

**British Columbia Regional Union Safety and Health Committee
(BRUSH)
Minutes
June 10, 2014**

In Attendance: Linda Harding (Chair) (GSU), Bob Jackson (REVP BC), Liz Olophont (UEW), Johanne Ackerman (UTE), Leanne Hughes (CIU), Bill Pleming (GSU), Tracy Shudo (CEIU), Virginia Vaillancourt (UVAE), Floyd Nelson (UTE), Crystal Warner (CEIU), Richard Maye, Jennifer Horsely (UPCE), Michael Small (UTE), Monique Bakker (UEW), Jim Sidel (DCL) and James Little (PSAC)

Regrets: Wayne Little (UTE), Bert Farwell (UCTE), Paul Croes (CIU), Jennifer Chien-Ho (UNE)

Agenda

Accepting the Agenda:

Review Previous Minutes

Business Arising

Standing Items:

 Ergonomics

New Business

 Holding a meeting in Victoria

 Bill C-4 Overview – “Fighting for our Lives”

 JLP – Mental Health in the Workplace

 National Campaign on Bullying

 GECA and the Martin Decision

 Workplace 2.0 – White Noise

 BC Federation of Labour Training

 National Health and Safety Board of Directors Update

Round Table

Adjournment

Roll Call

Linda conducted a Roll Call

Accepting of the Agenda

Added: Update on NBoD H&S Committee meeting

Agenda accepted

Review Previous Minutes

The minutes were accepted with the following two changes:

- Under Workplace 2.0 change Government Work and Public Services to Public Works and Government Services;
- Made some minor changes need to be made to names and titles.

Moved and Seconded

Update of Action Items from Last Minutes

Day of Morning

The National office created posters but they were only received the day after the Day of Morning. These posters can be used next year. There was a discussion on the types of items that may be appropriate to recognize this date. There will be a call out of the number of items requested and then it will be purchased by the local office and distributed per compiled requests. It was discussed that this item should be placed on the fall agenda so that we can be prepared for next year. Bob suggested we have these items ready and they can be handed out at next spring's BC Regional Health and Safety Convention.

Action – Place Day of Morning on October's Agenda

Donation to the Golden Tree Farm Workers Monument Project

Linda reported on the **Golden Tree Farm Workers Monument donation. It was well received by the BC Federation of Labour.**

Standing Items

Ergonomics

Brief discussion about the purpose of keeping this a standing item and it was agreed that it should now be removed and if members have issues with regard to ergonomics they can add the issue to the agenda at an upcoming meeting.

New Business

Holding a BRUSH Meeting in Victoria

The meeting was held in Victoria but was in conflict with other meetings so there were many regrets. Linda stated it was nice to see members that are not regularly seen outside convention.

Linda advised that she toured 1230 Government Street as they had White Noise installed and this has been an issue both at this location and others. She will be touring the Esquimalt Graving Dock tomorrow.

Bill C-4 Overview – “Fighting for our Lives”

Linda noted that there is a new one day course that has been developed to instruct members of the changes and effects of the new law.

We have to be careful about what has changed and be careful in regard to the miss information that is being passed around.

Jim attended the National Health and Safety meeting in Ottawa with his regional counterparts. He noted that there is a misconception that bill C4 replaces the Canada Labour Code which is not the case. He also noted that there is a significant change to the definition of danger and that we need to advise members of their rights in accordance with this new law.

The PSAC has developed a One-Day Course for H&S Committee members, Local Executives and Stewards on the changes brought on by the changes brought on by Bill C-4. The intention is to consult with the Educational officer to coordinate and look for funding to try to offer this course at least once this year.

Bob stated that the standing Health and Safety Board of Directors Committee has discussed this. They suggested having Regional Committees where they exist discussing these changes. It can be done in topics such as right to refuse dangerous work, etc. Bob noted that we can use the new PSAC Health and Safety website, Regional Committees and newsletters to advise members of their rights under Bill C-4.

Action: We should include aspects of this in our BRUSH meetings.

Joint Learning Program (JLP) – Mental Health in the Workplace

The Joint Learning Plan has developed a new course on Mental Health and it is a good resources for members. We would like to encourage members to request the course in their workplaces.

Virginia noted that a couple of members from her office are facilitators with the JLP. They did have a train the trainer session in Vancouver. It teaches members on how to recognize symptoms within themselves and others. It deals with remedies and with wellness and recovery. The next course date is on June 26. She noted it is a worthwhile course. She encourages members to put in a request for this course.

Liz plans on holding a course at IOS and is willing to open it up to Southern Vancouver Island members.

National Campaign on Bullying

The PSAC has been mandated by a resolution at the 2012 convention to develop a campaign on Bullying. The development of the campaign is being run out of the National Office and we will pass along any ideas members from BC have with respect to the campaigns development and roll out.

Bob discussed that at the National Health and Safety Executive meeting they have started developing a national campaign on bullying and should be rolled out in the fall.

Some ideas were to try and get the campaign up and running before the National Day Against Bullying and buttons and ribbons. Bob recommends members e-mail him on suggestions and he can forward it through to the national committee.

Government Employees Compensation Act (GECA) and the Martin Decision

The Martin decision was explained and that claims for gradual onset stress will now be assessed under the provincial acts and no longer the GECA.

Federal employees are now covered by this act. In short the Act relinquishes work related injury submissions to Workers Compensation Board (WCB) in the region of the country where the employee is working. Provisions are differed for accidents or injuries. PSAC won in Federal Court to accept sections 4.1 & 4.2 of the Act which states that mental health stress was now compensable by WCB and it did not have to be a direct result of a traumatic event or accident but now allowed for gradual onset of stress which could have occurred from harassment, bullying, etc. which was beneficial to our members. The Province of Manitoba took this decision to the Supreme Court of Canada and had a decision rendered against the gradual onset of stress which is known as the Martin Decision. The law states that when a decision is struck down we revert to the old system. This means that we go back to only covering mental health issues from traumatic events or accidents.

The good news is that in 2013 Worksafe BC amended its act to accept claim on gradual onset due to acceptable stressors. We can still get claims approved for such items as Violence in the Workplace, Bullying, etc. but it will be harder in future to get claims accepted. Individuals react differently to stressors. Bad performance reviews, managers criticizing your work, etc. are not WCB claims. Another example would be if there are 4 employees and all are treated evenly but one person is stress that would not be a WCB claim.

Here is the link to the GECA:

Workplace 2.0 – White Noise

Crystal explained that the white noise maker has been temporarily turned off in her office but there is no guarantee that this is a final decision and in fact it is being mandated by the employer. This was implemented because of lower office walls.

Linda did a site visit today to 1230 Government Street building in Victoria and only a few members still have the white noise. Unfortunately none were in the office to ask them how they felt about it. These mini speakers (similar in size to a sprinkler head) are in the ceiling and members do have concerns. Makes the sound like static or similar to a fan.

Linda will continue to conduct research on this issue.

BC Federation (BC Fed) of Labour Training in Vixtoria

The BC Feds have a new Health and Safety course on Improving Return to Work Outcomes. The course is scheduled for June 24 in Nanaimo and October 7 in Victoria. The course is 8 hours long. It is recommended for Occupational Safety and Health members.

Action: Send out information to distribution list.

National Health & Safety Board of Directors Update

Bob Jackson talked about the purpose and functionality of the National H&S Committee and about the work they are doing. He spoke about changes coming in Bill C-31 on WHMIS, the new regulations will be based on global perspectives and more importantly lining things up with the USA (our largest training partner). It would require Canada to have WHMIS conform to the United States versions and will need to conform better to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). This will be a big change and require conformity. There has currently been no consultation with the unions on this issue. This item is on the national radar and James will follow up with Denis St. Jean from the National office. James will try to get Jeff Benne to sit in on a BRUSH meeting to update members.

All chemical labeling will be changed and we will need in person training on the new rules and regulations governing these amendments.

Again we (the Union) are not being properly consulted in the discussion and there exists a clear lack of participation on the issue.

The new H&S national website is up and running and we are looking for feedback on the site. Please if you have any suggestions on how to improve the site please let the BC Regional H&S officer know and it will be shared nationally.

PSAC has a new H&S newsletter coming out soon.

Action: Raydon Gas information possibility for next meeting.

Round Table

Leanne - that at CBSA that Occupational Health and Safety training is handled by a two hour on line course and then one day of training.

Virginia - Talked about the Veterans Affairs training initiative conducted jointly by the PSAC and Veterans Affairs to all offices across Canada.

Monique – Environment has six whole days of training.

Jennifer – Changes in WHMIS are going to greatly affect Purolator and their delivery system.

Bill – PWGSC – If there is a change to WHMIS then should the Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) be involved?

Crystal – Tony Clements has put out a call to implement the CSA Standard on Psychological Health in all offices which would be a good thing.

Next meeting – July 23, 2014 – Vancouver RO

Adjourned