
February 19, 2021**9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.****Meeting via Video-conference**

Present: Rod Skinkle (Chair) Sandy Manners (Co-chair)
Larry Allison Tammie Orifa
Sunaina Menezes

Regrets: Julia Budahazy

Guests: Amanda Garofalo (MGCS)

ESA Staff: Borjana Bulajic Carol Keiley Claire Loucks Patrick Falzon
Allison Hawkins Norm Breton Soussanna Karas

1. PRELIMINARIES, APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The meeting began with introductions and welcome to new Stakeholder Relations Advisor.

Motion to approve the agenda by: Sunaina Menezes

Seconded by: Larry Allison

Motion to approve the Mar. 26, 2020 meeting minutes by: Tammie Orifa

Seconded by: Sandy Manners

CARRIED

Conflict of interest declaration – none identified.

A reminder of the importance of risk management was given.

2. AUDITOR GENERAL REPORT

Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations provide an overview of the Auditor General's Report released in December 2020 (see presentation).

- ESA is working closely with MGCS on joint recommendations.
- AG will return in two years to audit progress on recommendations.

- ESA will engage with stakeholders as the action plan moves forward.
- ESA may book more meetings with councils depending on stakeholder engagement plan.
- External action plan will be posted on the website at the end of February and will be updated quarterly.
- There will be more details on the action plan going forward.

Comments:

- Member asked if it would be helpful to know who had experience in stakeholder consultations. Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations responded that any expertise would be welcome.
- Two members had experience with stakeholder consultations. One with consumers in particular. Other members had limited experience.
- Member asked if the recommendations affecting CAC would be targeted consultations and if ESA would be drilling down into the recommendations.
- Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations responded that all councils would have specific consultations focussed on their areas of expertise.

3. PRODUCT SAFETY STRATEGY UPDATE

- Director of Product Safety provided an update on the strategy (see presentation)
- ESA is on track to present to the board for approval in June 2021
- AG Report touched on product safety. Have taken the recommendations into consideration in updated strategy.
- ESA will hold targeted consultations in March/April 2021 and will incorporate feedback into strategy submitted to the board in June.
- After board approval, will begin implementation.

Comments:

- Member asked if CAC was included in the targeted consultations.
- Director of Product Safety indicated that there was not a plan to consult again with CAC but that an overview of the strategy was included in the presentation. If members had comments, please feel free to send them in.
- The strategy reflects the feedback received to date and addresses the challenges identified.
- Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations informed the CAC that the Director of Product Safety was retiring at the beginning of March and thanked him for his contributions to ESA and the council.
- CAC members congratulated Director of Product Safety on his retirement and thanked him.

4. ONLINE ME EXAM AND VIRTUAL PROCTORING

- Director of Licensing and Training provided an update on the progress toward launching online examinations.
- ESA recognizes the importance of implementing its digital strategy, particularly in the light of the challenges during Covid-19. Complying with government orders, ESA was not able to offer in-person exams for extended periods and experienced a backlog in applicants wishing to take the exam.
- To address this, and provide additional options for those wishing to take the exam, ESA fast-tracked its online exam project.
- In-person exams had proctors that would help ensure the integrity of the exam process. ESA needed to ensure that an online version would offer the same level of assurance.
- ESA is working toward launching the online exam with virtual proctoring. Have done internal testing and are using a team of external experts including MEC members to do additional testing.
- The plan is to make schedules available to candidates by the end of March. Will phase in the launch to ensure rollout is smooth and that any issues are immediately addressed.

Comments:

- Member asked if there would be testing on a diverse population to ensure that the software does not adversely affect people.
- Director of Licensing and Training indicated that ESA has the ability to set the parameters of the software. The exams would be reviewed by the vendor and then by ESA. ESA will make sure that diversity is addressed when testing the exam.
- Stakeholder Relations Consultant indicated that ESA had an accommodation policy and some wording could be added to the exam page.
- Chair agreed that learning disabilities would be important to address.
- Chair asked about the backlog due to COVID and when that might be resolved.
- Director of Licensing and Training indicated that online training for the exam was already being offered. As soon as the province permits in-person examinations, extra sessions will be added and the backlog should be cleared by the end of May.
- Member referred to a recommendation in the AG report regarding the ME exam and the ability to take it multiple times. Suggested that there needs to be a balance between accommodation and maintaining the integrity of the exam.
- Director of Licensing and Training responded that ESA established a working group to address the recommendations within the report. The existing unwritten rule that the exam can only be taken twice and then additional training is requested will be formalized. The exam questions will also be reviewed by the working group.

5. POOL INSTALLATIONS AND OVERHEAD WIRES

- Powerline/Safety Code Specialist gave an overview of code requirements for pool/hot tub installations near powerlines (see presentation).
- ESA has seen an increasing number of installations that do not comply with the code. Depending on the issue it can be complicated to rectify.

- Utilities need to provide as much information as possible about requirements to ensure the point of attachment meets the requirements stipulated by the utility.
- Ontario building code does not reference pools or hot tubs so often installers don't look at the OESC.
- ESA is looking at options to ensure common messages are sent out and that installers are looking at the requirements for overhead wires.

Comments:

- Member asked if homeowner would be required to inform their insurance company regarding a pool installation and if it was a requirement perhaps the insurance company could be given materials about the requirements and suggested that insurance companies also have newsletters that might also be an option.
- Powerline/Safety Code Specialist indicated ESA would look into this option.
- Member indicated that installations would need to be in compliance with municipal by-laws and perhaps could approach municipalities.
- Powerline/Safety Code Specialist responded that ESA was looking into this now for both overhead wires and underground wires. Municipalities are not aware that they are responsible for this area of compliance. They are only concerned of Municipal setbacks from property lines. Are looking at preparing a communications piece to address this gap.
- Member suggested that ESA should approach public works within the municipalities rather than OMA.
- Member asked for an overview of docks and submarine cable.
- Powerline/Safety Code Specialist indicated the ESA was reviewing whether there was a requirement to contact the local utility before building a dock. Will work with Ontario One Call on the issue.

6. POWERLINE SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

- Manger of Internal and External Communications provided a presentation on 2020 Powerline Safety Campaign (see presentation).
- ESA did a refresh of the campaign to reposition the messaging and align with specific target audiences.
- Developed separate messaging for home safety and work safety.
- Campaign was very focused on social media and performed well.
- Used data to drive campaign. Ads were targeted at areas research indicated were high incident for accidents.

Comments:

- Member asked if specific professional areas (e.g. dump truck drivers) or ethnic groups were being targeted.
- Manager of Internal and External Communications indicated that ESA was aware of the need for other languages and have translated in the past. Are presently looking at more languages.
- Member asked if multi-cultural stations were targeted.

- Manager of Internal and External Communications indicated want to add more languages when more information is available on the website in those languages.
- Member asked when translations would be done.
- Manager of Internal and External Communications indicated that this year were looking at offering French. Will expand in future using data analytics.
- Member suggested that there would be value in doing ads now without waiting for the website translations.
- Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations responded that ESA was looking at media targeted in other languages but there are budget constraints and translations are costly. Will have to balance the two.

7. MEMBER RECRUITMENT PACKAGE

- Stakeholder Consultant updated the recruitment package and will provide the materials to the council to assist with recruitment.
- Was based on the backgrounder updated by the council in October.
- The package includes messaging for social media.

Comments:

- Member asked who recruitment was targeting.
- Stakeholder Consultant responded that the specific areas of expertise were outlined in the backgrounder.
- Member asked if the messaging could be added to their social media.
- Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations responded that any assistance provided by council members would be welcomed.
- Chair asked if ESA uses LinkedIn.
- Stakeholder Consultant responded that LinkedIn had been used in previous recruitment efforts but had not been very successful in attracting new members.
- Stakeholder Consultant indicated that the package would link to the ESA website which would provide more information.

ACTION ITEM: Stakeholder Consultant and Project Coordinator, Communications & Stakeholder Relations to insert links and update webpage and provide recruitment package with links to council members.

8. ADMIN ITEMS

- Code of Conduct
 - Document was drafted as a result of a recommendation by a governance expert who presented at ECRA.
 - Document was based on a number of examples, including the ESA Board of Directors and other not-for-profit organizations.
 - Document has been introduced at all councils. Only one difference in the document is for ECRA as they report to the Board. This is the section relating to complaints which is a standard part of council code of conduct.
 - Part of housekeeping and good governance.

Comments:

- Member asked what should be put in the “dated at” section.
- Director of Licensing and Training responded that “Mississauga” was fine.
- Chair asked members to review and sign at earliest convenience.

ACTION ITEM: Members to review and submit signed code of conduct prior to March 31.

- Expense Forms
 - **Members were reminded to submit expense forms within 30 days of the meeting.**
- Member survey
 - Stakeholder Consultant thanked those who had participated in the survey and indicated that less than 50% of the council had responded. As such the results could not be compared to previous years and were not a reliable representation of the group.
 - Chair requested that the survey be resent.

ACTION ITEM: ESA to circulate a new member survey with a one-week completion date. ESA will provide a reminder a few days prior to close.

- Meeting Dates
 - The following meeting dates were agreed upon for the remainder of the year:
 - Friday April 23: 9:30-12:30
 - Friday June 25: 9:30-12:30
 - Friday September 24: 9:30-12:30
 - Friday November 26: 9:30-12:30

9. OTHER BUSINESS

- A brief UAC update was provided.
- Member indicated that there was no update from ECRA.

WRAP UP & ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by: Tammie Orifa

Seconded by: Sandy Manners

Carried

End of Consumer Advisory Council Meeting

Council members should send comments and suggestions for the next agenda to the Council Chair, Rod Skinkle, who will consolidate all input.

Next Meeting: April 23, 2021

Location: video conference