

*July 30, 2010*

## **Ten-point plan to achieve greater Occupational Health and Safety accountability and transparency**

*Edmonton...* Changes are in the works for Alberta Occupational Health and Safety, including compliance and enforcement, planning and education.

Beginning today and through to the end of the year, Thomas Lukaszuk, Minister of Employment and Immigration, will implement ten initiatives that will ensure Albertans can continue to have confidence in the health and safety of their workplaces, and address recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General.

These initiatives include:

1. Implementing updated compliance and enforcement procedures (July 30)
2. Unveiling an easy-to-understand online template for posting safety records (August)
3. Posting the safety records of all Alberta companies online (September)
4. Reviewing the direction of Work Safe Alberta (November forum)
5. Launching an internal software program improving data collection and reporting systems (November)
6. Revising the “Employer Review Process” for companies with Certificates of Recognition and poor safety performance (December)
7. Discontinuing Best Safety Performer Awards and reviewing awards programs (underway)
8. Hiring eight additional Occupational Health and Safety Officers (underway)
9. Reviewing all open orders identified by the Office of the Auditor General (underway)
10. Introducing a pilot project for weekend and evening worksite inspections (underway)

“Let this serve as official notice for any Alberta company that doesn’t want to play by the rules,” said Lukaszuk. “Today is a new day for Occupational Health and Safety in Alberta.”

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**Background:** Compliance process / Auditor General recommendation work plan

**Media inquiries may be directed to:**

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## Compliance process / Auditor General recommendation work plan

### Compliance Process

Employers, workers, contractors, owners and suppliers share in the responsibility and accountability for the health and safety of persons at the workplace. The purpose of the compliance process is to ensure the proper enforcement tools are selected when responding to instances of non-compliance at Alberta work sites. The primary role of Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) officers is to ensure people meet their legislative responsibilities for workplace health and safety and enforce the OHS standards.

The full text version and a process diagram are available at [employment.alberta.ca/SFW/12235.html](http://employment.alberta.ca/SFW/12235.html)

#### 1. Immediate Verbal Compliance Directive

If work is being carried out in a manner that is unhealthy or unsafe to the workers on site and the employer agrees to comply with legislated standards and is able to achieve compliance immediately, an OHS officer may issue a verbal compliance directive. The officer completes re-inspection at that time to ensure that corrective action is taken and compliance is achieved before leaving the work site.

#### 2. Compliance orders

If an officer observes non-compliance during an inspection, the officer must take appropriate action to address observed non-compliance with the legislation. There are a number of compliance tools available to an officer to achieve compliance. The following enforcement actions may be taken according to what is most appropriate:

- Compliance Order
- Stop Use Order
- Stop Work Order
- Director's Order
- Repeat Non-compliance Order
- Court Order
- Contempt of Court Order

#### 3. Prosecution

Prosecution is established as an effective deterrent in reducing non-compliance with legislated requirements. The goal is to have a system that functions with compassion and respect. The work Alberta is doing with creative sentences is a step in this direction. Despite devastating and avoidable losses, it allows the creation of something positive out of a tragedy. Government will continue to encourage victim participation in terms of creative sentencing and the presentation of victim impact statements.

#### 4. Lifting of Orders

When an officer is satisfied that compliance is achieved and that the identified hazard to workers is eliminated or reduced as much as is reasonably practicable, the officer may lift the order and allow work to resume.

### Auditor General Recommendation Work Plan (highlights)

Recommendation	OHS Activity	Status / timelines
1. Enforce compliance by employers and workers who persistently fail to comply	Review all open orders identified by the OAG  Develop and distribute Compliance Policy and Enforcement Procedures (Compliance Process)	In progress  July 30
2. Improve the planning and reporting systems for OHS	Review Work Safe Alberta strategy to identify opportunities for enhancement and direction  Prepare and post a 2006-08 progress report <a href="http://www.employment.alberta.ca/SFW/322.html">http://www.employment.alberta.ca/SFW/322.html</a>	November 2010  Complete - posted
3. Strengthen the proactive inspection program by improving risk focus and coordinating employer selection methods	Focus proactive and targeted industry inspection programs on specific industry subsectors with a high incidence of injury/illness  Institute evening and weekend inspections of employer sites	In progress  Pilot project in place - will continue to March 2011
4. Improve the system of issuing Certificates of Recognition (COR) by obtaining assurance on work done by COR auditors and following up on recommendations made to Certifying Partners	Implement an audit review process to review the work conducted by Certificates of Recognition auditors  Track Certifying Partner progress in achievement of recommendations identified in quality assurance audits	In progress  Complete - A process has been implemented to track, follow-up, and record achievement of recommendations by Certifying Partners
5. Strengthen the legislated permit and certificate programs by improving control over issued asbestos certificates and improving the processes for	Require asbestos training agencies to submit a list of all new or recertified workers  Remove inactive asbestos training agencies from the accredited list  Complete administrative audits on the 17 accredited asbestos training agencies	Complete - agencies have been notified  In progress  In progress

approving and monitoring external training agencies		
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