## JOINT HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (JOHSC) POLICY

[Organization Name] is dedicated to the health and well-being of all of its employees. To that end, [Organization Name] will adhere to all provincial legislation in Nova Scotia as defined by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Additionally, [Organization Name] understands that it has the primary responsibility for health and safety on its premises as an employer.

POLICY

Where [Organization Name] has a workforce of more than 20 people, the company will create a Joint Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC).

The employer and employees can decide how large the committee will be, in total. However, at least half of the committee members must be non-management employees and must be selected by the employees they represent or by their union.

The management committee representative may be chosen by the employer and may be in management.

Unless a committee determines another arrangement for chairing the committee in its rules of procedure, two of the members of the committee shall co-chair the committee, one of whom shall be selected by the members who represent employees and the other of whom shall be selected by the other members.

Any time that the JOHSC dedicates to health and safety-related activities is considered work time, and members will be rewarded according to their normal working hours.

Training

While there is no specified training for Committee members or Representatives, Section 13(1)(c) of the Act, Employers' precautions and duties, require the employer to "....provide information, instruction, training ...as necessary to the health and safety of the employees".

[Organization Name] will guarantee that all new JOHSC members training specific to the functions of the Committee or Representative will greatly enhance the ability of members to carry out their duties. Functions of the OHS Committee or OHS Representative are found in Sections 31 and 33 respectively. Examples of subject matter for training could include: knowledge of OHS legislation, methods of hazard assessment, health and safety auditing, accident investigation, how to run effective meetings, etc.

This training will be offered at the expense of [Organization Name] to enable the employee to perform their JOHSC member duties. This training is regarded to be a necessary component of the representative's work obligations, and the representative will be paid for the time spent training.

Powers of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The JOHSC is charged with the following responsibilities and powers:

* the co-operative identification of hazards to health and safety and effective systems to respond to the hazards;
* the co-operative auditing of compliance with health and safety requirements in the workplace;
* receipt, investigation and prompt disposition of matters and complaints with respect to workplace health and safety;
* participation in inspections, inquiries and investigations concerning the occupational health and safety of the employees and, in particular, participation in an inspection referred to in Section 50;
* advising on individual protective devices, equipment and clothing that, complying with this Act and the regulations, are best adapted to the needs of the employees;
* advising the employer regarding a policy or program required pursuant to this Act or the regulations and making recommendations to the employer, the employees and any person for the improvement of the health and safety of persons at the workplace;
* maintaining records and minutes of committee meetings in a form and manner approved by the Director and providing an officer with a copy of these records or minutes on request.

Meetings

The committee shall meet at least once each month unless (a) a different frequency is prescribed by the regulations; or (b) the committee alters the required frequency of meetings in its rules of procedure.

[Organization Name] will give paid time off from regular job obligations for all JOHSC members to attend and prepare for meetings. Members shall maintain minutes of JOHSC meetings to keep track of pertinent problems and conversations. Each meeting must be meticulously documented and communicated to [Organization Name].

[Organization Name] will preserve copies of these reports for a minimum of two years in order to make them available as needed to employees.

Inspections

[Organization Name] shall adhere to its commitment to undertake frequent workplace inspections at adequate intervals to prevent the emergence of harmful working conditions. Additionally, it will guarantee that wherever possible, JOHSC members participate in these workplace inspections.

JOHSC Recommendations

The JOHSC is responsible for making recommendations on health and safety at [Organization Name].

If [Organization Name] receives written recommendations from the JOHSC in writing it must respond in writing to the committee within twenty-one days to:

* indicate acceptance of the recommendations; or
* give reasons for the disagreement with any recommendations that the employer does not accept, or, where it is not reasonably possible to provide a response before the expiry of the twenty-one day period, provide within that time a reasonable explanation for the delay, indicate to the committee or representative when the response will be forthcoming, and provide the response as soon as it is available.

If the JOHSC makes a request pursuant to subsection (1) and is not satisfied that the explanation provided for a delay in responding is reasonable in the circumstances, the chair or co-chairs of the committee, shall promptly report this fact to an officer.

Evaluation of the JOHSC

A documented evaluation of the JOHSC's effectiveness must be undertaken once a year.