

ALERT: Ontario Begins Consultations on Provincial OHS Strategy



In the Dean Report, the panel recommended the creation of the Chief Prevention Officer (CPO) position and suggested that this new executive work with the MOL and a Prevention Council to develop an integrated OHS strategy for the province.

Well, the CPO and Prevention Council have been created and those positions filled. Now the MOL has started consultations on the development of that province-wide OHS strategy, the first of its kind for Ontario.

The purpose of this strategy will be to provide a clear vision to guide Ontario's OHS system and workplaces. It'll also guide the planning, development, delivery and evaluation of OHS programs and services in Ontario for the coming years.

To facilitate the consultations, the MOL has released a full consultation document as well as an abridged version. The paper is available in various languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Spanish and Urdu.

The OHS strategy will focus on key issues such as:

- Addressing the needs of vulnerable workers, such as new and young workers
- Supporting small businesses (those with fewer than 50 employees)
- High-hazard activities, such as working at heights
- Occupational disease
- Effective support for workplace parties.

The consultation also asks for general feedback, asking questions such as:

- What products and services would help your workplace become self-reliant in achieving compliance with the *OHS Act* and its regulations'
- What would improve access to these products and services'
- What other suggestions do you have to improve occupational health and safety'

The MOL will use the feedback from the consultations, research, evidence and input from the Prevention Council in the development of the strategy. After the Minister reviews and approves the strategy, the MOL will publish it. The Chief Prevention Officer will then consult closely with stakeholders on implementing the strategy.

These consultations are an opportunity for workplace stakeholders to be heard and to contribute to the development of policies that will impact their workplaces. So we encourage you to provide feedback by the May 17, 2013 deadline. To do so:

- Use the consultation feedback form.
- Email comments to PreventionConsultation@ontario.ca.

Go to the Ontario OHS Reform Compliance Centre to stay on top of the latest developments in the province.