

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Series: Safety Management

Part 485: Safety and Occupational Health Program

Chapter 9: Occupational Safety and Health Councils, Committees, and Work Groups

Originating Office: Office of Occupational Safety and Health

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9.1 **Purpose.** To specify the Occupational Safety and Health Program (Program) requirements for the structure and function of the Department of the Interior (Department) Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) Council, the Department of the Interior Occupational Safety and Health Council (SHC), employee/management safety and health committees, and working groups.

9.2 **Scope.** Applies to all Bureaus and Offices in the Department.

9.3 **Authorities.**

A. [Executive Order 12196, "Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees."](#)

B. [Public Law 91-596, "Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970," \(The Act\) Section 19.](#)

C. [Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 1960, Subpart F](#) identifies requirements for certified committees and should be considered a model for establishing committees within the Department of the Interior.

9.4 **Reference.** American National Standards Institute/American Industrial Hygiene Association, Z10, [Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.](#)

9.5 **Responsibilities.** Primary responsibilities of councils, committees, and working groups are to collectively advise senior management on actions needed to achieve the Department, Bureau, Office or operating unit's occupational safety and health programs. These councils, committees, and working groups serve as a central lead for coordinating safety and health program activities common to the Department, all Bureaus, Offices, and operating units and serve as advisory bodies on Program matters. The DASHO Council and SHC provide a forum for the exchange of safety and health program information between the Office of Occupational

10/31/2022 #5124

Replaces 3/12/99 #3239

Safety and Health (OSH) and Bureau and Office safety and health managers, as well as other Departmental officials.

9.6 Definitions.

Occupational Safety and Health Council: The Occupational Safety and Health Council (SHC) is an advisory council on Occupational Safety and Health Program matters to the Director, Departmental Office of Occupational Safety and Health. It consists of Bureau and Department headquarters-level safety and health managers.

Occupational Safety and Health Committee: A group of two or more people officially delegated to perform a function, such as investigating, reviewing, considering, reporting, or acting on a matter for which the committee was formed.

Certified Safety and Health Committee: An agency, Bureau, or Office level safety and health committee that meets the provisions of section 1-3 of Executive Order 12196, and of 29 CFR 1960, as listed and attested to by the head of each agency in writing to the Secretary of Labor.

Work Group: A work group is an ad hoc group of two or more subject-matter experts working together to achieve specified goals or objectives defined by a higher level of authority (such as a higher-level agency/Bureau committee or council or a level of management requesting work group establishment).

Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO): The Departmental DASHO or Bureau/Office DASHO is an official so designated or appointed by the Secretary, Bureau head, or Office head, respectively, with sufficient authority and responsibility to effectively represent the interest and support of the Secretary or Bureau/agency head in the management and administration of the Program pursuant to 29 CFR §1960.6 and the provisions of Executive Order 12196.

A. **Department DASHO:** The Departmental DASHO will be the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget (AS-PMB) and must have sufficient headquarters staff with the necessary training and experience to be effective. The headquarters staff should report directly to, or have appropriate access to, the Departmental DASHO in order to carry out Program responsibilities.

B. **Department Deputy DASHO:** The AS-PMB, as the Departmental DASHO, may delegate the authority and responsibility to effectively represent the interest and support of the DASHO in the management and administration of the Program pursuant to 29 CFR §1960.6 and the provisions of Executive Order 12196 to the Deputy DASHO, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Capital and Diversity.

C. **Bureau/Office DASHO:** A Bureau or Office DASHO should be of equivalent

rank or equivalent degree of responsibility commensurate with that of the Department level DASHO and must have sufficient staff with the necessary training and experience to be effective. The Bureau or Office level staff should report directly to, or have appropriate access to, their respective level DASHO in order to carry out Program responsibilities.

9.7 Requirements.

A. Occupational Safety and Health Committees.

(1) Bureaus and Offices should strive for safety and health committee establishment with membership equally comprised of managers and employees to enhance workplace safety and health.

(2) Where occupational safety and health committees exist, they will serve as advisors to their respective management, and as such, should enhance communications between management and employees. Their scope of responsibility and involvement will be established in a committee charter, approved by their management.

(3) Committee meeting minutes, the committee's recommendations, and management's responses will be in writing and retained for at least two (2) years by the Bureau.

(4) Committee members should receive training meeting the requirements of [29 CFR 1960.58](#) within 180 days of their appointment to the committee.

B. Department DASHO Council.

(1) The Department DASHO Council is chaired by the Departmental DASHO and comprised of Bureau and Office DASHOs. The DASHO Council provides executive level guidance on the Bureau and Office involvement in the formulation of policy and the management of the Departmental Program.

(2) The DASHO Council collectively determines actions needed to achieve the Departmental Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Plan goals and, provides program direction and resources to and is responsible for approval of recommendations by the Department Safety and Occupational Health Council.

(3) The DASHO Council is a chartered council. The charter describes the DASHO Council's purpose, authority, organization, membership, functions, and decisional structure. See Appendix 1.

C. Department Occupational Safety and Health Council (SHC).

(1) The Department Safety and Occupational Health Council (SHC) is

comprised of Bureau safety and health managers, specified office representatives, and members of the OSH. The SHC serves as a forum and operates to address emerging safety and health issues and develops initiatives for and enhancements to the OSH Program in support of the Department DASHO Council's commitment to providing Department level occupational safety and health oversight of agency operations.

(2) The SHC provides Bureaus and Offices a forum to communicate and decide on DOI-wide requirements for efficiently and effectively delivering OSH programs to customers and stakeholders.

(3) The SHC is a chartered council. The charter describes the council's purpose, authority, organization, membership, responsibilities, and decisional structure. See Appendix 2.

D. Safety and Health Working Groups. Working groups will be established as deemed necessary to address particular issues or perform other specific tasks. The lifespan of a working group may be anywhere between a few months and several years. The important part of the work of such groups may be to develop a *quasi-permanent existence* (e.g., Department water safety working group or the industrial hygiene working group) once their initially assigned objective or task is accomplished and to remain together to resolve problems related to a system or network commensurate with the expertise of the working group members. The necessity to disband (or phase out) a working group is dependent on operational needs relevant to the group's composition of experts once it has achieved its original goal(s) or work tasks. Examples of common goals or work tasks for working groups include creation of an informational document, creation of a standard, research, or for continuous improvement planning purposes.

APPENDIX 1
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
DESIGNATED AGENCY SAFETY AND HEALTH OFFICIAL COUNCIL
CHARTER

The Secretary, Department of the Interior, is required by Executive Order 12196, effective February 26, 1980, in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 as amended in 29 U.S.C. 668, to furnish to employees safe and healthful places and conditions of employment. The Secretary is also required to operate an occupational safety and health program in accordance with the Order and to appoint a Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) who has sufficient authority to represent the Secretary and to be responsible for the management and administration of the Departmental Safety and Health Program. Further, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1960 regulations for federal agencies mandate that additional DASHOs be appointed at appropriate levels in the organization. Thus, the Department has established Bureau DASHO positions. Bureau DASHOs, in conjunction with the Departmental DASHO, meet as a Council in an ad hoc fashion to discuss appropriate activities, actions and initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the Departmental Safety and Health Program.

1. Purpose:

This charter describes the duties and responsibilities of the Department of the Interior (DOI) Designated Agency Safety and Health Official (DASHO) Council, its membership, and its operating procedures. The Council will serve in an advisory capacity for the Department DASHO and Office of Occupational Safety and Health.

2. Scope:

In partnership with the Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) and the Interior Safety and Health Council (SHC), the Council supports the DASHO's commitment to providing Department level occupational safety and health oversight of agency operations, by allowing Bureaus and Offices a forum to communicate and reach agreement to Department-wide requirements for efficiently and effectively delivering occupational safety and health programs to customers and stakeholders while maintaining an Agency perspective. The Council ensures issues and policies are addressed and resolved in a manner that enhances operational processes and performance standards.

The DASHO Council provides its members the opportunity for a meaningful exchange of information and collaborative approaches to meeting common challenges related to providing a safe and healthful place of employment. In doing so, the Council serves as a bi-directional body for operational performance, while enhancing communications and outreach efforts of the

10/31/2022 #5124

Replaces 3/12/99 #3239

Bureau and Office safety programs. Specifically, the Council supports the OSH mission to:

- Ensure the health, safety, and well-being of their employees and visitors;
- Develop Department-wide policies that protect lives, property, and natural resources; and
- Establish policy that facilitates the Department's decision-making process so that it can achieve a safe and healthful occupational and recreational environment for its customers including Departmental employees, volunteers, contractors, concessionaires and the visiting public.

The Council supports the OSH mission by performing the following activities:

- Provide oversight to the Department's occupational safety and health program as it relates to the development and implementation of Department-wide policy;
- Establish and institute long-term strategic goals and priorities;
- Provide accountability for the funding and implementation of occupational health and safety enterprise initiatives and objectives; and
- Provide direction to and approve actions by the Department of the Interior Safety and Health Council (SHC).

3. Authority:

The DASHO Council is hereby established by authority of the Secretary of the Interior through this charter. The Council will function under the general guidance of the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management, and Budget or their delegate.

4. Organization, Structure and Membership:

The DASHO Council serves under the Office of Policy, Management and Budget (PMB), situated within the Office of the Secretary (OS). The Assistant Secretary, PMB, or designee will serve as the Chair of the DASHO Council.

Members will be the Bureau DASHOs plus the Departmental DASHO and Deputy DASHO. They will be able to speak for respective Bureaus/agencies during meetings where commitments to recommendations are required. Council members will have appropriate Departmental, Bureau or Office authority to provide management oversight for occupational safety and health program activities, actions and initiatives commensurate with mission needs, funding capacity, and operational capability.

In addition to the Departmental DASHO and Deputy DASHO, the Council will be comprised of Bureau DASHOs from the following Bureaus and Offices:

- A. Indian Affairs
- B. Bureau of Land Management

10/31/2022 #5124

Replaces 3/12/99 #3239

- C. Bureau of Reclamation
- D. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- E. Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
- F. National Park Service
- G. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement
- H. Office of the Secretary
- I. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- J. U.S. Geological Survey

The Directors of the Office of Aviation Services, Wildland Fire, Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, Facilities and Administrative Services, the Solicitor, Acquisition and Property Management, Human Capital and the Inspector General will also serve on the committee as non-voting advisory members.

5. Responsibilities

Chairperson: The Council will be chaired by the Department DASHO who has the following responsibilities:

- Provide leadership, direction, and guidance;
- Establish areas of priority for Council consideration, in alignment with DOI strategic planning;
- Arrange and organize Council meetings;
- Foster a positive environment where ideas can be shared openly in order to achieve consensus;
- Ensure that decisions are made and recommendations finalized efficiently among DASHO Council members;
- Distribute documents to Council members; and
- Maintain records of Council activities and actions/decisions.

Council Members: Members have the following responsibilities:

- Attend all meetings of the DASHO Council;
- Participate in all functions and activities of the Council including providing Bureau and Office positions and recommendations on Occupational Safety and Health Program matters that come before the Council;
- Ensure decisions are consistent with law, DOI strategic plans, policies, guidelines, and other Federal regulations; and
- Establish goals and objectives to drive decision-making related to Council business.

Council:

In fulfilling the requirements of the scope, the DASHO Council will:

10/31/2022 #5124

Replaces 3/12/99 #3239

- Identify, clarify, and recommend the activities of the SHC;
- Provide agency-wide governance and oversight of occupational safety and health priorities and performance measures;
- Advise on strategic priorities affecting employee safety and health;
- Provide input as necessary to address challenges in operational success of occupational safety and health programs;
- Provide direction and guidance to the Departmental occupational safety and health programs;
- Provide guidance on the development and implementation of Department-wide occupational safety and health policy based on SHC recommendations; and
- Make recommendations to the Department DASHO and OSH regarding the budget and expenditure of monies targeted as safety and health initiatives in the Office of the Secretary centralized Working Capital Fund.

In performing these responsibilities, the DASHO Council will:

- Communicate recommendations, decisions, and actions regarding the Agency's occupational safety and health policies, plans and strategies to its Bureaus' senior leaders as appropriate;
- Provide input to and work with other Bureaus and Offices as necessary to achieve DOI goals and missions;
- Establish and oversee SHC and associated committees and related subcommittees for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's responsibilities; and
- Review and approve the work products of the SHC.

6. Meetings and Reports:

Meetings will be scheduled and held on an ad hoc basis. The Chair has the authority to call for and schedule a meeting of the DASHO Council if they decide an open forum and discussion of the issues would benefit the decision-making process. The Council will meet formally no less than once each year to discuss and evaluate progress of the occupational safety and health program.

- Meetings can only be held when a quorum is achieved. Quorum requires attendance of two-thirds of the Bureaus and one-half of the program offices;
- Members may identify an alternate to attend meetings; however, the alternate must be at the same senior executive level or have delegated authority to speak on behalf of the assigned SES member; and
- Minutes will be prepared in writing within two weeks after the meetings are held and at a minimum will record attendees, issues presented, decisions made, and any outstanding action items.

10/31/2022 #5124

Replaces 3/12/99 #3239

Agenda: Proposed agenda items may be submitted by any Council member, the Director of the OSH, or the Chairperson of the DOI Occupational Safety and Health Council, to the DASHO Council Chair.

- Draft agenda topics should be submitted as early as possible but no later than one week in advance of each meeting; and
- Final agenda items and all supporting documents will be distributed by the Chairperson to all DASHO Council members a minimum of two days prior to the meeting.

7. Decision Making:

- All occupational safety and health policy and operational issues that affect or have the potential to affect more than one Bureau or Office will be elevated to the DASHO Council for consideration and/or decision;
- Occupational safety and health issues that are elevated by the SHC will be submitted to the Chair through the Deputy DASHO. The DOI Medical Officer and/or the Solicitor will be consulted on all medical and legal issues respectively;
- Decisions will be reached through majority consensus. When a vote is required, the Chair will poll the members to establish majority consensus from all voting members and the vote will be recorded;
- If consensus cannot be reached, the Council Chair will elevate the matter to the Assistant Secretary for PMB for decision; and
- The Chairperson will ensure occupational safety and health activities including decisions, recommendations, issues, action items, meeting summaries and other pertinent materials attributed to the Council are documented and communicated to Council members and other DOI senior leadership and affected staff, as appropriate, in a timely manner.

8. General Provisions:

Nothing in this document is intended to alter or impede the ability to carry out the authorities of Bureaus and Offices to perform their responsibilities under law and consistent with applicable legal authorities and Departmental or Bureau policy and guidance.

9. Effective Date:

This charter becomes effective when this DM is approved by the Secretary of the Interior or designee and may be revised by Council majority vote with approval of the Secretary or designee.

APPENDIX 2
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COUNCIL
CHARTER

1. Name

The name of the organization will be the Department of the Interior (DOI) Occupational Safety and Health Council (SHC).

2. Purpose

This charter describes the duties and responsibilities of the DOI SHC, its membership, and operating procedures. The SHC serves as a technical advisory body on Occupational Safety and Health Program matters to the Director, DOI Office of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

The SHC serves as a forum and operates to address emerging safety and health issues and develop initiatives for, and enhancements to, the OSH Program in support of the DOI DASHO Council's commitment to providing Department level occupational safety and health oversight of agency operations. The SHC provides Bureaus and Offices a forum to communicate and decide on DOI-wide requirements for efficiently and effectively delivering OSH programs to customers and stakeholders.

3. Authority

- Section 19 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-596);
- Section 7902 of Title 5 of the United States Code;
- Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees;
- Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employee Occupational Safety and Health Programs and Related Matters; and

4. Membership and Organization

A. Regular Membership. The DOI SHC will consist of:

- 1) The Director, or designee, Office of Occupational Safety and Health, who will serve as the DOI SHC Chair. The chairperson is a non-voting member.

2) The DOI SHC Executive Director who will serve as the SHC Chair's administrative assistant to support the Chair in carrying out SHC responsibilities. The Executive Director is a non-voting member.

3) Bureau Safety and Health Managers for each Bureau and Office indicated below. These members will be voting members.

- i. Indian Affairs
- ii. Bureau of Land Management
- iii. Bureau of Reclamation
- iv. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- v. U.S. Geological Survey
- vi. Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement
- vii. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
- viii. National Park Service
- ix. Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement
- x. Office of the Secretary, represented by the Office of Facilities and Administrative Services
- xi. Office of Wildland Fire

B. Ad Hoc Membership. The DOI SHC may have ad hoc, non-voting members. The following ad hoc representatives also advise OSH Council Membership as needed:

- 1) Office of Aviation Services.
- 2) Office of Emergency Management.

5. SHC Responsibilities

A. The SHC Chairperson will be responsible for:

- i. Providing leadership, direction, and guidance.
- ii. Establishing areas of priority for SHC consideration
- iii. Conducting SHC meetings and teleconferences.
- iv. Ensuring accountability for action items.
- v. Preparing and providing SHC material to the Deputy DASHO in support of the DASHO Council.
- vi. Presenting SHC action items and recommendations for DASHO Council decision consideration.
- vii. Coordinating SHC activities with all internal and external stakeholders.
- viii. Designating a Bureau or Office vice-chairperson to assume the duties of Chairperson during an absence.
- ix. Editing and soliciting feedback on SHC meeting summaries and distributing summaries to SHC members.

B. The Executive Director will be responsible for:

- i. Ensuring SHC meeting agendas and summaries are prepared.
- ii. Tracking SHC action items until closed.
- iii. Scheduling meetings and teleconferences as requested by Chairperson.
- iv. Maintaining records of SHC activities and actions/decisions.
- v. Coordinating and managing the Departmental Safety Awards Program review through the SHC.

C. Council Members will be responsible for:

- i. Attending and participating in regular and special DOI SHC meetings or on scheduled conference calls.
- ii. Highlighting significant/cross-cutting Bureau/Office issues to council.
- iii. Providing input into the DOI OSH Strategic Direction & Planning.
- iv. Briefing Bureau/Office DASHO on meeting outcomes.
- v. Briefing Bureau/Office professional & collateral staffs on meeting outcomes and decisions.
- vi. Coordinating creation of and/or serving on DOI SHC committees when required.

6. Work Groups

A. Ad hoc work groups may be formed by the Chairperson to:

- i. Review and make recommendations concerning ongoing DOI safety and health programs.
- ii. Develop and recommend proposals for new programs, initiatives, and action planning for Departmental consideration.
- iii. Develop future objectives and plans for the Department at the request of the Director, Office of Occupational Safety and Health or the Departmental DASHO.

7. Meetings.

A. The DOI SHC should meet at least quarterly, or as needed, according to a published schedule prepared by the chairperson, in coordination with SHC members.

B. The annual meetings schedule will be determined at the first meeting of a new fiscal year and will include the dates and locations for each meeting.

C. Agenda topics will be submitted to the Executive Director in time for inclusion in the agenda published before each meeting.

D. The meeting agenda will include unresolved old business and committee reports, if any, in addition to new topics.

E. Draft meeting summaries of each meeting will be transmitted to members within two weeks after the meeting for corrections or comments and at a minimum will record attendees, issues presented, decisions made, and any outstanding action items. The Chairperson will attempt to resolve any differences. The final minutes should be published within 30 business days after the meeting had adjourned.

8. Special Meetings

A. Special meetings of the DOI SHC may be called by the Chairperson or will be called upon the written request of at least six SHC members served upon the Chairperson. Such a call will state the subject and the proposed time and location of the meeting.

B. The Chairperson will notify members at least seven days in advance of special meetings, by mail, telephone, or electronic means stating the time, place, and subject of the meeting.

9. Quorum

A. Meetings can only be held when a quorum is achieved. A quorum requires attendance of six voting members of the DOI SHC. The act of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present will be the act (i.e., constitute approval) of the DOI SHC.

B. Policy and memorandums that impact or direct a Bureau or Office's activities will be coordinated through the SHC for initial review and comment. The DOI OSH office will take the initial draft, finalize it, and bring it back to the Council for a vote. The approval of a majority of the members present at the meeting at which a quorum is present will constitute approval of the DOI SHC. If OSH needs to make changes after the vote, the revised product will be communicated to the SHC before being sent to the DASHOs.

10. Decision Making

- All OSH policy and operational issues that affect or have the potential to affect more than one Bureau will be vetted through the SHC for majority consensus prior to elevation to the DASHO Council for consideration and/or decision action.
- OSH issues that are elevated to the SHC will be submitted to the Chairperson. The DOI Medical Officer and/or the Solicitor will be consulted on all medical and legal issues brought to the SHC for action or decision.
- Decisions are reached through majority SHC consensus. When a vote is required, the Chairperson will poll the members to establish majority consent from all voting members and the vote will be recorded.
- If majority consent cannot be reached, the Chairperson will attempt to resolve the

dissenting position, and if unable to do so, will elevate the matter to the DASHO Council for resolution.

- The Chairperson will ensure SHC activities including decisions, recommendations, issues, action items, meeting summaries and other pertinent materials attributed to the Council are documented and communicated to Council members and other DOI-senior leadership and affected staff, as appropriate, in a timely manner.

11. General Provisions

Nothing in this document is intended to alter or impede the ability to carry out the authorities of Bureaus and Offices to perform their responsibilities under law and consistent with applicable legal authorities and Departmental or Bureau policy and guidance.

12. Effective Date

This charter becomes effective when this is approved by the Secretary of the Interior or the designee and may be revised by SHC majority vote with approval of the DASHO Council.