



Technical Standards and Safety Authority

Minutes of the Natural Gas Advisory Council

Meeting on April 23rd, 202

Minutes of the Natural Gas Advisory Council Meeting of the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA) held in hybrid format at 3 p.m. on the 23rd day of April 2024.

Present: Martin Luymes (Chair); Sunaina Menezes; Alan Reitzel; Greg St. Louis; Neil Waugh

Guests: Alexandra Campbell; Kelly Hart; Gary Highfield; Kristian Kennedy; A. Raval; Olga Sousa-Dias and Kathy Pearsall

1. Welcome and Constitution of Meeting

The Chair, M. Luymes, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

a) Safety Moment

For the safety moment, K. Kennedy highlighted five outdoor safety tips for spring:

1. Practise ladder safety by having a buddy, placing ladders on level spaces, and securing the ladders;
2. Check outdoor cords that may have frayed or been damaged during winter;
3. Ensure equipment is properly fueled to eliminate inhalation risk;
4. If digging, contact Ontario One Call to locate buried cables, pipes and wires;
5. Stretch and warm up before beginning to work.

2. Adoption of April 23, 2024 Agenda

Council adopted the agenda as presented.

3. Adoption of November 1, 2023 Minutes

Council adopted the minutes as presented.

4. Review of Action Items from Last Meeting

K. Kennedy said with the departure of Andy Vella there is an opening on council for a member representing Standards Development Organizations.



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R. Vanhevel has left the council, leaving an opening for a Contractor representative.

K. Kennedy urged council members to let him know of anyone who may be interested in filling these vacancies.

4. Chair's Update

The Chair said there is concern about a decision from the office of the Hon. David Piccini, Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, to not allow gas technicians to receive Red Seal endorsement under the auspices of Skilled Trades Ontario. There was no consultation on this and many in the industry were surprised by it.

He said it would be helpful to have side-by-side programs to help technicians navigate the transition in fuel types going forward. Separate training programs will create problems.

The rationale for the decision is unknown and a meeting is planned with the Minister.

5. Council Administration

Alan Reitzel has renewed his membership.

There are vacancies for Manufacturers/Designers (Furnace) and the Standards Development Organization position. The Chair said it may be time to begin refreshing the advisory council in light of the term limit that has been imposed. He urged council members to do some outreach and bring forward names of potential new members.

K. Kennedy said vacancies for council are posted on the website. A. Campbell said TSSA relies on council members to bring names forward.

6. Advisory Council Meeting Location

A. Campbell asked council if they prefer to meet in person, virtually, or in a hybrid format in the future. There are four meetings per year.

The Chair said the hybrid format does not work well. He suggested alternating between in-person and virtual meetings.



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G. St. Louis suggested one in-person meeting per year, such as a plenary. For the rest, a virtual option is helpful for those who live far away. S. Menezes and A. Reitzel agreed.

The Chair said the council is not delivering enough value to the TSSA. An hour spent on a virtual call lowers the level of effort. He suggested having occasional in-person meetings and demanding that issues be brought forward. He requested that the October 2024 meeting be held in person.

The chair asked what feedback the TSSA is getting from other Fuels committees. A. Campbell said the responses have been similar. The Amusement Devices council is the only one pushing for a hybrid format because they are geographically spread out.

A. Campbell said TSSA will poll all the councils in a few weeks' time.

7. Pipeline Strikes Data Trends

G. Highfield said even small disturbances to a pipeline's integrity may cause a future leak.

Year over year there has been a slight decrease in strikes with no injuries reported. Most strikes occur in the heavily populated areas of southwestern Ontario: Toronto, Mississauga, and Brampton.

Approximately 40% of strikes are digs without a locate. The TSSA Fuels Program is focused on high-risk activities, high-risk locations, and repeat offenders.

The Ontario Region Common Ground Alliance produces its annual DIRT report. Its data on damages and root causes support TSSA findings.

G. St. Louis asked if the 40% of excavated damages are from homeowners or contractors. G. Highfield said they are mostly homeowners it is important to educate them.

The Chair asked what percentage of pipelines in Ontario are above ground. It is not uncommon for them to run above ground in other provinces. G. Highfield said some are running on fence lines, but all should be buried.



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The Chair urged council to submit agenda items in advance of each meeting, using the Agenda Item Request Form.

K. Kennedy reminded council to bring names forward to fill vacancies.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.