University of Regina
Occupational Health Committee

Terms of Reference for Local Safety Committees

Introduction

In 2004, the legislated University of Regina Occupational Health Committee (OHC) was restructured to include members from all University bargaining units and University Administration. This committee oversees the University of Regina Safety Policy 20.105, which provides the following statement of objectives:

The University of Regina is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all members of the University community. To that end this policy will be reviewed at intervals that are not greater than 3 years, and whenever there is a change of circumstances that may affect the health and safety of workers. It is the objective of the University to:

1. maintain, as a minimum standard, compliance with all relevant statutes, regulations and standards of regulatory authorities representing occupational health and safety.
2. ensure that safety and accident prevention are an integral part of planning, operations and University activities.
3. promote safe working practices and awareness through training, education and the implementation of general safety policies and workplace-specific procedures, including an Occupational Health and Safety Program.

Contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and others providing a service for the University of Regina shall, as part of their contracts, agree to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation and University policies and procedures where directed by the University.

The OHC has agreed that the University requires Local Safety Committees in the Faculties/Departments identified as higher risk to establish a process where health and safety concerns can be addressed at a local level. The following committees must be established:

- Science
- Physical Plant
- Engineering
- Kinesiology & Health Studies
- Fine Arts
- College Avenue Campus

Other committees may be established as appropriate. In some instances, two or more faculties may form joint committees.

The Dean, Director or designate is responsible for ensuring a local committee is established and that it carries out its respective health and safety responsibilities. Local committee members will be selected in accordance with Faculty/Unit practices.
The Local Safety Committees will operate under the auspices of the OHC, and will play a significant role in the identification and resolution of local health and safety issues. Within the first year, local committee members are required to complete specific University Health & Safety, Human Resources training developed in consultation with Saskatchewan Labour. The effectiveness of the Local Safety Committee will depend on the leadership given by the designated individual. It is the designated individual’s responsibility to ensure appropriate representation on the committee, that issues raised receive timely investigation and response, and, if unresolved, are referred to the OHC. The Local Safety Committees report to the OHC through Health and Safety, Human Resources.

**Membership/Meetings**

Leadership and authority within the Local Safety Committee encourages information sharing, cooperation and compromise. The members' names are to be posted where employees can reference them.

- **Membership:**
  Membership will be such that there will be representation from all areas of activity. Members should be drawn from a variety of work areas and all trade unions representative of the hazards which may have to be considered by the committee. Graduate students should be represented where possible. The designated individual shall be a permanent member of the committee.

- **Chair:**
  A Chair must be established within each committee. The Chair will be a voting member of the committee.

- **Term of Office:**
  Three years - members hold office for 3 years and may be reappointed for a second or subsequent term.

- **Meetings:**
  Role call or attendance, comments from the chair, approval of the agenda, acceptance of minutes of last meeting, new business (details of problem or concern, what action taken or proposed, name of person responsible and target date), old business (report of actions taken must remain in minutes until resolved), inspection reports, time and place of next meeting, adjournment.
  - **Frequency:** commensurate with hazards (at least quarterly).
  - **Quorum:** at least half the members must be present.
  - **Attendance:** members are expected to attend all meetings. Members that are absent are responsible for notifying the chair or recording secretary of their absence.
  - **Minutes:** minutes will be recorded in the format as required by the University (as attached).
  - **Special Meetings:** the Chair can call special meetings.
Responsibilities

The obligation to maintain a safe workplace is ultimately the responsibility of the University as the employer under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993*. The following duties/responsibilities of local committees assist the University in achieving this mandate:

1. **The Local Committee will:**
   6.1. receive, consider and respond to local safety concerns.
   6.2. assist in identifying, eliminating and/or controlling hazards within the area covered by the committee.
   6.3. establish a schedule for and conduct workplace inspections, with the frequency determined by the probability and severity of the risks (reasonable intervals not to exceed one year).
   6.4. ensure the development of specific safety policies and procedures.
   6.5. assist and provide input to the Dean/Director concerning the management of safety issues.
   6.6. refer work refusals, incidents of violence, and incidents involving major injury or loss of life to the OHC, with a copy to the Dean/Director.
   6.7 refer any concerns to the OHC, with a copy to the Dean/Director, which cannot be resolved, after diligent effort.

Refer to the University of Regina Safety Policy for responsibilities of the University, Supervisors, Workers and Students, the Occupational Health Committee, and the Manager, Health and Safety, Human Resources.

Review
The terms of reference will be updated and revisited as necessary.