

WorkSafe BC -Introduction

WorkSafe coverage provides support for a member's recovery, rehabilitation and a safe return to duties following an injury, illness, or disease resulting from RCMSAR authorized activities, primarily training and taskings. Benefits may also include wage loss or disability income. This coverage provides our members with benefits that are far superior to our current AD&D program.

To make the WorkSafe implementation easier to understand and manage the basic program requirements have been broken down into three component parts. They are Member Injury reporting, the Claims process, and Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) requirements.

1. Member Injury Reporting

a) Reportable and non-reportable injuries

An injury incident involving a member fall into one of two categories, **reportable** and **non-reportable**.

An injury or incident **is reportable and must be reported** if a member:

- Independently seeks medical treatment including a chiropractor, physiotherapist, or counsellor for a duty related condition.
- Is taken from or leaves duty for treatment at a medical facility.
- Misses time from their duties after the day of an injury
- Loses consciousness.
- Is diagnosed with a workplace disease.
- Develops symptoms of a mental health disorder related to the work or work environment.
- Incurs broken eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aid or artificial limb due to a duty related incident.

An injury is a non-reportable injury or incident if it does not fall within the above noted categories. This is still the case if the minor injury is addressed through the delivery of first aid.

b) Injury Response Process

When a member is injured:

Member notifies supervisor of injury or incident.

The supervisor assesses whether the injury or incident requires no action, can be addressed with station level first aid, or requires a higher level of care.

If station level first aid is sufficient then the supervisor arranges the provision of first aid to the member. If there is any doubt as to the severity of the injury, then medical assistance is to be sought.

If a higher level of care is required:

The supervisor arranges transport for the injured member. The type of transport should be determined by the potential severity of the injury. If there is any doubt an ambulance should be summoned.

c) Reporting

When first aid is provided to an injured member a record of that service must be kept. This can be done in one of two ways depending on the severity of the injury or incident. Keep In mind that some injuries can increase in severity after the initial incident. If this to occur then the need to report must be re-evaluated.

Non-reportable:

The member reports the injury to their supervisor.

The supervisor records the injury and the actions taken at the station. This is done using a first aid log kept in the ready room or an online WorkSafe form (form6) can be completed and retained. The online first aid form can be found in this document under useful links.

Reportable:

The member reports the injury to their supervisor.

The supervisor records the injury and the actions taken in the station. As above tis is done using a first aid log kept in the ready room or an online WorkSafe form (form6) can be completed and retained. The online first aid form can be found in this document under useful links.

The supervisor prepares a report of what happened including statements from witnesses.

Member initiates a claim with WorkSafe BC by phone Tele claim 1-888-967-5377or online.

They are to inform their supervisor that they have done so.

The supervisor provides a copy of their report to RCMSAR HQ within 24 hours of the injury or incident.

RCMSAR HQ will submit an employer's report (form 7) to WorkSafe within 72 hours.

Should a formal investigation subsequently be required from an OH&S perspective it will be conducted by a member of the RCMSAR HQ staff in conjunction with a station leader.

d) WorkSafe Process

Once WorkSafe receives the claim forms they will determine whether the claim will be accepted and only then will they assign a claim number. WorkSafe will primarily work with the person who has been injured to develop a care and recovery plan. Once the volunteer is ready to return it is possible WorkSafe will work with the individual and RCMSAR to develop a return-to-work plan.

WorkSafe will not provide details on the steps being taken or medical information to RCMSAR or Station Leadership. It is incumbent on us to liaise with the person who has been injured to keep upto date on their recovery.

2. Claims

The filing of a claim is a process where a member following a duty related injury, illness, or disease files a formal request with WorkSafe for support. WorkSafe benefits include specialized medical treatment, recovery, rehabilitation, and a safe return to duties. In some cases, wage loss from their regular place of employment is also available.

3. Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S)

Although RCMSAR is covered by WorkSafe BC insurance for our members our organization falls under federal employment legislation when it comes to OH&S requirements and not WorkSafe BC requirements. Regardless of jurisdiction, an employer is morally and legally required to provide a healthy and safe workplace for their members. Members also have obligations and more specifically to carry out their duties in a safe manner utilizing all required safety equipment and protocols.

RCMSAR is in the process of developing a more structured program to supplement our current practices. As this program is developed it will be shared with our community.

In the interim members can re-acquaint themselves with RCMSARS policies, SOP's and other protocols and practices that address personal and crew safety including the use of PPE.

Stations as part of their regular members meeting should consider setting aside some time to discuss safety. This will provide members with an opportunity to provide suggestions or raise concerns regarding safety.

Stations may also wish to seek out a volunteer whose role would be to review the ready room or boathouse for issues of safety to members.

Vessel safety should be captured by the pre-departure check list or GAR assessment.

a) First Aid Requirements (HQ and Stations)

First aid requirements are based on workplace risk, shift numbers and surface transit time to a hospital. It is assessed that RCMSAR falls within the moderate risk category, shift numbers up to

6 and greater than 20 minutes surface time to a hospital. Therefore, the requirements are as follows:

1. An identifiable space (ready room, boathouse etc.) where first aid supplies are kept, and first aid can be administered.
2. A trained first aid attendant (OFA 2 or equivalent which is met by our member Red Cross training)
3. First aid kit equivalent to that on vessel
4. A means of transport such as a spine board
5. Maintaining a record of all reported or treated injuries.
6. Keeping records and documents for at least three years. Records must be retained in a secure space or container and accessed only by those with a justifiable need.

However, if a shift is 6 members or greater in addition to the foregoing the following is required:

1. A basket stretcher c/w collar, head immobilizer, straps, blankets, cushioning and leg splints of one meter.
2. An OFA 2 or equivalent with transport endorsement or equivalent

4. Useful links

How to file a claim? [WorkSafe BC - How to file a claim](#)

Employee claim form (form 6) [WorkSafe BC Form 6](#)

Employers report (form 7) [WorkSafe BC Form 7](#)

What happens when you file a claim? [WorkSafe BC What To Expect](#)

Accident Investigation form [WorkSafe BC Investigation Form](#)

WorkSafe- Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone has a role to play in the health and safety of our members while engaged in the business of RCMSAR. The following sets out the various roles and responsibilities as they apply to RCMSAR as an organization. Regardless of the size of a business, the law requires that it be a safe and healthy place to work. This is the prime responsibility of RCMSAR albeit much of the following is carried out at the station level. It is worth noting that much of what is described in this document is already being carried out at an acceptable level. Our GAR process also plays a big role in meeting much of what is outlined here.

Responsibilities

1. RCMSAR HQ - Acts as the Employer for purposes of WorkSafe

Establish and oversee an occupational health and safety program.

This includes:

- The development of policies, SOP's and other standards that promote a healthy and safe work environment.
- Addressing unsafe conditions/equipment
- Providing training/education that enables members to carry out their duties safely.
- Ensuring that proper PPE is in place and members.
- Ensuring stations have personnel with the required first aid training.
- Overseeing and participating in the WS claims management process.

2. Station Leaders – Acts as primary Supervisor.

- Training our members to carry out their duties safely.
- Providing proper supervision
- Ensuring adequate first aid equipment, supplies and trained attendants to handle injuries.
- Addressing unsafe conditions/equipment
- Transporting injured members to the nearest location for medical treatment
- Reporting all injuries to HQ and WorkSafe that require medical attention.
- Maintaining a first aid log
- Investigating incidents where a member is injured, or equipment is damaged.
- Based on an investigation incorporating the lessons learned to prevent a re-occurrence of the incident

3. Person Directing Activity (Coxswain, Training Officer etc) - Supervisor.

- Ensuring the health and safety of all members under your direct supervision
- Knowing the health and safety requirements that apply to the services performed under your supervision and make sure those requirements are met.

- Ensuring workers under your supervision are aware of known hazards.
- Ensuring members under your supervision have the appropriate personal protective equipment, which is being used properly, inspected regularly, and maintained.
- In the event of an incident that the appropriate action (first aid, transport to a medical facility etc.) is taken.

4. Member

- Being alert to hazards. Reporting them immediately to your supervisor.
- Always following safe work procedures and act safely while on duty
- Using the protective clothing, devices and equipment provided properly.
- Reporting all incidents to your supervisor and getting treatment quickly.
- Following the treatment advice of the health care provider.
- Should be required to file a claim, then do so without delay.

Duty Guidance

- The use of intoxicants, drugs, medications, mood-altering drugs, including those prescribed by a physician, which will affect a member's ability to perform their duties safely are prohibited when on call or on duty.
- -When reporting for duty, be fit, rested and familiar with their duties and the area in which they will be operating
- Be open and honest when undergoing GAR assessment.

WorkSafe BC (WS) Coverage -Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ'S)

1. Why did RCMSAR apply for WorkSafe BC insurance coverage?

WorkSafe coverage provides our members with a broad range of support services that are not currently available to them under our current AD&D plan in the event of a workplace injury or illness.

As an aside attaining WorkSafe coverage provides RCMSAR members with the same benefits as volunteer firefighters, and GSAR members.

2. When does my WorkSafe (WS) coverage start?

Existing RCMSAR members (operational or supporting) became eligible on 11/23/22. For new members, coverage becomes effective the day you perform authorized RCMSAR activities following acceptance as a member.

3. When will the AD&D plan come to an end?

The AD&D plan which has been replaced by WorkSafe BC insurance will come to an end on March 31, 2023.

4. Do I have to complete my probation before I am eligible for WS coverage?

No, WS coverage starts the day you perform authorized RCMSAR activities whether you are on probation or have completed probation.

5. Is WS coverage contingent upon the number of volunteer hours or annual sea time I have?

No, WS coverage is not contingent upon your number of hours of volunteer time or annual sea time.

6. I am an RCMSAR member who is on a Society Board that is involved in fundraising. Am I covered by WS while conducting Society Board business?

No, any Society business is separate and distinct from RCMSAR business. Societies are separate legal entities. WS coverage is only provided to members conducting RCMSAR authorized activities i.e., search and rescue training.

7. Who pays for my WS coverage?

RCMSAR headquarters pays for WS Insurance that provides WS coverage to more than nine hundred RCMSAR volunteer members.

8. As a member am I covered when travelling outside the province for meetings or educational opportunities?

Yes, you are covered by WS while conducting authorized RCMSAR business outside of the province.

9. What coverage does WS provide?

WS coverage is provided for illness, injury or disease arising from authorized activities with RCMSAR.

10. What benefits and services does WS provide?

Benefits and services include but are not limited to support for a member's specialized medical treatment, recovery, rehabilitation, and a safe return to duties resulting from an RCMSAR related injury, illness, or disease.

This may include wage loss, disability, or death benefits.

11. Do my WS benefits end at age 65?

Usually, healthcare benefits are paid regardless of age subject to applicable WS policies.

However, with regards to wage loss, vocational rehabilitation, and permanent disability benefits these may stop once you reach the age of sixty-five (65) unless you have supportive evidence that you intended to work past the age of sixty-five (65) and retire later.

- *Note A person is generally considered to be retired when he or she substantially withdraws from the workforce and receives retirement income from sources not related to work (CPP, AOS, RRSP's RIFF's, an employer pension plan etc.)*

12. Am I covered by WS while in transit to the station for authorized activities such as training or a tasking?

It depends, you are not normally covered by WS while in transit to training or tasking however a WS claim should be filed as on a rare occasion an exception has been made.

13. How old do I have to be to be eligible for WS coverage?

As a volunteer you must be sixteen (16) years of age to be eligible for WS coverage.

14. I am turning 70 this year. Will my WS coverage end?

No, your coverage will not end but your coverage may be limited. If working, this could be a result of a change in employment status for example.

15. When does an incident or injury need to be reported by a member?

An injury or incident must be reported by RCMSAR if a member:

- *Independently seeks medical treatment even a chiropractor, physiotherapist, or counsellor for duty related condition.*
- *Is taken from or leaves the duty site for treatment at a medical facility.*
- *Misses time from their duties after the day of an injury*

- *Loses consciousness.*
- *Is diagnosed with a workplace disease.*
- *Develops symptoms of a mental health disorder related to the work or the work environment.*
- *Suffers broken eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aid or artificial limb due to a duty related incident.*

16. What do I do if I get injured?

- *Report your incident in detail (including the date, time location) immediately to your supervisor (Station Leader, Training Officer, Coxswain)*
- *Notify RCMSAR HQ.*
- *See a physician if warranted.*
- *File a WS claim.*
- *Cooperate with the person investigating your incident whether from RCMSAR and/or WS.*

17. How do I make a claim?

Refer to the link on page 5.

18. If I file a claim what needs to happen before my claim is adjudicated?

WorkSafe requires three Forms to be completed to adjudicate a claim for benefits.

-Members (your) report of injury (form 6)

-RCMSAR's report of injury (form 7)

-Physicians report (form 8)

Leaders -Member Injury FAQ's

****Note Leaders Defined:*** *Supervisor, Coxswain, Station Leader, Deputy Station Leader, Training Officer, RTO, Manager, Operations, Manager, Training and Development etc.*

19. Is the Red Cross first aid training required of RCMSAR members equivalent to OFA 2?

Yes, if it also includes CPR.

20. One of my crew was injured during a tasking-what do I need to do?

As a coxswain you are responsible for getting the member any necessary first aid and transporting that member to a medical facility if required.

You should also follow up with the member to ensure that they file a WS claim if required.

In addition: depending on the severity of the injury you are required:

- *Prepare a report of the incident and provide a copy of the report to RCMSAR HQ.*
- *Document your actions and the names of any witnesses.*
- *RCMSAR will file the employers report on behalf of the station.*

21. Are there any types of incidents that must be reported by RCMSAR to WS immediately by phone?

Yes, they include:

- *Serious injury or death of a member*
- *Sexual assault of a member*
- *Exposure to a hazardous substance*
- *Fire or explosion that has the potential for causing serious injury to a member.*

22. Who from RCMSAR is responsible for reporting the above noted types of incidents?

Given the urgency to report the Manager, Operations must be immediately notified.

The Manager, Operations will then make the call to WS.

A record of that call should be maintained.

23. What information will be required of me when reporting an emergency incident to HQ or WS?

- *Your contact's name and phone number*
- *The location of the incident*
- *The date and time of the incident*
- *The number of members involved and their names.*
- *A brief description of the incident*
- *The names of any witnesses to the incident*