



## For Immediate Release

### Chambers Shocked at WCB Expansion Announcement

On Wednesday Afternoon, after business hours, the WCB announced a \$5million, 11 thousand square foot expansion to the WCB Building located at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Strickland Street.

“For the past few years we have seen a steady decline in the assessment rates paid by employers” said Philip Fitzgerald the Chair of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce “... and we have been able to reduce workplace accidents by more than 35% from 1,978 in 2006 to 1,256 in 2012”. He also mentioned “... that Employers’ assessments are the primary source of revenue for the WCB.”

“The lack of consultation and communication with your primary client base on such a major expenditure is not acceptable”, says Rick Karp the President of the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce.

Currently the WCB has an FTE of 81 employees with three vacancies that they are trying to fill. The average staffing allocation for a regional WCB office with Worksafe B.C. doing a similar volume of claims transactions is 28. Back in 2006 the WCB made a commitment to reduce staff to 60 by the use of attrition. The WCB has not met this goal!

“We share the concerns of the Whitehorse Chamber and are worried that increased space will lead to increased staffing and will therefore likely lead to increased rates down the road.” commented Yukon Chamber Chair Rich Thompson. He added “we have been very pleased at the progress we have seen on reduction in WCB rates which directly lead to more competitive Yukon businesses and worry that this move signals a change in the progress that has been made in this area”.

Samson Hartland, Executive Director of the Chamber of Mines noted “While we understand the rationale that Whitehorse real estate is a good investment, we question whether it is appropriate that WCB investment funds are being deployed in this fashion. WCB appears to have grown well beyond the overall growth of the territory in terms of GDP.”

The Chambers are disappointed at this sudden announcement, without any consultation and communication with business!

Philip Fitzgerald  
**Chair,**  
**Whitehorse Chamber**

Rick Karp  
**President,**  
**Whitehorse Chamber**

Samson Hartland  
**Executive Director,**  
**Yukon Chamber of Mines**

Rich Thompson  
**Chair,**  
**Yukon Chamber**