Report on Other Standards Activities

Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

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This document contains an overview of related voluntary standards and guidelines on the topic of psychological health and safety in the workplace and describes current international standards development work under development.
Introduction

Despite data pointing to the high incidence of psychosocial hazards in the workplace throughout the world, few voluntary standards exist that provide guidance on psychological health and safety management process and there are no international standards at the present time. Existing standards for occupational health and safety lack clarity around the concepts of psychosocial risks and their management.

A standard is defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) as a document established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.

The project by BNQ and CSA to develop a National Standard of Canada on Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace and championed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, is a ground-breaking standards activity. It is anticipated that this will be the first national, consensus-based, voluntary standard to address this critical subject.

This report provides a scan of other relevant standards and guidelines directly related to the topic of psychological health and safety in the workplace and an overview of some related standards activities that are currently under development. Recommendations for possible future actions are also included. This report does not include information about government regulations, policies or standards on this subject or general guidance information developed by safety organizations, government agencies, research institutes or industry groups.

Part 1: Standards directly referring to the concept of psychological health and safety in the workplace or psychosocial risk

United Kingdom – British Standards Institute (BSI)

PAS 1010:2011 – Guidance on the management of psychosocial risks in the workplace

BSI published this Publicly Available Specification (PAS) in February 2011. It offers guidance and good practice on assessing and managing psychosocial risks at work. The development of this guidance document was led by BSI, the University of Nottingham and the Institute of Work and Health and Organizations (I-WHO). A PAS is a consensual based document developed by a balanced standards development committee. It is a sponsored fast track specification developed to meet the needs of the marketplace. After two years, the PAS is reviewed and a decision is made as to whether it should be developed into a formal British Standard.

The Scope for this PAS is as follows:
This Publicly Available Specification (PAS) provides employers with guidance on good practice for the assessment and management of psychosocial risks in a workplace environment.

This PAS is applicable to human resources managers and specialists, occupational health and safety managers and specialists, managers and owners of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and employee representatives.
This PAS is most likely to be used by organizations that wish to:

a) establish a strategy and process of psychosocial risk management to eliminate or minimize risks to personnel and other interested parties who could be exposed to psychosocial hazards associated with its activities;

b) implement, maintain and continually improve the psychosocial risk management process and related practices;

c) assure themselves of their conformity with their stated occupational health and safety (OH&S) and psychosocial risk policy.

The guidance and recommendations in this PAS are intended to be incorporated into any OH&S management system. The extent of the application will depend on such factors as the OH&S policy of the organization, the nature of its activities and the risks and complexity of its operations.

**PAS 1012 – Code of Practice for the Resilience, Well-being and Returning to Work (under development)**

This document is comprised of two parts. The first part provides guidance in relation to prevention or resilience in the workplace by individual employees taking personal responsibility for their own well-being. The second part lays out clear procedures to ensure that employees receive an effective return to work programme. It is anticipated that this PAS will be available sometime in late 2012.

Notes: Whereas PAS 1010 is a GUIDELINE document, PAS 1012 is a CODE OF PRACTISE. This is a live PAS project, and the draft PAS document has been through the first of two Steering Group meetings and is currently available for public consultation. It will therefore probably not be published until later in 2012.

The Scope for this PAS is as follows:

This Publicly Available Specification (PAS) provides recommendations for employers in relation to good practice for the management of stress and the promotion of wellbeing and resilience at the individual level. It provides a framework for:

- employers to identify, select and evaluate the services they need for management of stress from the perspective of building resilience in the workforce;

- the service provider to demonstrate competence.

This PAS is intended for use by persons responsible for implementing, delivering and managing stress awareness and wellness and resilience building programmes in the workplace. This includes both employers and service providers.

It is also intended for use by service providers implementing training, health and safety officers, human resource managers and specialists, occupational health managers and specialists, employee assistance providers and employee representatives.
NOTE 1: Training programmes involving awareness, assessment, management and prevention of stress in individuals in the workplace may incorporate/use this PAS. It may also be incorporated into any return to work policy involving absenteeism caused by workplace stress.


NOTE 3: PAS 1012 was out for public consultation until June 15, 2012.

PAS 1011 – Management Competencies and Standards (on hold)
This proposed standard is based on management standards and competencies and is intended to provide guidelines for managers to ensure they have the core knowledge to implement their organization’s policy and to understand their own responsibility in relation to the policy and managing stress. BSI advises that this project is on hold at present as a PAS and is exploring with their partners at the University of Nottingham to see if they can resurrect it.

Note: neither PAS 1010, nor PAS 1012 are currently proposed to become either European or International standards.

United States -- American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS)
ASIS GDL WPV 09- Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Guideline, 2005,
This guideline presents practical definitions of workplace violence and the continuum of acts, from less severe to more severe, and a classification of workplace violence incidents based on the relationship of perpetrator to victim. It outlines prevention strategies and procedures for detecting, investigating, managing, and following up on threats or violent incidents that occur in a workplace.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
ISO 10075-3:2004 – Ergonomic principles related to mental workload
This international standard developed by ISO Technical Committee on Ergonomics (TC 159) establishes principles and requirements for the measurement and assessment of mental workload and specifies the requirements for measurement instruments. It provides information for choosing appropriate methods and provides information on aspects of assessing and measuring mental workload to improve communication among the parties involved. This document lists 29 task features that influence the intensity of mental workload and are sources of fatigue.

ISO 10075-3 is intended for use mainly by ergonomic experts, for example, psychologists, occupational health specialists, and/or physiologists, with appropriate training in the theoretical background and usage of such methods, as well as in the interpretation of the results. In this standard, specialists will find information needed when developing or evaluating methods of mental-workload assessment.
Part 2: Related Standards and Standards Under Development

ISO 26000:2010 – Guidance on Social Responsibility

This innovative ISO standard, published in 2010, includes a clause requiring organizations to “strive to eliminate psychosocial hazards in the workplace, which contribute or lead to stress and illness”. At the present time, BNQ and CSA are working jointly to adopt this ISO guidance standard as a National Standard of Canada. In March 2010, the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the first time listed mental and behavioural disorders, post traumatic stress disorders, and other mental disorders as a recognized occupational disease, which supports the importance of the requirement in ISO 26000.

ISO 10667-1:2011 – Assessment service delivery – Procedures and methods to assess people in work and organizational settings – Part 1: Requirements for the client
(developed by ISO TC 230 Project Committee on Psychological Assessment)

This standard establishes requirements and guidance for the client working with the service provider to carry out the assessment of an individual, a group, or an organization for work-related purposes. It enables the client to base its decisions on sound assessment results. ISO It also specifies assessment methods and procedures that can be carried out for various work-related purposes made by or affecting individuals, groups or organizations.

ISO 10667-2:2011 – Assessment service delivery – Procedures and methods to assess people in work and organizational settings – Part 2: Requirements for service providers
(developed by ISO TC 230 Project Committee on Psychological Assessment)

This standard establishes requirements and guidance for the service provider in working with a client to carry out the assessment of an individual, group or organization for work-related purposes and to deliver quality assessment services. It also contains guidance for the service provider in the delivery and use of assessment methods and procedures that can be carried out for various work-related purposes made by or affecting individuals, groups or organizations.

BNQ 9700-800/2008 – Prevention, Promotion and Organizational Practices Contributing to Mental Health in the Workplace

This Standard, also known as the “Healthy Enterprise Standard”, was developed by the BNQ to support the initiative of Groupe de promotion pour la prevention en santé (GP2S), a coalition of organizations dedicated to workplace health promotion and disease prevention. The purpose of the Standard is the maintenance and sustainable improvement of individual health. The Standard calls for integration of the value of individual health into organizations management processes. It also seeks to create favourable conditions for empowerment of individuals regarding their health and to encourage them to adopt and maintain healthy living habits. This standard serves as a reference for a certification program administered by the BNQ.

Note: The subject of this standard has been included in the SCC areas of priority and BNQ plans to develop a National Standard of Canada based on this standard.
BNQ 9700-820/2010 – Work-Family Balance

This Standard, developed by the BNQ, specifies the requirements regarding good work-family balance (WFB) practices tailored to the characteristics and realities of organizations and their employees. The standard aims to promote WFB as an integral part of an organization’s management of human resources. It applies to all types of organizations (private, public and other) seeking to implement and maintain WFB measures and practices that match the needs expressed by both employees and organizations. This standard (PDF) is available free of charge, and it serves as a reference for a certification program administered by the BNQ.

CSA Z1002, Occupational Health and Safety – Hazards and Risks – Identification, Assessment, Elimination and Control

(under development, publication scheduled for summer 2012)

This new Standard will provide users with guidance on how to identify hazards, assess risks, and choose appropriate controls for hazards and risks that cannot be eliminated, to ensure that risk is reduced to ensure the health and safety of workers. It will augment existing OH&S management systems, and provide guidance to users to select appropriate assessment methods for the nature of hazards and risks under consideration. High level guidance on psychosocial hazards is included in the Standard.

CAN/CSA Z1000–06 – Occupational health and safety management

This Standard, published in 2006, specifies requirements for an occupational health and safety management system. The purpose of the Standard is to enable an organization to improve its occupational health and safety performance, and thus reduce or prevent occupational injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. The Standard is based on principles and model for a management system (Plan, Do, Check, Act). This standard is currently under review by the CSA Technical Committee to determine if any updates are required.

CAN/CSA ISO 31000-10 Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines

This is the Canadian adoption, without modifications, of the identically titled ISO Standard (published in 2009) as a National Standard of Canada. The Standard provides internationally accepted principles for effective risk management. The Standard will help users manage risks so that they can implement and continuously improve a risk management framework as an integral component of their organization’s governance and management systems.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) -- Human resource (HR) management

An ISO committee, ISO/TC 260, Human resource management, was established in 2011 to develop standards for HR management (including guidelines, processes, policies, practices, services). It will promote reliable and transferable approaches to workforce management in developed and emerging economies for the overall benefit or organizations and their employees. The standards will help organizations adapt to, and exploit demographic shifts that influence their access to workers.

It will reduce the barriers to exchange (trade) of talent across regions by harmonizing the processes to physically move talent and the assessments of their competence (skills, knowledge, abilities, and results).
Some 13 countries are actively participating in this work and twenty countries are observers to this work. Canada has agreed to be an observer. The Secretariat of the committee is held by ANSI. The Technical Committee will be developing standards in the following areas:

- Compensation, total rewards, benefits and employee relations
- Regulatory compliance practices
- HR aspects of alliances, joint ventures, mergers and acquisitions
- HR information systems
- Performance appraisal and feedback
- Change management and organizational development
- Workforce planning, retrenchment and talent management
- Training and development and Leadership development
- Job analysis and design
- Workplace readiness and sustainability

While current scope of work does not address the management of psychological health and safety, the Secretariat has indicated that it could be considered as a new work item in the future. At this time, Canada has chosen to observe the work of this Committee to help determine if this is an appropriate forum for the development of an international standard on psychological health and safety in the workplace, and, if so, when might be the appropriate time to present a new work item on this subject.

**United Kingdom – British Standards Institute (BSI)**

**BS OHSAS 18001:2007 - Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements**

BS OHSAS 18001 helps organizations to implement a sound occupational health and safety management system, so they can reduce risks to personnel and put the right safety measures in place. The standard also looks at the ways to improve and maintain occupational health and safety systems, while in line with company’s policies. By complying with it, organizations can improve their overall working environment and conditions of employment. BSI has also produced additional guidance documents to help organizations implement this standard. While not a full consensus standard, this specification is the most widely used OHSMS in the world and is the basis of auditing/management systems certification programs.

**United States -- American National Standards Institute (ANSI)**


This OHSMS voluntary consensus standard provides management systems requirements and guidelines for improvement of occupational health and safety. Experts from labor, government, professional organizations and industry formulated this standard after extensive examination of current national and international standards, guidelines and practices. It provides the blueprint for widespread benefits in health and safety, as well as in productivity, financial, performance, quality, and other organizational and business objectives. The seven sections include Management Leadership and Employee Participation, Planning, Implementation and Operation,
Evaluation and Corrective Action, and Management Review. Appendices address roles and responsibilities, policy statements, assessment and prioritization, audit information, and much more.

**Related Publication from the International Labour Office (ILO)**

The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards. In 2000, ILO published a number of situational analysis papers on the subject of mental health in the workplace. At that time ILO indicated that it would continue to develop guidelines for mental health promotion in the workplace. While it has not developed any standards or codes of practice in this area at this time, it has recently published a manual, titled, *Stress Prevention at Work Checkpoints* (2012). This manual was developed by ILO, using a group of six experts and reviewed by external experts associated with international organizations of employers and workers. The manual identifies 50 checkpoints which represent simple, actions that can be applied to the workplace to deal with problems causing stress in the workplace.

**Conclusions**

While there are many general voluntary standards in the area of occupational health and safety, most of these focus on the physical aspects of the work environment. In recent years, a few countries have developed preliminary standards, regulations and policy frameworks for psychosocial risks in workplace. Additionally, a number of guidance documents related to psychological health and safety have been published by government agencies, safety organizations, and research institutes. With the publication the BNQ/CSA Standard, Canada will be the first country to have a national, consensus-based, voluntary standard, providing an organizational management process that can be aligned with other management and business standards. Canada will have an opportunity to share information with other standards bodies in North America and internationally, in an effort to advance this subject area beyond Canadian borders.

**Recommendations** (possible future actions)

1) BNQ and CSA should continue to observe and monitor the work program and activities of the ISO Technical Committee 260 on Human Resources Management during FY 2012/13 to determine if this Committee is the appropriate forum to advance a new work item for psychological health and safety in the workplace. They could provide a report and recommendations to the BNQ/CSA Technical Committee and members of PRC, and explore the possibilities of funding for international activities.

2) Continue the dialogue between BNQ, CSA and BSI to share information about mutual work in the area of standards and supplementary products for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace with the objective of determining opportunities for collaboration and next steps to advance this subject at the international level. BNQ and CSA could provide a report and recommendations to the BNQ/CSA Technical Committee and members of PRC, and explore the possibilities of funding for these activities.
3) Initiate a dialogue between BNQ, CSA, Standards Council of Canada and ANSI to share information about North American standards work in the area of Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace and to explore any potential areas for collaboration. BNQ and CSA could provide a report and recommendations to the BNQ/CSA Technical Committee and members of PRC, and explore the possibilities of funding for these activities.