

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

JAMES HANSEN, *Applicant*

vs.

**PEPPER INVESTMENTS, INC., dba AANTEX PEST CONTROL;
TECHNOLOGY INSURANCE COMPANY,
administered by AMTRUST NORTH AMERICA, *Defendants***

**Adjudication Number: ADJ18517862
Marina Del Rey District Office**

**OPINION AND ORDER
DENYING PETITION
FOR REMOVAL**

Defendant has filed a petition for removal from the order setting the matter for trial issued on May 19, 2025, by the workers' compensation administrative law judge (WCJ).

Defendant contends that discovery is not yet complete.

We have received an Answer from applicant. The WCJ filed a Report and Recommendation on Petition for Removal (Report) recommending that we deny removal.

We have considered the allegations of the Petition for Removal and the contents of the WCJ's Report. Based on our review of the record and based upon the WCJ's analysis of the merits of petitioner's arguments in the WCJ's Report, we will deny removal.

Removal is an extraordinary remedy rarely exercised by the Appeals Board. (*Cortez v. Workers' Comp. Appeals Bd.* (2006) 136 Cal.App.4th 596, 599, fn. 5 [71 Cal.Comp.Cases 155]; *Kleemann v. Workers' Comp. Appeals Bd.* (2005) 127 Cal.App.4th 274, 280, fn. 2 [70 Cal.Comp.Cases 133].) The Appeals Board will grant removal only if the petitioner shows that substantial prejudice or irreparable harm will result if removal is not granted. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 8, 10955(a); see also *Cortez, supra*; *Kleemann, supra*.) Also, the petitioner must demonstrate that reconsideration will not be an adequate remedy if a final decision adverse to the petitioner ultimately issues. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 8, § 10955(a).) Here, based upon the WCJ's analysis of the merits of petitioner's arguments, we are not persuaded that substantial prejudice or irreparable

harm will result if removal is denied and/or that reconsideration will not be an adequate remedy if the matter ultimately proceeds to a final decision adverse to petitioner.

Decisions of the Appeals Board “must be based on admitted evidence in the record.” (*Hamilton v. Lockheed Corporation (Hamilton)* (2001) 66 Cal.Comp.Cases 473, 476 (Appeals Board en banc).) Furthermore, decisions of the Appeals Board must be supported by substantial evidence. (Lab. Code, §§ 5903, 5952(d); *Lamb v. Workmen’s Comp. Appeals Bd.* (1974) 11 Cal.3d 274 [39 Cal.Comp.Cases 310]; *Garza v. Workmen’s Comp. Appeals Bd.* (1970) 3 Cal.3d 312 [35 Cal.Comp.Cases 500]; *LeVesque v. Workmen’s Comp. Appeals Bd.* (1970) 1 Cal.3d 627 [35 Cal.Comp.Cases 16].) An adequate and complete record is necessary to understand the basis for the WCJ’s decision. (Lab. Code, § 5313; see also Cal. Code Regs., tit. 8, § 10761.)

Here, once the parties proceed to trial, they will have an opportunity to create a record, raise all relevant issues, and submit evidence. Specifically, as part of that process, the parties will have an opportunity to raise the issue of whether further development of the record is appropriate. The trial WCJ can then consider the evidence and the legal arguments raised by the parties and determine how best to proceed.

We make no judgment at this time whether defendant is entitled to additional discovery since without a formal record available to review, we have no ability to make this determination.

Accordingly, we deny removal.

For the foregoing reasons,

IT IS ORDERED that defendant's Petition for Removal from the order setting the matter for trial issued on May 19, 2025, by the WCJ is **DENIED**.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD

/s/ JOSÉ H. RAZO, COMMISSIONER

I CONCUR,

/s/ ANNE SCHMITZ, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

/s/ KATHERINE WILLIAMS DODD, COMMISSIONER



**DATED AND FILED AT SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA
SEPTEMBER 19, 2025**

**SERVICE MADE ON THE ABOVE DATE ON THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW AT
THEIR ADDRESSES SHOWN ON THE CURRENT OFFICIAL ADDRESS RECORD.**

**JAMES HANSEN
FIELD LAW GROUP
LLARENA MURDOCK LOPEZ & AZIZAD APC**

EDL/mt

I certify that I affixed the official seal of the
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board to
this original decision on this date.
BP