



Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Location: CHSI, 5110 Creekbank Road, Training Room 200

Meeting: Contractor Advisory Council (CoAC)

Present:

Rick Charron (Chair)	OEL
Dave Ackison	OEL
Luke Bogdanovic	OEL
Scott Kelly	OEL
Joe Kurpe	ECAO
Barry Moss	OEL
Larry Shaver	ECAO

Absent:

Michael Lettner	ECAO
Dan Topazzini	ECAO

Guests:

Al Merlo	ESA Board of Directors
Tony Minna	ECAO
Clint Attard	OEL
Rob Sloan	OEL

ESA Staff:

Earl Davison	ESA
Mark Taylor	ESA
Farrah Bourre	ESA
Nancy Evans	ESA (part time)
Kathryn Chopp	ESA (part time)
Eric Kingston	ESA (part time)
Nansy Hanna	ESA (part time)
Ted Olechna	ESA
Steve Habermehl	ESA
Carol Keiley	ESA

15.02.01 **Motion to Approve Agenda**

MOTION to approve agenda by Rick Charron

With addition of:

Solar questions and comments – added to agenda item #9

Item #3 – Talk about wiring fees as a whole

Item #7 – Luke would like to discuss a new item (ACP)

Seconded by Joe Kurpe and Barry Moss

Carried

Motion to Approve February 19, 2015 Minutes

MOTION to approve February 19, 2015 minutes by Rick Charron

Seconded by Luke Bogdanovic and Larry Shaver

Carried

Outstanding Actions

The outstanding actions were reviewed and the status updated.

15.02.02 **Election**

Rick Charron was thanked for his chairing duties and helping make it a very productive Council.

Chair and Vice Chair election: Joe Kurpe was the only nomination for Chair; Scott Kelly was the only one for Vice Chair

Clint Attard and Rob Sloan did not vote as they will be replacing outgoing member Barry Moss and Rick Charron.

Joe Kurpe unanimously voted as Chair; Scott Kelly as Vice Chair

15.02.03 **Wiring Fee Adjustment Deferral - Single Family Dwellings and Apartments**

Earl Davison spoke about the feedback received in response to the wiring fee adjustment.

It was noted that the consultation process could have been better. Also noted was that the change affected a very small number of permits relative to overall amount. This was not a revenue generating change as very little money comes from these fee items. It was intended to better align the fees to the jobs..

2 key questions were considered:

1. Relative fee increase to that subset; and
2. Mechanics of the calculation; what makes sense in the industry (sq footage or number of outlets).

ESA is holding working groups with contractors to revisit the issue and work to a better solution. Need people from these categories of work to participate and provide comments, e.g. GTCA, ECAO, people who deal with large projects.

On May 13, there will be two back to back working groups – large residential and apartments – representatives are needed. ESA requires about six to eight contractors for each group; information will be sent prior to meeting; may have to reschedule the call if not enough people respond.

Last meeting, there was a lot of energy in the room – on ESA's behalf, Earl told CoAC that we took the input seriously and recognize it wasn't done right.

Comments and Questions:

There was a comment that the fees for sub metering are too high. Why is not suitable for selective inspection? Why are fees so high?

Mark said it would be added to the consultation working groups to gain information on apartment fees.

ACTION: Rob Sloan to provide a clear statement on the problem.

Would large retirement homes fit the qualifications to participate in the working groups?

No, the actual size of the individual unit, not the building, is the issue.

Wiring Fee Adjustment Process

Nancy Evans provided an overview on the planned wiring fee adjustment process for 2016 (see presentation).

Highlights...

- Trying to keep increase restrained. Planning for 1% average increase.
- Fee committee looks at changes to fee guide based on feedback received through year
- Service reconnect (\$296) – after 6 months of uninhabited home; same as reconnect after a fire – inspector has to do same amount of work.
- Considering a change to pricing for large entertainment projects to a more flat rate – subs-consultation required for this group
- Try to rationalize increases and make them easier to understand
- Early June, or earlier for consultation
- Implementation of fee increase in January 2016

Comments and Questions:

Is this funding the liability for pensions? How far along is ESA in paying this back? When will we see a reduction in fees?

ESA is continuing to pay down the deficit; we have been doing well and have done a lot of things to minimize the cost. Other lines of revenue and investments have helped. Accounting standards have also changed so costs don't have as significant an impact on operating budget. .

15.02.04 **CSC Update**

Eric Kingston provided an update on the results of the Customer Service Centre's (CSC) actions to improve service. (See presentation).

Eric highlighted the success of the Customer Service Representative (CSR) training program. The second group have completed training program and are ready for the summer peak season.

The CSC is focusing on people and productivity – CSRs are polite, but reducing the amount of 'chit-chat'; it makes a difference in call time.

The goal of 70% of calls answered in 30 seconds has been met in recent weeks, and they have actually been exceeding that at times. CSC has received very positive feedback.

They are continuing to work on initiatives – the key is to be sustainable. There is a lot of work to come, but have to maintain where they are at currently.

ACTION: Eric will loop back and gather comments from contractors; also advise them what ESA is doing with the list, etc.

Questions and comments:

It was asked whether extension of call centre hours has been considered. Eric said that will improvements in service as well as changes in season, call patterns have been changing. Currently, peak volume is 7-8 a.m. so extending later in day won't make major impact. Once call patterns are clear, consideration will be given to whether hours changes are appropriate.

There was a question from the Council as to whether Eric is considering contractor feedback in planning changes to eNOLA. *Yes, they collect the feedback and prioritize. The information received has been high level. There is no formal process, but they have an internal list of approximately 185 items on a 'wish list'. It was agreed that contractor perspectives are important.*

A CoAC member suggested ESA should look at providing the list to contractors to establish priorities.

Phoning in to the CSC has improved, but eNOLA is still cumbersome to work with.

15.02.05 **LEC Campaign Update**

Kathryn Chopp reviewed the mid-campaign results for the spring LEC Campaign (see presentation).

The campaign targets Ontario homeowners early in the process of planning electrical work or renovations. ESA consumer segmentation was reviewed – sensible urbanites; eager urbanites; and lawful home keepers.

The goal is to increase awareness of the importance of hiring an LEC and drive traffic to LEC lookup tool.

ESA has received great results at this point in the campaign.

The LEC Store is another component. The online store contains promotional material that is not dated so they can be used all through the year

Questions and comments:

A comment was put forth from the OEL contractor council about the LEC store – can the costs come down? It's too expensive.
It's personalized material, which costs more, and is more expensive the less you buy. ESA is taking no profit on this and selling at cost recovery pricing. We can look at different options next time around. We will ensure to get more formal feedback to make the process better.

15.02.06 **Energy Retrofit**

With regards to Toronto Hydro not requiring inspection permit for retrofits, Earl talked to them and they do require a permit to be taken out, but they don't require it to be submitted. They pay money to contractor without ever seeing the permit.

ESA doesn't have the regulatory authority to review Toronto Hydro's list of retrofit projects and see if those addresses took out a permit. Earl doesn't know if it can be enforced. However, Toronto Hydro will reinforce the requirement.

Earl is pursuing Terry Young at IESO (into which OPA has been merged) to see if he can get traction that way to determine if permits were taken out for those projects.

Questions and Comments:

Why does ESA not have the authority to regulate LDCs?
ESA is continuing to look at this.

15.02.07 **Authorized Contractor Program Update**

ACP has been an active topic at CoAC. ESA needs a systematic approach to addressing the issues. ESA has limitations in terms of what it can do with the program.

Need to go back and look at the ANSI and the 20 permit requirement – a lot has changed since then (licensing, fees, etc.).

Nansy Hanna provided an update on the ACP Program permit requirements and potential changes (see presentation).

Have to look at the program in a whole – not just reducing the number of permits which is a band-aid solution

Whatever approach we take, the risk assessment and oversight at the same level.

Nansy reviewed the concept of a 'probationary'-type ACP status for contractors who have not been able to maintain all requirements. Some privileges would be limited, but full AC status not lost.

Need to consider a balance between privileges and conditions...

Fee code items

Low defect ratio to be maintained

Input from the field (senior inspector)

Questions and comments:

The status of "ACP contractor" is perceived as a better contractor by the consumer. There are other factors to consider: years of service, number of inspector visits, dollar value of the permit, etc.

When solar is involved, can the job be split in two (ACP is not attached to solar)?

Can the defect ratio be a consideration? It should play a big part.

Why isn't there recognition/special inspection for field evaluation?
Field Evaluation is non-regulatory work; doesn't fall under ESA's regulatory responsibilities nor the Ontario Electrical Safety Code. Separate from Code electrical work and installation –

Field Evaluation is for unique, custom work where ACP was intended for high volume, repetitive OESC work..

Why can ESA turn ACP on and off, but the contractor can't? 'Privileges' can sometimes be considered cumbersome – inspection scheduling differences between ACP and non-ACP; reconnections, etc. You leave homeowners in the lurch while they await inspection.

Want some permits go through ACP; and others not.

ESA needs to solve the 20 permits issue.

Find a solution that would keep contractors on ACP, but with other restrictions

Probation period could be a consideration, rather than coming off the program completely.

ESA will develop options to review with Operations and then the ACP committee; will come back to CoAC in June or September with recommendations and gather feedback. We will take the time that is needed to get it right – administrative and operational impacts need to be considered as well.

Will there be any relief for the current ACP people kicked off the program while ESA works through the process?

Rules will remain what they are today until the change has been implemented. We are already quite flexible when it comes to the 20 permit rule, more like 15. ESA sends warning notices through the year to those who are slipping. Last year, with 2400 ACP contractors, sent out 600 warnings

ACTION: Update on ACP for the June meeting with a timeline or obstacles to getting it done.

ACP Information Gathering

Nancy Evans provided an overview of ACP info gathering (see presentation).

ESA needs a big picture view – project this year to collect feedback; give stakeholders (including contractors, clients, homeowners, LDCs, etc.) an opportunity to provide input. It will be a cross between a survey and consultation.

Planning how we're doing this over the next couple of months – aiming to be in market August/September, with the results/analysis taking place in in September. This will lead to multiple discussions at CoAC

ACTION: Nancy to provide an update at the June CoAC meeting.

15.02.08

Alternative compliance

Nancy Hanna gave an update on a planned Alternative compliance approach in development for commercial renovations. (See presentation).

It would allow good oversight of commercial renovations while freeing resources for higher risk work. Also make it easier for those to comply in smaller renovation situations.

The goal is to ensure safe commercial renovations in Ontario.

ESA would like to try a pilot to implement a solution by actively going after non-compliance. ESA will be looking for contractors to participate in the pilot.

Questions and comments:

Would like to add residential to this.

We will start with commercial as it is a smaller line of work; test here before we move on to the bigger residential renovations market.

Earl noted that the largest market for commercial renovations is the GTA and Ottawa, but the pilot would be bad timing with the Pan Am Games so ESA picked the next best thing, Milton (Oakville to Milton area); get data there and then try to apply it to other markets.

15.02.09

Regulatory Update

OESC consultation update: ESA will make changes based on comments and then take them to CPCC to vote on them. ESA and CPCC will reconsider the stove receptacle change based on feedback from CoAC and CAC.

Licensing Demarcation Points for Solar

Ted Olechna provided an overview on the Licensing demarcation points for solar (see presentation.)

OCOT made decision as to who is responsible for what in a solar installation. MOL requires a minimum level of training on a PV installation.

An electrician is required for anything that is not 'plug and play' requires an electrician ('plug and play' is not electrical work, doesn't require electrician). The issue is not if it's electrical work, but if it requires an electrician.

There is no trade called PV installer (mechanical fastener), it's non-LEC; once it is integrated into the bonding, then it is electrical work.

1000 volts in residential dwelling units is in the new code. A bulletin has been developed as it was the quickest thing ESA could do to address industry needs. The height restriction for accessibility is also included in the bulletin.

ACTION: Ted to provide a copy of the draft bulletin to be included with the minutes sent to CoAC.

Solar Inspections

Steve Habermehl provided an overview on solar inspections (see presentation).

Questions and comments:

Who assumes responsibility when several contractors are involved on one PV installation?

This doesn't happen very often, but we will look at this – as long as someone takes a permit out along the way.

Micro inverters not treated the same way, considered part of the “glass”

Solar installations over 10 kw, and in parallel with supply authority, requires plans submitted to Plan Review.

Mark added that permit requirements are being reviewed for non-electrician work.

Ted advised that the ACP vertical for solar is a retrofit.

15.02.10 **Other Business**

Member Survey – Farrah reminded CoAC that every year a survey is sent out to find out how effective the council is. Using the feedback, we try to measure progress year over year. The survey should be out in the next couple of weeks – would like 100% participation; result in June or September meeting.

Contractor summary report (companion document to Annual Report) – If there is anything you want addressed or want to see in the report, think about it and let Farrah know at the next meeting.

Also, does CoAC have any interest in discussing the difference between bulletins and directors orders? Are there too many bulletins? Does CoAC have any interest in talking about bulletin contents?

Adjournment

*MOTION to Adjourn by Rob Sloan
Seconded by Joe Kurpe
Carried*

End of Contractor Advisory Council Meeting

Next Meeting: June 25, 2015
Time: 9:30 am – 2:30 pm
Location: Centre for Health and Safety Innovation
5110 Creekbank Road, TBD

If there are any discrepancies to these minutes, please report them to Joe Kurpe and Farrah Bourre by email.

2015 Meeting Dates:

June 25, 2015
September 10, 2015
November 12, 2015