Appendix C

Guide for Developing a Terms of Reference

When the committee is formed, preferably at its first meeting, certain matters are usually decided upon and put in writing as the “terms of reference” or “guidelines” for the committee.

Terms of reference should include:

- An opening statement of beliefs signed by the senior representative of the employer and a representative of the workers.
  For example: “It is our firm belief that, through education programs, investigation of problems and joint resolutions of these problems, the workplace will be healthy and safe for all workers”.

- A description of the committee’s structure (who and what we are).
  Who makes up our committee?
  How many members are there in total?
  How long should each member serve?
  How will we chair our meetings?

- A description of the functions of the committee (what we do).
  Identify workplace hazards and recommend corrective action
  Participate in workplace inspections
  Promote worker education
  Promote workplace safety

- A guideline for committee meetings (when and how we meet)
  How often will we hold regular meetings?
  Who will be responsible for taking minutes?
  How will recommendations be handled?
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Sample Terms of Reference

1. Name of health and safety committee

   A name is reference for identification where there are other committees in the business/organization.

2. Constituency

   Identify the parts of the operation or the group or groups of workers represented by the committee.

3. Purpose of the committee

   It is a joint committee made up of worker and employer representatives consulting in a cooperative spirit to identify and resolve health and safety problems in support of a planned occupational health and safety program in the place of employment.

4. Functions of the Committee

   (a) Make recommendations for the establishment and enforcement of health and safety policies and practices.

   (b) Participate in the identification of dangers to health and safety in places of employment, and recommend means of controlling the hazards.

   (c) Obtain information from the employer and from such other sources as necessary regarding the identification of existing or potential dangers to health and safety at the place of employment.

   (d) Advise on and promote occupational health and safety programs for the education and information of the employer and workers.

   (e) Receive, consider, and, where necessary, investigate complaints respecting health and safety of workers at the place of employment, and, where necessary, make recommendations to the employer.

   (f) Maintain records regarding the complaints received and the resolution of those complaints.

   (g) Where applicable, review the information resulting from monitoring and measuring procedures, and, where necessary make recommendations to the employer.

   (h) Participate in inspections at places of employment concerning the health and safety of workers.

   (i) Perform any other duties that an OH&S officer may assign to a committee.

5. Records

   The committee will keep accurate records of all matters that come before it.
6. Meetings

(a) The committee will meet monthly on the third working day of each month.

(b) Special meetings, if required, will be held at the call of the chairperson.

(c) A quorum shall consist of a majority of members.

(d) The committee will add procedures it considers necessary for the meetings.

7. Agendas and Minutes

(a) An agenda will be prepared by the secretary under the direction of the chairperson and distributed to members prior to the meeting.

(b) Minutes will be prepared as soon as possible after the meeting and will be made available to the OH&S committee, employer, workers, and the Commission.

8. Composition of the Committee

(a) The committee shall consist of ____ members.

(b) One worker representative will be elected from each of the following areas or unions (list areas or unions).

(c) One management representative will be appointed from each of the following areas (list areas).

9. Committee Officers

The committee shall elect a chairperson and secretary from its membership.

The chairperson shall:
• control the meetings
• ensure the maintenance of an unbiased viewpoint
• arrange the agendas
• review previous minutes and material prior to the meetings

Secretary’s duties will include:
• arrangement of the meeting place
• notification of meetings to members
• agenda preparation
• minutes preparation
• forwarding a copy of the minutes to the employer for distribution
• all correspondence
• acting as chairperson when necessary

10. Amendments

These terms of reference may be amended by majority vote of the committee members.