

WORKSAFEBC

REVIEW DIVISION

Statistical Overview – 1st Quarter 2017

The Review Division

The Review Division was created in 2002 as a result of amendments to the *Workers Compensation Act* ("Act") that made significant changes to the workers' compensation appeal process. These changes, which took effect on March 3, 2003, established two levels of review or appeal for most decisions made by the WorkSafeBC (Workers' Compensation Board) under the *Act*.

The first level is internal involving an independent review of a decision by a Review Officer in the Review Division and the second level is to the external but also independent Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal ("WCAT").

The Review Division's mission is to effectively process reviews and to reduce disputes leading to reviews and appeals by providing:

- Clients with an opportunity to present their case;
- Participants with opportunities to understand and resolve disagreements;
- Clear, fair and consistent decisions; and
- Information and feedback about decision-making to management as part of the overall strategy to improve the quality of decisions.

Purpose of this Report

This statistical overview report is issued at the end of each quarter. The report includes three sections:

- A. Incoming Requests for Review – Information about the volume of requests for review received by the Review Division
- B. Completed Reviews – Information about the volume and outcome of completed reviews
- C. Completed Issues – Information about the volume and outcome of issues decided in completed reviews. A review may involve more than one issue.

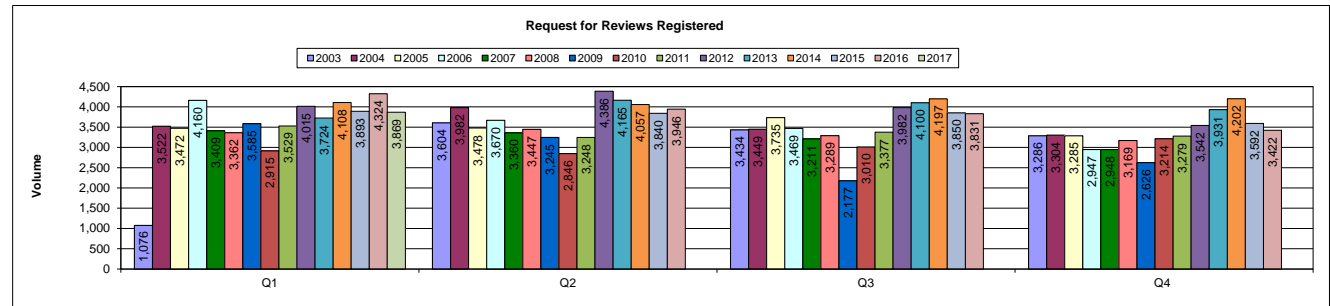
This report is intended primarily for readers who are already familiar with the WorkSafeBC decision-making and the Review and Appeal processes. Additional information about the Review Division can be found at:

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/contact-us/departments-and-services/review>

or by contacting the Review Division directly by phone at 604-214-5411.

A. Incoming Requests for Review

Reviews may be requested on decisions concerning Compensation, Prevention or Assessment matters. It is estimated that reviews are requested on only a very small percentage of decisions made by the Board each year.



* The review and appeals system change arising from Bill 63 did not fully come into effect until March 3, 2003.

Comments:

- Q1 2017 incoming volume increased 13.1% from the previous quarter and was down 10.5% over Q1 2016.
- 96% of the incoming volume concerned Compensation matters, while Prevention and Assessment matters made up 1% and 3%, respectively.

B. Processing Status of Requests for Reviews

Status		Q4 2016	Q1 2017
Outstanding Balance Beginning of Period		3,853	3,825
Registered During Period		3,422	3,869
Reactivated Reviews*		12	5
Less:	Rejected	50	54
	Declined	197	218
	Discarded	97	117
	Abandoned	6	5
	Withdrawn	481	639
	Completed	2,631	2,780
Outstanding Balance end of Period		3,825	3,886

* Reviews that were initially rejected or declined and subsequently reactivated.

Comments:

- The "drop-off rate" of Requests for Review in Q1 2017 was 26.9%, a 2.4% increase over Q4 2016 (24.5%). The "drop off" is comprised as follows: 10.4% rejected/declined/discarded/abandoned (the primary reasons for rejection are late filing, no underlying decision to review, and requests outside of Review Division jurisdiction) and 16.5% reviews withdrawn before the review was completed. The percent of reviews withdrawn increased 2.4% from the previous quarter while the rest of the "drop-offs" decreased 0.1% from the previous quarter.

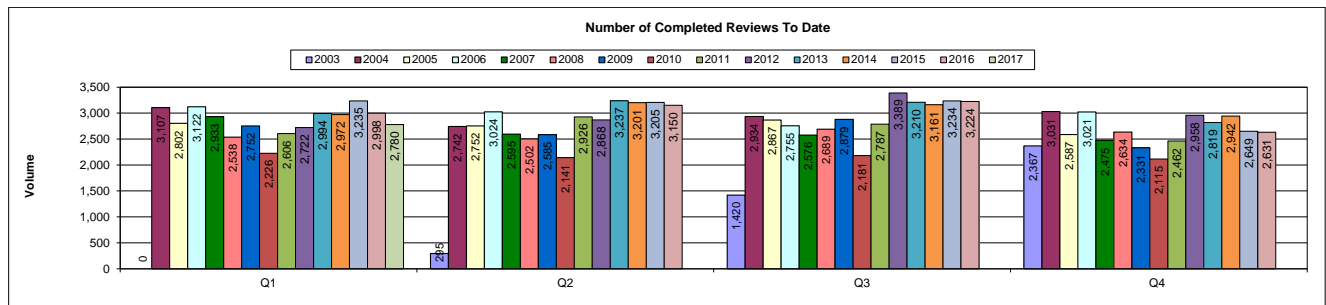
C. Decision on Applications for Extensions of Time to Apply for a Review

Decision	Q4 2016	YTD Q4 2016	Q1 2017	YTD Q1 2017
Allowed	88	388	75	75
Denied	140	529	131	131
Total	228	917	206	206

Comments:

- The number of “late review” requests (filed outside of the 90 days statutory deadline) in Q1 2017 was 14.8% less compared to Q4 2016.
- The percentage of “allowed” extension requests in Q1 2017 was 2.2% less than Q4 2016 (36.4% vs 38.6%)

D. Completed Reviews to Date

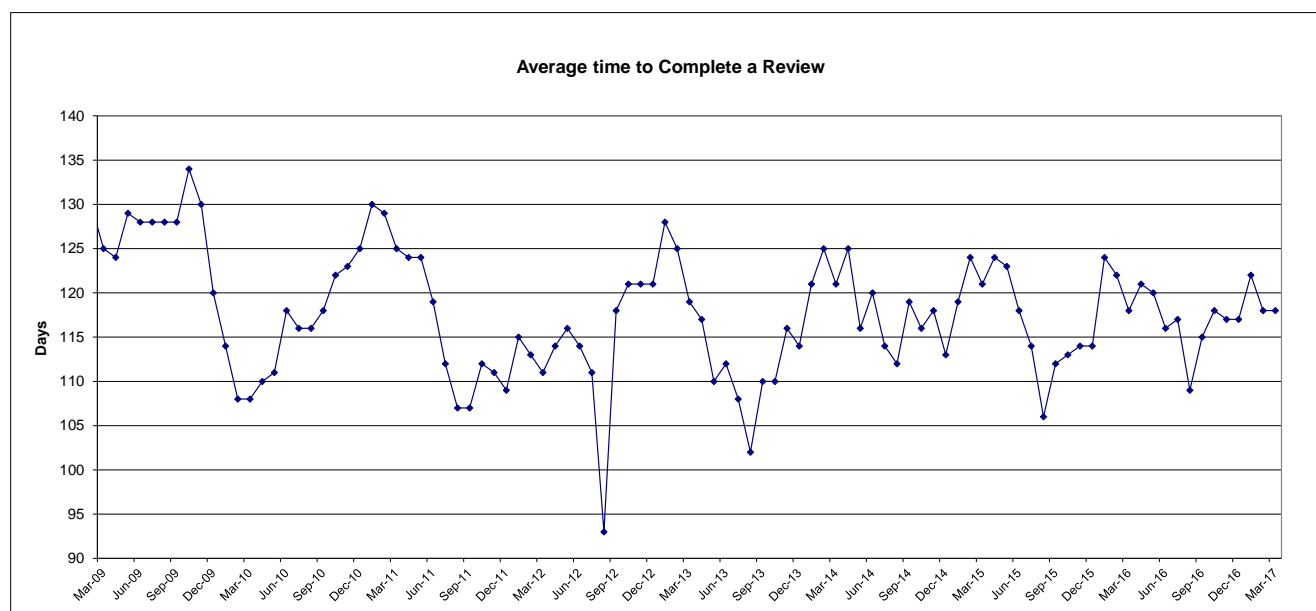


* The review and appeals system change arising from Bill 63 did not come fully into effect until March 3, 2003.

Comments:

The number of completed reviews in Q1 2017 increased 5.7% compared to Q4 2016 and decreased 7.3% from the number completed at the same time last year.

Average Time to Complete a Review



Comments:

- The average number of days to complete a review in Q1 2017 was 119 days (versus 117 days in Q4 2016).

E. Review Outcomes

Each Request for Review usually relates to a specific decision letter from one of the WorkSafeBC operating divisions. As shown in the table below, one of four possible outcomes was coded to each completed review:

Outcome for Completed Reviews*	Q4 2016	% of Q4 2016 Total	Q1 2017	% of Q1 2017 Total
Confirm	1,534	58%	1,636	59%
Cancel	23	1%	13	1%
Vary	747	28%	785	28%
Return to Board	327	12%	346	12%
Total	2,631	100%	2,780	100%

*See appendix for definitions.

F. Issue Outcomes

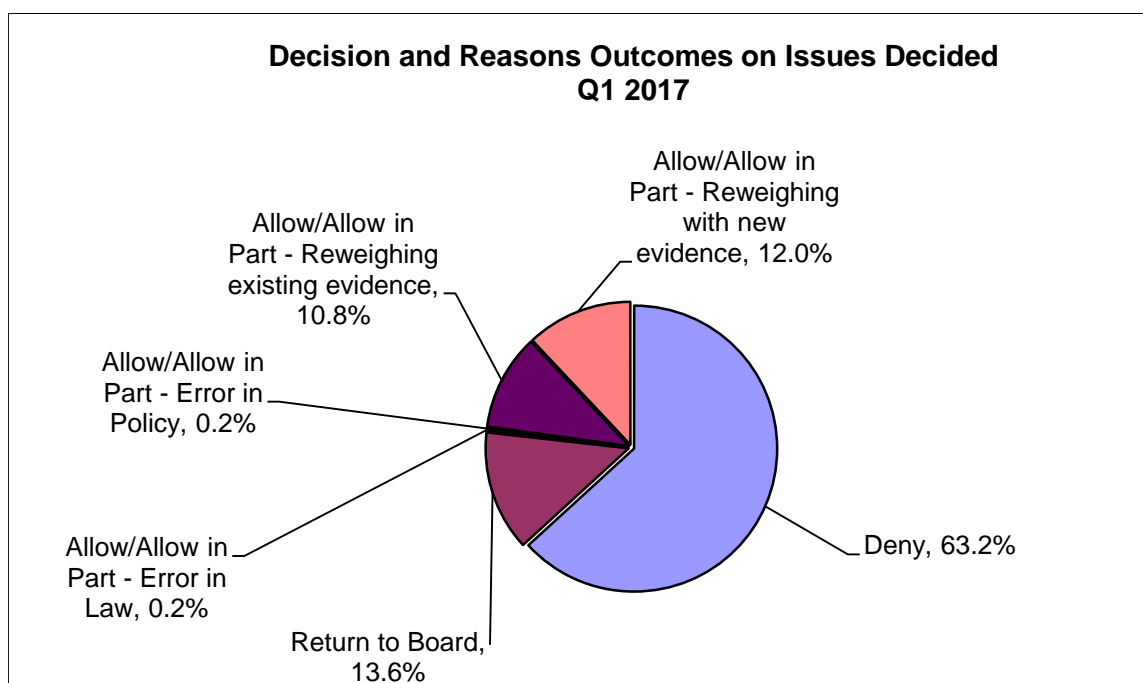
I. Overall Issue Outcomes

Within each decision letter reviewed, there will be one or more issues under review. The Review Division provides statistics on decisions concerning the overall reviews and on the issues under review. As shown in the table below, one of four possible outcomes is coded to each completed issue:

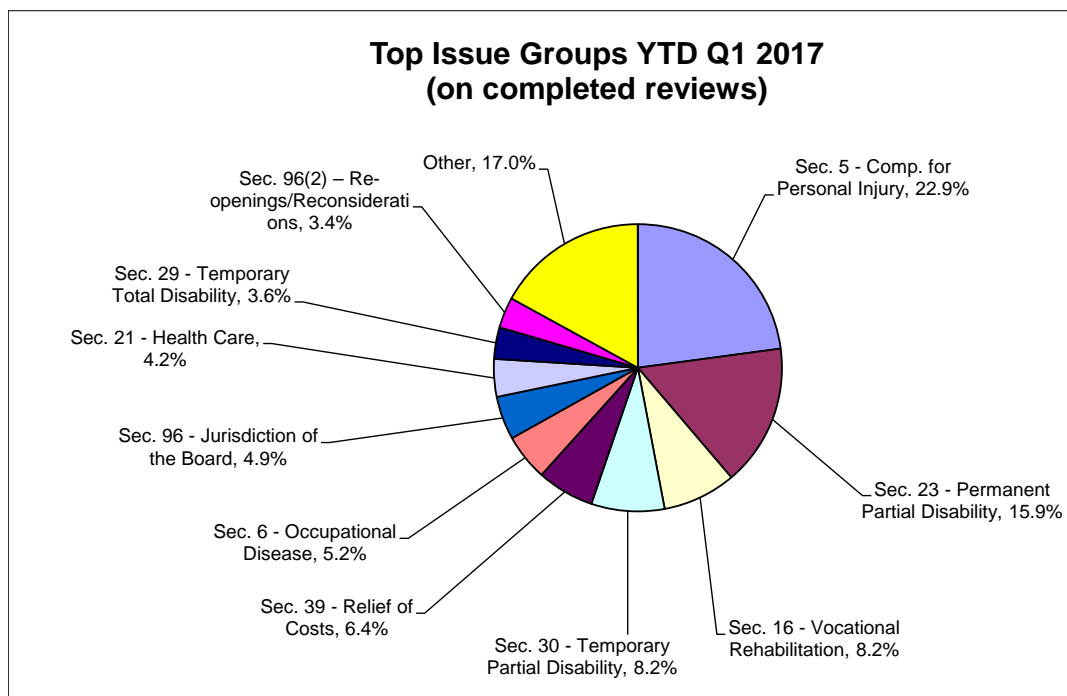
Outcome for Completed Issues*	Q4 2016	% of Q4 2016 Total	Q1 2017	% of Q1 2017 Total
Allow	682	20.3%	694	19.6%
Allow in Part	133	4.0%	128	3.6%
Deny	2,101	62.6%	2237	63.2%
Return to Board	439	13.1%	481	13.6%
Total	3,355	100.0%	3,540	100.0%

*See appendix for definitions.

II. Outcome and Reasons for Issues Decided Year to Date



III. Top 10 Issues under Review



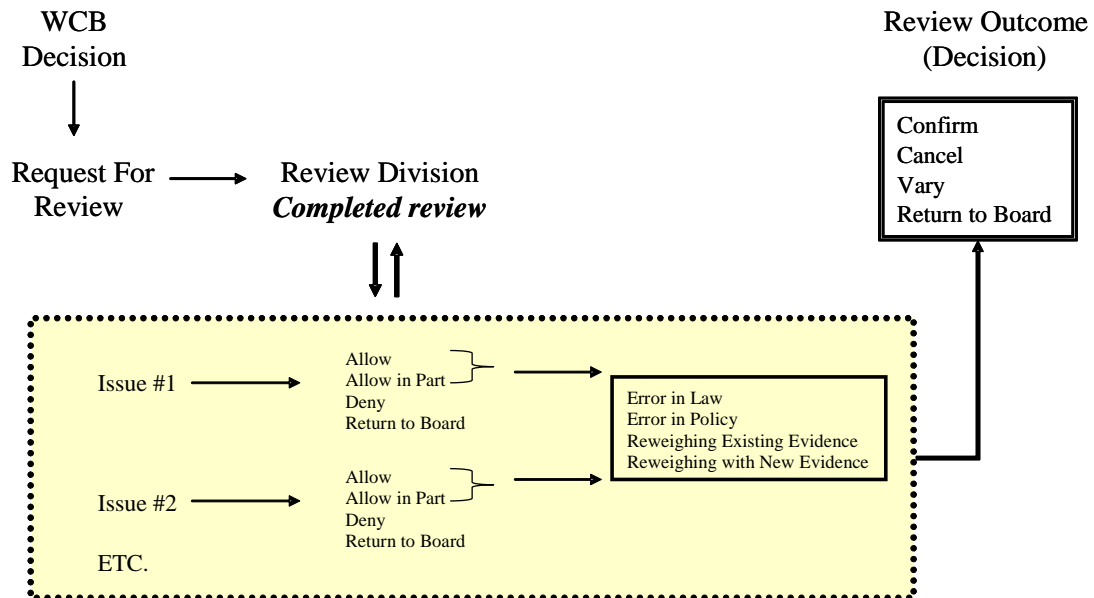
Issue Group	# of Issues YTD Q1 2017	% of YTD Q1 2017 Total
Sec. 5 - Comp. for Personal Injury	810	22.9%
Sec. 23 - Permanent Partial Disability	563	15.9%
Sec. 16 - Vocational Rehabilitation	291	8.2%
Sec. 30 - Temporary Partial Disability	291	8.2%
Sec. 39 - Relief of Costs	227	6.4%
Sec. 6 - Occupational Disease	185	5.2%
Sec. 96 - Jurisdiction of the Board	173	4.9%
Sec. 21 - Health Care	150	4.2%
Sec. 29 - Temporary Total Disability	126	3.6%
Sec. 96(2) – Re-openings/Reconsiderations	122	3.4%
Other	602	17.0%
	3,540	100.0%

Comments:

- Issues are summarized in issue groups which cover a specific topic or area of decision-making.
- 94.9% of review requests for YTD Q1 2017 concern claim-related matters
- The most frequently coded issue YTD Q1 2017 is Section 5 – Compensation for Personal Injury, while Sec 23 – Permanent Partial Disability ranked 2nd.

G. Appendix

I) Linkage of Decisions, Reviews, & Issues



II) Definition of Terms

The Review Division of the Workers' Compensation Board ("Board") has authority under sections 96.2 to 96.5 of the *Workers Compensation Act* ("Act") to review decisions in specific cases made by officers in the Board's Compensation Services, Finance (Assessment decisions), and Prevention Divisions.

Pursuant to Section 96.2(3) of the *Act*, a Request for Review must be filed within 90 days from the date when the Board decision or order was made. Board decisions are normally communicated in a letter or other document that includes an explanation of the reasons for the decision. This letter or document should be submitted with the Request for Review form when initiating a review of the decision to the Review Division.

With each decision letter, one or more issues may be identified and each of these issues may be reviewed. Upon review, Review Officers will determine an outcome for each of the issues. Outcomes of issues may be one of the following four types:

Allow	The Review Officer disagrees with the determination made on an issue covered by a decision or order under review.
Allow in Part	The Review Officer disagrees in part with the determination made on an issue covered by a decision or order under review.
Deny	The Review Officer agrees with the determination made on an issue covered by a decision or order under review.
Return to Board	A referral of a decision or order back to the Compensation Services, Finance or Prevention Division of the Board so that the Division may make a further determination on one or more issues.

For each issue with the outcome of allow or allow in part, a reason must be provided for why. Reasons provided can be one or more of the following:

Error in law	The decision was inconsistent with the <i>Act</i> , a regulation under the <i>Act</i> , or some other law or regulation.
Error in policy	The decision was inconsistent with the published policy of the Board.
Reweighing existing evidence	The decision was changed because the Review Officer reached a different conclusion on the same evidence that was before the initial decision maker.
Reweighing with new evidence	The decision was changed because the Review Officer reached a different conclusion as a result of significant new evidence that was not before the initial decision maker.

Although each review may deal with one or more issues, an outcome for the whole review must be stated using the terms set out in Section 96.4(8)(a) of the *Act*. Outcomes on each review may be one of the following:

Confirm	The Review Officer agrees with the determinations made on every issue covered by a decision or order under review, though not necessarily with the reasons for those determinations.
Cancel	The Review Officer disagrees with the determinations made on every issue covered by a decision or order under review and determines that the decision should be withdrawn without a new decision being substituted.
Return to Board	A referral of a decision or order back to the Compensation Services, Finance or Prevention Division of the Board so that the Division may make a further determination on one or more issues.
Vary	Any decision by a Review Officer other than one that confirms or cancels a decision or order. This covers situations where the Review Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) agrees with the determination made on one or more, but not all, the issues covered by a decision or order under review, or (b) disagrees with the determinations on all issues, and decides to substitute a new decision or order.