INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

Delivery drivers

Delivery drivers for the firm were independent contractors but the firm exercised control over their work. Although the drivers were required to supply a vehicle for use in the deliveries, the primary object of the contract was not the use of the vehicle as contemplated in *White v. Department of Labor & Indus.*, 48 Wn.2d 470 (1956). The drivers were covered workers under the Industrial Insurance Act. *...In re Henry Industries, BIIA Dec., 13 11525 (2014)* [Editor's Note: The Board's decision was appealed to superior court under King County Cause No. 14-2-12640-9.]
APPEARANCES:

Firm, Henry Industries, Inc., by
Stinson, Morrison, Hecker, LLP, per
Molly E. Walsh and Stephanie N. Scheck

Department of Labor and Industries, by
The Office of the Attorney General, per
Katy J. Dixon, Assistant

The firm, Henry Industries, Inc., filed an appeal with the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals on February 11, 2013, from an order of the Department of Labor and Industries dated January 10, 2013. In this order, the Department modified its Notice and Order of Assessment dated October 3, 2011, thereby assessing Henry Industries, Inc., $51,579.57 for unpaid premiums, penalties, and interest for calendar year 2010. The Department order is AFFIRMED.

DECISION

As provided by RCW 51.52.104 and RCW 51.52.106, this matter is before the Board for review and decision. The Department filed a timely Petition for Review of a Proposed Decision and Order issued on September 26, 2013, in which the industrial appeals judge reversed and remanded the Department order dated January 10, 2013. Our industrial appeals judge determined that Henry Industries delivery drivers were independent contractors whose personal labor was not the essence of the contract. The contested issue addressed in this order is whether drivers delivering packages for one of Henry Industries’ customers are workers under the Industrial Insurance Act (Act).

The Board has reviewed the evidentiary rulings in the record of proceedings and finds that no prejudicial error was committed. The rulings are affirmed.

Henry Industries provides warehouse, logistic, and courier services in Washington State. PharMerica is a long-term care pharmacy that sells pharmaceutical products and packages to long-term healthcare facilities. PharMerica contracted with Henry Industries for the delivery of its pharmaceutical products to healthcare facilities in Washington State. Henry Industries then contracted with individuals to make the deliveries on assigned routes.

The controversy in this appeal is whether the 33 individuals performing the delivery services during calendar year 2010 are covered workers under the Act. Henry Industries asserts that the
individuals are not workers under the Act because (1) it has subcontractor relationships with the
individuals through written contracts; (2) the essence of the contract is not the personal labor of the
individuals; (3) Henry Industries does not exercise control over the work of the individuals; and (4)
the contract requires that the individuals provide a vehicle necessary to perform the contract.
Henry Industries argues that these facts exclude the individuals from the definition of worker under
the Act. The Department argues that the essence of the contract is the personal labor of the
individuals; the individuals are workers under the Act; and they are not exempt under the alternative
definition of worker found in RCW 51.08.195.

Our industrial appeals judge determined that the individuals were independent contractors
and exempt from coverage under the Act because they did not provide personal labor and the
essence of the contract was to provide a vehicle for delivery services for Henry Industries and its
customers. We have granted review because we disagree with the analysis set forth in the
Proposed Decision and Order. We find on the facts in this record that although the individuals are
independent contractors, the essence of the contract was personal labor and they are workers
within the meaning of the Act. Further, we find that Henry Industries failed to establish that the
individuals are exempt under the alternative definition of worker found in RCW 51.08.195.

Henry Industries and the 33 individuals entered into written contracts. The contract provides
that the individuals are subcontractors. The contract provides that each individual is required to
provide a vehicle and have necessary and appropriate insurance. An individual with a route was
free to hire someone else to do the work. The drivers obligated themselves to keep records, obey
all regulations, and to pay all taxes owed. The contract requires that the individual be fluent in
English and successfully complete drug, alcohol and background screening. The drug screening
includes random testing. The background check includes motor vehicle records and criminal
records. A negative report in the back ground check results in immediate termination. The
individual is to "faithfully and diligently devote his/her/its best efforts, skill and abilities to comply
with customer requirements and to faithfully enhance and promote the welfare and best interest" of
Henry Industries. Exhibits 2-33, § 3. i. The contract requires that the individual execute a
confidentiality agreement to ensure Henry Industries interests are protected.

The definition of worker is set out in RCW 51.08.180. The term "worker" includes not only
employees, as that term is commonly understood, but also a person "who is working under an
independent contract, the essence of which is his or her personal labor for an employer under this
RCW 51.08.070 defines an employer as a person or entity, engaging in any work in this state covered by the provisions of this title, "who contracts with one or more workers, the essence of which is the personal labor of such worker or workers." This statutory construct creates a presumption in favor of mandatory coverage. As a general rule, all employments are covered under the Act unless there are specific exceptions or exemptions from coverage. Further, RCW 51.08.180 and RCW 51.08.070 exclude a person from the definition of a worker or employer who meets the six part test set forth in RCW 51.08.195(1) through (6).

The Washington Supreme Court has provided a test for determining whether an independent contractor is a worker with the meaning of RCW 51.08.180. Under this test, an independent contractor is exempt from coverage under the Act when the contractor: (1) must of necessity own or supply machinery or equipment as distinguish from the usual hand tools to perform the contract; or (2) obviously could not perform the contract without assistance; or (3) who of necessity or choice employs others to do all or part of the work contracted to perform. White v. Department of Labor & Indus., 48 Wn.2d 470, 474 (1956). We will address each of the three tests set out in White.

When viewed in its entirety, the contract between Henry Industries and each individual calls for personal labor. While the contract requires the individual to provide a car for use in the delivery of the drugs, the requirement of the car, although an important part of the contract, is not the primary object of the contract. The contract is specific with respect to selecting the individual. The individual must be fluent in English and must complete drug, alcohol and background screening. The drug screening occurs randomly when required by Henry Industries' clients and performed at Henry Industries' request. The background screening is conducted initially and then annually as authorized by Henry Industries. A negative report in any test results in termination. Additionally, under the contract the individual is required to promote the best interest of Henry Industries.

The record establishes that the individuals who contracted with Henry Industries to deliver the pharmaceuticals are engaged in a long-term relationship with PharMerica where they would pick up the pharmaceuticals and the various long-term care facilities where they would deliver them. The drivers would enter the PharMerica building to obtain the pharmaceuticals and would make the delivery inside the health care facilities. This would require contact by the delivery drivers with the "customers" on each end of the process. The agreements that Henry Industries had with the individual drivers are open-ended. The testimony of two drivers, Charles Hawley and Keith Parker, indicate that the individual drivers worked for many years for Henry Industries. At the time
of his testimony Mr. Hawley had worked for Henry Industries for approximately 2-1/2 years. Mr. Parker began work in 2006 and worked through the audit year of 2010. The relationship between Henry Industries and the individual drivers and the long-term care facilities reflects a long-term personal relationship. This relationship forms an important element of the relationship between Henry Industries and the drivers and is reflected in the requirements the driver must meet in order to work for Henry Industries. The selection process used by Henry Industries as well as its monitoring of the actions of the individuals demonstrates that Henry Industries is hiring the individual based on the individual's personal attributes and will terminate the individual if their personal behavior and performance fails to meet the requirements set by Henry Industries in the contract. Henry Industries exercised control over the individuals under the contract.

While the contract is specific regarding the qualifications and conduct of the individual, the contract is silent on the requirements of the vehicle to be supplied by the individual. The vehicle's size, its ability to carry loads, or any other specification about the vehicle is absent from the contract. Specific to the contract is the requirement that the vehicle used must be able to be locked to provide security for the items carried under the contract. The primary object of the contract is not for the use of any machinery or equipment as contemplated in White, the contract is for the personal labor of the individual. Not any person with a car can meet the requirements of the contract. However, once the individual meets the requirements of the contract, any standard car is acceptable for use under the contract so long as it is properly licensed and insured and has locks on the doors. The mere fact that the individual used a vehicle which the individual supplied in the course of performing work does not change the fact that the essence of the contract is personal labor.

In Lloyd's of Yakima Floor Center v. Department of Labor & Indus., 33 Wn. App. 745 (1982), the floor center hired floor and carpet installers to install carpet sold by the center. The installers were required to supply their own tools and equipment, plus a van or vehicle able to transport the carpet and flooring materials to customer locations. The court found that the essence of the agreements between the floor center and the installers was for their personal labor. The van or motor vehicle for transportation was not specialized equipment contemplated by White. Lloyd's at 751. We find on the facts in this record that the individuals hired by Henry industries fail to meet the exclusion from coverage under the first White test.
Henry Industries has also failed to prove that the individuals met either of the remaining two tests set forth in *White*. There is no evidence delivering totes of pharmaceuticals required the work of helpers. The individuals are not excluded under the second *White* test.

The testimony of the two drivers who worked for Henry Industries in 2010, fails to establish that the drivers employed others to perform the labor under the contract. Charles Hawley stated that he never hired anybody to do the work for Henry Industries. Keith Parker's testimony on this issue is not clear whether he hired others to perform the delivery services. Mr. Parker testified that he was required to make sure the delivery gets done and that if he is not available he finds someone to handle the route. But Mr. Parker also testified on cross examination that he has never had any employees. We are not persuaded by Mr. Parker’s testimony that he in fact hired others to perform the work required by the contract. The individuals are not excluded as workers under the third *White* test.

The dissent argues that a recent Board decision *In re Yellow Book Sales & Distribution Company, Inc.*, Dckt. No. 10 11146 (March 30, 2011) on similar facts reaches a different conclusion and should be followed. The dissent notes that our decision in *Yellow Book* determined that delivery drivers in that decision were independent contractors and the essence of the contract was not personal service and therefore they were not covered workers.

In *Yellow Book*, we adopted the Proposed Decision and Order issued by our industrial appeals judge. In doing so we adopted the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law contained in the Proposed Decision and Order. *In re Yellow Book Sales & Distribution Company, Inc.*, Dckt. No. 10 11146 (Proposed Decision and Order, December 17, 2010). The facts set out in the *Yellow Book* Proposed Decision and Order that provided the basis for our Decision and Order in *Yellow Book* are substantially different from the facts of this appeal.

In *Yellow Book*, the firm contracted once a year with distributors to deliver phone books to residential addresses. These deliveries were in rural settings as well as in urban settings. The delivery was done on designated routes and was to be completed in a three-day period for each route. The delivery was a one-time event and the delivery person had no contact with the occupants of the residence and the firm did not care who actually delivered the books. In *Yellow Book*, the essence of the contract was not any individual's personal labor. It was clear on the facts that given the number of books to be delivered and the short time frame the contract required for the delivery, the same individual with the contract would have extreme difficulty delivering the books.
without the help of others and elevates the contract to more than just the personal labor of the delivery person. Additionally, the firm owner specifically stated that the firm did not care who made the actual delivery. This is in sharp contrast to the screening and control exerted by Henry Industries over the hiring and monitoring of the drivers delivering the pharmaceuticals. The facts in *Yellow Book* are substantially different facts than presented in this appeal and result in a different decision.

RCW 51.08.195 provides an alternate definition of employer and worker and creates an exception from mandatory coverage under the Act. The statute excludes certain individuals from coverage if all six of the specified elements are met. RCW 51.08.195 provides:

As an exception to the definition of "employer" under RCW 51.08.070 and the definition of "worker" under RCW 51.08.180, services performed by an individual for remuneration shall not constitute employment subject to this title if it is shown that:

(1) The individual has been and will continue to be free from control or direction over the performance of the service, both under the contract of service and in fact; and

(2) The service is either outside the usual course of business for which the service is performed, or the service is performed outside all of the places of business of the enterprise for which the service is performed, or the individual is responsible, both under the contract and in fact, for the costs of the principal place of business from which the service is performed; and

(3) The individual is customarily engaged in an independently established trade, occupation, profession, or business, of the same nature as that involved in the contract of service, or the individual has a principal place of business for the business the individual is conducting that is eligible for a business deduction for federal income tax purposes; and

(4) On the effective date of the contract of service, the individual is responsible for filing at the next applicable filing period, both under the contract of service and in fact, a schedule of expenses with the internal revenue service for the type of business the individual is conducting; and

(5) On the effective date of the contract of service, or within a reasonable period after the effective date of the contract, the individual has established an account with the department of revenue, and other state agencies as required by the particular case, for the business the individual is conducting for the payment of all state taxes normally paid by employers and businesses and has registered for and received a unified business identifier number from the state of Washington; and
(6) On the effective date of the contract of service, the individual is maintaining a separate set of books or records that reflect all items of income and expenses of the business which the individual is conducting.

Henry Industries must prove all 6 elements of RCW 51.08.195 to establish that its drivers are exempt from mandatory coverage. Our industrial appeals judge, having found that the individuals were excluded as workers under the White test, did not address the application of RCW 51.08.195. We have reviewed the record and find that Henry Industries has failed to present evidence to establish that any of the individuals met all the requirements set out in RCW 51.08.195.

The two individuals with contracts in 2010 that presented testimony, Mr. Hawley and Mr. Parker provided very little information regarding their activities relevant to the six elements of RCW 51.08.195. Mr. Haley testified that he has a Unified Business Identifier (UBI) number, but he failed to provide it. He stated he has no account with the Department of Labor and Industries. He stated that he has an Employer Identification number (EIN), but he failed to provide it. He stated that he has not worked for other employers than Henry Industries. He has never hired others to do the work under the contract. We are not persuaded that Mr. Hawley has an EIN or a UBI number. If he does, the persuasive evidence would be the numbers and not Mr. Hawley's bald assertion that they exist. But even if we were persuaded that Mr. Hawley had both and EIN and a UBI number without substantially more information this fact is insufficient to establish any of the requirements of RCW 51.08.195. Mr. Hawley is not excluded from coverage under the alternative definition of worker under RCW 51.08.195.

Mr. Parker, the second individual with a contract in 2010 that testified, stated that he did not have a UBI number or business license in 2010. He was not registered with the Department of Revenue and did not have an account with the Department of Labor and Industries. He also stated that he did not provide services to any other entity in 2010, only Henry Industries. This evidence fails to establish any of the requirements of RCW 51.08.195. Mr. Parker is not excluded from coverage under the alternative definition of worker under RCW 51.08.195. We agree with the Department of Labor and Industries that the 33 individuals holding contracts with Henry Industries in the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010 were workers under the Act.

Henry Industries failed to make reports as required and is therefore subject to the penalty provisions of RCW 51.48.030. When reports are not filed as required, the Department has the authority to estimate the amount of unpaid premiums. RCW 51.16.155. The estimate must have some reasonable basis in fact. In re NAO Enterprises, BIIA Dec., 89 1832 (1990).
The Department knew how much each driver had been paid through tax records compiled by Henry Industries. The amount a driver was paid, divided by the state average wage for the type of work performed, gives a reasonable estimate of the hours worked. Hours worked multiplied by the premium rate produces a reasonable estimate of the unpaid premiums. This is the method the Department used for the audit period, calendar year 2010. The Department’s estimate had a reasonable basis in fact and conforms to the requirements of NAO Enterprises.

In addition to unpaid premiums, Henry Industries was assessed fines, penalties, and interest for failing to keep records, make quarterly reports, and to pay premiums when due. The fines, penalties, and interest assessed by the Department are reasonable.

The Department order dated January 10, 2013, is correct and is affirmed.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. On April 8, 2013, an industrial appeals judge certified that the parties agreed to include the Jurisdictional History in the Board record solely for jurisdictional purposes.


3. During the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010, Henry Industries, Inc., contracted with PharMerica to deliver pharmaceutical products to locations specified by PharMerica.

4. During the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010, Henry Industries, Inc., contracted with 33 individuals to deliver pharmaceutical products to locations specified by PharMerica.

5. During the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010 the individuals were working under independent contracts, the essence of which was their personal labor.

6. During the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010 the individuals employed by Henry Industries under independent contracts were not free from the firm’s control or direction over the performances of their services.

7. The firm, Henry Industries, Inc., failed to establish that during the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010 the individuals employed by Henry Industries under independent contracts provided service outside the usual course of the firm’s business, or performed services outside all of the places of business of the firm’s enterprise, and were responsible for the cost of the principal place of business for which the service was performed.
8. The firm, Henry Industries, Inc., failed to establish that during the first, second, third, and fourth quarters of 2010, the individuals employed by the firm under independent contracts were customarily engaged in independently established trade, occupation, profession or business, of the same nature as that involved in the contract of service.

9. The firm, Henry Industries, Inc., failed to establish that during the first, second, third, and fourth quarters of 2010, the individuals employed by the firm under independent contracts were responsible for filing at the next applicable filing period, both under the contract of service and in fact, a schedule of expenses with the internal Revenue Service for the type of business the individual was conducting.

10. The firm, Henry Industries, Inc., failed to establish that during the first, second, third, and fourth quarters of 2010, the individuals employed by the firm under independent contracts had established accounts with the Department of Revenue, and other state agencies as required by the particular case; for the business the individual was conducting for the payment of all state taxes normally paid by employers and businesses; and had registered for and received a uniform business identifier number from the state of Washington.

11. The firm, Henry Industries, Inc., failed to establish that during the first, second, third, and fourth quarters of 2010, the individuals employed by the firm under independent contracts were maintaining a separate set of books or records that reflected all items of income and expenses of the business, which the individual was conducting.

12. The 33 individuals working for Henry Industries, Inc., during the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010 were workers and subject to mandatory coverage under the Industrial Insurance Act.

13. During the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010 Henry Industries, Inc., failed to maintain records of the 33 individual workers.

14. Henry Industries, Inc., failed to produce records of the 33 individuals work when requested by the Department of Labor and Industries.

15. The penalties assessed by the Department are reasonable.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter of this appeal.

2. The 33 individuals working for Henry Industries, Inc., in the first, second, third and fourth quarters of 2010, were workers as contemplated by RCW 51.08.180 and RCW 51.08.195.
3. The Department order dated January 10, 2013, is correct and is affirmed.

   BOARD OF INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE APPEALS

   /s/  
   DAVID E. THREEDY  Chairperson

   /s/  
   FRANK E. FENNERTY, JR.  Member

   DISSENT

   Because the majority concludes that the delivery drivers under an independent contract with Henry Industries are workers under the Industrial Insurance Act and reaches this conclusion by disregarding the obvious nature of the contract, I must dissent. The contract between Henry Industries and the delivery drivers requires the use of equipment without which the contract cannot be performed. The essence of the contract is the delivery of the pharmaceuticals which clearly requires the use of specialized equipment, an automobile. While an automobile may be used in the course of employment and may not always satisfy the requirement of specialized equipment under the White test, here the requirement of the car clearly does. In a recent Board decision In re Yellow Book Sales & Distribution Company, Inc., Dckt. No. 10 11146 (March 30, 2011), the Board addressed a similar issue. In the Yellow Book appeal, the contract called for the delivery of phone books to individual residences. The Board adopted the findings of the Proposed Decision and Order and issued a Decision and Order. The findings of the Board included a finding that the independent contractor who agreed to delivery of the telephone books "of necessity had to own or supply machinery in the form of a car, pickup or other motorized machine in order to accomplish their delivery." The Board's finding in the Yellow Book appeal was correct and should be followed in this appeal. The delivery drivers under contract with Henry Industries "of necessity had to own or supply machinery in the form of a car in order to accomplish their delivery." On this record, I would find that the drivers were independent contractors; the essence of the contract was not personal
labor; and the independent workers are not covered workers under the Industrial Insurance Act. I agree with the industrial appeals judge and would reverse the Department's Notice and Order.


BOARD OF INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE APPEALS

/s/
JACK S. ENG Member