

BOARD POLICIES

CLAIMS

At the Workers' Compensation Board meeting held December 16, 1982, the following policy was agreed upon and adopted.

No. 75 Noise Induced Hearing Loss Claims

A claim shall be opened upon receipt of initial application and the following information shall be obtained prior to adjudication.

1. Work history to include, as exact as possible, periods of employment in and out of the Yukon, names and addresses of all employers.
2. Personal history - does worker belong to a gun club, noisy sporting activities, ever served in the armed forces, etc.?
3. Nature of occupation over the years and whether noise factors were prevalent with the various employers. (Did the worker feel that the employment was noisy?)
4. Types of machinery, equipment, truck and tractor units, etc., being operated and/or if worker is working near such equipment, the length of exposure to such noise factors and if possible, noise level readings in these areas.
5. Is the worker wearing specified ear protectors where applicable and, if so, for how long.
6. The worker should be questioned as to when he feels his hearing loss started; when he first sought medical attention and from whom; the names of his attending physicians; where and on what dates he has had audiograms taken. Copies of all audiograms and medical reports shall be obtained.
7. Confirmation of employment periods must be obtained from each employer, and any opinions as to the exposure of noise the worker may have been exposed to while in his employment. This information is to be obtained only if the noise exposure is significant.
8. The worker shall have an audiogram at the Board's expense.
9. After the above information is obtained the Medical Consultant will review all the information and give his opinion as to whether the worker has an induced hearing loss and if so, whether it is attributable to industrial noise exposure; if such be the case, he will give an opinion as to whether it is due to current or previous employment and in what proportion.

10. If in the opinion of the Board's Medical Consultant the findings confirm an industrial noise-induced hearing loss of a disabling degree, the worker shall be referred to a hearing specialist and a detailed examination report will be secured. Upon receipt of this report the file will be referred to the Medical Consultant for his opinion of the degree of disability based on 4 frequencies, i.e. 500, 1,000, 2,000, and 3,000 Hertz, as applied to the partial hearing loss table used by the Board. The file will then be referred to the Board for the appropriate award.
11. If there is no industrial hearing loss the worker is to be so advised, and the medical costs shall be charged to Administration.
12. If the worker has a hearing loss but such is attributable to non-industrial causes, he is to be so advised and also advised of his right to appeal and the medical costs shall be charged to Administration.
13. In the event that an industrial hearing loss is established but is not of a disabling degree, the worker is to be advised, and further audiograms shall be done annually. If the disability increases, then a further review will be done by the Medical Consultant.
14. Where the disability is due to exposure with more than one employer under the Act, the cost experience shall be prorated between the employer's and/or industrial classifications concerned.
15. Where there is confirmed exposure in other Provinces the other parties to the Hearing Loss Agreement are to be notified of the filing of the claim.
16. If the provision of a hearing aid is recommended such is to be provided, subject to approval of the Board's Medical Consultant.
17. Providing a worker has suffered significant exposure to noise in industry in the Yukon, and has an assessable degree of noise induced hearing loss, he shall receive an award based upon the total hearing loss present regardless of previous industrial exposure outside the Yukon.
18. If a worker has very little exposure in the Yukon, then the worker should be advised to submit his claim to the Province which has the most exposure.
19. Commencement date of disability is date of first audiogram showing hearing loss.



B. Booth
Chairman