

# Longshoremen's Compensation to Be Raised to \$318 Weekly

Maximum workers' compensation benefits for nearly a million workers covered by the Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act and related laws, will be raised to \$318.38 a week effective Oct. 1, the U.S. Labor Department announced recently.

Minimum compensation for disability has increased from \$74.57 to \$79.60 a week, or for any worker earning less than \$79.60 a week the minimum will be the actual wages lost.

W.L. Massey, associate assistant regional director for the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, explained in Seattle that "compensation benefits, subject to the maximum and minimum limitations, are two-thirds of an injured employee's average weekly earning."

The maximum for the past year, applying to injuries

occurring before Oct. 1, has been \$261 a week.

Covered under the Act are dock and shipyard workers, all private employees in the District of Columbia, workers under contracts with the U.S. government in overseas locations, employees of military post exchanges and other nonappropriated agencies serving the armed forces, and workers engaged in exploration or drilling on the outer continental shelf.

The maximum benefit is based on the national average weekly wage of certain groups of employees specified in the Act. The past year's maximum benefit of \$261 a week has been based on 175 per cent of the national average weekly wage of \$149.14.

The new maximum benefit of \$318.38 a week is based on 200 per cent of the national average weekly wage of \$159.19.

Under the present law, on every Oct. 1 hereafter, the maximum benefit will be based on 200 per cent of the applicable national average weekly wage.

The Act sets the minimum benefit at one-half of the national average weekly wage, or the worker's actual wages, if less than that amount.

Also effective Oct. 1 is a 6.74

per cent increase in compensation to workers drawing benefits for permanent total disability, and in death benefits.

Under the Act, compensation benefits are paid by insurance carriers or by self-insured employers. Benefits received by workers and their survivors in 1974 totalled \$65,414,353 including medical costs.

The Longshoremen's and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act is administered by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs of the Department of Labor's Employment Standards Administration.