

APPEAL NO. 031045
FILED JUNE 2, 2003

This appeal arises pursuant to the Texas Workers' Compensation Act, TEX. LAB. CODE ANN. § 401.001 *et seq.* (1989 Act). A contested case hearing was held on April 2, 2003. The hearing officer determined that the respondent's (claimant) _____, compensable injury extends to include disc bulges in his neck and back. The appellant (carrier) appeals this determination. The claimant urges affirmance.

DECISION

Affirmed.

The disputed issue in this case involved a factual question for the hearing officer to resolve. Section 410.165(a) provides that the contested case hearing officer, as finder of fact, is the sole judge of the relevance and materiality of the evidence as well as of the weight and credibility that is to be given the evidence. It was the hearing officer's prerogative to believe all, part, or none of the testimony of any witness, including that of the claimant. Aetna Insurance Company v. English, 204 S.W.2d 850 (Tex. Civ. App.-Fort Worth 1947, no writ). Generally, corroboration of an injury is not required and may be found based upon a claimant's testimony alone. Gee v. Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance Co., 765 S.W.2d 394 (Tex. 1989). We do not view this case as one requiring expert medical evidence to establish causation, as lay testimony is sufficient to establish causation where, based upon common knowledge, a fact finder could understand a causal connection between the employment and the injury. Texas Workers' Compensation Commission Appeal No. 941464, decided January 9, 1995. Nothing in our review of the record indicates that the hearing officer's decision is so against the great weight and preponderance of the evidence as to be clearly wrong or manifestly unjust. Cain v. Bain, 709 S.W.2d 175, 176 (Tex. 1986).

The decision and order of the hearing officer is affirmed.

The true corporate name of the insurance carrier is **TEXAS MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY** and the name and address of its registered agent for service of process is

**MR. RUSSELL R. OLIVER, PRESIDENT
221 WEST 6TH STREET
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701.**

Chris Cowan
Appeals Judge

CONCUR:

Judy L. S. Barnes
Appeals Judge

Gary L. Kilgore
Appeals Judge