

The Prevention Council of Ontario

November 15, 2013

In December 2010, an Expert Advisory Panel on Occupational Health and Safety released its final report after a comprehensive review of Ontario's workplace health and safety system.

On June 1, 2011, Bill 160, the [Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011](#), received Royal Assent, establishing the legislative framework enabling the Ministry of Labour to implement many of the report's key recommendations.

Chief Prevention Officer

[George Gritziotis](#) is Ontario's first Chief Prevention Officer (CPO) and Associate Deputy Minister.

As CPO, he is responsible for:

- establishing a provincial occupational health and safety strategy
- providing the minister each year with a report on the performance of Ontario's occupational health and safety system
- promoting the alignment of prevention activities across all workplace health and safety system partners
- providing advice on preventing occupational injuries and illnesses
- advising on proposed changes for the funding and delivery of prevention services
- working with Ontario's Health and Safety Associations (HSAs) to establish effective delivery of prevention programs and services
- monitoring the HSAs' compliance with standards set by the minister.

He also has the authority to set standards for health and safety training.

Expert Advisory Panel

In January 2010, Tony Dean was appointed as chair of an expert advisory panel to lead a review of Ontario's occupational health and safety enforcement and prevention system. The panel included three members each from labour, employers and academia.

The [panel's consensus report](#) — released in December 2010 — highlighted the need for:

- enhanced training, including mandatory basic awareness information for workers and frontline supervisors, training for high-hazard work, and training for health and safety representatives
- greater access to health and safety resources and support
- improved protections for workers against employer reprisals for raising health and safety concerns
- a new Occupational Health and Safety system structure to create more effective prevention programs that are aligned with enforcement efforts.

Occupational Health and Safety Statute Law Amendment Act, 2011 (Bill 160)

The panel recommendations led to the most significant changes in 30 years to Ontario's system for preventing work-related injury and illness. A series of new amendments to the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) and [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997](#) has established the Ministry of Labour as the lead for injury and illness prevention in Ontario, transferring responsibility from the Workplace Safety Insurance Board and giving the minister the powers to:

- appoint a Chief Prevention Officer to coordinate and align the prevention system
- create a new Prevention Council, with representatives from labour, employers, and safety experts, to advise the CPO and the Minister of Labour
- establish standards for the province's six health and safety associations; workplace health and safety education and training; and promotion of workplace safety.

The Prevention Council

The Prevention Council advises the Minister of Labour and the Chief Prevention Officer on a wide range of occupational health and safety issues, including:

- prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses
- development of the provincial occupational health and safety strategy, and
- any significant proposed changes to funding and delivery of services under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#).

Ontario's Health and Safety System Partners

Ontario's occupational health and safety system is comprised of the Ministry of Labour, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, and six health and safety associations.

- [Workers Health & Safety Centre](#) is a designated occupational health and safety training centre for workers.
- [Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers](#) provides comprehensive occupational health services and information.
- [Workplace Safety & Prevention Services](#); [Infrastructure Health & Safety Association](#); [Public Services Health & Safety Association](#), and [Workplace Safety North](#) all offer sector-specific support to employers.

Improvements to Ontario's Workplace Health and Safety System

- A permanent Prevention Council, with representation from business and labour and other health and safety experts, is in place to provide advice to the Chief Prevention Officer and the Minister of Labour.
- Responsibility for funding and monitoring the province's health and safety associations has been transferred from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to the Ministry of Labour so that system prevention activities can be better coordinated.
- To support evidence-informed workplace practices, the MOL has established the Occupational Health and Safety Research Program and an occupational health and safety research advisory panel (OHSRAP). The first call for research proposals under the MOL mandate was launched in September 2013.
- Two task groups have been established to study and advise the Chief Prevention Officer and Prevention Council on the issues particular to vulnerable workers and to small business.
- A poster explaining workplace parties' basic rights and responsibilities under the OHSA is now available in 19 languages. Display of the poster at worksites became mandatory on October 1, 2012.
- The ministry provides a range of free awareness materials including a health and safety awareness workbook for workers and another for supervisors, and an employer guide for each of these. Additional resources will be released this fall.
- Training resources titled "Worker Health and Safety Awareness in 4 Steps" and "Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness in 5 Steps" and their associated employer training guides are available now. These workbooks are focused on the health and safety rights and responsibilities of workers, supervisors and employers and are a general introduction to workplace health and safety.
 - The workbooks and associated employer guides are available for download on the MOL website in English, French, and 7 other languages (Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Hindi, Punjabi, Portuguese, Spanish and Urdu). The workbooks are AODA compliant and free of charge.