

Teleforum Summary

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) Questions and Answers

Q. What changes have taken place in the regulation with respect to Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (JOHSC)?

Effective April 3, 2017 the new regulations require that an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the JHSC is completed, mandatory training for JHSC members, and mandatory training for worker representatives is provided.

Q. How does the new legislation affect the training requirements for committee members who were already a part of our JOHSC before April 3rd?

Members that were part of the committee wouldn't get captured in this new regulation. Only new members joining the committee after April 3rd would need an extra eight hours of training.

Q. What training is required for all committee members?

All joint committee members selected on or after April 3, 2017 must receive eight hours of training and instruction. Two of which can be completed online and the remaining six hours can be facilitated in a class or by webinar.

All worker health and safety representatives selected on or after April 3, 2017 must receive four hours of training which can be completed online.

Q. What is the definition of a “worker representative”? And how is this different for employers with <20 or >20 employees?

If your workplace has between 9 and 19 workers, you need to have a Worker Health and Safety Representative. If your workplace has 20 or more workers, you need to have a joint committee.

Q. How is the role of a Worker Representative different than a Joint Committee?

The worker representative and joint committee members have virtually the same role in the workplace, and that's to promote safe work practices, make recommendations to the employer including programs, promoting compliance with the Act and Regulations. They also have similar entitlements in the Act such as annual education, the right to receive necessary equipment for conducting their duties, and additional training.

Q. What are the training topics that new committee members need?

The instruction and training must include the following topics:

- Duties and functions of a worker health and safety representative
- Requirements respecting accident and incident investigations
- Requirements respecting workplace inspections, including how to make regular workplace inspections
- Requirements respecting refusal of unsafe work

Q. When must the training be completed?

All training for new committee members must take place as soon as practicable but no more than 6 months after the individual joins the committee.

Q. Where can I obtain training for my committee members?

There are various options for providing training to committee members including:

[SafeCare BC JOHSC Workshops](#)

[BC Federation of Health and Safety Workshops](#)

[Employers Advisory Office](#) is also in the process of developing online webinars later this year

Q. What is the annual evaluation that is required for my Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee?

New regulations require evaluations that measure the effectiveness of the joint committee. The items that need to be evaluated pertain to the effectiveness of the committee's compliance to specific sections of the Act: selection of members, duties and functions, receipt of paid time off to receive health and safety training, new members to receive instruction.

Q. Who must complete the evaluation?

The evaluation is to be done by committee co-chair – one worker co-chair and one employer rep co-chair, or designate of co-chairs, or by the employer or persons retained by the employers with input from the co-chairs.

Q. Do I have to use the WorkSafe BC Online tool for completing the evaluation?

Employers may develop their own tool provided that evaluation is conducted by either the co-chairs of the committee, a member of the committee designated by the co-chair, or the employer or a person retained by the employer.

Q. What is the transition period for enforcement of the new regulations?

The training for new committee members must occur now, therefore officers would look at the availability of the training. Employers have one year from April 3, 2017 to complete the evaluation.

Q. What would an enforcement officer look for at my site when conducting an inspection of my Joint Health and Safety Committee?

Officers would look for posted minutes from the past three months, ask about committee representatives, committee function, and the makeup of committee. With the new regulations, officers will ask more questions around training. Training documentation must be kept for a minimum of 2 years.

Q: We are a unionized organization and have been told that only committee members who are worker representatives have to be chosen by the union, is this correct?

In unionized work environments, the collective agreement would establish the selection criteria for worker representatives. If the selected worker representative is not immediately available to conduct the investigation in person, the employer may find an alternate way to include

them. For example, they may send them pictures or videos so that they are able to provide recommendations as part of the investigation.

Q. What happens if a worker representative is not available when an incident occurs and therefore can't take part in the initial investigation of an incident?

A worker representative must be reasonably available within 48 hours of an incident occurring. The employer must provide a practical means for them to participate in the investigation which may include leaving pictures or videos for them to analyze.

Helpful Links

SafeCare BC Resources and Links Page – Joint Committees

<http://safecarebc.ca/tools/resources-and-links/#joint-health-&-safety-committees>

WorkSafe BC Joint Committees Page

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/joint-health-safety-committees>

WorkSafe BC Joint Committee Evaluation Tool

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/checklist/jhsc-evaluation-tool?lang=en>