

Commission administers activities and functions of the Washington Suburban Transit District, and has powers to develop, on a bi-county basis, a transportation system including mass transit facilities for the needs and growth of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

The Commission consists of seven members. Three are appointed by the Montgomery County Executive, and three by the Prince George's County Executive. The Secretary of Transportation serves *ex officio*. Commissioners who are appointed serve at the pleasure of the County Executive, and commissioners who are not appointed from among the members of the governing bodies serve for a period of three years. By law, the position of chairperson alternates on an annual basis between Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

The Commission appoints two of its members and two alternates to the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the interstate agency charged with the overall responsibility of planning, financing, and operating the regional rapid rail and bus transit systems for the Washington metropolitan area. The Commission works in conjunction with the Authority in the development of the regional rapid rail transit system, which has been under construction since December 1969. The first segment of that system—4.5 miles extending from the Rhode Island Avenue Station to Farragut North Station in downtown Washington, D.C.—began revenue operations March 29, 1976. With completion of an additional 5.5 miles of track, the Red Line was extended from the Rhode Island Station to Silver Spring, where the first Maryland Station was opened for revenue operations on February 6, 1978.

In February 1973, the Authority acquired the operations of the areas' four privately-owned bus companies and began immediate plans for improving transit service in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The Commission acts as the financial conduit through which funding of mass transportation projects within the counties take place. It acts as the coordinating body for mass transit matters within the bi-county area, and as such coordinates mass transit activities of the two county governments with each other, with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and with the Maryland Department of Transportation.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION COMMISSION

Chairperson: Charles J. Krysiak, 1992

Harold Lee Frankel, 1989; Edward A. Palamara, 1990; G. Joseph Sills, Jr., 1989; Clement R. Mercaldo, 1991; Sidney W. Albert, 1993; Carmel Snow, 1993; Francis J. Valle, 1982.

Virginia R. Barnes, *Secretary and Director of Administration*

William Hemelt, *Director of Claims*

Robert L. Dodson, *Chief, Hearing Division*

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The Workmen's Compensation Commission originally was created in 1914 as the State Industrial Accident Commission (Chapter 800, Acts of 1914). It received its present name in 1957 (Chapter 584, Acts of 1957). The Commission consists of ten members, all of whom are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate for terms of twelve years (Chapter 521, Acts of 1982). The Governor designates the chairperson.

Like its predecessor, the Commission administers the Workmen's Compensation Law. It hears contested cases and holds hearings throughout the State; receives reports of accidents and adjudicates claims for compensation arising under the law; and investigates companies and firms that fail to carry insurance under the terms of the Act. The Chairperson sits on the trial of cases when his administrative and executive functions permit (Code 1957, Art. 101, secs. 1, 2, 5, 16, 38-40).

In recent years the General Assembly has made many important changes in the Workmen's Compensation Act. The Legislature increased maximum payments for temporary disability and permanent total disability to one hundred percent of State average weekly wage. It also increased the maximum total payable for total disability to \$45,000, provided, however, that if the employee's total disability shall continue after a total of \$45,000 has been paid, then further weekly payments at the rate previously paid shall be paid to him during such disability. In 1965 the Serious Disability Section was added to the Act. This provides for a greater amount and rate of compensation for a workman who sustains a serious disability, as defined by the Law (Code 1957, Art. 101, secs. 21-36, 66).

The Commission publishes *Annual Report of the Workmen's Compensation Commission*, and *Brochure of Questions and Answers about Mary-*