

TO: All MUNFA Members

FROM: The MUNFA Executive Committee

DATE: April 18, 2011

SUBJECT: Restructuring Occupational Health and Safety Committees at Memorial University

Please see the attached memo and information which serves as an update of the originally distributed memo on the current status of the process of Restructuring Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committees at Memorial University.

Summary of Memo:

- New OHS legislation mandates a workplace oriented (building/worksite focused) OHS committee structure.
- A 3 tier committee system has been organized to help implement this process. MUNFA remains committed to continued involvement for the benefit of improved health and safety in our workplace.
- Employee groups and Memorial still need representatives in a number of buildings across campus.
- This is an opportunity to volunteer and add voices as MUNFA members to be part of the new OHS structure at Memorial. Serving on such committees fulfills academic service as described in Clause 3.01(c) of the Collective Agreement.

Restructuring Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committees at Memorial University:

Memorial University is now actively restructuring its legislated OHS Committees to be more building/worksite focused. These Committees are central to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment.

In every workplace, all employees are expected to be familiar with and committed to health and safety and governing protocols, both provincial and federal. At Memorial University, there are many buildings, different campuses and fieldwork locations with a mobile workforce and student population. MUN's Department of Health and Safety (H&S) has been setting up a number of building based H&S Committees which will serve as the H&S Committees that will satisfy Provincial H&S legislation.

Current legislation calls for a more workplace oriented OHS structure rather than one based on employee groups. In order to meet this requirement, MUN Department of H&S has recently been trying to establish committees for each building, on each campus, where there are more than 10 employees. This means that the number of legislated joint committees at Memorial will be around 29, encompassing all groups in each building/worksite. For those worksites with less than 10 employees, a worker health and safety representative will be required.

Most universities in Canada have moved to a worksite focus. Employee groups (MUNFA, NAPE, CUPE, LUMUN, TAUMUN) have done much over the past several years to engage University Officials and have begun the important work of restructuring existing committees to:

- develop an enhanced safety culture at the university,
- facilitate communication between the various groups, and
- meet the legislative requirements.

To restructure OHS Committees at Memorial, a Tier 1 Committee has been organized (Central Health and Safety Committee) and has been very active in implementing these changes in the restructuring. A three tier system has been implemented:

One system, three tiers

The university's new OHS system, one finally approved by Government Services, has three tiers:

Tier 1 – is a university-wide committee designed to provide overall direction and support, and includes representatives from all the employee groups and senior administration. This committee is in place, has been very active and is called the Central Health and Safety Committee (CHSC). Your MUNFA Representatives on the CHSC are Robert Gendron, MUNFA Executive Committee Representative and George Jenner, MUN-MUNFA JOHSC Representative.

Tier 2 – is made up of union-based joint committees, which have remained in place as they previously existed. Your MUNFA Representatives on the MUN-MUNFA JOHSC Committee (St. John's) are: George Jenner, Barbara Neis and Sevtap Sevas. Corner Brook: Kent Jones, Don-Roger Parkinson and Paul Grant.

Tier 3 - the worksite or building committees are considered the Workplace OHS Committees as required under provincial legislation. Many buildings are as of yet without a complete OHS Committee and some do not have MUNFA representation.

Your help is needed

The Central Health and Safety Committee (Tier 1) is working together with MUN's Department of H&S to help organize and establish the site based of OHS at Memorial.

In order to effect these changes, employee groups and Memorial will need representatives to attend training and participate in OHS Committees for each building on each campus. Training is expected to take 2-3 days. In some instances this will require modifications to existing OHS Committees, while in others, building committees will need to be created.

The UHSC encourages you to volunteer to be a member of one of these committees. If interested, please contact your dean/director and/or union. You should also forward your name to the Department of H&S at health.safety@mun.ca.