



2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Occupational Health and Safety



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness (OHSW) is part of the Human Resources Directorate (HR). OHSW provides support, direction, and guidance to the Senate by delivering effective, efficient, and comprehensive health, safety, and wellness program services. The team is comprised of two full-time professionals who oversee all aspects of workplace safety, wellness, and mental health.

Objectives for 2022

The 2021 annual report included the following objectives:

1. Continuing to [manage the ongoing pandemic](#)
2. Building the [Mental Health and Wellness Program](#)
3. Ensuring compliance with legal and other requirements under the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II (CLC, Part II—namely, [mandatory training](#) and implementing the [Hazard Prevention Program \(HPP\)/Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment \(HIRA\)](#)

2022 Highlights

1. Within two months of its launch, 79% of senators and Senate employees completed the mandatory training on workplace health and safety.
2. OHSW launched a new LifeWorks employee and family assistance platform.
3. The Workplace Health and Safety Committee (WHSC) completed 100% of its required workplace inspections. This proactive identification contributed to the correction of 107 workplace hazards.

Incident Statistics

In 2022, 59 incidents were reported to OHSW. These included

- 5% disabling injuries;
- 15% minor injuries (with or without first aid);
- 26% near misses; and
- 54% minor occurrences (building issues related to OHSW).

VISION

To coordinate, support, appraise, and maintain the effectiveness of the Senate's OHSW program, enabling senators and managers to competently contribute to creating a safe and healthy working environment, thus ensuring compliance with the Senate's statutory duties.

Guiding Principles:

- Both the organization and the individual play key roles in promoting and maintaining a physically and psychologically safe and healthy workplace.
- A physically and psychologically safe and healthy workplace is based on a culture of respect, trust, honesty, fairness, and inclusivity.
- Workplace health and well-being initiatives are based on best practices and are regularly reviewed and evaluated to sustain a supportive culture and relevant programming.

Overarching Strategic Aims:

- Maintain legal compliance, as a minimum.
- Make health and safety effortless by cultivating solutions relevant to the Senate's needs, leveraging technology when and where possible.
- Ignite purpose by creating client experiences in the delivery of a safer and healthier work environment for all.
- Show continuous improvement in annual key performance indicators (KPIs) in health and safety performance.

INTRODUCTION

In the 2022 annual health and safety report, the primary focal points are identifying and documenting the health and safety performance of the Senate of Canada against its overarching health and safety objectives; minimizing work-related injuries and illnesses; eliminating unsafe work practices; and promoting the health, safety, and well-being of all employees, contractors, and visitors.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

Both the Health and Safety Policy Committee (HSPC) and the WHSC delivered on their respective accountabilities under the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II.

Health and Safety Policy Committee

The HSPC met six times in 2022, exceeding the legislative requirement of four times per calendar year. The committee contributed to the [Senate Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy](#) by reviewing the Workplace Risk Assessment recommendations; revising its terms of reference; overseeing health and safety reporting indicators based on compliance requirements under the *CLC*, Part II; developing committee standard operating procedures; and providing training to new and existing members.

2023 Goals for the HSPC

- Develop committee standard operating procedures (ongoing).
 - Follow its work plan (reporting obligations under the *CLC*, Part II).
 - Improve its presence both online on IntraSEN and on the health and safety bulletin boards across the organization, thus promoting employee engagement in the areas of health and safety.
- [Committee Members](#)
 - [Meeting Minutes](#)

Workplace Health and Safety Committee (WHSC)

The WHSC remained focused on ensuring a safe work environment by conducting inspections and holding more than its legally required meetings:

- It held 12 meetings, exceeding the legislative requirement of nine meetings per calendar year
- It completed 100% of its required inspections
- It identified 107 deficiencies, with 91 corrected and 16 low-risk still outstanding. Definitions are provided in [Appendix A](#).

2023 Goals for the WHSC

- Review and revise its terms of reference
 - Ensure compliance for workplace inspections
 - Review all incident reports and follow up with management on recommended action items
- [Committee Members](#)
 - [Meeting Minutes](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

Hazard Prevention Program/Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)

The introduction of a hazard prevention program is a requirement for employers with obligations under the *CLC*, Part II. Preliminary work on this project continued throughout 2022, with the current project plan to unfold between February and December 2023. Implementation of Phase I (approvals, platform development, communications strategy, training, and change management plan) is projected for September 2023. Completion of Phase II (conducting job hazard analysis, identifying job-specific training, and creating programs as risk mitigation tools) is anticipated for 2024.

Communicable Disease Prevention Program (COVID-19)

As was the case in previous years, protecting the health and safety of senators and Senate staff during the pandemic remained the primary focus in 2022. Adopting and implementing risk mitigation measures that allowed the Senate Administration to continue to effectively support the work of senators and the Senate were the guiding principles. Every effort was made to protect the health and safety of employees while respecting the Public Health Agency of Canada's guidelines on health monitoring, physical distancing, hand hygiene, cleaning, and disinfecting.

The Senate workforce continued to work remotely unless their senator or supervisor deemed them to be required in the workplace for operational reasons.

In 2020, the Senate created three phases (defined in [Appendix A](#)) to respond to a crisis. The Senate was in the following phases throughout 2022:

- January to March – Crisis (onset of the Omicron variant of COVID-19)
- April to December – Endurance

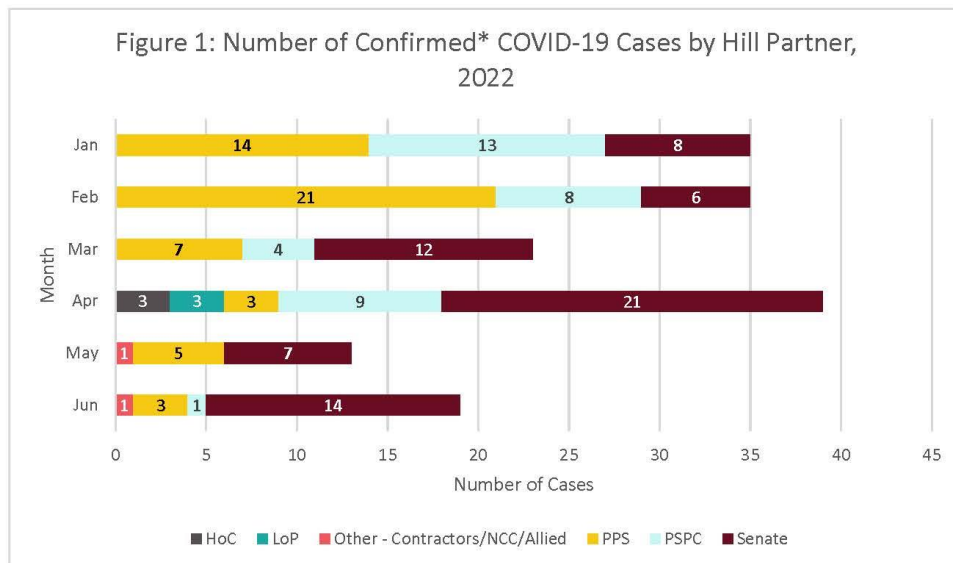
Key COVID-19 measures in 2022

We continued to maintain the [COVID-19 website](#) in 2022 to provide information to and create awareness among members of the organization. Here is a summary of the COVID-19 mitigation efforts implemented in 2022:

- **January 2022** – Masks remained mandatory, with staff present in Senate workplaces only if deemed required to support Senate operations.
- **February 2022** – The Voluntary Rapid Antigen Testing Program was actively promoted.
- **March 2022** – Meeting room capacities were increased to 1-metre distancing, with mandatory face masks and no food or beverage. Provincial mask mandates were lifted, but Senate safety measures remained in effect. Cafeterias and shuttle buses returned to full capacity.

- **April 2022** – The Senate aligned with City of Ottawa guidelines for COVID-19 prevention. The 10-day mandatory isolation period was reduced to as few as five days. The Return to the Workplace pilot project was relaunched, at 25% capacity.
- **June 2022** – The [Senate Policy on COVID-19 Vaccination](#) was suspended and monitoring of COVID-19 cases ended. The Return to the Workplace pilot project was increased to 50% capacity.
- **July 2022** – A transition was made to a [communicable disease prevention model](#). The COVID-19 Response Team was dismantled and tracking of COVID-19 cases ceased. The Return to the Workplace pilot program was increased to 75% capacity.
- **August 2022** – Masks were no longer mandatory.
- **September 2022** – The Return to the Workplace pilot project was increased to 100% capacity.
- **November 2022** – An [online tool](#) was launched to help event planners.

Figure 1 provides a summary of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Senate and among Parliament Hill partners. The onset of the COVID-19 Omicron variant brought an increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases between December 2021 and April 2022; however, no incidences of workplace transmission occurred in 2022.

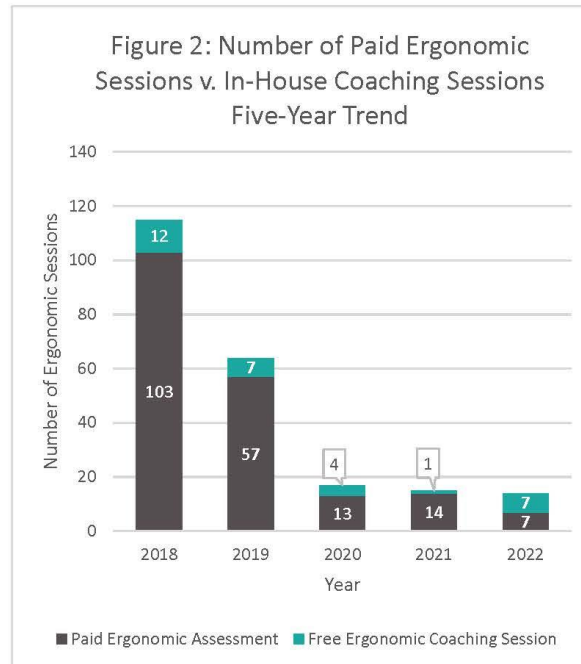


*Confirmed COVID-19 cases: Individuals who have tested positive using a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test or rapid antigen detection test kit.

Ergonomic Program

The OHSW team offers free ergonomic coaching sessions as a preventive measure for managing the risk of repetitive-strain injuries and to address employees' ergonomic concerns. This has contributed to a steady decline in ergonomic requests, as illustrated in Figure 2. The decrease from 2020 to 2022 may be attributable to employees not seeking ergonomic coaching for home office set-ups.

Starting in September 2022, paid ergonomic assessments needed because of a personal medical condition will be reported through Employee Relations within Human Resources.



Ergonomics has been flagged as a priority in 2023 both to support key elements of the proposed telework policy and in response to an increase in [ergonomic-related injuries](#) in 2022.

Wellness Program

On-Site Nursing Services

In April 2022, the Senate renewed its agreement with the House of Commons for nursing services. The current agreement expires in March 2026. [On-site nursing services](#) are available for senators and Senate employees for

- assessment of work-related injuries and personal conditions; and
- non-urgent nursing services

The House of Commons nurses had **156 total visits** in 2022:

- 40 senators and 34 Senate employees used the general nursing service; and
- 82 senators and Senate employees attended the annual flu vaccination clinic.

Well-Being Activities

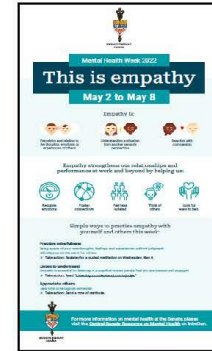
HR is committed to creating events that will serve to engage and educate senators and

employees, produce a supportive and inclusive environment, and provide access to mental health information. The Senate, our Hill partners, and senators launched the following initiatives over the past year and communicated via SEN GLOBAL emails:

Communiqué issued by Human Resources on January 26, 2022 – [Tips that will help you improve mental health](#)

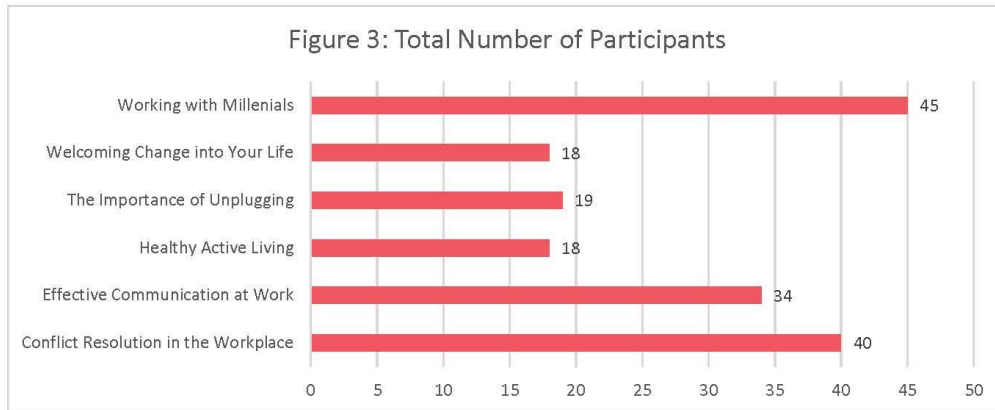
Mental Health Week (May 2 - 8)

To mark Mental Health Week 2022, OHSW sent out a SEN GLOBAL [Communiqué](#) on the theme of “empathy”. Additionally, the Chief Human Resources Officer invited all honourable senators and members of the Extended Management Group to join a webcast on the topic of *Accommodation Strategies for Employee Success*. During that webcast, mental health professionals from across government offered strategies for helping employees with mental health challenges reach their full potential at work.



Webinars on Wellness and Mental Health (Offered in english and french)

In total, 174 participants registered for the instructor-led virtual workshops (summarized in Figure 3) in 2022. Open to all employees, these workshops invited them to invest in their wellness and professional development journey.



World Mental Health Day (October 10)

On October 11, HR launched the new [LifeWorks well-being platform](#), which is accessible to all senators and Senate employees. Users can access digital solutions that help to support their mental health and well-being, and they can choose content from leading experts on the topics in which they are most interested. Highlights of the platform include the following:

- employee discounts on up to 212 exclusive offers
- 20 Care Now Programs (work, mind, relationships, body, personal finances)
- access to LifeWorks Fitness (custom-developed training sessions), health coaches for weight management, and addiction and recovery toolkits
- twice-weekly newsfeeds to introduce the new platform, perks program, and well-being assessments; and to provide information about finding opportunity in change, friendships in the workplace, budgeting for the holidays, and creating New Year's resolutions.

Employee and Family Assistance Program

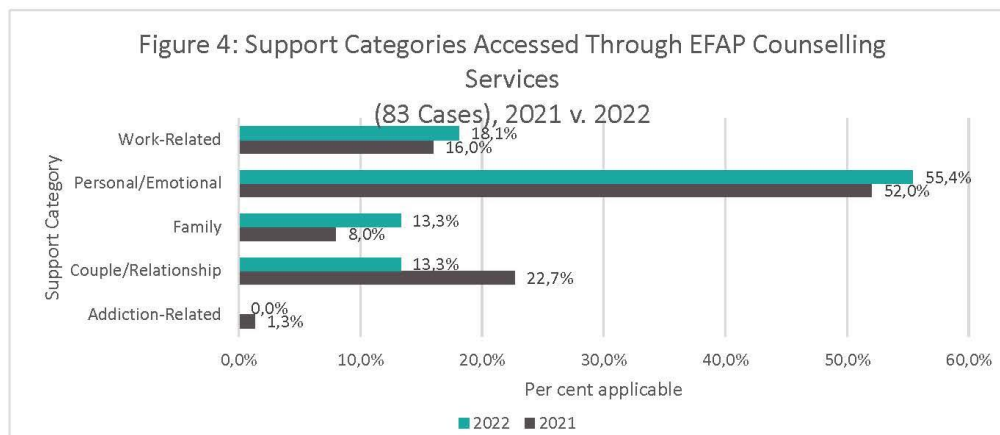
The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is a confidential, voluntary support service providing senators and their staff members, Senate Administration employees, and their immediate family members with support for a variety of health-related issues. It also provides wellness resources. Supports available through the EFAP range from resource banks to wellness assessments to counselling services.

In 2022, the annual utilization rate was 13.71%. The most-accessed services were **counselling services**, at 10.74% (83 cases), with 2.98% seeking **work/life services** (23 cases). Senate utilization of EFAP services decreased slightly when compared to 2021 (14.62%). To try to bolster the use of EFAP, the Senate [launched the new LifeWorks platform](#) in October 2022.

Reviewing EFAP services provided the Senate with valuable insights into the resources in which employees may be most interested.

Counselling Services

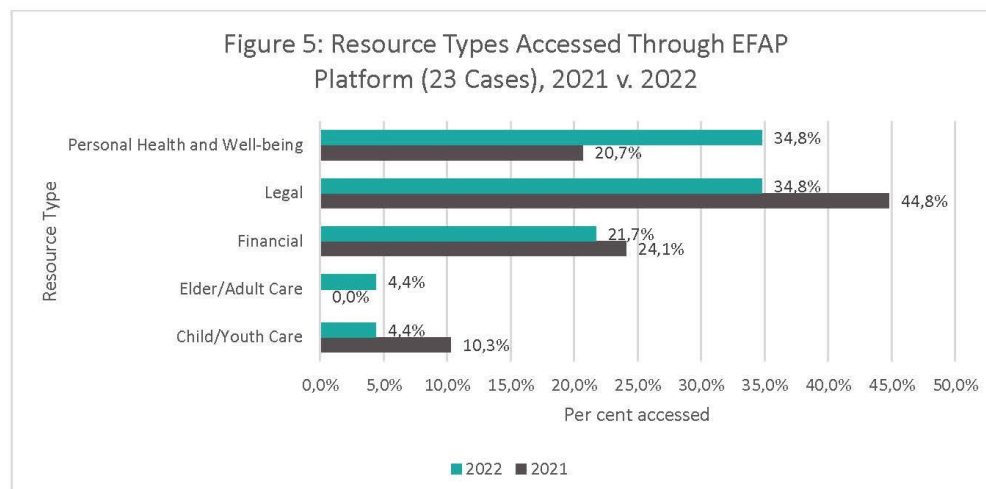
Some 83 individuals accessed counselling services through EFAP, up from 60 in 2021. Figure 4 depicts categories for which individuals have sought counselling services. The top emerging issues were:



Work/Life Services

Down from 29 in 2021, 23 individuals accessed information through EFAP work/life services either online on the new platform or by calling directly. Figure 5 depicts the top categories for information. The top emerging issues were

- child custody;
- nutrition in relation to weight management; and
- nutrition in relation to general healthy eating.



Satisfaction Rates

We saw 20 client satisfaction surveys completed and returned. The results illustrate that 55% of users either strongly agreed or agreed that they were satisfied with the services, while 20% neither agreed nor disagreed, 5% disagreed, and 20% strongly disagreed:

- 65% agreed that they received relevant information that assisted them with their problem
- 52% agreed that they received options to consider and solutions to resolve their problem
- 65% agreed that they made positive changes based on what they learned
- 35% strongly agreed or agreed that they improved their ability to cope with job demands, while 43% neither agreed nor disagreed, no one disagreed, and 21% strongly disagreed
- 35% confirmed that, if they had not received assistance, their problem or concern would likely have caused them to be away from work

Health and Safety Training Program

Mandatory Health and Safety Training

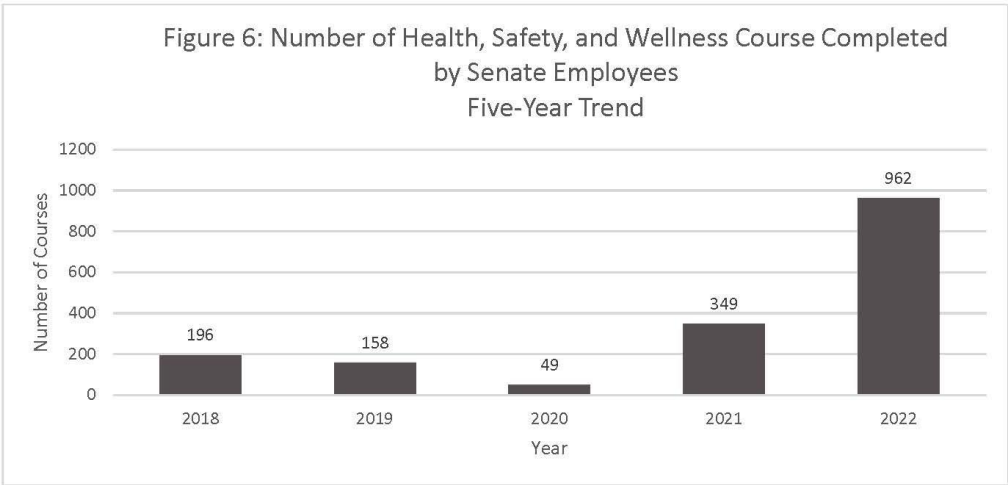
OHSW directly contributed to the achievement of Administrative Commitment 1 of the [“Senate Administration Strategic Priorities”](#) in 2022.

On July 28, 2022, the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure (Steering) of the Standing Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration (CIBA) approved the plan for mandatory workplace health and safety training for all supervisors (including senators) and employees, as part of the [Senate Policy on Occupational Health and Safety](#) and the *CLC*, Part II. CIBA imposed a deadline of November 30, 2022, for Senate-wide completion and asked HR to submit a detailed non-compliance report immediately after that.

The course was [launched](#) on September 15, 2022; as of December 31, 2022, 79% of the Senate population had completed the training. HR will continue to encourage senators and Senate employees to complete this mandatory training to ensure the Senate’s compliance with the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II. New hires must complete it as part of their onboarding activities, and they must do so within three months of being hired.

Health, Safety, and Wellness Training

Participation in health, safety, and wellness training has continually increased over the last five years (see Figure 6). In 2022, employees completed 962 courses, including ones on mandatory health and safety training and the mental health and wellness webinars (identified in Figure 3).



Types of training included:

- Office ergonomics
- Accident investigation
- Safe driving: Backing up
- Pandemic awareness
- Electrical hazards
- Ladder safety
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems (WHMIS)
- Workplace Committee Member training
- Psychological Health and Safety
- Lockout
- Manual materials handling
- Working at Heights
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- Personal protective equipment
- *Canada Labour Code*, Part II: An Overview

Hazardous Occurrence Investigation Reporting and Recording (HOIRR) program

Incident Statistics

The following section details incidents at the Senate in 2022.¹

Analysis

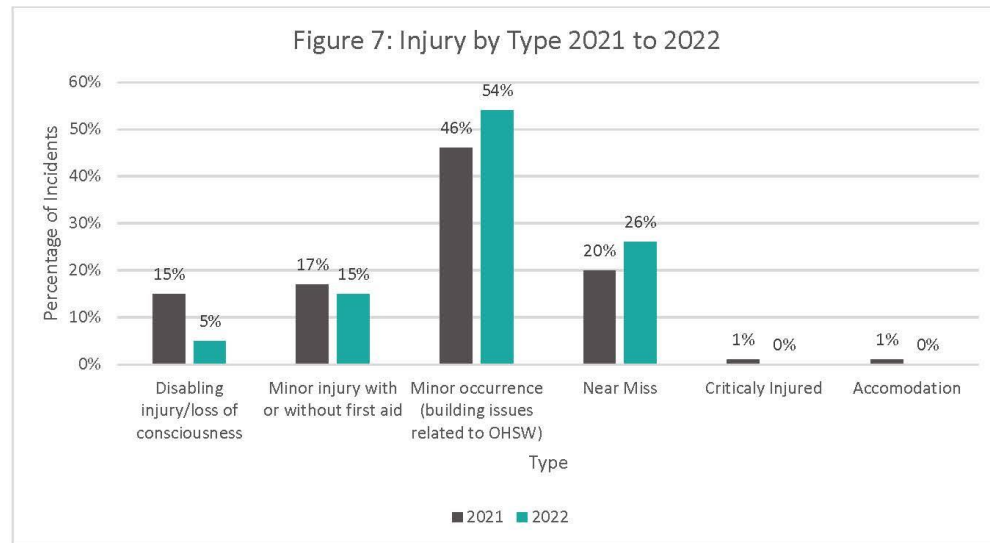


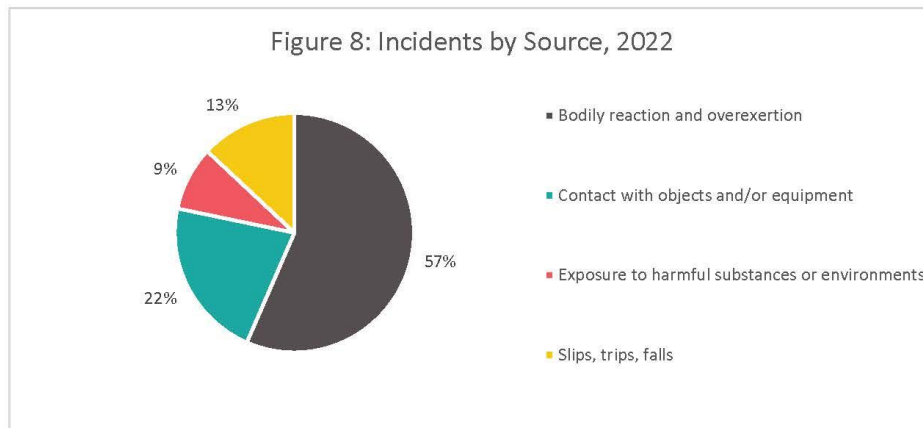
Figure 7 depicts incidents by type from 2021 to 2022.

- The number of incidents reported in 2022 (59) decreased when compared to 2021 (87).
- 100% of all incidents were investigated and reviewed, and short-term or long-term corrective actions were implemented for all of them.
- 79% of all incidents were “minor occurrence (building issues related to OHSW)” (54%) or “near misses” (26%):
 - 55% of the “minor occurrences (building issues related to OHSW)” were water issues in East Block, Wellington Building, and the Senate of Canada Building, and
 - 78% of the “near misses” were “bodily reaction and overexertion”.
- 21% of all incidents resulted in an injury to an employee:

¹ The Senate implemented corrective actions after collaborating on the investigation of an October 20, 2022, incident involving a Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) interpreter. However, we do not keep statistics for incidents involving non-Senate employees, contractors, guests, or others granted access to the workplace.

- 5% were “disabling injuries” (three in total, with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) determining that two were work-related).
- 33% of the “minor injuries (with or without first aid)” were “bodily reaction and overexertion”; 33% were “contact with objects and/or equipment”; and 33% were “slips, trips, and falls”.

As in previous years, the most common source of all incidents in 2022 was “bodily reaction and overexertion”. These incidents included those related both to ergonomic complaints and to lifting, pushing, or pulling injuries (see Figure 8).



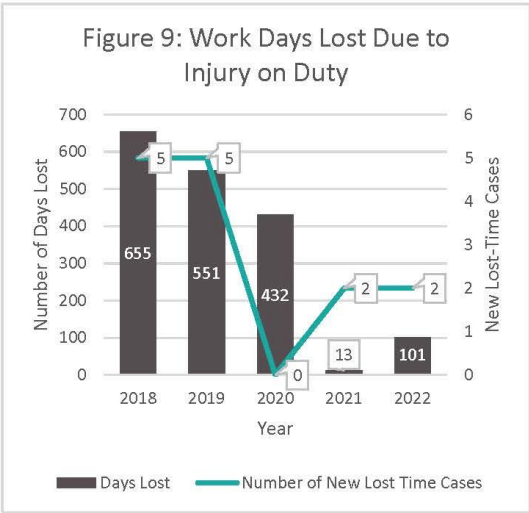
Operational Costs Due to Injury

In 2022, three disabling injuries occurred, including one due to contact with objects and one due to bodily reaction and overexertion. WSIB determined that both were work-related, while the third one was a personal medical condition unrelated to work.

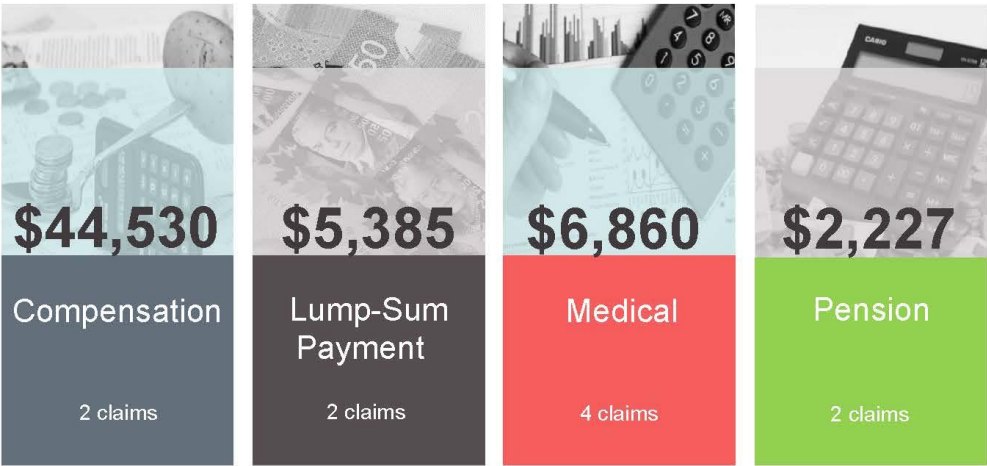
The two claims with the WSIB resulted in a total of **101 lost workdays**. Days lost compared to the number of new time-loss cases is illustrated in Figure 9.

Employment injury benefits (worker’s compensation) for employees injured in the course of their duties can include

- compensation for lost earnings (if an injured employees is not entitled to injury-on-duty leave);
- medical, hospital, and related services; rehabilitation services; or
- a pension if an injury results in a permanent disability or a pension to dependents if an employee is fatally injured in the course of employment.



In 2022, disabling injuries cost the Senate \$59,002 — up from \$46,549 in 2021. WSIB costs in 2020 were \$91,156, partly due to two long-term claims dating to 2014.



CONCLUSION

Evaluation of the Health and Safety Program

Continuous improvement of health and safety outcomes across the organization constitutes a key principle of a health and safety program. The program continues to focus on preventing workplace injury or illness. The OHSW Strategic Plan for 2023 includes the following:

Goal 1 — Establish and manage occupational health and safety (OHS) programs that are based on the principles of risk identification, assessment, and control. In addition to meeting compliance requirements, strive to achieve best practices in preventing workplace incidents.

- Implement an **HPP** to prevent work-related injuries and diseases by identifying hazards, assessing those hazards, introducing preventive measures, and promoting employee education.
- Work with internal partners to harmonize **programs** and **training** opportunities related to OSH, including by conducting a training review; evaluating delivery systems; identifying competencies, as well as quantitative and qualitative needs and outcomes; and making subsequent improvements.

Goal 2 — Foster and maintain a health, safety, and wellness management system that addresses accountability, risk management, and legal compliance.

- Identify strategies to effectively communicate OHSW responsibilities during the **onboarding** of senators and employees.
- Continue to **advise senior management** and facilitate effective leadership related to safety and risk management functions.
- Review and develop risk assessment tools and resources.

Goal 3 — Prioritize and enhance organizational psychological health and wellness.

- Provide all employees with opportunities to be and stay well.
- Build wellness leadership capacity at all levels of the organization.
- Continuously improve and evaluate the wellness culture at the Senate, then review and renew or develop wellness tools and resources accordingly.

Goal 4 — Provide OHS expertise and act as a resource in a professional, reliable, courteous, and timely manner while maintaining the core values of collaboration, respect, and trust, delivering them through a service-oriented culture.

- Support managers and employees as plans for the workplace transition advance.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

Pandemic Phases

Term	Definition
Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote work is required unless physical presence in the workplace is deemed essential• Infection rates continue to progress at the national or local levels
Endurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remote work should still be prioritized, with some in-person work as required• Infection rates steadily decrease despite sporadic outbreaks
Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senators and staff are able to safely return to the workplace without restrictions• The disease is contained and no longer a substantial public health and safety risk

Incident Type

Term	Definition
Disabling injury/Loss of consciousness	Professional medical attention or loss of time at work, possibly with modified duties (WSIB claim)
Critical injury	Serious injury that: places life in jeopardy; produces unconsciousness; results in a substantial loss of blood; involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or toe; involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand, or foot but not a finger or toe; consists of burns to a major portion of the body; causes the loss of sight in an eye; causes other significant losses requiring immediate medical attention in a hospital or by a qualified medical practitioner.
Minor injury (with or without first aid)	First aid treatment provided. No time is lost beyond the day of injury.
Near miss	No property damaged, no personal injury sustained, but a situation in which damage and/or injury could easily occur given a slight shift in time or position.
Minor occurrence (building issues related to OHSW)	Damage to Senate property or loss of Senate material.