



# 2025 Fall Session Ministerial Briefing Binder

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#### **Recommended response:**

- This government commends the Board of Directors of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board on its prudent management of the Compensation Fund in the best interests of workers and employers.
- The Board of Directors is committed to maintaining the funded position of the Compensation Fund at a target range of between 121% and 129%.
- Maintaining the funded position at the target range ensures rates charged to employers represent the actual costs of the system and reduces volatility in the rates.
- At the end of 2024, the Compensation Fund's funded position was 138%, down from 142% in 2023.
- This decrease in the funded position from 2023 to 2024 reflects both the \$10 million rebate distributed to employers and an increase in benefit liability.

#### **Additional response:**

- Any decisions on future rates or rebates rests with the Board of Directors.
- The funded position for 2025 will be determined at the end of the calendar year, and released publicly in spring 2026 with the publication of the Board's Annual Report.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There may be questions about future rebates in light of the funded position at the end of 2024 of 138%.

#### Background:

- The compensation system is funded by assessment premiums collected from employers registered with the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board.
  - The Board's funded position is considered when determining assessment rate changes, rebates and subsidies.
- Distributing the Compensation Fund's surplus reserves to eligible employers in the form of rebates accelerates the movement of the fund towards its target levels.
- In September 2024, a \$10 million rebate was announced by the Board of Directors.
- This rebate was distributed as a credit to employers' accounts.
- WSCB has distributed the following rebates to employers:
  - 2015 approximately \$10M
  - 2016 approximately \$10M
  - 2017 approximately \$10M
  - 2018 approximately \$5M
  - 2019 no rebate
  - 2020 approximately \$10M
  - 2021 no rebate
  - 2022 no rebate
  - 2023 no rebate
  - 2024 approximately \$10M
- In total, approximately \$89M has been returned to employers through rebates and rate subsidies.

#### Approved by:

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

President/ CEO

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

Date Approved

### Recommended response:

- This government is committed to the health and safety of all Yukon workers.
- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board commissioned an independent investigation to perform a causation study of the heap leach failure at the Eagle Gold Mine.
- The resulting report was completed in December 2024.
- It identified both minor and major contributing factors.
- Recommendations in the report will help improve safety practices, reduce risk and support better outcomes for mining in the Yukon.
- The report can be found on the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board website at [wcb.yk.ca](http://wcb.yk.ca)
- Workers' Safety and Compensation Board is working on developing safety materials for future heap and mining operations.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Victoria Gold reported a heap leach failure at Eagle Gold Mine on Monday June 24, 2024. There may be questions about the recommendations for heap leach safety arising from the report.

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### Background:

- Victoria Gold reported a heap leach failure at Eagle Gold Mine on Monday June 24, 2024.
- The Ontario Superior Court of Justice appointed Pricewaterhouse Coopers as the receiver to manage Victoria Gold's former assets, under the direction of the Government of Yukon.
- WSCB commissioned an independent investigation to perform a causation study which was completed in December 2024 and published on the WSCB website in spring 2025.

- The report makes a number of recommendations in terms of outstanding issues, additional analysis and investigation of the heap leach facility.

**Approved by:**

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

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President/ CEO

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

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Date Approved

### Recommended response:

- This government recognizes the invaluable contribution of every Yukoner who fights fires, whether full- or part-time, urban or wildland, professionally or as a volunteer.
- This government is committed to the safety of all Yukoners. One of our platform commitments is to support emergency preparedness and protective services to provide appropriate gear, equipment and training.
- Workplace Health and Safety officers conducted inspections of Yukon fire halls, to assess compliance with Workplace Health and Safety legislation and regulations.
- Orders were written during that time frame.
- Safety Officers continue to work with Community Services and the Fire Marshal's Office to facilitate compliance with Workplace Health and Safety legislation and regulations.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- In March 2025, the CBC published an article stating that volunteer firefighters were wearing expired PPE.
- Supporting firefighters by working with the Association of Yukon Firefighters and Fire Chiefs to provide appropriate gear, safety equipment and training is one of the Government of Yukon's platform commitments.

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### Background:

- Between January 2025 and March 2025, WSCB inspected firehalls across the Yukon.
- Orders were written as a result of these inspections.
- The outstanding orders primarily relate to:
  - vehicle exhaust systems;
  - fire apparatus communication systems;

## Yukon Firehall Inspections

WSCB

- Scene Safety Response Unit (SSRU) policy, procedures, training and personal protective equipment;
- hazard corrections regarding fire apparatus equipment; and
- firefighter training facility policies, procedure and training requirements.
- No firehalls were subject to 'stop use orders'.

**Approved by:**

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

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President/CEO

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

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Date Approved

#### **Recommended response:**

- The safety of workers in all Yukon workplaces is important to this government and to the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board.
- I am aware that concerns were brought forward over potential lead in drinking water at Yukon schools.
- Workplace Health and Safety Officers have completed inspections at various school facilities.
- Safety officers determined that the mitigation measures put in place by the schools are appropriate.

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In October 2024, the Yukon Employees' Union filed a grievance with the Yukon Government over the delay in testing for levels of lead present at all fixtures in Yukon schools.

#### **Background:**

- The grievance alleges that the Government of Yukon failed to follow the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.
- Testing completed in December 2024 found that ten schools had one fixture requiring remediation, eight schools had two to three fixtures requiring remediation and six schools had five or more fixtures requiring remediation, mitigation or replacement.
- By September 2025, all drinking fountains, bottle-filling stations and sinks had been replaced or remediated and tested below Health Canada's maximum acceptable concentration (MAC) for lead.
- Permanent signage was installed for non-drinking fixtures (e.g., science lab and washroom sinks) in June 2025.

#### **Approved by:**

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

President/ CEO  
Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

Date Approved

## Wildland Forest Firefighter Cancer Presumption

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### Recommended response:

- This government recognizes the invaluable contribution of every Yukoner who fights fires, whether full- or part-time, urban or wildland, professionally or as a volunteer.
- Expanding presumptive cancer coverage to include wildland forest firefighters is one of this government's platform commitments.

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Expanding presumptive cancer coverage to include wildland forest firefighters is one of the Government of Yukon's platform commitments.

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### Background:

- A regulation expanding presumptive cancer coverage for firefighters, but excluding wildland forest firefighters, under the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act* came into force on July 1, 2022.
- There are now 19 cancers included under the presumption, including pancreatic and thyroid, alongside three cancers that primarily affect women.
- If full-time, part-time or volunteer firefighters develop a cancer listed in the regulations and have worked for the minimum cumulative period, the diagnosed cancer is presumed to be caused by their employment, unless the contrary is proven.
- Any worker not covered under the presumption, including wildland forest firefighters, who contracts cancer as a result of their employment, can still apply for compensation.
- For all firefighters, including wildland forest firefighters, if they suffer a cardiac arrest within 24 hours after attending an emergency response, the cardiac arrest is presumed to be caused by their employment and work-related, unless the contrary is shown.
- Wildland forest firefighters are not included under presumptive work-related cancer legislation in several jurisdictions, including Yukon

## Wildland Forest Firefighter Cancer Presumption

WSCB

- Currently, British Columbia, Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan include wildland forest firefighters under the presumptive cancer provisions of their legislation.
- There is little evidence of an increased risk of cancer for wildland forest firefighters in the Yukon; they are not typically exposed to the same burning manufactured materials as structural firefighters.
- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board continues to monitor the emerging research on potential links between wildland forest firefighting and cancer.

Approved by:

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

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President/ CEO

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

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Date Approved

#### Recommended response:

- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board is conducting a comprehensive review of the *Workplace Health Regulations* and the *Radiation Protection Regulations*.
- Modernizing the regulations to reflect current scientific evidence and national standards, will better protect Yukon workers from occupational diseases, risks and hazards.
- Updated regulations will also provide employers with more straightforward guidance, so they can stay compliant and do their part to keep Yukon workplaces safe.
- This initiative aligns with national efforts to harmonize occupational health and safety standards under the Pan-Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Reconciliation Agreement.

#### Additional response:

- Conducting a review of existing regulations to reveal redundant, overly-expansive, outdated or burdensome rules is a promise this government made to Yukoners.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukon's *Workplace Health Regulations* and *Radiation Protection Regulations* require updating to reflect modern exposure limits and national safety standards.

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#### Background:

- The *Workplace Health Regulations* and the *Radiation Protection Regulations* have not been amended since 1986.

### Workplace Health Regulations Updates

WSCB

- The standards and exposure limits established in the regulations are no longer consistent with the provisions in place in other jurisdictions, nor in many ways do they reflect generally accepted best practices in Canada.

Approved by:

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

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President/ CEO

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

Date Approved

### Recommended response:

- The *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act* strictly prohibits me, as Minister responsible, from getting involved in any claim for compensation, an assessment matter or in any workplace health and safety matter.
- The Workers' Safety and Compensation Board follows the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act* and policies when making decisions.
- If an injured worker or an employer disagrees with a decision, I would encourage them to take advantage of the comprehensive reconsideration and appeal process provided by the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Workers and employers sometimes approach a Minister's office or opposition members to request resolution of disputes they have with the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board.

### Background:

- *The Workers' Safety and Compensation Act* states a Minister shall not be directly or indirectly involved in the determination of a claim for compensation, an assessment matter or in any workplace health and safety matter.

#### Approved by:

Catherine Jones

November 28, 2025

President/ CEO

Workers' Safety and Compensation Board

Date Approved

### Truth and Reconciliation Commission      Executive Council – Update on Calls to Action      Office

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#### Recommended response:

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in the Yukon.
- Advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action is central to our government's commitment to reconciliation.
- We will continue to collaborate and work in partnership with Indigenous governments and groups on advancing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action to create meaningful change and better programs and services for Yukon First Nations Peoples and all Yukoners.

#### Additional response:

- We are tracking our actions and initiatives in addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- It has been 10 years since the report and Calls to Action were published. The Official Opposition may ask for an update on the government's progress in addressing the Calls to Action.

#### Background:

- Released in 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)'s report Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future contains 94 Calls to Action on redressing the harms resulting from residential schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. There are 32 Calls to Action that relate directly to YG.
- YG and YFNs collaborated on addressing the Calls to Action under the 2017 Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan and through other reconciliation initiatives, such as supporting the important work of the YFN-led Yukon Residential Schools and Missing Children Project.
- YG has taken additional steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
  - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the federal government);
  - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission      Executive Council  
– Update on Calls to Action      Office**

- implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: Breaking Trail Together (relates to Call 7);
- working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement the Yukon's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
- participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
- receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).
- YG last reported on its progress to implement the TRC Calls to Action in fall 2023 through a status report and Pathways magazine. The magazine and report provided an update on the actions being taken across YG and in collaboration with YFN governments in areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

**Approved by:**

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November 28, 2025

Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Date Approved

## **2025-26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 – CORPORATE**

Finance

### **Recommended response:**

- By bringing these Supplementary Estimates to the Legislative Assembly for debate, we are providing transparency to the public about how the government is allocating taxpayer dollars.
- These Supplementary Estimates serve as an update on spending from the previous government, to fulfill the obligations and contracts already committed to by departments for the current fiscal year.
- We want to increase transparency and accountability around spending, rather than relying on special warrants for the remainder of the year.
- We look forward to bringing forward a budget this spring that we have had the opportunity to shape, and that is reflective of our priorities and commitments to Yukoners.

### **Contingencies**

- Our guiding principle has been that these Supplementary Estimates will provide the resources needed by departments to take them to the end of the fiscal year, without requiring further changes or dependence on additional spending.
- There is a provisional contingency for price and volumes pressures, including inflation, increased demand for public services, and potential wage increases resulting from ongoing collective bargaining.
- There is also a general contingency to ensure compliance with financial authorities. These contingencies are included to ensure all departments remain within their voted budgets for the fiscal year given the potential for unforeseen pressures.

## **2025-26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 – CORPORATE**

Finance

### **Summary:**

- The 2025-26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 forecasts an overall gross increase of \$150.4 million in O&M spending, with an offsetting increase of \$8.3 million in recoveries. The net increase in O&M spending is forecast at \$142.0 million when accounting for recoveries.
- Capital adjustments in the Supplementary Estimates No. 1 reflect an overall increase of \$1.0 million in spending and a \$1.6 million increase in capital recoveries. This results in a net decrease in capital spending of \$594 thousand.
- Budgetary revenues are projected to increase by \$5.9 million, primarily due to a \$5.7 million increase in accrued interest on loans to the Receiver for Victoria Gold Corporation.
- The Government of Yukon continues to maintain a budgetary surplus forecast for 2025-26 of \$12.5 million, revised down from the \$82.0 million forecast in the Main Estimates.

### **FTEs:**

- There is an increase of 71.2 FTEs or “Full-Time Equivalents” in the Supplementary Estimates. This is primarily for 57.3 FTEs in Education, including teachers, Educational Assistants, and other positions to provide enhanced support for students.
- This increase also includes 11.4 positions in Health and Social Services for both frontline and administrative positions, and small personnel additions to the Department of Justice (2 FTEs) and the Public Service Commission (0.5 FTEs).

# Session Briefing Note

Embargoed until tabling

**TAB #20**

**Fall 2025**

## **2025–26 Supplementary Estimates No. 1 – CORPORATE**

Finance

### **Borrowing:**

- Total anticipated territorial borrowing was \$773.9 million in the 2025–26 Main Estimates, inclusive of \$400 million in long-term borrowing authorized in the First Appropriation Act 2025–26. We expect to proceed with the second tranche of this borrowing in the spring, using the remaining \$200 million authorized.
- Significant energy infrastructure pressures require an increase of \$100 million to the Yukon Development Corporation's short-term borrowing limit. This includes \$50 million authorized by the previous government, and an additional \$50 million being authorized by this government to address critical work in Mayo.
- Other factors include a decrease of \$966,000 in a loan payable by Yukon University and a \$3.15 million increase in accrued interest payable.
- Revised estimated total borrowing in 2025–26 is \$876.1 million. This leaves \$323.9 million available within the \$1.2 billion borrowing limit.

### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2025-26 Second Appropriation Act will be tabled during the fall sitting.

### **Background:**

- Supplementary estimates are introduced by the government to account for unforeseen spending at the time of tabling the annual Budget.

#### **Approved by:**

Katherine White

December 8, 2025

Deputy Minister, Finance

Date approved