

# As the year-end approaches, the 2023 COMPACT crosses the finish line!

By Robin Aronson

That's a wrap folks! As another year winds down, the 2023 audit and annual review "season" has drawn to a close. Risk Services staff met with members this year using both virtual platforms and good old fashioned in-person visits; thank you for your hospitality! How we met, and wherever we met, good conversations took place. It was great to see so many new faces, including many new delegates and alternates! Thank you for the hard work in meeting or exceeding the COMPACT compliance elements for 2023.

WCIA members and Risk Management Representatives collaborated again this year to formulate tailored risk reviews based upon individual need and applicability, selecting from three options, a traditional audit (Special Events Liability, Police Liability, or Fleet Liability), a Targeted Risk Management Review, or a Loss and Exposure Reduction Plan. The Risk Services staff appreciates the hard work by members to coordinate the participation in meetings and discussions.

Overall, the results of the audits and reviews were positive. For those areas needing improvement, the Risk Reps were able to share best practices with members and provide resources to assist the members. Here are just a few highlights from this year's Option 1 audits:

New for 2023 was a **Special Events Liability** audit. Seventy-one members tackled this new audit! This audit was selected to be the feature audit for 2023 as many members have not had many third party events or city/town sponsored events over the past three years and were seeing an uptick in both the number of events and number of attendees. This was a great time to discuss special event issues and share best practices. We heard about and discussed all sorts of special events including various festivals, concerts in the parks, foot races (Turkey Trots!), carnivals, dancing ponies, water events and more! Often times these events were complete with food trucks, beer gardens, and other fun and tasty goodies.

Many members had good practices in place for special events. Some members were just getting started on developing policies and procedures. In some cases, we saw a need for members to update special event applications, permits, and in some instances city and town ordinances. The Reps provided suggestions to update insurance information, build a more comprehensive application, better define a special event, and offered suggestions to address events protected by the first and fourteenth amendments. The Reps shared best practices from other WCIA members. The Risk Reps shared the Special Event Tool Kit and Liability Resource Manual guidelines and sample documents that are on the WCIA website. We were also pleased to see so many members participate in the Special Events Liability classes offered this past year.

Back for a second year was the **Police Liability** audit. Nine members participated; a small group as we had completed the majority the prior year. The members and Reps discussed the recent legislation and changes in the laws. Members shared that they are sending law enforcement officers in person on crisis and health and welfare calls again. Departments responding to health and welfare calls may first contact by phone to determine if police are needed. As far as staffing issues go, some departments are still doing okay with staffing levels. Others reported still having difficulty getting grade "A" candidates due to staffing shortages and recruitment from neighboring agencies.

WCIA continued to offer the **Fleet Liability** audit rolled out in 2021; eight members participated in this Option 1 audit. A topic of interest and concern remains the need for members to have written qualified driver approval criteria. Members need to have an objective method for evaluating and approving an applicant or employee's driving record. WCIA has a risk management guideline on vehicle drivers along with two sample driver evaluation criteria available for use by members. Please contact your assigned Risk Management Rep for more information or assistance in locating or making use of the guideline and criteria.

The Targeted Risk Management Review, Option 2, proved to be very popular again this year with many members working with their Risk Rep to develop a custom audit. The Risk Management Reps and members together reviewed and discussed members' contracts, programs, and policies and procedures across a wide array of topics including sidewalks, special events, parks, volunteers, and right-of-way permits. The Risk Reps also toured many facilities, including community centers, city halls, 911 centers, along with parks and playgrounds, gaining a better understanding of member operations and possible risk exposures.

Risk Services is eager to assist members! We will offer suggestions on ways for members to improve their processes; often times we are able to provide samples and templates either from the Liability Resource Manual or from samples we have collected and vetted from other members. So please don't be bashful about reaching out; we love to hear from members!

### **Risk Services is getting geared up for 2024!**

Watch for the January newsletter which will detail the 2024 COMPACT Audit. As a sneak peek, the Option 1 traditional audit topics will include Special Events Liability and Personnel. Option 3 will be modified a bit into a Strategic Risk Improvement Plan! Stay tuned!

As we get ready to turn the calendar over to 2024, WCIA looks forward to the opportunity to continue supporting the membership!

***P.S.: Be sure to watch for information in the New Year on the 2024 Grant Program!***