB premiums,” says McNinch.

Each participating firm selects five safety elements to initiate or improve upon from an "achievement list" provided by the WSIB that includes: hazard recognition and assessment; organization; and leadership. They also agree to attend at least three safety group meetings per year, develop and implement an action plan to address their selected elements and complete a baseline and end-of-year assessment.

According to WSIB Research and Evaluation Branch, surveys conducted before and after implementation, both management and labour believed that things changed for the better. In the closing survey, workers expressed greater satisfaction with the health and safety of their workplace and were less concerned about being injured on the job.

As a sponsor, ACSESS oversees member companies' participation, liaises with the WSIB and other health and safety organizations, recruits new safety group members, measures progress and regularly reports to the WSIB. The association also encourages members to share ideas and pool resources by organizing joint meetings and leadership workshops and helps participants to develop action plans. The rewards to an individual firm can include:

- Improved safety performance affecting the firm's individual experience rating (NEER, CAD-7, or MAP);
- Fewer lost-time injuries and associated costs (the estimated average direct cost to a firm for an LTI is \$35,000 - \$40,000);
- Increased financial competitiveness.

To date, participating ACSESS members have given the program high approval and enjoyed the benefits. Safety Group Program members are also eligible but not guaranteed to receive a rebate on their WSIB premium, based on the proven success of the group's health and safety program. The greatest return, however, is measured in human terms: safer, healthier employees and ultimately, a better corporate image.

“This program provides unparalleled opportunities for networking and mutual support and ensuring the group's success is in everyone's best interest - financial and otherwise,” explains McIninch. “And ACSESS, as always, is there to help.”

ACSESS encourages members to sign on for 2011. Application forms are available online or by visiting the WSIB website. ACSESS also provides workshops with the WSIB, IAPA, OSSA and MOL to show how to implement health and safety improvements throughout the year. To find out more, contact Mary McIninch or Marinella Nesso at 1-888-232-4962 or email [acsess@acsess.org](mailto:acsess@acsess.org).

For more details on the WSIB's program, visit [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca) and look for the "Safety Groups Program" link in the Incentives section of the Prevention menu.

The Association of Canadian Search, Employment and Staffing Services (ACSESS) is the single voice for promoting best practices and ethical standards for the recruitment, employment and staffing services industry in Canada. ACSESS ([www.acsess.org](http://www.acsess.org)) supports advancement of the staffing industry through professional training and certification programs, leading to a Certified Personnel Consultant (CPC) designation. Its more than 1,000 member offices, from professional search to contract staffing firms, help businesses respond to changing needs and offer a broad range of employment opportunities and services to their clients.

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