

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

Limited-Scope Audit

**Department of Labor: Reviewing the
Effectiveness of Accident Prevention Programs
Required Under the Workers' Compensation Law**

**A Report to the Legislative Post Audit Committee
By the Legislative Division of Post Audit
State of Kansas
July 2005**

Legislative Post Audit Committee

Legislative Division of Post Audit

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94PA38	Reviewing the Workers' Compensation Claim By Former Insurance Commissioner Fletcher Bell	August 1994
93PA35	Reviewing Selected Issues Related to Workers' Compensation	February 1993
93PA31	Examining Increases in Expenditures from the State Workers' Compensation Fund	November 1992



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July 15, 2005

To: Members, Legislative Post Audit Committee

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This report contains the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from our completed performance audit, *Department of Labor: Reviewing the Effectiveness of Accident Prevention Programs Required Under the Workers' Compensation Law (Limited Scope Audit)*.

The report includes a recommendation for the Department to evaluate the role of the Program in helping ensure workplace safety; if officials think it is not necessary, they should request that the 2006 Legislature repeal existing requirements for the Program. If the Program remains in place, we recommend several changes to improve its effectiveness.

We would be happy to discuss these recommendations or any other items in the report with any legislative committees, individual legislators, or other State officials.

Barbara J. Hinton
Legislative Post Auditor

Get the Big Picture

Read these Sections and Features:

1. **Executive Summary** - an overview of the questions we asked and the answers we found.
2. **Conclusion and Recommendations** - are referenced in the Executive Summary and appear in a box after each question in the report.
3. **Agency Response** - also referenced in the Executive Summary and is the last Appendix.

Helpful Tools for Getting to the Detail

- In most cases, an “**At a Glance**” description of the agency or department appears within the first few pages of the main report.
- **Side Headings** point out key issues and findings.
- **Charts/Tables** may be found throughout the report, and help provide a picture of what we found.
- **Narrative text boxes** can highlight interesting information, or provide detailed examples of problems we found.
- **Appendices** may include additional supporting documentation, along with the audit **Scope Statement** and **Agency Response(s)**.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEGISLATIVE DIVISION OF POST AUDIT

Is the Department of Labor's Oversight of Accident Prevention Programs Sufficient To Ensure That Workers' Compensation Insurers Are Providing the Type of Programs the Law Envisioned?

The Legislature created the Accident Prevention Program in 1993 to improve workplace safety and reduce accident claims. page 3
In 1993, the Legislature adopted major changes to the State's workers' compensation law. One change required each insurance company that provided workers' compensation insurance to offer accident prevention services.

The Department's implementation of its Accident Prevention Program has changed significantly over time. Initially, Program staff examined accident prevention records at individual insurance companies and inspected some employers who had received services to assess the quality and thoroughness of the accident prevention services insurance companies were providing. In 1995, in response to insurance company objections, the Department changed its focus from reviewing insurance companies to inspecting employers. In 1997, the Department decided to not maintain a separate Accident Prevention team, and combined those positions with other staff who conducted workplace safety inspections of private-sector and public-sector employers. page 3

In our 1999 audit of the Program, we concluded that this level of oversight was inadequate because the Department was doing almost nothing to ensure that insurance companies complied with the law.

The 2000 Legislature imposed a higher standard on insurance companies and strengthened the Department's oversight role for the Program. page 5
In response to our 1999 audit, the Legislature made it mandatory, not optional, for insurance companies to provide accident prevention services when an employer requested them. The Legislature also clarified that the Department could inspect insurance companies on both a random basis and in response to employer complaints, and that the Department could audit insurance companies' accident prevention services.

The Department of Labor still is providing inadequate oversight regarding the Accident Prevention Program. page 5
Department officials haven't made any significant changes to their oversight of insurance companies' accident prevention services since the law was changed in 2000. The Department still doesn't do any on-site examinations of insurance company data, and it accepts insurance companies' self-reported information about what's being done without checking its accuracy.

We noted a number of potential problems with the current practice of assessing the adequacy of accident prevention services only during regular workplace safety inspections. They include: page 6

- *The data-collection form that field staff use is deficient because it doesn't require staff to gather the information that's needed to assess whether adequate accident prevention services were provided.*
- *It's not clear that workplace safety inspection staff are asking employers about the accident prevention services their insurance companies may have provided.*
- *Through the inspection process, Department staff don't identify a sufficient number of employers who have requested accident prevention services (only 37 in 2004) to gauge the adequacy of accident prevention services Statewide.*

We also found that the resources devoted to the Program have been overstated since fiscal year 1999. We determined that the Department's staff's time and cost data for the Program were unreliable because staff who perform workplace safety inspections were directed to fill out time sheets that didn't reflect the actual time spent on the Program.

Conclusion page 9
Recommendations page 10
APPENDIX A: Scope Statement page 12
APPENDIX B: Agency Response page 14

This audit was conducted by Joe Lawhon. Cindy Lash was the audit manager. If you need any additional information about the audit's findings, please contact Mr. Lawhon at the Division's offices. Our address is: Legislative Division of Post Audit, 800 SW Jackson Street, Suite 1200, Topeka, Kansas 66612. You also may call us at (785) 296-3792, or contact us via the Internet at LPA@lpa.state.ks.us.

Department of Labor: Reviewing the Effectiveness of Accident Prevention Programs Required Under the Workers' Compensation Law

State Workers' Compensation laws require each insurance company or group-funded self-insurance plan providing workers' compensation insurance coverage in Kansas to maintain and provide accident prevention programs for the businesses they insure. The law states that these programs shall be adequate to furnish the accident prevention services required by the nature of the operations of the policyholders, and shall include surveys, recommendations, training programs, consultations, analyses of accident causes, industrial hygiene, and industrial health services. The programs are to be provided by field-safety representatives who must meet certain requirements spelled out in the law.

The Secretary of Labor is authorized to inspect insurance companies and group-funded self-insurance plans as necessary to determine the adequacy of their accident prevention programs. The law doesn't require the Secretary to inspect every insurance company or plan. The Secretary also has authority to investigate employer complaints about such programs.

At least once each year, each insurance company or group-funded self-insurance plan providing workers' compensation insurance in Kansas is supposed to submit to the Director of Workers' Compensation detailed information on the types of accident prevention programs it offers to policyholders, who they were provided to, how much money was spent on them, and the like.

Funding for the Department of Labor's oversight of accident prevention programs comes from the Workers' Compensation Fee Fund. The source of that funding is assessments levied against insurance providers.

Recently, legislators have expressed concerns that the Department's oversight activities don't ensure that this program is meeting its intended purpose.

This limited-scope performance audit answers the following question.

Is the Department of Labor's oversight of accident prevention programs sufficient to ensure that workers' compensation insurers are providing the type of programs the law envisioned?

To answer this question, we reviewed State law, Division of Workers' Compensation annual reports, accident prevention program annual reports, a recent monitoring report prepared by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), our 1999 K-GOAL audit of the Department of Human Resources entitled *Reviewing the Implementation of the 1993 Changes to the Workers' Compensation Laws*, and other program records and documents. We also interviewed various Division of Workers' Compensation and Department of Labor officials.

A copy of the scope statement the Legislative Post Audit Committee approved for this audit is included in Appendix A. In conducting this audit, we followed the applicable government auditing standards set forth by the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Is the Department of Labor's Oversight of Accident Prevention Programs Sufficient To Ensure That Workers' Compensation Insurers Are Providing the Type of Programs the Law Envisioned?

ANSWER IN BRIEF *The Legislature created the accident prevention program in 1993 to help improve workplace safety and to reduce accident claims. Initially, Department staff examined accident prevention records of individual insurance companies and inspected some employers who had received services, but in 1995 they stopped examining insurance company records. The Legislature imposed a higher standard on insurance companies and strengthened the Department's oversight role following the issuance of our 1999 audit, which pointed out that the Department wasn't ensuring that insurance companies complied with the law. The Department still is providing inadequate oversight of insurance companies' accident prevention services. In addition, the Department's record-keeping system is so bad that its cost and activity data for the accident prevention program are unreliable. These and other findings are described in the sections that follow.*

The Legislature Created the Accident Prevention Program in 1993 To Improve Workplace Safety and Reduce Accident Claims

In 1993, the Legislature adopted major changes to the State's workers' compensation law. One change, which was intended to help improve workplace safety and reduce the number of workers' compensation claims, required each insurance company or group-funded self-insurance plan (company) that provided workers' compensation insurance to offer accident prevention services.

The law gave the Department of Human Resources (now Labor) legal access to insurance company records, and made the Department responsible for determining the adequacy of the accident prevention services each insurance company provided. *Figure I-1* on the next page illustrates how the oversight process works.

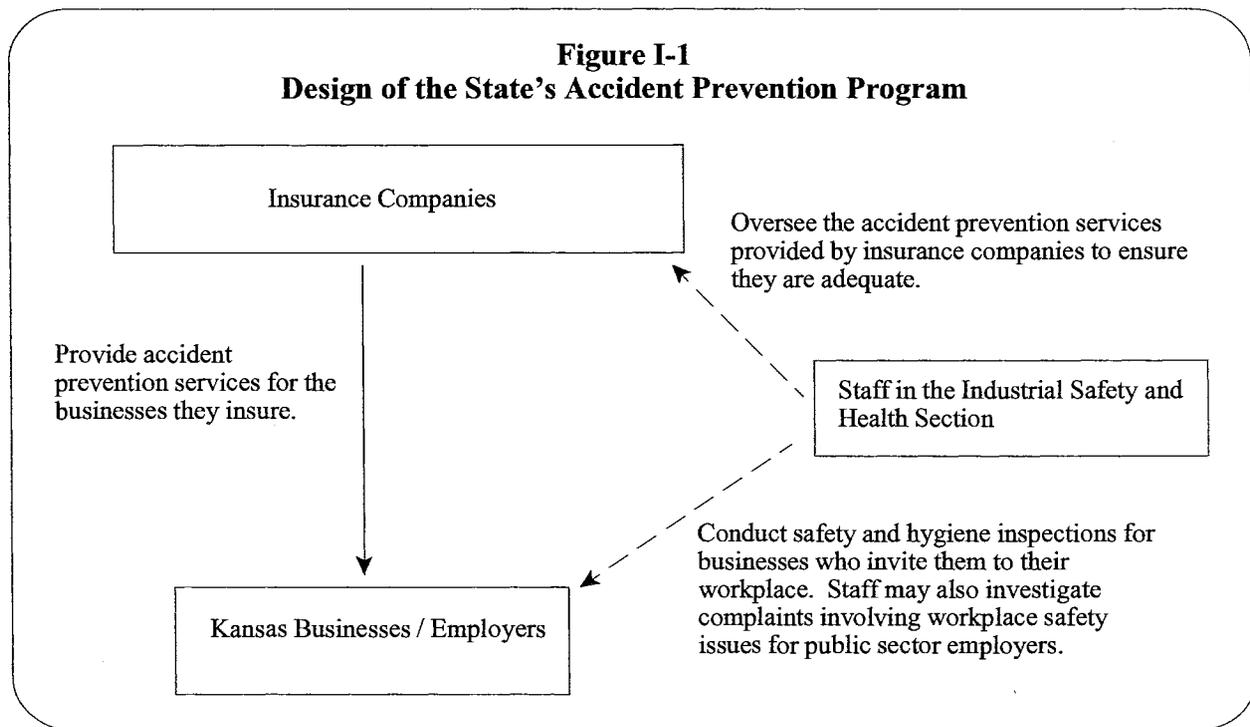
The Department's implementation of its Accident Prevention Program has changed significantly over time. Those changes are summarized below:

- Initially, Department officials told us, Program staff examined accident prevention records at individual insurance companies and inspected some employers who had received services to assess the quality and thoroughness of the accident prevention services insurance companies were providing.
- In 1995, in response to insurance company objections to having their records reviewed, the Department changed its focus from reviewing insurance companies to inspecting employers only. The Department had a seven-person Accident Prevention team, and field inspectors performed safety inspections of employers that invited staff to their work place. This allowed staff to identify unsafe working conditions

and to work with these employers to make corrections, but lost the emphasis on whether insurance companies were providing adequate prevention programs. Staff continued to request annual summary data from insurance companies about the services they provided, but didn't evaluate those services or verify any of the data submitted.

- In 1997, the Department decided to not maintain a separate Accident Prevention team. The seven positions were combined with other staff in the Industrial Safety and Health Section who conducted workplace safety inspections of private-sector employers (done under contract with OSHA) and of public-sector employers (as authorized by State law). Under this process, all inspection staff were supposed to ask during every workplace safety inspection whether the employer had requested accident prevention services from its insurance carrier and, if so, whether the employer was satisfied with those services. Department officials told us this line of questioning should take no more than 30 minutes to complete, and a typical inspection will take 2 days on average to complete, so it was easy to include this work in the workplace safety inspection.

In our 1999 audit of the Program, we concluded that this level of oversight was inadequate, because the Department was doing almost nothing to ensure that insurance companies complied with the law. Staff weren't verifying the accuracy of information submitted by insurance companies about the services they provided, and staff had limited first-hand knowledge about the extent of the accident prevention services actually provided by insurance companies.



The 2000 Legislature Imposed a Higher Standard On Insurance Companies and Strengthened the Department's Oversight Role for the Program

In response to our 1999 audit, Department officials indicated they would re-examine the purpose of the Accident Prevention Program, with the key question being how much and what type of oversight of insurance companies was needed to fulfill the Department's statutory mandates. Subsequently, the 2000 Legislature made several changes to State law which affected the Department's Accident Prevention Program and the accident prevention services provided by insurance companies. Those changes are summarized below:

- Previously, the law only required insurance companies to offer accident prevention services. The law was amended to make it mandatory, not optional, for insurance companies to provide accident prevention services when an employer requested them.
- Previously, the law specified that the Department could conduct inspections as necessary to determine the adequacy of the accident prevention services provided by each insurance company. The Legislature acted to strengthen the Department's oversight role in this area by clarifying that:
 - inspections of insurance companies could be done on both a random basis and in response to employer complaints
 - insurance companies' accident prevention services could be audited

The Department of Labor Still Is Providing Inadequate Oversight Regarding the Accident Prevention Program

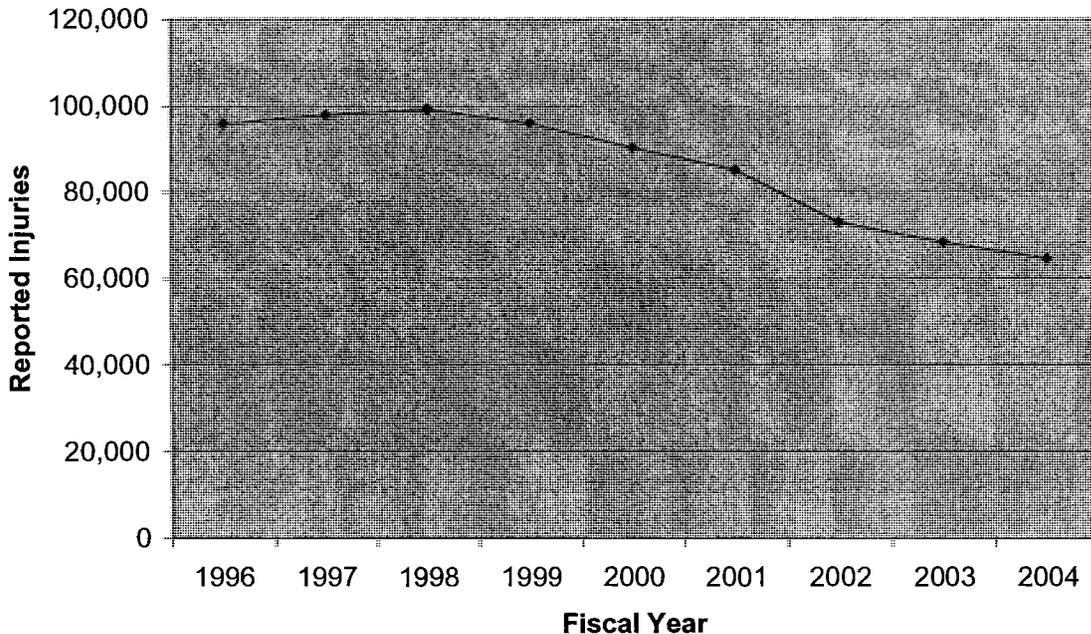
Program statistics and data suggest that the work place is becoming safer and that employers aren't dissatisfied with the quantity and quality of accident prevention services provided by insurance companies. For example:

- *Figure 1-2* on the next page shows that the number of workers' compensation claims filed has declined since 1998.
- The box on page 7 shows that insurance companies are reporting to the Department that they're providing significant amounts of accident prevention services to employers.
- Department staff told us they hadn't received a complaint about accident prevention services in at least six years.

However, our review of the Department's Program and its data raised the following concerns:

The Department still doesn't do any on-site examinations of insurance company data. Department officials told us they haven't made any significant changes to their oversight of insurance companies' accident prevention services since the law was changed in 2000. They said they would send staff to examine an insurance company's records if there was a need, but they haven't identified a situation that presented such a need.

**Figure I-2
Reported Workers Compensation Injuries
Fiscal Years 1996 - 2004**



The Department accepts insurance companies' self-reported information about what's being done, without checking its accuracy. Each year, Department staff survey insurance companies to determine which companies have provided workers' compensation coverage. Those that have are required to submit various information about the accident prevention services they provided to covered employers. Department staff still don't verify the accuracy of any of the self-reported information being submitted.

We noted a number of potential problems with the current practice of assessing the adequacy of accident prevention services only during regular workplace safety inspections. As noted earlier, field staff are supposed to ask during a safety inspection whether the employer sought any accident prevention services from its insurance company, and if so, staff are to gather additional information. The problems we identified are summarized below:

- The data-collection form that field staff use is deficient because it doesn't require staff to gather the information that's need to assess whether adequate accident prevention services were provided. The form only requires staff to find out what types of services were provided, such as training materials, reviewing accidents to determine causes and trends, and surveying employees to find out

Information Reported by Insurance Companies Providing Accident Prevention Services

Each year, Department staff survey insurance companies and group-funded plans and ask them to provide various information related to the accident prevention services they provide. Department staff compile this information and submit it to the Director of Workers Compensation. The most recent report available was submitted on September 10, 2004, and includes information for services provided in calendar year 2003. **None of the information has been verified by Department staff.** That report shows the following:

- 223 entities provided workers compensation insurance coverage to 55,516 Kansas employers.
- they reported spending \$7.6 million on accident prevention services
- they received requests for accident prevention services and provided:
 - 2,071 safety inspections
 - 20 hygiene inspections
 - 534 training sessions
 - they provided 7,284 non-requested visits to check on safety and hygiene in the workplace

Insurance companies actually have a vested interest in helping employers maintain an accident-free workplace. By doing so, they reduce the number of claims filed and the corresponding amount of claims paid. This allows them to increase their profit and reduce the premiums they charge to provide workers compensation coverage.

what hazards they think are present. The form doesn't require staff to find out if the insurance company provided the services that the employer sought, whether they were provided promptly, or assess whether the services provided were adequate, and if not, why not.

- It's not clear that workplace safety inspection staff are asking employers about the accident prevention services their insurance companies may have provided. Department staff conducted nearly 2,000 safety inspections in fiscal year 2004 at the request of employers or in response to a complaint, but only 620 accident prevention service forms were turned in. Department officials don't know how many forms should have been turned in. Some inspections would not have required a form, such as a follow-up inspection or when both a hygiene and safety inspection were performed, but officials said they would have to review each inspection report to determine how many accident prevention forms should have been completed. Department officials also told us they thought inspectors might not be filling out the forms as often as required. However, it's also possible inspectors aren't asking about the accident prevention services employers are receiving.

In addition, until this audit started, Department staff didn't electronically tally the accident prevention information collected through these inspections, nor was it tallied on an on-going basis. This made it nearly impossible for staff to know which inspectors were and were not turning in forms, and what data they had collected.

- Through this inspection process, Department staff don't identify a sufficient number of employers who have requested accident prevention services to gauge the adequacy of accident prevention services Statewide. Of the 620 employers for whom a form was completed in 2004, only 37 said they had requested accident prevention services from their insurance companies. It is impossible for Department officials to accurately assess whether adequate

accident prevention services are being provided by insurance companies Statewide when only 37 cases are reviewed.

We also determined that in one of these 37 cases, the inspector reported that the employer said accident prevention services had been requested on several occasions, but the insurance company had not provided the requested assistance. The employer said the insurance company sent several training videos, but the employer already had them. Department officials told us they didn't follow-up on this situation. This is problematic because this type of situation is exactly what the Legislature is trying to avoid. Clearly, Department officials have not fulfilled their statutory responsibility in this case.

The resources devoted to the Program have been overstated since fiscal year 1999. During this audit, we determined that the Department's staff time and cost data for the Accident Prevention Program were unreliable for the following reasons:

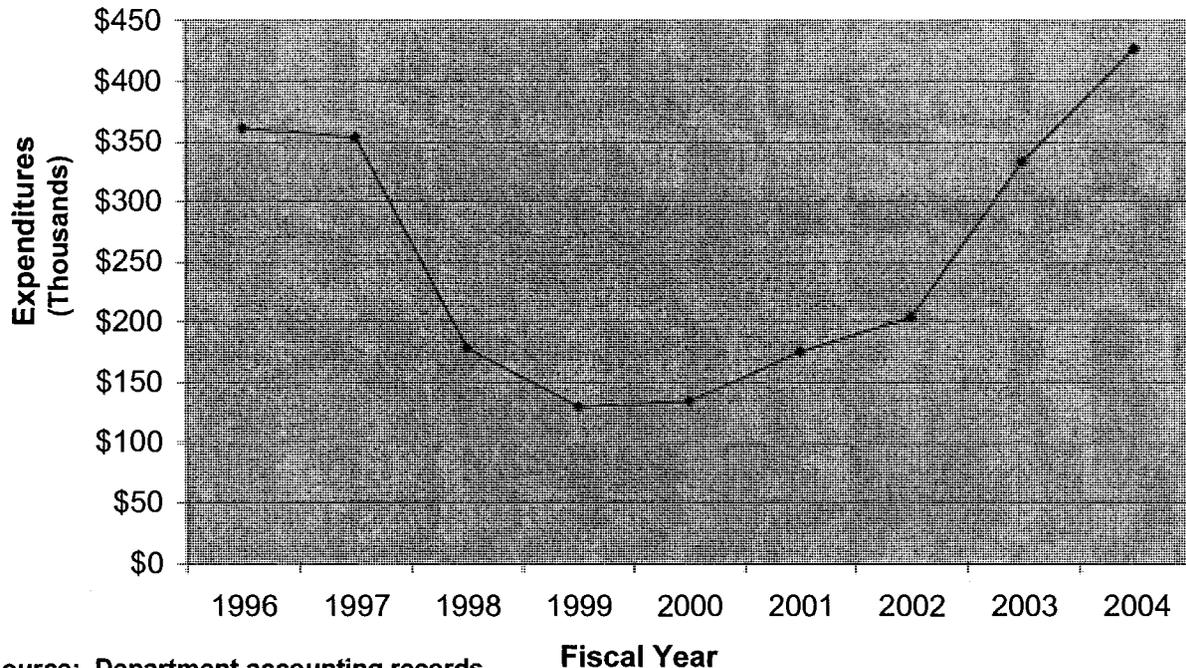
- Staff who perform workplace safety inspections were directed to fill out time sheets that didn't reflect the actual time spent on the Program. Workplace safety inspections are conducted by staff in the Industrial Safety and Health Section, who might charge their time to any of four different codes depending on their work activity: administrative, private sector, public sector, and accident prevention inspections.

Since fiscal year 1999, staff have been instructed to report their time according to predetermined percentages. In the last several years, those assigned percentages have ranged from 25% to 50% on accident prevention services, up to 75% on OSHA, and between 12% and 50% on the State inspection program. However, because staff typically spend a maximum of 30 minutes on accident prevention for every two-day inspection, it's inconceivable that they were spending between 25% to 50% of their time on accident prevention services.

The former Section manager said he implemented this system to ensure that all federal OSHA grant moneys were spent. Following an OSHA audit which identified certain issues related to time reporting, Department officials investigated the time reporting practices and in April 2005 directed staff in the Industrial Safety and Health Section to begin reporting the time actually spent on each activity.

- Because staff time spent on inspections represents the largest share of the costs for this Program, the expenditures being attributed to the Program likely have been overstated as well. As shown in *Figure I-3* on the next page, the Department has reported that Program expenditures have risen from about \$130,000 in 1999 to more than \$400,000 in 2004. Given the way inspectors were directed to fill out their timesheets, there's no way to know how much actually has been spent on this or any other Program, but the amount spent on accident prevention services is likely to be significantly less than the Department reported.

Figure I-3
Reported Expenditures for the Accident Prevention
Fiscal Years 1996-2004



Source: Department accounting records.

Conclusion: This is the second time we've reviewed the Department of Labor's oversight of the accident prevention services that insurance companies are required to provide when insured businesses request it. In both cases, we've concluded that the Department's oversight has been inadequate—largely because it doesn't independently assess the adequacy of those services, and doesn't verify any of the information insurance companies report to it about such services. Requiring inspectors during regular workplace safety inspections to ask employers whether and what type of accident prevention services their insurance companies have provided does not rise to the level of oversight.

The Department should provide oversight of the Accident Prevention Program that's commensurate with its statutory responsibilities and with the level of funding it receives. If the Department or the Legislature think such oversight is not necessary or is not a good use of limited staff resources—given the financial incentives insurance companies already have to minimize on-the-job injuries among their insureds, the drop in the number of on-the-job injuries, and the lack of formal complaints about the Program—the law should be amended and the level of funding provided to implement this Program should be correspondingly reduced or eliminated.

Recommendations:

1. To help ensure that its staff resources are used most effectively to promote workplace safety, Department of Labor officials should evaluate the role of the accident prevention oversight program in the workplace safety effort. If the Department determines that such an oversight program—even if revamped—will do little to help protect workers, it should request that the 2006 Legislature repeal existing requirements for the program.
2. If the oversight program remains in place, it should be restructured significantly to be operated in an efficient and effective manner. That could be accomplished by doing such things as the following:
 - a. Surveying a sample of employers each year from the list of employers insurance companies report as having received accident prevention services to ask whether the services were provided and, if so, whether they were timely, sufficient, useful, and the like. Any responses that indicated unsatisfactory action by the insurance companies should be follow up on.
 - b. Reviewing records at a small sample of insurance companies each year to verify selected elements of the activity data reported to the Department on accident prevention services. These data includes such things as the number of employers who received services, and the qualifications of those who provided the services. Department staff also could evaluate the quality and completeness of the accident prevention information provided by various employers—such as whether their training programs appear to cover the right areas in sufficient detail.
 - c. Deciding whether it makes sense to continue to have field inspectors inquire about accident prevention services when conducting safety consultation. If that process is continued, Department officials should revise the data collection worksheet to require field inspectors to obtain information from employers about the adequacy of the accident prevention services provided, to review relevant documentation showing what services were provided, and to record their assessments as to the adequacy of those services. Department officials also will need to develop a system to ensure that field inspectors have completed and turned in all required forms.

- d. Developing a system for recording and tracking accident prevention information obtained through oversight activities. This information should be recorded into a database in a timely manner and periodically reviewed by management officials.

APPENDIX A

This appendix contains the scope statement that was authorized by the Chair of the Legislative Post Audit Committee on January 7, 2005. This audit was requested by Senator Derek Schmidt.

SCOPE STATEMENT

Department of Labor: Reviewing the Effectiveness of Accident Prevention Programs Required Under the Workers' Compensation Law

State Workers' Compensation laws require each insurance company or group-funded self-insurance plan providing workers' compensation insurance coverage in Kansas to maintain and provide accident prevention programs for the businesses they insure. All workers' compensation policies are required to contain information about the availability of these programs on the first page of the policy.

According to the law, the programs should be adequate to furnish accident prevention services required by the nature of the operations of the policyholders, and shall include surveys, recommendations, training programs, consultations, analyses of accident causes, industrial hygiene, and industrial health services. The programs are to be staffed with field-safety representatives who must meet certain requirements spelled out in the law.

The Secretary of the Department of Labor has the authority to conduct inspections of insurance companies as deemed necessary to determine the adequacy of the accident prevention programs, and also has authority to investigate employer complaints about such programs. The law does not require the Secretary to inspect every insurance company for this purpose.

At least once each year, each insurance company or group-funded self-insurance plan providing workers' compensation insurance in Kansas is supposed to submit to the Director of Workers' Compensation detailed information on the types of accident prevention programs it offers to policyholders, who they were provided to, how much money was spent on them, and the like.

The money for the staff at the Department of Labor who oversee this function primarily comes from the Workers' Compensation Fee Fund and from federal sources.

Recently, legislators have expressed concerns that the oversight activities of the Department of Labor do not ensure that this program is meeting its intended purpose.

A limited-scope performance audit of this topic would address the following question.

1. Is the Department of Labor's oversight of accident prevention programs sufficient to ensure that workers' compensation insurers are providing the type of programs the law envisioned? To answer this question, we would interview officials at the Department of Labor to determine what resources have been committed to this function and what

procedures they have put in place to ensure that insurance companies are complying with the law. We would gather information about the number of companies that write workers' compensation coverage in Kansas and determine how many of those have been reviewed by the Department's staff over the past 2-3 years. To determine if the Department appears to be following its procedures, for a small sample of the insurance companies the Department has reviewed, we would look in detail at what the Department did to assess the adequacy of the workplace safety programs they provide. Based on information gathered about the number of companies overseen, the number of companies the Department has reviewed, and the specific things they look at, we would assess whether it appears enough resources are being committed to this function to be effective, and whether the specific things the Department's staff look at are likely to provide good information about whether the insurance companies are complying with the law.

Estimated time to complete: 200 hours

APPENDIX B

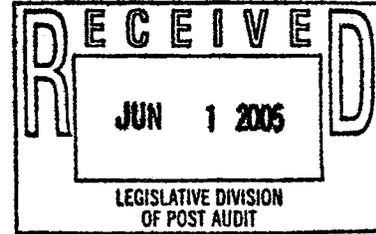
On May 16, 2005, we provided copies of the draft audit report to the Department of Labor. The Department's response is included as the Appendix.



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Jim Garner, Secretary

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, Governor

May 27, 2005



Barbara Hinton
Legislative Division of Post Audit
800 SW Jackson, Suite 1200
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Ms. Hinton:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the LPA report on the Department of Labor:
Reviewing the Effectiveness of Accident Prevention Programs Required Under the
Workers Compensation Law.

This audit reports that KDOL is providing inadequate oversight of insurance companies' accident prevention services. The Accident Prevention Program was designed to help improve workplace safety and reduce the number of workers compensation claims. It appears that KDOL is not effectively ensuring that insurance companies comply with the law.

As Secretary of Labor, I am committed to making workplace safety a priority for the State of Kansas. I truly believe that workplace safety programs will help make safe jobs a reality for all Kansas workers. Prior to this audit, I had already decided to reorganize the workplace safety programs within the department. In order to more effectively administer all workplace safety programs in the agency, including the accident prevention regulation functions, all the workplace safety programs are being reorganized, and thus elevated, under a new stand alone division within KDOL in 2005. Currently, the agency is searching for a director to lead this new Workplace Safety Division. The new director, who will report directly to me, will have strong leadership capabilities and management skills that will help organize and guide this new Workplace Safety Division as it is established.

In the current organization and in the new Workplace Safety Division, KDOL workplace safety programs include a safety consultation program for private employers, partially funded by OSHA. In my opinion, the consultation program provides the most direct and

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immediate impact to improving workplace safety. However, accident prevention programs are an important complement to services like the safety consultation program. It is important for employers to have a variety of services available to them to prevent injuries and illnesses in the workplace.

The recommendations set out in this audit suggest that we should evaluate the role of accident prevention oversight in the workplace safety effort. The audit suggests that existing incentives for insurance companies and declining workplace injury rates may have adequately addressed the workplace safety issue. While it is true that the rate of workplace injuries and illnesses has declined over the past decade, workers compensation data still show that more than 64,000 illnesses and injuries were recorded in the workplace last year. Work-related fatalities in Kansas rose to 44 in 2004, up from 42 in 2003. To protect our Kansas workers, we must focus efforts on improving workplace safety in the state.

I think it is important to begin by evaluating the purpose and direction of the accident prevention programs. We know that employers that take advantage of accident prevention programs reduce their workplace injury and illness rates. Accident prevention in the workplace helps employers lower their workers compensation premiums, improving the business climate in the state. Clearly, programs that help educate employers on ways to prevent accidents on the job site are valuable. However, these programs are only valuable if they are used.

Very Truly Yours,


Jim Garner
Secretary