

1.0	CARILEC STATEMENT ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY
<p>The electric utility industry in the Caribbean employs over 12,000 persons who are dedicated to meeting the needs of customers and building strong economies through the provision of a reliable and efficient service.</p> <p>Operating and maintaining electric generation, transmission and distribution systems involve tasks that are potentially hazardous. Care must also be taken in the use of electricity in homes and businesses.</p> <p>CARILEC member utilities are committed to delivering electricity service in a manner that safeguards the health, safety and welfare of employees, contractors, customers and members of the general public. In this regard, CARILEC's goal is to promote the highest standards relating to occupational health and safety (OHS) among its members in order to protect the interests of the employees, contractors, customers and the general public as well as the good reputation of the overall industry.</p> <p>CARILEC has established this position statement to act as a guide for its members and to encourage each of its members to establish safe working practices, create a healthy working environment, and to develop a culture which promotes safety. CARILEC's Board of Directors and the Secretariat are committed to demonstrating leadership in this area and being an excellent example to its membership.</p>	
2.0	OBJECTIVES OF AN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY PROGRAMME
<p>The objectives of a good OHS programme are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build a strong safety culture and inculcate safety as a value;• Adhere to best practice while ensuring compliance with legal and other requirements;• Develop strong OHS skills among employees and contractors through ongoing training and development;• Identify potential hazards through proactive risk assessments job hazard analyses;• Implement risk reduction strategies for those hazards that have been identified through one or all of the following measures – elimination, substitution, engineering control, administrative processes and use of personal protective equipment;• Identify root factors for every near miss and safety incident through investigation and prevent recurrence through corrective action;• Conduct regular safety inspections and audits to ensure compliance with established safety practices and procedures and to identify opportunities for improvement;• Accurately report on OHS statistics and set targets to promote improved performance; and,• Promote public awareness regarding the safe and efficient use of electricity.	
3.0	OHS POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
<p>Every CARILEC member should establish an Occupational Health and Safety Policy which sets out the employer's and employees' commitment to health, safety and wellness.</p> <p>CARILEC member utilities should strive to establish an OHS Management System that conforms to recognized international standards. CARILEC member utilities should establish specific leading and lagging indicators with a view to driving continuous improvement through the "Plan > Do > Check> Act" quality management process to reduce risks and ultimately the number and severity of workplace injuries that are experienced.</p>	

4.0	CREATING A HEALTH & SAFETY CULTURE
<p>CARILEC recognizes the importance of creating a culture that places the greatest emphasis on OHS matters in the workplace. Employers and employees must demonstrate through their action a commitment to the organizations OHS initiatives and support the implementation of OHS policies and procedures. Effective supervision and communication of OHS policies and procedures is critical for supporting behavioral change. Leading by example is a very good model for improving human behavior and utility executives and senior management should provide such leadership. It is also CARILEC's belief that when people recognize the importance of good OHS practices in their lives at work, that this can have a positive influence on behaviour in their homes and communities.</p>	
5.0	OHS AWARENESS AND TRAINING
<p>Every CARILEC member is encouraged to undertake training and awareness sessions for their employees and contractors to help them understand how to undertake their tasks safely, to emphasize the importance of maintaining high OHS standards and to provide emergency first aid response. Training plans should be structured and documented to ensure that the competencies required for every task are identified and including in the plan. Training must be repeated as needed to ensure that employee skills are refreshed and attitudes are reinforced. Training should also ensure that employees are equipped to respond appropriately in the event that an accident or incident does occur.</p>	
6.0	SAFETY COMMITTEES
<p>Employee engagement in occupational health and safety is paramount. Where these do not already exist, every CARILEC member utility should establish Health and Safety Committees. These Committees should comprise a cross section of employees with the task of improving communication in the workplace and assisting in the development OHS procedures. To be effective, the Committee must receive the full support of management.</p>	
7.0	CONTRACTED SERVICES
<p>Contractors in the utility industry are exposed to the same hazards as utility employees and should be expected to exhibit similar high safety standards. CARILEC members are encouraged to establish a list of approved contractors and to have a contractor management process in place to ensure that all contractors have health and safety programmes, which include awareness and training for their employees.</p> <p>Where contractors are not engaged on a regular basis, then orientation and job hazard analyses should be undertaken before any work commences.</p>	
8.0	PROMOTING HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS
<p>Employees of CARILEC member companies are encouraged to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest safety standards. CARILEC members are encouraged to establish programmes to that promote positive health and safety attitudes and actions amongst employees. CARILEC members are also encouraged to put in place remedial training, positive coaching and disciplinary procedures, up to an including dismissal, to address breaches of safety standards by employees.</p>	
9.0	PUBLIC SAFETY

CARILEC is committed to building public awareness of the importance of good safety practices when using electricity. Members utilities are encouraged to:

- Establish public safety awareness programmes;
- Inform first responders including the police, fire, and ambulance services and to make these persons aware of the proper procedure to be followed to safeguard themselves and others against the hazards associated with electrical contact;
- Promote safety around electricity in schools with age appropriate information;
- Work with the electric inspectorate to establish appropriate safety standards for commercial and residential installations;
- Promote road safety through defensive driving training for all utility drivers and by use of traffic management at utility worksites; and,
- Investigate incidents involving the public to determine root factors and identify correction actions to prevent recurrences.

10.0

CARILEC OHS COMMITMENT

The CARILEC Board of Directors and the Secretariat are committed to demonstrating leadership in the area of safety through ongoing engagement with its members in OHS activities, conferences, and meetings. The Secretariat will report on a regular basis to the CARILEC Board of Directors on its OHS performance the performance of its members.

Through its many conferences and programmes, CARILEC will foster collaboration amongst its member utilities. Through dialogue and sharing, CARILEC members can learn from one another and benefit from the broad experience of all members. In this regard CARILEC is committed to the following:

- Facilitating Workers, Employers and Public Safety Awareness programmes;
- Improving the health, safety and welfare of the employees of all its members through ongoing dialogue on OHS;
- Focusing on OHS initiatives which can contribute to a reduction in safety incidents;
- Developing OHS professionals through formal training and industry related assignments;
- Maintaining a current list including contact information of all OHS officers within its membership
- Establishing the terms of reference for a regional Health and Safety Committee inclusive of its utility members and ensure that the committee meets on a regular basis;
- Coordinating regional audit teams and the use of these teams to encourage continuous improvement;
- Liaising with members on upcoming and current OHS legal and regulatory requirements that directly affect the employee welfare and business continuity;
- Influencing organizational change among members by promoting the adoption of OHS Management Systems relevant to their needs;
- Benchmarking OHS performance across all CARILEC member utilities through the sharing of specific leading and lagging indicators with a view to establishing trends and helping members to adopt best practice; and,
- Developing relationships with international bodies to assist with the implementation and monitoring of employers and employees OHS performance.

