

"The Program" 2018 Year End

Programs and Services Provided by WCB NS Funding Agreement





OEA NS Society commenced a new contract with WCB NS in January 2017. The programs and services provided through this funding are referred to as the "The Program". This Annual Report represents the activities of our Business Plan, for the year ending 2018, that were provided through the funding received.

THE PROGRAM

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BOARD PRESIDENT MESSAGE

Happy 10th Anniversary OEA Nova Scotia!

Our first newsletter in 2008 celebrated the opening of OEA NS saying, "The timing could not be better for such an organization for Employers, helping to bring business success to Nova Scotia!" A decade later that statement remains as meaningful now, with the need for OEA NS continuing as steady and strong. Our industry-representative Board of Directors has always viewed their collaboration as both unique and a success story for governance. This organization's core objective is to Navigates to Business Success. Our core objective guides our strategic and business planning, our decisions about programs and services, how we implement system advocacy, and how we interact with our staff and vendors. As a not for profit organization, our focus is service to our clients and the System in which we operate.



Bernadine MacAulay, OEA NS Society Board President

In 2008 OEA NS began as a three-year pilot program with one Advisor. Then in 2010

we Incorporated as a Society and negotiated a funding agreement with WCB NS to provide funds to assist Employers in relation to WCB and OHS issues. Through this process, we have never stopped changing and growing to meet Nova Scotia's Employers needs. We now have four Advisors providing service excellence to Employers of Nova Scotia! Success of the business community results in a vibrant and diverse economy where we can raise families in an enriched environment. At OEA NS Society we embrace the mandate to Navigate Employers to Business Success with enthusiasm and energy! It guides our decision making as we move forward into our next decade!



OEA NS Society Board of Directors 2018 From L– R: Alan Angrignon, Patricia Bland, Jim Cormier, Henry Vissers, Bernadine MacAulay, Jordi Morgan, William (Bill) Costin, Rick Feehan, Tina Lane Missing from Photo: Christopher Ipe

Looking back at 2018, we introduced improvements to our services that will assist Employers even more. Our new website went live in the summer and received many compliments about the enhancements made, information provided, and the overall presentation of material. Joy Samuel was hired in early 2018 in the new role of Business Services Advisor overseeing business plan implementation for education, awareness and outreach. She was very involved in our 10th Anniversary Employer conference which brought noted guest speakers from the medical, legal, and employment communities. The conference challenged our thinking, gave perspective, and refueled our battery to continue advocating for Employers in their quest to understand and navigate through the challenges faced by Nova Scotia Employers.



Each year, the Board of Directors are asked to rate the effectiveness of the Board based on different criteria. The average rating per year is displayed above.

Throughout the year and from our conference speakers, we heard time and time again about the frustrations and complexities with the System. Poor return to work rates and service delivery issues where there are delays and refusals to return to work, plague case management and Employer productivity. It results in losses in our economy and uses precious time and resources. Every aspect of the System appears stretched to the breaking point and this remains a major concern of the OEA NS Society Board of Directors.

In 2018, our Board of Directors welcomed Patricia Bland. Patricia brings an experienced background in health care, administration, and policy development to our Board discussions and decisions. The OEA NS Society Board of Directors continues to oversee the governance of our organization. Our Directors remain confident and committed to the purpose of OEA NS Society and I thank those business associations and individual Employers for their support of our volunteer Board members, Staff and the OEA NS Society.

This Annual Report represents my last message to the business community as President. Ten years may represent a decade of time however, in retrospect it has gone by quickly. I am appreciative of so many people who shared the idea to create an advisory program in Nova Scotia and brought it to reality. I send sincere gratitude to those who came before me to spark the idea of an employer counsel and those who have counseled me and worked with me over the past ten years to diligently create and maintain a program dedicated to Employer success in Nova Scotia.

I hope you enjoy reading this Annual Report for The Program for 2018.

Sincerely Yours,

Bernadine MacAulay, LLB, Q.Arb. President, OEA NS Society

2018 OEA NS SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bernadine MacAulay — Board President General Counsel, Nova Scotia Barristers' Society	Christopher Ipe — Director WCB Specialist, Barrister & Solicitor, Canada Post Corporation
Henry Vissers — Vice President Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture	Jordi Morgan — Director Vice President Atlantic, Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
Rick Feehan — Treasurer	Tina Lane — Director
Chief Financial Officer, Wear Well Garments Limited	President & COO, Marid Industries
Jim Cormier — Director	William (Bill) Costin — Director
Director, Atlantic Canada, Retail Council of Canada	Representing Construction
Alan Angrignon — Director	Patricia Bland — Director
Manager, Forestry Safety Society of Nova Scotia	Representing Health Care

OEA NS SOCIETY STAFF

Mary Morris Executive Director, Employer Advisor

Jeannette Combes Employer Advisor

Lisa Wight Barrister and Solicitor, Employer Advisor

Joy Samuel Business Services Advisor



OEA NS Society Staff 2018 From L– R: Joy Samuel, Mary Morris, Jeannette Combes, Lisa Wight

OVERVIEW

OEA NS Society commenced a new contract with WCB NS in 2017. The programs and services provided through this funding are referred to as "The Program". Pages 1 to 26 represent our reporting on those activities of our Program Business Plan for the year ending 2018 that were provided through the funding received.

Each fall the Business Plan for the coming year is submitted to the WCB Board of Directors for review and

"The services provided by OEANS are essential to any business going through the WCB process. The depth of knowledge and expertise is an amazing asset." consideration. Our 2018 plan was submitted, aligned to our Society's Strategic Plan.

Our Strategic Plan provides guidance for The Program under four key themes:

Theme 1: Employer Engagement - Focused on Outcomes

Theme 2: Governance and Communications

Theme 3: Capacity and Resources

Theme 4: Education and Advocacy

The Program provides navigation, advice, planning support, education, advocacy and assistance with issues related to workers' compensation, occupational health and safety and related intersecting issues arising from the legislation, regulations, policies and practices.

OEA NS Society's Mission is to Navigate Employers to Business Success through expertise, advice, support, planning, advocacy, education and resources. Our Core Values guide our decision making, interactions and programs and services offered.

At OEA NS Society we value:

- 1. Healthy, Safe and Engaged Workplaces in Nova Scotia
- 2. Self-Management of OEA NS Society
- 3. Change
- 4. Accountability
- 5. Transparency
- 6. Collaboration
- 7. Client Focused Approach



- 8. Outcome Driven Approach
- 9. Diversity
- 10. Integrity
- 11. Respect

OEA NS SOCIETY 10TH ANNIVERSARY!

KNOW THE MAL CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF OEA NOVA SCOTIA SOCIETY

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2018

On May 12, 2018 OEA NS Society celebrated its 10th Anniversary! In ten years OEA NS Society has had the opportunity to assist so many Employers and business groups and we have much to celebrate by their support, collaboration and trust. Thank you Nova Scotia Employers!



103 New Employers

contacted OEA NS Society for assistance under The Program in 2018. That's a 7% increase in 2018 compared to 2017. After more than a decade of navigating

NAVIGATING EMPLOYERS TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

Employers we are still moved by the kind gestures, comments and testimonials received by Employers, new and returning.

"The advisors at the OEA are amazing. They are very knowledgeable and response time is quick. They always keep in contact, follow-up and their letter writing is second to none. Thank you for everything you do!"

43 Industry Sectors

were assisted under The Program in 2018.

Celebrating ten years of Navigating Employers to Business Success, we hosted our 10th Anniversary Employer Conference in partnership with McInnes Cooper in November 2018.

85 Participants

attended the November 2018 Conference

A special thank you to the Labour and Employment team at McInnes Cooper who partnered with us again this year and presented on Day 2 of the Conference.

Guest presenters included, Dr. Christopher Martin of West Virginia University and Dr. Carlos Davidovich of Optimum Talent.



2018 CONFERENCE VENDORS

- Aware NS
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
- Conciliation and Mediation Services - NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education
- East Coast Mobile Medical (ECMM)
- Indoff Office Supplies

- Lifemark
- OHS Division NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education
- Safety Services Nova Scotia
- WCB NS Work Safe. For Life.



2018 CONFERENCE SPONSORS



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

OEA NS Society Strategic Theme 1 takes a *clients comes first* approach with an outcome to develop relationships and services. This section of the report looks at the various aspects of our relationship with our clients, Nova Scotia Employers, in 2018.

• EMPLOYER REQUESTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

"The services provided by OEANS are essential to any business going through the WCB process. The depth of knowledge and expertise is an amazing asset."

In 2018 Employers requested the following programs and services:



EMPLOYER ASSISTANCE

88%

Total of 271 Files

Workers' Compensation

9%

Occupational Health & Safety Total of 28 Files 3% of Employer inquiries were outside the scope/mandate of The Program.
Also included in this 3% are injured workers who contacted OEA NS Society

OEA NS Society staff create interactions with the business community by advertisements, telephone, email, education, presentations and print materials to explain and describe all of our programs and services.

We ensure that clear information about the programs and services addressed by our funding agreement with WCB NS is provided. We answer any questions.

Employers are very satisfied with our service delivery under the Core program. However, remained dissatisfied in 2018 about the scope of Core funded resources when compared to injured workers programs, given that Employers pay for the System. It remains an issue of growing frustration and discontent.

Employers Contacted OEA NS Society About—OHS Issues	% Total
Accommodation / Disability Management	7%
Case Management	18%
Discipline, OHS Act - Violence in the workplace	4%
Legislation, Policy & Process (WCB/OHS)	14%
OHS General Health & Safety	46%
Policy	7%
Out of Scope	4%

Employers Contacted OEA NS Society About—WCB Issues	% Total
Accommodation / Disability Case Management	34%
Appeals - Internal Appeals	14%
Appeals - WCAT	18%
Assessments / Rate Category / Premiums	15%
Claim Recognition	12%
Legislation, Policy & Process (WCB/OHS)	2%
WCB Policy	2%
Employer Did Not Pursue	2%
Out of Scope	1%

EMPLOYER INFORMATION



EMPLOYER NAVIGATION

Three Employer Advisors and one Business Services Advisor assisted Employers from diverse industry sectors and all regions of the province in 2018.

- New files related to The Program decreased by 17% in 2018 compared to 2017. But we experienced a 7% increase in new Employers using The Program. New file activity slowed in the last quarter of 2018 due to capacity having been reached for intake of appeal files. Employers did not wait for 'Intake' of their matter in 2018, however, we were unable to begin work on new appeal files in November and December.
- The volume of files is not as much a determinant of capacity or ability to intake more files, as the issues within those file matters. The larger the file and the numbers of issues with the file determines or decides the time to resolution of the matter.
- 41% of new inquiries were not assigned to an Advisor. This means the Employer's issue(s) were resolved in less than two hours at initial intake. Efficient turnaround of inquiries is a key priority for Employers and our Employer Advisors.
- 59% of inquiries required assignment to an Employer Advisor. The complexities of individual file issues often results in complex case management, assessment and appeal support that can span months, into years. Many case management files close, only to reopen again some time afterwards, due to new issues.
- We are increasingly seeing files with mental health and other co-morbid conditions adding to the medical and administrative complexity of navigation.



• The length of time Program files remained open decreased by **2%** in 2018 compared to 2017.



- 60 Program files carried forward into 2018 from 2017. File volume is the total of "carry forward" and "new intakes".
- **58** Program files remained open at the end of 2018 going into 2019.
- A total of **249** Program files were resolved and closed in 2018.

EMPLOYER NAVIGATION



NAVIGATING EMPLOYERS TO BUSINESS SUCCESS



2598 new Employer Program files have been navigated between 2008 and 2018.

"Always pleased with the support offered by the folks at the OEA"

-Farnell Packaging Ltd. (used with permission)

THE PROGRAM - APPEALS

Employer participation in the appeal process can and does take many forms, including written submissions and oral hearings. The numbers of Employers participating more actively in the appeal process is definitely increasing. A decade ago we reported **3%** participation levels by Employers. However that number has been steadily changing. Employers receive assistance to understand the appeal process, the impact to them of decisions made, to prioritize plans to make improvements, to prepare to self represent at oral hearings, prepare submissions, do background review and to understand System legislation.

OEA NS Society advised in **85** appeals in 2018.

35 of these appeals were carried forward into from 2017.

50 of these appeals were newly opened appeals in 2018.

Type of Appeals	% Total
Internal Appeals	42%
WCAT Appeals	56%
Labour Board Appeals	1%

43% of appeals OEA NS Society was involved with were Employer initiated appeals.

54% of appeals OEA NS Society was involved with were Worker initiated appeals.

3% of appeals OEA NS Society was involved with were both Employer and Worker appeals.

Status of Appeals at End of 2018	% Total
Appeal Awaiting Further Decision	74%
Employer Appeal Allowed	4%
Employer Appeal Denied	5%
Employer Withdrew Appeal	5%
Worker Appeal Allowed	4%
Worker Appeal Denied	8%
Worker Denied & Employer Denied	1%
Appeal Returned / Sent Back	0%

"Fantastic Service. Helped guide us through the WCB Appeal process much easier than us doing it alone. Highly recommend the service."

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GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

- FINANCIALS -

Please refer to separate financial statement for The Program which accompanies this report prepared by Optio Accounting.

OEA NS Society Strategic Theme 2 reflects that at OEA NS Society *We Know the Way.* This theme takes into consideration our Governance Model using our Core Values to facilitate OEA NS Society interactions with system partners, clients and staff and focuses on communication and outreach in 2018. Priority is also placed on service quality and governance excellence using data collection and analysis to evaluate outcomes.

How New Employers Indicated They Found Out About The Program:						
19% Business Association	18% Business Colleague	13% WCB Referral	12% OEA NS Website	10% WCB Website	10% Google Search	6% WCAT Referral

THE PROGRAM - SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Employers who contact OEA NS Society for assistance related to The Program are responded to most often the same day, by telephone or email. Employers often express surprise that their calls are answered by a real person! Service excellence has always been of key importance at OEA NS Society and we endeavor to meet the Employers needs in a timely and helpful way. We make the process to access our services easy and we are there to assist. Our service excellence means Employers may, and often do, receive completed work, analysis of the issue and recommendations, in response to their inquiries late in the evening, early in the mornings and on weekends. Employers reach out to us with hugely complicated issues touching on many areas of employment legislation and their business. Easy access and available Employer Advisors have given OEA NS Society a strong reputation of trust, credibility, and expertise in the Employer community. Employers typically just call us at 902.442.9366 or email at info@oeans.ca and ask, "can we talk?"

> "It has been a pleasure to work with such a responsive, approachable and professional team. We are very pleased with their desire to meet our needs."

We also receive calls from injured workers and navigate them to the appropriate resources. We always wish them well and many reply their thanks for our concern of them. As a key stakeholder in the WSIS System, service excellence extends to everyone who contacts us!

THE PROGRAM - EMPLOYER CONSULTATIONS

- Two consultations sessions with Employers were held in relation to the PTSD legislation and WCB Policy. Nineteen Employers participated in these consultation sessions.
- OEA NS Society Executive Director also participated in meeting with the CFIB Regional Managers to discuss WCB issues of concern.

COMMUNICATIONS

SERVICE QUALITY EVALUATIONS

Partnerships require two way communication and at OEA NS Society we have a decade of gathered feedback from Employer clients. OEA NS Society strives for Service Quality Excellence and implements data collection and analysis in our business planning to provide feedback on our performance! At the conclusion of service with OEA NS Society, Employers are provided with a Service Quality Survey to complete. This survey provides performance feedback helping us evaluate whether quality outcomes have been met.



96% of Employers who completed the Service Quality Survey, upon closure of their file, indicated they received the assistance they were seeking.

2018 Quality of Experience with OEA NS Society rated 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5 (5 being excellent):

Professionalism of Service	Timely handling of Inquiry	Staff ability to listen to, understand and respond to needs	Accuracy and relevance of information provided	Satisfaction with written documentation	Overall Satisfaction of Experience
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Evaluations for the quality of experience with OEA NS Society is consistently rated a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being excellent. Data for 2017 and 2016 can be seen below.

Professionalism of Service	Timely handling of Inquiry	Staff ability to listen to, understand and respond to needs	Accuracy and relevance of information provided	Satisfaction with written documentation	Overall Satisfaction of Experience	
2017 :						
100%	100%	100%	100%	98%	97%	
2016 :						
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

SERVICE QUALITY EVALUATIONS

Types of Assistance Received from The Program	%
Provided advice, recommendations only	11%
Assisted with appeal preparation	10%
Reviewed claim decisions, provided interpretation, recommendations and feedback	10%
Reviewed policies and provided feedback	5%
Reviewed correspondence	11%
Assisted with appeal document filing for Employer	9%
Participated in a conference call with Employer	7%
Participated in a case management meeting	5%
Participated in a site visit	2%
Reviewed file information and discussed with Employer	9%
Reviewed Legislation and discussed with Employer	7%
Phone calls to agencies/ organizations for Employers	7%
Provided printed or online resource materials	6%

64% of Employers who completed the Service Quality Survey in 2018 were returning Employers who had used OEA NS Society services before.

Employer knowledge levels are self-reported on a scale of 1-5 (5 being excellent) and a comparison is made of reported knowledge level before OEA NS Society assistance, and after. In 2018, Employers reported a 54% increase in their knowledge level after OEA NS Society assistance. In 2017, Employers reported a 49% increase in their knowledge level after OEA NS Society assistance.

"My knowledge on this matter was very low and having Lisa Wight helping me out was well appreciated. She helped us with everything." —Leo J. Beazley 1996 Ltd. (used with permission)



NEW BUSINESS SERVICES ADVISOR

Awareness of The Program is important to Employers and the System in which we all operate. Providing



enhanced programs and services is of critical importance to meeting Employers needs regarding the System.

In April 2018, Joy Samuel was hired as the new Business Services Advisor, a strategic role designed to provide Employer and the

OEA NS Society team, service and support to create outcomes in alignment with the OEA NS Society Strategic Plan. The Business Services Advisor objectives are to promote the programs and services of The Program through outreach, education, advertising, reporting, awareness and communication activities. In 2018 we were able, as a result of this role to:

- Redesign and update our website enhancing information for The Program!
- Initiate a regular presence on social media and provide regular updates and information to Employers!
- Increase growth in the Employer contacts especially new contacts (see page 8).
- Host our 10th Anniversary Employer Conference with McInnes Cooper at Cineplex Cinemas in Dartmouth Crossing of which WCB and Department of Labour were both vendors!
- Reach out to 17 new industry sectors!
- Participate in annual meetings and trade shows of business and safety groups!
- Network with and set up business meetings to facilitate partnerships with more business and safety associations!



Employer Advisor Nova Scotia Society | "The Program" Annual Report 2018

OUTREACH

We welcome opportunities for more Employers to increase their awareness about and utilize our programs and services under The Program. We always seek to develop partnerships with business associations, safety groups, professionals and related agencies. In 2018 we:

- Participated in Small Business Week Networking Trade Show hosted by the Halifax Chamber of Commerce. (OEA NS Society booth can be seen in photo to the right)
- Attended Aware NS Annual General Meeting
- Distributed over 40 "Small Business Safety Toolkits"
- Distributed 35 "Working to Well Return to Work" Kits
- Distributed 25 "WCAT Annual Reports"
- Distributed 130 WCB and WCAT brochures to Employers attending OEA NS Society training sessions
- Distributed 7 email mailouts after April 2018, promoting upcoming OEA NS Society training sessions and events.
- Enhanced our Contact list to reach out to more Employers and business associations more frequently



We also presented at Business and Safety Associations events:

- Construction Sector
- Forestry Sector
- Education Sector
- Health Sector

THANK YOU!

OEA NS Society would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for referring Employers to The Program in 2018:

- Workers' Compensation Board Work Safe. For Life.
 - Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)

OEA NS Society would also like to thank all of our followers on social media for their continued support and engagement.

Special Mentions to:

- Work Safe. For Life.
- McInnes Cooper
 - AwareNS
 - CFIB NS
- NS Federation of Agriculture

for continuously sharing, tagging, commenting and retweeting our content.

Finally we want to say a special thank you to all our 2018 Employer Conference Sponsors!

We look forward to connecting with everyone throughout 2019.

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

OEA NS Society Strategic Theme 4 has an outcome focused on sharing knowledge, driving system change and innovation. This section of the report looks at the educational services and partnerships we provided to Employers in 2018.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Program offers education and learning programs with the focus on workers' compensation, return to work, best practices, risk analysis, policy development and occupational health & safety. Our programs are tailored to the ever changing employment climate and business needs.

In 2018:

7 Educational Training sessions under The Program were offered

209 Employers attended these education programs

Sessions included:

- 2 Navigating Workers' Compensation Sessions
- 1 Navigating Occupational Health & Safety Session
- 2 Disability Case Management Sessions
- 2-day Appeal Preparation Session
- Presumptive Benefits for PTSD Session

We also received requests for review of or drafting company OHS and Return to Work policies for Employers. OEA NS Society directly assisted with seven different policy reviews for Employers in 2018.

"Very satisfied with the service we received from the OEA"

-Truefoam Ltd. (used with permission)

As a result of this assistance, we were also able to offer additional assistance to Employers through new customized training for their supervisory and management staff, or their teams.

OEA NS Society offers customized training to meet Employers unique needs and we will go to the Employer or business association in order to deliver this training.

All of our educational programs under The Program are available to Employers at their worksite.

WCB & WCAT Appeal Preparation Training

On September 18 & 19, 2018, OEA NS Society hosted WCB & WCAT Appeal Preparation Training for Employers. Participation by Employers in appeals is one of the most important aspects of the WCB System and Employers should be involved. The two-day training course covered important planning, preparation steps and processes to prepare for appeals. The training focused on providing expert advice and information about WCB, Internal Appeals (IA), and the Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal (WCAT).

The key objectives included:

- Provide practical and useful information to Employers to assist them to participate more confidently and expertly in appeals.
- Facilitate an avenue for Employers to be involved in discussion, ask questions and obtain answers about WCB appeals at IA and WCAT.
- Ensure employers understand the appeal process from start to completion, including preparation.

This training program included presentations by:

- Amy Bradbury, Wickwire Holm
- Bradley Proctor, McInnes Cooper
- Brian Field, WCB
- Kenny LeBlanc, WAP
- Sandy MacIntosh & Diane Manara, WCAT
- Wade Hynes & Tammy Gamble, WCB Internal Appeals

"I have a much better understanding of the WCAT process than before - making changes as a result"



A mock conference call and mock oral hearing were also delivered with Commissioner Brian Sharp from WCAT as guest Commissioner for the mock hearing.

We thank all of the presenters for their involvement in Employer Education.





OEA NS SOCIETY SERVICE PROVIDERS

OEA NS Society is an Employer too!

We extend a sincere "Thank You" to all of our service providers in 2018. We are proud to support employment and business in our own business operations. We carefully source and purchase from only Nova Scotia Employers, wherever possible, in order to ensure Employers and Employees in this province are supported and recognized. We utilize unionized and non-unionized vendors. Our providers are listed below:

- * ADT Security
- * Altimax Courier
- * Bell & Grant Ltd. Insurance Specialists
- * Bell Mobility
- * Blue Cross Group Health
- * Brookshire Developments Limited
- * Canada Post Corporation
- * Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)
- * Cineplex Cinemas Corporate Meetings & Screenings
- * Corporate Impact Inc.
- * Dash Creative
- * DSM Telecom
- * Eastern Building Cleaners
- * Eastlink Fax & Internet Services
- * Forest Safety Association of Nova Scotia

- * Indoff Office Supplies—Atlantic Canada
- * McInnes Cooper Lawyers / Avocats
- * Minutemen Press
- * Nova Scotia Department of Labour & Advanced Education
- * Nova Scotia Power
- * NS Federation of Agriculture
- * Optio Accounting
- * Retail Council of Canada, Atlantic Region
- * SPL Learning
- * Teachers Plus Credit Union
- * Wear Well Garments Limited
- * Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia
- * Workplace Essentials







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