



OFFICE OF THE  
INFORMATION &  
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for British Columbia

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**News Release**

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### **Audit report commends WorkSafeBC on access and privacy practices**

**VICTORIA**—Acting Information and Privacy Commissioner Drew McArthur has found that WorkSafeBC is generally fulfilling its duty under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) to respond to access requests and protect the personal information of British Columbians. The findings were published today in *Audit & Compliance Report F18-01: WorkSafeBC: Management of access and privacy requests and complaints*.

The audit found that between 2014 and 2016, WorkSafeBC met legislated timelines in response to applicants 94% of the time, conducted appropriate searches for records, and rarely applied fees. In most cases, WorkSafeBC provided records to applicants with minimal-to-no severing. A secure online portal allows individuals to view their own claims online, likely reducing the need for access requests.

“I am pleased to see a public body take extra measures to achieve compliance with BC privacy and access laws. This is a great example of a public body doing the right thing. Same-day response to routine requests and the online portal are just two examples of how WorkSafeBC showed a commitment to serving the access needs of British Columbians.

“I would encourage public bodies to consider some of the practices employed by WorkSafeBC to determine if it is a model that can be leveraged to improve timeliness,” said Acting Commissioner McArthur.

Auditors found that WorkSafeBC should improve documentation practices, as documentation was missing in 19% of files. Documentation of fee payment dates was not consistent; in most cases auditors were unable to determine the date fees were paid, a requirement under FIPPA to establish a timeline for the record.

“Documentation is an integral part of the access to information process. If fee payment dates are not recorded, the public body cannot accurately assign a final due date. An electronic case management system would enable WorkSafeBC to track all requests and complaints.”

The Acting Commissioner recommended that WorkSafeBC:

- Ensure that all requests for records have complete documentation on file;

- Document fee payment dates to enable proper compliance with timelines allowed by FIPPA;
- Increase its success rate in responding to access requests within the timelines allowed by FIPPA from 94 percent to 100 percent; and
- Consider an electronic case management system to track and manage requests and complaints.

WorkSafeBC was selected for the audit based on the comparatively high number and variety of access and privacy related complaints received by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC). As a provincial agency mandated to promote safe and healthy workplaces, save lives, and prevent-work-related injury, disease and disability, WorkSafeBC collects personal information of individuals involved in work-related injuries in BC.

The OIPC has released a top 10 tip sheet to assist public bodies manage requests for records, available on the [OIPC website](#).

Audit & Compliance Report F18-01 *WorkSafeBC: Management of access and privacy requests and complaints* is available for download at <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/reports/audit-compliance/>.

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