Occupational Health and Safety Program Manual
Chapter 9
Safety Committees

September, 2023

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9.1 Introduction

The Occupational Health and S afety Act (the OHS

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9.4 Functions of JOHS Committee

The OHS Act identifies the function as being, to involve employers and employees together in
occupational health and safety in the workplace. This is the main vehicle for joint labour-management
consultation on the identification and resolution of health and safety problems in the workplace.

Recognizing that the employer has the greatest amount of responsibility for health and safety at the
University, the function of the JOHSC is to involve representatives of employees and the employer in the
identification and resolution of health and safety issues in the workplace and in the production of
healthy and safe work practice, including:

• The co-operative identification of hazards to health and safety, and effective systems to respond
to the hazards;
• The cooperative auditing of compliance with health and safety requirements in the workplace;
• Receipt, investigation and prompt disposition of matters and complaints with respect to
workplace health and safety;
• Participation in inspections, inquiries and invest9(e000)-3(f)12(u)3(n)3(c(, inq) (t,)9)11(, inqo)-5(ern)-4(wi)5(f ch(n)3(d)(cti-2(ty)4(p5(2(q)3;(t)-3(

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JOHS Committees provide an opportunity for employees to participate in the development and
maintenance of the Occupational Health and Safety Program in keeping with the requirements of the
OHS Act and the University’s OHS Policy. The primary role of the JOHS Committee is to provide advice
and recommendations on health and safety issues within the workplace. Additional roles include
cooperative identification of hazards, evaluation of the effectiveness of the systems to respond to these
hazards, and auditing of compliance with legislative standards. Following is a brief summary of JOHSC
roles.

9.5.1 Hazard assessments

The OHS Program has adopted a formal Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control
process (see Chapter 3 of this Manual). JOHSC members and Safety Committee may participate
in hazard assessments by participating in the working group performing the hazard assessment
or may participate by reviewing the completed hazard assessment. Hazard assessments will be

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employees involved in the work, suppliers or others relevant to the work refusal; examine
documents; and make such additional enquiries as it sees fit prior to making a recommendation
with regard to the work refusal.

The committee shall address the concern according to the procedure laid out in Chapter 8 of this
Manual, including documentation of its involvement. Note that in order to recommend that the
employee return to work, the recommendation of the JOHS Committee or the sub-committee
must be unanimous.

At its next meeting, the JOHS Committee should review the reports of all unsafe work refusals
referred to it for investigation.

9.5.7 Regulatory Role of the JOHS Committee

Various regulations specify the regulatory role of the JOHS Committee. The WHMIS Regulations
require the JOHS Committee to be consulted regarding the development and annual review of
the employee education program. The First Aid Regulations require the employer to consult the
JOHS Committee in the development of first aid remote location plans. The Occupational Safety
General Regulations require the employer to consult the committee when developing or
reviewing any written policy or procedure required by the regulation. From time to time, it may
be necessary for the JOHS Committee to review Regulations that are under review, or in the
process of being drafted by NS D

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x Hazard Identification/Assessment;
x Workplace Inspections;
x Incident Investigation.

Members of ad-hoc safety sub-committees will be provided training as required.

9.8 Written recommendations to management

Section 34 of the OHS Act requires that an employer shall respond in writing within 21 days to written
recommendations from the JOHS Committee. The formal recommendation(s) should be reserved for
the more serious issues. Routine matters should be dealt with by recording them in the minutes for
action by management.

To use Section 34 of the Act, the recommendation(s) must be in writing and must ask for a written
response. Simply recording in the committee minutes that a matter has been discussed does not meet
this requirement. Communication regarding recommendations must be phrased as a recommendation.
In order for Section 34 to take effect and the 21 day response period to be activated, the committee
must consider the matter, come to a consensus as to what it wishes to recommend, and communicate
the recommendation(s) to management.

At the end of this Chapter of the Manual is a Recommendation Form, which should be used to
communicate the recommendation(s) of the Committee. The JOHSC will forward recommendations,
regarding the overall Campus, to the Vice-President, Finance and Administration. The Science Safety
Sub-committee will forward recommendations relating to the Faculty of Science to the Dean of Science.
The Facilities Management/Administration will forward its recommendations to the JOHSC.
Additionally, recommendations may also be addressed to the management person who is responsible
for the work, location, or issue about which the recommendation(s) refer.

Management must take action to ensure that the recommendation(s) are dealt with and that a formal
response is provided in a timely manner. A response to the recommendation(s) should be made as soon
as possible; accepting recommendation(s) or giving reasons for not accepting them. If the matter
requires more investigation or time to reach a decision or develop a plan of action, an interim response
must be made to the JOHS Committee advising them of the status, the reason for the bB, and the
time when they might expect the full response. The matter must be followe up and the JOHS
Committee must be advised of the outcome.

9.9 Departmental notifications

Section 28(2)(e)(iv) of the OHS Act requires that the Occupational Health and Safety Program identify
the circumstances where hazards must be reported by the employer to the JOHS Committee and the
procedure for doing so.

Pursuant to this requirement, the University shall notify the JOHS Committee within 24 hours of the
occurrence of:

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x an accident at the workplace where a person is killed or injured in a manner likely to prove fatal;
x a fire or explosion at the workplace whether a person is injured or not; and
x a Stop Work Order being issued by an Occupational Health and Safety Officer of the
Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education
(DLAE).

The University shall notify the JOHS Committee within seven days of the occurrence of:
x an accident at the workplace where a person sustains a bodily injury which requires medical
treatment or which results in lost time of greater than one day, not counting the day of the
injury; and
x an order of an Occupational Health and Safety Officer of the Occupational Health and Safety
Division of DLAE.

The notification may initially be verbal, in order to save time, but must be confirmed in writing as soon
as reasonably practicable. The written notification may take the form of the notice to the Director,
Occupational Health and Safety Division of DLAE, or a copy of the order of the Occupational Health and
Safety Officer. The OHS Office will prepare a monthly report of all incidents for the JOHSC and safety
sub-committees.

Additionally, as required by Section 35 of the Act, the Department shall notify the JOHS Committee of
the existence of reports of workplace occupational health or safety inspections or of workplace
occupational health or safety monitoring or tests.

Further, pursuant to Section 39 of the Act, the Department shall notify the JOHS Committee of a
compliance notice provided by the University in response to the order of an Occupational Health and
Safety Officer or an appeal of the order or decision of the Officer.

9.10 Written request for information

Section 35 of the Act requires an employer to notify the JOHS Committee of any occupational health and
safety reports, inspections, workplace monitoring or tests. Upon request, the employer must make
these reports available to the JOHS Committee. If the JOHS Committee wishes to request any of these
reports, the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee Request for Information Form should be
used to ensure a response in a timely manner. This form may be found at the end of this Chapter of the
Manual.

Section 35 of the OHS Act requires that an employer shall respond in writing within 21 days to a written
Request for Information from the JOHS Committee.

Please note that this section of the OHS Act applies only to the reports listed above. If the JOHS
Committee wishes other information, a request can be made to the party with the information.

9.11 Participation in OHS Program evaluation

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At least once each year, the JOHS Committee shall review and advise the University regarding:
x The

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x any correspondence which is received or sent.

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Recommendation

Pursuant to Section 34 of the OHS Act, a written response to this Recommendation is requested within 21 days.

Recommendation Number: Date Submitted:
Re:

Recommendation:

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

Signed: Employee Co-Chair Date:
Signed: Employer Co-Chair Date:

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Response by Management

Response attached: YES___ NO___
If NO, state reason:

Response by Management

Response prepared by
Signature
Date