

WCB Safety Certified Audit Questions – Examples

The following are provided only as examples of the types of questions that could be asked during a Safety Certified audit. Examples are organized by the 22 elements of the WCB Safety Certified audit. Please note that each Safety Certified audit provider has their own audit tool that has been approved by the WCB.



Element 1 – Occupational Health and Safety Policy

- Does the Policy identify the employer's commitment to health and safety?
- Does the Policy contain one or more statements setting out the employer's commitment to cooperate with employees in the pursuit of occupational health and safety?
- Does the Policy have statements that indicate employer, supervisors' and employees' occupational health and safety responsibilities?
- Are employees aware of the Occupational Health and Safety Policy?
- Is the Policy posted?
- Is the Policy reviewed yearly by organizational management and the JOHSC or Safety Representative?
- Is the Policy signed by senior management of the organization?

Element 2 – Compliance Assurance

- Is the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Act and/or the Canada Labour Code and pertinent regulations posted at all worksites?
- Are employees aware of the OH&S Legislation and Regulations?
- Are employees aware of internal OH&S policies and rules?
- Are employees aware of the Internal Responsibility System?

- Are employees aware of their OH&S rights and how to exercise their rights as per occupational health and safety legislation?
- Is there a follow-up process established for instances of non-compliance with legislation or non-conformance with company policies or rules?

Element 3 – Detailed Responsibilities

- Are employees aware of their OH&S responsibilities in keeping with the Internal Responsibility System? Is this reviewed regularly with employees (at least once a year)?
- Are managers and supervisors aware of their OH&S responsibilities as per the OH&S legislation and the organizational OH&S Policy?
- Are OH&S legislation and responsibilities reviewed with new employees during orientation?
- Are OH&S legislation and responsibilities reviewed during safety training, safety meetings and yearly occupational health and safety reviews?
- Are sub-contractors aware of the OH&S legislation and the organization's health and safety policies and rules when working at the employer's workplace?

Element 4 – Management Communications and Commitment

- Is there a communications plan for how and when management communicates occupational health and safety information to the employees?
- Is an organizational health and safety plan done each year and signed off by senior management?
- Do managers/supervisors conduct regular organizational tours and inspections?
- Does senior management communication demonstrate management's personal support of the organization's occupational health and safety system?



Element 5 – Training: Management

- Are managers and supervisors adequately aware of the organization's occupational health and safety program?
- Are managers and supervisors adequately aware of their responsibilities under the OH&S legislation and the organization's OH&S policies and rules?
- Are managers and supervisors adequately aware of the OH&S legislation as it applies to their workplace?
- Are managers and supervisors adequately aware of the importance of safe work procedures?
- Are managers and supervisors adequately aware of hazards that exist in their workplace?
- Does management understand the need for adequate JOHSC and/or employee input into the design of the organization's OH&S program?
- Are adequate training records available to determine the criteria required by this Element?

Element 6 – Training: On the Job

- Are employees adequately aware of the organization's OH&S program?
- Are employees adequately aware of their responsibilities under OH&S law?
- Are employees adequately aware of their responsibilities as per company policies and rules?
- Are employees adequately aware of OH&S legislation as it applies to their workplace?
- Are employees adequately aware of the importance of safe work procedures and how they are developed?
- Are employees adequately aware of hazards that exist in their workplace?
- Are employees involved, either directly or through the JOHSC, in the design of the OH&S training program?
- Are adequate training records available to determine the criteria required by this Element?

Element 7 – Training: Orientation

- Are new employees aware of the employer's OH&S program, including OH&S policies and safe work procedures as they apply to the new job?
- Are new employees trained adequately to perform their duties?

- Are new employees adequately aware of their rights and responsibilities as per the OH&S legislation?
- Is there adequate input into the design of the OH&S orientation program from the JOHSC and/or other appropriate employee representatives?
- Is orientation training provided to employees before they are exposed to any hazard on a new job?
- Are adequate training records available to determine the criteria required by this Element?

Element 8 – Worker Participation: JOHSC and Safety Representative

- Does a Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative exist in the workplace?
- Is the process for selecting the JOHSC members or Health and Safety Representative in compliance with the OH&S legislation?
- Have the JOHSC members or H&S Representative received appropriate training to enable them to adequately perform their duties?
- Has the JOHSC established terms of reference and/or rules of procedure?
- Are JOHSC meetings held on an adequate frequency and are adequate meeting minutes kept?
- Is management response to issues raised by the JOHSC adequate, and does it meet the requirements of the OH&S legislation?

Element 9 – Incident Reports and Investigations

- Is there a written incident/accident investigation procedure that includes how to report an incident/accident?
- Does the procedure identify the process for determining how and when incidents are investigated?
- Are timeframes established for each aspect of the incident/accident investigation process – reporting, investigating, recommendations, remedial actions, sign-off?
- Is there a standard incident/accident report form that includes immediate cause(s), root cause(s), and remedial actions?
- Have persons involved in incident/accident investigation received adequate training to carry out their duties?



- Do JOHSC members or the H&S Representative participate in incident/accident investigations?
- Are investigation results communicated to all employees?
- Is there a process to identify recurring or similar incidents/accidents?

Element 10 – Inspections

- Is there an appropriate inspection schedule (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly)?
- Are pre-use of equipment inspections carried out?
- Are inspection checklists used?
- Are inspections carried out as required by OH&S law and organizational policies and rules?
- Are managers, employees and JOHSC/Safety Representatives involved in inspections?
- Are inspections carried out on a regular basis in all workplaces?
- Are employees doing inspections adequately trained to do inspections?
- Are workplace deficiencies that are identified in the inspections being remedied?
- Is there a process in place to identify issues that have been identified in previous inspections?
- Is there adequate record keeping of inspection reports?
- Do senior organization managers review inspection reports?

Element 11 – Hazard Assessments

- Is there a system in place to identify all workplace hazards including physical, ergonomic, indoor air quality (biological, chemical and particulate substance) and workplace violence?
- As part of the hazard assessment system, are controls in place to limit hazard exposure?
- As part of the hazard assessment system, is there a process to rectify identified hazards?
- Are new and seasoned employees trained in hazard identification and hazard control?
- Is the JOHSC or Safety Representative trained in hazard identification and evaluation?
- Are there written organizational policies, procedures, or rules in place to identify hazards and injuries?

- Is the workplace hazard assessment system updated with changes to organizational procedures?
- Is the workplace hazard identification process reviewed on a regular basis?

Element 12 – Work Refusal Process

- Are employees aware of their right to refuse unhealthy or unsafe work?
- Are employees aware of the process to report a workplace refusal, including legislation?
- Is there a written procedure and forms to document the process?
- Is training given to employees on the right to refuse unsafe and unhealthy work?
- Are employees aware that if one worker exercises his/her right to refuse an unsafe job, they have to be advised of the refusal if they are asked to do the same work?
- Is the employer aware that they can't discriminate against a worker who exercises his/her right to refuse unsafe or unhealthy work?

Element 13 – Safe Work Practices and Procedures

- Does the employer have a policy and procedure that outlines the process on developing, implementing, and reviewing safe work practices and procedures?
- Is there adequate input from the JOHSC or Safety Representative in the development of safe work practices and procedures?
- Are safe work practices and procedures adequate and appropriate for the work performed in the workplace?
- Are safe work practices and procedures reviewed annually or when work practices change? Is there documentation to support these reviews and/or changes?

Element 14 – Emergency Preparedness

- Are there staff trained in First Aid, in keeping with the Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety (NS OH&S) First Aid Regulations?
- Are first aid kits available and maintained as per the NS OH&S First Aid Regulations?
- Is there adequate staff available for first aid in the workplace as per the NS OH&S First Aid Regulations?



- Are there adequate fire extinguishers in the workplace and are they inspected regularly?
- In case of fire or emergency in the workplace, is there an emergency plan in place that includes emergency exits, fire/emergency wardens, and assembly areas? Has this plan been practiced on a regular basis?
- Is there an emergency plan in place to evacuate employees from exposure to environmental pollutants, contain exposure where appropriate, and report to authorities?
- Is emergency preparedness training given to all employees who deal with all workplace emergencies?
- Are emergency procedures posted at relevant places in the organization; i.e. lunch/common rooms, exits, safety notice boards, etc.
- Is emergency preparedness updated with organizational changes?

Element 15 – Employer Rules

- Are there adequate employer policies and rules for all workplace hazards where warranted?
- Is there adequate JOHSC/Safety Representative/Employee input and participation in company occupational health and safety policies and rules?
- Are there rules in place to deal with workplace discipline?

Note: Element 15 does not include issues that are covered in other criteria, such as Permits/Special Procedures, Safe Work Practices, Personal Protective Equipment and others.

Element 16 – Contractor Health and Safety

- Is the Contractor informed of relevant health and safety issues and policies before they start work at the site?
- Is the Contractor advised of the proper PPE to wear and when?
- Does the Contractor have the proper training to do the job required by the organization?
- Does the Contractor have the proper and safe equipment to perform the required task?
- Has the Contractor signed a declaration to agree to the organization's occupational health and safety rules and policies, and to adhere to occupational health and safety law and regulations?

- Does the Contractor have WCB coverage or private insurer coverage?
- Has a WCB Clearance Letter been provided to confirm Contractor's WCB account is in good standing?

Element 17 – Data Analysis / Objectives / Standards

- Is there a tracking system in place to track daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly occupational health and safety program statistics?
- Are there appropriate objectives or standards established to evaluate the organization's occupational health and safety program?
- Is there a yearly occupational health and safety plan with objectives? If so, is it communicated to all employees?
- Are there standards in place for employees to deal with:
 - incident/accident investigation?
 - inspections?
 - personal protective equipment?
 - training?
 - emergency preparedness?
 - other OH&S system elements?
- Is appropriate action taken when established objectives or standards are not met?

Element 18 – Occupational Health and Safety Meetings

- Are regular health and safety meetings held in keeping with organizational policy?
- Are employees briefed on hazards and reminded of the importance of occupational health and safety?
- Is attendance adequate at occupational health and safety meetings?
- Are topics at occupational health and safety meetings relevant?
- Do operational health and safety meetings follow agendas?
- Are operational health and safety meeting issues recorded, acted upon, and resolved?
- Do supervisors/managers take part in operational health and safety meetings?

Element 19 – Maintenance Policy and Program

- Is all equipment maintained in a healthful and safe condition?
- Do competent personnel maintain the organization's equipment?



- Are recommendations followed as per manufacturer's specifications?
- Do replacement parts meet manufacturer's specifications?
- Is there adequate and current documentation of major equipment maintenance?

Note: Element 19 is not meant to cover minor tools or office equipment.

- Is personal protective equipment inspected on a regular basis to identify deficiencies?
- Is personal protective equipment worn when required? If not worn, are employees aware of the disciplinary procedure for not using PPE?
- Does the JOHSC or Safety Representative participate in advising on appropriate PPE – and/or in the selection of appropriate PPE – for the work being performed?

Element 20 – Management Performance Standards

- Are there written occupational health and safety standards and expectations for management and supervisors?
- Is occupational health and safety performance part of the annual management performance reviews?
- Are occupational health and safety standards set for each supervisory and managerial role? This question should look at training of employees, inspections, incident/accident investigation, personal protective equipment, ergonomics, occupational hygiene, etc.

Element 21 – Permits and Special Procedures

- Does the organization have a system in place to identify the need for permits from regulatory authorities?
- Does the organization have a procedure for special permits?
- Does the organization have a system in place to identify the need for special procedures, such as confined space, fall protection, lock-out/tag-out, hot work, chemical product, biological substances, etc.?
- Are safe work permits posted?
- Are employees aware of permits and special procedures?

Element 22 – Personal Protective Equipment

- Is personal protective equipment available to all staff?
- Is personal protective equipment adequate and appropriate for the workplace hazards?
- Does the personal protective equipment meet recognized standards?
- Are employees trained in the need for personal protective equipment, the use of the PPE, the care of the PPE and the maintenance of the PPE?