
June 18, 2020**8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.****Meeting via Video-conference**

Present: Joe Kurpe, ECAO (Chair) Dave Ackison, OEL
Clint Attard, OEL Shawn Blacklock, OEL
Ryan Delisle, ECAO Tony Minna, ECAO
Larry Shaver, ECAO Robert Smith, ECAO
Rob Sloan, OEL

Regrets: Mark Hopkins, ECAO Larry Pearson, OEL
Dan Williams, LEC

Guests: Sharmila Uruthirandasivam, MGCS

ESA Staff: Borjana Bulajic Earl Davison
Soussanna Karras Carol Keiley
Allison Hawkins Aisling O'Doherty
Mark Taylor

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Motion to Approve Agenda

MOTION to approve agenda as amended by Tony Minna

Seconded by Larry Shaver

Carried

Motion to Approve Minutes

MOTION to approve Oct. 8, 2019 minutes by Tony Minna

Seconded by Dave Ackison

Carried

Review Outstanding Actions

The outstanding actions were reviewed and the status updated.

2. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The Council voted on three members whose terms were up for renewal.

Member terms were up for renewal for Mark Hopkins, Robert Smith and Dan Williams.

The Council members voted unanimously to extend these members' terms for an additional three years.

3. RISK-BASED OVERSIGHT UPDATE

Mark Taylor provided the Council with an update on the Risk-Based Oversight (RBO) activities to date.

Overview of activities and launch plans:

- RBO will launch on July 6, 2020.
- Communications sent to ACP contractors to provide a summary of what has been done for RBO and what will happen next.
- Defect ratios have been sent to give contractors time to get their processes in place. Inspectors have been reaching out to those who have high defect ratios and are on the cusp of RBO eligibility.
- RBO webinars developed and posted to esasafe.com and contractors are encouraged to watch them. Each one is approximately 7-10 minutes, and covers a different topic.
- New Online Service with new passwords – information will be sent out the weekend of the switchover (July 4-5). The new service will also include help files and CSC assistance.
- ACP open notifications will continue to be processed under ACP rules until completed.
- New Fee Guide posted, comes into effect July 6.

Scheduling (med/low risk) – The more notice a contractor can provide, the better; provide 48 hours notice, receive notice the day before/day of scheduled visit; otherwise, expect a visit.

ACP discounts and fees have gone away; reimbursements will be issued.

Comments/Questions from Council:

Is there a new application form? The only difference under RBO is the inspection process, right?

The Notification forms stay the same; however, ESA moved away from asking the age of the building. ESA is not asking anything new on the form (will use fee codes and assumptions to get building information contractors may not have access to).

Will contractors know if their job is low-medium-high risk?

Yes. The inspection ratios for low-medium is 1 in 5. ESA is training inspectors to send out notices the day of a scheduled visit. It could take one to two months to trust the recommendations coming out of the system.

High-risk inspections will be scheduled the day inspector services the area. If you use the Online Service, you can book a particular day – the system will tell you if it is available.

ESA is making a change to the online system and moving away from using fee items to work items. Contractors will use descriptions to enter the work being done; the system is intuitive so it should be better for contractors. Under RBO, ESA gets more information and the inspector knows more about the job.

Will RBO increase number of visits by an inspector?

By sending out more “Pass/No Visit” notices, that commitment has been made. Currently, contractors can call up to 4pm the day before an inspection and get a visit the next day – it will take a while to evolve from this. Need to modify behaviours to get the flexibility needed.

What are the procedures for emergencies? How do we get in touch with Inspectors?

There will be no change under RBO. However you worked before will continue to under RBO.

ACTION: Send copy of RBO presentation to COAC.

4. COVID-19: OPERATIONAL UPDATE

Earl Davison updated the Council on ESA’s operational response to the pandemic.

Mr. Davison provided a high-level overview of ESA response to COVID-19 and reiterated that all information is posted on the COVID-19 Hub on esasafe.com. Since the pandemic started, ESA has issued about 10 updates/guidance documents.

He pointed out that some concerns were access to sites; trying to keep Ontarians safe, as well as our staff/inspectors as well as shortage of certain PPE equipment.

He asked for counsel and guidance from CoAC members as to whether ESA created any limitations for contractors with COVID-19 guidelines and asked for any feedback to improve.

Comments from Council:

Haven’t heard anything from the field about inspections. Some inspections have been done with photos; and there has been a lot of communications with inspectors.

Mr. Davison thanked the members and explained that ESA has accepted hundreds of photos and videos, and are building towards a day where specific installation inspections can be done by video in real time.

5. LICENSING UPDATE

Soussanna Karras provided the Council with an overview of licensing activities under the COVID-19 pandemic; and the Licensing Plan which was approved by the ECRA Advisory Council and ESA's Board of Directors was also presented.

Licensing highlights:

- New Licence registrations and renewals are down, ME exams have been cancelled, and call volumes are down overall.
- ESA is implementing virtual proctoring for ME exam, and reviewing other options as well (e.g. in-person for small groups, Zoom/online, etc.). The goal is to reduce the backlog and move ahead with urgent cases.
- Investigations have been limited to high-risk, urgent cases.
- Courts are slowly opening up (they have been closed since mid-March).
- Licence Holder Meetings (LHM) – plan to cancel the Sudbury LHM October meeting and have one virtual meeting on November 7; more information will follow as we get closer to the dates.

The Council was asked if they has any suggestions for the LHM.

The members suggested a few topics:

- How is RBO doing at that point, how it's moving along...
- Keep the technical hour – it's great opportunity for contractors to talk to inspectors
- Something about Covid-19... An update at that time.

Licensing Plan

The Licensing Plan has been a work in progress that started last year. The plan has been approved by the ESA Board of Directors, and outlines the path forward for the next five years.

An update was provided on activates already underway – virtual exams, online renewals, improved reporting, target underground activity on Kijiji, etc. ESA has been working with Kijiji since May. Kijiji has been monitoring their site for ads that don't have a licence holder number and asking the people to remove the ads. They are notified by Kijiji three times to remove the ad, and if it's not, Kijiji removed the ad themselves. Seven hundred (700) ads are posted on Kijiji everyday for electrical work – that works out to about 600,000 a year. ESA wants to educate both sides to tackle unlicensed activity.

A Council member asked if ECRA AC approved the plan. The response was that the ECRA AC Council approved the plan after making some changes/improvements. ESA has also been working with ECRA AC and ESA's own Training department to develop a continuous education framework

ACTION: Send copy of Licensing Plan to Council members.

6. COVID-19 IMPACT DISCUSSION

Council members participated in a general discussion on how the pandemic has impacted them.

Comments included:

- *Enhanced social distancing and protective measures put in place.*
- *Phones not ringing like they normally would.*
- *Some employees would rather stay home because they're concerned about walking into foreign environments; concerned about keeping enough stock of PPE.*
- *PPE is a big issue – constantly trying to keep on top of it.*
- *Highway and infrastructure work and tendering is ongoing, with the majority of workers back on site. There's an issue with high-rises and getting workers in/out of new construction sites/buildings (the elevators are a problem).*
- *Keeping busy with outdoor work; have shifted workers outside.*
- *Concerned about Niagara Falls and tourism business for the foreseeable future.*
- *Had to lay off some staff and business has been down a bit.*
- *Work is picking up; productivity not being affected much now.*
- *Utilities appear out of sync in their processes; each one is different.*

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Joe Kurpe pointed out that his term as Council Chair is coming to an end; elections will be held in October for Chair and Vice-Chair positions.

A member raised an issue with defect ratios during the pandemic... It's tough to get your defect ratio down when you're not getting visits to sites, and business is down overall. Do photos and videos submitted count as a visit?

ESA explained that photos and videos are not classified as a visit, and will look into it at going forward.

Can an inspector rescind a defect?

Yes, it is called defect disregard, and can be removed from the calculation – the process remains in place as defects become more important under RBO.

CoAC members thanked Mark Taylor for all his contributions and wished him all the best in his upcoming retirement.

ACTION: ESA will look using photos and videos going forward.

WRAP UP & ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Tony Minna

Seconded by Rob Sloan

End of Contractor Advisory Council Meeting

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

Next Meeting: October 15, 2020

Location: ZOOM Conference Call