



City of Richmond

Report to Council

To: General Purposes Committee
From: Robb Armstrong
Manager, Occupational Health & Safety
Re: UBCM/BCMSA Funded Safety Coordinator

Date: November 1, 2006
File: 05-1600-03-01/2006-Vol
01

Staff Recommendation

Council support the proposed BC Municipal Safety Association funded coordinator position and report back to the UBCM executive.

Robb Armstrong
Manager, Occupational Health & Safety
(4330)

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Budgets	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DW NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES GD <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

The UBCM Executive is seeking endorsement from its members for support of a funded safety coordinator for the BC Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA). (See attached UBCM request). WorkSafe BC (formerly WCB) has suggested UBCM as the appropriate body to approach employers about their interest in supporting this initiative.

The proposition is that WorkSafe BC will administer a levy of a one-cent per \$100 of Assessable Payroll for support of such an initiative. In order to proceed, support is needed from 2/3 of the Assessable Payroll in the municipal classification unit.

WorkSafe BC is introducing a Certificate of Recognition program that may result in an up to 15% reduction of local government assessments; but only if the program is administered through a funded Safety Association.

Earlier this year, the UBCM Executive endorsed, in principal, a one-cent levy through WorkSafe BC, to fund a full time coordinator for the BC Municipal Safety Association.

Analysis

The municipal industry falls under more WorkSafe BC Regulations than any other industry in BC. This challenge creates a need to provincially pool resources to cost effectively meet the needs of all municipalities.

The BCMSA is a not-for-profit association, registered under the Societies Act of BC, representing member municipalities in British Columbia with a current membership of 79 municipalities.

The City of Richmond is a founding member of the BCMSA and sat as a member of its Executive since its formal inception 10+ years ago. Currently all activities of the Association are conducted by volunteers, who are Municipal or Regional District employees with safety responsibilities.

Richmond has benefited from programs developed by the association in examples where the cost would be too great for any individual employer alone to take on. This includes the development of municipal industry specific safety awareness videos, training systems and comprehensive health and safety programs.

An effective method for improving workplace safety is to undertake activities accessible to all municipalities. Preparing and delivering occupational health and safety programs, promoting safe work practices, and developing best practices for high risk work are activities that would be of use to all municipalities and regional districts.

The BCMSA is seeking a stable source of funding through the WorkSafe BC assessment system to fund a full-time coordinator for the Association. Working for and in conjunction with the BCMSA, this full time coordinator would:

- Work with municipalities to help them implement, evaluate and maintain industry-specific health and safety programs
 - Research and develop programs aimed at improving worker safety and reducing injury costs (return to work programs, Partners in Injury Reduction programs, etc.)
 - Offer and/or coordinate accessible, standardized and cost-effective industry-specific training to municipal employers, managers, supervisors, and workers on a wide variety of workplace health and safety topics;
 - Create a library of videos and printed materials available for members' use
 - Act as an industry liaison between WorkSafe BC representatives and industry members
 - Be available to research and answer any health and safety questions or concerns
- Assist employers when required to meet compliance after orders have been written on the municipality by WorkSafe BC

WORKSAFE BC CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION (COR) PROGRAM

WorkSafe BC has initiated the COR Program in several employer classification units. The COR Program is intended to reward organizations who have met or exceeded pre-determined standards in their Health and Safety Programs.

Depending on the level of completion of aspects of the COR Program, the reward to municipalities can be as high as a 15% reduction in the assessment rate. Using the Large employer group as an example, this could result in a savings of between \$3,500 and \$500,000 per year.

In order to participate in a COR program, the entire Classification Unit must be part of a recognized association.

The full-time administrator would take on the role of administering the COR program.

Financial Impact

Based on 2005 payroll and assessment figures offered by WorkSafe BC specifically for the City of Richmond a levy of one-cent per \$100 of Assessable payroll would cost Richmond approximately \$6,219 per year. (This can be accommodated within the overall Workforce fiscal account). Full and successful completion of the COR program could result in a refund of WorkSafe Assessment of up to \$147,390.

Conclusion

The BC Municipal Safety Association requires a full time coordinator/administrator in order to move forward on projects aimed at improving the health and safety of workers within the Local Government Classification Unit, including administration of the Certificate of Recognition program. Without an organization becoming the Certifying Partner there would be no access to

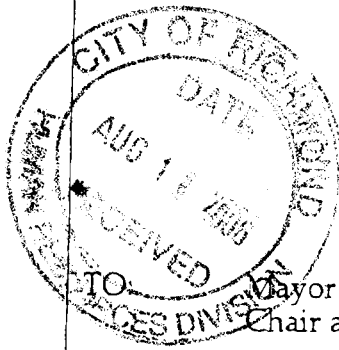
the Certificate of Recognition program and no resultant savings as a consequence. One cent per one hundred dollars of assessable payroll within the Classification Unit would provide sufficient operating funds for this purpose. Return on investment could be realized through cost savings in assessment rates, as a result of reduced injuries and absence duration, and through a refund of assessment through participation in the Certificate of Recognition Program.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robb Armstrong", written in a cursive style.

Robb Armstrong
Manager, Occupational Health & Safety
(4330)

RA:ra

Attachment to the Report dated November 1st, 2006 on
UBCM/BCMSA Funded Safety Coordinator



pc: GM

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0060-20-UBCM)

UNION OF
BRITISH
COLUMBIA
MUNICIPALITIES

FROM: UBCM Executive

DATE: August 15, 2006

RE: BUSINESS CASE - FULL TIME FUNDED
COORDINATOR FOR THE BC MUNICIPAL
SAFETY ASSOCIATION

Suite 60
10551 Shellbridge Way
Richmond
British Columbia
Canada V6X 2W4
604 270 8226
Fax 604 270 9116
ubcm@cmvictor.bc.ca

The UBCM has been approached by the BC Municipal Safety Association to determine the level of interest in funding a full time safety coordinator (see attached proposal). Worksafe BC had suggested UBCM as the appropriate body to approach employers about their interest in supporting this initiative.

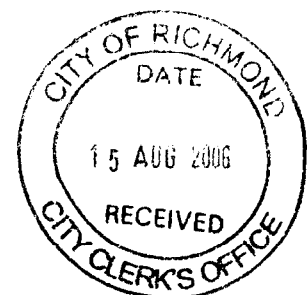
The proposition is that Worksafe BC will administer a levy of a one-cent per \$100 of Assessable Payroll for support of such an initiative. In order to proceed, support is needed from 2/3 of the Assessable Payroll in our classification unit.

We are also advised that Worksafe BC is supporting a Certificate of Recognition program and that may result in an up to 15% reduction of local government assessments; but only if the program is administered through a funded Safety Association.

The UBCM Executive requests all councils and boards to consider this proposal and advise us if you are in support.

Your response by the end of September would be appreciated.

625:001:Business Case Safety Association Memo



BUSINESS CASE – FULL TIME FUNDED COORDINATOR FOR THE BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPAL SAFETY ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The British Columbia Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA) is a not-for-profit association, registered under the Societies Act of BC, representing member municipalities in British Columbia. Membership is voluntary and open to all municipalities and Regional Districts in BC; the Association currently has 79 members. All activities of the Association are conducted by volunteers, who are Municipal or Regional District Safety Officers.

It has long been recognized that the municipal industry covers more WorkSafe Regulations than any other industry in BC. This challenge, combined with the fact that over 90% of municipal employers are very small and do not have dedicated safety personnel, creates a need to provincially pool resources to cost-effectively meet the needs of all municipalities.

An effective method for improving workplace safety is to undertake activities accessible to all municipalities. Preparing and delivering occupational health and safety programs, promoting safe work practices, and developing best practices for high risk work are activities that would be of use to all municipalities and regional districts. Due to the regular workload demands placed on municipal safety officers, it is impossible for volunteers to complete all of these activities, while maintaining active employment in municipalities or Regional Districts. It is also not possible to provide one-on-one assistance to municipalities when it is needed.

The BCMSA is seeking a stable source of funding through the WorkSafe BC assessment system to fund a full-time coordinator for the Association. Working for and in conjunction with the BCMSA, this full time coordinator would:

- Work with municipalities to help them implement, evaluate and maintain industry-specific health and safety programs
- Research and develop programs aimed at improving worker safety and reducing injury costs (return to work programs, Partners in Injury Reduction programs, etc.)
- Offer and/or coordinate accessible, standardized and cost-effective industry-specific training to municipal employers, managers, supervisors, and workers on a wide variety of workplace health and safety topics;
- Create a library of videos and printed materials available for members' use
- Act as an industry liaison between WorkSafe BC representatives and industry members
- Be available to research and answer any health and safety questions or concerns
- Assist employers when required to meet compliance after orders have been written on the municipality by WorkSafe BC
- Increase Occupational Health and Safety Awareness at these levels:
 - Elected officials
 - Administrators
 - Public Works Supervisors
 - Joint Health and Safety Committees

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PROPOSED FUNDING

Funding at a rate of one cent (\$0.01) per \$100 of assessable payroll would generate sufficient annual operating funds, estimated to be approximately \$150,000.00. Operating funds would cover salary and administrative expenses, as well as the costs to facilitate programs on behalf of all municipalities. Activities undertaken for specific municipalities would be on a cost-recovery basis (i.e. traveling training programs).

In 2005, there were 474 employers registered in the Classification Unit of Local Government and Related Operations.

Employer Size	Assessable Payroll	#
Large	$\geq \$1,600,000$	79
Medium	\$600,000-\$1,599,999	57
Small	\$150,000-\$599,999	105
Very Small	$< \$160,000$	216
Unknown		17
Total		474

WorkSafe BC Policy requires that 2/3 of the Classification Unit, determined by assessable payroll, agree with the funding formula.

Annual cost per large municipality would range from a low of approximately \$180 per year, to a high of approximately \$24,000 for the largest Municipality in the Province.

BENEFITS

Injury rates for most employer groups in the Local Government Classification have shown a decrease over the past four years. A drop in the number of injuries or in injury duration for even one large employer in the group, can have a corresponding positive effect on the Assessment.

COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER'S ASSESSMENT/\$100 ASSESSABLE PAYROLL

Below is the base rate for assessments over the past six years:

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1.79	1.77	1.87	1.61	1.58	1.41

There may be numerous reasons for the improvement in assessment rates. The two most likely reasons are (1) more diligence by the Employers and by WorkSafe BC to bring injured workers back on modified duties, reducing the cost of claims, and (2) improvements in safety programs brought about, in part, by the activities of the BC Municipal Safety Association and its members.

WORKSAFE BC CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION (COR) PROGRAM

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Depending on the level of completion of aspects of the COR Program, the reward to municipalities can be as high as a 15% reduction in the assessment rate. Using the Large employer group as an example, this could result in a savings of between \$3,500 and \$500,000 per year.

In order to participate in a COR program, the entire Classification Unit must be part of a recognized association.

The full-time administrator would take on the role of administering the COR program.

CONCLUSION

The BC Municipal Safety Association requires a full time coordinator/administrator in order to move forward on projects aimed at improving the health and safety of workers within the Local Government Classification Unit. One cent pre one hundred dollars of assessable payroll within the Classification Unit, would provide sufficient operating funds for this purpose. Return on investment would be realized through cost savings in assessment rates, as a result of reduced injuries and absence duration.

PROPOSED FUNDING

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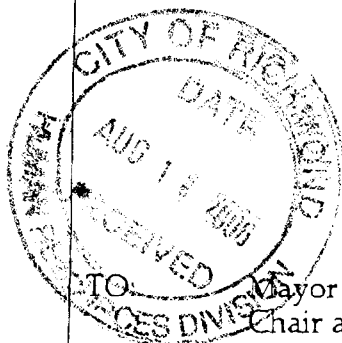
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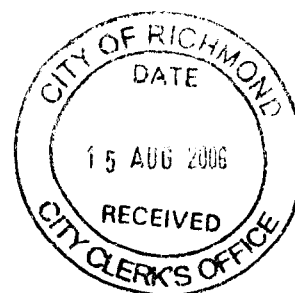
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