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Review of *GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety*

Project Proposal

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Project background

Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) of the UN Sustainable Development Goals emphasizes the importance of promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), an estimated 2.3 million workers die every year due to occupational accidents and diseases; and 317 million accidents occur on the job annually.¹

Changing expectations related to occupational health and safety (OHS) are also reflected in recent developments regarding management standards. For instance, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is working on a new international standard (ISO 45001) on occupational health and safety management system requirements, expected to be published in December 2017. The early drafts released of ISO 45001 suggest a number of important new features may be included, such as a wider focus on contractors and suppliers, and greater emphasis on senior management involvement.² This new ISO standard is envisaged to replace the widely-used management standard OHSAS 18001.

In response to these international developments, the GSSB re-confirmed in its October 2016 virtual meeting to commence a review of [GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety](#).

This project proposal sets out an overview of the project objectives and scope, as approved by the GSSB.

Project objectives and scope

Based on research carried out by the Standards Division and feedback received from the GRI network, credible and widely accepted work has been undertaken by international organizations in the field of OHS since the last major revision of the GRI disclosure requirements on OHS in 2006.

The primary objective is to review the content of *GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety* in order to represent internationally-agreed best practice and to align with recent developments in OHS management and reporting practice. Key references for revising the content will include international authoritative instruments, such as ILO Conventions, and other relevant standards and developments.

A multi-stakeholder Project Working Group (PWG) will be formed to help contribute to the revision of *GRI 403*, as outlined in the GSSB's [Due Process Protocol](#). This PWG will be responsible for developing recommendations for the revised content and disclosures related to OHS. The drafting of text within the Standard will be carried out by the GRI Standards Division, and the GSSB will have oversight and final approval over the Standard before its release.

The overall scope of work includes reviewing the existing content of *GRI 403*, and, where appropriate, updating, expanding, or deleting existing content. New content may also be developed in order to ensure that *GRI 403* reflects leading practice in OHS management and reporting, while remaining accessible and practicable for a global user base.

¹ Source: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/safety-and-health-at-work/lang--en/index.htm>. Accessed on 1 November 2016.

² Source: First draft of ISO's occupational health and safety standard now available, <http://www.iso.org/iso/news.htm?refid=Ref1874>. Accessed on 1 November 2016.

The review of *GRI 403* may also include developing requirements, recommendations, and/or guidance specifically related to reporting the management approach for OHS. Any additional content in the management approach section is to be compatible for organizations to use together with *GRI 103: Management Approach*.

The review of *GRI 403* is to be carried out within the existing structure and template of the GRI topic-specific GRI Standards – for example, preserving the hierarchy of requirements, recommendations, and guidance. The Standards Division will provide the PWG with a template structure to refer to in revising the content.

In addition, the scope of the review should, wherever possible, seek to be compatible with the revised ‘employee’ and ‘worker’-related wording that was introduced in *GRI 403* as a result of the separate technical review carried out in 2016. For example, the PWG should aim to be consistent with the revised definitions of ‘employee’ and ‘worker’, and the specific subsets of ‘workers’ used in this context, and to avoid introducing any additional worker-related terms unless there is a strong justification for doing so.

Next Steps

The project follows the [Due Process Protocol](#), the implementation of which will be overseen by the Due Process Oversight Committee (DPOC). The DPOC has the mandate to assess whether due process has been followed effectively by the GSSB in its standard-setting activities.

Appointment of Project Working Group (PWG): The Standards Division will develop a Terms of Reference for the PWG (taking into account input from the GSSB) and issue a call for nominations for PWG members in mid-January 2017.