

## Meeting Minutes

# Ontario Fire Service Advisory Committee (Section 21 Committee)

**Thursday, February 5, 2026 – 12 pm – 4:30 pm**

**Friday, February 6, 2026 – 9:00 am – 12:00 pm**

*Meeting Held In-Person at 1001 Erb St W, Waterloo, ON N2T 0C3*

### **Attendance:**

Rob Grimwood	O AFC – Committee Co-Chair
Dan Worrall	OPFFA – Committee Co-Chair
Jackie Roberson	OPFFA
John Plater	OPFFA
Luke Pedersen	OPFFA
Aaron Burridge	O AFC
Harry Baranik	O AFC
Jeff Kirk	O AFC
Adam Bulkiewicz	AMO
Mark Pankhurst	AMO
Doug Kellam	Volunteer Firefighter
John Mcbeth	Office of the Fire Marshal (Observer)
Jon Lee	MLITSD (Prevention) (Observer)
David Winter	MLITSD
Tasha Pinkerton	MNR – Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services (AFFES)
Chris Plater	MNR – Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services (AFFES)
Ricardo Romero	PSHSA (Consultant/Facilitator)
Kayla Thomson	PSHSA (Minutes)

### **Regrets:**

Andrew King	Volunteer Firefighter
Amber Sayed	MLITSD (Prevention) (Observer)
Ronald Landry	MLITSD
Patricia Clausen	PSHSA (Alternate facilitator)

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### **Greetings – R. Grimwood**

- R. Grimwood welcomed everyone to the meeting and started a round table of introductions for new member A. Bulkiewicz.

### **Review of minutes from December meeting – R. Grimwood**

- The minutes were approved.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send the previous meeting minutes to O AFC for posting.

## Guidance notes

### Cyclical review – D. Winter

#### *GN 3-1 Controlling exposure to diesel exhaust*

- The committee discussed adding reference to group 1 carcinogenic and it was added to the guidance note.
- The committee discussed carbon monoxide detectors and regulations and added reference to them and maintaining them.
- NFPA 1500 is now [NFPA 1550, Standard for Emergency Responder Health and Safety](#), and has been updated in the related section.

#### *GN 3-2 Asbestos*

- No changes.

#### *GN 3-3 Heat and cold stress*

- NFPA 1500 is now [NFPA 1550, Standard for Emergency Responder Health and Safety](#), and has been updated in the related section.

#### *GN 3-4 Radiofrequency awareness*

- Reference to radio frequency and microwave radiation in the workplace was added from the ministry.

#### *GN 3-5 Exposure to noxious weeds*

- The committee discussed issues related to this hazard that their members have faced and how useful the guidance note is.
- A link to information about noxious weeds needs updating as the page doesn't exist anymore. The link was updated to the new [Ontario.ca website landing page for noxious weeds](#).

#### *GN 3-6 Polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) awareness*

- NIOSH link is not working and will need to be updated.
- The committee discussed types of firefighting foam.
- NFPA 1971 is now [NFPA 1970, Standard on Protective Ensembles for Structural and Proximity Firefighting, Work Apparel, Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus \(SCBA\) for Emergency Services, and Personal Alert Safety Systems \(PASS\)](#), and has been updated in the related section.
- NFPA 1851 is now [NFPA 1850, Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural and Proximity Firefighting and Open-Circuit Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus \(SCBA\)](#), and has been updated in the related section.

### Update on guidance notes currently with the ministry – D. Winter

- D. Worrall and R. Grimwood talked about how we are finally making headway with getting the backlog of guidance notes posted.
- D. Winter provided an update on where the pending new and updated guidance notes currently are within the ministry process and the following guidance notes are now live on Ontario.ca:
  - [GN-3-03 Heat and Cold Stress](#)

- [GN-6-26 Structural Firefighting Tactics](#)
- [GN 6-48 Marine Vessels](#)
- [GN 6-50 Lithium-Ion Batteries](#)
- [GN 6-55 Supplementary Support Vehicles](#)
- [GN 7-08 Live Fire Training](#)

Review guidance note comments

*GN #-## Pipeline Emergencies (Mark and Jeff)*

- No comments received.
- One comment received by M. Pankhurst directly with a bullet addition. Committee approved the addition.

**ACTION:** J. Kirk and M. Pankhurst to add in the comments they received and send to D. Winter for the ministry process.

Review new/revised Guidance Notes:

*GN #-## Wildland Firefighting GN (J. Roberson, R. Grimwood, C. Plater and T. Pinkerton)*

- The title has been updated to “Wildland Firefighting”.
- R. Grimwood went through the draft guidance note with the committee.
- There were grammatical errors caught and corrected.
- There minor wording changes made within the guidance note.
- The committee discussed burn bans. Some verbiage was added to reflect coordination with other stakeholders including federal and provincial parks and conservation authorities.
- Reference was added to noxious weed training.
- The committee discussed how the guidance note doesn’t talk enough about waterbombers. C. Plater and T. Pinkerton were asked to create a blurb for the guidance note.

**ACTION:** Working group to take the guidance note back and add more reference to waterbombers and make the discussed changes. Team will circulate it to the committee before it goes out for comment with O AFC.

- The committee talked about the inclusion of ticks and bed bugs, but it was decided that there should instead be a new guidance note addressing these.

**ACTION:** A new guidance note on insects (D. Kellam and H. Baranik) to be created. J. Roberson to send tick info from Mississauga to D. Kellam and H. Baranik.

*GN #-## Working at Heights (L. Pedersen and J. Kirk)*

- Deferred to next meeting.

*GN #-## Fire Pole Safety (A. Burr ridge and J. Plater)*

- R. Grimwood read through the guidance note with the committee.
- The committee discussed how new department builds have installed slides.
- No major changes.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send guidance note out for comment through O AFC.

## *GN ### Management of Human Biological Remains (D. Worrall and A. Burrige)*

- The title has been updated to “Washdowns”.
- D. Worrall read through the guidance note with the committee.
- Changes were made to adjust measurements from feet to metres.
- The committee discussed fire services being asked to clean up after a scene, they don’t have the kind of training for this, but it happens. How can we support members being asked to do this? There are psychological hazards with the mishandling of washdowns.
- The committee discussed other areas who have similar SOPs for the same or similar issue.
- O Reg. 833 title error was corrected.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send guidance note out for comment through O AFC.

## **MLITSD Prevention Update – J. Lee**

### JHSC standard Q&A

- Q: What was changed with part 2 for firefighters?
  - A: Nothing other than some updated wording surrounding occupational illness.
- Q: Change to recertification.
  - A: If your certification expires, you must do it again. New arrangements will be that all you need to do is take refresher. Some people don’t want to get re-certified, and it discourages new people from doing it “We want to be on the committee, but re-certification is holding us back” is common feedback.

### More updates

- The new prevention strategy is a main priority right now. As a reminder, the committee received a presentation back in September. Feedback received from all presentations they did are being seriously reviewed and folded into the new strategy, including occupational hygiene and focus on high hazards. Targeted release is for next fiscal (April).
- The committee asked about incentive programs for the strategy and J. Lee confirmed that there will be some kind of incentive, it’s being worked on, nothing to delve into at this moment.
- Harmonization is happening between other jurisdictions. Right now, there are things going on federally, not many details, but it’s a priority.

## **O AFC Update – R. Grimwood**

- R. Grimwood spoke about new O AFC board members and spoke about the new president and what he’s working on.
- The [northeastern fire education tradeshow](#) is in March, you don’t have to be an O AFC member to attend. R. Grimwood gave an overview of events happening during the tradeshow.
- Queens Park advocacy day is in May.
- R. Grimwood spoke about two [online learning series sessions](#) about NFPA standards: [NFPA 1850](#) and [NFPA 1970](#).
- This year’s [annual general meeting and tradeshow](#) is now combined and happening November 16 – 21, 2026. Agenda to come.

## **OPFFA Update – D. Worrall**

- OPFFA has a lot going on and are pretty busy at the moment, lots of activities.
- D. Worrall gave an overview of what political advocacy he's working on.
- There is an OPFFA seminar coming up.
- Relationship with OPFFA and OAFC is seamless now.
- The OFM rechargeable battery committee is to meet with the Minister of Labour.

## **MNR AFFES Update – C. Plater**

- C. Plater shared updates on exposure research that they are working on.
- They are working on sharing information with their members regarding monitoring.
- C. Plater reiterated that they are in their infancy stage when it comes to health and safety.
- C. Plater spoke about legislation changes and political advocacy on their end including wildland fire management plans for some communities.
- There is a project being worked on for urban interface and asked if R. Grimwood's team in Sudbury would be interested in connecting about the project. There is a wildland urban interface training program that could be of interest. It's out of BC. R. Grimwood said yes and C. Plater to send him the info.
- The committee discussed training offered by the MNR. There's a new course coming that combines current training, C. Plater is hopeful that it could be ready by 2027.

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## **PSHSA Update – R. Romero and J. Sam**

### Firefighter cancer prevention program – J. Sam

- J. Sam reminded the committee about her previous presentation for the committee regarding the Health Canada national framework on cancers linked to firefighting grant. PSHSA is happy to announce that they received the grant.
- J. Sam gave an overview of the funded project PSHSA will be working on:
  - Stream 1:
    - Raising awareness through educational tools
    - Online health resources/website.
  - Stream 2
    - Developing diagnostic guidance on firefighter cancers and healthcare provider tools.
  - Stream 3
    - Procedural and equipment standards for wildland firefighters.
  - Stream 4
    - Promoting information sharing.
- The initiative is to raise awareness of cancer risks and prevention through educational tools.
  - Primary audience: Canadian firefighters with tailored content for women, Indigenous, and wildland firefighters.
  - Secondary audience: Canadian fire services.
  - Tertiary audience: General materials also available to families, healthcare providers, and the public.
- The proposed toolkit will include:
  - Evidence-based content, leveraging the best evidence available.
  - Tailored content for sub-populations (women, Indigenous, wildland).

- Practical resources to simplify complex health information.
- Digital engagement to broaden reach and accessibility.
- Collaboration with broad network of partners to promote consistency and coordination across jurisdictions.
- Guiding principles:
  - 1) What can firefighters do on/off the job to reduce their own risks.
  - 2) What fire departments and governments can do in risk reduction.
- J. Sam provided a preview into individual resources for different sector groups that may be developed.
- J. Sam provided an overview of what organizations are partnering with PSHSA to create this project.
- To get started on project planning, J. Sam engaged the committee in a Q&A session regarding gaps in access to resources, training, product delivery, etc.

#### Upcoming webinars – R. Romero

- PSHSA is hosting a one-hour webinar focused on lithium-ion battery hazards and risk management in the workplace.
  - **Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026  
**Time:** 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM (EST)  
**Format:** Microsoft Virtual Events (Powered by Teams)
  - This session will explore the fire, explosion, and exposure risks associated with lithium-ion batteries across public-sector workplaces. Participants will gain practical, actionable guidance on identifying hazards, implementing controls, and managing damaged or end-of-life batteries. This webinar is designed for professionals in fire services, public safety, government, healthcare, and education who are responsible for workplace safety and emergency response planning.
  - [Register Now](#)
- Committee members may also be interested in the following upcoming sessions:
  - **February 18:** [Workplace Wellbeing Webinar Series](#)  
“Building Psychologically Safe Teams”
  - **February: various dates (click link for more info)**  
[OHCOW’s 2026 Repetitive Strain Injury \(RSI\) Day Webinar Series](#)

#### JHSC training promotion – Limited time offer – R. Romero

- Get JHSC Part 1 eLearning for **\$50** when bundled with Part 2. From **February 2 to March 31, 2026**, customers who purchase both JHSC Part 1 eLearning and a JHSC Part 2 session will receive an **87% discount** on Part 1—equal to **\$349 in savings**.
  - **Qualification criteria:**
  - Part 1 eLearning and Part 2 must be purchased in the same transaction
  - Purchase must occur between February 2 and March 31, 2026
  - The selected Part 2 session must run between April 1 and September 30, 2026
  - Both courses must be public sessions (exceptions may apply in limited cases)

#### Help shape PSHSA’s psychological health and safety guide – R. Romero

- PSHSA is updating its resource *Workplace Psychological Health and Safety: A Guide to Support Worker Well-Being*, and input from the field is critical. Health and safety professionals, HR leaders, wellness champions, and operational leaders are invited to complete a **brief 2-minute survey**. Feedback will directly inform how the next edition supports real-world practice, including emergency services environments.
- **Survey deadline:** March 31, 2026.

## **Cancer Prevention Sub-Committee – R. Grimwood, D. Worrall, M. Pankhurst and K.**

### **Thomson**

- The committee agreed that the sub-committee will soon (once the next round of WSIB data is received) have enough information to move forward with communications plans and are ready to meet again.

**ACTION:** Sub-committee to meet before next meeting.

## **Cancer Prevention Checklist – R. Grimwood and D. Worrall**

- D. Worrall gave an overview of the checklist and thanked everyone for their review outside of the committee meeting.
- The committee discussed potential changes to the updated checklist.
- The committee discussed exposure reporting.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send the checklist out for comment through O AFC.

## **Ontario Regulation 714/94 Modernization – D. Worrall**

- D. Worrall gave an overview of action items and working plans towards the modernization and an update on its political advocacy.
- D. Worrall spoke about doing site visits with stakeholders to walk through the issues.
- There is hope that this will go into the next steps to get approved after the summer.

## **MLITSD Policy Update**

- No update at this time.

## **Committee Communications – Kayla, Doug and Andrew**

- No update at this time.

## **PFAS Discussion – All**

- No update at this time.

## **New business**

### Slow down, move over

- D. Worrall and R. Grimwood met with the Ministry of Transportation policy staff about slow down move over. D. Worrall talked about incidents in his area, which is a lot. They provided points on issues, and discussed enacting a specific speed reduction, but there are concerns that if someone slams on the breaks to meet a specific threshold, it could cause a wave of issues behind the car that breaks. They also noted that they need a clear description of what move over entails. Getting the message out is also important.
- D. Worrall met with MTO to talk about what they are looking for. They spoke about blocker vehicle deployment and improved MTO enforcement. Police are busy with the accident; they need enforcers to worry about slow down move over. There is some interest in this.

- The committee discussed how the message also needs to reach fire service members.
- The committee discussed issues that members have experienced with accidents and slow down move over and fines that people face being low for such damage.
- D. Worrall talked about an integration with Waze that shows what drivers do when approaching an accident.
- The committee discussed [guidance note 6-10](#) and how it might need an update and the OPFFA and OAFSC putting out a notice regarding the note and the importance of members being aware of the hazard.
- J. Mcbeth shared that there was a post that went out regarding slow down move over and they are keeping an eye on the analytics behind the post. Infographics and such will be pulled together to help people understand what is at stake. A campaign is in motion.

#### June 2026 meeting location

- North York: PSHSA to host now.

**ACTION:** K. Thomson to send a meeting calendar update to switch June and September locations and setup hotel information

#### 2025 committee guidance note analytics – D. Winter

- D. Winter went through the guidance note landing page website data with the committee and noted most visited pages.

**ACTION:** D. Winter to send the report to the committee for a closer look.

#### New committee member updates – D. Winter

- As the committee is already aware, there is a new AMO rep, A. Bulkiewicz.
- As for the vacant volunteer seat, it has been narrowed down to a top five. We will have a new member for the June meeting.
- D. Winter to follow up on L. Pedersen and J. Roberson’s appointment letters that they still haven’t received. A. Bulkiewicz also needs his.

#### Other new business

##### *Marine firefighting \*

- The committee talked about how there isn’t any guidance or training for marine firefighting on ships or at ports. Once you’re on a boat, it’s federal land.
- The committee discussed marine port fires and other issues with this type of firefighting. It’s similar to airports.
- The committee agreed it’s a good idea to have a guidance note on the topic.

**ACTION:** D. Worrall, L. Pedersen, J. Roberson, H. Baranik and J. Kirk to form a working group and create the guidance note.

#### Coroners’ inquest

- The committee discussed firefighter suicides and [memorial grants](#).
- D. Worrall updated everyone on what’s happening with the coroners’ inquest.

### Cancer claims

- A committee member spoke about submitting cancer claims and the need to act quickly on the claim. It can be an issue with volunteer services since a lot of volunteers don't know after they finish volunteering, that their illnesses may be related to the work they did when firefighting.
- The committee discussed the process of getting claims pushed through.
- The committee discussed the ways they promote awareness on cancer.
- The committee discussed the need to have on file what work a person does, the Ministry of Health should have this information.
- The committee discussed how they could reach previous volunteer firefighters who are unreachable.
- The committee discussed getting in touch with more HR reps in the fire services utilizing new committee member A. Bulkiewicz. He shared that it would be possible to get in front of some municipality groups and talk about issues.

### **2026 meetings:**

June 4 and 5 – North York (PSHSA)

September 28 and 29 – Springwater

December 3 and 4 – Ajax