

ECAO

**ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO**

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February 2, 2004

The Honourable Jim Watson
Minister of Consumer and Business Services
250 Yonge St., Eaton Tower, 35th Floor
Toronto, ON M5B 2N5

Dear Minister:


On behalf of the Electrical Contractors' Association of Ontario (ECAO) and the Industry Stakeholder Committee on Provincial Licensing, I would like to request a meeting to introduce you to our organization and its activities and to discuss the progress of initiatives we have been working on with your Ministry.

In particular, we would like to bring you up to date on the work we are doing to assist the government with the implementation of a framework for province-wide licensing and certification of electrical contractors and trades. As you can see by the attached chronology, work on this initiative has been ongoing for almost three years now. An industry coalition made up of ECAO, the Ontario Electric League (OEL) and the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) has effectively developed, promoted and supported this initiative from inception through legislative drafting. When fully implemented, the new system will improve consumer protection and enhance public and worker safety in a cost-effective manner. The industry believes it is time to carry on with this important project and wish to discuss strategies with you for achieving our goal this spring.

ECAO and our industry partners would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience. Our Government Relations Consultant, Deborah Reid, will contact your office in the next few weeks to set up a time that is convenient for you.

We look forward to working with you and your staff.

Sincerely,



Eryl Roberts
Executive Vice-President

Encl.: Chronology & Stakeholder Backgrounder
c.c.: Dave Mason, ECAO
Gary Enright, OEL
Peter Marcucci, ESA

The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO)
170 Attwell Drive, Suite 460
Toronto, Ontario, M9W 5Z5
Telephone: (416) 675-3226

The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario has a membership of approximately 1000 electrical contracting firms, the majority of whom are small to medium sized family owned and operated businesses. The contractors employ more than 15,000 electricians, apprentices and support staff who generate in excess of \$2 billion worth of electrical, utility and communications construction work annually.

Through its Electrical Contractors Registration Agency (ECRA), the ECAO provides services supporting the current electrical contractor licensing system and acts as Secretary to the Reciprocal Recognition Committee of municipalities who license contractors to the ECRA standard. The Electrical Safety Authority and the Ontario Electrical League are partners with ECAO in the operation of ECRA.

The Ontario Electrical League (OEL)
101 Duncan Mill Rd, Suite 101
North York, Ontario, M3B 1Z3
Canada
Telephone: (416) 495-0052

The Ontario Electrical League is a non-profit, provincial organization, dedicated to 35 Chapters throughout Ontario, with over 2,000 members from the electrical industry. The OEL represents approximately 350 Contractor Companies with employing over 1000 Electricians. Its mission is to "To promote and strengthen the electrical industry in Ontario. "

League members include Electrical Contractors, Maintenance Electricians, Municipal Utilities, Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One, Electrical Safety Authority, Electrical Distributors, Manufacturers, Manufacturer Representatives, Consulting Engineers and Educators.

The League's role is to communicate, educate and promote Ontario's electrical industry through Chapter meetings, the "Dialogue" Magazine, conferences, seminars, promotional programs and community activities.

Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)
155A Matheson Blvd West, Suite 200
Mississauga, Ontario, L5R 3L5
Telephone: (905) 712-5361

The Electrical Safety Authority is a financially self-sustaining not-for-profit safety business accountable to a Board of Directors and operating under legislation governed by the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services. ESA has been given authority to work with the public to prevent electrical accidents, injuries and deaths as part of Ontario Regulation 89/99.

ESA's primary responsibility includes enforcement of the Electricity Act, 1998 and Regulations including the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, Ontario Regulation 10/02. ESA employs close to 200 electrical inspectors who perform wiring, general and product approval inspections, and provide Ontario Electrical Safety Code advice and information. Inspection services are supported and enhanced by technical advisors, a Customer Service Centre, and a dedicated Programs Division. ESA continues to offer traditional inspection services, and regularly explores new approaches to regulation, products, and services that can result in increased public electrical safety where we live, work, and play in Ontario.

PROVINCE-WIDE LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS AND TRADES

CHRONOLOGY

January, 2001	Industry Steering Committee on Provincial Licensing of Electrical Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering committee formed with representation from the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO), the Ontario Electrical League (OEL) and the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) to develop a provincial licensing system for electrical contractors
May 26, 2001	Electrical Trade Symposium – I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized by the Provincial Advisory Committee for the Electrical Trade • Provided an opportunity for all sectors of the electrical industry to re-evaluate the future direction of certification of the electrical trade • Attended by a cross-section of management and labour from the electrical industry • Established four Guiding Principles related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trade Splintering 2. Enforcement 3. Promotion 4. Training
June 2001		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADM Advisory Committee request to industry stakeholders for draft proposal for new administrative model for electrical trade certification
October 20, 2001	Electrical Trade Symposium – II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second symposium held to develop Guiding Principles into a proposal to the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities • Assessed five strategic models for the administration of electrical trade certification • Consensus achieved on Strategic Model #4 establishing ESA as the regulatory authority
November 2001		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings with ministry staff at Consumer & Business Services; Municipal Affairs & Housing; Energy, Science & Technology; Red Tape Commission • Work on licensing and certification issues brought together
September 13, 2002		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of proposal to Assistant Deputy Minister Advisory Committee
Winter/Spring 2003		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government approval of policy framework and amendments to s. 113 of the <i>Electricity Act, 1998</i>, needed to give ESA authority to implement system of province-wide licensing and certification
Spring 2003		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments drafted, but no opportunity to introduce before end of Spring session
December 2003		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Provincial Auditor 2003 report recommends that MCBS work with stakeholders on certification and licensing issues.