

Meeting Minutes

Ontario Fire Service Advisory Committee (Section 21 Committee)

Thursday, March 2, 2023 (Joint committee meeting)

Friday, March 3, 2023 (8 am – 4 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 Burridge	O AFC
Harry Baranik	O AFC
Jeff Kirk	O AFC
Cathy Hoffman	AMO
Mark Pankhurst	AMO
Doug Kellam	Volunteer Firefighter
Randy Narine	Volunteer firefighter
John Snider	Office of the Fire Marshal (observer)
Juanita Martin	MLITSD
Tanya Morose	PSHSA (Facilitator)
Kayla Thomson	PSHSA (Minutes)

Regrets:

Mark Pankhurst	AMO
Adam Neal	OPFFA

Thursday, March 2, 2023 (Joint committee meeting)

Committee attended the joint meeting with first responder S21 committees (Fire, police and paramedics)

Friday, March 3, 2023 (8 am – 4 pm)

Greetings

D. Worrall and R. Grimwood greeted the committee and went over the agenda for the day.

Review of minutes from December meeting – R. Grimwood and D. Worrall

Minutes were approved.

Review of previous day – Joint meeting

- The committee discussed having meetings every 18-24 months with all committees. Round tables were the highlight as a positive and would like to have more time allocated

for them. What are our common goals? These meetings were suggested to happen more often than the 18 – 24 month time frame.

- The committee also discussed the letters to the minister from all committees as a jumping point of conversation.
 - **ACTION:** D. Worrall and R. Grimwood to connect with J. Martin and action joint letter to minister to highlight-the value of regular interagency training with sustainable funding.
- Committee expressed interest in active shooter training. It would be beneficial for fire services, it's a gap in current training and incidents are increasing.
 - **ACTION:** T. Morose to send York Region Police active shooter resources to committee. They presented at the OPFFA conference in October of 2022.
- Fire services was called to assist in the mass shooting at an apartment complex in Vaughan. Initial response was for a fire alarm. Firefighters need accurate information ahead of time. Improved communication between CACC, Fire and Police dispatchers would be beneficial.

6-26 Structural firefighting — fire streams and ventilation

- Draft guidance note reviewed and supported by the committee. There are a number of changes to the guidance note.
 - **ACTION:** T. Morose to send guidance note out for comment

6-32 Elevator Rescue

- Defer to next meeting.

6-39 Hydrogen sulphide chemical suicides

- The MLITSD received a letter from a respected organization on the wording of this guidance note. The guidance note has been removed from the website until it is reviewed.
- The major concern is “Could this be used by someone intending to inflict self-harm?”
- J. Martin proposed changes to background section. “Firefighters may respond to incidents involving the mixing of chemicals to create a hydrogen sulphide in an enclosed space”.
- Committee agreed on the proposed change.
 - **ACTION:** J. Martin to finalize change.

Guidance notes comments

Late comments received:

6-46: There were changes suggested to our verbiage from a manufacturer. This guidance note has already been out for comment with comments past due.

- Comments received after GN have gone through approval process will be received by the committee facilitator and shared with the committee at an appropriate time for subsequent review.

4-1: Two comments received.

- Are we calling it bunker gear or turn-out gear?
 - We refer to the gear as bunker gear.
 - **ACTION** R. Grimwood to follow up with O AFC commentor.
- Change wording to “Shall not wear”
 - **ACTION:** No change to be made. R. Grimwood to reach out regarding the limitations on the use of “shall”.
 - Translation issue perhaps?
- Missing reference: The act says gear must be secured, a helmet would fall under this and is not listed anywhere.

- **ACTION:** J. Martin to add hyperlink to subsection 7(4) of the Firefighter regulation to the reference section of this guidance note
- **ACTION:** D. Worrall to reach out and let the commentor know that we will add reference to subsection 7(4) of the firefighter regulation.

4-13 Personal protection during fire investigation operations – D. Kellam

- Note has been reviewed and no changes recommended. OMFPOA has been consulted.

Regulation Working Group – R. Grimwood and J. Martin

- MLITSD Policy division will meet with committee representatives to discuss regulation development process and changes proposed by the committee. Date to be determined.

Volunteer Firefighter Representation on the Committee and Recruitment

- Two volunteer firefighters are currently on the committee. Term for one volunteer firefighter comes to an end in June 2023.
- Committee discussed process for Ministry’s recruitment of member position.
 - OAFCA can send message to all fire chiefs and related associations (e.g. FSWO, OAFCA, etc.). The committee suggested that the position is posted on the OAFCA website.
 - Committee suggested use of social media to share opportunity when available (e.g. Minister to post on LinkedIn?) Considering most volunteers are active/follow fire service accounts on social media, posting on social media would be beneficial.
- Committee discussed evaluation rubric for applications.
- The Ministry will verify that applicants are members in good standing of a volunteer fire service.
- In person meetings (due to travel time) could be a deterrent for some people wanting to be on the committee. The Committee discussed the possibility of hybrid meetings to reduce barriers for interested applicants.

PFAS discussion – all

- The new PFAS guidance note is going through approvals with the ministry. The committee discussed the importance of reminding fire services that bunker gear should be handled with caution, for example: No bags made of old bunker gear and other DIY projects, add signs in certain areas that say “no bunker gear”, etc.
- Committee discussed adding lithium ion batteries and PFAS as a standing agenda item.
 - **ACTION:** T. Morose to include it as a standing item during agenda planning
- Some municipalities have received request of confirmation from their insurance providers of PFAS free foams as a condition of insurance.
 - Is there an insurance consultant who can be spoken to about this?
 - **ACTION:** H. Baranik to email C. Hoffman with questions for her insurance consultant contact. J. Kirk to reach out to his contact who has had an experience with insurance providers and get more details.
 - **ACTION:** H. Baranik to send list of PFAS free foams to the committee.
- In the next few years, maybe more PFAS free foam will be out there in circulation.
- Committee discussed PFAS free foam training (to ensure proper use and changes based on thickness) as well as considerations for disposal of foams containing PFAS (contact hazardous waste contacts at municipal waste management)

PSHSA update

- T. Morose updated the committee on PSHSA’s marketing and communications team wanting to create authentic images with Ontario’s fire, police and paramedic services. All that would be asked of the services is to allow PSHSA to have two employees attend training/day on the job and take pictures of things such as daily tasks, interacting with each other, training exercises, etc. Those interested in participating were asked to reach out to K. Thomson.
- PSHSA has received funding from April to June 2023 to offer two courses at no cost to public safety professionals for the first 100 registrants :
 1. [R2 for Leaders Building Resilient Organizations](#)
 2. [Managing Mental Health Stay at Work & Return to Work for First Responders](#)
 - **ACTION:** T. Morose to let committee know when the courses are available

New business

SCBA Cylinder Life Extension in Ontario – R. Grimwood

- Alberta Fire Chiefs’ Association and Hexagon Digital Wave issued a press release indicating Transport Canada’s approval to extend the life of carbon composite cylinders up to 30 years. Hexagon is not a manufacturer, they do testing. They claim they have the authority to test any cylinder and extend its life form 15 – 30 provided it passes the testing.
- Committee discussed the safety concerns surrounding this change. Note that in Ontario TSSA is authority having jurisdiction.
 - **ACTION:** A. Burrige to talk to MSA and J. Snider to reach out to TSSA for more information on this. All they currently have is AFCA’s letter announcing it.

Occupational Cancer Working Group – T. Morose, K. Thomson, R. Grimwood, C. Hoffman and M. Pankhurst

- Defer to June.
 - **ACTION:** Working group to compare calendars and meet prior to June.

Marine Operations Working Group – M. Pankhurst, H. Baranik and J. Plater

- Drafted, defer to June.

Investigating firefighter deaths – R. Grimwood and D. Worrall

- R. Grimwood and D. Worrall provided update after meeting with Chief Coroner of Ontario Dirk Huyer, Deputy Coroner Bonnie Burke and OFM Jon Pegg. There is support from all stakeholders in attendance on investigating firefighter line of duty deaths on the fire ground. The conversation included an understanding that the investigation needs to include stakeholders who understand firefighter operations. The Deputy Chief Coroner is currently developing the process for firefighter death investigations.
- The committee is hopeful that in the event of a firefighter line of duty death investigation the findings from the investigation can be used for training and to prevent it from happening again. There is a possibility of statistics being shared from these investigations.

Medical Questionnaire Working Group – A. Neal and A. Burrige

- The draft physician's guide has been streamlined. Currently, the document has IAFF logo for now but there are options to change it. The committee discussed the addition of a checklist for doctors’ visits and an interactive PDF to be sent prior to a visit. The committee agreed to defer conversations on branding and logo usage until a later time when development of the resource is more complete.

- First reading of bill C224, National Framework on Cancers Linked to Firefighting Act, to be held on March 9, 2023 it is an Act to establish a national framework for the prevention and treatment of cancers linked to firefighting.
 - **ACTION:** R. Grimwood to send a hard copy, R. Narine and A. Burrige to make PDF, T. Sparks to send Richmond Hill's QR code to download checklist.
- Chief Prevention Officer Dr. Moody is aware of the committee's concerns regarding lack of coverage for firefighters and medical screening for early detection of occupational illness which is currently an out-of-pocket expense for firefighters.
- Minister to announce expanded presumptive firefighter cancer coverage today: Thyroid and Pancreatic.

Slow down move over law (MTO) – R. Grimwood

- R. Grimwood and D. Worrall had a conversation with M. Baxter, PAO President and Police S21 committee co-chair. There are opportunities for joint efforts by the committee co-chairs to advance this issue
- OPP is currently enforcing Slow Down, Move Over in a blitz.
- Committee discussed the possibility of changing the HTA to quantify a speed reduction required for compliance similar to other jurisdictions.
- A news reporter was struck this week while reporting at a scene inside the barricades. There have been several near misses with fire apparatus as well as fire apparatus being struck by motoring public when firefighters are working on roadways at a scene.

September meeting

- Existing date conflicts with CAFC conference. September meeting will be on Monday September 25 and Tuesday September 26, 2023
 - **ACTION:** Tanya send updated meeting invite to the committee.

OSB In Live Fire Training

- Cristina St Pierre, MLITSD Provincial Hygienist, spoke with D. Worrall regarding OSB being used for live fire training:
 - Fire Training Officers have greater exposure to OSB products
 - C. St Pierre will attend June 2023 meeting to discuss OSB hazards
 - NFPA 1403 went into a vote in 2019 to remove OSB. The vote failed. All the notes came back regarding the science not matching up. No science to back = no changes
 - If anyone has info, please send it
 - **ACTION:** H. Baranik stated that a Chief in Woodstock would have some info on this
 - **ACTION:** Committee to send any concerns to T. Morose to send to Cristina. She is interested in learning about our concerns to provide support
- For more information:
 - https://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/AboutTheCodes/1403/Proposed_TIA_1552_NFPA_1403.pdf

Pre-Service Firefighter Training

- Students are being sent home with dirty gear. The gear then gets stored in dorms or apartments/condos.
- Committee discussed how this concern falls outside of our realm. It's with the Ministry of Education. The OHSA addresses worker protection, with limited application to students.

Electric vehicles

- Guidance note is currently being reviewed by MLISTD legal
- Firefighting foam can allow electricity to pass through the foam and cause injury to first responders

Meeting adjourned

2023 meeting dates

Thursday, June 8, and Friday June 9, 2023

Monday, September 25, and Tuesday, September 26, 2023

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