

**Health and Safety Report: James Potts/Gérald Grenon**

The National Health and Safety Policy Committee (NHSPC) held a hybrid meeting on June 20th, 2023. The next meeting is scheduled for September 2023, and will again be offered in a hybrid format.

New Management Co-Chair: MGen Conrad J.J. Mialkowski.

The Cannabis file was put on hold during the pandemic which delayed further drafting of a potential impairment DAOD and revisions to DAOD 2007-2. Composed of 80 plus members (including several employee representatives) and chaired by the Occupational Health and Safety Secretary, the Working Group on Cannabis Use is being reinstated virtually and will have the continue the review process for DAOD 2007-2 and a potential Impairment Directive.

The Working Group (WG) on Committees and Councils was stood up to look at the issue regarding the number of safety committees within DND and in respect of the CAF. As such, the WG sought to review the governance structure and how information flows all the way up to the NHSPC and also looked at some of the issues around how to streamline the approach to safety committees and ensure that it was efficient and effective. The basis of the 5 recommendations is not simply catered towards committees and councils in general, but rather looks at how the overall process within the department can be improved to ensure that occupational health and safety matters are addressed properly.

There were 2 work refusals during this period.

* CArmy in GS 2 Div CA, Valcartier:
  + Refusal occurred on January 30, 2023.
  + An employee refused to perform a task of filling ABC powder fire extinguishers.
  + A safety procedure was executed.
  + No further updates/information available on this case at this time.
* MPC in CFB Borden.
  + Refusal occurred on January 15, 2023.
  + 17 FOS-02 employees refused to work in the dish washing area of the Curtis Kitchen at CFB Borden due to possible mold in the ventilation system.
  + The employees and employer agreed that there was a danger and corrective actions were taken.
  + 13 February 2023: The kitchen was fully cleaned, the mold in the kitchen vents was tested and the tiles in the ceiling were replaced. The results of the testing showed that the mold found was not dangerous and did not pose a health risk. Nonetheless, minor repairs were still necessary.
  + 28 February 2023: The Curtiss Kitchen Staff who submitted their Refusal to Work are satisfied that their concerns have been addressed. This Refusal to Work is considered resolved by the unit (Personnel Support Services (PSS)) at the lowest level possible.

Neither work refusal resulted in any lost days of work.

James is now a member of the Working Group on the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. This committee will focus on the development of the Terms of Reference and the timing of the meetings, determine priorities and expected outcomes, reconnect with the DND/CAF Mental Health Champions – the DM, the VCDS and the Employee Representative, request the Deputy Heads (DM and CDS) re-sign the Mental Health Pledge for the Defence Team, review the National Standard Hazard Analysis Tool, address results of Department well-being surveys and determine which of the 13 psycho-social factors will need to be addressed – immediately, in the mid-term (6 to 12 months) and in the long-term (12 months+) and an action plan will be developed, and work with ADM(HR-Civ), Director General Workplace Management (DGWM), Director Total Health Management (DTHM) to develop more awareness tools such as those that had been developed under the “Let’s Talk Workplace Wellness” for the 13 psycho-social factors. This Working Group will report to the NHSPC on a quarterly basis and/or secretarially.

The Working Group on Harassment and Violence Prevention in the Workplace (WHVP) is currently undertaking the following activities:

a) The WHVP Policy manual and DAOD 5014-0 have been published.

b) There is now a toolkit for the employer, which has the proposed language for employers when meeting a PP and the RP.

c) In collaboration with the WG an addendum to the WHVP training for DND specific program elements has been created (English version available on NHSPC SharePoint site, French currently in translation).

d) In Collaboration with the WG the WHVP assessment guide has been updated (English version available on NHSPC SharePoint site, French currently in translation).

e) An updated dashboard will soon be available where Occurrence data will be available by L2 (picture available on NHSPC SharePoint site).

f) A WG has been stood up to look at the alignment of the CAF harassment process and the WHVP program. The WG is chaired by Robin MacKay (CPCC DGCSS) and its members consist of stakeholders from various L1s and programs.

There remain 6 legacy Workplace Harassment and Violence complaints. Clarification is being sought from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) on acceptable timelines for resolving these issues.

UNDE is likely to increase its presence on the NHSPC from 3 to 4 members. There is also the possibility that Management reduce its presence in order to properly balance the membership.

Language of work for the committee was discussed. Management discussed this issue with the Official Language Coordinator. Draft documents that may undergo several updates and/or revisions can be completed in one official language. More mature documents ready for publication or distribution will be provided in both official languages. Beyond the costs of translating each draft document that is updated or revised, it impacts the timeliness in which we can provide documents to members. Currently, the language of work for the NHSPC is English. James expressed his concern that some members of the committee will not be able to participate fully if the documents and meetings are exclusively in English. He urged the Management Co-Chair to do better.

It was announced on 10 May 2023 that free menstrual products would be available in all federal jurisdictions by mid-December 2023. ADM(IE) clarified that this initiative is already in motion and ADM(IE) will be adopting a top down and bottom-up approach at the same time to ensure coordination and provision of services.

Return to the workplace and hotelling raises issues of sanitation, ergonomics, etc. This is primarily an NCR issue. The NHSPC Secretary is to organize a meeting with subject matter experts to discuss the issue of hotelling stations cleanliness. The outcomes of this meeting are to be shared with NHSPC members.

The General Safety Program is to offer training on 1) the Roles and Responsibilities of the National Health and Safety Policy Committee and 2) the Internal Complaint Resolution Process to all committee members. Ad-Hoc Training Sessions will be scheduled and offered on a voluntary basis to provide training for all those who wish to participate.

The Disability Management Consultation Committee was to meet the day prior to the NHSPC but that meeting has been rescheduled to September due to the unavailability of several members.

Training statistics are now available on the Safety Intranet. Reports can be pulled for the organization as a whole, all the way down to a single unit.

James Potts participated in the Safety Program Development and Evaluation Technique (SPDET) Review Working Group June 4-8, 2023, at NDHQ Carling Campus. This tool has not been updated since 2001 and it is wildly out of date. Sitting on this committee with various L0 and L1 experts made it clear that there are many shortcomings that will need to be addressed with regards to how safety programs are being evaluated.

Respectfully submitted,

James Potts and Gérald Grenon

**Return to Work Report**

James Potts is the Co-Chair and Gérald Grenon is a member of the Disability Management Consultation Committee (formerly the Return-to-Work Committee). This committee is to meet 2 times per year. There was a meeting scheduled for June 19th, 2023, but that meeting was postponed to September 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

James Potts