

**To:** IOHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Subject:** Report of the IOHA Certification Committee

**Date:** June 8, 2002

At the Board meeting on July 8, 2000 in Cairns, Australia, the following motion was approved:

MOTION: The IOHA Board of Directors recognizes and accepts the Report of the IOHA International Workshop on Occupational Hygiene Certification. The Board of Directors has reviewed the report and accepts the Recommendations of the Workshop. The Board approves the establishment of the IOHA Certification Committee, initially consisting of the existing Certification Bodies (Canada, Italy, Norway, The Netherlands, Switzerland, USA and the U.K.). The purpose of the Certification Committee will be to evaluate programs submitted for consideration as an IOHA Recognized Certification Board and to present their recommendations to the Board of Directors. Once recognized, that organization will be invited to be a member of the IOHA Certification Committee. Once formed the Committee is requested to develop operating procedures and to submit these procedures to the IOHA Executive Committee for approval. Dr. Vernon E. Rose, IOHA President Elect, will serve as liaison to Certification Committee.

The Board also accepts and endorses the Model Certification Program and asks the Committee to use the Model Program in evaluating their own certification procedures as well as those of other organizations, which seek the status of an IOHA Recognized Certification Board.

The Board also wishes to express its appreciation to all those who participated in the Workshop and to those organizations who supported the attendance of the Workshop members.

On 17 November 2000, the Board of Directors approved the Certification Committee Charter, as shown in Attachment 1.

Subsequent to the Cairns meeting, Vern Rose, as Chair of the Certification Committee, invited representatives from the existing Occupational Hygiene Boards to participate in the IOHA Certification Committee. Invitations were sent to and accepted by the Certification Boards in Canada, Norway, Southern Africa, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. In addition, representatives from Australia, Brazil, Finland and Sweden were invited to participate as observers. The first meeting of the Committee was held during the AIHCE in New Orleans in May 2001. A copy of the minutes of 2001 meeting is included as Attachment 2.

Following the New Orleans meeting the Committee developed "A Model Process" (Attachment 3) which was made available to certification boards interested in seeking recognition by IOHA. Invitations were extended to certification boards to submit their applications to the Committee.

As of June 2002 applications were received from three Certification Boards. The full committee has reviewed all applications and comments have been sent to the three Boards. Responses have yet to be received from the Boards, but informal contact suggests two of the Boards will be responding within the next ....months. The third Board has indicated it will take some additional time to consider the comments. When the responses are received, they will be forwarded to committee members for a vote on the application(s). If and when three-quarters of the voting members recommend a Board for recognition by IOHA, the Committee Chair will forward the nomination to the President for concurrence and referral to the full IOHA Board for approval.

It is hoped the approach to “due diligence” designed and implemented by the Certification Committee satisfies the IOHA Board of the integrity of the process. Of course the Committee welcomes advice and suggestions from all sources especially the Directors of IOHA.

On a personal note, I have thoroughly enjoyed the process of participating in IOHA’s efforts to “harmonize” the certification process for occupational hygienists. As I leave the IOHA Board, I have informed the incoming President, David Zalk, I will be pleased to remain as Chairman of the Certification Committee until such time as the process matures and reaches a point, hopefully in the not too distant future, where new leadership is appropriate.

Respectfully submitted.

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Vernon E. Rose  
Chair, IOHA  
Certification Committee

## Attachment 1

INTERNATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL  
HYGIENE ASSOCIATION

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# CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE CHARTER

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## MISSION STATEMENT

To promote global respect for and recognition of Occupational Hygiene Certification Programmes which meet or exceed the “IOHA Model Certification Programme” developed at the 1999 IOHA Workshop on Certification/Registration and approved by the IOHA Board of Directors on 8 July 2000.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 1999, IOHA sponsored an International Workshop on Certification/Registration. The existing occupational hygiene certification and registration Boards were invited to attend the Workshop. See the IOHA website for a copy of the Workshop Report. The workshop achieved its aims and a report with recommendations was submitted to the IOHA Board of Directors on 12 April 2000. The recommendations contained in the report were:

- 1. That IOHA establish an IOHA Certification Committee, initially consisting of the existing Certification Bodies (Canada, Italy, Norway, The Netherlands, Southern Africa, Switzerland, USA and the UK). The purpose of the Certification Committee will be to evaluate programmes submitted for consideration as an IOHA Recognised Certification Board and to present their recommendations to the Board of Directors. Once recognized, that organization will be invited to be a member of the IOHA Certification Committee.*
- 2. That the initial members of the Certification Committee will develop detailed procedures for evaluating certification programmes. Once approved by the IOHA Board of Directors, these evaluation procedures will be applied to each of the initial members and the results presented to the Board of Directors for approval. Members of the Certifying Committee cannot sit in judgment of their own country's certification programme. That member must be absent from the meeting during consideration of his or her own certification process.*
- 3. That IOHA endorse the recommended model certification programme. This model contains the minimum requirements to be met for an organization to obtain acceptance as an “IOHA Recognised Certification Board”. The IOHA Certification Committee, in developing their procedures and criteria for evaluating applicants, will use the model as a starting point.*
- 4. That existing IOHA Recognised Certification Boards explore methods for assuring “mutual*

*recognition” of certification between Board.*

- 5. That existing IOHA Recognised Certification Boards will share information and experiences involving the certification process and will commit to continuing to improve their individual processes. Following are the proposed Mission Statement and Procedures of the Committee. The Committee as its first order of business will further refine these after the IOHA Board of Directors appoints Committee members. The Mission Statement and Procedures will be submitted to the IOHA Board of Directors for approval and future changes. Once approved, the Committee will solicit applications from existing Certification/Registration Boards to become “IOHA Recognised”.*

## **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

The IOHA Certification Committee will consist of one member from each of the IOHA Recognised Certification Boards. Each board shall recommend a Committee member (usually a senior member of their Board, e.g. the past chairman). The IOHA Board shall officially appoint all members to the Committee. Committee members will serve 3-year terms, which can be renewed one time (for a total of 6 years service on the Committee). Initially the President of IOHA will invite all existing Certification Boards to nominate a member. These individuals will constitute the Start-up Committee.

The first order of business of the Start-up Committee will be to develop application procedures, provide these procedures to existing Certification Boards and process applications from the existing Boards to determine if they meet the requirements to become IOHA Recognised Certification Boards.

When the initial round of evaluations are completed those Start-up Committee members representing the IOHA Recognised Certification Boards may become members of the ongoing Committee, or their organization may wish to appoint another member. As additional Boards are recognized by IOHA, they will be invited to nominate one member of the Committee. The IOHA Past President will serve as liaison between the Committee and the IOHA Board of Directors. The Committee will elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.

## **COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

The usual activities of the Committee will consist of the following:

1. Receive and review applications from Occupational Hygiene Certification Boards seeking IOHA Recognition (see the following Approval Procedures).
2. Determine an appropriate application fee for organizations seeking IOHA Recognition. It is anticipated that the activities of the Committee will be revenue neutral. The IOHA Board will approve the application fee. Each year the Committee will submit a proposed budget to the Board.

3. The Committee will evaluate other third party accreditation programme activities and evaluate their effect on the IOHA model process.
4. Periodically review the Model Process and, where appropriate, recommend changes for approval by the IOHA Board.
5. Periodically review the Committee Charter and recommend changes to the IOH Board of Directors.
6. Develop more detailed internal procedures for Committee operation.
7. Establish communications with prospective Certification or Registration programmes with an emphasis on providing assistance in programme development.

### **APPROVAL PROCEDURES**

The following procedures will be used by the Committee to evaluate the Certification process and procedures of organizations applying for IOHA Recognition:

1. Receive applications for Certification/Registration Programmes and review for completeness.
2. Compare the applicant's programme elements with those of the IOHA Model Programme.
3. If the applicant's programme does not meet or exceed the IOHA Model Programme, advise the applicant of the areas needing modification.
4. If three-quarters of the voting members of the Committee vote to approve a programme, a report will be prepared with recommendations for approval. Any Committee member who does not agree with the report will be offered the opportunity to attach a dissenting report with the Committee's report.
5. If the Committee does not vote to approve an application, the reasons for such a decision will be set forth in writing and will be provided to the applicant in a timely fashion. The Committee will offer constructive suggestions on modifications to the applicant's programme, which would serve to enhance the success of the application upon resubmission.

### **Appeals Process**

Any applicant may appeal to the IOHA Board against a recommendation of the Committee. Any such appeal must be in writing, stating the recommendation that is the subject of the appeal and the grounds on which the appeal is made. The IOHA Board will deliver a decision in writing and be subject to a simple majority of voting members.

Approved by the IOHA Board of Directors  
17 November 2000

## ATTACHMENT 2

# INTERNATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE ASSOCIATION

**Notes from a meeting of the  
Start-up Certification Committee  
held on 4 June 2001 at the Marriott Hotel, New Orleans, USA**

<b>Present:</b>	Dr V E Rose	(Chairman)
	Mr D E Agopsowicz	American Board of Industrial Hygienists
	Dr D Cottica	Italian Industrial Hygiene Association
	Mr M Newell	British Institute of Occupational
Hygienists		
	Dr W Spieler	Swiss Society for Occupational Hygiene
	Ms E Steyne	Southern African Institute for Occupational Hygiene
<b>Observers:</b>	Dr R Hanhela	Finnish Occupational Hygiene Society
	Miss H Jackson	Australian Institute of Occupational
Hygienists		
	Ms G Nise	Swedish Association of Occupational
and		
		Environmental Hygiene
	Mr S Zachariassen	Norwegian Occupational Hygiene
Association		
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs P M Blythe	Secretariat Manager
<b>Apologies:</b>	Dr L Burdorf	Dutch Occupational Hygiene Society

1. In accordance with the IOHA Certification Committee Charter (approved by the IOHA Board 17.11.00), it was agreed that representatives from the Canadian, Italian, Norwegian, The Netherlands,, Southern African, Swiss, USA and UK member organizations would form the Start-up Committee.
2. Dr Rose and Mrs Blythe to consider whether any changes were required to that document, and to put forward any proposals for change to the Start-up Committee prior to submission to the IOHA Board.  
Action : V Rose / P Blythe
3. Those listed in 1. above to be formally asked to nominate a representative to this Committee.

Action : P Blythe

4. IOHA will cover the administrative expenses of the Secretariat, but will not cover any expenses incurred by members of the Committee.
5. Dr Rose and Mrs Blythe to design a form, for use within the Secretariat, which would act as a check-list regarding applications (date received, details of documents received, date forwarded for consultation, date returned from consultation, date vote called/due, result of vote notified to applicant, etc)

Action : V Rose / P Blythe

6. The Committee agreed that
  - a. all applications must be in English;
  - b. those not submitted by email must be provided by the applicant in a sufficient number of copies to enable one copy to go to each member of the Committee (plus one to be retained at the Secretariat);
  - c. upon receipt, all applications would be subject to an initial check by the Chairman and the Secretariat Manager before circulation to other members of the Committee;
  - d. when circulated by the Secretariat to Committee members, a deadline will be set for completion of the review;
  - e. the Chairman to be responsible for relating any queries raised as a consequence of the review process back to the applicant;
  - f. when the iterative process is complete, the Secretariat will call for a vote (by email), including a deadline for receipt of votes (e.g. 30 days from date of call);
  - g. all members of the Committee are required to vote (in favour, against or abstain), any not voting will be expelled from the Committee, although a mechanism and criteria must be devised for re-admission;
  - h. any votes against will be accompanied by reasons for such a vote;
  - i. that the number of votes needed in favour of an application in order that it be approved shall be 75% of the votes cast;
  - j. that approved schemes may style themselves "IOHA Recognised Certification Board"
  - k. any significant changes to an approved scheme must be notified to the Committee;

7. The IOHA Board will require a recommendation from this Committee on the level of fees to be charged to applicants.

Action : All

8. The Committee to recommend to the IOHA Board its preferred form of recognition (e.g. letter, certificate, wall plaque, etc).

Action : All

9. The Committee' Charter, together with an extract from Chapter 9 of the Certification of Occupational Hygienists booklet (published by IOHA in December 2000), to be posted in a Certification section on the web site, and other guidance as developed.

Action : V Rose / P Blythe

10. ABIH and BIOH to submit their own schemes for consideration by the Committee at the earliest opportunity.  
Action : D Agopsowicz / M Newell
11. The Committee hoped that by mid-June 2002 it would have considered applications from all the members of the Start-up Committee, so that it would be in a position to consider others.
12. Dr Rose to write an article for the IOHA Newsletter. Action : V Rose

## ATTACHMENT 3

### Model Process

When the occupational hygienists within a country believe it is time to seriously consider implementing a certification program, the following model should prove useful in designing the process. As with any model, it is necessary to consider realities including, resources, availability of support and other factors and then to adjust the model as appropriate. However, based on the experience of existing Certification Bodies, IOHA believes the model provides fundamental guidance necessary to design a system capable of becoming IOHA Recognized. Circumstances vary considerably, county-to-county, and any model must accommodate the national realities. In considering a model, the workshop attendees highlighted the following desirable elements.

The first step in the process is for the profession (i.e. the national professional organization) to establish a Certifying Body or "Board" to design and implement the process. Ideally this body should consist of occupational hygiene professionals and individuals outside the profession (e.g. allied professional, non-related professionals or the general public). At a minimum, various stakeholders and related professions should have input to the design and implementation of the process to ensure that it meets the national needs. This may help to minimise some of the "negatives of certification" and gain broader support for the undertaking. The goal is to demonstrate that the process is not entirely designed by and for the occupational hygienists, but also values contributions from related sources. The responsibilities of the Certifying Body (the first two may be assumed by the national professional organization) are:

- Develop the mission/goals of the Body
- Market the concept
  - Internally to the profession
  - Externally to the public and government
- Develop the process; consider the IOHA model and existing programs in other countries
- Implement and maintain the process.

In addition to the Certifying body, the model process also suggests establishing a formal External Body (or Advisory Board) consisting of representatives from IOHA and certifying Bodies in other countries. The External Body can serve two purposes:

- 1 Provide startup advice including assistance in evaluating if a critical mass of hygienists exists to support a viable certification

program (are there enough potential candidates whose fees can be used to develop and maintain a quality certification program?). It is recommended that the concept of a "critical mass" include the strength of the national occupational hygiene organization and the participation of several nationals who have been certified by an IOHA Recognized Certifying Body. Also important in judging the "critical mass" is the geographical distribution of professionals.

- 2 Provide peer review of the process once implemented and until recognized by IOHA

The certification process should be designed with the following considerations as guiding principles: objectivity, consistency, and integrity.

- Objectivity means that the process relies on evaluation procedures that are verifiable and reproducible. This includes procedures for evaluating education, experience and knowledge.
- Consistency requires the evaluation techniques be applied in a non-arbitrary manner. Each applicant within the national scheme for certification must be evaluated using the same procedures and criteria. Appeal procedures should also be established and uniformly applied.
- The confidentiality of both the applicants and appropriate parts of the process (e.g. answers to examination questions) must be fully maintained.
- Where objectivity, consistency and confidentiality are of primary importance, the integrity of the process will be established.

In designing a model program, three basic requirements/criteria are necessary to demonstrate competence: knowledge, experience and verification (examination).

- Knowledge of relevant basic sciences obtained through completion of a B.Sc., or equivalent, from an accredited university. If an alternative route to an equivalent level of knowledge and permissible (combination of education and experience) they must be well established.
- Experience is demonstrated by working as a professional hygienist for at least four years. An advanced academic degree in occupational hygiene can count for some of the years. To be acceptable experience, the work must have

included the anticipation, recognition, evaluation and control of hazards and be documented through appropriate references and/or reports.

- Verification of competence is usually accomplished with a written and/or oral examination. If oral questioning is used, the Board should consult with other experienced certifying bodies to ensure consistency among examiners. The examination should be designed to require problem solving skills rather than simply memorizing facts or formulas. Indeed, it is appropriate to provide examinees with appropriate formulas to be used during the examination. The examination should cover the comprehensive practice of occupational hygiene, but should be based on what constitutes the practice of occupational hygiene in the country. Consider using a formal process, such as RDTA<sup>1</sup> to determine examination content. Candidates should be provided with guidance regarding examination content and procedures. The examination passing criteria (for written examination the score, for an oral examination the concepts to be understood) should be established and published before the first candidates for certification are processed. As the passing criteria are changed, the information should be made available to new candidates. A system should be in place to ensure quality. For example, a professional examination service with question development and evaluation and related skills could be engaged to evaluate examination content, results and to assist in examination maintenance and update.

Unsuccessful candidates should be advised as to their shortcomings in meeting any of the criteria (education, experience or examination) and given guidance as to what steps they might take to satisfy deficiencies especially in their formal education or quality of their work experience. Where the candidate does not pass the examination, feedback is also important. Feedback may include weak subject areas (if the examination is structured in such a form), the candidate's score which can then be compared with the passing score, or deficiencies in providing responses to oral questions.

Once an individual successfully completes the certification process, the Certifying Body has the responsibility to ensure that the Certified Professional maintains his/her competency. The process, usually known as Maintenance of Certification, should, at a basic minimum, involve periodic reporting (every 4 -6 years) by the Certified Professional of activities, which demonstrate ongoing professional development. Elements often included in program are:

- Continuing professional experience
- Professional activities including teaching, writing peer reviewed articles and participation on relevant technical committees
- Participation in professional and development courses (e.g. continuing education).

The Certifying Body should also consider the Certified Professional's adherence to a Code of Ethics as a requirement for continuing certification.

## ***Sources of Assistance***

In the initial stages of developing a Certification Program, the responsible professional organization (usually the national association of occupational hygienists) should consider consulting with other organizations whose experience might be useful. Such organizations include:

- Existing certifying boards
- Membership organizations
- Examination design services
- Third party accrediting bodies, i.e. organisations which accredit certifying bodies

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<sup>1</sup> Role Delineation/Task Analysis is a formal process for identifying what day-to-day activities constitute the practice of a profession. The examination content should reflect the work of the practitioners. For details see: Rose, V.E., Wilkening, G.M., and Rosen, G.A.: The Practice of Industrial Hygiene: Role Delineation Analysis-American Board of Industrial Hygiene. Am. Ind. Hyg. Assoc. J. 46:A8-A10 (1985).