

- Meetings should not be postponed or cancelled except in very exceptional circumstances. Where postponement is absolutely necessary an agreed date for the next meeting should be made and announced as soon as possible.
- Notices of dates of meetings should be published where all employees can see them. A copy of the agenda and any accompanying papers should be sent to all committee members at least one (1) week before each meeting.
- Agreed minutes of each meeting should be kept and a personal copy supplied to each member of the committee, and a copy of the minutes should be sent to the Chief Occupational Safety and Health Officer of the Ministry of Labour.
- Report/Minutes should be used as a basis for discussion at meetings to arrive at decisions.
- When decisions are taken they should include the designation of an individual or group to take action.
- Actions should be reviewed or evaluated in terms of success or failure.

The Workplace Safety and Health Representative

1. How is the Workplace Safety and Health Representative appointed?

The Safety and Health Representative shall be elected by those workers who do not exercise managerial functions and who will be represented by the Safety and Health Representative in the workplace or the part thereof, as case may be.

2. What are the duties of the Workplace Safety and Health Representatives?

The duties of the Representative include the following:

- Identifying situations that may be a source of danger or hazard to workers and to make recommendations or report his or her findings thereon to the employer and the worker.
- Obtaining information from the employer concerning the conducting or taking of tests on any equipment, machine, device, article, material, chemical, physical agent or biological agent in or about a workplace for the purpose of Occupational Safety and Health.
- Being consulted about and be present at the beginning of testing conducted in or about the workplace if the Representative believes his or her presence is required to ensure that valid testing procedures are used to ensure that the tests are valid.
- Inspecting sites where a worker is killed or critically injured at a workplace from any cause, and any machine or article and shall report his or her finding in writing to the Chief Occupational Safety and Health Officer.
- Maintaining and keeping a record of the exercise of his or her function and shall make the same available for examination by an inspector.

NOTE

The Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee should consider itself the action arm of the Workplace's safety and Health Policy.

Success depends on mutual confidence between Management and Employees.

**For further information please contact
The Occupational Safety and Health Department,
Ministry of Labour,
82 Brickdam, Georgetown.
Telephone # 225-7008 / 225-8801 / 225-8803.**

Ministry of Labour Guidance Notes

THE JOINT WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE AND/OR THE WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE



What you need to know.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act No. 32 of 1997 or Chapter 99:10, laws of Guyana makes provision for the establishment of Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committees and the appointment of Safety and Health Representative in smaller workplaces with less than twenty (20) workers. The Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee should consider itself the action arm of the Workplace's safety and Health Policy.

The Safety and Health Representative should be given time from work as may be necessary to carry out his or her duties. The time so spent shall be deemed to be work time for which the Representative shall be paid by his or her employer at the Representative's regular salary.

1. What is meant by the Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee?

The Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee should be considered among other things:

- An organizational framework for problem solving
- An internal responsibility system
- A mechanism for the exchange of information
- The means by which employee participation is increased
- A system to put in place safety and health procedures, and
- A pooling of knowledge and expertise

2. What is the Objective of the Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee

The main objective of the Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committees should be the promotion of cooperation between employers and employees in investigating, developing and carrying out measures to ensure the Safety and Health at work of employees.

3. Who comprises the membership of this committee?

The membership and structure of the Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committees should be settled in consultation between Management and the Trade Union workers' representatives concerned.

The number of Management Representatives should not

exceed the number of Employee representatives. Workers' The number of Management Representatives should not exceed the number of Employee representatives. Workers' representative on the Committee should be elected by their fellow workers and not selected by Management.

Management representation should be aimed at ensuring:

- Adequate authority to give proper consideration and commitment to views and recommendations.
- The necessary knowledge and expertise to provide accurate information to the committee on company policy, production needs and on technical matters in relation to premises, processes, plant, machinery and equipment.

4. How are members of the Committee Elected to serve?

Election of members should be held at least once every year or as may be determined by the committee. In undertakings where a Company Doctor/Nurse or Safety Officer is employed, they should be ex-officio members of the Safety and Health Committee. Other company specialists such as Project Engineers, Chemists, and Training Officers etc. might be co-opted for particular meetings when subjects which they have expertise are to be discussed.

5. What is the composition of the Committee?

The committees should be large enough to be fully represented and small enough to get work done. They should also reflect the composition of the workforce.

6. What is the role of the committee?

The role of the Committee is an Advisory one. It is not a Policy Making or Regulatory Body.

7. What are some of the activities of the Committee?

The activities should include the following?

- The study of accidents and notifiable diseases, statistics and trends, so that reports can be made to management on unsafe and unhealthy conditions for corrective action.
- Assistance in the development of workers' safety and health rules and safe system of work
- A watch on the effectiveness of the safety and health content of employee training and education
- A watch on the adequacy of Safety and Health Communication and publicity in the workplace.
- Promote the training and education of members and colleagues.

8. How can the Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee be effective?

The Committee can be effective by doing the following:

- The holding of regular meetings with effective publicity of the Committee's discussions and recommendations;
- The timely implementation of decisions by management on the Committee's recommendations; where necessary promptly translated into action and effective publicity;
- The participation by members of the committee in periodical joint inspection.

9. How is the business of the committee conducted?

- Committees should meet (as often as necessary) at least once each month. Sufficient time should be allowed during each meeting to ensure full discussion of all business.