

Meeting Minutes

Ontario Fire Service Advisory Committee (Section 21 Committee)

Thursday, December 1, 2022 (12 pm – 4:30 pm)

Friday, December 2, 2022 (8:30 am – 12 pm)

*Meeting Held In-Person at Centre for Health & Safety Innovation, 5110 Creebank Road,
Mississauga*

Present:

Rob Grimwood	O AFC - Committee Co-Chair
Dan Worrall	OPFFA – Committee Co-Chair
Tim Sparks	OPFFA
John Plater	OPFFA
Adam Neal	OPFFA
Aaron Burr ridge	O AFC
Mark Pankhurst	AMO
Doug Kellam	Volunteer Firefighter
Randy Narine	Volunteer firefighter
John Snider	Office of the Fire Marshal (observer)
Fiona Macpate	MLITSD
Tanya Morose	PSHSA (Facilitator)
Kayla Thomson	PSHSA (Minutes)

Regrets:

Cathy Hoffman	AMO
Harry Baranik	O AFC
Jeff Kirk	O AFC
Juanita Martin	MLITSD

Guest Presenters:

Dr. Paul Demers	OCRC
Tyler Beauchamp	WSIB
Diane Zhu	WSIB Manager of business analytics
Carol Luce	WSIB Business analyst
Tiffany Turnbull	WSIB VP of Policy and Consultation
Cristina St Pierre	MLITSD Provincial Hygienist

Thursday, December 1 (12 pm – 4:30 pm)

Greetings

- Congratulations to A. Burr ridge – Interim Chief of Ajax

September meeting minutes

- Minutes approved without changes
- **ACTION:** K. Thomson send to O AFC for posting

Cyclical review of Guidance Notes 6-31 to 6-35

F. Macpate reported that the following guidance notes have been posted to Ontario.ca.

- [3-1 Controlling exposure to diesel exhaust](#)
- [3-2 Asbestos](#)
- [4-2 Eye protection](#)
- [4-7 Wildland fire fighting and PPE](#)
- [4-8 Care, maintenance, inspection, and replacement of structural fire fighting PPE](#)
- [4-13 Personal protection during fire investigation operations](#)

6-31 – Agricultural Silos

- Concerns and hazards – add structural collapse.
- **ACTION:** T. Morose to send out for comment

6.32 Elevator rescue

- Delete “through the door” rescue can be through door, hatch, shaft.
- Concern/hazard – add reference to different types of elevators: hydraulic, geared, or gearless traction or machine room less elevator (all components are in the shaft). Each has their own considerations.
- **ACTION:** Defer to March 2023.
- **ACTION:** R. Grimwood to connect with elevator SMEs for review and input.

6.33 Hazards created by abandoned buildings

- No changes

6.34 Solar photovoltaic systems

- No changes to at this time. Discussed the update to the Electrical Safety Handbook coming in 2023.

6.35 Wind turbines

- No changes

6-21 Aircraft fire fighting hazards – Feedback from GTAA (M. Pankhurst and T. Morose)

- R. Grimwood - Information received from the Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA) Toronto Pearson Fire Department. T. Morose has been forwarded the email
- Add scenarios surrounding having airport fire departments and NFPA 414
 - **ACTION:** F. Macpate to incorporate comments provided in email from D. Hollett, Toronto Pearson.

6-26 Fire Streams and Ventilation (R. Grimwood, A. Burrige, M. Pankhurst)

- **ACTION:** Defer to March 2023

Guidance note comments

- Feedback was received from three individuals on the three guidance notes out for comment.
- **ACTION:** R. Grimwood and D. Worrall follow up with OAFC and OPFFA members who provided feedback and advise of the committee’s response to their feedback.

6-19 Hybrid/electric and electrical vehicle safety

- Committee discussed various small changes to this note.
 - Class A – Eliminate tires. Instead “fabrics, wood and some plastics”

- Class C – Add to guidance note: Live electrical equipment (e.g., batteries, wiring)
- Change “Battery fires will initially show from under the vehicle” to “Battery fires may initially show from under the vehicle”
- “Heightened situation...” move from where it is to “Incidents and actions” section
- “Manufacturers MAY route high voltage cables but be aware” location of high voltage cables varies, be aware there may be high voltage cables in the cut zone
- Committee discussed asking a hybrid vehicle/electric vehicle/alternate fuel vehicle subject matter expert to review the guidance note and proposed changes before we amend the guidance note.
- Committee discussed that perhaps this is two guidance notes, one for electric vehicles and one for hybrid vehicles, the committee decided to leave this as one guidance note for the time being.
 - Committee to look into UL 2580 as to whether it should be added.
- Remove “If the high-voltage battery is intact, an airbag lift could be acceptable on the bottom of the vehicle”
- Committee discussed fire departments informing towing companies about protocols
 - **ACTION:** Ask J. Martin if this can be communicated to Provincial Towing Association for their safety. Not added this GN.

6-20 Electrical hazards in rescue and fire situations

- Working near electrical hazards – Remove the word “isolating” change to “securing areas”
- “Do not move electric meters” change move to “remove”
- Add UL 374 and NFPA 70 to references

6-46 Fluorinated Chemical Awareness

- Add reference to farmland and crops in “Size-up the situation before applying fluorinated foams; taking into account any water sources near the scene and exposure of personnel” add in farmland and crops
- Add public education activities to “Consider policies that limit the use of bunker gear to the appropriate circumstances i.e. Do not use bunker gear for routine medical calls or physical fitness activities” add in “Public education activities or repurposing bunker gear for personal products (e.g. bags).”
- Under “Bunker Gear” change “Use appropriate PPE when handling bunker gear.” to “Use appropriate PPE, including N95 respirator and gloves when handling bunker gear”
- Add references to NFPA 1971, NFPA 1851 and, Reg 7-14
- Add to guidance note that “This note will be reviewed and revised in light of current and emerging research and scientific evidence.”

4-1 PPE Use of bunker gear at public events and non-suppression activities (D. Worrall and T. Morose))

- Change to “Employers should consult with their JHSC to develop procedures and policies for appropriate use at response or activity for bunker gear”
- **ACTION:** T. Morose to send this guidance note to OAFIC for posting for comment

Regulation Working Group (R. Grimwood, D. Worrall, A. Burrige and D. Kellam)

- The recommendations regarding Ontario Regulation 714 are ready to go, just need someone in the government to look at it

- **ACTION:** Working group firmly believes we need an opportunity to meet with MLITSD to discuss. Ontario Regulation 714 has many outdated components and they are ready to have a conversation about a full update
 - Working group would like to discuss the update with MLITSD in March or sooner (virtual is fine)
 - Document presented to the committee dated March 2021 hasn't changed.
 - **ACTION:** R. Grimwood to send most recent document to the committee
 - **ACTION:** F. Macpate to bring forward the request of the WG to meet with Ministry staff.

Occupational Cancer

Cancer Communication Working Group (T. Morose, K. Thomson, R. Grimwood, C. Hoffman and M. Pankhurst)

- No update. Defer to March 2023. Did not meet prior to December. No responses received from the group regarding a meeting.
- **ACTION:** T. Morose to send calendar invite to the working group

PFAS discussion (D. Worrall, T. Sparks and T. Moros)

- Committee discussed a fast fact/tip sheet or infographic as a resource to supplement and provide information in addition to the guidance note.
- **ACTION:** T. Sparks, D. Worrall, R. Narine and T. Morose to discuss further

OAFC update - AGM and Health and Safety Workshop (R. Grimwood)

- R. Grimwood updated the committee on the success of the event.

New business

Fire hydrant bonnet hitting fire fighter ((T. Sparks))

- T. Sparks shared a presentation of the incident investigation following the initial incident, barrel split on another fire hydrant soon after. Next hydrant they hit was also out of service. The person completing the incident investigation learned from public works that there had not been preventative maintenance inspection of the hydrants for 5 years. Investigator discovered they were looked at 5 years ago.
- Committee raised requirement of municipality to maintain the fire hydrants under 6.6.4 of the Ontario Fire code and apparent non-compliance

Marine Operations – lessons learned from FF inquest (H. Baranik and R. Grimwood)

- Background: Firefighter line of duty death in Montreal. Main cause was found to be inadequate training related to marine operations.
- The committee discussed that there are no guidance notes that speak to specific marine topics (licenses, protocols, no portable pumps in the boat, etc.) Committee agrees that a marine operations guidance note would be beneficial
- **ACTION:** M. Pankhurst, H. Baranik and J. Plater to create a working group to draft a guidance note and discuss further

NFPA merging of standards (1970) (R. Grimwood)

- R. Grimwood discussed NFPA standards that are being reviewed and merged. As the NFPA standards are updated, the committee will need to review the guidance notes to ensure correct references.

GN 2-3 Radio Communications – plain language vs. 10 codes (R. Grimwood)

- Background: Québec uses 10 codes, guidance note recommends plain language. Border departments are at cross-roads
- It was noted that the guidance notes are only meant as guidance, not law, fire departments need to be able to defend their choices. Guidance note is in alignment with the OFM directive, you just have to be able to defend what you're doing.
- **ACTION:** R. Grimwood to reach out and provide a committee response about plain language vs 10 codes to the person who submitted the query

Third Party Training Providers

- With mandatory certification of technical rescue now required, and the OFM not directly delivering most technical rescue training, there remains the potential of unqualified, unsafe and unregulated third-party training providers being in high demand over the next few years.
- The committee discussed the elements required for due diligence when contracting a third party for high-hazard training.
- **ACTION:** In March 2023 the Committee will review the existing training guidance note and identify appropriate changes to include due diligence for high hazard training providers.

Dr. Demers, Occupational Cancer Research Centre (OCRC)

- Dr. Demers prepared a presentation on OCRC's recent study on Cancer in firefighters
 - The study looks at 2.4M people in the province. 13,642 firefighters - 1,730 cancers (96% male, 83% municipal) and 22,595 police - 2,377 cancers (83% male, 80% municipal). Skin melanoma and testicular cancers were found to be at the top of the list with firefighters having twice the risk of mesothelioma than police.
 - Conclusions: Increased risk in firefighters compared to the rest of the population for a lot of the cancers studied.
 - Questions?
 - Q: Do you believe with the information you have, our asks are achievable?"
 - A: Regular checkups and screenings are a useful ask. It seems sensible to do so. The conversation can be furthered with physicians.
- International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) evaluation
 - This is a high priority for re-evaluation of firefighting exposure with many new reports being published with similar results. The working group is split into subgroups of exposure: cancer in humans and mechanistic evidence. Included in the groups are experts in the field of research being done (ex. Epidemiologists). When the monograph comes out, it'll be about 100 pages long and to be published sometime next year, most likely in the summer. Occupational exposure as a firefighter has also been classified as group 1 (carcinogenic).
- Dr. Demers willing to attend the March 2023 meeting

Meeting adjourned.

Friday, December 2, 2022 (8:30 am – 12 pm)

WSIB Occupational Cancer data (T. Beauchamp, D. Zhu, C. Luce and T. Turnbull)

- The WSIB gave an overview of occupational cancer claims and presented the findings to the committee's data request on a deep dive into cancer claims submitted by firefighters.

Skin cancer (27%) and prostate cancer (24%) are the leading primary sites in allowed cancer claims from firefighters, accounting for over half of all claims, with the average age at diagnosis for all cancers being 62.4 years. The average cost for allowed fatal claims as of July 31, 2022, was about \$506,000, and the average for allowed non-fatal claims as of July 31, 2022, was approximately \$33,000.

- **ACTION:** Revisit the conversation for March meeting
- Committee discussed the statistics detailed in the WSIB presentation. Discussion of the relationship between direct costs (WSIB data) and indirect costs (replacement worker, incident investigation, etc.) for occupational injury and illnesses to better communicate the “true” total cost of occupational cancers.
- Can the committee create a document for Ontario firefighters to provide to attending physicians similar to [BC Professional Fire Fighters’ Association’s](#) for medical surveillance?
 - More info: [Cancer Prevention — BC Professional Fire Fighters \(bcpffa.net\)](#)
- **ACTION:** F. Macpate to touch base with ministry staff to determine opportunities, if any, for supporting committee work on this item.
- **ACTION:** A. Neal and A. Burridge to create a working group to create a questionnaire for doctors and update in March.
- Committee discussed the feasibility of developing resources for the 2023 OAF and OPPFA conferences and a launch webinar to reach those who are not able to attend the conferences in person.
- **ACTION:** T. Morose to arrange meeting for cancer communication working group. Working group to report back in March 2023 on how to communicate new WSIB cancer cost data
- **ACTION:** T. Morose to identify resources to quantify ratio of direct and indirect costs for occupational illness and injuries and share with the committee

Formaldehyde exposure for fire investigators (C. St Pierre, MLITSD Provincial Hygienist) Respiratory protection

- Leaders want to protect workers when they go into a fire, but respiratory protection may not be appropriate enough for being exposed to formaldehyde. 3M recommended a specific cartridge for formaldehyde. However, it is expensive and does not protect against other exposures at a fire investigation scene. St. Pierre recommends that fire services seek guidance from their supplier on the best product(s) to mitigate exposure. “These are our environments ____, what is the best product for us?”

Monitoring (four or six gas monitors)

- Formaldehyde occupational exposure limits are low; ceiling limit of 1.5ppm and short term exposure limit of 1ppm (O. Reg 833). Discussion that one service is removing hydrogen sulfide from monitor and replacing with formaldehyde. C. St Pierre indicated that multi-gas monitors don’t accurately detect formaldehyde at the low levels that and a sensor for formaldehyde isn’t sensitive enough **Suggestion:** Keep hydrogen sulfide sensor in 4 or 6 gas monitor and instead invest in a separate monitor for formaldehyde that is intended for the low exposure limits.
- Q: What about CBRN filters?
 - A: It depends on the situation. They weren’t brought up in discussion, but you could bring it up with your supplier

- Comment: Municipal fire investigators aren't with the crews necessarily (wearing PPE). Approval for entry doesn't necessarily take into consideration what gas' might still be hanging around.
 - A: Ventilation is important
- The committee discussed next steps for Section 21 in light of the conversation with C. St. Pierre on formaldehyde exposure during fire investigation. In cyclical review of guidance notes, the committee will bring attention to possible presence of formaldehyde. For March 2023 review guidance note 4-13 Personal Protection During Fire Investigations
- **ACTION:** Table the topic of adding formaldehyde to 4-13 under "Reducing exposure to contaminants and other hazards" section (last bullet) or concerns/hazards.
- **ACTION:** J. Martin to send 4.13 guidance note to D. Kellam in word form so he can bring proposed edits in March.

PSHSA update (T. Morose)

- There is a new [webinar with RED Friday on peer support](#) available on the PSHSA website.
- Sector photography – There was some interest across the committee to work with K. Thomson to get accurate pictures for PSHSA's use. This will be brought up again in the March meeting with the other S21 committees as well.

PFAS

PFAS and Use of Bunker Gear for Personal Use Items – Conversation continued

- People are making bags and other personal use items from retired bunker gear
- Add to GN 6-46
 - "Consider policies that limit the use of bunker gear to the appropriate circumstances i.e. Do not use bunker gear for routine medical calls, physical fitness activities or public education events." add in "repurposing bunker gear for personal products (e.g. Bags)" and change "do not use" to "For example, not using"

March meeting

- F. Macpate provided an overview of the work that's been done already at MLITSD to plan for the joint meeting of Fire, Police and Paramedic Section 21 committee in March 2023.
- The committee wonders if Police are aware of increased cancer risk for the profession. Comment: Would the exposure depend on position? (Patrol Constable, Forensic Identification, TAC, etc.)
- Slow Down Move over law. The committee discussed if there would be value in the Ministry of Transportation attending in March to hear the concerns of Fire, Police and Paramedics with the general public's awareness of and compliance with slow down move over.

Letters sent to Minister McNaughton

- Committee received a response from MLITSD to the letter regarding slow down move over. Minister McNaughton sent a response and forwarded concerns to the Ministry of Transportation.
- Section 21 committee makes recommendations to the Minister of Labour. The committee cannot make a recommendation to another ministry. Individual members of the committee can send letters to another Ministry in their role with their association, the representation on the committee (e.g. AMO, OAFCA, OPPFA can write a letter to Minister

of Health, Environment, Transportation), to advance an issue on behalf of their membership.

- **ACTION:** Follow up with J. Martin as it has already been actioned to the MTO

Meeting adjourned.

2023 meeting dates

Thursday, March 2 (Fire, Police, Paramedic joint meeting), and Friday, March 3, 2023

Thursday, June 8, and Friday June 9, 2023

Thursday, September 21, and Friday, September 22, 2023

Thursday, November 30, and Friday, December 1, 2023