



University and Joint Local Safety Committee Terms of Reference

Committee Name: **University Safety Committee**

1. Purpose of the Committee

The University Safety Committee (USC) and UVic local safety committees (LSC) are joint health and safety committees as required by WorkSafeBC. Each committee is made up of worker and employer representatives working cooperatively in support of a comprehensive occupational health and safety program. As a joint committee, they represent an excellent means of consultation within the organization to review health and safety programs, establish proactive communication, participate in safety activities, and make recommendations to help minimize workplace risks and potential for accidents and injuries.

2. Duties and Functions of the Committee

- a) Identify situations that may be unhealthy or unsafe for workers and advise on effective systems for responding to those situations.
- b) Consider and expeditiously deal with complaints related to occupational health and safety of workers.
- c) Consult with workers and the employer on issues related to occupational health and safety and occupational environment.
- d) Make recommendations to the employer and the workers for the improvement of the occupational health and safety of workers and compliance with the regulations, and monitor their effectiveness.
- e) Make recommendations to the employer on educational programs promoting the health and safety of workers and compliance with the Regulation, and monitor their effectiveness.
- f) Advise the employer on programs and policies required under the Regulation for the workplace and monitor their effectiveness.
- g) Advise the employer on proposed changes to the workplace or the work processes that may affect the health and safety of workers.
- h) Ensure that incident investigations and regular inspections are carried out and reviewed as required by the Regulation.
- i) Participate in inspections, investigations and inquiries as provided by the Regulation.
- j) When necessary, request information from the employer about:
 - i. Known or reasonably foreseen health or safety hazards to which workers at the workplace are likely to be exposed.
 - ii. Health and safety experience, work practices and standards in similar or other industries of which the employer has knowledge.
- k) The University Safety Committee provides advice, assistance and resources to local safety committees and may assist the LSC with resolving health and safety issues.
- l) Carry out any other duties and functions prescribed by the OHS Regulation.



3. Records

The committee will keep accurate records of all matters that come before it. The committee will maintain copies of its minutes for a period of at least 2 years from the date of committee meeting to which they relate.

4. Meetings and Release from Work

- a. The committee will meet monthly, preferably on the same working day of each month (i.e. 3rd Wednesday of the month).
- b. Special meetings, if required, will be held at the call of the co-Chairs.
- c. A quorum shall consist of the majority of members, provided that the composition includes at least 2 worker representatives.
- d. The employer will provide meeting space and administrative support to the committee.
- e. A member of the committee is entitled to paid time off work to attend committee meetings, and other time that is reasonably necessary to prepare for meetings of the committee and to fulfill the other functions and duties of the committee, including completion of mandatory 8-hours of training for new members who join after April 2, 2017.
- f. Each member of the committee is entitled to an annual educational leave totalling 8 hours for the purpose of attending approved occupational health and safety courses. This training is optional and in addition to the training in 4(e).
- g. The committee will add procedures it considers necessary for the meeting.

5. Agendas and Meeting Reports

- a. An agenda will be prepared by the co-Chairs and distributed to members prior to the meeting.
- b. A report of the meeting (minutes) will be prepared as soon as possible after the meeting and distributed to the committee members and Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (OHSE).
- c. The meeting minutes will include a list of committee members.
- d. The minutes of the three most recent meetings will be posted in a place readily accessible to the employees for whom this committee is responsible.

6. Composition of the Committee

- a. The committee will consist of a minimum of four members.
- b. The committee will consist of an equal number of employer and worker representatives, or there may be a greater number of worker representatives¹

¹ Employer representatives are those individuals who exercise management functions and/or supervise other employees, and may include unionized supervisors. At UVic, employer representatives are Deans, Directors, Chairs, Managers, Supervisors and Administrative Officers, but may include other positions. Worker representatives are those individuals who do not perform management functions and include unionized staff, faculty and librarians.



- c. Each committee will have appropriate worker/union representation based on the work areas that the committee is responsible for.
- d. At least two worker/union representatives will be elected or appointed by their respective union. In the event that the union is unable to appoint a member to the committee, OHSE or management will solicit union members to voluntarily join the committee.
- e. At least two employer representatives will be appointed by management.

7. Co-Chairs

- a. The committee will elect co-Chairs from its membership.
- b. The worker representatives shall select a co-Chair.
- c. The employer representatives shall select a co-Chair.
- d. The co-Chairs shall:
 - i. Control the meetings
 - ii. Ensure the maintenance of an unbiased viewpoint
 - iii. Arrange the agendas
 - iv. Review previous meeting reports and material prior to the meetings
 - v. Arrange for the meeting place
 - vi. Notify members of the meeting
 - vii. Prepare meeting agendas
 - viii. Prepare meeting minutes
 - ix. Forward a copy of meeting minutes to OHSE
 - x. Prepare recommendation(s) and forward to the employer for a response
 - xi. Prepare all correspondence

8. Terms of Office

- a. Committee members will sit on the committee for 2 years and can be re-appointed for additional terms. (Note: committees are more effective if terms of office overlap for committee members. This allows a mix of new and experienced committee members on the committee, even after elections).
- b. If a member of the committee chosen by the workers is unable to complete the term of office, the workers will choose another member.
- c. If a member of the committee appointed by the employer is unable to complete the term of office, the employer will appoint another member.
- d. All members will arrange to have an alternate member to attend meetings in their place, when they are unavailable to attend.

9. Reporting and Communication

The University Safety Committee reports to the Vice-President Finance and Operations, who is responsible to ensure that the university's joint health and safety committee structure is



meeting WorkSafeBC requirements. Joint local safety committees (LSC) report to assigned Deans or Directors. Deans/Directors are responsible to ensure that their committee is meeting monthly and has appropriate administrative support to fulfill its mandate.

Health and safety issues or concerns are the responsibility of the department supervisor or management to resolve. If issues remain unresolved, the local safety committee can assist by reviewing the issue and making a recommendation.

OHSE will communicate regularly with LSC's and provide advice, assistance and resources.

10. Recommendations to the Employer

Any written recommendation that the local safety committee makes to the employer with a written request for response must be:

- a. Directly related to health and safety
- b. Doable (reasonably capable of being done)
- c. Complete (employer will not need more information to make a decision)

The individual to whom the recommendation is directed will respond within 21 calendar days.

11. Resolving Health and Safety Issues

The USC can assist joint LSC's in resolving health and safety issues in the following situations:

- a. If a Joint LSC recommendation to the employer remains unresolved, this can be referred to the USC for assistance, or
- b. If the Joint LSC is unable to reach agreement on a matter relating to the health and safety of workers at the workplace, these matters can be referred to the USC for assistance.

The USC will respond to the request for assistance within 21 calendar days of reviewing the issue at their monthly meeting.

12. Annual Committee Evaluation

The University Safety Committee reviews local safety committee performance as part of the annual consultation process. In addition, each committee's effectiveness will be formally evaluated as required by the OHS Regulation.

13. Procedures

The committee may create or modify its own procedures by vote of the membership.