

Dear Stakeholder,

I would like to provide you with an update on the next phase of our consultation process regarding the *Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act*.

Our government is establishing six technical working groups to consult on the development of employment standards regulations, occupational health and safety (OHS) standards, and labour relations legislation.

The technical working groups will specifically address:

- Employment Standards Code: This working group will determine how various employment standards can be implemented in ways that make sense in the context of the agriculture sector.
- Labour Relations Code: This working group will determine how to ensure Alberta's laws are compliant with recent Supreme Court decisions.
- Occupational Health and Safety Code – Review of Existing Requirements and Exceptions (two groups): These working groups will consider the applicability of parts 1-29 of the Occupational Health and Safety Code with the unique considerations of farm and ranch work.
- Occupational Health and Safety Code – Best Practices for Agriculture: This working group will assist with the review of current best practices related to healthy and safe operations on farms and ranches, and provide advice, suggestions, and recommendations on the best practices prevalent in the agricultural sector.
- Occupational Health and Safety Code – Education, Training and Certification: This working group will assist with a review of the current OHS education and training tools available for farms and ranches, and provide recommendations to Labour and Agriculture and Forestry on which education, training, and certification requirements the agriculture sector will be able to use or find useful.

Please see the attached documentation regarding the mandates for a more detailed breakdown of the goals and expectations for these groups.

The technical working groups will be made up of representatives from the agricultural sector, labour groups, and technical experts. Each technical working group will be chaired by an independent and impartial individual with demonstrated mediation, consensus, and board governance experience. The role of the chair will be to encourage and enable full participation of the technical working group members.

I have also included in this package a nomination form for member positions. In the package you will see the qualities and qualifications we are seeking in members to ensure the groups provide quality recommendations for government's consideration.

I would appreciate your suggestions on individuals who could potentially serve as members of the technical working groups. Please use the enclosed nomination form to submit names and contact information to my ministry at [FarmandRanchSecretariat@gov.ab.ca](mailto:FarmandRanchSecretariat@gov.ab.ca). We plan to go through the nomination and evaluation process and begin discussions in late February.

I have been reaching out to many individuals and organizations and I look forward to seeing a comprehensive list of qualified individuals who can bring valuable perspectives to this process.

Our government is committed to working with you and taking the time necessary to ensure we get this right. We want to build a made-in-Alberta solution that works for Alberta farms and ranches.

For the most current information on this process, please go to <http://www.alberta.ca/farm-and-ranch.cfm>.

Thank you,

Oneil Carlier  
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry

## Technical Working Groups Terms of Reference

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### Scope and Purpose

The six technical working groups (TWGs) will consult on the development of employment standards regulations, occupational health and safety (OHS) standards, and labour relations legislation.

The TWGs will specifically address:

- Labour Relations Code: This TWG will determine how to ensure Alberta's laws are compliant with recent Supreme Court decisions.
- Employment Standards Code: This TWG will determine how various employment standards can be implemented in ways that make sense in the context of the agriculture sector.
- Occupational Health and Safety Code – Review of Existing Requirements and Exceptions (two groups): These TWGs will consider the applicability of Parts 1-29 of the Occupational Health and Safety Code with the unique considerations of farm and ranch work.
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### Membership

Each TWG will have a maximum of 12 members plus one chair.

The membership will reflect a broad and diverse range of voices from the farming and ranching sector as well as experts in farm safety, labour relations, occupational health and safety codes, and employment standards.

### Technical Working Group Support

Staff from Agriculture and Forestry and Labour will provide facilitation, coordination, secretariat support, and technical expertise to all TWGs.

### Remuneration and expenses

TWG members will be entitled to a per diem based on the standard government rate.. Eligible per diem hours include attendance at meetings and travel to and from meetings.

Other expenses incurred related to the performance of services are governed by the following:

- (a) For travel by automobile directly related to the performance of the services, reimbursements shall be paid at the kilometer rates as described by the Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expense Policy (<http://www.finance.alberta.ca/business/planning-accountability/accountability/GoA-Travel-Meal-and-Hospitality-Expense-Policy.pdf>)
- (b) For costs incurred directly related to performance of the services for:
  - Travel by public conveyance,
  - Meals and accommodations, and
  - Telephone, courier, and other communications services.

Reimbursement shall be paid at government rates, as set out in the policy as amended, or where no rate is specified, at reasonable rates. Copies of receipts or invoices should accompany the invoice.

### **Membership Terms**

Members are required to attend all TWG meetings. Member substitutions and delegations are not allowed.

In the event that members cannot attend required meetings, membership may be withdrawn.

Membership will be concluded upon completion of duties as determined by the chair and/or minister(s).

Members will be appointed for a term of up to one year.

### **Meeting Schedule**

Meeting dates will be set by the chair. Meetings will be held in the Edmonton area or Calgary area.

TWG members must have the ability to apply necessary time and effort to the TWG. This includes meeting preparation (e.g. reading), attendance, and follow-up.

### **Technical Working Group members will meet:**

- Between March 14 and 24, 2016, for a two-day meeting.
- Between June 13 and 30, 2016, for one, possibly two, two-day meetings, depending on requirements.
- In late July or August, for either a one- or two-day meeting.

Members need to respond to e-mails and be available for conference calls in April and May. Additional meetings or conference calls may be required.

## **Recommendation Development**

TWG decisions are reached through consensus. Consensus means TWG members are committed to finding solutions that everyone actively supports, or at least can live with.

TWG decisions will be recorded in meeting minutes.

## **Accountability**

Members of the TWGs are accountable to the Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry and Labour.

## **Communication**

Key messages from the TWGs will be formulated at the end of each meeting.

Official TWG communication to the Ministers, both written and verbal, will be through the chair and based on TWG key messages.

Each TWG's chair serves as official spokesperson. TWG members should direct media inquiries to the chair. Communication with the media will reflect TWG key messages.

TWG recommendations will be presented to the Ministers in writing.

**Position Profile**  
**Farm and Ranch Worker Safety Consultation**  
**Member – Technical Working Groups**

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The Government of Alberta created the *Enhanced Protection for Farm and Ranch Workers Act* to bring the protection and compensation of waged, non-family farm and ranch workers in line with protections already extended to other workers in Alberta and similar to other provinces, where family farms continue to thrive.

Government is looking to consult with farmers, ranchers, workers, agriculture sector representatives, and other stakeholders to design workplace regulations that reflect the unique nature of farming and ranching. Input is needed on how to best implement the changes for Occupational Health and Safety, Labour Relations and Employment Standards legislation, as well as on what supports might be required to enable recommended changes.

The Government of Alberta is establishing six technical working groups (TWGs) tasked with developing recommendations to inform the drafting of regulations, codes and guidelines for the farm and ranch legislation. Group membership will represent the diversity of stakeholders to ensure representation of both employees and farm and ranch owners. Other factors considered in member selection include: geography, gender, farm operation size, commodity, and ownership structure. Academics, industry professionals, safety associations, and safety delivery organizations will also be considered. Working groups are advisory to the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Minister of Labour.

The TWGs will specifically address:

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TWG members will demonstrate the following key competencies:

- Strategic thinking.
- Integrity and accountability.
- Relationship building (team player, collegial, collaborative).
- Leadership, conflict resolution, and consensus building.
- Effective communicator.
- The ability to synthesize complex information and ideas into clearly articulated strategies and recommendations.
- Results oriented.
- Understanding of labour relations, employment standards, or occupational health and safety standards and best practices.
- Experience serving on public or volunteer boards.
- In-depth knowledge and understanding of the diversity of agriculture in Alberta (regions, commodities, production systems).
- A degree or technical expertise in a related field and/or experience with 4H would be considered assets.

**Commitment:**

Must have the ability to apply necessary time and effort to the TWG. This includes timely response to e-mails and follow-up enquiries and preparation for and participation in all required meetings, conference calls, and video conferences.

The TWG will meet:

- Between March 14 and 24, 2016, for a two-day meeting.
- Between June 13 and 30, 2016, for one, possibly two, two-day meetings, depending on requirements.
- In late July or August, for either a one- or two-day meeting.
- Additional meetings or conference calls may be required.