Minutes of the Operating Engineers Advisory Council ((OEAC) meeting of the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) held in Boardroom 1434, 14th Floor, Centre Tower, 3300 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario at 09:30 a.m. on the 21st day of November, 2012.


In attendance: Mike Adams, Director BPV/OE (all except item 15), Michael Beard, Vice President of Operations (all except item 15), John Coulter, Manager and Chief Officer (all except item 16), Maileen Gan, Advisor, Government Relations (all except items 15), Judy Harrison, Project Coordinator (item 13), Maram Khalif, Council Coordinator (all except item 15), Wilson Lee, Director Stakeholder Relations (item 7), Srikanth Mangalam, Director, Public Safety Risk (item 9), David Scriven, Interim President and CEO (all items except 15), Richard Smart, Chief Financial Officer (item 7), & Supraja Sridharan, Public Safety Risk Analyst (item 9).

Guests: Colleen Sonnenberg, Manager, Technical Safety Unit, Ministry of Consumer Services (MCS) (all items except 15) and Sarah Jeffery-Hampton, Senior Policy & Program Analyst, MCS, (all except item 15).

1. Constitution of Meeting

C. Andrews, Chair, welcomed council members and called the meeting to order. The Chair introduced the new members to the council: G. Black, K. Peddle and E. DiCredico.

2. Approval of Agenda

Council members approved the November 21, 2012 meeting agenda, as presented.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Council members approved the minutes of the March 1, 2012 Operating Engineers Advisory Council meeting as presented.

4. Review Action Items from Last Meeting

C. Andrews reviewed the action items with council members noting pending items 5, 12, & 13 will be discussed as shown on the agenda under priority safety issues. The Chair also noted that item 4 on the pending action items be considered completed.

S. Jeffrey-Hampton provided an update on item 7 regarding skills shortage of other professions and what steps have been taken by the Provincial Government. She highlighted steps taken to address the Physician shortage of Ontario by changing the human resources model from one based on supply based to one based on population health needs. She also highlighted the changes made by the Ministry of Citizenship to make it easier for skilled trade people to immigrate to Canada and work in their trade. She further noted that by working with educational institutions to expand training, and seeking opportunities for support from industry stakeholders, TSSA was aligned with the direction taken by other ministries.
In regards to item 15 on the pending action items, J. Coulter informed council that the national standardizing initiative of all provinces and territories power plants, which was discussed at the last Standardization of Power Engineer Examination Committee (SOPEEC) meeting, was still in progress. He noted that they would continue meeting during the week of November 26th in, P.E.I.

M. Adams added that the National Public Safety Advisory Committee (NPSAC) and Association of Chief Inspectors (ACI) had discussed the same issues including standardizing boiler ratings in their last meeting. He noted that he would share the draft presentation from that meeting with the council for further information. J. Coulter cautioned that this information was only in the initial development stage and should not be shared beyond the council members. He reiterated that this matter was ongoing and will remain open on the pending action items until a conclusion was reached.

ACTION: M. Adams will share the draft presentation from NPSAC and ACI meeting with the council for further information around standardizing regulations for boiler ratings and power engineers class by facility across Canada.

5. Council Chair’s Report

As part of the advanced materials for this meeting, members received the Chair’s report to the President and CEO. This report was treated as read.

6. TSSA President & CEO’s Report

As part of the advanced materials for this meeting, members received a written report from the Interim President and CEO regarding TSSA’s key activities over the last quarter. This report was treated as read.

D. Scriven provided a high-level update of the status of a significant elevator incident involving one fatality which occurred in Thunder Bay in early October 2012.

D. Scriven further provided a brief overview of the status of a potential issue related to the Ontario College of Trades regarding concerns of potential duplication of licensing responsibilities, especially in the Fuels Program. He noted this was an ongoing issue and further updates will be provided when they become available.

7. Fee Review Framework and Process Update

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation that forms part of the record of the meeting, R. Smart presented an overview of the notices regarding changes to the fee schedules and communication timelines.

He highlighted the communication steps that were taken and completed to date and the progress of the implementation phase. He noted that a reminder email will be sent to all stakeholders three months prior to the effective date of May 1, 2013.

Council acknowledged appreciation for TSSA’s work in the fee review and framework process.

8. Ministry of Consumer Services (MCS)
C. Sonnenberg provided an overview of the status on the Ministry’s consideration of TSSA and council’s proposed draft Operating Engineers’ regulation that had been forwarded to the ministry for review some time ago.

She further noted that the MCS has been quite active in attending all OEAC meetings and Risk Reduction Group meetings in order to be fully engaged within the program which was benefiting the ministry relative to the proposed draft regulations process.

A high level discussion ensued around the challenges in getting government support for the original proposed draft and alternative approaches to that taken to date. In particular, MCS and TSSA agreed to consider an approach that would significantly reduce the amount of detail provided in the regulation, consistent with government policies to reduce regulatory burden.

Next steps were identified as the ministry to work in partnership with TSSA to prepare all internal briefing material identified.

9. Report on Operating Engineers safety compliance

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation that forms part of the record of the meeting, S. Mangalam presented the Operating Engineers Program occurrences and periodic inspections as it pertains to the Annual Public Safety Performance Report (ASPR). S. Mangalam also introduced a member of Public Safety Department, S. Sridharan.

S. Mangalam provided a high level update on two incidents reports involving schools and a refrigeration plant in 2011/2012. He noted there were no health impacts. He also provided a high-level update on Operating Engineers Periodic Inspections from 2004/2005 to 2011/2012 in which an increasing trend in non-compliance was observed.

ACTION: Operating Engineers Safety Compliance presentation will be sent to council.

10. Thermal Oil Systems RRG

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation that forms part of the record of the meeting, C. Andrews reported that the Thermal Oil Risk Reduction Group (RRG) has conducted a risk analysis process and were now ready to make a recommendation to the council.

C. Andrews introduced the background that warranted this RRG. He noted that some of the industry had safety concerns and felt regulatory oversight was required for thermal oil systems. After a deliberate analysis and review of data in Ontario, the RRG members noted there were no indications of catastrophic system failures in Ontario. They recommended, to council that inclusion of the thermal oil systems in the Operating Engineers Regulation or other regulation not be considered at this time. However, they recommended continued monitoring of facilities and if data was found to indicate an increase in the frequency or severity of incidents, then this recommendation should be revisited.

Council discussed all the steps taken in finding existing data in Ontario and other jurisdictions. It was noted that thermal oil is regulated in Alberta and British Columbia; however, our contacts in those jurisdictions could not obtain the information that triggered the inclusion and did not have any meaningful data related to Thermal Oil incidents. British Columbia’s regulations were recently revised to allow plants with registered control systems to be exempted from staffing with qualified operators (Directive D-B6
1). Council also noted that industry preferred strong supporting evidence for any inclusions in the regulations.

Further discussion ensued regarding data in Ontario and checking if any collaboration were possible with other agencies such as Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) for sharing information or reports. Due to privacy concerns, this was not possible during the investigation.

C. Andrews acknowledged the members of the RRG and their efforts: M. Menheere and a former member, Bengt Sormon.

ACTION: C. Sonnenberg to follow up on Ministry of Labour, WSIB and other pertaining ministries on finding data of any incident related to thermal oil systems in Ontario and share it with council at the next meeting.

11. Steam Turbine Governor RRG

R. Philip reported that the steam turbine trip survey relative to types of turbines and overspeed testing frequency was sent to manufactures and shared its preliminary findings. He noted that this matter was still evolving. A further discussion ensued on the purpose of this RRG. There were discrepancies in information received from manufactures and owners in regards to the testing frequencies and as a result this RRG was created to determine the best practice and developing ways to standardize steam Turbine overspeed testing frequency.

12. Future of Power Engineers RRG

R. Brady provided an update of the work of the Future of Power Engineers RRG. He noted the challenges facing this RRG in moving forward. He reported to council that the RRG had challenges collecting data needed to develop strategies from approved providers due to lack of established connection between RRG members and training providers. He also advised ways TSSA may be able to assist the RRG to reach out to high school students into attracting them to the Power Engineering profession.

R. Brady requested on-going administration support from TSSA. He acknowledged the support from J. Coulter to date and emphasized the need to have more support in engaging institutions providing training, and soliciting industry support for investing into this initiative.

A discussion followed around ways to engage existing and future training colleges and universities in Ontario and ways to have the industry support this initiative for its own benefits. Further discussion focused on the upcoming shortage of certified Power Engineers in the future demographic changes forecasted for Ontario over the next few years. Council discussed ways to support and improve high school curriculums that would prepare students for the academic requirement for colleges/universities. A further discussion ensued around interprovincial disadvantages for Power Engineers.

A further discussion ensued around tracking graduated engineers and getting data to find out how they may be employed and how they may have moved up in the certification process. It was noted that industries’ interest on hiring only second class certification level holders hindered the long term prospects of Power Engineers in Ontario.

There were many issues surrounding the skills shortage RRG including industry impact, other jurisdictions, funds and sustainability of business without sufficient staffing and engaging training providers.
R. Klopf also noted that moving forward; it would be beneficial for this RRG to have an updated version of training and certification process statistics, similar to what had been previously provided.

ACTION: Two new members will join the Future of Power Engineers RRG: G. Black and E. DiCredico.

ACTION: A follow up meeting with members of the RRG, the Council Chair and TSSA representatives will be scheduled to discuss the issues surrounding this RRG and next steps.

ACTION: J. Coulter to provide an updated version of the training and certification process statistics that was drafted in the past to assist the Future of Power Engineers RRG.

13. Review membership Matrix and Membership

Council agreed to remove from the membership matrix a requirement for a member from the refrigeration sector. Council acknowledged that they will be able to add this sector if the need arises in the future. However, at this point, there was no need to for specific representation from this sector. As a result, with the three new members who joined the council today, the council is at full capacity.

ACTION: Changes will be made to the Operating Engineers Advisory Council matrix to remove refrigeration sector.


M. Beard introduced this item and its background. He reiterated that this item will remain on the agenda as a standing item to collect information that may be tabled for future agenda items. J. Harrison presented the findings from council at the last meeting and their progress to date. There were no new trends shared at this meeting; however, it was noted that thermal oil systems discussion was concluded. It was reiterated that collecting industry trends and issues would also be utilized for strategic planning and business as usual.

15. Questions and Other Business

R. Klopf noted that he shared documents initiated by the Institute of Power Engineers (IPE), Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) and St. Lawrence College (SLC) with the council previously. He noted that the preceding organizations developed a strategy around the skills and labour market development of Power Engineers in Eastern Ontario. They had identified the supply and demand requirement of power engineers as a regional priority and were committed to providing ongoing support and assistance to their employees. He reiterated TSSA’s support in the past to create similar initiatives Ontario wide and sharing the progress with the council at the next meeting.

ACTION: M. Adams to provide strategies for skills training and labour market development of Power Engineers in Ontario similar to the strategy developed for Eastern Ontario by IPE, KEDCO and SLC.

16. In Camera

Council members met in camera without management and guests.
17. Termination

The meeting was terminated at 2:45 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2013