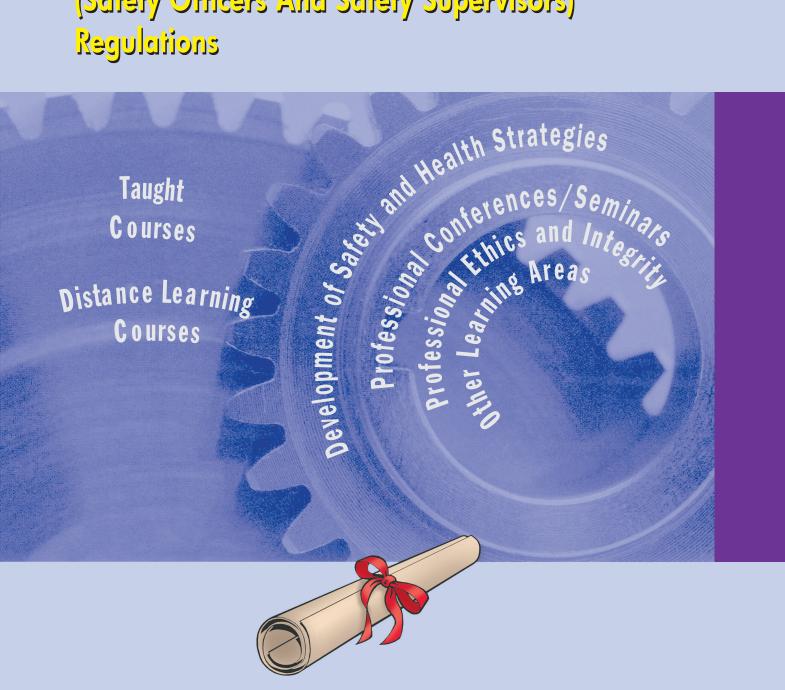
Guidance Noies On
Continuing Professional Development Programmes
Under The Factories And Industrial Undertakings
(Safety Officers And Safety Supervisors)
Regulations







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Guidance Notes On Continuing Professional Development Programmes Under The Factories And Industrial Undertakings (Safety Officers And Safety Supervisors) Regulations



January 2022

Continuing Professional Development Programmes for Registered Safety Officers

Introduction

- 1. The Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Safety Officers and Safety Supervisors) Regulations provide, among other things, that the registration of safety officers shall be valid for a period of 4 years subject to renewal or revalidation. Application for renewal or revalidation of registration shall only be approved if the Commissioner for Labour ("Commissioner") is satisfied that the applicant has completed a total of not less than 100 hours of Continuing Professional Development ("CPD") Programmes in occupational safety and health ("OSH") in the 4 years immediately preceding the application.
- 2. CPD Programme means a course, lecture, seminar or other programme, including distance learning programme that, in the opinion of the Commissioner:-
 - is relevant to the needs and professional standards of registered safety officers ("RSOs");
 - enhances professional competence; and
 - complies with any notes of guidance as may be issued from time to time by the Commissioner.
- The purpose of this Guidance Notes is to provide guidance for RSOs to pursue CPD Programmes for the purpose of renewing or revalidating their registration as safety officers.

- 4. RSOs play important roles in ensuring safety and health of persons employed in industrial undertakings. They advise the proprietors of industrial undertakings of appropriate measures through work such as workplace inspections, incident / accident investigations and assist in the development of safety management systems to ensure OSH of employees. With the rapid development of science and technology, the skills and professional knowledge of RSOs should be kept pace with times for RSOs to cope with the risks faced by all relevant industries. To this aim, the Labour Department publishes the fourth edition of "Guidance Notes on Continuing Professional Development Programmes under the Factories and Industrial Undertakings (Safety Officers and Safety Supervisors) Regulations" ("Guidance Notes") to meet the development and needs of the industries, and the expectation of relevant stakeholders on the professional standards of RSOs. The major amendments made to this edition include:
 - (i) adding professional ethics and integrity of safety officers as a compulsory CPD Programme;
 - (ii) accepting training on subjects in other learning areas ("OLA"), i.e. engineering, information technology / software application and soft skills training as CPD Programmes; and
 - (iii) adjusting the maximum acceptable CPD hours of each category of CPD Programmes to tie in with the above amendments.
- 5. This Guidance Notes (i.e. the Fourth Edition) becomes effective on 1 January 2023.

The Principles of CPD

- 6. Every professional has to continuously upgrade his knowledge and skills to keep pace with changes and developments in his professional field. Safety officers, as registered professionals in the OSH field, are no exception.
- 7. Becoming an RSO is the first step towards a life-long process of continuing education, training and development. RSOs have a continuing duty to (i) provide services at a high standard of conduct and integrity; and (ii) enhance their professional competence to ensure that the clients or employers receive the benefits of competent professional services based on the latest developments in safety technology, practices and legislation.
- 8. There are many means of meeting CPD requirements. They include attendance at conferences, seminars, workshops and completion of short or long courses relevant to the needs of a safety officer. In developing this Guidance Notes, the following broad principles have been adopted:-
 - (a) the success of any CPD scheme depends largely on the integrity of the safety profession. It is the ultimate responsibility of the professional to judge within this Guidance Notes whether the programme can develop him / her personally and professionally. No professional can fully delegate this personal responsibility to a set of rules or Guidance Notes. RSOs as a professional group must be relied upon to be selfregulating;
 - (b) all CPD Programmes that are in line with this Guidance Notes will, in the opinion of the Commissioner, be relevant to the needs and professional standards of RSOs and enhance professional competence, and will therefore be counted towards the CPD hours for the purpose of renewal or revalidation of registration. There is no need for RSOs or CPD Programme organisers to submit their CPD Programmes for accreditation, although the Commissioner may, at his discretion, ask RSOs for information and evidence to prove their attendance in, participation in and / or completion of CPD Programmes when they apply for renewal or revalidation of registration;

- (c) the range of acceptable CPD Programmes must be sufficiently wide to allow RSOs the flexibility to choose the ones that best suit their developmental needs; and
- (d) RSOs can decide on the combination and pace of the CPD Programmes during the four years preceding the application for renewal or revalidation of registration.

Characteristics of CPD Programmes

- 9. For the purpose of satisfying the requirements for renewal and revalidation of safety officers' registration, CPD Programmes should have the following characteristics:-
 - (a) the CPD Programmes shall be related to OSH and relevant to the needs and professional standards of safety officers;
 - (b) they shall be able to enhance the professional competence of safety officers;
 - (c) they should have a clear set of objectives;
 - (d) they should have a formal structure for developing or imparting professional knowledge (e.g. lectures, courses, seminars, workshops, briefing sessions or visits);
 - (e) they should be formally organised by the Government, Government related organisations, professional bodies, educational institutions, consultants, employee associations or employers; and
 - (f) the programmes should require involvement of the safety officer (e.g. as a student, as a conference delegate or speaker).

Professional Ethics and Integrity of Safety Officers

- 10. For the sake of upholding the professional standards, RSOs in each CPD cycle are required to complete at least one hour of CPD Programme in professional ethics and integrity of safety officers as a compulsory requirement for renewal / revalidation of their registration as safety officers. This compulsory CPD Programme could be professional conferences / seminars offered by the Government, Government related organisations or professional bodies. The contents of these conferences / seminars should include (but are not limited to) the following:-
 - (a) honesty, fairness, impartiality;
 - (b) compliance with the law;
 - (c) protection of information confidentiality; and
 - (d) avoiding conflict of interest, biases and discrimination.

Modes of Acceptable Categories of CPD Programmes

11. CPD Programmes that meet the characteristics in section 9 generally fall into the following categories:-

A. Short or Long Courses

This category covers both taught programmes and distance learning programmes.

Courses conducted by the Government, Government related organisations, professional bodies, educational institutions, consultants or in-house courses organised by the employers and conducted either by the employers' training staff or by outside course providers, or a combination of these, with face-to-face lectures and discussions, are accepted as taught programmes.

Acceptable distance learning courses include structured self-study courses organised by the Government, Government related organisations, professional bodies, educational institutions or other course providers and delivered through correspondence, audio cassettes, video cassettes, television broadcasts, interactive videos, computer-based learning programmes and e-learning.

B. Professional Conferences / Seminars

This category covers the range of professional activities or gatherings such as conferences, seminars, symposiums, forums, workshops, briefing sessions and visits which provide a suitable venue and environment for exchange of professional and / or technical information relevant to the safety profession.

C. Professional Publications and Innovations

This category includes contributions to the knowledge of OSH through publication of articles, journal papers and books, and the development of new safety technology.

D. Professional Services

To claim CPD hours in this category, the safety officer shall participate in services on advisory boards, technical or research committees or special working groups of statutory bodies or professional bodies dealing with OSH.

E. Development of Safety and Health Strategies / Training Programmes

This category covers activities for developing OSH strategies or training programmes for implementation in an organisation. Safety officers who are responsible for developing such strategies or training programmes are eligible to claim CPD hours.

Other Learning Areas

- 12. To enhance the professional competence of RSOs, training programmes of the following OLA through short or long courses, professional conferences / seminars would be accepted as CPD Programmes if they meet the characteristics in section 9 and the conditions set out below:-
 - (i) Engineering (in any disciplines established by The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers)

Engineering training could enhance the technical competence of RSOs in risk control and hazards mitigation. In this regard, training in engineering belonging to the disciplines established by The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers would be acceptable as CPD Programmes for renewal and revalidation of registration as safety officers.

(ii) Information Technology / Software Application

With advancement of technological development, there is an increasing trend to apply information technology ("IT") in the respective industries. In this regard, IT / software application relating to the duties of RSOs are acceptable CPD Programmes for renewal and revalidation of registration as safety officers.

(iii) Soft Skills

Sharpening essential soft skills to become a more authentic and dynamic OSH professional is a global trend. Soft skills training is complementary to technical training in enhancing the competence of safety officers. Training programmes in soft skills applicable to OSH include (but are not limited to) communication skills, teamwork, decision-making, problem-solving skills, conflict / crisis management, leadership skills, management skills, training and supervisory skills, negotiation skills, report writing skills, etc., and they are acceptable CPD Programmes for renewal and revalidation of registration as safety officers.

Counting of CPD Hours

- 13. In each CPD cycle, the minimum number of acceptable CPD hours to be claimed for professional ethics and integrity of safety officers and the maximum number of acceptable CPD hours to be claimed in each of the categories of CPD Programmes and OLA are specified in Annexes I and II respectively.
- 14. When an RSO chooses to attend a short or long course as a CPD Programme, he / she must complete the course as mentioned in section 8. Completion of the course must mean fulfilling all the course requirements leading to the issue of the certificate of award. If an RSO wishes to claim CPD hours for completion of individual modules / stages of a long course, he / she should make sure before enrollment that: (i) the requirements of the course have spelt out clearly that such course is structured to allow for completion in stages or by modules; and (ii) certificates / proof of attainment would be awarded upon successful completion / fulfilment of all requirements of individual modules / stages of the course.
- 15. CPD hours claimed in connection with taught programmes under the category of Short or Long Courses should be the actual hours of attendance at the lectures.
- 16. As for distance learning programmes, CPD hours should be determined by reference to the required hours of study as published by the course providers.
- 17. CPD hours earned under the category of Professional Conferences / Seminars should be the actual hours of attendance at such conferences / seminars.
- 18. CPD hours earned under the category of Professional Services should be the actual hours of attendance at the meetings of the relevant boards, committees and groups mentioned in section 11D.

- 19. Under the category of Professional Publications and Innovations, 1 CPD hour may be awarded for every 500 words published and up to 50 CPD hours may be earned for each item of Innovation.
- 20. Under the category of Development of Safety and Health Strategies / Training Programmes, not more than 10 hours may be earned for the development of each strategy or training programme.
- 21. A CPD activity shall be claimed only **ONCE** and only in **ONE** category. There shall be no double counting of CPD hours related to activities specified under this Guidance Notes. For example, if an applicant attends the same safety training course several times, it can be claimed for CPD hours only once. Similarly, if an applicant claims CPD hours by undertaking a dissertation towards an academic qualification under the category of "Short or Long Courses", he or she shall not claim the activity under the category of "Professional Publications and Innovations".
- 22. All CPD activities for which CPD hours are claimed must have been undertaken within the cycle to which the application for renewal or revalidation relates. CPD hours in excess of the requirement cannot be carried forward to the succeeding CPD cycle.

Recording and Reporting of CPD Programmes

- 23. A safety officer who wishes to renew or revalidate his / her registration should keep a personal record of the CPD Programmes pursued during the preceding four years and set up a personal system for filing any supporting documentation to prove attendance in, participation in and / or completion of CPD Programmes.
- 24. The onus of furnishing all information and evidence, as may be required by the Commissioner, to prove involvement in CPD Programmes rests with the applicant.

Documents to be submitted

- 25. Applicants shall submit the following documents when making the application for renewal or revalidation:
 - (a) Duly completed and signed application form (i.e. SOSS-F6); and
 - (b) Photocopies of certificates and course information; or attendance certificates and programme rundown of the conferences, seminars, workshops, talks or visits attended; for claiming a large number of CPD hours under a single programme, such as a programme for claiming 20 or more CPD hours.

The Labour Department will conduct sample check on the documents submitted, and may request for further information and/or documents in processing the applications.

- 26. DO NOT SEND THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS. The Labour Department will not be responsible for any loss of the documents. All documents submitted by the applicant will be disposed of by the Labour Department and will not be returned. Application for renewal of the registration shall be made prior to but not earlier than 9 months before the expiration of the registration.
- 27. The applicant should send the duly completed application form to the Registration and Staff Training Division ("RSTD") of the Labour Department. The date of the application will be the date on which we receive the application if the applicant delivers it to us by hand, or the date of the postal chop on the envelope containing the application form if it is sent to us by post.
- 28. The application will be acknowledged in writing. If an acknowledgement is not received within 10 working days, the applicant should check with RSTD. The RSTD will contact the applicant direct for any subsequent communication, if necessary. The actual time taken for processing an application for renewal / revalidation of registration as safety officers depends on the completeness of the information supplied.

Enquiry

29. For enquiries on this Guidance Notes, please contact:

Registration and Staff Training Division Labour Department Units 815-816, 8/F, Grand City Plaza 1-17 Sai Lau Kok Road Tsuen Wan, New Territories

Telephone : 2151 3502 Fax : 2151 4796

E-mail : dso_rst_3@labour.gov.hk

Information on the services offered by the Labour Department and on major labour legislation is also available on our website at www.labour.gov.hk. For details on the services offered by the Occupational Safety and Health Council, please call 2739 9000.

Complaints

30. If you have any complaint about unsafe operations and environments at workplaces, please call the Labour Department's OSH complaint hotline at 2542 2172 or fill out and submit an online OSH complaint form on our website. All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.



Minimum CPD hour of Compulsory CPD Programme required in each CPD cycle

CPD Programmes	Minimum CPD hour in each CPD cycle
Professional Ethics and Integrity of Safety Officers (Professional conferences / seminars offered by the Government, Government related organisations or professional bodies.)	1

Counting of maximum permissible CPD hours in each CPD cycle

Category	Maximum CPD hour in each CPD cycle		
(A) Short or Long Courses (including Other Learning Areas)			
Taught / Distance Learning / e-learning Courses (offered by the Government, Government related organisations, professional bodies or educational institutions)	99		
Taught / Distance Learning / e-learning Courses (offered by others)	50		
(B) Professional Conferences / Seminars (including Other Learning Areas)	99		
(C) Professional Publications and Innovations	99		
(D) Professional Services	50		
(E) Development of Safety and Health Strategies / Training Programmes	50		

Counting of maximum permissible CPD hours in Other Learning Areas in each CPD cycle

Subject	Maximum CPD hours in each subject in each CPD cycle	Maximum total CPD hours in Other Learning Areas in each CPD cycle
(1) Engineering (in any disciplines established by The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers)	20	
(2) Information Technology / Software Application	15	20
(3) Soft Skills	20	

