



## Safety and health committees

**I**t is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions in all present and future installations and to develop a safe workforce. The employer and the unions insist on the observance of safe rules and procedures by employees and insist on correction of unsafe conditions.

Article 14 of the National Working Agreement, along with USPS Handbook EL-809, lay out the foundation for joint safety committees. This month, I would like to provide details about what local committees should be doing.

**A joint labor-management safety and health committee** should be established at each postal installation that has 50 or more employees. Committees can be established at the request of the installation head where there are fewer than 50 employees.

- Representation on the committee shall include one person from each of the unions at the installation.
- The chairperson of the committee will be an operations direct report to the installation head.
- The secretary of the committee will be designated by management.
- When an installation has a safety officer (manager, specialist) on the staff, that person shall be a member of the committee.
- When an installation has maintenance and/or environmental personnel on the staff, those persons shall be members of the committee.

**All committee members should receive formal training** on their duties and responsibilities, on the basic elements of the safety and health programs, on identification of hazards and unsafe conditions, and on reports and statistics. With the exception of the chairperson, the secretary and the safety officer, committee members shall serve three-year terms. Union representatives will, at the discretion of their local union, be eligible to succeed themselves.

The committee shall meet at least quarterly in order to discuss significant problems or items. Each committee member should submit agenda items to the secretary at least three days prior to the meeting.

The local committee responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attend all scheduled meetings.
- Review local safety and health rules and assist man-

agement with the enforcement of these rules.

- Determine program areas to receive increased emphasis.
- Review employee safety and health suggestions.
- Review safety-training records to determine if all employees are receiving appropriate training.
- Review Forms 1767, Report of Hazard, Unsafe Conditions, or Practice and responses or action taken.
- Review Forms 1769, Accident Report, and statistics from the National Accident Reporting System and the Injury Compensation Program Reporting system.
- Discuss all matters relating to employee safety and health—except for individual grievances—and make recommendations for improvement.

**Local committee meetings should be conducted according** to generally accepted rules of order:

- The chairperson should call the meeting to order promptly at the designated time.
- Roll call by the secretary. Names of members and others present should be recorded.
- Introduction of any visitors.
- Minutes of the previous meeting should be read and any needed correction made.
- Unfinished business should be brought up for reconsideration.
- New business:
  - Review of safety accident reports and statistics.
  - Review of Form 1767.
  - Review of employee safety suggestions.
  - Review of safety rules, films, training programs, etc.
  - Review of progress of safety and health program, special campaigns, etc.
  - Discussion and resolution of any other items or problems relating to safety and health.
- Safety education—This should be made a part of every meeting. A presentation can be made by a committee member, an outside expert or the local safety officer.
- Adjournment.

**The above information in its entirety, along with other** safety and health resources, can be found in the *NALC Guide to Safety and Health*, a basic guide for local safety and health activists, on the NALC website. ☒