

November 2, 2020

NOTICE OF CHANGES TO THE NORTH SLOPE TRAINING COOPERATIVE (NSTC)

Dear NSTC Instructors, Third Party Providers, and other NSTC stakeholders:

As many are aware, the structure of the NSTC program has been largely unchanged since its founding in 1997. In contrast, recent years have seen significant shifts in Alaska's oil and gas industry and major changes in Owner/Operators in the state, as well as the participating members of the NSTC Operators Group.

These factors, alongside challenges tied to the current COVID-19 pandemic, have prompted the NSTC Operators Group to conduct a program-wide evaluation of NSTC's structure, management, curriculum, cost-effectiveness, and overall sustainability. After careful review and much deliberation, the NSTC Operators Group will implement program-wide changes and policy revisions, which take effect over the next 14-24 months.

This communication has been developed to inform all stakeholders of the changes that will be implemented by NSTC Operators, and to provide a general implementation timeline. Future communications will offer additional details as they become available.

Currently, computer-based training (CBT) courses are being created for the six modules of the NSTC Unescorted Course, and the H2S/FeS Module. The CBT modules are designed to be completed by individual workers through independent online study. Each module includes a 20-question knowledge check, which trainees will be required to pass with a 70% or greater.

Upon release of the final Operator-approved CBT courses, completion of all six NSTC Unescorted Course online CBT modules, with a passing score, will be accepted as the equivalent of completing the current instructor-led Unescorted training.

The anticipated release of all NSTC Unescorted CBT modules is slated for November 2020. A follow up communication will be distributed upon final approval and publication of the online courses.

The Operator members of the NSTC will also begin accepting the combination of [Basic Orientation Plus®](#) (BOP) and the North Slope Orientation (NSO) course as an equivalent to the NSTC Unescorted Course.

Basic Orientation Plus® is a standardized, awareness level training developed by the Association of Reciprocal Safety Councils (ARSC) and delivered by ARSC member councils. As a reciprocal safety training offered at [Safety Councils](#) across the United States, BOP is accepted by operator and contractor companies across the country. Locally, Basic Orientation Plus® and the Basic Orientation Plus® Refresher training is available through the Alaska Safety Alliance.

BOP is an instructor-led course requiring trainees to complete a 50-question test with a passing score of at least 70%. BOP Instruction lasts approximately four hours, with an additional 90

minutes available to complete the test. The BOP Refresher course is a proctored CBT, also requiring a 70% or greater score on a 50-question exam.

The North Slope Orientation course supplements Basic Orientation Plus® training, providing North Slope specific awareness level training. The NSO course was developed by the Alaska Safety Alliance in cooperation with the NSTC Operators Group. NSO is a self-paced computer-based training that can be completed by workers via [ASA Online](#). NSO is a one-time, unproctored training and does not require a refresher course. It takes approximately one hour to complete.

New NSTC Instructor Qualifications will be discontinued effective December 31, 2020 and phase out the instructor-led delivery model for the NSTC Unescorted Course and H2S will occur over the course of 2021.

Active NSTC Instructors currently qualified to teach the NSTC Unescorted Course on January 1, 2021, and who meet the annual qualification renewal requirements, may continue instructor-led delivery of the NSTC Unescorted Course through December 31, 2021. Instructor-led delivery of the NSTC Unescorted Course will cease on January 1, 2022.

Operator members of the NSTC will continue to accept the NSTC Unescorted training credential to meet basic awareness level requirements for workers on the North Slope. In the event of changes to future NSTC training requirements, the NSTC Operators Group will provide updates to all stakeholders.

The NSTC Unescorted Course was created to meet the basic awareness training needs of all Operators on the North Slope and has been a model of collaboration for the betterment of industry in Alaska. The NSTC Operators Group is profoundly grateful for the level of excellence demonstrated by hundreds of Qualified NSTC Instructors over the past 23 years. We express sincere gratitude to the many volunteers who have shared their time and knowledge through NSTC Evaluations, Third Party Providers, Curriculum and Steering Committees, and the many other committees that have shaped the North Slope Training Cooperative over the past two decades.

Thank you for your continued commitment to safety, and for your many past contributions to this unique program.

NSTC Operators Group

