

## Meeting Minutes

# Ontario Fire Service Advisory Committee (Section 21 Committee)

**Monday, September 16, 2024 – 12:00 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2024 – 8:00 am - 12:00 pm**

*Meeting Held In-Person in Guelph at the Fire Headquarters: 50 Wyndham St S, Guelph, ON N1H 4E1  
Tour of Homewood Health Centre on September 17: 150 Delhi St, Guelph ON N1E 6K9*

### **Attendance:**

Rob Grimwood	O AFC – Committee Co-Chair
Dan Worrall	OPFFA – Committee Co-Chair
Adam Neal	OPFFA
John Plater	OPFFA
Tim Sparks	OPFFA
Harry Baranik	O AFC
Aaron Burr ridge	O AFC
Jeff Kirk	O AFC
Cathy Hoffman	AMO
Mark Pankhurst	AMO
Andrew King	Volunteer Firefighter (Absent day two)
Doug Kellam	Volunteer Firefighter
Stephanie Maragna	MNR – Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services (AFFES)
John Mcbeth	Office of the Fire Marshal (observer)
Erica Arsenault	MLITSD (Absent day one)
Ricardo Romero	PSHSA (Consultant/Facilitator)
Kayla Thomson	PSHSA (Minutes)

### **Regrets:**

Andrew King	Volunteer Firefighter (Absent day two)
Erica Arsenault	MLITSD (Absent day one)
Patricia Clausen	PSHSA (Alternate facilitator)

### **Guests:**

Ronald Landry	MLITSD
David Winter	MLITSD

## **Monday, September 16, 12:00 pm: Meeting Convened**

### **Greetings And Introduction of Guests – D. Worrall/R. Grimwood**

- R. Grimwood greeted the committee and a roundtable of introductions including members and guests took place as well as an overview on what the committee does.

### **Review of Minutes from June Meeting – D. Worrall/R. Grimwood**

- Committee members had two comments regarding a spelling and date error. These were corrected by K. Thomson and the minutes will go for posting with O AFC.

**ACTION:** K Thomson to send June minutes to OAFC.

## **Guidance Notes**

### Review And Refine the Guidance Note Development Process

- R. Grimwood gave an overview of the issue with lost guidance notes.
- The co-chairs, PSHSA and the MLITSD will re-review the lost guidance notes and incorporate approved comments from the committee after they originally went out for comment.
- The co-chairs, PSHSA and the MLITSD will also be working to come up with process changes to avoid this happening again in the future.
- Committee discussed changes to the committee over the past year and it was agreed that a terms of reference review is timely.

**ACTION:** R. Grimwood to send current terms of reference to committee for review prior to the next meeting for discussion.

### Review of the Comments Received on Guidance Note 3-3: Heat and Cold Stress

- Committee approved the comment suggestion to include a reference to the importance of a specific and well documented rehab program in the “Actions of Employer” section of the guidance note.
- Medical monitoring and the steps for achieving that has also been added to the guidance note.
- Committee discussed having baseline vitals. An onsite medical professional would need to be present due to privacy concerns. Some committee members expressed concern over inclusion and how achievable that is.
- The term “Shall” was also replaced with “Should” within the document as flagged by the committee during review.
- Committee discussed [NFPA 1500](#) as a reference in relation to this guidance note.

**ACTION:** E. Arsenault to send guidance note through ministry process

*The following guidance notes were reviewed over the course of two days. The committee received overviews of the guidance notes during day one and reviewed them before day two of the meeting. Some members had comments regarding word use and some formatting, all of those comments were approved.*

### Response to Rail Emergencies - R. Grimwood

- R. Grimwood did an overview of the new guidance note for the committee.
- [Ask rail](#) was added to the resources section. It was flagged however that this has to be requested by departments individually and go through the approval process for access.
- A reference to encampments was added to the “Actions for Employers” section since some services may have encampments near or around rail lines.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send guidance note to OAFC for comment.

### Off Road Vehicles Now Supplementary Support Vehicles - H. Baranik

- H. Baranik went over the new guidance note with the committee including the name change to “Supplementary Support Vehicles”.
- The committee had a few suggested changes including:

- The addition of providing instruction/training on operations.
- A few areas of generalization under the considerations section. It was decided to remove generalized examples to refocus the guidance note back to the fire services.
- Add alteration consideration to the considerations section to reflect not making changes outside of what is recommended by the manufacturer.
- Some grammatical and flow changes were made.
- [NFPA 1192](#), construction regulation and [guidance note 6-7](#) were all added to related section.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send guidance note to OAFC for comment

Lithium-Ion Batteries, Energy Storage Systems and Hybrid-Electric Vehicles GNs - R. Grimwood/A. Neal

- R. Grimwood and A. Neal gave an overview of the complexity of the guidance notes to new committee members and guests and did a high-level walkthrough of the draft guidance note as it stands.
- During the walkthrough there were grammatical suggestions as well as removing reference to vehicles since there is a separate vehicle note.
- J. Mcbeth confirmed that the committee can send this guidance note to the OFM for review from their expert, especially considering new resources coming out of their office in the next month surrounding training.
- The committee reviewed the guidance note overnight and provided feedback during day two of the meeting. Comments received were incorporated and the committee approved the guidance note.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send guidance note to OAFC for comment.

Encampments – J. Plater/M. Pankhurst

- J. Plater and M. Pankhurst went through the updates to the guidance note with the committee.
- The committee discussed the hazards section and whether more needed to be added. The committee agreed on cross-contaminations from residue and flammable/combustible gases or liquids needing to be included.
- Committee suggested a few word changes and additions that were accepted.

**ACTION:** E. Arsenault to send guidance note through ministry process.

**Cancer Communications Working Group –R. Grimwood/D. Worrall/C. Hoffman/M. Pankhurst/P. Clausen/K. Thomson**

- Updated data from the WSIB has been requested. Updates to the slide deck and other draft cancer communications resources to be made once the data is received.
- R. Grimwood flagged the need to organize the next working group meeting as soon as the data is available.

**ACTION:** Cancer communications working group to meet in advance of the next meeting to discuss next steps.

## OPFFA Update – D. Worrall

- D. Worrall spoke about an upcoming OPFFA seminar and the lineup of attendees, speakers and events happening during the meeting.
- It was noted that fire chief registrations have more than doubled compared to last year.
- They are breaking the labour and management barrier by mutual invitation to OPFFA and OAFCA members to both seminars.
- D. Worrall gave another update on items currently going through legislation and a general overview for new members and guests on items like the move over law, heat stress, hearing protection, medical surveillance and designated substances.
- Committee discussed PFAS free gear and Hamilton’s extensive prevention techniques including ample medical surveillance. They will be discussing this at the OPFFA seminar as well.

## OAFCA update – R. Grimwood

- R. Grimwood gave an overview of his meetings at the recent AMO Conference including conversations on cancer prevention.
- R. Grimwood also spoke about a recent fleet signaling authority course the OAFCA held.
- November 18-22 is the OAFCA AGM and Health & Safety Workshop.
  - R. Grimwood gave an overview of the speakers and events lineup including:
    - Tuesday, Thursday (except the business meeting) and Friday were flagged as open to anyone.
    - The committee has a section set aside so that they can update attendees on committee activities.
    - [National Indigenous Fire Safety Council](#) will be in attendance to discuss their fire issues as well as common issues with municipal bylaw. For example: “ \_\_\_ is how first nations balance fire safety with traditions”.

## PSHSA Update – R. Romero

### PTSD Prevention Plans (EMIP Project)

The PTSD Prevention Plans project is in Phase 1, focused on identifying best practices through a literature review and jurisdictional scan. A survey is now live to gather insights from public safety personnel about their PTSD prevention plans.

- **Phase 1:** Current State Analysis.
- **Literature Review:** Complete; evidence-informed practices for PTSD/OSI prevention identified at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels.
- **Jurisdictional Scan:** Review of PTSD prevention plans and support programs in Ontario is complete.
- **Survey:** NOW LIVE! This survey aims to gather feedback on what organizations have implemented or changed in their PTSD prevention plans since 2017. [Survey Link](#) (Closes end of October 2024).
- **Next Steps:** Following the analysis of survey results, the next phase will focus on resource development and consulting with organizations to enhance their PTSD prevention plans.
- **Research Partner:** Queen’s University, Dr. Megan Edgelow.
- **Note:** There is interest and opportunity for a presentation to the committee in November. We would provide a summary and share preliminary findings of the current PTSD Prevention Plans survey (which is now live and closes in October).

- **For more information:** [Ontario PTSD Prevention Plans](#).

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send Jackie Sam from PSHSA an invite to the November meeting.

### Training Opportunities

#### *R2 for Leaders – Classroom Training*

R2 for Leaders training helps public safety organizations build resilience. Available for free until the end of FY25-26.

- **Free Training:** Available to public safety organizations until FY25-26.
- **Contact:** Reach out to schedule a session. [Link to Register](#).

#### *R2 The Fundamentals – eLearning*

This self-paced eLearning course focuses on building resilient public safety organizations. It's free for a limited time and can be accessed online.

- **Free eLearning:** Available for Police, Fire, and EMS until FY25-26. Self-register via the following links:
- [Police – R2 The Fundamentals](#)
- [Fire – R2 The Fundamentals](#)
- [EMS – R2 The Fundamentals](#)
- Please share widely with your team.

#### *Managing Mental Health Stay at Work & Return to Work for First Responders – Classroom Training*

This course focuses on strategies to manage mental health while staying at work or returning to work. It's available for free until the end of FY25-26.

- **Free Training:** Available for public safety organizations.
- **Contact:** Reach out to schedule a session. [Link to Register](#)

### Consulting

#### *Introducing Radius (formerly OPRA Tool)*

PSHSA is pleased to introduce a new tool: [Radius](#). This web-based application addresses gaps in hazard recognition and control left by other psychosocial assessments by focusing on 18 job-specific factors. Rooted in evidence and extensive research, Radius helps identify job-specific risks of psychological harm.

Radius uses principles of engagement, empowerment, inclusion, and diversity, enabling workplaces to collaboratively identify actionable solutions to enhance worker wellbeing.

#### How Radius Works:

- Access Radius by creating an online workplace account.
- Facilitators complete a brief eLearning module.
- Select a job to assess for psychological risk.
- Gather workers and leaders for two review sessions (worker and leader sessions).
- Participants rate the probability and severity of psychological harm for 18 job factors.
- Solutions are identified to mitigate risk, with flexibility to add custom solutions relevant to the organization.

#### *Occupational Stress Injury Resiliency (OSIR) Tool*

The OSIR Tool is designed to assess occupational stress injury resilience in organizations. It is currently available for free, and recruitment is ongoing for organizations to participate.

- **Free Access:** The OSIR tool is available free of charge to public safety organizations until FY25-26.
- **Validation Study:** Ongoing in collaboration with the Institute for Work & Health.
- **Recruitment:** Actively seeking organizations to participate. Contact OSIR@pshsa.ca for next steps.
- **For more information:** [OSIR Tool](#).

### **MLIITSD Reporting – E. Arsenault** Annual Report

- E. Arsenault went through the annual report including data on injuries in 2023, occupational illness, field visits and more.
- Committee discussed what data is collected by the ministry vs. WSIB, the differences and how neither organization are showing the true numbers.

### Update on Guidance Notes That Are Currently with the MLITSD for Review/Approval

- E. Arsenault went over the current guidance notes in the system and where they are at.

### **Policy Update – E. Arsenault/R. Landry**

- No one from policy in attendance for this meeting however, some changes are coming in Working for Workers Act 6 to reflect what's in the construction regulation regarding proper fitting bunker gear.

### **Coroner LODD Process Update – D. Worrall**

- D. Worrall spoke with the committee about the current framework.
- We will get info, and they will ask for comment, but who does it go to?
- Unfortunately, to see if the process works, we need to wait for a death to occur.

### **PFAS Discussion – All**

- Mississauga commissioned a company to investigate the chemicals in the station wear materials and PPE soft goods.
- They want to ask the chief hygienist what the information means for health and is it actually safe?
- Dispatchers, mechanical staff, etc. are moving from fire resistant materials. They don't need fire protection gear.
- The committee discussed difference in bunker gear safety from different departments across the province including Mississauga that takes gear away frequently to be properly cleaned by a third party.
- The committee spoke about ways the MNR can try and keep their wildland firefighters safe. There is a difference in needs due to the amount of time a wildland firefighter wears their gear for. The priorities for health and safety are different, and the approach to the items are different. Where structural firefighters rotate to avoid heat stress, wildland firefighters can't do that. They wear the gear and stay in it for extended amounts of time.
- The committee discussed bunker gear use for school visits and other community events and how it isn't required.

- The committee discussed cross contamination and keeping others accountable for cleaning their gear. It was noted that by one person not keeping up with their cleaning, they endanger the person sitting beside them in the truck.

### **Inviting Stakeholders and Dignitaries to Future Meetings – All**

- The committee extended an invitation to Minister David Piccini for the November meeting. SOLGEN has also expressed interest in attending a meeting. If the Minister cannot attend the November meeting, an invitation will be extended to SOLGEN. If the Minister can attend the November meeting, then SOLGEN will receive an invitation for the first meeting of 2025.
- Dr. Moody has also come forward looking to attend more meetings.
- The committee expressed interest in a multi-service (fire, police & paramedics) meeting together again in 2025 since it was a good meeting last year.
- C. Hoffman also suggested a stakeholder meeting in general and for AMO in attendance at the multi-services one. AMO has been interested in what goes on in these meetings and it would be beneficial to have them as a guest.

### **Fire S21 Communications Avenues – R. Grimwood/E. Arsenault**

- Having a way to better communicate with the public would be beneficial for awareness of the committee. For example, a post on social media could alert followers that there is a new guidance note available, we are looking for comments on draft guidance notes, etc.
- How can we cut through the chatter, so the end user knows what guidance notes are, where guidance notes are located and when new ones are posted?
- E. Arsenault has received confirmation that we can have a social platform or webpage, but it's hands off from the ministry. This would be entirely committee run.

### **Finalize Location for Remaining 2024 Meeting – All**

- Ajax – November 28 and 29.

### **Establish 2025 Meeting Dates – All**

- February 27 and 28.
- June 5 and 6 – Multi committee (Tri service) meeting.
  - Committee discussed wishes of having someone speak about encampments.
- September 15 and 16.
- December 4 and 5.

### **New business**

#### **MNR Rep Discussion – S. Maragna**

- MNR (AFFES) was invited as an observer to participate at the committee meeting and provided an overview of AFFES including legislation, program areas, overall responsibility/mandate and some areas of mutual interest between the committee and AFFES.
- S. Maragna mentioned benefits of the committee having a meeting up north including the fire fighting museum and a tour of the aviation hangers.
- Resilient minds and peer support training for their firefighters was suggested from the committee.
- The committee discussed return to work processes and how it changes depending on the job, the person and what the exposure was that the worker went into.

## WSIB Committee Invite – D. Worrall

- D. Worrall asked for the committees' thoughts on having the WSIB here regularly or on a once or twice a year basis.
- E. Arsenaault mentioned that the other s21 committees she sits on have the WSIB come and provide sector data which would be beneficial for the committee.
- The prevention division also has standing on some of the other committees as well which would also be beneficial.

**ACTION:** The WSIB to be invited to the June and December meetings.

## **Tour of Homewood Health Centre**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2024, 2:30 pm: Meeting adjourned.**

### **Summary of Key Actions:**

- K Thomson to send June minutes to OAFC.
- R. Grimwood to send current terms of reference to committee for review prior to the next meeting for discussion.
- E. Arsenaault to send the following guidance notes through ministry process:
  - 3-3 Heat and Cold Stress.
  - 6-49 Encampments.
- K. Thomson to send the following guidance notes to OAFC to go out for comment:
  - 6-54 Rail Emergencies.
  - 6-55 Supplementary Support Vehicles.
  - 6-50 Lithium-Ion Batteries.
- Cancer communications working group to meet prior to discuss next steps prior to the November meeting - R. Grimwood/D. Worrall/C. Hoffman/M. Pankhurst/P. Clausen/K. Thomson.
- K. Thomson to invite Jackie Sam from PSHSA to the November meeting to discuss the PTSD prevention plan project.
- The WSIB to be invited to the June and December meetings.

### **2024 meeting dates:**

- November 28 and 29, 2024

### **2025 meeting dates:**

- February 27 and 28
- June 5 and 6 – Multi committee (Tri service) meeting
- September 15 and 16
- December 4 and 5