



*Report of Stakeholder Workshop on a Proposal for a National Standard on Workplace First Aid Competencies and Training*

**WORKSHOP  
AGREEMENT**



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## Foreword

This Report is the result of collaboration between CSA Group's Occupational Health and Safety Standards Program and the Canadian Red Cross's Workplace Injury Reduction Collaborative Forum. Through this collaboration, the Canadian Red Cross and CSA Group have worked together to explore the feasibility of a new national standard in the area of first aid competencies and training.

Any group may come forward to request a standard. Often safety organizations, trade/industry associations or government departments see a need for a standard and submit a proposal to CSA Group for consideration. CSA evaluates the overall relevance of a potential standard in meeting that need, and assesses the level of support in the community and industry.

In light of the complexity of issues and diverse stakeholders involved with this subject area, it was determined that a key first step would be to obtain stakeholder input to help guide the development of recommendations for the evaluation of the proposed new standard. This proposed area of standards development was presented to CSA's Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety in April 2014 and received strong support from those regulatory members. To obtain additional stakeholder input, selected experts were invited to attend a workshop co-hosted by CSA Group and the Canadian Red Cross on October 22, 2014. This report reflects the ideas generated in the discussions that took place during the workshop. The process was not designed to arrive at a consensus on each question, but instead to generate dialogue and ideas and to obtain feedback from expert stakeholders on the feasibility and need for a CSA standard related to first aid training. This report contains the results of the discussions and provides guidance on what needs to be done to progress this standard proposal.

## Acknowledgements

CSA Group wishes to acknowledge the financial support of the Canadian Red Cross for the planning and hosting of this special workshop. In addition, we wish to thank the participants at the workshop for their participation and sharing of expertise and suggestions.

For questions and comments on this Report, or for more information on this initiative, please feel free to contact the following Project Leaders:

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*January 2015*

## Executive Summary

In 2013, CSA Group was approached by the Canadian Red Cross with a proposal to develop a national standards-based solution to the issue of first aid competencies and training. With the support of the Canadian Red Cross, a stakeholder workshop was organized to obtain feedback from experts in the field on the concept of a standards solution to address important aspects of this complex issue.

A group of 15 invited experts came together on October 22<sup>nd</sup> in Mississauga, Ontario. (See Appendix B for a list of participants). The purpose of the workshop was to discuss and reach agreement on the development of national guidance in the area of first aid competencies. This was a unique opportunity to bring together experts in the field of workplace first aid training and to dialogue on the current issues in the field and potential standards solutions. The results of this workshop will pave the way for continuing dialogue and consideration of standards-related initiatives to address first aid training.

The key themes arising from the workshop are outlined below:

- According to the participants, status quo is not an option. There is an urgent need for new policy approaches in a number of jurisdictions in light of the changing regulatory frameworks.
- The development of a CSA voluntary standard was strongly supported by the participants as it would provide an open, consensus-based, national and sustainable solution. The standard could be updated regularly to reflect current scientific evidence and best practice.
- A standards-based approach would help to ensure more consistent, high quality and measurable training based on core competencies.
- A national standard cannot address all the gaps. The standard would need to be part of a national system for first aid training and assessment of training organizations.
- Providing a standards-based framework for this subject is a game-changer and will require significant resources and communication to successfully advance the project.

## 0 Introduction

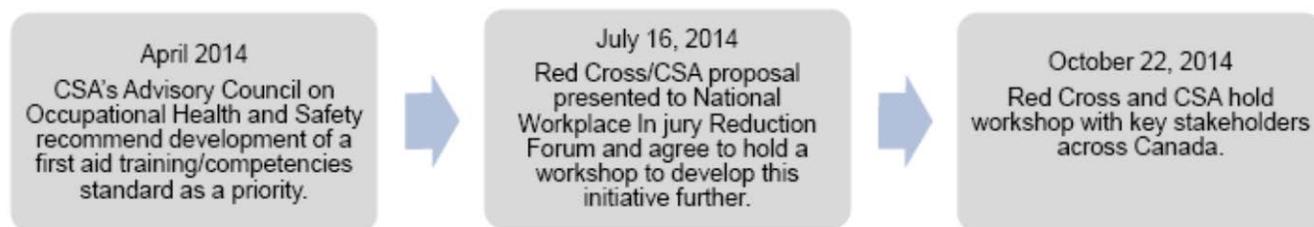
The Canadian Red Cross championed the establishment of the National Workplace Injury Reduction Collaborative, a stakeholder group composed of regulators, educators, and experts from the occupational health and safety sector as well as health care. The overall goal of this initiative is to establish a multi-disciplinary group of stakeholders focused on further mitigating workplace injury through evidence-based messaging and training. One of the first areas identified by the Collaborative focused on first aid education. The objectives of this initiative would be to:

- Provide oversight on the creation of a standard of practice and competency for first aid training, with a focus on using scientific evidence as the foundation, and
- Create a process for continuous evaluation of program content requirements.

In some jurisdictions, it has been identified that there is a need to modernize the existing training criteria and program elements. Developing a standardized curriculum without reference to a specific proprietary program would be a key element to develop a consistent, systematic and effective training program across the country. Any national standard would need to be updated regularly to reflect current scientific evidence and best practice. It was recognized that a management-systems based standard could provide the flexibility to accommodate sector-specific requirements to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

The Canadian Red Cross engaged CSA Group to explore the feasibility of a CSA standard solution. At the April 2014 meeting of CSA Group's Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Safety, the members representing the federal, provincial, and territorial agencies responsible for occupational health and safety identified first aid as a priority for new CSA standards development work. While the focus of this initiative is on competency and a training curriculum, the elements of workplace first aid are complex and multi-faceted with a wide variety of requirements and approaches across jurisdictions and sectors. For example, stakeholders have identified concerns about the inconsistency of first aid kit requirements across the country.

To help assess the proposal and scope out the proposed standard, it was agreed to undertake an initial stakeholder consultation. On July 16, 2014 CSA Group and Canadian Red Cross presented a briefing note on a Proposal for a National Standard on Workplace First Aid Training to its National Workplace Injury Reduction Collaborative Forum. It was agreed that the first step would be to hold a stakeholder consensus workshop. This workshop was hosted by Canadian Red Cross and CSA Group and provided an opportunity for invited stakeholders to provide input on a roadmap for the development of the proposed standard. This report summarizes the results of the workshop and outlines the level of consensus that was reached on the proposed initiative.



## 1. Workshop Objectives

The workshop used a structured process to achieve the following objectives:

- a common understanding of the current landscape for workplace first aid training and competencies
- dialogue on defining the problem, current gaps and potential solutions
- preliminary feedback on the proposed solution of CSA standard
- identification of potential barriers and resources required to advance the project
- recommendations on next steps and scope of the proposed initiative

## 2. Presentation

Dave Shanahan provided a brief overview presentation about CSA Group, with a focus on occupational health and safety standards and competency standards. A copy of the presentation is included in Appendix C.

## 3. Table Group Discussions – Session 1

### Defining the Problem

The participants identified a wide range of issues with the current system and programs across the country. Clearly, the most challenging problem overall is that it is a very fragmented system, with no harmonization or consistency in approach or quality. This creates problems for not only for the providers, but also for the regulators, the employers and workers. Other problems identified by the participants included:

- content is not always evidence-based and does not reflect changing workplace injuries
- lack of rigour in defining competency – does not equal hours trained
- lack of clarity on the role of a First –Aider
- certification/accreditation and availability of instructors (lack of quality monitoring)
- lack of clarity on recertification requirements (need for practice and retention of skills)
- quality of training programs (need to go beyond basic compliance with regulations)
- inconsistent training in various regions and jurisdictions
- alignment with incident reporting and investigation
- serving isolated communities vs. urban centres
- current programs do not meet the unique needs of some industry sectors
- challenges of how best to integrate new training delivery systems and methods
- liability issues /insurance obligations

### Identifying Gaps

In small groups, participants were asked to identify key gaps across the country in the policy framework and provision of services for workplace first aid training. Many of the gaps identified directly relate to the problems noted above about the lack of a national, consistent approach. It was noted that some provinces have well developed, comprehensive regulations and programs, while other provinces have very limited requirements. This creates serious gaps and issues related to labour mobility. There was also general agreement that the current system does not allow for easy updating of requirements to keep pace with current evidence, workplace trends, and new training methods. Changes in regulations and updating of legislation are time-consuming. Some of the other gaps identified included:

- lack of opportunity for all stakeholders to have a say in the updating of requirements
- changes in legislation at the federal level have created serious gaps for those provinces that do not have their own regulations and had relied on the federal Labour Code in the past. There is a lack of resources at the provincial level to develop and maintain the required policy framework
- participants noted that there is a need for more specific standards or requirements for emergency medical services, paramedics, air transport, marine first aid, rescue operations, and other specific environments
- lack of verification and auditing tools – any standard developed would need to have corresponding audit requirements and tools. At present many provinces and territories do not have the necessary auditing or oversight
- keeping requirements up to date – participants noted that there needs to be a linkage between Canadian requirements and what is taking place internationally in the scientific community ( e.g. ILCOR)
- lack of adequate first aid training facilities in some jurisdictions
- language and literacy gaps
- portability of training and recognition
- lack of harmonized practical assessment/demonstration of skills test
- consistency in instructor training and assessment
- best practices re: procedures and delivery methods assessment
- gaps between requirements and actual workplace needs

### **Potential Solutions**

Participants were asked to consider potential solutions to address the problems and gaps identified above. While a national, consensus-based standard was clearly a strong option, the participants did acknowledge that volunteer organizations could develop best practice guidance documents. In some jurisdictions, a government regulation and program requirements will continue to be the model. The participants felt that even where a government model exists; there would still be value in a national registry for training. Currently, the agencies who provide the training maintain the training records. The cost of developing and maintaining a registry would need to be shared.

Based on experience with other national voluntary standards, the participants indicated that a CSA national standard would provide competency requirements which could be used as the basis or foundation for curriculum development and certification programs. It was noted that even with a national standard in place, there would be a need for provincial requirements based on industry or geographic needs.

The participants discussed the range of potential standards solutions which included:

- national program standard which could be incorporated by reference by jurisdictions, if required
- standards for instructor competency as the basis for certification
- standards for accreditation of agencies/service providers
- standard for competency of workplace /designated first aiders (not for public /lay responders)

Participants discussed the opportunities that a national, voluntary standard could provide in this case:

- incorporate best practices easily and can be updated quickly as required
- encourages more collaboration across jurisdictions
- provides a foundation for the development of consistent audit process and framework
- provides basis for certification of providers to improve quality
- would demonstrate consensus of all affected stakeholders

#### 4. Plenary Session – Consensus on Need for a Standard

Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

- a) Do you feel there is a gap which is affecting workplaces that this proposed standard could address?

*All participants agreed with this statement*

- b) Is there a need for a consistent, national standard of practice and competency for first aid training?

*With the exception of two abstentions, participants were in agreement on this question*

- c) Is a CSA standard or guidance document the next logical step?

*All were in agreement with this next step.*

While there was strong support for a CSA standard as the best solution, the participants stressed that the next steps will require an in-depth discussion on the scope of the proposed standard. CSA's existing OHS Training Standard could be used as one of the seed documents. In addition, CSA's Z275.2 –Occupational Safety Code for diving operations and Z275.4 – Competency Standard for diving, hyperbaric chamber, and remotely operated vehicle operations could be helpful in the development of the first aid document. Questions were also raised about the costs for developing and implementing the standard. Even in those jurisdictions where the standard would have limited application, it was still felt that the standard would provide benefits (e.g. labour mobility). It was also noted that the proposed standard by itself would not address all the gaps. There is a need to establish some kind of national system for first aid training and

assessment of training organizations. This national framework would require collaboration across the jurisdictions and with the training providers.

## 5. Table Group Discussions – Session 2

In the afternoon, the participants continued their discussions looking at some of the things that would need to be considered as part of the next steps. Participants were asked to outline what they would want to see in a first aid training standard. Key features are outlined below:

### Participants

There was general agreement that all stakeholders need to be involved in the development of the standard. Representatives from regulatory agencies, training providers, employers, labour organizations should be involved. It was noted that this proposed standard would not be directly relevant for scientific research organizations.

### Scope

While the Technical Committee will need to determine the scope of the document, the participants recommended that the initial edition of the standard should be focused on training and should not cover related issues such as first aid kit requirements and training equipment standards. There was strong support for keeping it basic at the start and evolving it, as required. The standard should be applicable to all sectors. The participants identified a long list of topics that could be included in the standard, including:

- requirements for training programs ( e.g. 3 levels – Emergency First Aid, Standard First Aid, Advanced First Aid)
- training needs assessment
- means for incorporating new evidence-based training content
- training provider quality assessment
- instructor training and certification
- program assessment audit tools
- first aid training equipment requirements ( facilities, equipment, location)
- guidance on how to select a training provider
- guidance on course ratio
- core competency requirements for learner (first aiders ) and trainer
- definitions, terminology
- process for hazard assessment
- quality management /assurance
- records management

- specialty electives
- measurement tools
- practical assessment tools
- quality improvements (continuous improvement )
- mandatory as well as elective information

### **Resources Required**

The participants noted that while both human and financial resources would be required to develop this standard, much information is already available to support this work. Financial support may be available from a variety of government departments such as: Labour, Health and Education. Jurisdictional surveys have been completed and seed documents exist. Many of the existing training programs would provide valuable information to help create the core competencies and best practice guidance. It is critical that this work use state-of-the-art seed material such as:

- research on competency based education
- existing medical and rescue resources
- existing management system standards and auditing tools
- risk assessment models for first aid requirements
- evidence , injury data
- current successful regulator models as best practice

### **Barriers**

Participants were asked to identify any potential barriers that might impact the success of this project. Some of the issues identified included:

- jurisdictional differences
- wide variety of industry needs
- lack of resources available to support the development work
- jurisdictions and stakeholders who are not willing to adopt the standard
- time that will be required to implement the new standard
- Resistance to change – it is not broken, so why is this needed?
- not a priority for some jurisdictions
- need for additional research to determine and verify the levels of competency

## 6. Conclusions /Next Steps

The participants were strongly in support of this initiative moving forward and expressed interest in being involved in next steps. There was consensus that the proposed standard would benefit all stakeholders. There was also recognition that this is a very big endeavour and will require strong stakeholder support, collaborative effort and additional research before moving forward.

With a major initiative such as this which has such broad impact, there will be need for a well-developed communication plan to go out to stakeholders to explain the value of the proposed standard and the need for change.

The deliberations of the workshop will be very useful in helping to complete the evaluation of the proposed standard and developing the next steps for this initiative. These will include:

1. Participants will receive a draft copy of the report of the workshop in the next month for review and comment.
2. The report will be revised based on feedback and then posted on CSA Group's OHS Community of Interest for a period of 14 days for review and comment by interested stakeholders.
3. Following this review, the report will be finalized and published on CSA's OHS Community of Interest and the website of the Canadian Red Cross.
4. Canadian Red Cross will circulate this report to other external parties and international researchers who were unable to attend the workshop.
5. The report of the workshop will also be shared with CSA's Steering Committee on Occupational Health and Safety and CSA's Regulatory Advisory Council for Occupational Health and Safety.
6. The proposal for a new standard and the workshop report will be used to complete the evaluation of the proposal by CSA Group management.
7. If the proposal meets the criteria for a new CSA OHS standard and there is sufficient stakeholder interest and financial support, CSA will initiate a project to develop a new CSA standard.

## Appendix A – Workshop Agenda

### October 22, 2014 Red Cross/CSA Group Consensus Workshop

#### **8:00 AM – 9:00 AM      Registration and Refreshments**

9:00 AM – 9:20 AM      Welcome

9:20 AM – 10:30 AM      Format for the Day and CSA Group Overview

Preliminary Jurisdictional Scan

#### **10:30 AM – 10:50 AM Refreshment Break**

10:50 AM – 12:00 Noon      Table Group Discussions

#### **12:00 PM – 1:15 PM Lunch Break**

1:15 PM – 2:15 PM      Development of a Consensus Statement

2:15 PM – 3:15 PM      Process for Developing a National Standard of First Aid Competencies

Part 1: Content and Scope

#### **3:15 PM – 3:30 PM Refreshment Break**

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM      Discussion Continued

Part 2: Participants

4:00 PM – 4:20PM      reporting back from Table Groups

4:20 PM – 4:30 PM      Wrap Up/Summary of Next Steps / Process Evaluation – CSA Group

4:30 PM      Concluding Remarks & Adjournment

## Appendix B – List of Participants

Peter Ellis, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, Ontario

Dwayne Forsman, Paramedic Association of Canada

John Hagan, Workplace Safety North

Gayle Joyes-Bond, Government of Alberta, OHS Policy and Legislation

Judy Kainz, Workers Safety and Compensation Commission on NT/NU

Beverly Lafortune, St. John Ambulance

James LeBlanc, OHS Nova Scotia Labour and Advanced Education

Glen Linder, Labour Program, ESDC, Government of Canada

Shauna MacLean, YWCHSB

Don Marentette, Canadian Red Cross

Angélique Prince, WorkSafeBC

Richard Rusk, WSH Manitoba

Carla Sanson OHS, Saskatchewan

Cathy Whiffen, WHSCC, Newfoundland

Bob Whiting, CCOHS

### **Facilitators:**

Ian Fitzpatrick, Canadian Red Cross

Debbie Kolozsvari, CSA Group

Dave Shanahan, CSA Group

## Appendix C Presentation

**Stakeholder Workshop:**  
First Aid Training  
October 22 , 2014

 CANADIAN RED CROSS

 CSA Group



## Overview of CSA Group

CSA Group

Consumer  
Product  
Evaluation

Standards

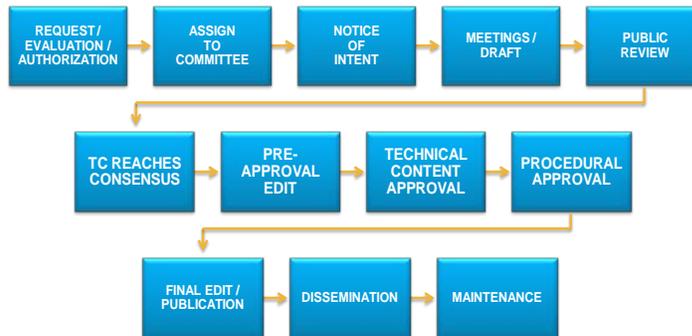
Product  
Certification  
& Testing

6

## Key elements of the CSA Consensus Process

- **National** approach
- **Multi-stakeholder** participation – volunteer experts develop the standard – CSA staff facilitate the process
- **Consensus-based** decision-making- no one interest can dominate
- **Open /Transparency** – public notice and public review
- **Training** for members and Chairs
- **Responsive** - ongoing review at least every 5 years
- **Sustainable** – CSA maintains the standards
- **Harmonization** – to meet stakeholder needs
- **Recognized** Accredited process – SCC audits
- **Due Diligence /Rigour** – document control, quality review, public feedback

## Standards Development Process



New standard, revise existing / new edition, amendments, formal interpretations, withdrawals, reaffirmations

## CSA Training & Competency Standards



**Competency** - *knowledge and skills required to perform a task or occupational role*

### CSA Competency Standards

**Z275.4** - Competency Standard for diving, hyperbaric chamber, and remotely operated vehicle operations

**B335** – Safety Standard for Lift Trucks

**Z1620** – Competency Standard for Ground Search and Rescue – Basic Searcher, Team Leader, SAR Manager ( ***under development*** )

### Other training-related standards

**Z275.5** - Occupational diver training

**Z1001** – Occupational health and safety training

## Standards Development



### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

Over 175 standards & over 50% referenced in legislation/regs

Personal Protective Equipment  
OHS Management Systems  
Machinery and Equipment  
Construction Safety  
Workplace Electrical Safety

Emergency Management  
General Workplace Safety  
Mining  
Ergonomics  
TDG