



Departmental Occupational Health and Safety Program

Guide for
Regional Health and Safety Advisory Committees

Version 2.0

June 2014





1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II, subsection 134.1(1), Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) has established a Policy Health and Safety Committee (PHSC) for the purposes of addressing health and safety matters that apply to ESDC.

Given the size and scope of the Department, Regional Health and Safety Advisory Committees (Regional Advisory Committees) were established to assist the PHSC in meeting its obligations. The duties of the Regional Advisory Committees are defined in Module I of the Departmental Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Program and in this Guide.

2. SCOPE

This Guide applies to all regions within ESDC, including Service Canada, the Labour Program and all other service offerings.

3. AUTHORITIES


Regional Advisory Committees are established and shall operate in accordance with:

- a) the Departmental OHS Program and its components, particularly Module I;
- b) the Guide for Regional Advisory Committees; and
- c) the Terms of Reference template for Regional Advisory Committees approved by the PHSC.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Regional Advisory Committees shall:

- a) be familiar with key matters addressed by the PHSC that might impact workplaces within their region and inform their Workplace Health and Safety Committees (WHSCs) or Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) in a timely manner;
- b) ensure that all WHSCs or HSRs are fulfilling their mandates as prescribed;
- c) produce a Terms of Reference (TOR) document using the template available in the [Committee's Toolkit](#):
 - o these TOR may be amended by consensus of the committee members and must be reviewed every two years;
 - o these TOR must be approved by the PHSC;

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- d) establish strong two-way communication with the Regional Occupational Health and Safety Advisor (ROHSA) and the PHSC, keeping them informed of regional health and safety matters;
 - e) establish and maintain a communication network with WHSCs and HSRs;
 - f) establish parameters and reporting relationships with WHSCs and HSRs;
 - g) share with WHSCs and HSRs common health and safety issues raised in WHSC meeting minutes or workplace inspection reports, and identify possible preventive and/or corrective measures;
 - h) assist WHSCs and HSRs in promoting annual health and safety themes or initiatives;
 - i) provide leadership to and consult with WHSCs and HSRs, and participate to the extent that they consider necessary in enquiries, investigations, studies and inspections;
 - j) report to the PHSC on Regional Advisory Committee activities biannually or as requested;
 - k) seek the expertise of technical advisors or subject matter experts as necessary for specific health and safety issues;
 - l) bring matters of a national impact or unresolved matters at the regional level to the attention of the PHSC using the Agenda Item Proposal Template available through the [ROHSA](#); and
 - m) consider matters brought before the Regional Advisory Committee, provided those matters were first discussed by the WHSC and submitted by both WHSC co-chairs or an HSR.

No Regional Advisory Committee member is personally liable for anything done or omitted to be done in good faith.

5. MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be selected and appointed in accordance with the terms of reference template, approved by the PHSC.

6. DUTIES

6.1 Employer co-chair

The employer co-chair shall:

- a) bring recommendations to the Regional Assistant Deputy Minister / Assistant Deputy Minister (RADM/ADM) or designate, or to the PHSC co-chairs, on behalf of the Regional Advisory Committee;
- b) ensure that all records/minutes are kept for a period of two years; and
- c) provide secretarial services.

A decorative header at the top of the page features a row of light blue silhouettes representing a diverse group of people. The silhouettes include individuals of various ages, a person in a wheelchair, a person with a cane, and a person pushing a stroller, all set against a light blue background.

6.2 Co-chairs

The co-chairs shall:

- a) ensure effective two-way communication with the PHSC;
- b) develop the agenda prior to the meeting;
- c) ensure attendance of members;
- d) assign members to specific duties, working groups and subcommittees;
- e) involve members in resolving health and safety issues;
- f) send recommendations, with supporting documents, to the PHSC;
- g) ensure that all Regional Advisory Committee members have OHS training;
- h) invite special guests to attend meetings when appropriate;
- i) approve and ensure distribution of minutes once revised by Regional Advisory Committee members; and
- j) report to the PHSC on Regional Advisory Committee activities, biannually or as requested.

6.3 Members

The members shall:

- a) attend meetings or inform the co-chair and brief the alternate;
- b) review information and documents prior to meetings;
- c) actively participate in Regional Advisory Committee discussions, working groups, etc.;
- d) provide input and feedback on documents and tools;
- e) attend the prescribed OHS training; and
- f) comply with the authorities governing the Regional Advisory Committee noted in section 3.

6.4 Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) request agenda items prior to the meeting;
- b) prepare agendas and issue notices under the direction of the co-chairs;
- c) distribute the agenda and all necessary documents prior to the meeting;
- d) record and prepare meeting minutes;
- e) forward draft minutes to Regional Advisory Committee members for feedback;
- f) forward approved minutes to members and the ROHSA, and make arrangements for the minutes to be published on the national OHS intranet site;
- g) be responsible for all documents pertaining to the Regional Advisory Committee; and
- h) assist the co-chairs as required.

A decorative header image showing silhouettes of various people in different poses and activities, including a person in a wheelchair, a person with a cane, and a person with a stroller, set against a light blue background.

7. RECORDS

Minutes shall be taken at every meeting. They shall be distributed to members in both official languages, when applicable, as per the Treasury Board Policy on Language of Work, for review and feedback. The approved version shall be published on the Department's national OHS intranet site.

Minutes are to be kept by the employer for a period of two years.

8. STEWARDSHIP OF INFORMATION

ESDC's [Stewardship of Information](#) initiative requires that information requested, discussed and managed by this Regional Advisory Committee be administered in accordance with the *Privacy Act*; the Privacy Code of the *Department of Employment and Social Development Act*, Part IV; the *Access to Information Act*; the Policy on Government Security; the ESDC Security Policy and Procedures; the ESDC Code of Conduct; and the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector.

9. EFFECTIVE AND REVIEW DATES

This Guide takes effect on June 17, 2014, and replaces previously established departmental guidelines or information on Regional Advisory Committees. This Guide shall be reviewed by the PHSC every three (3) years from the date of implementation, or as required.

10. ENQUIRIES

Questions or interpretations regarding this Guide must be directed to the ROHSA, through the [HR Service Centre](#).