Workplace OHS Committees Guidelines

Workplace Occupational Health and Safety committees along with workplace management play a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing good and robust health and safety practices and standards within the University of the South Pacific.

The Fiji Health and Safety at Work Act 1996 under Part 3 “workplace arrangements” states that “An employer who employs twenty or more workers at a workplace shall establish a health and Safety committee for that workplace.”

The composition of health and safety committee shall consist of, at least half the person or persons elected by the workers, the other half or lesser shall be the person or persons nominated by the employer for the purposes of this Section.

All persons on the workplace occupational health and safety committee must be a full time registered employee of that workplace.

The chairperson for the workplace OHS committee must be a staff elected workers representative.

The committee will delegate an elected representative to be the secretary for the committee and be responsible for all secretarial duties and keeping of minutes and other reports.

Details of workplace OHS committee members must be displayed in workplaces to which these reps are responsible for.

Workplace health and safety committee representatives may cease to be a committee member if he/she resign or is terminated/transferred from that workplace or resign his/her position as that workplace OHS rep on the committee whilst still being employed in that workplace.

At USP, the term for each workplace occupational health and safety representative and committee is 3 years.

In addition the Fiji HASAW 1996 (Representatives and Committees) regulations 1997 further states

As a minimum, each workplace occupational health and safety committee is to convene a meeting minimum of once every 3 months. However in emergency situations, the chairperson of the workplace OHS committee may call meeting at any time.

It is a requirement that notice of meeting as well as agenda be submitted by chairperson and circulated to committee representatives not less than 3 working days before date of the meeting.

Minutes of meetings must be displayed at prominent places in the workplace in which the committee is established and kept in safe keeping for no lesser than 7 years from the time meeting was convened.

Minutes of meeting can be displayed onto the OHS Noticeboard at the FBE Main Building and on FBE OHS webpage for general viewing.

Any person who contravenes Fiji HASAW Act 1996 and provision of these Regulations commits an offence and, unless otherwise provided, shall be liable for a fine not exceeding $1,000.00 in the case of a worker or $20,000.00 in any other case.

Fiji Health and Safety at Act (Representatives and Committees) Regulations 1997 (Download/Read Online)