

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE GUIDANCE MANUAL

The purpose of this guidance manual is to outline recommended equipment, work practices and procedures applicable to the prevention of injury or illness to workers in the fire service.

This manual complies with the intent and provisions outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act (the Act). The employer, under the OHS Act, shall instruct and acquaint a worker with any hazards, and maintain equipment in good condition. {Refer to S25(1) & (2)}.

Guidance materials contained herein have been reviewed by the management and labour representatives on the Fire Service Section 21 Committee to ensure that appropriate information is made available to the fire service, to allow them to assess their equipment and procedures against recommended practice.

Several principles were observed in the preparation of this manual. A review of these may prove useful in better understanding how this manual may be used for the benefit of workers:

- To use a standard “information type” format, to provide a concise, easy to understand message to readers.
- To provide guidance rather than policy direction (e.g. manual to use terminology such as may or should).
- To encourage feedback from users regarding alternate approaches to controlling hazards.
- To develop and/or review approximately six draft guidelines per year.
- To stay away from Standard Operating Procedures, because they are developed for the specific equipment and circumstances of each department.
- To establish a mailing list of interested parties, who should receive updates.
- To use a durable, loose-leaf binder format to allow easy updating of information
- To encourage the use of association websites for information.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ontario Fire Service Advisory Committee On Occupational Health & Safety Under Section 21 of the Occupational Health & Safety Act

OBJECTIVE

To advise and make recommendations on matters relating to the occupational health and safety of all firefighters in the Province of Ontario.

Secondary Objectives:

- To develop a Manual of Health and Safety Guidance Notes for fire services in Ontario. This manual will outline recommended equipment and procedures to be used by workers in the fire service to prevent injury or illness, and will comply with the intent and provisions outlined in the Act.
- To ensure, as far as is possible, that the guidance is applicable and acceptable to both employers and workers in Ontario, and results in improved information being available to the fire service, to assess equipment and procedures against recommended practice.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee will be composed of an equal number of representatives from management and labour, as outlined below. The committee will be co-chaired by representatives selected from each side, with secretariat being provided by the Ministry of Labour.

For labour:

Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association	4
Fire Fighters' Association of Ontario	2

For management:

Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs	4
Association of Municipalities of Ontario	2

PROCESS

- Decision will be by consensus of the members in attendance, rather than by voting.
- Matters for which no consensus can be achieved will be fully reported, with explanation to the Ministry of Labour through the Director, Industrial Health and Safety Program.
- The Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Public Safety and Security will provide technical support
- Non-members may attend committee meetings at the call of the co-chairmen and with the agreement of the committee.
- Committee members, alternates who attend on behalf of members, as well as members of task forces and/or technical committees, will be paid reasonable expenses in accordance with the Management Board of Cabinet Guidelines (S 4-1 and S6-1, respectively).
- Alternates will attend on behalf of committee members, only when it is impossible for the regular member to attend.
- Agendas will include matters that impact on the health and safety of all fire fighters in the Province of Ontario. Matters for inclusion on the agenda will be submitted to the co-chairmen one month before a scheduled meeting of the committee. Either co-chairman may include matters on the agenda. The Director of the Industrial Program of the Ministry of Labour may include matters on the agenda.
- A steering committee shall be established, consisting of the co-chairmen and the Director of the Industrial Health and Safety Program (IHSP). A chairman will be selected from within this group. The purpose of this committee will be to ensure the proper administration of functions of the Joint Advisory Committee, including setting of agendas.

- Meetings by the Section 21 Committee will be on a quarterly basis.
- The Section 21 Committee shall appoint a task force, and/or technical committee, by way of consensus.

DEFINITION OF CONSENSUS

Substantial agreement reached by the members of the committee in attendance; consensus includes an attempt to resolve all objections; it implies much more than the concept of a simple majority, but not necessarily unanimity.

ALTERNATES

One alternate will be seated and will be allowed to participate in committee discussions, if any of the represented organizations does not have a single representative present for a scheduled Section 21 Committee meeting, the following procedure will take place:

- The Co-Chairs shall be contacted and advised of the reasons for an alternate being required.
- Approved alternates will have their expenses picked-up as is customary by the MOL.

OBSERVERS

Each organization is allowed no more than one observer per scheduled Section 21 meeting. More may be allowed in special circumstances, if approved by the Co-Chairs. Co-Chairs should be advised in advance, so that seating arrangements are adequate. Observers will not take part in decision-making, and the MOL will not be responsible for expenses. Permission to address an issue must be sought and approved by the Chair of the meeting.

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The Ontario Fire Service Health and Safety Advisory Committee was established February 6, 1989, to deal with health and safety issues as they arise in the fire service sector.

Earlier versions of this committee have served this purpose since 1980.

This bipartite committee's agendas are set at a meeting between co-chairs and the MOL, one month before a scheduled meeting. Other MOL observers/advisors attend as necessary.

The committee's mission is to:

- Reduce risk of injury, death, and illness in the fire service.
- Foster the Internal Responsibility System (IRS).
- Promote consistent compliance with the Act, in fire services in Ontario.
- Provide advice to the Minister of Labour regarding enforcement, regulations, policy, etc., for the fire service.
- Resolve health and safety issues that arise in the fire service.

Task Groups are established from time-to-time, to perform specific tasks. One such task group developed this guidance manual.

Members are encouraged to conduct their own investigations/research and obtain advice from appropriate parties, as deemed necessary.

Some of the issues that the Section 21 Committee has successfully dealt with in the past include: application and wording of the protective equipment regulation for fire fighters; certification and testing of protective clothing; vehicle requirements; hiring of fire service special projects officer; and heat stress.

If you have any questions, please call Karen Hanna at 416-212-0866.

MOL ACTIVITIES

The role of the Ministry of Labour is to set, communicate, and enforce standards to protect the health and safety of workers in Ontario.

A Ministry of Labour Occupational Health and Safety Inspector's primary role is to administer and enforce the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the regulations made under it in a professional and courteous manner. This is accomplished through:

- Inspection of workplaces such as fire stations, emergency scenes, and other work sites;
- Investigation of fatalities, critical injuries, complaints, etc;
- Enforcement, by issuing compliance and stop-work orders and, where appropriate, by prosecution.

Technical, medical and legal advice, policies, and guidance material such as this manual, are used to guide and assist inspectors in carrying out compliance activities.

The Industrial Health and Safety Program, under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (excluding construction and mining) include some 4.5 million workers in more than 246,000 workplaces. These workplaces are divided into 29 sectors: Agriculture; automotive; ceramics, glass & stone; chemical & plastics; construction premises; education; electrical & electronics; film & TV; fire; fishing; food, beverage & tobacco; government; health care; industrial services; live performance; logging and sawmills; office & related services; police; primary metals; pulp & paper; restaurants; retail; textiles & printing; tourism, hospitality & recreational services; transportation; utilities; vehicle sales & service; wholesalers; wood & metal fabrication.

A number of Ministry of Labour Occupational Health and Safety Inspectors have received special training to deal with health and safety in the fire sector. These inspectors inspect the fire services as part of their other inspection duties.

HEALTH & SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS/RESOURCES

The following organizations may be contacted as a resource on occupational health and safety:

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) – www.wsib.on.ca

200 Front Street West
Toronto, ON. M5V 3J1
Tel: 416-344-1000
Toll Free: 1-800-387-5540

The WSIB was established in 1998 to administer workers' compensation, the Certified Member Program and the Young Workers Awareness Program, to provide financial incentives to decrease workplace injuries, and to oversee the Safe Workplace Associations.

Workers' Health and Safety Centre (WHSC) – www.whsc.on.ca

15 Gervais Drive, Suite 102
Don Mills, ON M3C 1Y8
Tel: 416-441-1939

The WHSC was established by the Ontario Federation of Labour in 1979. Since that time, the Centre has become a major source of health and safety training to workers in Ontario. Their operations are overseen by an independent Board of Directors from unions and other organizations representing workers in virtually every sector of the economy. They operate from five regional offices located all across Ontario.

Their purpose is to promote workplace prevention measures that reduce occupational disease, disability and death, and to equip and encourage workers to promote the well being of other workers, and improve the health and safety environment within their workplaces. They are committed to quality health and safety training for workers, delivered by their peers.

The WHSC employs trained technical consultants. They are available to do an on-site analysis and work with your health and safety committee to develop a workplace health and safety plan.

Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA) – www.iapa.on.ca

250 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON M5B 2N4
Tel: 416-506-8888

The IAPA is a not-for-profit association with over 40,000 member firms across Ontario. Established in 1917, the IAPA is dedicated to helping firms achieve safe, health and productive workplaces.

Their mission is the improvement of quality of life in workplaces and communities, and to contribute to the continuous improvement of member firms' workplace-related health and safety, by providing and marketing client-focused, quality, educational programs, products and services.

The IAPA offers over 150 publications, kits, video-based training packages and software products, dealing with key health and safety topics. Input from our member firms and other valuable resources help us ensure that these products are practical and effective.

The IAPA is the recognized leader in health and safety training. In 1994, more than 12,000 participants attended our quality courses. Customized in-plant training is also an IAPA specialty and a growing part of our services.

IAPA consultants work with businesses across Ontario helping to analyse their health and safety programs and recommending improvements. Professional engineers, certified industrial hygienists and ergonomics specialists are also available, providing more in-depth technical services.

Municipal Health and Safety Association (MHSOA) – www.mhsao.com

115 Torbarrie Road
Toronto, ON M3L 1G8
Tel: 416-246-6472 / Fax: 416-246-0872

The Municipal Health and Safety Association is one of the Safe Workplace Associations sanctioned by the WSIB. It is a bi-partite organization of labour and management,

committed to assisting Ontario's municipalities and their related working groups by promoting safer and healthier workplaces through offering training courses.

Their client base is drawn from municipalities, conservation authorities and first-nation reserves. The association is funded through the WSIB and many of their courses have targeted the needs of the Ontario Fire Service.

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety (CCOHS) – www.ccohs.ca

250 Main Street East

Hamilton, ON L8N 1H6

Tel: 1-800-668-4284 (toll free in Canada and USA)

1-905-570-8094 / Fax: 1-905-572-2206

The CCOHS was created by Act of Parliament in 1978 “to promote the fundamental right of Canadians to a health and safe working environment”. It is Canada’s national centre for occupational health and safety (OH&S) information. They have a well-established reputation worldwide, as an innovative, expert OH&S resource. As a corporation governed by a council with representatives from employers, labour and government, CCOHS is committed to providing impartial, accurate, useful information to all parties in the workplace.

Their mandate is to promote health and safety in the workplace, and encourage attitudes and methods, which will lead to improved physical and mental health of working people. Our products and services, designed with an emphasis on prevention, foster improvements in the workplace.

Their clients include: managers, supervisors, workers, government officials, OH&S specialists, health care professionals, lawyers, and representatives from unions and community and educational groups.

The CCOHS professional staff provides up-to-date health and safety information through a variety of products and services, including an inquiries service which responds directly to the occupational health and safety needs of Canadians, publications geared to the workplace, and electronic products such as CCINFO disc, a series of over 20 CD-ROMs that contain databases, publications, full text Canadian safety and environmental legislation, and multimedia training packages.

Their products are designed in cooperation with national and international OH&S organizations, agencies and associations.

The service is provided in both official languages to individuals and organizations. The identity of the inquirer is kept confidential.

Occupational Health and Safety Resource Centres
Locations (see below)

Five “Occupational Health and Safety Resource Centres of Ontario” provide information and training in occupational health and safety. These centres are very active in providing services to assist industry, labour, small business and other educational institutions.

Centres are located at Cambrian College in Sudbury, Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Queen’s University in Kingston, University of Waterloo in Waterloo, and University of Western Ontario in London. Each centre serves the needs of a specific area.

Other Resources (websites)

Ontario Ministry of Labour: <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/>

Ontario Ministry of Health: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/>

Canadian General Standards Board: www.pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb

Construction Safety Association of Ontario: www.csa.org

Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs: www.oafc.on.ca

Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association: www.opffa.org

Fire Fighters’ Association of Ontario: www.ffao.on.ca

Municipal Health & Safety Association of Ontario: www.mhsao.com

National Fire Prevention Association: www.nfpa.org

The Canadian Red Cross Society – www.redcross.ca

5700 Cancross Court
Mississauga, ON L5R 3E9
Tel: 905-890-1000

The Canadian Red Cross Society is a volunteer-based organization, providing emergency relief and humanitarian services to the public in accordance with seven fundamental principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

Health and social service initiatives include: courses in water safety, first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation; means on wheels, and the loan of assistive devices and sickroom equipment for persons recuperating at home.

All emergency and humanitarian relief services continue to operate in times of disaster or conflict, in Canada and around the world.

St. John's Ambulance – www.sja.ca

5700 Cancross Court
Mississauga, ON L5R 3E9
Tel: 905-890-1000

St. John's ambulance is a world-renowned, non-profit organization whose goal is to provide quality first-aid, CPR, and health care training and service, to help Canadians reduce accidents, maintain health and minimize the consequences of injury and illness.

The "Emergency First Aid" and "Standard First Aid" courses are provided to industry in a modular form that allows inclusion of upgraded material such as CPR training. Advanced and instructor levels courses are also available. Certificates are provided upon successful completion of each course. A computer-based first-aid training course is available.

St. John's ambulance is the oldest and one of the largest charitable organizations in the world.

INTERNAL RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM (IRS) (OR ROLES/RESPONSIBILITY/ACOUNTABILITY)

The Act is based on the concept of co-operative compliance, a system that assigns roles and responsibilities to a group that has direct responsibility for workplace health and safety, and to a group that has a contributory responsibility in health and safety. The direct responsibility to control occupational risks rests with the employer, the supervisor, and the worker. This system is known as the Internal Responsibility System (IRS).

It requires the participation of the employer and worker to develop systems and procedures suited to the particular circumstances of each workplace. For the parties in the workplace, such participation is likely to result in a greater understanding of the risks affecting the worker, acceptance of each party's responsibility for worker safety, improved communications and a deeper commitment to reducing and controlling occupational health and safety risks. Although the IRS is not specified or defined in the Act, it forms the basis of the Act.

During an inquiry into workers' health and safety in the pulp and paper sector, Dr. Ham suggested that anyone who views health and safety solely in terms of unsafe acts and unsafe conditions, is operating based on an over simplified model. Just a few other factors to consider include: raining, supervision, age, sex, abilities, technology, materials used, character of management, and attitudes.

According to Dr. Ham, people are now demanding their rights to a greater degree than ever before. However, we need to balance rights with accompanying responsibilities.

The IRS involves everyone, from the top of an organization, down to the worker. Its effectiveness depends on assignment of responsibilities, their execution and accountability. Senior management attitudes, relationships between management and labour, community interests, technology, and process, all interplay to determine how safety is viewed in the workplace.

While regulatory bodies exist to audit the IRS and to make judgements as to whether conditions are tolerable, there needs to be a balance between formal regulations and self-compliance. Studies on accident statistics in California show that about 50% of accidents are not associated with a breach of regulations. It is impracticable to attempt to regulate everything. External audits must serve to keep the IRS alert. Fines and

prosecutions are useful, in that they elicit attention and raise concerns about a company's public image.

Other factors requiring more attention include: competency of supervision, training, injury record keeping, certification of equipment, health regulations, and participation of affected parties in setting regulations. Dr. Ham noted that "near misses" are symptoms of a faulty IRS. Incidents such as these lead to more serious accidents.

If Dr. Ham were to make one change to the legislation, it would be to make senior management more responsible for the health and safety performance of their organization. How often does a senior manager review health and safety? Does the Annual Report note safety performance? Most important, discussion must centre more on responsibilities, rather than rights. All too often, the responsibility for worker safety is pushed all the way down to the bottom of the organization. Accidents are blamed on first-line supervisors and, thus, senior management avoids any responsibility.

Probably the most common misconception regarding IRS, according to Dr. Ham, is that the JHSC personifies IRS. In fact, the JHSC is only a very small part of IRS. IRS is better defined as the top to bottom "fabric" of responsibility regarding health and safety.

Management has a choice. They can demand and reward good safety performance or they can delegate their responsibility. Workplaces with exceptional safety programs demand and receive good safety performance. A clear line of responsibility must be established for correcting health and safety concerns at the workplace. Once this is established, working relationships between management and labour will be enhanced. Unsafe conditions can be eliminated only if identified and reported to the appropriate level of supervision. Corrective action must be of high priority. This means that adequate funds and manpower need to be allocated.

SUCCESSFUL HEALTH AND SAFETY EFFORTS

Two basic principles must be present in order to achieve a high standard of health and safety: a) a demonstrated commitment from the top down; and b) the involvement of the workers in the workplace. Commitment to health and safety must be demonstrated daily.

CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS

Top management commitment to health and safety:

- Corporate Policy Statement []
- Budget provided for health and safety []
- Safety performance discussed in the corporate boardroom []
- Safety record in Annual Report []

Direct responsibility from top to bottom of organization []

Open & supportive atmosphere []

Good labour/management relationship regarding health and safety []

Strong training programs established []

Assess hazards and training requirements for new technology before introducing into workplace []

Prompt response by management to Joint Health and Safety Committee Recommendations []

JHSC minutes and accident investigated by worker and management representatives []

Work complaints investigated seriously []

TABLE OUTLINING RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SAFETY/WORK PERFORMANCE

In June 1976, James Ham submitted the "Report of the Royal Commission on the Health and Safety of Workers in Mines." This report, more commonly known as the Ham Report, contained a table entitled "internal responsibility system for tile performance of work" (table 51). A simplified version of this table has been developed for use in the pulp and paper industry as outlined below.

Responsibilities	Workers	Supervisors	Managers	President, C.E.O. & Board of Directors
Nature of task	Perform task	Schedule and assign work task	Set objectives and work plan	Establish purpose and overall goals
Responsibility for workers	Direct helpers. Keep alert for coworkers, particularly new hires	Select, instruct and supervise workers	Select and develop supervisors	Select plant manager
Responsibility for safe performance of work tasks	Use training, knowledge, and skill to safely accomplish tasks according to accepted practices and procedures. Report unsafe or other conditions that reduce performance.	Direct workers to follow safe and efficient operating procedures according to job descriptions, health and safety legislation, policies and procedures.	Ensure that procedures are developed to comply with operating philosophy and policy.	Establish business philosophy regarding efficient and safe use of human resources.
Responsibility for facilities and equipment	Use facilities, equipment, machines, and tools. Do not use unsafe equipment	Provide adequate tools, services, and equipment. Provide adequate maintenance.	Provide adequate operating capital and facilities.	Authorize expenditures
Responsibility for safe and efficient work conditions	Maintain standardized work conditions	Implement and monitor acceptable level of standardized safe work conditions	Determine acceptable level of standardized safe work conditions, set out in writing, and institute as part of performance appraisal system.	Set overall policy regarding safety and efficient work conditions. Monitor accident statistics and budget
Responsibility for reporting of substandard conditions	Inspect work site and equipment as regular part of doing task. Report substandard and unusual conditions to supervisor.	Inspect work area as regular part of directing work tasks, Investigate reports of unusual and substandard conditions. Take action to correct. Where corrective action will take some time, provide interim protection or solution. Report to plant manager, as necessary to correct conditions.	Develop an effective accountability and audit system. Report on business and safety status to C.E.O.	Report to owners on status of company.