

REGIONAL COUNSEL

In the fall of 1995 the Firm was asked to participate in the creation of a Regional Counsel Program to handle tort litigation for one of its major corporate clients. The program was designed, organized and implemented over the ensuing months and formally commenced in the first quarter of 1996. The concept was to outsource the management of litigation to experienced trial counsel. We serve in this capacity on a national and regional basis, with emphasis on the Northeast Region which encompasses thirteen states.

Matters are generally assigned by the client or their third-party administrator. For significant exposure cases an immediate response team has been set up to coordinate investigation and damage control. The local attorneys we utilize coordinate with our office in the preparation of litigation planning. We prepare an outline of legal activities, establishing cost effective alternatives and assist in setting reserves with client representatives

Alternate dispute resolution is generally pursued if the objective is settlement. Arbitration and mediation are introduced early in the process.

Regional Counsel affords a single point of contact for the client as well as ease of administration. There is a centralization of responsibility for litigation management. Cost control is achieved through a proactive approach with litigation expertise by the Regional Counsel. The key to every relationship is good communication between counsel, client, and the carrier/third-party administrator. We utilize a network of local counsel and experts. In addition, the Firm has achieved a knowledge of the client's business so that a true partnership has been achieved. Cost effective management with local counsel willing to budget, bill and minimize client expense is essential. The majority of reporting is done on an electronic basis.

The Regional Counsel Program for one client expanded into four others. The Firm is pleased to report that it has served as National and Regional Coordinating Counsel for tort cases which encompass product liability, premises and automobile cases. Success has been achieved through a hands on approach and continuing dialog with client representatives.

We coordinate with three other Regional Counsel and meet with our clients on a regular basis. Our continuing goal and objective is process improvement.