

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SAFETY TOPIC

This safety topic is mandatory for **SUPERVISORS ONLY**, or any person whose role in the workplace meets the definition of a supervisor under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which is *“a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker”*.

Any person whose role does not meet the definition of a supervisor does **NOT** need to complete this supplemental safety topic.

Beginning July 1, 2014, employers in Ontario must ensure that all of their workers and supervisors complete a basic occupational health and safety awareness training program that meets the new regulatory requirements under Ontario Regulation 297/13, “The Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training Regulation” (O.Reg. 297/13).

In the Sarnia region, all workers and supervisors who work on site at local plants must take the *Basic Safety Orientation (BSO Plus)*. The *BSO Plus* program has been revised, effective January 1, 2014, to meet the sections of the new regulation pertaining to worker awareness training. Therefore, this supplemental safety topic covers the additional information required specifically for supervisors.

### If you are a supervisor and you completed BSO Plus training...

#### ...BEFORE Dec 31, 2013,

Then you need to complete these safety topics:

1. BSO Plus / O. Reg. 297 Supplement **for Supervisors** (MAY 2014)

#### **AND**

2. BSO Plus / O. Reg. 297 Supplement (FEB 2014)

#### ...AFTER Jan 1, 2014,

Then you need to complete only this safety topic:

1. BSO Plus / O. Reg. 297 Supplement **for Supervisors** (MAY 2014)

Records of completion must be uploaded into the IEC database.

Completion and documentation of the relevant supplemental safety topic(s) and will ensure supervisors' training is up-to-date and that employers are compliant with the new regulation.

## BSO PLUS / O. REG. 297 SUPPLEMENT FOR SUPERVISORS

### What is this about?

On November 15, 2013, the Ministry of Labour (MOL) released the Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training Regulation (O. Reg. 297/13). This new regulation requires all workers and supervisors to complete awareness training programs and also defines the minimum requirements for the content of these training programs. This regulation will come into force July 1, 2014.

Supervisors and workers who previously completed a worker training program, either with their current or a former employer, do not have to take the training again if they can:

1. Provide proof that they completed the training, and
2. Their current employer is able to verify that the training program covered the content required by the regulation.

The IEC's *Basic Safety Orientation (BSO Plus)*, which is mandatory for contractors working on site at local plants, was revised as of January 2014 to cover all regulatory requirements for worker awareness training. The revised *BSO Plus* also covers 4 out of the 6 requirements for supervisor awareness training. However, in order to fully meet the regulatory requirements for supervisor awareness training, specifically items 5 and 6 in subsection 2.(3), supervisors must also complete this supplemental safety topic.

### What the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* says about supervisors:

A supervisor is a person who “has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker”. Because of the importance of your role, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) states that your employer must appoint a “competent person” [OHSA, s. 1.(1)] as a supervisor so that he or she can fulfill their legal duties:

#### Competent Person

Has the knowledge, training & experience that qualifies them to organize the work and its performance.

Is familiar with the OHSA and regulations that apply to the work.

Has knowledge of any potential or actual danger in their workplace.

#### Duties of a Supervisor [OHSA, s. 27. (1)(2)]

- Telling workers about hazards and dangers and responding to their concerns
- Showing workers how to work safely and making sure they follow the law, and the workplace health and safety policies and procedures
- Making sure workers wear and use the right protective equipment
- Doing everything reasonable under the circumstances to protect workers from getting sick or injured at work

Source: MOL, *Supervisor Health and Safety Awareness in 5 Steps*

## Hazard management in the workplace:

You learned how to recognize workplace health and safety hazards in the *BSO Plus* course. However, when you consider your duties as a supervisor under the OHSA, it makes sense that you need to know more than just how to recognize them. You also need to know how to assess the risk associated with workplace hazards, how to control them, and how to evaluate their effectiveness. The sequence of steps used to effectively manage workplace hazards can best be remembered by the acronym *RACE*.

The following information is adapted from the MOL's document, "*Supervisor Awareness in 5 Steps*".

**RECOGNIZE** where there are potential hazards in your workplace by practicing these actions:

- Observe the work while it's going on
- Take part in workplace inspections
- Talk to your workers about their work; ask them about any concerns
- Review workplace reports such as inspection reports, incident reports, safety alerts, etc.

**ASSESS** how likely it is that someone could be exposed to a hazard, and what the consequences would be if that were to happen. Ask yourself these questions:

- How could someone get hurt or sick doing this work?
- What's the worst that could happen if someone were exposed to this hazard?
- How does this hazard compare to the Act and regulations, standards, and guidelines?

**CONTROL** the hazards by eliminating them or, if that's not possible, look for ways to mitigate the hazards. Sometimes, more than one method may be necessary to control the hazard to within acceptable limits. Mitigation options include:

- Substitution: replacing a hazardous chemical, process or activity with a less hazardous one
- Engineering controls: enclosures, ventilation systems, safety pressure valves, lockout systems
- Administrative controls: procedures and work practices related to job rotation, scheduling of hazardous work, education & training, housekeeping, and hygiene facilities
- Personal Protective Equipment: PPE is the last level of protection for a worker, and its use should be considered more as a precaution than as a control. **\*\*NOTE** that certain occupational hazards require the use of specific PPE by law, and that workers must also wear/use all PPE required by the employer.

**EVALUATE** how well the controls are working:

- Talk about the work with the workers who report to you
- Watch them perform the work after any changes have been implemented
- Listen to the workers and look for ways to improve health and safety

Remember that one of your responsibilities is to tell your workers about the hazards in the workplace and respond to their concerns. If you find a hazard, or are advised about one, it's up to you to do something about it. If you are unable to resolve it yourself, talk to your employer. The bottom line is to take every reasonable precaution under the circumstances to protect workers.

## Keeping yourself informed:

You are not on your own when it comes to health and safety in your workplace. You have a wealth of information available to you from both internal and external sources. Finding out about all the potential hazards in your workplace and knowing the legislation, standards, and policies that apply to your workplace will help you plan and organize the work so that it can be done safely.



The key sources of external information are covered in detail in the IEC's *Basic Safety Orientation Plus* course as well as in the Safety Topic for February 2014. Listed here are internal sources of information that can help you fulfill your duties as a supervisor.

## Internal Sources of Information:

Workplace Health and Safety (H & S) program and procedures	The employer's H & S Program focuses on the specific hazards of your workplace. The procedures created to deal with those hazards may give you the detailed information you need to plan and organize work.
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)	MSDS provide information about specific chemical hazards, including their safe handling and storage. Your employer is required to make these available in your workplace.
Inspection / incident reports	Workplace H & S reports can be a great source of information for identifying potential problem areas. They may also include recommendations as well as any interim solutions implemented at the time.
Equipment / operator manuals	Operator manuals often include useful information related to health and safety. If your employer doesn't have a manual on hand, you can always contact the manufacturer for a copy.
Joint Health & Safety Committee or Health & Safety Rep	The JHSC or H & S rep conducts monthly inspections and makes recommendations to the employer for the improvement of health and safety in the workplace. Get to know your committee members or rep; talking to them can provide you with valuable health and safety information.
Other supervisors	Build a partnership with your peers and learn from each other. It's possible another supervisor has run into a similar issue in the past and may be able to offer some good advice on how to deal with it.

The OHSA supports a collaborative approach to health and safety in the workplace. Your part in this approach means putting your knowledge, training and experience into action. If you don't have all the information you need to perform your legal obligations, it's important you talk to your employer to get what you need. You're the supervisor; show your commitment to health and safety and set the example for the people you supervise.