



**Meeting:** Contractor Advisory Council (CoAC)

**Date:** Thursday, February 16, 2017

**Location:** CHSI, 5110 Creekbank Road, Training Room 3

  

**Present:**

Joe Kurpe (Chair)	ECAO
Dave Ackison	OEL
Tony Minna	ECAO
Larry Shaver	ECAO
Rob Sloan	OEL

  

**Regrets:**

Scott Kelly (Vice Chair)	OEL
Clint Attard	OEL
Luke Bogdanovic	OEL

  

**Guests:**

Sharmila Uruthiranandasivam	MCGS
Jeff Koller	ECAO
Robert Smith	LEC
Dan Williams	LEC

  

**ESA Staff:**

- Nancy Evans
- Earl Davison
- Farrah Bourre
- Mark Taylor
- Eric Kingston
- Rod Lawrence
- Kara Fraser
- Carol Keiley

**17.01.01 AGENDA/MINUTES/ACTION ITEMS**

**Motion to Approve Agenda**

MOTION to approve agenda as amended by Tony Minna

Seconded by Dave Ackison

Carried

**Motion to Approve Minutes**

MOTION to approve November 17, 2016 minutes by Larry Shaver

Seconded by Dave Ackison

Carried

**Review Outstanding Actions**

The outstanding actions were reviewed and the status updated – see attachment.

**17.01.02 NEW AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY**

See presentation.

Nancy Evans led a Council workshop on new and emerging technology and changes in the electricity sector. The purpose was to help ESA and stakeholders assess and plan for developments that may impact electrical safety and regulation.

Technology trends focused on five areas:

1. *Electrification* – The use of electricity is growing. For example, there has been a surge in demand for electrical vehicles and CoAC members are seeing an increase in charging station installations.
2. *Changes in the electricity system* – Includes changes in distribution and generation with residential homes starting to generate and supply electricity back to the grid through solar/alternative generation, e.g. Alectra Utilities' Power House.

*Members asked how to analyze the risk of harm when working with this technology? Is the Code ready for this?* ESA's Regulatory department is looking at ways to have a more dynamic Code update process and stay on top

of changes through director's orders.

3. *Changing role of LDCs* – LDCs to become more of a service platform; more interaction with the consumer side. This is a concern among CoAC members as it's perceived as unfair competition. ESA noted that if an LDC works on Code wiring they must meet all Licensing and Code requirements, including holding a valid ESA/ECRA license, having a DME, pulling permits and following the Code.
4. *The Smart Home* – Various systems (security, heat, entertainment) are becoming controlled by smart technologies that are integrated into the home's electrical system. Contractors are starting to see this in new homes being built. How do you layer this on older homes?
5. *Changing role of electricity consumer* – Consumers are producing electricity and sending it back to the grid.

Discussion and views from the contractor perspective:

- Lithium ion (L-ion) batteries are an area of increasing interest for safety organizations due to their broad application in a variety of contexts.
- A number of the contractors at CoAC aren't yet feeling the impact of these changes but other contractors are starting to see these technologies in daily work.
- HVAC systems are getting more complicated, ability to be controlled remotely and different temperature zones throughout the house – contractors see this more in custom homes than in track housing.
- Custom homes' technology may be a good indicator of what's on the horizon

### 17.01.03

### TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORKPLAN

Farrah Bourre presented an amendment to the Contractor Advisory Council's Terms of Reference. The amendment includes a provision for guests to attend: Attendance of Non-Members at Council Meetings – ESA Board Members and Public/other. These guests will have no voting privileges and will be invited to participate in the discussion by the Chair and ESA senior management when appropriate.

Motion to amend the CoAC Terms for Reference moved by Tony Minna and seconded by Larry Shaver.

Carried.

#### Workplan

A copy of the workplan will be sent to CoAC with all prereads and members can propose additional topics.

An ElecCheck up-date will be added as a topic for April.

An ECRA Advisory Council update should be added to the workplan to keep CoAC informed on what has happened at the ECRA Advisory Council.

ESA will circulate a report on what other Advisory Councils have been doing.

**ACTION:** Farrah Bourre/Carol Keiley to provide Council report to CoAC.

#### **17.01.04 INSPECTION PROGRAMS UPDATE: ACP**

See presentation.

Mark Taylor provided an update on ACP and changes to the program.

Effective March 1, 2017, an ACP contractor can file a minimum of 20 relevant applications in 18 months to remain on ACP. This is an extension of the current ACP rule which states that an ACP Contractor must file a minimum of 20 applications in 12 months to remain on ACP.

If suspended, an ACP contractor can still reapply for ACP status within 12 months.

#### **17.01.05 EDUCATION ITEM ON ESA CORE PROCESSES: INVESTIGATIONS PROCESS – WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CASE GOES TO COURT?**

See presentation.

Investigator Rod Lawrence presented an overview of what happens during the investigation process and when an unlicensed contractor is prosecuted.

Contractor complaints come to ESA via several channels. Rod highlighted ESA's efforts to pursue unlicensed companies offering electrical services in Ontario on websites like Kijiji.

The investigations process can be lengthy. Investigators must evaluate all evidence and determine whether or not there is enough evidence to bring a case to court and be successful.

Comments and questions included:

*Do investigators have to explain technical aspects of the case to the Justice of the Peace?*

An ESA Inspector explains technical details (the Code) whereas the Investigator testifies to the facts of the investigation.

*Has ESA ever investigated an LDC?*

This investigator has not. ESA staff noted that LDCs have been subject to enforcement efforts related to Code work.

*Does ESA work with Ontario College of Trades (OCOT) investigators?*

Yes ESA makes every effort to work with them where there is alignment.

*Homeowners need to bear some responsibility when hiring unlicensed contractors.*

ESA management agreed and noted that the LEC awareness campaign is focussed on the “demand” side of the equation – homeowners and businesses hiring unlicensed companies.

Classified websites like Kijiji have disclaimers to avoid liability for violations of local regulations by posters. The expectation is on the consumer to verify the information that is posted and ensure compliance.

#### 17.01.06

#### CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE (CSC) UPDATE

See presentation.

Eric Kingston provided an annual update on key work activities and service results at the Customer Service Centre.

#### Call Volumes

The CSC consistently met service levels, except for two periods of extreme volumes in April with the launch of the new code and a fall peak. The increase in volume for the new Code was higher than in previous Code implementation years. However, wait times remained relatively low. CSC will do an outreach to large contractors for open permits that are approaching year.

CSRs try to manage high volume by reducing actual call time (while not reducing quality) – keeping conversation business related and redirecting non-business talk as a few seconds can make a big difference to service levels when applied across thousands of calls.

#### Quality Program

There are three key measures within the CSC's Quality Program:

1. Technical and process – handling calls (fast)
2. Customer service– soft skills (friendly)
3. Accuracy – input of data (accurate)

CSC is exceeding its target for the year >85%

90-95% of calls are LECs creating notifications. Homeowners usually call for informational purposes. (Note: CSRs do not provide technical/Code information.)

### **CSC Corporate Projects**

The CSC is focusing on the following corporate projects:

1. Improved complaint tracking system – new procedure with centralized tracking
2. Assessment of customer channels – use a third party to review all customer channels and look for opportunities for improvement
3. Customer experience feedback for wiring – develop a survey/feedback system

There are approximately 40 CSRs (out of 53) taking calls each day (taking into account vacations, illnesses, etc.); there are five different shifts throughout the day.

**ACTION:** ESA to schedule a CoAC meeting at the CSC in Cambridge.

## **17.01.07 ACCOUNT BLOCKS**

See presentation.

Nancy Evans provided an overview of the different types of account blocks ESA uses. She also reviewed the information that has been posted to ESA's web site, distributed to CoAC and ECRA members in December, and that will be in the next issue of Plugged In.

The three types of blocks are:

1. Licensing (there are five subcategories of licensing blocks)
2. Defects
3. Credit

ECRA received a detailed briefing on licensing blocks.

Complaints about account blocks can be submitted to ESA. When a complaint is filed, a review is initiated and a response is provided.

Questions included:

*How do you know what your credit limit is?*

An account's available credit can be found on eNOLA.

The credit limit granted is determined by typical credit processes -- credit checks and recommended thresholds. If you submit a permit that exceeds limit, then it will be evaluated by ESA and the limit adjusted; usually same day approval. The limit is based on average history and credit history.

#### 17.01.08

#### STATUS OF MAJOR PROJECTS: RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT

See presentation.

Earl Davison presented an update on Risk-Based Oversight.

ESA is redefining what electrical work will be physically inspected and when.

A lot of effort (90%) is currently spent on low risk inspections. ESA will move to inspect 100% of high risk notifications and spend less time inspecting low risk work. But the rationale for not visiting a site must be grounded in science, data, and a consistent approach. In addition the program will have processes that allow for some discretion in response.

ESA will take a three-phased roll-out to implement Risk-Based Oversight (2017-2018-2019) by segments of work starting with commercial renovation wiring. Before proceeding to the next phase, the previous phase will be evaluated against criteria including stakeholder feedback. Stakeholdering will take place all along the way. There is a lot of design and development work before starting. ESA will be coming back to CoAC and other contractor groups for feedback and input.

LECs will still need to comply with permits, and the benefit will be more predictability for inspections.

The roll-out process will be similar to the commercial renovation pilot that began in 2016.

**17.01.09 OPERATIONAL Q&A**

*Is there an update on ElecCheck?*

ESA expects to be able to provide a more detailed up-date on ElecCheck at the April 2017 meeting.

ElecCheck is a non-regulated service that uses a physical inspection and checklist over and above a visual inspection. It is more thorough than a visual inspection and the homeowner receives a report once an ElecCheck has been completed. If the report recommended repairs or other up-dates, an LEC may be contacted by the customer to correct the items identified in the ElecCheck report. As with any wiring job, a permit will be required to do the work.

Requests for ElecCheck usually come from insurance companies.

*Does ESA need a Designated Master Electrician (DME) to conduct an ElecCheck?*

ESA does not require a DME to do the ElecCheck review.

**ACTION:** ESA to provide an update of ElecCheck, including the role of the DME, at the April 13 meeting.

**17.01.10 OTHER BUSINESS**

**2017 Fees**

Adjustments to two calculations came into effect February 3, 2017 – long term care definition and residential generator transfer switch. The 2017 Fee Guide is now available.

**Other comments from CoAC members:**

*Some inspections require access to restricted areas and the customer does not accept the ESA identification as sufficient and asks ESA Inspectors for their driver's license. Some Inspectors have declined which results in a defect for no access. Management committed to look into this.*

*There was a suggestion to have a live chat component added to NOLA. In addition, more tools are needed in NOLA to automate/schedule an LEC's internal work.*

**ACTION:** ESA to provide instruction on how to get a quote through eNOLA without taking out a permit.

ESA to review access ID processes for Inspectors.

**Adjournment**      *MOTION to Adjourn by Dave Ackison*

*Seconded by Larry Shaver*

*Carried*

**End of Contractor Advisory Council Meeting**

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**Next Meeting:**      **April 13, 2017**  
**Time:**              **8:30 am – 1:30 pm**  
**Location:**         **Centre for Health and Safety Innovation**  
                             **5110 Creekbank Road, Training Room 3**

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