

cases and most types of disability. Twenty-seven States and the District of Columbia increased the maximum weekly benefits payable for temporary-total disability by 10 percent or more on the average. In some jurisdictions the maximum percentage of weekly wages used in computing benefits was increased or the total time or money limit on payments was extended. Many of the 1955 changes were first reflected in 1956 calendar-year operations.

Increased payments occurred in all States, though the rate of increase was uneven, ranging from 27 percent in Indiana to less than 1 percent in Washington, South Dakota, and Rhode Island. Regionally, the Midwestern States showed the greatest relative advance, with the Southeastern States a close second. The smallest percentage gains were scored in the New England and Middle Atlantic States.

Despite increased benefit payments, employers continued to spend about the same proportion of their payrolls to insure or self-insure their risks under workmen's compensation programs. Slightly more than \$1.6 billion is estimated as having been spent by employers in 1956; this amount represented about 93 cents per \$100 of covered payroll, compared with 94 cents in 1955. The 1956 total consists of (1) \$1,169 million in premiums paid to private insurance carriers; (2) \$325 million in premiums paid to State funds (for the Federal employees' program, which is financed through congressional appropriations, these "premiums" are the sum of the benefit payments and the cost of the administrative agency); and (3) about \$135 million as the cost of self-insurance (benefits paid by self-insurers, with the total increased 5-10 percent to allow for administrative costs).

Of the total premiums of \$1.6 billion, the benefit payments of \$1,003 million represented 62 percent—a slight increase from the 60 percent of the preceding year. The loss ratio of private carriers likewise experienced an increase—from 52 percent to 53 percent. These loss ratios were among the highest recorded in the last decade.

Private carriers were responsible for 62 percent of total benefit pay-

ments, State funds for 26 percent, and self-insurers for 12 percent. This distribution has not changed much since the early 1950's, except for a slight drop in self-insurance payments. In 1956, however, for the first time since 1951, payments made by private carriers increased at a faster rate than State fund disbursements—10.0 percent as against 8.6 percent.

Medical and hospital benefits probably account for as much as \$350 million of the total of \$1,003 million. While the greatest liberalizations in workmen's compensation laws have been made in the area of cash benefits, the higher costs of providing these benefits have been matched by the increased cost of medical services rendered to injured workmen. The estimated distributions by type of payment are shown below; data for 1956 are preliminary and those for 1955 have been revised.

[In millions]		
Type of payment	1956	1955
Total.....	\$1,003	\$915
Medical and hospitalization.....	350	325
Compensation, total.....	653	590
Disability.....	578	520
Survivor.....	75	70

Civil Service Retirement Act Amendments, 1957*

During the first session of the Eighty-fifth Congress, three laws were enacted amending the Civil Service Retirement Act. The modifications, which are of a relatively minor nature, are summarized below.

Public Law 85-58, signed June 21, 1957, relates to annuities payable to the widows of Members of Congress. Before the 1956 amendments to the Civil Service Retirement Act, the annuity to the widow was not payable (if there were no minor children) until she attained age 50. Legislation in 1956 had removed the age restriction if the death should occur after September 1956. The 1957 law made the change effective for deaths

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occurring after March 31, 1956, and set July 1, 1957, as the beginning date for payment of such an annuity. The widow of any Member of Congress who died in the 6 months April-September 1956 could therefore begin drawing the annuity for July 1957, even though she was under age 50.

Public Law 85-65 (June 29, 1957) affects those Federal workers who are reemployed after separation from the service and who desire to make a deposit for noncontributory service rendered or who want to redeposit contributions previously withdrawn. The 1956 amendments required payment of interest both for periods of service and for periods in which the employee had no service under the system. The 1957 amendments exclude from the requirement payment of interest for any periods of non-service that began before October 1, 1956.

The survivorship option for retired Members of Congress who were separated from service before October 1, 1956, is also affected by Public Law 85-65. Formerly the annuity to the widow of a retired Member of Congress was payable when she reached age 50. The new legislation removes the age restriction if the Member of Congress dies after December 31, 1956. The beginning date of the annuity is June 1, 1957, or the first day of the month in which death occurred, whichever is later.

Public Law 85-177 (August 28, 1957) provides, in general, that a Federal employee who leaves his position for employment with the International Atomic Energy Agency shall retain for 3 years his status under the civil-service retirement program and the program of group life insurance for Federal employees. If the worker is separated from the Agency and wants to obtain retirement credit under the civil-service program for his Agency service (up to but not in excess of 3 years), he must, within 90 days from the date of separation, pay the deductions that would have been made from his salary and the matching departmental contributions for coverage under the Civil Service Retirement Act. To retain group life insurance coverage, the worker must make his payments concurrently with his Agency employment.