



**Alberta Construction
Safety Association**



ENHANCEMENTS TO THE NCSO DESIGNATION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PURPOSE

What is the purpose of the new standard?

The added value to the new standard is in:

1. Strengthening the NCSO designation, making it a more respected designation and enabling transferability and mobility between other provinces.
2. Showing commitment to continual improvement and professional development. Continual improvement is the foundation of health and safety management.
3. Lifelong learning benefits the individual by staying current with changing standards and evolving technology, and benefits the employer by having a more knowledgeable person represent them in health and safety related matters.

Are all the provinces aligned in this initiative?

The Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA) allows the heads of each provincial construction safety association, and their associates, to meet and discuss their shared interest in promoting awareness of construction health and safety, improve information sharing, and collaborate to produce workplace training resources.

The CFCSA meets annually (at a minimum) and have long had an interest in strengthening the NCSO designation, and in making it truly national.

The CFCSA members took a collaborative approach to this new standard with the intent of supporting mobility for NCSOs across Canada, and sharing in raising the standards to better the program's recognition and acceptance.

CFCSA members are signing the new agreement at the 2017 meeting in June, which will be hosted by ACSA in Calgary.

How will our employers know what the new standard is and why we should meet these requirements?

Those who achieve their Active NCSO status, will have it noted on their transcript and certificate with the updated NCSO logo as evidence of completion to show prospective employers. However, please note that an Active list will not be posted publically for three years (July 1st, 2020), in order to allow time for existing NCSOs to meet the new requirements and be included if they wish.

Your ACSA, and other provincial construction safety associations, will together communicate the importance of the new standard, through various channels.

EXAM

When is the first exam? And how often are you running them?

The first exam will take place in September 2017. Future exams will be scheduled based on demand. A schedule of anticipated exam writing dates will be published in the summer of 2017.

Will these exams be offered online or do I have to write in person?

The exam is currently offered in-person only. However, we are exploring the option of an online version of the exam, and will communicate more about this in early 2018.

What's on the NCSO exam?

The exam covers hazard assessments and controls, training and orientations, inspection, investigations, auditing, health and safety programs, documentation, WHMIS, adopted standards, first aid and emergency preparedness, and the Canadian Criminal Code.

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The exam will include various question formats. If you will be completing ACSA's NCSO program after July 1st, 2017 you will have covered all of the material on the exam in your mandatory courses. A more detailed exam blueprint will be made available to anyone who is scheduled to write the NCSO exam.

What's the pass mark for the NCSO exam?

The pass mark will be an overall score of 75%.

Is there a cost for writing the NCSO Exam?

Not in Alberta. The exam is free when written for the first time. Other provinces may have a fee. Check with the respective provincial construction association for further details.

What are my options if I do not pass the exam?

If unsuccessful, you may rewrite the exam as soon as the next available offering. An administrative fee of \$60 will apply to exam re-writes. Unsuccessful attempts in other provinces will not affect your Alberta designation.

How long is the NCSO exam?

You have two hours to complete the exam.

Will I have to write the NCSO exam in every province or will there be a supplemental exam to cover the differences in provincial legislation?

You only have to successfully complete the national exam once. However, each province will have their own supplemental legislation exam. In Alberta, the exam in the revised Legislation Awareness (LEG) course (released September, 2016) counts as the provincial exam. Alternatively, current Alberta NCSOs may opt out of the course and simply challenge the new LEG exam.

Is there a fee for writing ACSA's Provincial OHS Exam?

Yes. The cost for completing the one-day Legislation Awareness course is \$85 (for members) or to skip the course and challenge the exam, the fee will be \$60.

How will an employer be able to tell if I meet the new standard?

Your NCSO certificate will have the new NCSO logo with the CFCSA seal on it to show you meet the new national standard. Your Student Portal will also automatically track your progress and indicate when you achieve the new standard requirements through your transcript.

An Active list of NCSO's meeting the new standard will be published on July 1st, 2020. This time period allows for existing NCSOs to meet the new requirements. ACSA will actively promote the new Active standard through its expansive network.

How will provincial or territorial OHS legislation exams be managed?

Each province and territory will have separate exams that will test a person's knowledge of local OHS legislation. These exams will be written by anyone from outside a jurisdiction who wants to work in another jurisdiction.

For example, if you are an NCSO from B.C. who has written and passed the NCSO National Exam in B.C., but want to work in Alberta and Saskatchewan you would have to write both the Alberta and Saskatchewan OHS Legislation exams. You would not have to re-write the NSCO Exam. In Alberta, you could decide to successfully complete ACSA's OHS Legislation Awareness course instead of writing the exam.

ACSA is working on making the Alberta OHS Legislation Exam available on-line as an alternative to doing the one-day classroom course, or in-person exam challenge.

If you have any further questions, please contact our Client Services Department at 1.800.611.ACSA (2272) or email us at info@youracsa.ca.