

Using Existing Resources

Leveraging what already exists to help manage psychosocial hazards

AMTA and Psychosocial Hazards

Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) is working to draw attention to the problem of workplace psychosocial hazards in the trucking industry. We have published a [guide on addressing psychosocial hazards](#) meant to provide best practices small- and medium-sized carriers can put into place. This bulletin presents one of the best practices from the guide: using existing resources.



Overview

Carriers struggling with or confused about psychosocial hazards should know they are not alone. Many other companies and organizations are struggling to address these hazards from an occupational health and safety standpoint.

Creating a safety program to address psychosocial hazards can seem like an overwhelming task. Fortunately, organizations have created and published resources to help companies address psychosocial hazards. While many of the practices listed in this paper likely require professional help at some point in their implementation, carriers can use free resources to at least plan their approach.

Just because a resource is free doesn't mean its quality is questionable. Organizations interested in improving health and safety at workplaces frequently provide free material in the spirit of promoting their message. For an organization that wants to see psychosocial hazards mitigated, free resources allow them to remove the cost barrier to accessing their knowledge.

Benefits

An obvious benefit to free resources is their price. Carriers are free to pay for services to address problems in their workplaces, but they can at least start learning through free resources and then make educated purchasing decisions should they decide to purchase a service or product.

Due to the multitude of freely-available information related to psychosocial hazards, carriers do not have to take a single approach. They can borrow elements from different sources to craft a strategy that makes sense for their operations.

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Challenges

The last paragraph above is also one of the challenges with free resources: there is a lot of information to sift through. This is one of the concerns AMTA is addressing through this bulletin series and our [psychosocial hazards guide](#): to do the research for carriers and provide them with options that are likely to work using our understanding of Alberta's trucking industry.

Some resources are very generic. When this is the case, the carrier may have to reach out to the organization that published it for specific information or guidance to see how to apply the recommendations in the resource to their operations.

Finally, taking a free resource and only doing a surface-level implementation does not constitute due diligence. In safety, due diligence "means that employers shall take all reasonable precautions, under the particular circumstances, to prevent injuries or incidents in the workplace." [1] Carriers need to measure their psychosocial hazard mitigation efforts against this definition.

Where to Find Resources

One of the most prominent resources carriers can use to address psychosocial hazards is the Canadian Standards Association's (CSA Group) National Standard of Canada Psychological health and safety in the workplace, a voluntary standard to address psychological and psychosocial hazards [2].

Implementing the above CSA Standard is complex. To help in its implementation, CSA Group has also published *Assembling the Pieces*, a guide on how to implement the CSA Standard [3].

The CSA Standard contains a section discussing 13 workplace factors that affect psychological health and safety [4]. These were developed from *GuardingMinds@Work*, an online resource employers can use to create a workplace-specific action plan [5]. These 13 psychosocial workplace factors are:

1. Balance
2. Civility and Respect
3. Clear Leadership and Expectations
4. Engagement
5. Growth and Development
6. Involvement and Influence
7. Organizational Culture
8. Protection of Physical Safety
9. Psychological Competencies and Demands
10. Psychological Protection
11. Psychological and Social Support
12. Recognition and Reward
13. Workload Management

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Carriers can access the CSA Standard [6] and GuardingMinds@Work [7] for details on these factors, with GuardingMinds@Work more specifically aimed at providing an action plan for employers.

The Government of Alberta offers a variety of free resources, from research reports [8] to occupational health and safety-specific bulletins and resources to prevent harassment, workplace violence, and psychosocial hazards [9]. The Federal Government of Canada also offers similar resources [10].

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) offers a variety of mental health resources and training for people throughout Canada. They offer specific workplace mental health training for employers to help create psychological safety for their workers [11]. Not all CMHA services are necessarily free; employers can contact CMHA for more information on their services.

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) has a detailed library on information about occupational health and safety. Specific to psychosocial hazards and mental health, they offer resources which can be accessed at no cost [12] in addition to paid training.

Trucking HR Canada is a Canadian not-for-profit organization that provides a wealth of resources on a wide range of human resource-related topics in Canada's trucking industry. They have previously published a best practices resource for trucking employers called Gearing Up for Workplace Mental Health [13] which presents additional best practices and resources for carriers across Canada.

Finally, health and safety associations like AMTA can work with employers to find resources appropriate to their operations. AMTA supports Alberta's trucking industry and employers who have commercial fleets whose primary business isn't the transportation of freight or passengers.

Need Help? Contact AMTA

AMTA can provide carriers with guidance on the information presented in this bulletin. If you have any questions, please contact AMTA and our experienced staff will be happy to help. For your safety and compliance questions, please email Workplace Support Services (WSS) directly at wss@amta.ca.

For more updates like this on a variety of topics related to the trucking industry, please [sign up for our eNews](#).

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