



# Annual Report

SEPTEMBER 1, 2019 - AUGUST 31, 2020

## Our Story

The BCFED Health and Safety Centre was born out of the BC Federation of Labour's enduring commitment to ensure the protection of every worker—and that remains our goal to this day. A unique extension of the traditional work done by the labour movement, the Centre focuses on engaging with workers and employers, union and non-union alike, and providing the most committed, worker-focused occupational health and safety education available.

BCFED Health and Safety Centre (the Centre) is a non-profit organization committed to helping workers across the province access best practices and effective tools to ensure workplace health and safety. This fundamentally includes highlighting employers' responsibility to provide a safe workplace, what to do when they don't, and how to support and share this knowledge with their fellow coworkers.

Our approach is centred around the idea of collective education. We believe the best people to instruct workers about their health and safety are other workers. All of our instructors began as workers themselves and understand the stresses and constraints of a job site. We also focus on empowering workers to share the knowledge and tools we impart with their colleagues. The safest work sites are ones where workers come together to collectively protect everyone's health and safety.

Our labour roots and non-profit status allow us to focus on a singular goal: ensuring BC's workers are protected. To this end we strive to not only provide the most effective health and safety training available, but empowering workers with the means and confidence to share this knowledge with their coworkers and help provide a safe and healthy workplace for everyone.

# Annual Report

Over the past two decades, the equivalent of 81 years of education has been provided to workers in British Columbia through the Centre. At the beginning of 2020, the Centre team was focused on the execution of the workplan, including incremental infrastructure and organizational changes.

Like businesses and organizations across the globe, we realized by late-March that our plans required rapid recalibration to the new reality. COVID-19 was changing everything about the workplace, including how we worked, where we worked, and even the tools we used for work.

The year's annual report is focused on the Centre's response to COVID-19 and is divided into four sections – Part 1. COVID-19 Response, Part 2. Digital Transformation, Part 3. Major Projects, and Part 4. Workplan Status.

## Part 1. COVID-19 Response

### COVID-19 Programming

When COVID-19 was declared a provincial health emergency, the Centre initially suspended all public and private face-to-face workshops throughout all programming streams.

The Centre quickly identified the need for resources and education for workers and employers, focused specifically on what would be required for compliance with WorkSafeBC and Public Health Officer (PHO) directives. This led to the development of the following webinars with supporting resources:

#### OH&S Committee role during COVID-19

*Participants will understand the role and responsibility joint occupational health and safety committees have during this unprecedented pandemic; including how to identify potential COVID-19 hazards, inspecting the workplace for potential means of exposure, investigation techniques and best practices.*

#### OH&S Rights and Responsibilities

*The webinar outlines workers' rights and responsibilities in a safe workplace and how they have been affected by the COVID-19 public health emergency.*

#### Conducting a Risk Assessment / Exposure Control Plan (ECP) for COVID-19

*An overview of risk assessments, exposure control plans and the May 14, 2020 order from the PHO requiring safety plans for workplaces in relation to COVID-19. An occupational hygienist will be part of the webinar.*

## Mental Health during COVID-19

*Understand the impacts and challenges that workers may face to their mental health during the COVID -19 pandemic in the workplace and working from home. Topics will include awareness, potential effects, coping strategies and available helpful resources.*

## Developing a COVID-19 Safety Plan

*This webinar will provide guidance to employers, supervisors, joint committee members, and workers to understand what is required to develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan.*

At the conclusion of each 90-minute webinar, time was allocated for a question-and-answer period. Questions that could not be captured in the webinar allotted time or were too technical to assist with online were followed up with afterwards. In total, Centre staff provided over detailed written responses to over 140 different employers and workers. In addition, over 400 questions generated and responded due via chat during the initial offering of COVID-19 webinars.

Each topic was supported with a stand-alone resource document. These resources continue to be used, and the Centre was recently approached by SAFE Work Manitoba to adopt our OH&S Committee role during COVID-19 resource document. Links to each resource are included below.

## COVID 19 Resources development by the BCFED Health and Safety Centre

- [Conducting a Risk Assessment / Exposure Control Plan \(ECP\) for COVID-19](#)
- [OH&S Committee role during COVID-19](#)
- [OH&S Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Developing a COVID-19 Safety Plan](#)
- [Mental Health during COVID-19 - Building Psychologically Healthy Workplaces](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources](#)

The popularity of these webinars led to requests for private offerings for the following organizations:

- **SafeCareBC** - OH&S Committee role during COVID-19 (repeat planned for Jan 2021)
- **Professional Employees Association** - OH&S Committee role during COVID-19
- **Northern Savings Credit Union** - Mental Health during COVID-19
- **United Food and Commercial Workers 1518** - OH&S Committee role during COVID-19
- **International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees 891** - H&S Committee role during COVID-19

In total **6435** participants took part in these webinar offerings. We received numerous comments of thanks for the timely service, and the assistance provided to employers to support compliance with new COVID-19 requirements.

## **COVID-19 impact on F2F course delivery**

The impact of the initial COVID-19 shut-down resulted in the cancellation of over 130 classes across the province between March and July of 2020. This created a significant administrative and financial burden for the Centre. In addition, the now-retired Access database used by the Centre to manage participants did not have the functionality to track credits, and as a result over 1400 registrations were refunded between April and July.

## **Resumption of in-person classes**

As we moved into Phase 3 of BC's '*Restart Plan*', the Centre resumed public in-person classroom training with appropriate safety protocols in place. We added a number of public courses in regional centers to meet demand of postponed courses. In addition, the fall course schedule has been updated with a priority on essential skills to deal with COVID-19.

The Centre applied the following procedures to ensure the safety of staff and participants:

- Reduced the maximum size of each public course
- Facilitated most public courses in larger venues, such as hotels and conferences centres to support physical distancing
- Restructured learning activities to allow physical distancing
- Eliminated the need for the use of shared class materials
- Introduced participant checks for pre-entry wellness confirmation
- Ensured host facilities have appropriate no/low touch protocols in place (entrance/exits, washrooms)
- Reviewed COVID-19 Safety Plan from all venues, as well as Safety Plans from employers when the Centre was providing private onsite training
- Supplied readily available hand sanitizer and disposable masks
- Routine internal review of COVID-19 procedures

## **Virtual course transition**

Between May and August, the Centre team undertook the significant work of transitioning in-person course materials to be synchronous online delivery. The first online class was delivered on Sept 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020. To date the Centre has converted core programs to synchronous online delivery, with ancillary programs scheduled for conversion by Spring 2021.

## **Migrant Worker Programs**

In June, the Centre partnered with Vancouver Coastal Health to provide essential education to both Temporary Foreign Workers and Seasonal Agricultural Workers. The Centre worked collaboratively to provide health and safety education to workers who were housed at various designated hotels in the Lower Mainland. These education sessions focus on 1) basic OHS rights and responsibilities, 2) hazard recognition and control and 3) COVID-19 related processes. This work is ongoing, and a summary of the outcomes will be included in this 2020-2021 mid-term report.

## **Part 2. Digital Transformation**

Prior to COVID-19, the Centre was undertaking an incremental approach to upgrading our digital infrastructure. As noted in the workplan, this included an evaluation of the Centre's hardware and software needs. Like many organizations, the Centre was forced to dramatically accelerate our planned upgrades to our digital infrastructure. While there were significant financial implications, this accelerated adaption of new digital technologies has enabled the Centre to continue providing all contracted services for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Centre's hardware and software improvements include:

- Transition to Microsoft 365 and the adoption of the Teams platform to support remote work
- Use of remote desktop services to support server-based systems (like Sage & Access)
- Adoption of Zoom as our primary platform for online delivery and webinars
- Adoption of Monday platform to support project management for remote teams, and streamlining various financial processes
- Integration and adoption of Dynamics 365 CRM/ERP to manage core business functions related to the delivery of Centre programs
- PCI assessment and implementation of new privacy-protection procedures
- Cybersecurity review and gradual implementation of improved digital security systems
- Upgraded server

## **Customer Experience**

The Centre's improvements to our digital infrastructure also included improvements for customer experience for workers and employers. Upgrades to our system now allow workers and employers to self-serve and manage their training records through our online self-serve portal. Workers and employers can access past certificates, view upcoming training sessions, register, cancel upcoming registration, and request private or custom courses.

**My Sessions**

Individual

Upcoming Sessions				
Session ↕	Location (Session)	Session Start Date	Session End Date	Status reason
Accommodating Mental Health Issues	Koolanays - Community Living Centre (Cranbrook)	11/3/2020 8:30 AM	11/4/2020 3:30 PM	Cancelled
Occupational Health & Safety 1 Federal	Online - Aldergrove	11/4/2020 8:30 AM	11/4/2020 4:30 PM	Cancelled

  

Session History				
Session ↕	Location (Session)	Session Start Date	Session End Date	Status reason
Accommodating Mental Health Issues	Koolanays - Community Living Centre (Cranbrook)	9/29/2020 8:30 AM	9/30/2020 4:30 PM	Active

Figure 1 - Self-Service Portal for individuals

For employers and other large organizations, our improved database enables clients to view all related training records for their employees within our dedicated self-serve portals for Company Accounts.

## Part 3. Major Projects

### CRM/ERP Development & Integration

The Centre retained the services of PurelyCRM, a local firm to assist in the design and to build the Centre’s CRM/ERP system. The Centre’s fully integrated Microsoft-based CRM/ERP launched December 1, 2020, and the design and testing occurred during the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The project did exceed the original budget estimates, but multiple deliverables from the 2020-2021 workplan were incorporated into the build, along with improved security features and integration with the Centre’s existing technologies – outcomes not previously contemplated when the workplan was designed in 2018. The build of this system is the largest capital investment the Centre has undertaken and remains a cornerstone of our strategic plan to modernize and future-proof the Centre as we celebrate our twentieth anniversary.

### Strategic Communications Plan

The Centre retained the services of Point Blank Creative to assist with the development of our strategic communications plan. This project was segmented into four key stages - 1. Discovery, planning & research, 2. Brand promise, story and messaging, 3. Visual identity & brand guide and 4. Design templates. During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, Stages 1 & 2 were completed. Stages 3 & 4 are scheduled for completion by February 2021. Implementation of strategic communications plan is a key component of the 2020-2021 workplan.

## Financial & Business Process Review

The Centre retained the services of MNP, a leading accounting, tax and business consulting firm to review the Centre's primary business and financial processes. The review from MNP included:

- Current processes and controls by analyzing existing policies, procedures and other relevant documents, and interviewing management and relevant staff
- Walkthroughs of each in-scope process and key controls
- Identifying key controls based on walkthroughs
- Testing key controls on a sampling basis. The nature of testing included a combination of the following techniques
  - Interviewing key personnel
  - Observing operations
  - Examining relevant documentations
  - Re-performance of control operation using selected transactions.

At the conclusion of the review, MNP provided the Centre with 18 recommendations. To date, seven recommendations have been implemented, with the remaining recommendations planned for implementation in 2021 and 2022.



## Part 4. Workplan Status

Workplan # 1. Improving Customer Service			
ACTIVITY	OUTPUT	STATUS	COVID-19 IMPACT
Website usability review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of website usability</li> <li>• Outcome of the usability review and strategic plan to implement changes</li> </ul>	Complete	None
Website Usability Functionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usability Improvement</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• SEO</li> </ul>	Complete	None
Software/Hardware needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace server</li> <li>• Replace database</li> </ul>	Complete	Transition to <i>work from home</i> as well delivery of synchronous online learning resulted in a secondary review of software and hardware needs. Both software and hardware requirements dramatically changed to support to the Centre's digital transformation.
Introduce CRM		Complete	Transition to synchronous online learning required additional upgrades to the CRM/ERP, resulting in a delayed implementation from August 2020 to November 2020. The Dynamics system is now fully online and implemented.

## Workplan # 2. Prevention Through Education

ACTIVITY	OUTPUT	STATUS	COVID-19 IMPACT
<b>OHS Committee Skills</b>	Year 1: 5407 Year 2: 5498	Year 1: 4021 Year 2: 2636	<p>The Centre's combined targets for Year Two for OHS Committee Skills and General OHS Education totaled 7,333 participants.</p> <p>Although the programs provided were significantly altered due to COVID-19, the Centre still exceeded targets and provided occupational health and safety education to a total of <b>9659</b> workers &amp; employers in BC during the past fiscal year.</p> <p>The Centre was able to adapt and provide synchronous online education to <b>6435</b> workers, employers, and union representatives in BC between April and July 2020.</p> <p>These online education sessions included <i>Conducting Risk Assessments for COVID-19</i>, <i>Mental Health in the Workplace during COVID-19</i>, <i>Implementing COVID Safety Plans</i>, and the <i>Role of the OH&amp;S Committee during COVID-19</i>.</p>
<b>General OHS Education</b>	<p><i>Supervisor</i> Year 1: 747 Year 2: 785</p> <p><i>Health Hazards program</i> Year 1: 954 Year 2: 1050</p>	<p><i>Supervisor</i> Year 1: 1245 Year 2: 414</p> <p><i>Health Hazards program</i> Year 1: 291 Year 2: 174</p>	
<b>Building Psychologically Healthy Workplaces</b>	Year 1: 1200 Year 2: 1260	<b>Targets met and exceeded</b> Year 1: 2507 Year 2: 1485	While there was little direct impact during this past fiscal year, there are early indications in the current fiscal year (2020-2021) that there is significant demand for mental health programs, was a direct link to the impact of COVID-19 in the workplace.
<b>Develop Education Materials</b>		<b>Complete</b>	In addition to planned work, new materials were created to support COVID-19 related courses and webinars.
<b>Professional Development</b>		<b>Complete &amp; ongoing</b>	Participation in professional development, was primarily online due to COVID-19.
<b>Safety Content Development</b>		<b>Complete</b>	In addition to planned work, new materials were created to support COVID-19 risk assessments and safety plan implementation.

## Workplan # 3. Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement

ACTIVITY	OUTPUT	STATUS	COVID-19 IMPACT
<b>Continue to engage with stakeholders, including the formation of a Technical Advisory Committee, and ongoing consultation with BCFED affiliates, high risk industry partners, and rural communities</b>	See activity	Activity significantly behind schedule.	Unable to engage with stakeholders beyond COVID-19 related consultation. Routine stakeholder engagement delayed until 2021.
<b>Build a strategic partnership plan</b>	See activity	<b>Complete</b>	This project was recalibrated and focused primarily on the internal Centre's strategic plan, with an emphasis on ongoing partnerships.
<b>Build a communication plan</b>	See activity	<b>Ongoing</b>	Project was delayed due to COVID-19, anticipate completion by March 2021. This work has been undertaken with a third party (Point Blank Creative).

## Workplan # 4. Vulnerable Worker Health & Safety Education

ACTIVITY	OUTPUT	STATUS	COVID-19 IMPACT
<b>Alive After Five</b> <i>Young worker education</i>	Year 1: 28,146 Year 2: 29,553	Year 1: 36,145 Year 2: 18,028	<p>The AA5 program has now fully transitioned to synchronous online delivery.</p> <p>While Year 2 deliverables were not met due to school closures, the Centre did achieve <b>93%</b> of the overall two-year target.</p>
<b>Employment Program</b>	Year 1: 2431 Year 2: 2553	Year 1: 1423 Year 2: 1000	<p>Employment Program enrollment is often tied to the overall employment rate. In the past two years, the Centre has experienced decreased enrollment in the Employment Programs.</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to the impact of COVID-19, we have seen increased demand for these programs. This increased enrollment will be captured in the mid-term report for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.</p>
<b>Migrant Worker Program</b>	Year 1: 400 Year 2: 400	<b>Targets met and exceeded</b> Year 1: 409 Year 2: 520	<p>Significant increase in activity due to the impact of COVID-19 on SAWP and TFW workers. Further increases in this program's activities will be captured in the mid-term report for the 2020 - 2021 fiscal year.</p>
<b>EAL Program</b>	Year 1: 160 Year 2: 168	Year 1: 147 Year 2: 87	<p>EAL has now transitioned online. While targets for Year 2 were not achieved, success in our online pilot(s) indicate program growth in 2021 due to demand in regions not historically serviced through face-to-face delivery. Results of this programs transition to online will be captured in the mid-term report for the 2020 - 2021 fiscal year</p>

## Our Vision, Purpose and Promise

### Vision

The BCFED Health and Safety Centre’s vision is a world where the health and safety of every worker is protected.

### Purpose

The BCFED Health and Safety Centre exists to empower workers through collective education.

The idea of “empowering workers” represents not only the knowledge to ensure employers are providing a safe workplace, but how workers themselves can impact their own safety, and share that knowledge and experience with fellow workers as participants or facilitators.

### Promise

Collective - Preventative - Education