

# **Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee Meeting**

Minutes of meeting held November 17 and 18, 2008  
560 Rochester Building, Ottawa, Ontario

## **Attendees:**

### **Employee Representatives**

Glenn Miller, Agriculture Union, PSAC  
Fabian Murphy, Agriculture Union, PSAC  
Darrell-Lee McKenzie, Agriculture Union, PSAC  
Michelle Coe, Agriculture Union, PSAC  
**Chair:** Gaston Mercier, PIPSC

### **Management Representatives**

Rosalie Burton, DG Performance Excellence, Human Resources Branch  
George Brown, Manager, Land Management, PFRA  
Jim McKendry, Director, Integrated Services, Assets (representing Lynden Hillier, DG Asset management)  
Denis Petitclerc, Associate Director General, Science Centres Directorate, Research Branch (representing Gilles Saindon, DG Science Bureau, Research Branch)  
Catherine Walker, Director, Human Resources Services

### **Technical Advisors**

Marie-Josée Poirier, HR Consultant  
Bob Neilson, A/Head, Occupational Health & Safety

### **Guest**

Carol Rinfret-Megan, Sr. HR Consultant  
Nathalie Turcotte, Senior Communications Advisor

### **Regrets:**

Elaine Massie, Service Officer and Technical Advisor, Agriculture Union, PSAC

## **1.0 Introduction and approval of agenda and minutes of the previous meeting - Updates to Items not included separately in agenda**

- New items have been added to the agenda:

1. Term of Reference and Travelling
2. Treasury Board Occupational Health and Safety Seminar
3. Local OHS committee and asbestos
4. Recap of PSAC OHS Committee members and alternate
5. Rollover Tractor equipment
6. New Agenda Format
7. Work plan for next year (re-establishing the priorities)

**Action:**

- Marie-Josée will post minutes from previous meetings on Website (next meeting)

## **2.0 Business arising from the minutes**

### **First Aid**

- Bob provided a draft First Aid program (version 4)
- Committee provided some revision that will be included in the document
- Revised First Aid draft will be sent to committee co-chairs for approval
- The defibrillator policy is on hold due to a product recall. Bob will get more information from Health Canada
- Bob will schedule a conference call with the Policy Committee in order to decide the departmental approach on the defibrillator policy.

**Action:**

- Marie-Josée will send a revised draft of the First Aid program (next week)
- Bob will get defibrillator information from Health Canada (next week)
- Bob will schedule a conference call regarding defibrillator (mid December)

### **Workplace Inspection**

- Bob presented a first draft on Hazard Database Registry which would serve as an assessment methodology (this draft was developed by Jeff Bryant and Dave Best). Bob noted that this database would be available to every employee in the department through the web. There was discussion regarding the populating and maintenance of the database.
- It was suggested to consult with other departments to see what other options may be available.
- It was also suggested to discuss the draft Database Registry with CFIA in order to share the cost of creating it.
- It was noted that input to the Business Information Solutions Committee (BISC) template has been requested this month.
- Rosalie indicated the need to prepare a briefing note for the ADM HR to highlight the importance of getting this item on the BISC priority list.

**Action:**

- Bob to provide input to BISC template (November) and draft the BN (December).

**Emergency Evacuation Plan**

- Bob provided an update on the Emergency Evacuation Plan program. The draft is almost ready and will be forwarded once finalized.
- Working group is waiting for Guidelines from Treasury Board which is scheduled to be available on December 1st, 2008. Once guidelines are received the draft will be forwarded to the committee.

**Accident Recording/Reporting/Investigation**

- Carol Rinfret-Megan walked the Committee through the instrument Delegation of Authorities.
- Rosalie suggested having every branch looking at their instrument in order to make sure the information is accurate. It was also recommended referencing Schedule II with the Delegation Instrument.
- The committee has decided to include the "Delegation Instrument" in the communication plan.

**Action:**

- Carol to send Schedule II to Bob. Bob will compare this vis-à-vis the OHS Instrument of Delegation and revise the Accident Reporting document as required. (December 2008)
- Bob will send the revised document to the Committee for review (January 2009).

**OHS Orientation**

- Bob advised the committee that Treasury Board is coming up with a Draft Standard Framework on Orientation. This draft is expected to be posted in December, 2008. Therefore, Bob suggested postponing the review of our draft program until the TB guideline is available.

**Action:**

- Bob will distribute to committee draft OHS Orientation program when available.

**Website**

- The OHS feature button is not yet available.
- A draft proposal for restructuring the OHS website will be distributed to the committee members.
- Committee members to provide feedback on draft.
- It was indicated that the Regional OHS Coordinators working group will verify and

reorganize the information to be posted on the website. Bob will validate.

**Action:**

- Bob will send the draft proposal to committee (end of November 2008)

**Communication**

- Nathalie Turcotte has replaced George Abraham as the Communications Advisor assigned to HRB.
- Natalie was invited to attend the meeting to identify communication needs and concerns (see Item 3. B).

**Lab Safety Program**

- Comments made by the committee members were included in the package sent by Nathalie Ritchot.
- [The framework is now available on the website](#)
- Concerns were raised by Glenn that although the package was never approved secretarially it was posted on the website.

**Job Hazard Analysis (JSA) Training program**

- The train-the-trainer session for Regional OHS Coordinators was completed September 15, 2008.
- A few changes need to be done to the communication document before launching the training.

**Action:**

- Bob will:
  - send revised documents to committee members for secretarial approval (by email) (December 2008)
  - post the final document on website (end of December 2008)
  - brief the OHS Regional Coordinator of changes brought to training program (end of November 2008)
  - prepare a briefing note (communiqué) (end of November 2008)

**Workplace Violence**

- Treasury Board is preparing draft guidelines on Preventing & Dealing with Workplace Violence; these should be ready in December, 2008. The guidelines should give us better clarity on training requirements.
- Bob suggested waiting for the draft before going any further with this program. Once draft received, this can be added to the work plan and an education module drafted.
- An update was provided by Bob on the recent pilot "Creating a Respectful Workplace"

program which incorporated the concept of preventing and dealing with workplace violence.

**Action:**

- Bob will send Treasury Board draft guidelines on Preventing and Dealing with Workplace Violence to committee members when available.

**Ergonomics**

- No new update to report.

## **2. B. Non-Employees working at AAFC**

- Denis advised that the procedures for foreign employees were sent to Research Managers this summer along with 5 different tests. He also stated that managers are responsible to manage the risk regarding OHS. It was also noted that managers have the responsibility to advise senior management if they do not feel the employee meets the official language requirement.

**Action:**

- Invite Joanne Boisvert to next meeting to walk Committee through process.

## **2. C. Departmental Lab Safety**

- Working group (to develop lab safety training modules) is in place.

## **2. D. Chemical Inventory System**

- Manon Proulx is now responsible for this project. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

## **2. E. OHS Training**

- List of OHS course codes are still being updated and will be provided at the next meeting.
- An OHS Training Status Report was sent to ADM HR and distributed to each Branch Head.
- An updated OHS Training Report will be completed at the end of March 2009.

**Action:**

- Marie-Josée to provide list of OHS courses/course codes at next meeting.

## **2. F. Hazard Prevention Program**

- Discussed posting a JSA (one pager) on the web site. Other relevant documents (eg Safe Work Procedures) need to be generated in support of this program.

### **Action:**

- Bob to develop a JSA one-pager for posting on web. (December 2008)
- Bob to develop a Safe Work Procedure template to be posted on the web. (January 2009)

## **2. G. Chemical Spill Response**

- Bob advised that he received good feedback from management.
- Bob would like to have a 1 pager (preamble to the standard) identifying criteria for establishing CERT. This will need to be reviewed and approved by the committee.

### **Action:**

- Bob will follow-up with Nathalie Ritchot for evaluation of each facility on the CERT plan (3rd week of January).
- Bob will create a 1 pager preamble to the standard (for next meeting).

## **2. I. Use of government vehicle**

- This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

## **2. J. Potable Water**

- This item will be put on the agenda as a standing item.

### **Action:**

- Jim will distribute the video (December 2008).

## **2. K. New Draft TB Policy**

- Bob incorporated the feedback from the Policy Committee within the submission to TB. This document was distributed to the committee members.

## **2. L. Internal OHS complaint resolution process**

- Revised document changes are complete.
- This process will be posted on the web site.
- Jim suggested that the HRSDC Hazardous Occurrence Report form for documenting the formal process. The Policy Committee will monitor for effectiveness.

## **2. M. Fume Hood Testing**

- After a discussion it was decided not to have another member added to the working group.
- Jim will update the Policy Committee on any new developments
- Terms of Reference was sent by Bob.
- July 2009 was identified as timeline to complete the work on Fume Hood Testing.

## **2. N. Scent Sensitivities Toolkit**

- Bob advise that Legal did provide some comments on the toolkit and the document will be revised.
- Input from committee members was sent to Bob for review.
- Policy Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the toolkit.
- Toolkit to be posted on OHS web site.

### **Action:**

- Bob will send next version to committee for comments.
- Committee to provide comments to Bob (3 weeks).
- Bob to incorporate the comments made by the Committee.

## **3. A. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

- An update was provided on the department's Employee Assistance Program by Greg Miller (HR) as he is currently overseeing the contract for services for AAFC.
- It was confirmed that the provider would provide a brief analysis on data to the Policy Committee.
- It was suggested by the Committee to have a yearly analysis with graphics completed for our department.
- Nathalie advised that if information were to be posted on the web, information technology (IT) should be contacted.

## **3. B. Communication needs**

- Suggestions included:
  - mapping out a strategy for launching new OHS documents so that employees are not overwhelmed by the volume of information. It was also suggested to identify the target audience for each type of communiqué.

- identifying what is different, now vs. previously.
- having some website links identified as "under construction" until updated.
- updating the website, arranging for the launch, and then preparing the communications plan.
- having the first communiqué sent by the Deputy Minister and subsequent communiqués to be sent by the ADM-HR.

**Action:**

- Bob will co-ordinate with TB and HRSDC to obtain dates for Fire Safety Week and other important dates for Occupational Health and Safety. Bob will create a calendar to highlight important OHS dates (January 2009).
- Nathalie will send draft communication plan to Bob (first week of December). Bob to send draft communication plan to committee members.
- Schedule a teleconference for the 2nd week of December, 2008.

### **3. C. AAFC-MOE 2009 PhD Research Program**

- This item was discussed previously in the meeting (please refer to 2. B)

### **3. D. OHS Training Report & Business Process**

- A draft business process was developed in order to better capture and manage training data.
- Discussion took place on how best to capture information regarding individuals that are not included in PeopleSoft. Jim advised that the Post Docs were captured at a local level.
- The committee suggested maintaining a document control register to track what OHS training modules were reviewed and approved by the Committee and when.
- NCR was identified as a significant gap in terms of training to date (only 5% of NCR staff is trained on their OHS Roles & Responsibilities).
- Discussion took place regarding whether it is possible to differentiate in PeopleSoft between supervisory and non-supervisory staff. Bob advised that we have not yet received a response on this issue.

**Action:**

- Marie-Josée will include the training form in the business process. This will facilitate the Team Learning Coordinator work (December, 2008).

### **3. E. Minutes format**

- Committee members suggested having the minutes signed by the Co-chair and then posted on the web.

**Action:**

- Rosalie will send an email to Nathalie to get more information on formatting options for web posting (end of November 2008)

### **3. F. Moves of employees to new facilities**

- Glenn recommended having the local OHS workplace committee inspect any new facilities before the employees are required to move-in.
- Discussion took place regarding joint OHS committees with CFIA. Bob advised that AAFC management representation needed to be maintained for legal purposes. Bob will check into the issues and provide an update at the next meeting.
- Concerns were brought to the Committee regarding the gap in required OHS committees in the NCR.

**Action:**

- Jim will ensure the current NCR OHS committees get involved with the new sites.
- Fabian volunteered to contact Joanne to get a better understanding of the situation in NCR.

### **3. G. Use of personal listening device**

- Glenn advised that the use of personal listening devices could be affecting the safety of employees and suggested having a standard procedure for the department, as he has identified that Research Centers have various procedures in place.
- Bob suggested researching current "best practices" in this area. He indicated that a policy has been in effect since 2002 and it might be time to revise the policy.
- Rosalie suggested doing a 1 pager on the use of personal listening devices. This 1 pager could then be approved by the Committee and distributed to all employees. This could also be part of the Hazard Prevention Program.

**Action:**

- Bob will create a 1 pager for next meeting.
- Bob, Glenn and Fabian will draft an update to the policy on the use of personal listening devices (next meeting).

### **3. H. Other Items**

1. *Budget*
  - Rosalie suggested having a document created to track the cost of the committee. She also suggested conducting some of the meetings via videoconference.
  - Union members expressed some concerns regarding videoconferencing. Glenn will forward the Committee information on face-to-face meeting requirements.

- It was observed that there may be value in establishing a discrete and separate budget specific to the Committee.
  - It was recommended to create a template for the Committee to track information on their travel costs, hospitality, salary costs etc.
  - It was also suggested the meetings be limited to one day meetings unless there is a unique need requiring a 2 day meeting.
  - It was decided by the Committee to collect the information on costs before sending a request to the ADM HR and the Executive Committee.
2. *Treasury Board Occupational Health and Safety Seminar*
- Michelle shared her comments on her participation at the TB-OHS seminar. She said the seminar provided her with valuable information such as how policies are developed and created. It also gave her insight into "what was out there" regarding Occupational Health and Safety. Overall it was a good learning experience and a great networking opportunity.
3. *Local OHS committee involvement in asbestos*
- Fabian brought forward that the local OHS committee was not consulted when a building were going through asbestos testing. He suggested having the local committee involve when this situation happens again.
4. *Recap on union committee members and alternates*
- The PSAC has decided to keep the same members for the National Occupational Health and Safety Policy Committee.
  - Four new PSAC alternate members were identified as follows:
    1. Jane MacDonald
    2. Milton Dyck
    3. Jean Clouter
    4. Barry Payne
  - The PSAC will keep all alternate members informed.
5. *Rollover tractor*
- Discussion took place on rollover tractor equipment and the requirement for every tractor to have rollover protection. All the ones that do not have this protection were put out-of-service. Concerns were raised that some tractors without the rollover protection might still be used.
  - Information on the rollover tractor standard was sent by Pierre Corriveau in 2004 to all research centers. Jim will send a reminder to each research center on this.

**Action:**

1. Jim to send email reminder on rollover tractor departmental standard.

▪ *Documents control*

- It was approved by the committee to continue with the next step of the document control project.

- *New agenda format*
  - A new format was brought to the committee for approval. The new format was approved and will now be used for future meetings.
  
- *Work plan for next year*
  - Confined space program development to be moved up to the top priorities section of the implementation plan.
  - Fall protection and respiratory protection program will also be moved up as priorities.
  - Bob will have a conference call with the Regional Coordinators to update them on the new priorities.
  - The committee suggested creating a document that would list all of AAFC OHS programs and the date they were developed/revised.

**Action:**

- Bob to prepare updated version of implementation plan.

## **4. Next Meeting**

It was agreed to schedule four meetings to be held in 2009. The next meeting was tentatively settled for February 25 or 26, 2009 in Ottawa.

Other dates are as follow:

- June 10 or 11, 2009
- September 23, 2009
- December 2 or 3, 2009