

# Enform's New Safety Orientation Standard for Oil & Gas Industry Becomes Mandatory



Enform, the safety association for Canada's upstream oil and gas industry, released a new general safety orientation standard in Dec. 2012 on behalf of six industry associations. As of June 1, 2014, the *General Safety Orientation Guideline for the Oil and Gas Industry* (Guideline) is the mandatory standard for general safety orientations in this industry. Enform also released an electronic general safety orientation (eGS0), a free online 20-minute video that provides workers with standard orientation information. And as of June 1, 2014, all companies in this industry are expected to use eGS0 as part of their general safety orientation. Here's an overview of the general standard and the eGS0. (Even if your company isn't in the oil and gas industry, you may still find the Guideline useful for developing or improving your workplace's safety orientation.)

## THE GUIDELINE

**Why It Was Created:** The Guideline replaces the *IRP 16 ' Basic Safety Awareness Training*. Its purpose is to outline the basic OHS information that all employers in this industry are required to provide their new, young and inexperienced workers upon hire or transfer. For example, it applies to workers who are:

- Transferred to jobs or work areas they are unfamiliar with;
- Returning from an extended period away from work; and
- New to the work force.

The Guideline was developed to provide more flexibility for employers in delivering general safety orientations to such workers. In addition to outlining requirements for general safety orientations, the Guideline describes industry expectations and specific requirements in AB, BC and SK. Note that employers are still responsible for ensuring that their safety orientations comply with all applicable requirements in their jurisdiction's OHS laws.

**Role of eGS0:** eGS0 is a free online general safety orientation video designed to support employers' existing new worker orientation programs. Because the video is designed to complement existing employer programs, it doesn't contain information specific to a company, prime contractor or individual site. So

employers will still need to provide such information separately. In addition, it's only an awareness tool and doesn't test the viewer's learning. But companies can create their own tests if desired. The 30-minute video was based on the Guideline and so meets industry general safety orientation requirements. It was also developed specifically for the new, young workforce entering the upstream oil and gas industry.

Once a worker completes the program, he can immediately print out an eGS0 Record of Completion, which provides evidence that an individual worker has received the minimum information required by the Guideline. In fact, effective June 1, 2014, an eGS0 Record of Completion is required as evidence of a worker's completion of a general safety orientation. This requirement applies to both new *and* existing workers, thus serving as the single industry standard for evidence of having completed a general safety orientation.

**Key Changes:** In addition to the changes noted above, other key changes include:

- Enform will no longer evaluate company orientation programs for equivalency with the Guideline;
- Enform will provide a process to deliver eGS0 to groups of workers, who'll then receive individual Records of Completion;
- Workers with an eGS0 Record of Completion won't be required to repeat general safety orientations;
- Construction Safety Training System and Pipeline Construction Safety Training will no longer serve as equivalent to viewing the eGS0; and
- Workers with existing Petroleum Industry Safety Training (PST) certificates and those completing the PST course will automatically receive an eGS0 Record of Completion from Enform.

## ANALYSIS

Enform's Guideline appears to be a positive development. The industry's adoption of eGS0 as the single standard for delivery of this information provides predictability for owner and prime contractor requirements, while reducing duplication of general safety orientations provided to workers. A similar approach would be useful in other industries that rely heavily on the use of contractors, such as the construction industry. And the Guideline's focus on new, young and inexperienced workers makes sense given that these are some of the most vulnerable workers in any workforce.