

# OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE LIMIT REVIEW COMMITTEE

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 1. PURPOSE

The role of the Occupational Exposure Limit Committee (“Committee”) is to provide an ongoing review of occupational exposure limits provided for in policy and proposed Threshold Limit Values (“TLVs”) as identified by the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (“ACGIH”).

### 2. STRUCTURE

The Committee shall be a standing committee of the Policy and Regulation Development Bureau (“Bureau”) and shall be chaired by the Director General or his/her designate (“Chair”).

The Committee shall be comprised of 6 staff members, including the Chair.

Within the Bureau, the Research Analyst – Regulation Review, will provide technical support to the Committee.

Meetings of the Committee shall be at the call of the Chair.

Minutes shall be kept of all meetings of the Committee and, after being signed by the Chair, shall be retained by the Bureau.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee shall provide advice on the need for new or modified exposure limits. Specifically, the Committee shall:

- Review proposed TLVs, as identified by the ACGIH through its TLV development process, in order to determine whether they are appropriate for adoption in British Columbia.
- Review those occupational exposure limits that have been adopted through Workers’ Compensation Board (“WCB”) policy as exceptions to the ACGIH TLVs to determine whether they continue to be appropriate or whether they should be removed or amended.
- Where required due to the risk to worker health and safety, recommend an occupational exposure limit for hazardous chemical substances that are not currently regulated (i.e., no ACGIH TLV or exposure limit in policy).

- For excluded substances provided for in policy, ensure corresponding ACGIH and International Agency for Research on Cancer (“IARC”) designations, provided for in section 5.57 of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, are current.

When developing recommendations on new TLVs or excluded exposure limits provided for in policy, the Committee shall consider the following factors:

- current scientific knowledge regarding the health effects of exposure;
- the working population who may be at risk;
- ability of the WCB to enforce the TLV or exposure limit; and,
- ability of affected industries to achieve the TLV or exposure limit.

Where considered appropriate and necessary, the Committee may refer a chemical substance under consideration to an external expert(s) for an independent review of the health effects information and/or the economic implications associated with implementation.

For each chemical substance under review, the Committee shall, whenever possible, collect and consider the following information:

- ACGIH and IARC supporting documentation, and other available scientific literature on the substance (including reported human health effects or animal studies);
- chemical and physical properties of the substance;
- where and how the substance is used or produced (e.g., type of industry, method of manufacturing, process type, and whether it is a primary, secondary or by-product);
- sources of exposure to workers, route(s) of exposure (e.g., inhalation, dermal, or ingestion), and levels of exposure where available;
- an estimate or survey of how many workers in the province are potentially exposed to the substance;
- exposure limits adopted in other relevant jurisdictions and/or exposure limits recommended by other relevant academic agencies;
- measurement techniques and practicability; and,
- any other relevant information.

#### **4. PRIORITY RANKING**

Proposed new ACGIH TLVs and occupational exposure limits provided for in policy shall be identified for review on an annual basis. In order to establish priority for a given year, the Committee shall consider the following factors:

- prevalence of exposure (including level of use, number of workers exposed, and existing controls);
- severity of potential adverse health effects;
- availability of new health information;
- substances identified as problematic by the Prevention Division and/or stakeholders; and,
- substances with lower exposure limits adopted in other relevant jurisdictions and/or exposure limits recommended by other relevant academic agencies.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

The Committee may consult with stakeholders in the community, experts in the field of occupational hygiene and health, and any other persons whom the Committee considers could assist in carrying out its mandate.

The proposed recommendations of the Committee shall be subject to a formal consultation process before being presented to the Board of Directors (“BOD”) for decision. In this regard, the Bureau shall facilitate a “public hearing” on the Committee’s recommendations. Where feasible, this consultation process may be aligned with the annual public hearing undertaken as part of the ongoing regulation review process.

The Bureau shall report to the BOD on the results of the formal consultation. The Committee shall review and consider the results of the stakeholder consultation prior to finalizing its recommendations for the BOD’s consideration.

#### **6. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Chair of the Committee shall, when appropriate, include in the Bureau’s monthly report to the BOD, updates on the Committee’s plans, accomplishments and work in progress.

To ensure transparency, documentation developed in support of the Committee’s recommendations will be made publicly available.