



Shawn Peterson

Shawn Peterson joined the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) team in August as the director of the newly renamed Policy Development, Research and Statistics unit.

Peterson served for 13 years at the Minnesota House of Representatives, most recently as director of legislative services and as a policy advisor to then-Speaker Steve Sviggum (now DLI's commissioner). Peterson hopes to use his legislative experience to help the DLI team accomplish its policy goals at the Capitol.

He said the function and name change of the unit were brought about to give an additional focus to the unit and to create a place for policy development and ideas to be evaluated using information and statistics.

“It really makes a great deal of sense to have your policy and research together,” Peterson said. “You need to know the research data for a particular issue if you want to make a policy change that will have a positive impact on the system. It is great to hear ideas from agency staff members who are in the trenches every day dealing with the variety of issues the department is charged to oversee. Keep the good ideas coming!”

Data-driven workers' compensation update

By Cindy Valentine, Chief Information Officer

The following Data-driven Workers' Compensation Project activities are planned for completion during fiscal-year 2008.

1. Incorporation of a workers' compensation identification number that is individual-specific, similar to a Social Security number. Activity for this item is planned to start in December.
2. Development of a secure Web site for submitting documents electronically. A prototype has been developed and the Department of Labor and Industry's Workers' Compensation Division is looking at internal processes to determine where best to implement it. It is anticipated forms will start to be received via a secure Web site in December.
3. Consolidation and generation of correspondence within Informix. The Workers' Compensation Division has reviewed all the correspondences it generates. The consolidation of this correspondence within the division's computer system is anticipated in March.
4. Obtaining relevant vocational rehabilitation information electronically instead of on forms; incorporation of the Vocational Rehabilitation unit's external Access system within Informix. The initial scope of this project is being evaluated at this time.

