

Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee/Health and Safety Representative Training Manual

A resource manual for course facilitators, participants,
committee members and representatives

December 2019

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This manual is current to October 2019. The law is constantly changing with new legislation, amendments to existing legislation, and decisions from the courts. It is important that you keep up with these changes and keep yourself informed of the current law.

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About this resource

This manual can be used by approved training agencies and facilitators, in developing and delivering approved joint work site health and safety committee (HSC) and health and safety (HS) representative training courses. The content in this manual is based on the Government of Alberta's **Health and Safety Committee and Representative Training Curriculum Standard (EDU008)** ("Curriculum Standard") and can be a valuable reference for course participants, HSC members, employers and workers.

In particular, this manual will assist HSC co-chairs and HS representatives in understanding their legislated duties and functions.

The information in this manual can help all work site parties work together to keep the work environment healthy and safe by providing key occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements in Alberta. "Health and safety" includes physical, psychological and social well-being.

Sections 1-9 address the prescribed learning objectives in the Curriculum Standard. The sections contain a range of information from various sources that help the reader understand key concepts. Appendix 1 is a glossary of commonly used terms, Appendix 2 contains the obligations of work site parties and Appendix 3 includes a selection of templates that are easily adaptable for your workplace.

Learning outcomes

Upon completing the HSC/HS representative course, participants should demonstrate an understanding of the following learning outcomes.

Section	Learning Outcome
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the purposes of the <i>OHS Act</i>, Regulation and Code and how this legislation applies to HSC members and HS representatives.• Describe what an HSC and HS representative are.• Summarize the duties and functions of a committee and representative.
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the internal responsibility system.• Explain due diligence.• Explain the three basic rights of all workers.• Explain the prohibition of discriminatory action.
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain how to determine if an HSC or HS representative is required.
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the requirements for HSC membership.• Summarize training requirements for HSC members and representatives.• Explain the purpose of an HSC's terms of reference and rules of procedure.• Describe requirements for managing HSC meetings.• Know the obligations of employers, contractors and prime contractors.
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the HSC/HS representative's role in hazard identification, assessment and control.
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the HSC/HS representative's role in work site inspections.
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain the HSC/HS representative's role in incident investigations.
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the roles and responsibilities of HSCs and HS representatives in addressing workplace violence and harassment.• Understand the roles and responsibilities of HSCs and HS representatives in receiving and addressing worker concerns.• Create appropriate HSC recommendations for employers.
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List the traits of an effective HSC and explain the purpose of conducting an evaluation of the committee's effectiveness.

1. Health and Safety Legislation

1.1 Purpose of the *OHS Act*, Regulation and Code

A safe and healthy work environment is the goal of Alberta's OHS legislation. There are three pieces to the legislation: the Act, the Regulation and the Code.

The *OHS Act*

OHS Act ("the Act") is an important piece of legislation that affects you. The Act sets standards to protect and promote the health and safety of workers throughout Alberta. It gives the government authority to make regulations and codes about health and safety in the workplace, and sets out fundamental duties and obligations of employers, workers and other work site parties.

Section 2 of the *OHS Act* lists its purposes as follows:

- (a) the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, psychological and social well-being of workers
- (b) to prevent work site incidents, injuries, illnesses and diseases
- (c) the protection of workers from factors and conditions adverse to their health and safety,
- (d) to ensure that all workers have
 - i. the right to be informed of work site hazards and the means to eliminate or control those hazards
 - ii. the right to meaningful participation in health and safety activities pertaining to their work and work site, including the ability to express health and safety concerns
 - iii. the right to refuse dangerous work
 - iv. the ability to work without being subject to discriminatory action for exercising a right or fulfilling a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations or the OHS Code

The OHS Regulation

The OHS Regulation addresses requirements related to general administrative matters and health and safety rules and regulations.

The OHS Code

The OHS Code specifies detailed technical standards and safety rules that employers and workers must comply with to fulfill their obligations. Technical requirements cover areas such as equipment safety, noise, chemical hazards and first aid, to name a few.

1.2 Requirements for training in the *OHS Act*

Section 29 of the *OHS Act* lists requirements for training of HSC co-chairs and HS representatives.

Training of committee members and representatives

29(1) Where a joint work site health and safety committee is established, an employer or prime contractor, as applicable, shall ensure that the co-chairs of the

committee receive training respecting the duties and functions of a committee.

(2) Where a health and safety representative is designated, an employer shall ensure that the representative receives training respecting the duties and functions of a representative.

(3) Where a member of a joint work site health and safety committee or a health and safety representative gives reasonable notice, an employer shall permit the member or representative to take time away from the member's or the representative's regular duties to attend health and safety training programs, seminars or courses of instruction.

(4) The amount of time allowed annually for training under subsections (1), (2) and (3) is the greater of

(a) 16 hours, or

(b) the number of hours the worker normally works during 2 shifts.

This section of the Act indicates that HSC co-chairs and HS representatives need to receive training respecting the duties and functions of committees and representatives.

1.3 Role of the health and safety committee and health and safety representative

An HSC is a group of worker and employer representatives working together to identify and solve health and safety concerns at the work site. A HS representative is an individual worker representative who promotes health and safety awareness and works with the employer to address health and safety concerns at the work site. A HS representative takes on all of the duties of an HSC (with necessary modifications). HSCs and HS representatives are an important part of the internal responsibility system, encouraging worker participation and helping ensure that work site parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the workplace.

HSCs and HS representatives have a number of duties and functions outlined under section 19 and 20 of the *OHS Act* to help prevent injuries and illness. These duties are to:

- receive and address concerns and complaints about the health and safety of workers,
- participate in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of, or in connection with, activities at the work site,
- develop and promote measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and check the effectiveness of the measures,
- cooperate with an OHS officer exercising their duties,
- develop and promote programs for education and information concerning health and safety,
- make recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner regarding the health and safety of workers,
- participate in investigations of serious injuries and incidents at the work site,
- maintain records in connection with concerns and complaints,
- other duties as may be specified in the *OHS Act*, Regulation and Code.

The OHS Code gives further HSC duties. These are to:

- establish a terms of reference and rules of procedure,
- inspect each work site at least once before each quarterly meeting,
- consult with the employer in the development and implementation of hazardous product procedures, and
- not disclose workers' personal information unless disclosure is required by law.

Section 37 of the *OHS Act* outlines that an employer who employs 20 or more workers is responsible to establish a health and safety program in consultation with the HSC. The program at minimum must include the following elements:

- Health and safety policy
- Identification of existing and potential hazards
- Emergency response plan
- Employer/supervisor/worker responsibilities
- Schedule and procedures for inspections
- Procedures to be followed to protect the health and safety of everyone at the worksite
- Worker and supervisor orientation and training
- Procedures for investigating incidents, injuries and work refusals
- Procedures for worker participation in work site health and safety
- Procedures for the review and revision of the health and safety program
- Any additional elements in the regulations

2. Internal responsibility system

2.1 What is an internal responsibility system?

Everyone at the work site has a role to play in keeping workplaces safe and healthy. An internal responsibility system is a way of sharing responsibility between everyone in the workplace. Responsibility is shared according to each person's legal obligation, which are often based on that person's authority and control at the workplace. In an internal responsibility system, employers are usually seen as having the most responsibilities, but all work site parties including workers and supervisors have health and safety obligations. For instance,

- Workers at the work site who see unsafe acts or conditions have an obligation to report the situation to the employer or the supervisor.
- Employers and supervisors are, in turn required to advise workers of all known or reasonably foreseeable hazards in the work they do.

The internal responsibility system is the foundation for the *OHS Act*. Part 1 of the Act identifies legal OHS obligations for the following parties:

- employers
- supervisors
- workers
- suppliers
- service providers
- owners
- contractors
- prime contractors
- self employed
- temporary staffing agencies

A person may be classified under more than one work site party, and if so will have multiple obligations under each role. In these cases, the person must meet the obligations of each classification.

It is important for HSC members and HS representatives to have a general understanding of the obligations assigned to each work site party. These obligations are included in [Appendix 2](#) and should be reviewed.

Designating health and safety responsibilities is a good start towards a successful internal responsibility system, but is only a start. A positive and cohesive internal responsibility system depends on a workplace culture that accepts and understands OHS responsibilities and accountabilities accountability system, and enacts them consistently.

2.2 Due diligence

Due diligence is the ability to demonstrate that a person did what could reasonably be expected under their circumstances, in order to satisfy a legal requirement. A due diligence defence depends on your ability to demonstrate the actions taken before an incident occurs, not after.

Due diligence is making reasonable efforts to comply with the legislation. Even within the best health and safety systems, non-compliance may occur from time to time, and those incidents of non-compliance may result in a serious incident.

To prove that all reasonable actions are carried out and due diligence is applied, consider the following items:

- 1) *Foreseeability* — could a reasonable person foresee that something could go wrong?
- 2) *Preventability* — is there an opportunity to prevent an injury or incident?
- 3) *Control* — who has the ability or responsibility to prevent an injury or incident from occurring?

2.3 Workers' OHS rights

Right to know

Workers have the right to know about workplace hazards and have access to health and safety information at the work site.

Employers are responsible for making their workers aware of the workers' rights under OHS legislation. Employers must also ensure that workers are made aware of any health and safety hazards at the work site as well as the controls used to eliminate or minimize these hazards (*OHS Act* s.2(d)(i)). This awareness allows workers to actively participate in preventing and resolving OHS issues at the work site.

Right to participate

Workers have the right to meaningful participation in health and safety activities pertaining to their worksite, including the ability to express health and safety concerns (*OHS Act* s. 2(d)(ii)).

For most of Alberta's workers, this participation is through their HSC or HS representative. Workers who do not have an HSC or HS representative should also have opportunities to participate.

Right to refuse dangerous work

Under section 2(d)(iii) as well as sections 31-34 of the *OHS Act*, workers have the right to refuse any work if they believe on reasonable grounds that

- there is a dangerous condition at the work site,
- that the work constitutes a danger to the worker's health and safety or to the health and safety of another worker or another person.

Employers must not take discriminatory action against any workers who have initiated a work refusal in good faith.

Danger that can trigger a refusal might include:

- a danger that is not normal for the job,
- a danger that would normally stop work, or
- a situation for which the worker isn't properly trained, equipped or experienced.

If a worker believes that the assigned work is dangerous, they must report their refusal and the reason for the refusal to the employer or supervisor promptly. If the employer cannot remedy the dangerous condition immediately, they must inspect the condition with the worker reporting the refusal and another worker, providing it is safe to do so. The legislation stipulates who the other worker will be, depending on the circumstances of your work site:

- If you have an HSC, this worker will be the co-chair who represents the workers.
- If you have an HS representative, this will be the worker.
- If you have no HSC or HS representative, the worker refusing to do the work should select the other worker.

The employer is required to prepare a written report of the refusal to work, the inspection and any actions taken. This report must be given to:

- the worker who refused the dangerous work, and
- the HSC/HS representative if one exists. The employer must ensure that this report does not contain any personal information related to the worker who refused dangerous work.

Until the dangerous condition is remedied, the worker who reported may continue to refuse the dangerous work.

If the dangerous condition is not remedied after the inspection, the worker who refused to perform the work or any person present during the inspection may file a complaint with an Alberta OHS officer who may investigate the matter further.

The employer must continue to pay the worker despite the refusal.

If the employer determines that the work does not pose a danger to the health and safety of any person, they may assign another worker to perform the work. The employer must advise that worker, in writing, of:

- the first worker's refusal,
- the reasons for the refusal,
- the reason why, in the opinion of the employer, the work does not constitute a danger to the health and safety of any person or that a dangerous condition is not present, and
- a worker's right to refuse to do dangerous work..

Prohibition of discriminatory action

Section 35 of the *OHS Act*, states that no person shall take discriminatory action against a worker, if that worker is:

- acting in compliance with the legislation,
- called to testify, intending to testify or testifying in a proceeding under the Act,
- giving relevant information about work site conditions,
- performing duties or exercising rights as a member of the HSC/HS representative,

- assisting or has assisted with the activities of the HSC/HS representative,
- refusing to do work under section 31(1),
- trying to establish an HSC or have an HS representative designated,
- being prevented from working because of an order under the legislation,
- taking reasonable action to protect the health and safety of themselves or any other person.

If a worker has reason to believe that they have been subjected to discriminatory action they may file a complaint with an officer (*OHS Act* s. 36(1)).

3. Determining if a health and safety committee or representative is required

3.1 Health and safety committee requirements

Employer-wide HSCs

An employer who has a total of 20 or more full or part time workers, and work that is expected to last 90 days or more must establish an HSC (*OHS Act* s. 16(1a)).

Multiple employer work sites

A work site with two or more employers/self-employed persons and work that is expected to last 90 days or more requires an HSC if there is a total of 20 or more full or part-time workers on the site. If there is a prime contractor on the work site, they must establish the HSC. If there is no prime contractor, all employers and self-employed persons at the site must coordinate establishing the HSC (*OHS Act* s. 16(2)).

The decision tree at the end of this section can be used to help determine the need for an HSC on multiple employer work sites.

3.2 Health and safety representative requirements

Where a union exists, the HS representative must be appointed in accordance with the constitution of the union that is the certified bargaining agent or has acquired bargaining rights on behalf of those workers (*OHS Act* s. 17(2)). If there is no union, a representative must be designated.

Note that as per OHS legislation, supervisors and employers cannot serve as HS representatives.

Employer-wide HS representatives

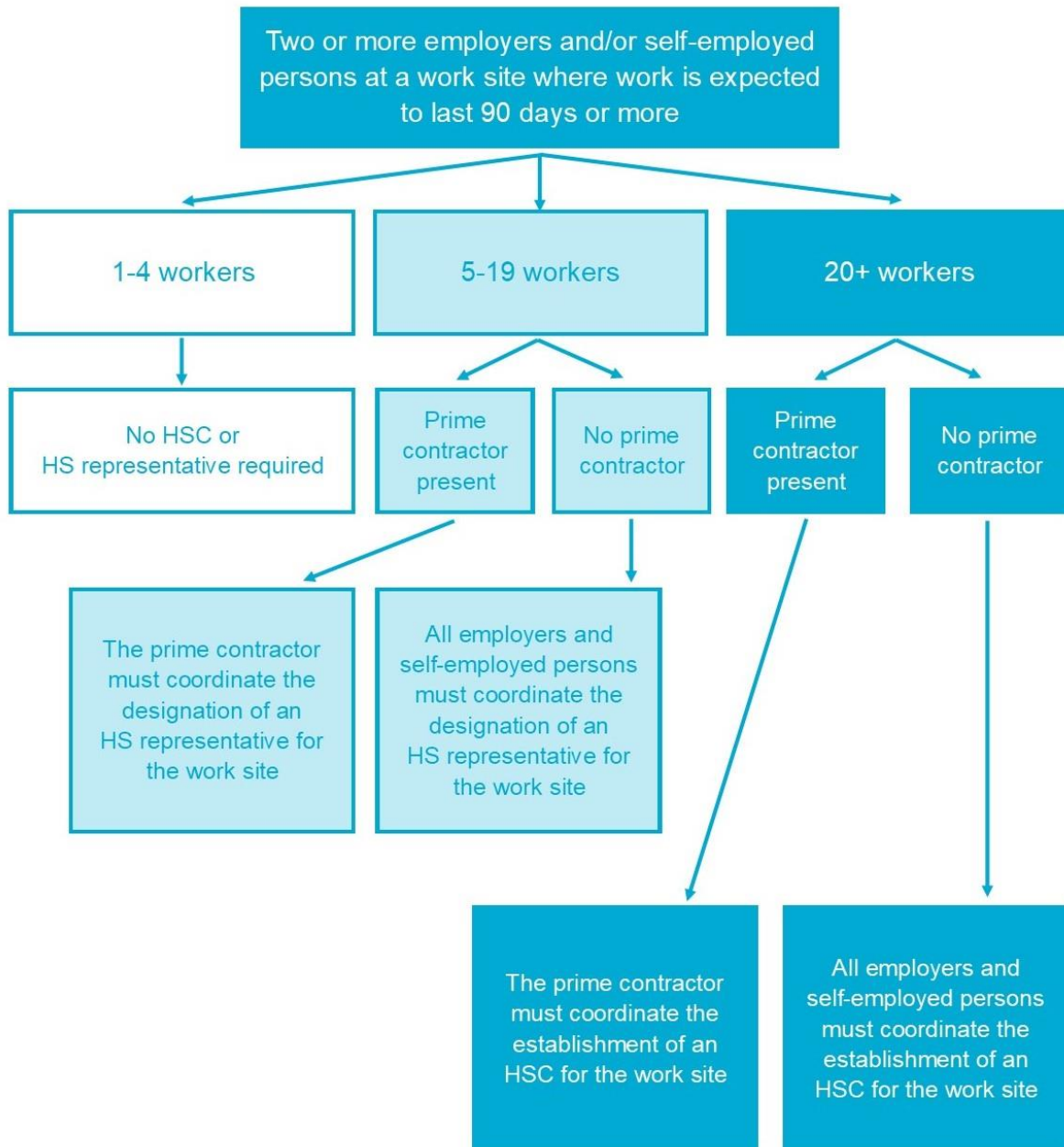
An employer who has one or more work sites, and work that is expected to last 90 days or more must designate a worker HS representative if the employer has 5 to 19 full or part-time workers.

Multiple employer work sites

A work site with two or more employers/self-employed persons and work that will likely last 90 days or more requires an HS representative if there are 5 to 19 full or part-time workers in total at the site. If there is a prime contractor on the work site, they must coordinate the appointment of an HS representative for the site. If there is no prime contractor, all employers and self-employed persons at the site must coordinate appointing an HS representative together (*OHS Act* s. 17(3)).

The decision tree on the next page can help determine the need for an HSC/HS representative on multiple employer work sites.

3.3 Multiple employer work site decision tree



4. Composition of the health and safety committee

4.1 Committee membership

Number of committee representatives

The minimum number of HSC members required is four, of whom at least half must represent workers who are not associated with the management of the work site (*OHS Act* s. 22(1)).

Note that as per OHS legislation, supervisors and employers cannot serve as worker HSC members.

Large employers and complex work sites may require more HSC members to adequately represent the health and safety interests of both workers and the employer. Any decision about the number of members required to create an effective HSC rests with the employer or prime contractor. The Act does not prescribe an upper limit to the size of an HSC.

Factors to consider when deciding on committee size should include:

- degree of hazards in the workplace,
- number of workers,
- number of departments,
- number of unions/collective agreements, and
- need to represent different shifts.

Committee co-chairs

Each HSC must have two co-chairs. The co-chairs are responsible for calling meetings and making sure that meetings operate effectively. Employer HSC members chose the employer co-chair and worker members chose the worker co-chair. The co-chairs must alternate in serving as chair at the meetings and participate in all decisions of the committee (*OHS Act* s. 22(2)(3)).

Worker members

Where no union exists, the workers select their worker members. If a union exists, worker members must be appointed in accordance with the constitution of the union that is the certified bargaining agent or has acquired bargaining rights on behalf of those workers. If more than one union exists, worker members must be elected in accordance with an agreement among all of those unions (*OHS Act* s. 22(1)).

Section 22(4) of the *OHS Act* states that a worker member of an HSC must:

- (a) work at the work site, or
- (b) in the case of an employer who operates at multiple work sites, be a person directly employed by the employer.

Employer members

An employer member of an HSC must be appointed to the committee by the employer or prime contractor, as applicable (*OHS Act* s. 22(5)).

Section 22(6) of the *OHS Act* states that an employer member of an HSC must:

- (a) be employed at the work site, or
- (b) in the case of an employer who operates at multiple work sites, be a person directly employed by the employer.

4.2 Training requirements

HSC co-chairs and HS representatives must receive training specific to their duties and functions so they can fulfill their roles. To ensure this is accomplished, training must be delivered by an organization approved by the Minister (*OHS Code* s. 201).

The *OHS Act* does not require the employer to provide this training to the remaining HSC members. However, an employer must also permit other HSC members to attend health and safety training programs, seminars, or courses of instruction to advance their overall health and safety knowledge, and this can include the mandatory HSC co-chair and HS representative training.

The amount of time allowed annually for individual members of the HSC or the HS representative to attend training, is the greater of 16 hours or the number of hours the worker normally worked during two shifts (*OHS Act* s. 29).

Employers can exceed the specified training limits and provide additional training time. During training, HSC members are deemed to be at work and must be paid at the applicable rate of pay.

HSC members and HS representatives are entitled to take time away from their regular duties to perform their required HSC or HS representative work (*OHS Act* s. 30).

HSC members and HS representatives must give the employer reasonable notice to take time away from work for training and performing their HSC duties. It is up to the employer or prime contractor to decide how to maintain work continuity during these periods of time.

4.3 Contact information

The employer or prime contractor, if there is one, is required to post the names and contact information of HSC members or the HS representative. The information must be posted in a conspicuous location at every work site where HSC/HS representative represent workers (*OHS Act* s. 23). This requirement makes it possible for work site parties to contact the HSC/HS representative with concerns or questions.

4.4 Membership term

HSC members or HS representatives are expected to fulfill their duties and hold office for a minimum of one year. They may continue to hold office until a successor is appointed or selected.

At work sites where there is a union agreement in place, the term of office specified in the union's constitution applies. Where there are multiple unions at a work site, the unions must agree on the term of office (*OHS Act* s. 24).

4.5 Terms of reference and rules of procedure

Terms of reference and rules of procedure are written procedures for how the HSC functions. The HSC is required to develop both a terms of reference and rules of procedure to establish structure, roles and responsibilities, and terms of office. These may be two separate documents or combined into one, but either way, must address the requirements for each.

Terms of reference

Section 197 of the *OHS Code* states that an HSC must establish terms of reference that:

- ensures the committee's membership represents all OHS concerns at their work site,
- sets out a process for replacing members of the committee if they depart,
- establishes a dispute resolution process to use if the committee fails to reach a consensus about recommendations to be put forward, and
- creates a process for coordinating with other HSCs established by the same employer (or prime contractor).

The terms of reference may also address other items to support the effective operation of the committee.

Rules of procedure

Section 16(3) of the *OHS Act* states that the HSC must establish rules of procedure for fulfilling its duties listed under Section 19 of the *OHS Act*.

The duties under Section 19 are described at the beginning of this manual (Section 1.3, Role of the health and safety committee and health and safety representatives). The intent of rules of procedure is to specify how to accomplish each of these duties.

For example, one of the duties listed under Section 19 of the *OHS Act* is to:

- make recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner respecting the health and safety of workers

For the purpose of rules of procedure, the HSC must document how it will accomplish this duty. Rules of procedure would address the HSC's specific process for making recommendations to the employer.

A terms of reference and rules of procedure sample is provided in [Appendix 3.1](#).

4.6 Meeting frequency and minutes

HSC meeting frequency

An HSC must meet within 10 days of being established and at least quarterly after that, but can meet more often if they choose to do so. Either co-chair may request special meetings to deal with urgent concerns at the work site. An HSC must also convene a special meeting if requested

to do so by an Alberta OHS officer. Meetings must be held during normal working hours (*OHS Act* s. 27(1-4)).

The minimum meeting frequency requirement is intended to encourage the resolution of concerns and issues at regular intervals rather go unresolved for long periods of time.

Health and safety committee meeting minutes

Section 27(5-7) of the *OHS Act* tells us that HSC co-chairs must record the minutes of each meeting. Minutes are a written record of what went on at the meeting. The meeting minutes must be:

- (a) Recorded and approved. “Approved” means the minutes are reviewed by those who attended the meeting and are considered to be an accurate record of what happened at the meeting.
- (b) Given to the employer or prime contractor within seven days after the meeting.
- (c) Posted or provided electronically at the work site within seven days after the meeting.
- (d) Saved by the employer or, if there is a prime contractor, the prime contractor, for a period of two years.
- (e) Kept readily available for inspection by an HSC member or an officer, along with any other relevant documents produced by the HSC.

A meeting minute template is provided in [Appendix 3.3](#).

Health and safety representative meeting frequency

The HS representative must meet regularly with the employer or, where there is a prime contractor, the prime contractor, to discuss health and safety matters. The *OHS Act* does not prescribe a minimum number of required meetings. The employer or prime contractor, together with the HS representative, should determine how often meetings should happen.

The HS representative can request a special meeting with the employer or prime contractor. Special meetings allow urgent concerns or issues to be discussed and resolved as needed (*OHS Act* s. 28(1)).

4.7 Quorum

Quorum is the minimum number of members of the HSC that must be present at its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. Quorum consists of at least half of the committee members as long as:

- representatives from both the employer and workers are present, and
- at least half of the persons present represent workers.

A meeting that takes place without a quorum is not a valid committee meeting. Because of this, any decisions or recommendations made at the meeting are not binding (*OHS Act* s. 26).

4.8 Employer, contractor and prime contractor obligations

Section 200(1) of the OHS Code states that the employer, contractor and prime contractor, if there is one, must:

- consult and cooperate with the HSC and HS representative to develop policies, procedures and codes of practice required by the Act, Regulations and Code,
- provide all members of the HSC and HS representative with reasonable opportunity to inform workers on matters affecting OHS,
- ensure records, policies, plans, procedures, codes of practice, reports or manufacturer specifications that must be maintained under the Act, Regulations and Code are available for examination by HSC members and HS representative, and
- distribute any information or documents addressed to the HSC or HS representative as soon as reasonably practicable.

As stated previously, Sections 19 and 20 of the *OHS Act* outline that the HSC or HS representative must make recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner respecting the health and safety of workers. The *OHS Act* does not specify timelines for this. How quickly this happens often depends on the health and safety issue and how quickly it needs to be addressed and resolved. Some concerns such as a leaking tank, malfunctioning equipment in frequent use, or missing safeguards need to be brought to the employer's attention as soon as they are identified. Others may not present an immediate hazard and can be addressed through routine inspections or meetings with the employer.

5. Hazard identification, assessment and control

5.1 Hazard assessment duties

Section 19 of the *OHS Act* states that HSCs and HS representatives are required to:

- Participate in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of activities at the work site.
- Develop and promote measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and checking the effectiveness of such measures.
- Make recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner respecting the health and safety of workers.

The *OHS Act* states that employers must inform workers of work site hazards – including harassment, violence, physical, biological and chemical or radiological hazards – and the measures taken to eliminate, reduce or control the hazards. An employer is required to consult with the HSC to accomplish this (*OHS Act*, s. 37(1)(b)).

The OHS Code section 7 goes into further detail outlining what is required of the employer's hazard assessment process.

- An employer must assess a work site and identify existing and potential hazards before work begins at the work site or prior to the construction of a new work site.
- An employer must prepare a report of the results of a hazard assessment and the methods used to control or eliminate the hazards identified.
- An employer must ensure that the date on which the hazard assessment is prepared or revised is recorded on it.
- An employer must ensure that the hazard assessment is repeated:
 - at reasonably practicable intervals to prevent the development of unsafe and unhealthy working conditions
 - when a new work process is introduced
 - when a work process or operation changes
 - before the construction of significant additions or alterations to a work site

In addition, section 8 of the Code specifies that employers must involve affected workers in the hazard assessment and control or elimination of the hazards identified.

Because of the prevalence of hazardous chemicals and products in most workplaces, the federal and provincial governments have developed a program to specifically address chemical hazards. The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System 2015/Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) program promotes chemical safety by standardizing hazard identification and product classification, labelling, safety data sheets, and worker education and training.

5.2 Hazard identification and assessment

Introduction

The hazard assessment and control process is a documented approach to prevent work-related illness or injury to workers and others present at the work site. This is a foundational health and safety responsibility in every workplace, and a central element in any health and safety program.

There are many ways to do a hazard assessment. Employers should customize the process based on their business operations. Two common types of hazard assessments are formal and site-specific. Formal and site-specific hazard assessments may work separately, but are most effective when they are used together.

A formal hazard assessment takes a close look at the overall operations of an organization to identify hazards, measure risk, and develop, implement and monitor related controls. Worker jobs or types of work are broken down into separate tasks. Formal hazard assessments are detailed, can involve many people, and will require time to complete.

There are nine steps to a formal hazard assessment:

1. Determine what people do.
2. List all work tasks/activities.

3. Identify hazards of each task.
4. Rank the hazards according to risk.
5. Find ways to eliminate or control the hazards.
6. Implement the selected controls.
7. Communicate the hazards and follow the controls.
8. Monitor the controls for effectiveness.
9. Review and revise hazard assessment as needed.

A site-specific hazard assessment is performed before work starts at a site and at a site where conditions change or when non-routine work is added. This flags hazards identified at the location (e.g. overhead power lines, poor lighting, wet surfaces, the presence of wildlife), or introduced by a change at the work site (e.g. scaffolding, unfamiliar chemicals, introduction of new equipment). Any hazards identified must be eliminated or controlled right away, before work begins or continues.

Site-specific hazard assessments are also known as field level hazard assessments (FLHAs) and are for use in any dynamic work situation, not just “the field”.

Use site-specific hazard assessments in addition to, not instead of, formal hazard assessments.

There are five steps to a site-specific hazard assessment:

1. Look at the site and the day or shift tasks.
2. Identify hazards.
3. Eliminate or control the identified hazards.
4. Communicate – make sure all workers on site are aware of the hazards and understand the controls.
5. Redo the FLHAs if there are unanticipated changes.

Identifying hazards

A “hazard” means a situation, condition or thing that may be dangerous to health and safety (*OHS Act*, s.1). Keeping workers healthy and safe involves identifying both health and safety hazards:

- *Health hazard* – anything that can harm someone’s health, either immediately or over time.



loud noises



repetitive movements



sun exposure



chemical exposure

- *Safety hazard* – anything that can cause injury or damage. Injuries caused by a safety hazard are usually immediate (e.g. a broken bone, a sprain or a cut).



falling objects



slippery surfaces



sharp equipment



icy roads

Workplace hazards can be grouped into four categories. These categories, and some example of each, are:

Physical hazards



- lifting heavy loads
- repetitive motions
- vibrations
- slipping/tripping
- working at heights
- working around moving equipment/vehicles
- extreme temperatures
- poor lighting
- working alone
- noise
- violence
- radiological energy sources

Chemical hazards



- chemicals (battery acids, solvents, cleaners)
- fumes
- vapours (spray paint)
- gases
- by-products/waste products from a process

Biological hazards



- viruses
- fungi
- bacteria
- moulds
- bodily fluids
- sewage
- animal/pest waste
- pandemic/influenza

Psychosocial hazards



- harassment
- stress
- fatigue
- shift work

Assessing Hazards

Although ranking the risk of hazards is not a legislated requirement, doing so can be useful in prioritizing the hazards.

Risk is the chance of injury, damage or loss. Some hazards pose a greater risk than others. By evaluating the risk of the hazards, you can prioritize which hazards to address first. Once you have identified all of the hazards of individual tasks, you can evaluate the level of risk that is associated with each hazard.

Start by asking these three questions:

- What could go wrong? (hazard)
- How serious could the consequences be? (severity)
- How likely is it to happen (likelihood)

There are various ways to rank hazards. The important thing is to be consistent. Be sure to use the same ranking system throughout your organization.

Many types of risk matrixes can be used to assess hazards. A basic example is provided in [Appendix 3.4](#) and also within Hazard Assessment and Control: a handbook for Alberta employers and workers

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/bp018>

5.3 Hazard control

The OHS Code states that:

9(1) If an existing or potential hazard to workers is identified during a hazard assessment, an employer must take measures to:

(a) eliminate the hazards, or

(b) if elimination is not reasonably practicable, control the hazard.

(2) If reasonably practicable, an employer must eliminate or control a hazard through the use of engineering controls.

(3) If a hazard cannot be eliminated or controlled under subsection (2), the employer must use administrative controls that control the hazard to a level as low as reasonably achievable.

(4) If the hazard cannot be eliminated or controlled under subsections (2) or (3), the employer must ensure that the appropriate personal protective equipment is used by workers affected by the hazard.

(5) If the hazard cannot be eliminated or controlled under subsections (2), (3) or (4), the employer may use a combination of engineering controls, administrative controls or personal protective equipment if there is a greater level of worker safety because a combination is used.

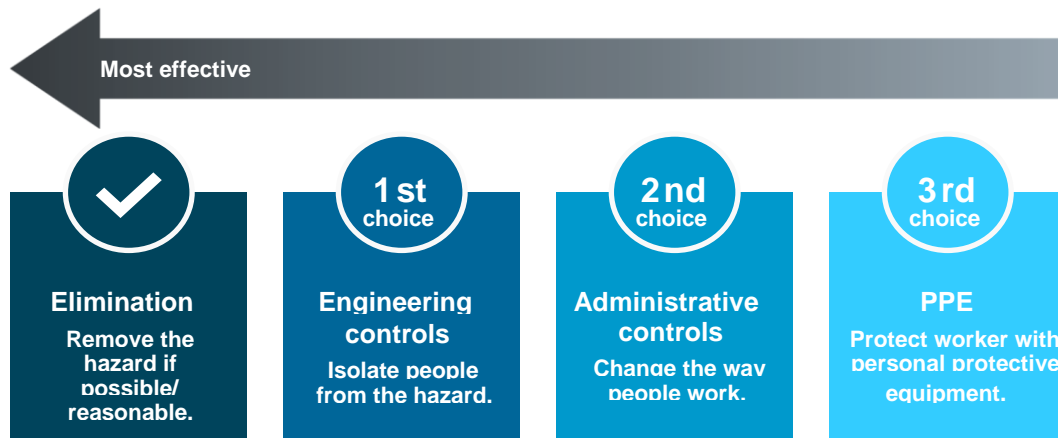
10(1) If emergency action is required to control or eliminate a hazard that is dangerous to the safety or health of workers,

(a) only those workers competent in correcting the condition, and the minimum number necessary to correct the condition, may be exposed to the hazard, and

(b) every reasonable effort must be made to control the hazard while the condition is being corrected.




As a first step in hazard control, determine if the hazards can be controlled at their source (i.e., where the problem is created) through applied engineering. If this does not work, try to put controls between the source and the worker. The closer a control is to the source of the hazard, the better. If this is not possible, hazards must be controlled at the level of the worker. Example: Workers can be required to use a specific work procedure to prevent harm.

Figure 1: Hazard control



One type of hazard control may not be effective on its own. A combination of several types of hazard controls often works well. Example: It might be better to redesign a work process than improve a work procedure. It is better to replace, redesign, isolate or quiet a noisy machine than to issue hearing protection to nearby workers.

Control at the source

- *Elimination* – First, try eliminating the hazard. Getting rid of a hazardous job, tool, process, machine or substance may be the best way of protecting workers. Example: A salvage firm might decide to stop buying and cutting up scrapped bulk fuel tanks due to explosion hazards. 
- *Substitution* – If elimination is not practical, try replacing hazardous substances with something less dangerous. Example: Replace a hazardous chemical with a less hazardous one. Use a safer work practice. Be sure to identify, assess and control the substitute's hazards. 
- *Redesign* – Sometimes engineering can be used to redesign the layout of the workplace, workstations, work processes and jobs to prevent ergonomic hazards. Example: Redesign containers to be easier to hold and lift. Engineering may be able to improve workplace lighting, ventilation, temperature or process controls. 
- *Isolation* – Isolating, containing or enclosing the hazard is often used to control chemical hazards and biohazards. Example: Negative pressure glove boxes are used in medical labs to isolate biohazards.

- *Automation* – Dangerous processes can sometimes be automated or mechanized. Example: Automated welding robots can assemble pipe flanges reducing exposure to the welding hazards. Care must be taken to protect workers from robotic hazards.

Control along the path from the hazard to the worker

Hazards that cannot be isolated, replaced, enclosed or automated can sometimes be removed, blocked, absorbed or diluted before they reach workers. Usually, the further a control keeps hazards away from workers, the more effective it is.

- *Barriers* – A hazard can be blocked. Example: Proper equipment guarding can protect workers from contacting moving parts. Screens and barriers can block welding flash from reaching workers. Machinery lockout systems can protect maintenance workers from physical agents such as electricity, heat, pressure and radiation.
- *Dilution* – Some hazards can be diluted or dissipated. Example: General (dilution) ventilation might dilute the concentration of a hazardous gas with clean, tempered air from the outside. While dilution ventilation may be suitable for less toxic products, it is not effective for substances that are harmful in low concentrations. It may also spread dust through the workplace rather than completely removing them.



Control at the level of the worker

Control at the level of the worker usually does not remove the risk posed by a hazard. It only reduces the risk of the hazard injuring the worker and lessens the potential seriousness of an injury. Therefore, most safety experts consider control at the level of the worker to be the least effective means of protecting workers.

- *Administrative controls* – These include introducing new policies, improving work procedures and requiring workers to use specific personal protective equipment (PPE) and hygiene practices. Example: Job rotations and scheduling can reduce the time that workers are exposed to a hazard. Rotate workers through jobs requiring repetitive tendon and muscle movements to prevent musculoskeletal injuries. Noisy processes can be scheduled when few workers are in the workplace. Standardized written work procedures can ensure that work is done safely. Workers can be required to use shower and change facilities to prevent absorption of chemical contaminants. The employer is responsible for enforcing administrative controls.
- *Work procedures, training and supervision* – Train supervisors to apply modern safety management and supervisory practices. Train workers to use standardized safe work practices. Periodically assist the employer to review and update operating procedures and worker training. Ensure that workers follow safe work practices. Provide regular refresher training.
- *Emergency planning* – Implement written plans to handle fires, chemical spills and other emergencies. Train workers to follow these procedures and use appropriate equipment. Provide regular refresher training.
- *Housekeeping, repair and maintenance programs* – Housekeeping includes cleaning, waste disposal and spill cleanup. Tools, equipment and machinery are less likely to cause injury if they are kept clean and well maintained.

- *Hygiene practices and facilities* – Hygiene practices can reduce the risk of toxic materials being absorbed by workers or carried home to their families. Keep street clothing in separate lockers to avoid contamination from work clothing. Segregate eating areas from work areas. Forbid eating, drinking and smoking in toxic work areas. Where applicable, workers may be required to shower and change clothes at the end of the shift.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing – Use PPE and clothing when:

- other controls aren't feasible (e.g. to protect workers from noise exposure when using chainsaws),
- where additional protection is needed, and
- where the task or process is temporary (e.g. periodic maintenance work).

PPE is less effective than engineering controls since it does not eliminate the hazard. It must be used properly and consistently to be effective. Awkward or bulky PPE may prevent a worker from working safely. In some cases, PPE can even create hazards, such as heat stress.

The employer must require workers to use PPE wherever it's prescribed by the regulations or organizational work procedures. Workers must be trained to use, store and maintain their equipment properly. The employer, supervisor and workers must understand the limitations of their personal protective equipment.

Selecting controls

Selecting a control often involves:

- evaluating and selecting temporary and permanent controls,
- implementing temporary measures until permanent (engineering) controls can be put in place, and
- implementing permanent controls when reasonable to do so.

Example: A noise hazard is identified. Temporary measures might require workers to use hearing protection. Long-term, quieter equipment could replace the current piece or it could be enclosed to isolate the noise source.

Communicating

Affected workers need to be aware of and understand the hazards and use the controls.

The methods used to communicate the information to the workers will depend on your organization. Some effective methods may include:

- worker orientation/training sessions
- worker mentorship
- discussing both the hazards and the controls during safety meetings
- using regular internal communication channels (e.g. newsletters, intranet forums)

Monitoring the effectiveness of controls

Sometimes hazard controls do not work as well as expected. HSC or HS representatives need to monitor the effectiveness of the corrective action taken by the employer. Ask these questions:

- Have the controls solved the problem?
- Is the risk posed by the original hazard contained?
- Have any new hazards been created?
- Are new hazards appropriately controlled?
- Are monitoring processes adequate?
- Have workers been adequately informed about the situation?
- Have training programs been modified to deal with the new situation?

Document the effectiveness of hazard controls in HSC minutes and on work site inspection forms.

A formal hazard assessment template is provided in [Appendix 3.4](#).

For more information on hazard assessment and control, read the Government of Alberta **Hazard Assessment and Control: a handbook for Alberta's employers and workers (BP018)**. It can be downloaded from the OHS resource portal at ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/bp018

6. Work Site Inspections

6.1 Work site inspection duties

Section 19 of the *OHS Act* outlines the duty of an HSC to inspect the work site at regular intervals. Section 198 of the OHS Code states that an HSC must inspect each work site at least once before each quarterly meeting to identify health and safety hazards that have not been controlled.

Section 20 of the *OHS Act* tells us that HS representatives have the same duties as HSCs, with any necessary modifications. This includes the HS representative duty to inspect the work site at regular intervals. The HS representative and the employer should determine the inspection frequencies together.

Employers who employ 20 or more workers also have inspection requirements laid out as part of their required health and safety program under section 37 of the *OHS Act*. These employers must establish, in consultation with the HSC:

- a schedule and procedures for regular inspection of the work site, and
- procedures for worker participation in work site health and safety, including inspections.

All work site parties have the duty to cooperate with officers in relation to inspections of the worksite. Section 25 of the *OHS Act* gives the authority for an officer to request the presence of HSC co-chairs or the HS representative during an inspection. Section 202 of the OHS Code requires the employer to provide time away for HSC co-chairs or HS representatives to join an officer in conducting an inspection.

6.2 Conducting work site inspections

An inspection is a planned walk-through or examination of a work site that looks at hazards, machinery, tools, equipment and work practices. Regular inspections reduce incidents and occupational illnesses. This is why the HSC must inspect each work site at least quarterly prior to the HSC meeting and develop an inspection schedule in conjunction with the employer. All work site parties must cooperate in identifying hazards.

Various factors influence inspection frequency, including:

- the type of work site
- the work performed
- the hazards encountered
- the size of the work site
- the number of workers on site

Inspections help the HSC to:

- compare existing conditions with standards, such as regulations and industry practices,

- determine if gaps exist between workplace practices and standards set by the organization, industry or legislation,
- identify the root causes for any gaps, and
- develop recommendations for corrective action.

The HSC can help identify hazards that have become normalized in the workplace, such as housekeeping hazards or unsafe work practices. The inspections can also identify hazards in out-of-the-way places like storage areas.

Inspections are an excellent way for HSCs to engage workers in finding and correcting problems before they cause harm. During an inspection, it's a best practice for the inspection team to ask workers about their concerns. Knowing about problems is the first step in resolving them.

Publicizing an inspection schedule may encourage people to hide hazards and unsafe work practices. Some HSCs meet shortly after each inspection, providing a chance to discuss the root causes for what was found while memories are still fresh. Effective inspections concentrate on fact-finding and not fault finding or blame fixing.

Training for inspections

The employer, HSC members and HS representatives must be familiar with:

- the training and information needed to work safely
- work processes and work areas
- workplace hazards and hazardous areas
- applicable PPE and its limitations
- engineering controls in the workplace
- applicable health and safety standards and legislation
- the recommendations of equipment and material suppliers
- how to record information
- how to report and deal with concerns

Planning inspections

The effectiveness of each inspection depends on the ability to measure existing conditions against clearly defined standards. As a best practice, work site parties planning inspections should gather standards from equipment manuals, trade publications, legislation, suppliers and industry associations, and build these into checklists and other inspection reporting systems.

When planning inspections work site parties should also consider:

- What hazards are likely to be encountered and where
- What needs to be inspected
- What aspects of each item need to be looked at and how
- What conditions and work practices need to be inspected
- How often must the HSC inspect these items, conditions and work practices

Inventories and checklists

An inventory (equipment, materials) tells you what to inspect. A checklist tells you what to look for when you are inspecting each item in the inventory. The HSC can help the employer prepare an inventory of what to inspect.

Prepare checklists using legislation, industry standards, equipment manuals and by interviewing experienced workers. Update checklists regularly.

Inspectors must know exactly what to look for. Checklist questions should be as precise as possible. Clearly identify and describe what to inspect in each item and part.

Checklists for jobs that are rarely performed are often more detailed than checklists for jobs that are frequently inspected. It is important no matter what you are inspecting to look beyond the checklist to identify root causes of problems. Workplaces can change very quickly. A checklist remains the same until it is updated.

A work site inspection template can be found in [Appendix 3.5](#).

What to inspect

Four categories should be inspected regularly.

1. People
 - training
 - work practices, work rules and safety procedures
 - supervision
 - experience
2. Vehicles, tools and equipment
 - machines and mobile equipment
 - production, machine tools and related equipment
 - engines, electric motors and other power-supplying equipment
 - electrical equipment, switches, circuits
 - hand tools and equipment, such as wrenches and power tools
 - PPE and clothing
 - first-aid stations and emergency equipment, such as eye washes
 - fire protection and emergency response devices, such as fire extinguishers and water supplies
 - walkways, ramps, docks, parking lots, roadways
 - elevators, hoists and lifts
 - storage sheds and areas
3. Chemicals and biological substances
 - products under WHMIS
 - biological substances
 - other materials of concern to workers

4. Work environment
 - housekeeping
 - dust, fumes and vapours
 - work area design
 - light
 - hot and cold conditions

Pre-inspection meetings

Before the inspection, review documents that may help to identify, assess and control hazards.

Examples:

- *Inspection reports and records of concerns* – These files may show degenerative trends, recurring concerns and ongoing problems.
- *Incident reports, Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) claims and first aid registers* – These may show where and how people are injured or made sick.
- *Product documentation* – Documents for chemicals, machinery, equipment and tools can help identify hazards and suggest controls. Safety data sheets (SDSs), OHS publications and industry literature can also provide assistance.
- *Plans and diagrams* – Review work process and floor plans to identify hazards, such as work area design flaws.

What to do during inspections

- *Follow up* – Ask workers if the corrective action taken since last inspection was effective. Check that workers, supervisors and maintenance personnel are performing necessary inspections.
- *Communicate with workers* – Ask workers about their concerns.
- *Use monitoring equipment* – Noise monitors, chemical sensing equipment and other devices may be required to detect and evaluate specific hazards. If monitoring is required, the employer must provide equipment and training. The HSC should be involved when consultants are used.
- *Take careful notes* – Carefully describe each hazard, its seriousness and where it was found. Note all hazards, even those corrected at once. Precisely explain how to fix each problem.
- *Communicate with supervisors* – HSC members who conducted the inspection should discuss their findings with the supervisor. The employer should ensure supervisors have a clear idea of what is expected of them and what they should do when a problem is reported. Employers and managers can support supervisors by ensuring they have the authority and resources needed to take corrective action.

6.3 Corrective actions

Handling the results

Keep careful records of inspections. Inspection reports should help the HSC and employer to identify problems, assess their probability and severity, and take action. Inspection records are useful in tracking the progress of corrective action and identifying degenerative trends.

Report inspection results regularly. Clearly explain each hazard or concern and identify its location precisely.

Add the inspection results and any unresolved concerns to the HSC meeting agenda. Classify and rank the hazards in order of importance. The HSC discusses the agenda and develops proposals for corrective action. Keep records of the concerns discussed. The co-chairs should discuss the recommendations with the employer.

File copies of each inspection report. Reports may be needed later for WCB claims and investigations, or used by an officer. Post a copy in the workplace to let workers know what is being done about their concerns. Inform workers who have raised concerns.

An inspection report template can be found in [Appendix 3.6](#).

When an unsafe condition is found

Section 19 of the *OHS Act* states that one of the duties of an HSC/HS representative is to make recommendations to the employer respecting the health and safety of workers. This includes recommendations associated with hazards and concerns identified during an inspection or investigation.

When the HSC reports an unsafe condition and makes recommendations to remedy the matter, the employer is expected to protect the health and safety of workers at risk until the unsafe condition or hazard is corrected. Section 21 of the *OHS Act* provides the detailed steps the employer must take to resolve the matter. These steps are outlined in section 8.3 of this manual in the context of developing employer recommendations.

Work site inspection summary

Inspections compare conditions with standards. They allow the HSC to identify hazards in the workplace, communicate with workers and help the employer correct problems. An effective inspection program can prevent incidents and improve the IRS. Inspections are an essential responsibility of every HSC.

HSCs are involved in regular, planned workplace inspections and in inspections conducted by officers. Encourage HSCs to conduct special inspections when necessary. HSC inspections should complement those performed by managers, supervisors and workers.

The employer can help the HSC to carry out inspections by:

- providing training,
- providing resources and time,
- helping plan and schedule inspections,

- helping develop inspection checklists, and
- encouraging the HSC to look for the root causes of problems.

Plan to inspect:

- people,
- vehicles, tools and equipment,
- chemical and biological substances, and
- the work environment.

During each inspection:

- follow up on corrective action,
- carefully identify and describe concerns,
- use appropriate monitoring equipment and inspection tools, and
- communicate with workers and supervisors.

Classify and rank concerns, in order of importance, and place them on the agenda. Discuss the results of the inspection at an HSC meeting and develop recommendations for corrective action. Have the co-chairs discuss the recommendations with the employer. The employer must:

- take corrective action to protect the health and safety of workers until the hazard is corrected,
- correct the root cause of the problem, and
- advise the HSC and workers about the corrective action.

If the employer does not agree with the HSC's recommendations, the employer must provide a written explanation to the HSC.

Your inspection process depends on your business. Check the OHS Regulation and Code for specific inspection requirements for your work and industry. There are many additional courses and resources available from a variety of training providers and associations that can assist an employer in understanding industry specific requirements. Be sure to check out the resource page at the back of this manual.

7. Incident Investigation

7.1 Incident investigation duties

Incident reporting duties

OHS legislation requires prime contractors, or if there is no prime contractor, employers, to report certain types of incidents and injuries to government. These reportables are:

- serious injury or incident,
- potentially serious incident (PSI), and
- incident at a mine or mine site.

It is the responsibility of the prime contractor, or if there isn't one, the employers of the work site, to report these incidents. Other legislation relevant to worksites may have separate reporting requirements. WCB is one example.

What is a serious injury or incident?

Serious injuries and incidents that must be reported by the employer under section 40 (2) of the Alberta *OHS Act* are ones that:

- result in the death of a worker,
- result in a worker being admitted to hospital,
- involve an unplanned or uncontrolled explosion, fire or flood that causes, or has the potential of causing, a serious injury,
- involve the collapse or upset of a crane, derrick or hoist, and
- involve the collapse or failure of any component of a building or structure necessary for its structural integrity.

Report a serious injury or incident to the OHS Contact Centre as soon as possible by calling 1-866-415-8690. As per the *OHS Act* s. 40(1) make sure to report the time, place and nature of the injury or incident.

What is a potentially serious incident?

A potentially serious incident is any event where a reasonable and informed person would determine that under slightly different circumstances, there would be a high likelihood for a serious injury to a person.

A potentially serious incident is not limited to workers and it does not require the occurrence of an injury.

When determining whether an incident is a potentially serious incident, consider the following factors:

- actual circumstances of the incident (person, place, time, work practices being followed),
- hazards present at the time of the incident,

- appropriate controls in place at the time of the incident,
- slightly different circumstances (timing, distance, body position, etc.) that may have resulted in a serious injury, and
- similar incidents that have occurred within the employer or prime contractor's operations in the past two years that resulted in a serious injury.

The *OHS Act* s. 40(5) directs employers to report potentially serious incidents to the government. Reports are to be submitted as soon as possible using the Potentially Serious Incident Online Reporting Service. The online form can be found at psi.labour.alberta.ca.

There are separate requirements for reporting injuries to the WCB. These are covered under the *Workers' Compensation Act*, which is different from OHS legislation. For more information and access to WCB publications and forms go to www.wcb.ca.

What types of mine or mine site incidents must be reported?

Mines and mine sites must report serious injuries and incidents as well as PSIs. Section 40 (3)(4) of the Act also outlines additional incident circumstances that must be reported to the government.

Investigation duties

Participating in serious injury and incident investigations at the work site is a legislated duty of HSCs and HS representatives.

Section 37 of the Act outlines that employers who employ 20 or more workers must establish procedures for investigating incidents, injuries or refusals to work and ensure these procedures address worker participation in consultation with the HSC.

Section 40(5) of the Act sets out the steps employers must follow should a reportable incident occur. The employer must:

- report the time, place and nature of the incident to a Director of Inspections,
- carry out an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the injury or incident,
- prepare a report outlining the circumstances of the injury or incident and the corrective action, if any, taken to prevent a recurrence of the injury or incident,
- ensure that a copy of the report is readily available and provided to an officer on demand,
- provide a copy of the report to a Director of Inspection, the HSC or HS representative, if applicable, or, if there is no committee or representative, make it available to workers once the investigation is complete.

The employer is required to include the HSC or HS representative (if there is one) in this investigation and to retain the report on file for a period of no less than two years.

To ensure confidentiality and protection of personal information, the law does not require HSCs or HS representatives to participate in investigations relating to harassment or violence, unless the harassment or violence results in a worker fatality or a worker being admitted to hospital.

It is also important to know that that Section 40(9) of the Act states no person shall disturb or conduct work at the scene of an injury or incident unless permitted to do so by a Director of Inspection, OHS officer or a police officer unless the person is:

- attending to persons injured or killed,
- preventing further injuries or incidents, or
- protecting property that is endangered as a result of the injury or incident.

7.2 Incident investigation process

Introduction

Investigations identify health and safety problems, and help prevent future injuries and incidents. An investigation should not be a blame-finding exercise. Each incident usually has several contributing factors, not all of which are obvious. Investigators must look for the deeper causes and not simply record events. Staff responsible for completing the investigation process should receive formal training. Thorough and effective cause analysis requires a particular skill set.

It is important to note the value in reporting all incidents to your employer and in investigating all incidents, not just incidents that are reportable by law. This includes near misses – undesired events that under slightly different circumstances could have resulted in personal harm, property damage or loss. A successful incident investigation will identify the cause(s) of the incident and find ways to prevent similar incidents.

By following a standardized process, a completed investigation should be able to answer these questions:

- Who was involved or injured?
- What occurred?
- Where did the incident occur?
- When did the incident occur?
- Why was the unsafe act or condition allowed?
- How can a similar incident be prevented?

Planning investigations

The employer works with the HSC to prepare an investigation plan that sets out:

Investigations – What incidents will the HSC investigate besides those listed by legislation? The employer and HSC should investigate all incidents that could have hurt someone.

Procedures – How will the HSC investigate incidents? Employers, HSC members, workers and supervisors should know exactly what to do if an incident happens.

Training – The employer must ensure that HSC members receive training respecting their duties and responsibilities. Each co-chair should attend workshops on how to investigate incidents. Employers are also encouraged to attend training.

Resources – The employer should ensure that the necessary tools and PPE are available.

Incidents often happen because of departures from accepted standards. Example: Sometimes safety devices are disabled to increase production, contrary to the rules.

Generally, investigations should:

- compare what should have happened with what actually happened,
- determine what gap exists between the two,
- determine why the gap developed, and
- recommend appropriate corrective action to prevent a recurrence.

Use legislation, company standards and industry publications to decide what standards should have been in place. This data can also help to determine the corrective action required.

Carrying out investigations

When something goes wrong and somebody gets hurt on the job, the first task is to get appropriate medical attention right away. Taking care of injured persons is the first priority.

1. Follow ERPs, secure the scene and report the incident

- Follow first aid or emergency response plans.
 - Assess and stabilize the situation.
 - Make the area safe for emergency crews and investigators.
 - Help the injured person.
- Secure the scene and protect evidence until an investigation starts.
- Get the names of witnesses.
- Keep witnesses from talking with each other until they can be interviewed (to keep viewpoints distinct).
- Report any incidents listed in the legislation to OHS.

2. Study the scene

There are four categories of evidence:

People

- People are the sources of eye or ear witness testimony to the pre-contact, contact and post-contact phases of an incident.
- People evidence relies on powers of observation and memory.
- People evidence is most fragile because it is subject to:
 - forgetfulness,
 - rationalization,
 - influence by others, and
 - personal conflicts.

Positions

- Positions provide information about physical relationships and sequences during the pre-contact and post-contact phases of an incident.
- The post-contact position information is vulnerable because of movement by emergency crews such as medical teams, firefighters and other people involved in the incident.

- Positions of equipment, structures, objects, etc. are also subject to compromise by:
 - the investigators,
 - bystanders and clean-up workers, and
 - production people in their eagerness to resume full operation.

Parts

- While less fragile in these respects than people and positions, parts are subject to pilferage, corrosion, marring and misplacement.
- The fragility of parts evidence has many facets:
 - internal defects,
 - proper/improper installation,
 - manufacturing standards and tolerances,
 - use of correct parts and materials, and
 - willful or inadvertent abuse.

Papers

- Paper evidence or documents are a potential source of information and the investigator should also collect relevant documents before they are misplaced or altered.
- Paper evidence can include:
 - written job standards,
 - training records,
 - operating instructions, and
 - maintenance records or log books.

3. Collect evidence

Evidence that is collected from people, positions, parts and papers can be supported by collection tools such as sketches, photographs, drawings, diagrams, videotapes, personal notes, reports, documents and interviews to aid the investigator. When collecting evidence the investigator must answer six basic questions.

<i>Who?</i>	Record the names of all the people involved in the incident, not only the person or persons injured, but also any witnesses, others in the area, supervisors, others doing the same kind of work. While you may only speak briefly with them during your initial contact, make sure you know how to get in touch with them later.
<i>What?</i>	Describe what happened. Include in your description details of any equipment or materials involved. Be sure you include the exact names of any chemicals. Check the equipment for defects. In your initial description, try to be clear about the sequence of events.
<i>Where?</i>	Describe the exact location of the incident. Use a camera to take photographs from several different angles. Make a drawing of the scene. If necessary, include diagrams of specific smaller areas of the scene. Note exits, ventilation, vehicle paths and lighting on the diagram.

When?	Specify the time the incident occurred. Note anything significant about the time: “just at shift change,” “first day back after layoff.” Note weather conditions at the time, if relevant.
How?	Describe the sequence of events that led to the incident and its “presumed” causes. Your assessment of how it happened may change as your investigation proceeds, but start with your initial impressions.
Why?	This is the hardest part of your investigation, but it is also the reason for it. Start with your initial impressions, but do not stop asking questions until you are satisfied that you know all the causes - direct, indirect and root.

4. Interview witnesses

Accurate interview records help reconstruct what happened and why. Contact everyone who can provide information.

- Interview eyewitnesses in private when possible, while memories are still fresh.
- Consider their emotional state, particularly if someone has been killed or seriously injured.
- Use open-ended questions and let the witnesses explain events in their own words.
- Avoid interrupting during their statements. Ask clarifying questions later if necessary.
- Have the witness sketch a drawing if it helps them portray the situation

If possible, have each witness visit the scene and show you what he or she saw. Witnesses will have seen events from different perspectives and their statements may disagree.

After interviewing eyewitnesses, talk to technical specialists, suppliers and experts. At the end of every interview:

- ask each witness to review their statement,
- clear up anything you do not understand,
- get the phone number and address of each witness, and
- thank each witness.

5. Investigate the physical evidence

Study the tools, equipment and product damages. Find out what the physical evidence indicates and why. Look at the details of the work environment. Consider visibility, noise, temperature, humidity and exposure to hazardous substances. Take photographs and make detailed drawings. Describe everything involved in detail, including work procedures and safety policies.

Collect product documentation, including the exact names of substances involved. Gather SDSs, blueprints and workflow diagrams that might help. Find out if any changes in design, products or work procedures were introduced before the incident.

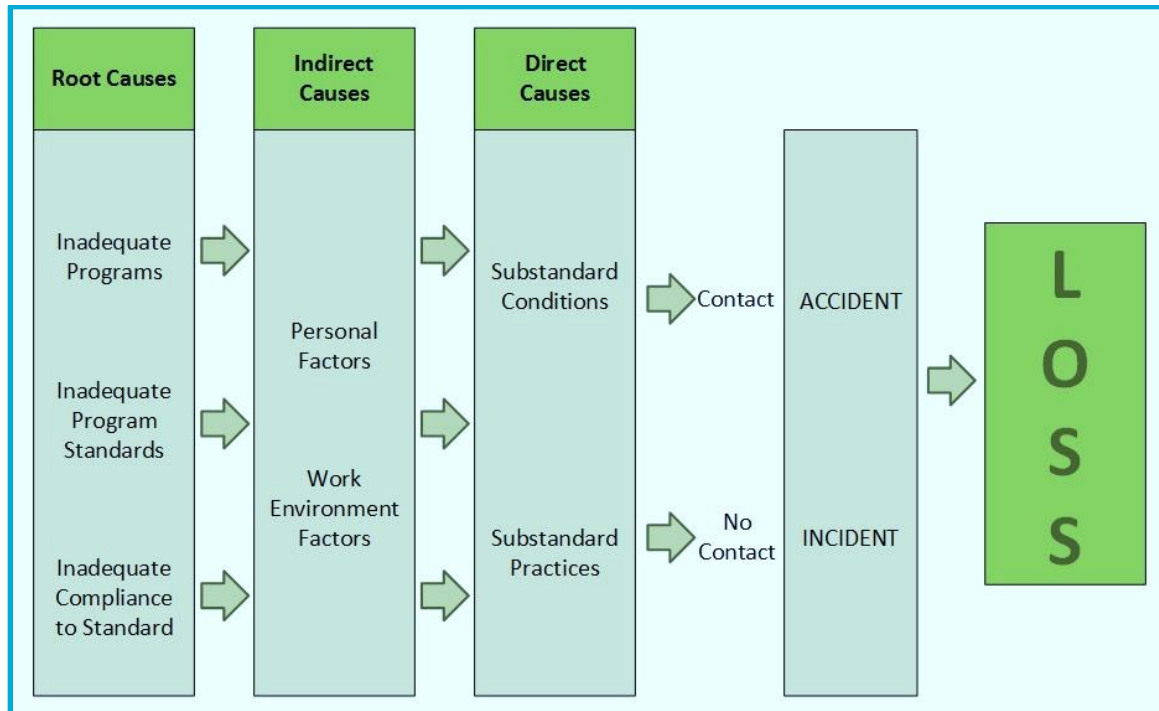
Compare what happened with the requirements of applicable standards. If requirements were not met, find out why.

6. Identify the causes

An incident investigation will look at what caused the incident, both directly and indirectly. The end goal of the investigation is to identify and correct the root cause(s) of the incident.

Usually there are several factors that cause or contribute to an incident. It is important not to focus only on the direct causes, but also look for other factors that may have contributed to the incident. If you do this, you will be more able to improve and prevent reoccurrences.

There are numerous loss causation models available to the incident investigator. A model that has been widely used and referenced, was established by Bird and Germain and is illustrated below.



Loss causation model adapted from Bird and Germain (*Loss Control Leadership: The Conservation of People, Property, Process and Profits, Institute Publishing 1985*).

Direct causes are the unsafe/unhealthy conditions or behaviours that led up to the incident (e.g. slippery floors due to spilled coffee; standing on a box instead of using a proper step stool or ladder; or lifting too heavy a load).

Direct causes in general relate to substandard conditions and/or practices. There may be several direct causes for an incident.

Substandard Practices	Substandard Conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating equipment without authority • Failure to warn • Failure to secure • Operating at improper speed • Making safety devices inoperable • Removing safety devices • Using defective equipment • Using equipment improperly • Failing to use personal protective equipment properly • Improper loading • Improper placement • Improper lifting • Improper position for task • Servicing equipment in operation • Horseplay • Under influence of alcohol and/or drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate guards or barriers • Inadequate or improper protective equipment • Defective tools, equipment or materials • Congestion or restricted action • Inadequate warning systems • Fire and explosion hazards • Poor housekeeping, disorderly workplace • Hazardous environmental conditions, gases, dusts, smokes, fumes, vapors • Noise exposure • Radiation exposure • High or low temperature exposures • Inadequate or excessive illumination • Inadequate ventilation

Once you have identified the direct cause(s) it's time to examine what the indirect cause might be. Indirect causes are the contributing factors leading up to the undesirable outcome (i.e. no one was available to mop up the spill; a step stool was nowhere to be found; a delivery came in through the store front instead of at the loading dock out back).

Indirect causes can be divided into personal factors and work environment factors. Indirect causes alone do not cause the incidents, however, they contribute to the outcomes. There may be several indirect causes for an incident.

Personal Factors	Work Environment Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate physical/physiological capability • Inadequate mental/psychological capability • Lack of knowledge • Lack of skill • Physical/ physiological stress • Mental/psychological stress • Improper motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate leadership and/or supervision • Inadequate engineering • Inadequate purchasing • Inadequate maintenance • Inadequate tools, equipment, materials • Inadequate work standards • Wear and tear • Abuse or misuse

The root causes of the incident are the source of each of the direct and indirect causes – the most basic conditions that allowed them to occur. The root cause is the underlying or basic cause of the incident.

Control measures that address the root causes are best able to prevent future incidents. In general, root causes fall into one or more of three categories.

Root Causes

- Inadequate programs
- Inadequate program standards
- Inadequate compliance with standards

7. Take action

Review what happened at each step in the incident. Prepare a report to describe events and recommend corrective action. Use photos and drawings to illustrate key points.

- Describe the work being done.
- Describe the immediate (direct) cause(s) of the incident.
- Describe the indirect cause(s).
- Explain why the incident happened (the root cause).
- Recommend corrective action, including both short- and long-term controls, to prevent the same thing from happening again (short-term controls should prevent a recurrence until longer-term controls can remove the fundamental causes).
- File a copy of the report and post summaries.

The employer should take appropriate corrective action based on the report and inform the HSC. Inspect the effectiveness of the corrective action.

Review

Investigations can identify fundamental weaknesses in hazard controls, suggest improvements and prevent a recurrence. The employer must involve the HSC in investigations.

The employer and HSC should have a plan in place to investigate incidents. Include the necessary procedures, personnel and resources.

Begin an investigation by securing the scene and reporting the incident to OHS, when applicable. Identify witnesses and keep them from talking to each other. Next, note everything involved in the incident. Take pictures of anything that could be of significance. Describe and photograph the scene. Interview each witness individually. Study and record the damage done to property and describe the scene in detail. Compare what happened with applicable standards.

Next, analyze the evidence. Find out what directly caused the event. Trace each direct cause back to the root causes. Write a report once you are sure that you have found the root cause. Include recommendations for corrective action in the report. The employer should take corrective action and the HSC can follow up.

There are many courses available from a variety of training providers and associations that offer in depth incident investigation training. See the resource page at the back of this manual for additional information on this topic.

An incident investigation template is provided [Appendix 3.7](#).

8. Supporting OHS in the workplace

8.1 Violence and harassment

Introduction

The potential for work-related violence and harassment is a hazard. Section 1 of the *OHS Act* states that violence, whether at the work site or work related, means the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm, and includes domestic or sexual violence.

Harassment is defined as any single incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying or action by a person that the person knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offence or humiliation to a worker, or adversely affects the worker's health and safety and includes:

- conduct, comment, bullying or action because of race, religious beliefs, colour, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, and sexual solicitation or advance,

Harassment does not include any reasonable conduct of an employer or supervisor in respect of the management of workers or a work site.

Violence and harassment legal duties

An employer must develop and implement a violence prevention plan that includes a violence prevention policy and violence prevention procedures in consultation with the HSC or HS representative (OHS Code s. 390(1)(2)). There are specific requirements written in section 390.1 and 390.2 of the OHS Code that an employer must follow when developing this policy as well as the procedures.

An employer must also develop a harassment prevention plan in consultation with the HSC or HS representative (OHS Code s. 390.4(1)(2)). This plan must include a harassment prevention policy and harassment prevention procedures. Specific requirements for what to include in the policy and procedure are listed under sections 390.5 and 390.6 of the OHS Code.

Section 390.7 of the OHS Code directs employers to review their violence and harassment plans in consultation with the HSC or HS representative and revise the plans if necessary when the earliest of the following three circumstances occur:

- an incident of violence occurs
- when the HSC or HS representative recommends a review
- once every three years

8.2 Worker concerns

Introduction

HSC and HS representatives are responsible for the receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns and complaints respecting the health and safety of workers.

An HSC can be invaluable in encouraging workers to discuss their concerns and suggest solutions. Methods include:

- conversations,
- contacts during inspections and investigations, and
- meetings.

Addressing concerns

- Encourage workers to bring specific concerns to their supervisor and general concerns to the HSC. If a concern cannot be resolved with the supervisor, it should be brought to the HSC for investigation. Keep the worker and supervisor informed during the investigation.
- If the HSC cannot resolve the concern, delegate resolve to the co-chairs.
- The HSC helps the worker and employer by gathering information on the risks posed by each hazard identified and alternative courses of action. Take recommendations to the employer for corrective action. Keep workers informed.
- If the HSC and employer cannot resolve a health and safety concern, any work site party may contact Alberta OHS to refer the matter to an OHS officer.
- Communicate the status and final resolution of the concern to everyone involved. Post meeting minutes, distribute bulletins or hold discussions with workers, supervisors and managers.
- The HSC can help everyone concerned by monitoring the effectiveness of the corrective action the employer has taken.

8.3 Recommendations

Introduction

Making recommendations to the employer respecting the health and safety of workers is a legislated duty of the HSC and HS representative (*OHS Act* s.19(f)).

As a best practice, HSCs/HS representatives can develop a recommendation form to standardize the process, ensure key information is collected, and encourage timely corrective actions by the employer.

A well-designed and properly completed recommendation form should:

- Precisely describe the item or problem and its location. Identify the workers affected by the problem.
- Provide any necessary background information and research performed by the HSC to quantify the problem.
- State what could happen if the problem is not resolved.

- Precisely describe proposed solutions, including estimated timelines and costs.
- Provide information to support each proposal. Note why each recommendation is proposed, what services will be required, who can provide them and when.
- If warranted, propose both short-term and long-term solutions.
- Note who will follow up on the corrective action and when.

A recommendation template is provided in [Appendix 3.8](#).

Section 21 of the *OHS Act* states that once a recommendation is brought to their attention the employer, self-employed person, or prime contractor must take the following actions.

- If the matter can be resolved within 30 days, employer, self-employed person, or prime contractor proceeds with resolution and informs the HSC or HS representative of the issue and outcomes.
- If resolution will take more than 30 days, inform the HSC or HS representative in writing how and when the concern will be addressed. This must include a timetable for implementing changes to address the matter and identifying any interim control measures.
- When the employer, self-employed person, or prime contractor disagrees with the recommendations of the HSC or HS representative or doesn't accept or believe there is a health and safety concern they must explain reasons for disagreement, lack of acceptance, or disbelief.
- In cases where the parties involved cannot resolve a problem or address a concern, refer the matter to an OHS officer. The officer must review the matter and take appropriate action, if any is required.

When the OHS Contact Centre receives a complaint, an OHS officer will confirm that both the employer and the HSC or HS representative have met the above responsibilities, and assess the health and safety concern. If needed, the officer may inspect the work site.

- If there are compliance issues, the officer may issue an order for compliance.
- If there are no compliance issues, the officer refers the matter back to the HSC or HS representative.

8.4 Promoting safety

The Act assigns HSCs and HS representatives the duty of developing and promoting health and safety programs for education and information (*OHS Act* s. 19(e)).

Talking with workers regularly is one of the best ways to promote health and safety. Other ways to promote safety in the workplace can include:

- Posting signs that draw attention to safety issues
- Creating awareness through safety workshops or training sessions
- Encouraging employees to report things that seem unsafe
- Distributing health and safety information to employees regularly
- Recognizing employees who exhibit safe behaviors

As HSC members and HS representatives carry out their legislated duties (eg. inspections, investigations, developing recommendations, etc) statistics should be tracked and periodically analyzed for trends.

Trends may indicate the need for a new training program or that communication needs to occur with staff regarding a specific topic.

8.5 Cooperating with officers

HSC members and HS representatives are required to cooperate with an officer exercising duties under the *OHS Act*, Regulation and Code (*OHS Act* s. 19(d)). If an officer attends a work site they may request that the HSC worker co-chair, worker co-chair designate, or an HS representative to accompany them on an inspection. An employer is required to provide that person with time away to attend the inspection.

8.6 Maintaining records

Confidentiality

An HSC, its individual members, or a HS representative, must not disclose a worker's personal health information or the personal information of an identifiable individual unless the disclosure is required by law (*OHS Code* s.199).

OHS record retention

Copies of HSC meeting minutes must be retained for at least two years (*OHS Act* s.27(6)).

Incident investigation reports must also be kept for at least two years (*OHS Act* s. 40(7)).

Other OHS documentation must be retained by the employer or prime contractor for prescribed periods. For example, first aid records are to be retained for three years (*OHS Code* s. 183(3)). Please see the relevant legislation for details on the retention periods and the various worksite parties that should have access to the documentation.

9. Evaluating the HSC

9.1 Traits of effective health and safety committees and health and safety representatives

Attributes of an effective HSC member/HS representative:

- always be ready to listen to the concerns of other workers,
- be sure you use safe work practices yourself, and follow all safety rules,
- ensure that all unsafe equipment and conditions identified are addressed appropriately,
- do not give up on any concern that is unresolved,
- do not become involved in matters that are not health and safety concerns,
- do not exceed your authority,
- do not interfere with equipment controls,
- get help in situations you don't understand.

9.2 Meeting management

Tips for effective HSC meetings:

- meet at a set frequency,
- set a meeting time that is convenient for all committee members, create an agenda to organize the discussion and ensure members come prepared,
- try to have full attendance at each meeting,
- postpone meetings for emergency reasons only,
- meet at a location that is free from interruptions, and
- run a well-organized meeting that stays on schedule.

An agenda template is provided in [Appendix 3.2](#).

9.3 Periodic evaluations

An effective HSC provides a way for the employer and workers to work together to identify and find solutions for health and safety concerns in the workplace. The first objective is to ensure the HSC meets the minimum legal requirements.

An additional way to measure effectiveness is to have workers conduct a written evaluation. These evaluations can help the committee gauge awareness levels by asking the following types of questions:

- Do workers know who their representative is or who members of the HSC are?
- Are the duties and authority known to the workers?
- Is the HSC or HS representative seen by workers and the employer as being useful in providing leadership in safety?

- Are members seen as enforcers or advisors?
- Do workers make suggestions to the HSC or HS representative?
- How many recommendations have been implemented?

Appendix 1: Glossary

Contractor: Means a person, partnership or group of persons who, through a contract, an agreement or ownership, directs the activities of one or more employers or self-employed persons involved in work at a work site.

Curriculum standard: means prescribed curriculum content approved training agencies must deliver.

Direct causes: the unsafe/unhealthy conditions or behaviors that led up to the incident.

Director of Inspection: means a person appointed under Section 42 of the *OHS Act*, as a Director of Inspection.

Domestic violence: is a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another with whom a person has or has had a personal relationship.

Due diligence: the ability to demonstrate that a person did what could reasonably be expected under their circumstances, in order to satisfy a legal requirement.

Employer: a person who employs or engages one or more workers, including a person who employs or engages workers from a temporary staffing agency, a person designated by an employer as the employer's representative, or a director or officer of a corporation or a person employed by the employer who oversees the occupational health and safety of the workers employed by the corporation or employer.

Formal hazard assessment: A documented hazard assessment that takes a close look at the overall operations of an organization to identify hazards, measure risk (to help prioritize hazards), and develop, implement and monitor related controls. Worker jobs or types of work are broken down into separate tasks. Formal hazard assessments are detailed, can involve many people, and will require time to complete.

Harassment is any single incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying or action by a person that the person knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offence or humiliation to a worker, or adversely affects the worker's health and safety, and includes, conduct, comments, bullying or actions because of race, religious beliefs, colour, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation, and a sexual solicitation or advance, but excludes any reasonable conduct of an employer or supervisor related to the normal management of workers or a work site.

Hazard: means a situation, condition or thing that may be dangerous to health and safety.

Hazardous: means likely to cause harm or injury in certain circumstances.

Health and safety: includes physical, psychological and social well-being.

Health and safety committee (HSC): a group of worker and employer representatives working together to identify and solve health and safety concerns at the work site.

Health and safety program: means a coordinated system of procedures, processes and other measures that is designed to be implemented by organizations in order to promote continuous improvement in occupational health and safety.

Health and safety representative (HS representative): an individual worker representative who promotes health and safety awareness and works with the employer to address health and safety concerns at the work site.

Indirect causes: contributing factors leading up to the undesirable outcome

Internal Responsibility System (IRS): The concept that everyone at the work site has a role to play in keeping workplaces safe and healthy.

Minister: means the Minister determined under Section 16 of the *Government Organization Act* as the Minister responsible for the *OHS Act*.

Officer: a Director or a person appointed under section 42 as an occupational health and safety officer.

Quorum: the minimum number of members of the HSC that must be present at its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. Quorum consists of at least half of the committee members as long as representatives from both the employer and workers are present and at least half of the persons present represent workers.

Root cause: the underlying or basic cause of the incident.

Site specific hazard assessment: A documented hazard assessment that is performed before work starts at a site and at a site where conditions change or when non-routine work is added. This flags hazards identified at the location (e.g. overhead powerlines, poor lighting, wet surfaces, extreme temperatures, the presence of wildlife), or introduced by a change at the work site (e.g. scaffolding, unfamiliar chemicals, introduction of new equipment). Any hazards identified are to be eliminated or controlled right away, before work begins or continues.

Training agency standard: means the prescribed criteria training agencies must meet to be considered before being approved by the Minister for the delivery of HSC/HS representative training.

Violence, whether at a work site or work related, is defined by the *OHS Act* as the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm, and includes domestic or sexual violence.

Work site: means a location where a worker is, or is likely to be, engaged in any occupation and includes any vehicle or mobile equipment used by a worker in an occupation.

Appendix 2: Obligations of Worksite Parties

Part 1 Obligations of Work Site Parties

Obligations of employers

3(1) Every employer shall ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable for the employer to do so,

- (a) the health and safety and welfare of
 - (i) workers engaged in the work of that employer,
 - (ii) those workers not engaged in the work of that employer but present at the work site at which that work is being carried out, and
 - (iii) other persons at or in the vicinity of the work site who may be affected by hazards originating from the work site,
- (b) that the employer's workers are aware of their rights and duties under this Act, the regulations and the OHS code and of any health and safety issues arising from the work being conducted at the work site,
- (c) that none of the employer's workers are subjected to or participate in harassment or violence at the work site,
- (d) that the employer's workers are supervised by a person who
 - (i) is competent, and
 - (ii) is familiar with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code that apply to the work performed at the work site,
- (e) that the employer consults and cooperates with the joint work site health and safety committee or the health and safety representative, as applicable, to exchange information on health and safety matters and to resolve health and safety concerns,
- (f) that health and safety concerns raised by workers, supervisors, self-employed persons and the joint work site health and safety committee or health and safety representative are resolved in a timely manner, and
- (g) that on a work site where a prime contractor is required, the prime contractor is advised of the names of all of the supervisors of the workers.

(2) Every employer shall ensure that workers are adequately trained in all matters necessary to protect their health and safety, including before the worker

- (a) begins performing a work activity,
- (b) performs a new work activity, uses new equipment or performs new processes, or
- (c) is moved to another area or work site.

(3) Every employer shall cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

(4) Every employer shall comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of supervisors

4 Every supervisor shall

- (a) as far as it is reasonably practicable for the supervisor to do so,
 - (i) ensure that the supervisor is competent to supervise every worker under the supervisor's supervision,
 - (ii) take all precautions necessary to protect the health and safety of every worker under the supervisor's supervision,
 - (iii) ensure that a worker under the supervisor's supervision works in the manner and in accordance with the procedures and measures required by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code,
 - (iv) ensure that every worker under the supervisor's supervision uses all hazard controls, and properly uses or wears personal protective equipment designated or provided by the employer or required to be used or worn by this Act, the regulations or the OHS code, and
 - (v) ensure that none of the workers under the supervisor's supervision are subjected to or participate in harassment or violence at the work site,
- (b) advise every worker under the supervisor's supervision of all known or reasonably foreseeable hazards to health and safety in the area where the worker is performing work,
- (c) report to the employer a concern about an unsafe or harmful work site act that occurs or has occurred or an unsafe or harmful work site condition that exists or has existed,
- (d) cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (e) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of workers

5 Every worker shall, while engaged in an occupation,

- (a) take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of the worker and of other persons at or in the vicinity of the work site while the worker is working,
- (b) cooperate with the worker's supervisor or employer or any other person for the purposes of protecting the health and safety of
 - (i) the worker,
 - (ii) other workers engaged in the work of the employer, and
 - (iii) other workers not engaged in the work of that employer but present at the work site at which that work is being carried out,
- (c) at all times, when the nature of the work requires, use all devices and wear all personal protective equipment designated and provided for the worker's protection by the worker's employer or required to be used when worn by the worker by this Act, the regulations or the OHS code,
- (d) refrain from causing or participating in harassment or violence,
- (e) report to the employer or supervisor a concern about an unsafe or harmful work site act that occurs or has occurred or an unsafe or harmful work site condition that exists or has existed,

(f) cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and

(g) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of suppliers

6(1) Every supplier shall

- (a) as far as it is reasonably practicable for the supplier to do so, ensure that any equipment that the supplier supplies is in safe operating condition,
- (b) as far as it is reasonably practicable for the supplier to do so, ensure that any harmful substance or explosive the supplier supplies is safe to use, when used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications,
- (c) as far as it is reasonably practicable for the supplier to do so, if the supplier has responsibility under an agreement to maintain equipment, ensure that the equipment is maintained in a safe condition, in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications, if any, and in compliance with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code,
- (d) as far as it is reasonably practicable for the supplier to do so, provide a notice to all of the employers supplied by the supplier with equipment, or to the purchasers or lessees of the equipment, when the supplier becomes aware or ought reasonably to be aware that the equipment that was supplied or is about to be supplied does not comply with a standard prescribed under the regulations or the OHS code,
- (e) as far as it is reasonably practicable for the supplier to do so, provide a notice to all of the employers supplied by the supplier with a harmful substance or explosive when the supplier becomes aware or ought reasonably to be aware that the harmful substance or explosive that was supplied or is about to be supplied does not comply with a standard prescribed under the regulations or the OHS code,
- (f) cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (g) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

(2) Subject to subsection (1)(d) and (e), every supplier shall ensure that any equipment, harmful substance or explosive that the supplier supplies complies with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

2017 cO-2.1 s6, 2018 c11 s14

Obligations of service providers

7(1) Every service provider shall ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable for the service provider to do so, that any service provided to a person to meet an obligation in the Act, the regulations or the OHS code will enable the person to comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

(2) Every service provider shall

- (a) ensure that all services provided in respect of a work site comply with the Act, the regulations and the OHS code,
- (b) ensure that services provided to a person to meet an obligation in the Act, the regulations or the OHS code are completed by workers who are competent to provide those services,
- (c) ensure that, as far as it is reasonably practicable for the service provider to do so, no person at or near a work site is endangered as a result of the service provider's activity,

- (d) cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (e) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of owners

8 Every owner shall

- (a) ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, that the land, infrastructure and any building or premises on the land that is under the owner's control is provided and maintained in a manner that does not endanger the health and safety of workers or any other person,
- (b) cooperate with any person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (c) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of contractors

9(1) Every contractor shall ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, that

- (a) every work site where an employer, employer's worker or self-employed person works pursuant to a contract with the contractor, and
 - (b) every work process or procedure performed at a work site by an employer, employer's worker or self-employed person pursuant to a contract with the contractor
- that is under the control of the contractor does not create a risk to the health and safety of any person.

(2) Every contractor shall

- (a) if the contractor is on a work site that has a prime contractor, advise the prime contractor of the name of every employer or self-employed person with whom the contractor directs the work activities,
- (b) cooperate with a person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (c) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of prime contractors

10(1) Every construction and oil and gas work site or a work site or class of work sites designated by a Director must have a prime contractor if there are 2 or more employers or self-employed persons, or one or more employers and one or more self-employed persons involved in work at the work site.

(2) The person in control of the work site shall designate in writing a person as the prime contractor of the work site.

(3) The name of the prime contractor must be posted in a conspicuous place at the work site.

(4) If the person in control of the work site fails to designate a person as the prime contractor as required in subsection (2), the person in control of the work site is deemed to be the prime contractor.

(5) The prime contractor shall

- (a) establish, as far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, a system or process that will ensure compliance with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code in respect of the work site,
- (b) coordinate, organize and oversee the performance of all work at the work site to ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, that no person is exposed to hazards arising out of, or in connection with, activities at the work site,
- (c) conduct the prime contractor's own activities in such a way as to ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, that no person is exposed to hazards arising out of, or in connection with, activities at the work site,
- (d) consult and cooperate with the joint work site health and safety committee or health and safety representative, as applicable, to attempt to resolve any health and safety issues,
- (e) coordinate the health and safety programs of employers and self-employed persons on the work site, if 2 or more employers or self-employed persons or one or more employers and one or more self-employed persons on the work site have a health and safety program,
- (f) cooperate with any other person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (g) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

(6) If a requirement in this Act, the regulations or the OHS code imposes a duty on an employer or a self-employed person with respect to equipment, work site infrastructure or an excavation and the equipment or infrastructure is designed, constructed, erected or installed, or the excavation is conducted by or on behalf of a prime contractor, the prime contractor shall comply with the requirement as if the requirement were directly imposed on the prime contractor.

(7) Subsection (6) does not relieve the employer, self-employed person or prime contractor from fulfilling other responsibilities under this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of self-employed persons

11 Every self-employed person shall

- (a) conduct the self-employed person's work so as to ensure that the self-employed person or any other person is not exposed to hazards from activities at the work site,
- (b) when working on a project that has a prime contractor, advise the prime contractor that the self-employed person is working on the project,
- (c) if a requirement of this Act, the regulations or the OHS code imposes a duty on an employer or a worker, comply with the requirement as if the requirement were directly imposed on the self-employed person, with any necessary modifications,
- (d) report, to the extent that it is reasonably practicable to do so, to all affected employers and self-employed persons at the work site a concern about an unsafe or harmful work site act that occurs or has occurred or an unsafe or harmful work site condition that exists or has existed,
- (e) cooperate with any other person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (f) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Obligations of temporary staffing agencies

12 Every temporary staffing agency shall

- (a) ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable for the temporary staffing agency to do so,

- (i) that the worker to be assigned to another employer is suitable to perform the task for which the worker is to be assigned,
 - (ii) that the worker is equipped with any necessary personal protective equipment prior to deployment to the other employer, or will be so equipped prior to commencing work activities with the other employer, and
 - (iii) that the other employer is capable of ensuring the health and safety of the worker,
- (b) cooperate with any other person exercising a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations and the OHS code, and
- (c) comply with this Act, the regulations and the OHS code.

Multiple obligations

13(1) In this section, “function” means the function of prime contractor, owner, contractor, employer, supervisor, service provider, supplier, worker, self-employed person or temporary staffing agency.

(2) If a person has 2 or more functions under this Act in respect of one work site, the person shall meet the obligations of each function.

(3) If one or more provisions in this Act, the regulations or the OHS code imposes the same duty on more than one person and one of the persons subject to that duty complies with the applicable provision, the other persons subject to that duty are relieved of their duty only during the time when

- (a) simultaneous compliance of that duty by more than one person would result in unnecessary duplication of effort and expense, and
- (b) the health and safety of any person at the work site is not put at risk by compliance with that duty by only one person.

Appendix 3: Templates and Samples

Some of the following templates and samples have been adapted with permission from WorkSafeBC (Workers' Compensation Board)

- 3.1 Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure - Sample
- 3.2 Agenda - Template
- 3.3 Meeting Minutes - Template
- 3.4 Formal Hazard Assessment - Template
- 3.5 Inspection Checklist - Template
- 3.6 Inspection Report – Template
- 3.7 Incident Investigation Form - Template
- 3.8 HSC Recommendation - Template

3.1 Terms of reference and rules of procedure - sample

Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure

Introduction

Alberta's *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act* requires that under certain circumstances an employer establish an HSC in the workplace. In order to work effectively, the HSC's role must be clearly defined, understood and accepted. Detailed terms of reference and rules of procedure that set out the mandate, structure and functions of the HSC ensure that its important work can be done.

HSCs are important forums for workers to participate in OHS. They ensure supervisors and workers discuss health and safety issues in the workplace and work collaboratively to find ways to address them. Committees allow workers to participate in OHS and support the three basic rights of workers:

- the right to know,
- the right to participate, and
- the right to refuse dangerous work.

Vital to developing and maintaining healthy and safe workplaces is an effective internal responsibility system (IRS). An IRS functions best when it recognizes the roles and responsibilities of all work site parties and encourages joint participation in recommending solutions to health and safety issues. The HSC is an important part of the IRS in a workplace, representing the collective contributions of workers and employers.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The HSC identifies opportunities and recommends initiatives to promote physical and psychological health and safety and continuous improvement in the operation and effectiveness of the Insert Employer Name Health and Safety Program.
- 1.2 The HSC helps department management fulfill their obligation to address worker concerns related to hazardous activities or conditions that affect worker health and safety across the department's business operations.
- 1.3 The Committee promotes and encourages workers to participate in health and safety initiatives and events at the workplace.
- 1.4 It is understood that these terms of reference and rules of procedure shall not amend, alter, subtract from, add to or qualify in any way, the *OHS Act*, or the terms of collective agreements between the Employer and the union that is the certified bargaining agents.

1.5 Any amendments to the *OHS Act* or collective agreement provisions will be incorporated into the terms of reference and rules of procedure, as applicable.

2.0 Membership

2.1 A committee consists of a minimum of four members in total with half of the members representing workers and half of the members representing management.

2.2 The union that is the certified bargaining agent shall select the worker member(s) of the HSC. If the work site also includes non-represented workers, the non-represented workers shall have the opportunity to select a worker member from among the non-represented workers on the work site.

2.3 The employer shall select the employer member(s) of the HSC.

2.4 A worker member who ceases to be employed at the work site ceases to be a member of the HSC and shall be replaced as soon as practicable.

Co-Chairs

2.5 Each HSC must have two co-chairs, one chosen by the employer members on the committee and the other chosen by the worker members on the committee. The co-chairs shall alternate in serving as chair at meetings of the HSC and shall participate in all decisions of the committee.

Posting of names

2.6 The names and contact information of the HSC members or representatives are posted at every work site.

3.0 Term of office

3.1 The term of office for the HSC members is not less than one year and they may continue to hold office until their successors are selected or appointed. If a union exists and the union's constitution specifies a term of office for the worker members of the HSC committee or the HS representative, the term of office is the term specified in the union's constitution.

4.0 Duties

4.1 The *OHS Act* under Section 19 specifies the following duties for an HSC:

- the receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns of concerns and complaints respecting the health and safety of workers
- participate in the identification of hazards to workers or other persons arising out of, or in connection with, activities at the work site,
- develop and promote measures to protect the health and safety of persons at the work site and checking the effectiveness of the measures,
- cooperate with an OHS officer exercising their duties,
- develop and promote programs for education and information concerning health and safety,

- make recommendations to the employer, prime contractor or owner respecting the health and safety of workers,
- participate in investigations of serious injuries and incidents at the work site,
- maintain records in connection with concerns and complaints,
- attend to other matters relating to the duties of the HS representative, including work refusals, and
- other duties as may be specified in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (*OHS Act*), Regulations and Code.

Rules of procedure for each of these duties are addressed within this document.

5.0 Member responsibilities

Co-chairs

5.1 Co-facilitate HSC meetings by:

- a) taking a leadership role in guiding Committee discussions towards definite conclusions,
- b) ensuring meeting start and end on time and are conducted in accordance with the established agenda and process,
- c) strive to achieve consensus,
- d) reviewing previous minutes and materials prior to each meeting,
- e) prepare and distribute meeting agenda and materials, and
- f) posts meeting materials to the designated location(s).

5.2 Complete and maintain the HSC minutes

Committee members

5.3 All HSC members will strive to fulfil their roles and responsibilities by working cooperatively, following the processes in these terms of reference and rules of procedure, and make every effort to reach consensus on issues for the effective operation of the committee

5.4 Attend all HSC meetings and, when unable to attend ensure all relevant correspondence and documents are reviewed and any assigned tasks are acknowledged.

5.5 Participate and contribute to the team by representing workers in their respective area of the organization.

5.6 Prior to the meetings review meeting materials.

5.7 Seek input from staff regarding the programs, gaps issues and questions.

Work site inspections

5.7 A worker member designated by the worker member(s) on the HSC shall inspect the physical condition of the entire work site every three months.

5.8 A different worker member may conduct each inspection. Where practical, the worker conducting the inspection should be accompanied by a management person for the work area being inspected, or a management member of the HSC.

5.9 Inspections by a Health and Safety Committee (HSC) can be supported by resources outside the HSC, if required, for specialized tasks. This support however does not replace an inspection by the members of the HSC.

5.10 The inspections should be undertaken in accordance with a schedule developed by the HSC.

5.11 The schedule should be distributed to all HSC members, the manager(s) of the area(s) being inspected, and posted as appropriate.

5.12 All OHS concerns raised during the physical inspection should be recorded on an appropriate work site inspection report form.

5.13 The work site inspection form should be forwarded to all HSC members within one week of the work site inspection.

Recommendations to the employer

5.14 The HSC will make recommendations to the employer (senior manager or management designee) to improve the health and safety of workers and follow up on the status of the recommendations.

Recommendations could include but are not limited to:

- a) improvements pertaining to health and safety in the workplace,
- b) improvements in response to incidents/accidents in the workplace, and
- c) improvements pertaining to work site inspections or review of local work site programs

5.15 The HSC will review responses to their written recommendations.

- a) **Note:** The employer (senior manager or management designee) must provide a written response within thirty (30) days. The response shall contain a timetable for implementation of acceptable recommendations or give reasons for not accepting recommendations.

6.0 Entitlements of HSC members

Time to fulfil HSC duties

6.1 On each work site, one worker member of the HSC, and not necessarily the same member on each occasion, shall be afforded time from work to inspect the work site as per the inspection schedule.

Members of an HSC are entitled to:

- a) pre-meeting preparation time,
- b) such time as is necessary to attend meetings of the HSC, and
- c) such time as is necessary to carry out the members' functions and entitlements as outlined in these terms of reference and rules of procedure.

6.2 HSC members shall be deemed at work when carrying out HSC functions and entitlements, and shall be paid at the regular or premium rate as appropriate.

Cooperation with OHS officer

6.3 A worker member, designated by the worker members of the HSC, shall be afforded the opportunity to cooperate with an officer exercising duties under the *Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act*, Regulation and Code. This cooperation includes accompanying an officer during an inspection of the work site.

Investigations and work refusals

6.4 A worker member, designated by the worker members of the HSC, shall assist the employer in investigating the circumstances where a serious injury or incident has occurred as defined in Section 40 of the *OHS Act*. The designated worker member will report his or her findings to the HSC.

6.5 A worker member, designated by the worker members of the HSC, shall assist the employer in inspecting a dangerous condition that led to a work refusal by a worker and shall attend such an inspection without delay.

7.0 Administrative processes

Meetings

7.1 HSC meetings shall be held at least once every three months. A schedule of meetings will be developed by the HSC.

7.2 The HSC shall have a quorum of at least one half of the members if a) both worker and employer members are present and b) at least one half of those present are worker members.

Agenda

7.3 The co-chairs will jointly prepare an agenda and forward a copy of the agenda to all HSC members in advance of scheduled meetings.

7.4 Unresolved items raised from the agenda in meetings will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Guest(s)

7.5 With the consent of the co-chairs, guest(s) may be invited to attend a HSC meeting, as a resource, to provide advice or expertise on specific items.

Minutes

7.6 The HSC will designate a member to take minutes for the meeting.

7.7 All items raised in meetings will be reported in the minutes, including the receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns and complaints respecting the health and safety of workers.

7.8 Names of HSC members will not be used in the minutes except to record attendance, or to record the name of the HSC member responsible for completing an identified action.

7.9 Minutes of meetings will be reviewed, edited where necessary and signed by the co-chairs, and circulated within a few days of the meeting to all HSC members with a copy forwarded to the senior manager or management designee of the workplace.

7.10 Minutes should be posted at the work site within seven days of the meeting and remain posted until the next meeting.

Record keeping

7.11 The HSC shall maintain and keep all agenda and meeting minutes, completed work site inspection reports, and work site inspection schedule for review by an OHS officer.

7.12 The HSC shall maintain and keep these terms of reference and rules of procedure.

Dispute resolution

7.13 If the HSC fails after trying in good faith to reach consensus about making recommendations to the employer, either co-chair of the HSC has the power to make unilateral written recommendations to the employer.

8.0 Training

8.1 An employer or prime contractor as applicable shall ensure that HSC co-chairs and HS representatives receive training with respect to the duties and functions of a HSC. HSC members, co-chairs and health and safety representatives are to be permitted time away from regular duties to attend training

8.2 The amount of time allowed annually for training is 16 hours or the number of hours the worker normally works during two shifts

9.0 Review and approval of the terms of reference and rules of procedure

9.1 These terms of reference and rules of procedure should be reviewed annually and will remain in force and in effect until new terms of reference are entered into.

9.2 These terms of reference and rules of procedure were last amended on < date > and approved by:

Worker Co-Chair

Date

Employer Co-Chair

Date

Distribution: Copy 1 – Senior Management, Copy 2 – HSC Files, Copies – HSC members

This form is for example purposes only. Completing this form alone will not necessarily put you in compliance with the legislation. It is important and necessary that you customize this document to meet the unique circumstances of your work site. Further, it is essential that this document is not only completed, but is used, communicated and implemented in accordance with the legislation. The Crown, its agents, employees or contractors will not be liable to you for any damages, direct or indirect, arising out of your use of this form.

3.2 Agenda – template

Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee Meeting Agenda

Date: Time: Location: Roll call: Adoption of minutes of last meeting:	
Reports	
First aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Incidents (non-reportable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents requiring investigation • Optional: property damage incidents, environmental impact incidents, threats of violence
Potentially Serious Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Serious Incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Internal Inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment • Facilities • Work practices
Other OHS inspections or reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberta OHS • Health and safety association • COR audit
Training and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and young worker training • Equipment and work procedures training • WHMIS • First aid • HSC co-chair and members
Old business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and updates on outstanding business from previous meeting(s) 	
New business	

Adjourn

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3.3 Meeting minutes – template

YOUR LOGO	<h1 style="margin: 0;">Minutes</h1> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committee</p>								
Complete all information in top section: Type or handwritten									
Name of business									
Mailing address	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>								
Postal Code	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>								
Work site address	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>								
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>								
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>								
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Fax:</p> </div> <div> <p>Total # of workers at work site</p> <p>Meeting date</p> </div> </div>									
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>Employer</p> <p>Co-chairperson</p> </div> <div> <p>Worker</p> <p>Co-chairperson</p> </div> </div>									
Management members	Occupation	Present	Absent		Worker members	Occupation	Present	Absent	
Old business:									
Item Date & No.	Problem or Concern	Action Taken or Proposed						Target Date	
1. Date									
2. Date									
New business:									

Item Date & No.	Problem or Concern	Action Taken or Proposed	Target Date
1. Date			
2. Date			
Other Business (including correspondence, HSC administration, etc.)			
Distribute copies as follows: Copy 1 - Permanent Committee Files Copy 2 – Employer Copy Copy 3 – Post on Committee Board for workers' information		In my opinion the above is an accurate record of this meeting <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> Employer Co-chair Worker Co-chair </div> <div style="text-align: right;">Page ____ of ____</div>	

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3.4 Formal hazard assessment - template

Job/Position/Work Type:					Date of Assessment:	
Assessment performed by: (names)					Reviewed/Revised:	
Tasks (List all tasks/activities of the job/position)	Hazards (List all existing and potential health and safety hazards)	Severity	Likelihood	Risk	Controls (List the controls for each hazard: Elimination, Engineering, Administrative, Personal Protective Equipment)	Date Implemented:
Severity: How serious could the consequences be?	Likelihood: How likely is it going to happen?	Risk: Calculate the risk of hazards to prioritize preventive actions.				
3 - It could kill you or cause a permanent disability, today or over time	3 - It is highly likely	Severity X Likelihood = Risk				
2 - It could send you to the hospital	2 - It might happen					
1 - It could make you uncomfortable	1 - It is unlikely					
<p>This form is for example purposes only. Completing this form alone will not necessarily put you in compliance with the legislation. It is important and necessary that you customize this document to meet the unique circumstances of your work site. Further, it is essential that this document is not only completed, but is used, communicated and implemented in accordance with the legislation. The Crown, its agents, employees or contractors will not be liable to you for any damages, direct or indirect, arising out of your use of this form.</p>						

3.5 Work site inspection checklist - template

The following inspection checklist is provided to help guide the process of regular work site health and safety inspections. The template is a guideline only, outlining the most common areas of focus for a work site safety inspection. The template can be customized to meet the needs of each work site.

Note that these general safety inspections do not replace the regular pre-use and scheduled inspections required for certain types of tools and equipment.

Inspection completed by: _____

Date and time: _____

For any item identified as deficient (N), use the **Inspection Report** at the end of this checklist to document details of the problem and recommended action.

		Y	N	n/a
#	Facilities and equipment			
	Emergency equipment and procedures			
1	Equipment present and working:			
2	• Fire extinguishers			
3	• Fire detection & suppression systems			
4	• First aid kits			
5	• Eye wash stations			
6	• Emergency lighting			
7	• Alarms			
8	Escape routes and muster points signed			
9	Emergency procedures signed			
10	Emergency contact information posted			
11	Emergency drill performed in last 12 months			
	Floors, walkways, and stairways			
12	Well-lit			
13	No blind corners			
14	Free of tripping hazards (e.g., clutter, damaged mats, uneven flooring, uncovered cables)			
15	Dry, clean and free of slipping hazards			
16	Railings and guardrails in place and secure			
	Entrances and parking lots			
17	Well-lit			
18	Clear of obstructions			
19	Entrances are secured			

		Y	N	n/a
20	Clear signage in parking lot (no parking, speed limits, direction of traffic, etc.)			
	Shop floors and work yards			
21	Appropriate lighting for work tasks			
22	Air flow and ventilation appropriate for work tasks			
23	Piping for gas, compressed air, etc. clearly labelled			
24	Electrical control boxes have clear access			
25	Circuit breakers and starter switches clearly marked			
26	Adequate heating and cooling			
27	Safe noise levels or hearing protection provided as required			
28	Pedestrian traffic separated from vehicle traffic where practical			
	Materials			
29	Stacked materials are stable (interlocked, strapped or other means of restraint)			
30	Stacked materials are not near ignition sources			
31	Stacked materials do not obstruct sprinkler systems			
32	Containers and storage racks undamaged and appropriate for materials			
33	Hazardous materials are properly labelled			
34	Flammable and hazardous materials secured and stored in approved containers			
35	Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) are current			
	Tools and equipment			
36	Maintenance log up-to-date			
37	Inspection log up-to-date			
38	Warning signage for physical hazards created by equipment and processes			
39	Hazardous points of operation adequately guarded			
40	Safeguards in place, in good condition and cannot be easily removed by workers			
41	Lockout procedures posted			
42	Equipment positioned to avoid endangering other workers			
43	Workers protected from materials ejected from tools or equipment			
44	Equipment controls clearly labelled and within easy reach, but protected from inadvertent activation			
45	Defective tools and equipment tagged and removed from service			
46	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available as required for all workers			
	Ladders			
47	Ladders are appropriate for the work task			
48	Ladders are in good condition with no obvious signs of wear and tear			
	Mobile equipment			
49	Maintenance logs up-to-date			
50	Pre-use inspection logs up-to-date			
51	Operators are trained			
	Vehicles			
52	Maintenance logs up-to-date			
53	Inspection logs up-to-date			
	Other areas of focus			
54	Problems identified in previous inspection(s):			

		Y	N	n/a
55	Priority areas as defined by the HSC:			
#	Work practices			
	Work practices — general			
56	Workers trained for specific work tasks			
57	Workers supervised for work tasks			
58	Tools used for their designed purposes only			
	Personal protective equipment (PPE)			
59	Workers are trained in correct PPE use			
60	Used consistently and correctly			
61	Maintained in good working order			
62	Inspected and replaced on schedule			
	Ladder use			
63	Workers are not required to carry materials up and down ladders			
64	Ladders are used only for non-routine activities completed in 15 minutes or less			
65	Fall protection used when required			
66	3-point contact maintained			
	Slipping and tripping avoidance			
67	Handrails are used			
68	Spills cleaned immediately			
69	Well-fitting, non-slip footwear worn			
	Ergonomics			
70	Available assistive equipment and/or mechanical aids used			
71	Tasks are varied or rotated to minimize repetitive movement			
72	Loads assessed before lifting or pulling			
73	Loads maintained close to body			
74	Lifting with legs			
75	Upper body kept erect			
76	Natural reaching without having to over-extend			
77	Work stations and seating at proper height			
	Safe work practices for high-risk work conform to regulatory requirements and are followed for:			
78	Working at elevation			
79	Asbestos exposure			
80	Exposure to hazardous materials			
81	Working in excavations			
82	Entry into confined space			
83	Working near combustible dust			
84	Hand falling or bucking			
85	Use of explosives, or flammable or combustible materials			
86	De-energization, lockout and safeguarding			

		Y	N	n/a
87	Exposure to violence			
	Other areas of focus			
88	Problems identified in previous inspection(s):			
89	Priority areas as defined by the HSC:			

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3.6 Inspection report -template

Item #	Description of hazard:	
	<i>(specific location and/or equipment, nature of hazard)</i>	
Recommended action:		
<i>(detailed action, taking account of hierarchy of controls, two or more options where appropriate)</i>		
Person responsible:		Target date:
Item #	Description of hazard:	
	<i>(specific location and/or equipment, nature of hazard)</i>	
Recommended action:		
<i>(detailed action, taking account of hierarchy of controls, two or more options where appropriate)</i>		
Person responsible:		Target date:
Item #	Description of hazard:	
	<i>(specific location and/or equipment, nature of hazard)</i>	
Recommended action:		
<i>(detailed action, taking account of hierarchy of controls, two or more options where appropriate)</i>		
Person responsible:		Target date:

Report reviewed by: (senior management)	Date:
Comments:	

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3.7 Incident Investigation Form - template

Sample Injury or Incident Investigation Report

For Employer/Prime Contractor

Type of incident:

- ☐ serious injury ☐ serious incident ☐ first aid ☐ medical aid
- ☐ potentially serious incident ☐ property damage ☐ production loss
- ☐ Other

Required immediate reporting to Government of Alberta,
Occupational Health and Safety **1-866-415-8690**

Date and time reported:

☐ YES ☐ NO

Worker job title: _____

Date of incident: _____ Time: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

Incident reported to: ☐ first aider ☐ supervisor ☐ another worker

☐ health & safety committee member ☐ health & safety representative

☐ other (job title) _____

Location of incident: _____

Witness job title:

Were statements taken:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 1. _____ | <input type="radio"/> YES (attached) <input type="radio"/> NO |
| 2. _____ | <input type="radio"/> YES (attached) <input type="radio"/> NO |
| 3. _____ | <input type="radio"/> YES (attached) <input type="radio"/> NO |

Report reviewed by:

☐ supervisor ☐ health & safety committee member ☐ health & safety representative

☐ employer ☐ prime contractor ☐ other (job title) _____

Description of incident:

Sketch/diagram/photos attached ☐ YES ☐ NO

[illegible]

Direct cause (action, event or force that is the immediate or primary agent which led to the incident):

Indirect cause (did not directly cause the incident but contributed to the outcome):

Root cause (the basic conditions that allowed each of the direct/indirect causes to occur):

Corrective action taken:

Assigned to:

Completed on:

Witness Statement Template

Witness job

title:_____

Date of
incident:_____

Date of
statement:_____

Name of
employer:_____

Where were you when the incident occurred?

Describe what you saw heard, smelled, felt or tasted **immediately before** the incident?

Describe what you saw heard, smelled, felt or tasted **during** the incident?

Describe what you saw heard, smelled, felt or tasted **immediately after** the incident?

Witness Statement Template

Draw a sketch of the incident scene to help describe your observations or show where you were.

Any additional comments about the incident?

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3.8 Health and safety committees recommendation - template

HSC Recommendation

Recommendation # _____

Date _____

To: (Owner/Manager) _____

Please respond in writing by _____ (30 days)

Issue

- Give a clear and complete description of the issue.
- Describe what, why, who, where, when and how.
- Reference the relevant section(s) of the occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulation and/or Code where applicable.

Committee recommendation

- Make sure the recommendation deals with workplace health and safety.
- Include rationale for your recommendation.
- If applicable, include options and pros and cons of each.
- For complex issues, include steps involved and suggest timeframe for implementation.

Committee decision

- Indicate if this recommendation was voted on or decided by consensus.

This form is for example purposes only. Completing this form alone will not necessarily put you in compliance with the legislation. It is important and necessary that you customize this document to meet the unique circumstances of your worksite. Further, it is essential that this document is not only completed, but is used, communicated and implemented in accordance with the legislation. The Crown, its agents, employees or contractors will not be liable to you for any damages, direct or indirect, arising out of your use of this form.

Additional resources and contacts

Health and Safety Committees and Representatives

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li060>

Participation in health and safety for small business owners and workers

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li055>

Health and Safety Committee/Health and Safety Representative Training Program

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/li054>

Hazard Assessment and Control: a handbook for Alberta employers and workers

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/bp018>

Reporting and Investigating Injuries and Incidents

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/Li016>

OHS Contact Centre

Throughout Alberta • 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton & Surrounding area • 780-415-8690

Deaf or hearing impaired: • 1-800-232-7215 (Alberta) • 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)

PSI Online Reporting Service alberta.ca/report-potentiallyserious-incidents.aspx

Website alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety.aspx

Get Copies of *OHS Act*, Regulation and Code

Alberta Queen's Printer

qp.gov.ab.ca

Occupational Health and Safety

work.alberta.ca/ohs-legislation