

Corrections Officer Entitled to Workers? Comp for Gradual Onset Stress



A correctional officer intervened in a fight between inmates, in which one inmate threw a knife at the officer (he wasn't hit). The officer began seeing a psychologist for post-traumatic stress and filed a workers' comp claim, which was rejected. The Appeals Tribunal said the officer's mental condition was the result of gradual onset stress from on-the-job exposure to events such as riots, fights and fires. The knife throwing incident was the last straw, which triggered the mental condition. The Tribunal concluded that the officer's gradual onset stress was a psychological injury that satisfied the definition of 'accident' under the law and so was compensable [20126628 (Re), [2012] CanLII 56052 (NB WHSCC), Sept. 21, 2012].