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**November 26, 2021****9:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.****Meeting via Video-conference**

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<b>Present:</b>	Sandy Manners (Chair)	Larry Allison
	Gurvinder Chopra	Tammie Orifa
	Jennifer Reynolds	
<b>Regrets:</b>	Sunaina Menezes	
<b>Guests:</b>	Alexander Janack, MGCS	
<b>ESA Staff:</b>	Borjana Bulajic	Raymond Chan
	Esau Habibulla	Nansy Hanna
	Freda Lam	Emily Larose
	Claire Loucks	Ray Yousef

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## **PRELIMINARIES**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

### **1. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest declared.

### **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

Motion to Approve Agenda

1<sup>st</sup>: Larry Allison

Seconded by Tammie Orifa

*Carried*

Motion to Approve Minutes of September 24, 2021 meeting.

1<sup>st</sup>: Tammie Orifa

Seconded by Sandy Manners

*Carried*

The Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations introduced Gurvinder Chopra as a new member and provided an overview of his resume.

Gurvinder Chopra introduced his role at EFC, experience in engineering and certification bodies and thanked ESA and the Council for the opportunity to participate.

Motion to confirm Jennifer Reynolds as a new member.

1<sup>st</sup>: Larry Allison

Second: Tammie Orifa

*Carried*

Jennifer Reynolds introduced herself and her experiences in safety and customer relations and expressed her pleasure in joining the Council.

The Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations stated that there is one role yet to fill on the Council and asked members to share any resumes that might be relevant. The Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations introduced Raymond Chan as the new Manager of Communications and Stakeholder Relations, who provided an overview of his experience.

### 3. ACTION ITEMS

- Potential for AI biases in virtual proctoring.

The Licensing Manager provided a response to the question raised regarding whether suspicious behaviour flags have been reviewed and if they reflect a pattern of bias. No measurable biases were found within the software and ESA has not received any reports from exam takers. ESA will continue to monitor this internally, should there be any concerns raised.

***Action Item: Stakeholder Advisor to circulate response from Proctorio for member reference.***

Comments:

- Member stated that it is important to not assume that these tools are without bias and expressed appreciation the work to look into this matter.
- Member stated that there is a lot of focus on unconscious bias and many employers are providing training to employees and offered to share materials. This could be something that the Council may be involved in.
- Chair asked if this is something that can be passed along, from an HR perspective.
  - Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations responded that we will pass it along internally.

#### **4. ANNUAL LICENCE HOLDER MEETING**

The Licensing Manager provided an overview of the Licence Holder Meeting. Of the 834 registrants, 451 attended, which is record breaking for ESA. ESA was happy to be able to hold it via Zoom again and reach so many license holders. The meeting provided information on licensing, communications and ECRA activities and provided an opportunity to hear from Technical Advisors on Code related questions. 65 questions were answered live, along with questions received in advance.

Minister Romano provided greetings, which was a first for the License Holder Meeting, making it special to hear him recognizing the importance of the regulations and congratulating LECs in maintaining high standards of electrical work. The keynote address was delivered by an ME and LEC who suffered injuries from an electrical explosion and was able to speak directly and passionately about the dangers of live electrical work, stressing a zero tolerance message.

Work is already underway to plan for next year's meeting, which will also be held over Zoom.

#### Comments:

- Member stated that it seems that virtual meetings increase participation, so maybe a hybrid option can be used in future years
  - Licensing Manager responded that we are considering this option.
- Member stated that the meeting seems to get better each year and that the changes to the agenda were great.
- Member agreed with all the good comments and that the keynote message was very impactful and balanced well with the focus on regulations. Extremely well done and delivered. Member felt immersed and a good introduction to ESA.
  - Licensing Manager responded that she will pass along the comments to the team.
- Chair stated that the meeting was very successful and impactful.

#### **5. 2021 ONTARIO ELECTRICAL SAFETY CODE UPDATE AND ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM INSTALLATIONS**

The Engineering Manager introduced himself and his role at ESA. The Engineering Manager provided an overview of the major changes stemming from the 2021 Ontario Electrical Safety Code. Please see presentation for details.

The Senior Director, Engineering & Regulation joined the meeting and explained the Code adoption cycle and goals of ensuring that new technology is provided for in the regulations to ensure safety and consumer protection. The regulations work to balance with the need for innovation and safety and consumer protection.

**Comments:**

- Chair stated that from a consumer perspective, it is good to see that the Code evolves and adapts.
- Member stated that it was a wonderful and concise presentation and that ESA does an amazing job of informing stakeholders. Canada lags behind in electric innovation, although there are companies making those innovations elsewhere and then bringing them to Canada. It is important for ESA to be part of this process. ESA has been a leader in this area. Manufacturers who are innovating are very concerned with safety and they will not do anything that will damage their reputation.
  - Senior Director, Engineering & Regulation responded that if an innovation is not safe, it will not be adopted or used, so innovation and safety go together.
  - Engineering Manager responded that it is interesting that the member mentioned European-based companies, as that is normally where the innovations start. They look after huge markets in Africa and Asia and with the huge demand comes the demand for innovation. They are very cautious of their brands and will never sacrifice them to push an unsafe product out to market.
- Member asked if there has been any changes related to electric vehicles.
  - Engineering Manager responded that the main thing is to address loading on infrastructure. By 2035, new vehicles will be electric and putting charging stations will impact existing infrastructure, so we need to make sure that we have the generating capabilities to support. It will take more than one or two Code cycles to adapt. A new Electrification Council is currently considering this from a strategic perspective; it is a moving target to address it best.
  - Chair asked if the Code has provisions for larger charging infrastructure for transport like buses.
    - Senior Director, Engineering & Regulation responded that this is covered in the Code and require coordination with utilities.

**6. PODCAST – GROUNDED IN ONTARIO AND AG/GR UPDATES**

The Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations advised the council of the new ESA podcast on Underground Economy, its intended audience, of MEs and LECs and invited Council members to listen to ESA podcasts and share with their peers.

She provided an update on on-going communications campaigns:

1. The Hire an LEC campaign is designed for homeowners and explains the differences between LECs, MEs and certified electricians and on-going outreach with Holmes Group.
2. Powerline Safety Campaign is completed for the calendar year, will review campaign survey results and prepare for the next year.
3. ESA will launch its Annual Holiday Safety Campaign that is consumer oriented on Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup> on social media channels, traditional media and update the ESA website with a focus on looking for damaged items and approved certification marks. , ESA has been working with MGCS on the Ontario Electrical Safety Code and we have completed the first two phases of communications outreach to inform stakeholders (Advisory Councils, LECs, MEs, and Associations) about the Code approval. Phase three will start in January to provide regular reminders ahead of adoption date on May 5, 2022. Inspector training is being conducted and will also be offered to LECs in 2022.

The statement from Minister Romano at the License Holder Meeting was much appreciated.

ESA updated its external action plan on the Auditor General recommendations on its website; we are well on target and ahead of schedule on some and are pleased with the outcomes so far.

#### Comments:

- Chair stated that she has noticed a lot on social media which is good, the campaigns are well done and provide concrete information with a strong message.
  - Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations responded that there has been a strategic shift to digital so we are aiming to increase this while still working on traditional media. Digital outreach is more efficient for stakeholders.
- Chair asked as part of the Holiday Safety Campaign, if someone notices something unsafe in a store, how easy is it to report this.
  - Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations discussed responded that Health Canada has jurisdiction on consumer products; however, we have information on how to report unsafe products on ESA website.
  - Member stated that EFC has been working with ESA to share these campaigns and also participated in a campaign for online sales coming, to inform consumers about purchasing online, with information on what to look for and certification marks. Member suggested to work together to promote these campaigns to reach relevant users and stakeholders.

## **7. 2020 ONTARIO ELECTRICAL SAFETY REPORT**

The Safety Analyst and Epidemiologist presented the 2020 OESR, including statistics related to electrical safety, incidents and injuries across Ontario. See presentation for details.

Comments:

- Member asked which demographic group see the most fatalities and incidents related to consumers.
  - Safety Analyst and Epidemiologist responded that fatalities and incidents generally occur in the occupational groups. For non-occupational groups, for 2020 and 2021, they remain a bit younger for interesting reasons. In 2021, two fatalities related to Lichtenberg generators occurred; the younger demographic has more access to these do-it-yourself projects on YouTube and social. In 2020, incidents were related to copper theft; these occurred during the COVID-19 lockdown and many people experienced financial difficulties, which may have led to criminal activity such as copper theft at utilities.

## **8. PRODUCT SAFETY TASK FORCE**

Stakeholder Advisor presented on the activities of the Product Safety Task Force and the focus group on consumer education and awareness that has been established. See presentation for details.

Comments:

- Member asked about how product safety is funded, as ESA previously did not have specific funding.
  - Stakeholder Advisor responded that ESA does not have a dedicated funding mechanism for product safety activities which is a challenge when determining how to address issues.
- Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations stated that more public awareness campaigns focusing on product safety will be released in the coming year.

## **9. FINANCIAL UPDATE – FEES**

The Director of Finance provided a financial update and an update on ESA's contemplated inflationary fee increase on wiring fees and noted that fees have not been increased since 2016.

Comments:

- Chair asked if there is a communications strategy to share this information.
  - Director of Finance responded that yes, ESA is bound by Schedule D of the Administrative Agreement, the plan is to provide notice to MGCS in January, 30 days before affected stakeholders, with the goal of implementing the fee increase in April 2022.
- Member asked if the fee increase would apply to utilities.
  - Director of Finance responded that no, ESA is not currently contemplating this. Utility fees are bound by a formula that is tied to their revenue and customer base. The increase only applies to wiring fees.

## **10. ADMINISTRATIVE MONETARY PENALTIES UPDATE**

Senior Director and Assistant General Counsel provided an update on the Auditor General's recommendation to implement AMPs. A legislative amendment has passed as part of Bill 13, which enables ESA to issue AMPs.

Comments:

- Member stated that this is important and needed. People who are flouting the rules have to be taken care of. Penalties have to be issued to curb the issue. Member asked how the reporting process will work.
  - Senior Director and Assistant General Counsel responded that reports will come from multiple sources, but for unlicensed activities, they can come through our anonymous tip line to the licensing department. We will leverage a lot of our existing tools and will use AMPs in addition to those existing tools.
  - Member responded that the process is good and that some monitoring will be required.
- Chair asked if ESA is cooperating with TSSA, as they are also implementing AMPs.
  - Senior Director and Assistant General Counsel responded that TSSA's AMPs program is very focused on a particular area of their regulating authority but ESA has worked with MGCS on a jurisdictional scan and we have worked with TSSA. RHRA has a tiered AMPs model that we have looked at as well.

The Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations notified members that the Senior Director and Assistant General Counsel will be starting a new role as Chief Regulatory Officer & Regulatory Counsel on rotational basis in January. Members expressed their congratulations; Senior Director and Assistant General Counsel thanked members.



## **11. MEMBER UPDATES**

Member representing ECRA explained ECRA's history to new members and its current role. The last ECRA meeting focused on preparing for the License Holder Meeting. A working group on the continuing education Auditor General recommendation will be established; ECRA had already been advocating this for MEs. It was suggested that the Chair of CAC participate in the working group.

## **12. OTHER BUSINESS**

Meeting dates for 2022 were scheduled.

Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations encouraged members to share resumes for an additional member. Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder stated that ESA is contemplating a consumer awareness campaign for product safety, based on the outputs from the Product Safety Task Force and encouraged members to share ideas.

- Member stated they have shared this information with their network in the past and will do so again.

The Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations stated that ESA is contemplating producing educational videos with safety messaging for high schools and colleges, skilled trades, women in trades. We look forward to any thoughts or best practices that can be shared.

- Member stated that EFC can collaborate with ESA, as EFC is doing quite a bit of work on this. For the past three years, EFC has identified talent availability and retention as an issue. He suggested to start with high schoolers to get them onboard to educate them on the benefits of working in technical fields.
- Director of Communications, Government & Stakeholder Relations asked that this information be shared with the Manager of Government and Stakeholder Relations so that we can build on these initiatives and suggested that perhaps the member can present on EFC's work at the next CAC meeting.
- Chair agreed that this is a great suggestion.

## **13. WRAP UP & ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Tammie Orifa

Seconded by Larry Allison

*Carried*



**End of Consumer Advisory Council Meeting**

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***If there are any discrepancies to these minutes, please report them by email to Chair and Claire Loucks.***

Next Meeting: February 11, 2022

Location: ZOOM Conference Call or in-person if possible.