

PURPOSE/APPLICATION

To provide direction and guidelines for the development of a Joint Workplace Health & Safety Committee as part of a functioning Health and Safety Management system. Certain Health and Safety committee requirements are determined by jurisdiction, they may also be ordered by the regulator.

PPE

TRAINING

- Orientation
- Training outlined in this SWP

HAZARDS & CONCERNS

- Communication

GUIDELINES

Purpose of Committee



Employers have the largest degree of control over the workplace, they also have the greatest legal responsibility for health and safety. However, CPES feels worker involvement is critical to effectively mitigate workplace hazards and maximize the effectiveness of our health and safety program. Workers have three critical rights, (i) the right to know, (ii) the right to participate, and (iii) the right to refuse, effective Joint OHS Committee help to ensure all three of these rights are met for all workers.

The responsibilities of a committee are:

- Participating in the identification, assessment, and control of hazards.
- Helping identify and resolve health and safety concerns of workers.
- Inspecting the workplace regularly.
- Meeting regularly to discuss OH&S concerns.
- Receiving and distributing information.

Committee Structure

- Each committee must have at least 2, but not more than 12 members.
- At least half the members must be workers who are not involved in management.
- Names of committee members must be posted in the workplace.
- Each committee must have two co-chairs, one representing management, and one representing workers.
- It is good practice to train and prepare alternate co-chairs and members for continuity.

Roles & Responsibilities

The main duties of CPES’s committee are:

- Advise and assist CPES Group in the development, updating, and role out of practices and policies.
- Assist the employer in the identification, assessment, and control of hazards.
- Promote the health & safety policy and program and make recommendations for improvement where required.
- Assist in the development of health and safety practices and procedures.
- Assist and advise employer on workplace health and safety issues. However, the committee is not responsible for managing health and safety in the workplace; the employer has that direct responsibility.
- Participate in the identification, assessment, and control of workplace hazards.
- Participate in workplace inspections as per regulatory and CPES requirements.
- Consult with workers and the employer on issues related to occupational health and safety and environment.

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- Actively participate & review incident investigations according to regulatory and CPES requirements.
- Select appropriate worker and employer representatives to participate incident investigation processes.
- Review and provide feedback on any corrective action reports resulting from incident investigations.
- Execute any other duties and functions prescribed by the provincial regulations.

Responsibilities related to the health and safety committee, which are outlined below:

Management Responsibilities to the Committee

- Support the committee and ensure the committee members receive OHC training.
- Work with the committee to develop and implement solutions to improve worker health and safety (while may not be able to adopt every suggestion; it will be a consultative and cooperative process).

Supervisors' Responsibilities to the Committee

- Cooperate with the committee.
- Bring significant health and safety concerns forward to the committee.

Workers' Responsibilities to the Committee

- Bring health and safety concerns forward to their supervisor/management first; if they are significant concerns or are not satisfactorily resolved, they should be brought forward to the committee.
- Cooperate with the committee.
- Assist the committee as required (e.g., hazard identification, inspections, etc.).

Training

Committee Chair members are required to take Occupational Health & Safety Committee (OHC) training. This training is to be identified and approved by the company and committee members. CPES has assessed the following courses to meet our training expectation:

- Following Courses through Alberta Construction Safety Association (ACSA)
 - Leadership for Safety Excellence (LSE)
 - Principles of Health and Safety Management (PHSM)
 - Joint Health and Safety committee/ Health and Safety Representative (HSCR)
- Following Courses through Energy Safety Canada (ESC):
 - Health & Safety Committees and Representatives (HSCR)
 - Safety Program Development
- The *Health and Safety Committees* e-learning course developed by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)

** Note Some Jurisdictions Have Specific Committee Training Requirements**

Meetings – planning, agenda, minutes, quorum

- Meetings beyond the initial phase of establishing the committee should be held quarterly.
- The co-chairs are responsible to plan the meetings and prepare the agenda. They can be assisted by other members or CPES HSE representative(s).
- The agenda should follow the CPES OHC template.
- Before the meeting, a minute taker should be appointed, who should summarize the minutes following the meeting, and distribute to the OHC members and for posting in the workplace. To promote ownership, this duty should typically rotate through committee members.

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- Quorum is required at OHC meetings for the purposes of votes and decision making. A quorum means at least:
 - Half of all OHC members must be present.
 - Half or more of the members present must be workers.
 - At least one employer member must be present.

Other Activities for member participation or review– inspections, complaints, work refusals, incident investigations

Committee members are encouraged to be involved both in proactive health and safety activities (e.g., hazard identification, inspections, etc.), as well as being aware of and assisting in resolving worker complaints, work refusals, incident investigations, etc.

Posting of Members and Minutes

The posting of a members list is required in each BU office in a general area access able to all workers of that Business Unit on General Safety Bulletin Boards.

Following Committee Meetings, the minutes will be drafted and posting in in a general area accessible to all workers of that Business Unit on General Safety Bulletin Boards.

The duties of committees are defined in Provincial OH&S legislation. The requirement for a committee and their specific duties may vary by the province in which work is being conducted.

SPECIFIC COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS BY PROVINCE

In addition to the guidelines outline above the following are requirements that are specific to the province in which the work is being conducted.

Alberta – OHS Act Part 2 Health and Safety Committees, Representatives and Programs

- Joint OHS Committees are required if the employer regularly employs 20 or more workers, or
- If there is **no Prime Contractor** and there are 20 or more regularly employed workers in total from 2 or more employers at a work site, all employers shall, coordinate the establishment of a joint health and safety committee for that work site.
- The number of persons on a joint health and safety committee who represent the employer shall not exceed in total the number of worker representatives on the committee.

Saskatchewan - OHS Code Part 4 Committees and Representatives

- A contractor shall establish a committee at a construction site at which 10 or more workers or self-employed persons work or are likely to work for more than 90 days.
- Employer select persons to represent the employer or contractor on the committee; and ensure that there is a sufficient number of members representing workers on the committee to equitably represent groups of workers who have substantially different occupational health and safety concerns; and designate members for a term not exceeding 3 years.

British Columbia - OHS Act Division 5 – Joint Committees and Worker Representatives

- An employer must establish and maintain a joint health and safety committee in each workplace where 20 or more workers of the employer are regularly employed.
- The committee must have at least 4 members or, if a greater number of members is required by regulation, that greater number; it must consist of worker representatives and employer representatives; at least half the members must be worker representatives; it must have 2 co-chairs, one selected by the worker representatives and the other selected by the employer representatives.

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- If a joint committee sends a written recommendation to an employer with a written request for a response from the employer. The employer must respond in writing to the committee within 21 days of receiving the request, either indicating acceptance of the recommendation, or giving the employer's reasons for not accepting the recommendation.

Manitoba OHS Code – Part 40 Workplace Safety and Health Committees and Representatives

- A prime contractor shall establish a committee at a construction project site if at least 20 workers are involved, or expected to be involved, in work on a construction project; and the project is expected to require more than 90 days to complete. The committee shall consist of not fewer than four of whom at least 1/2 shall be persons representing workers who are not associated with management.
- The employer or prime contractor must ensure that committee members are trained to competently fulfill their duties as committee members.

REFERENCES / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

HSEMS Section 9 Inspections, Audits, Evaluations and Observations

HSEMS Section 10 Incident Investigation, Management and Follow-up

REGULATIONS

Alberta OHS Code

OHS Act Part 2 Health and Safety Committees, Representatives and Programs

Part 13 Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee

British Columbia OHS Regulation

OHS Act Division 5 – Joint Committees and Worker Representatives

Part 3 Joint Health and Safety Committees and Worker Health and Safety Representatives

Manitoba OHS Regulation

Section 40 & 41 Workplace Safety and Health Committees and Representatives

Saskatchewan OHS Regulation

Part 4 Committees & Representatives

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