

REPORT TO: THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**RE: H&S FOR PERIOD AUG - NOV 2011****Submitted by: Debbie Graham, UNDE H&S PORTFOLIO OFFICER**

DND National Policy Committee – meeting held 26 Oct 11 resulted in more progress being made than in the past. The new Employer Co-Chair is knowledgeable in H&S issues and believes in supporting the workforce and working to ensure provision of a safe and healthy workplace.

- **Workplace Committee Structure** – this long standing agenda item is making slow progress. Available lists were sent to each VP to work with their Locals to confirm the information and advise me of any issues, corrections, additions or amendments.
- **Work Refusals** – it is the responsibility of the Unit to ensure all work refusals are being reported to the National Policy Committee. Interestingly enough, for the first time ever, we were presented an example from Valcartier regarding potable water which was in actually resolved before it went to a work stoppage.
- **Chemical Sensitivity** – this item was again discussed at length with still no success in moving toward a Policy. Research for other departmental policies proved unsuccessful so DND is hesitant in moving forward at this time. In the interim, workplace chemical sensitivity issues are dealt with on a one on one basis with Duty to Accommodate as an option to correct the problem.
- **Violence in the Workplace** – policy is still in draft format based on feedback provided during this meeting as well as expected feedback from the Labour Reps to Sister Mary Chamberlain (Committee Rep). CANFORGEN was finally sent directing that the DND Harassment Policy cannot be used to deal with complaints of violence in the workplace filed under the Canada Labour Code Part II Regulation XX.
- **Interdepartmental Standing Offer for Ergonomic Services** –due to the cessation of Health Canada Ergonomic Services in October 2009, a Committee has been formed to review the viability of creating a standing offer that will enable departments to address ergonomic needs.

PSAC National H&S Forum – was held 22 – 23 Nov 11 where members serving on National Policy Committee members came together to share best practices, identify challenges and make recommendations to the NBoD OSH Standing Committee. Guest speakers provided information on Governance and Trends in H&S Jurisprudence and How to Secure Effective Enforcement. Workshops covered functionality of our H&S Committees, H&S Training Requirements and Emerging issues (mental health, harassment and violence in the workplace). An open mike panel on the “Way Ahead” wrapped up the Forum. This well attended Forum demonstrated that all Components experience difficulty with departments regarding the application of Canada Labour Code Part II Section 135 and 135.1 and are looking for direction to address this concern.

Component Issues – there are a number of items that are being dealt with regarding H&S.

- **Minutes of Local Workplace H&S Committees** - some Locals have been providing copies of their minutes while more have not. The minutes received have been reviewed with comments provided back to seek further information or to provide direction however a number of my emails have not received a response. Benefits of receiving minutes include providing a review to ensure committee makeup and selection of representatives is according to the code, provide feedback on Terms of Reference and to assist in moving forward items that have not been resolved at the Local level.
- **Chemical Sensitivity** – members are frustrated by the lack of progress in developing a departmental policy. Individual cases currently exist and are being dealt with in isolation prevents the ability to capture the full impact this issue has on the workplace and the members.
- **H&S Conference** – organizing UNDE National H&S Conference is underway. Final agenda items, dates and location will be finalized soon. More to follow.