

---

**January 28, 2021****9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.****Meeting via Video-conference**

---

**Present:**

Dave Ackison, OEL	Joe Kurpe, ECAO (Chair)
Clint Attard, OEL	Shawn Blacklock, OEL
Tony Minna, ECAO	Rob Sloan, OEL
Ron Bergeron, OEL	Larry Shaver, ECAO
Robert Smith, ECAO	Mark Hopkins, ECAO

**Regrets:**

Dan Williams, LEC  
Ryan Delisle, ECAO

**Guests:** Sharmila Uruthirandasivam, MGCS

**ESA Staff:**

Borjana Bulajic	Earl Davison
Soussanna Karas	Carol Keiley
Allison Hawkins	Will Barrett
Nansy Hanna	Emily Larose
Serge Laflamme	Joel Moody

---

## **PRELIMINARIES**

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder relations indicated that members who had terms expiring in 2021 had been notified as well as the associations they represent. New members will be nominated to replace those members who have reached the maximum time on the council.

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

Motion to Approve Agenda

MOTION to approve agenda: Mark Hopkins

Seconded by Clint Attard

Carried

### Motion to Approve Minutes

MOTION to approve November 25, 2020 minutes by Dave Ackison

Seconded by Rob Sloan

Carried

## **2. Review of Outstanding Action Items**

ACTION: Council members to provide suggested wording for the website page in relation to Property Owner Obligations to Director of Licensing. (Open – members to provide suggested wording)

ACTION: Director of Licensing to review the suggested language against the regulatory requirements with regards to Property Managers. (Open – awaiting member's feedback)

ACTION: Senior Inspector, Business Planning and Improvement will look into the Pole Line eligibility requirements with Pole Line Committee and report back to council. (on agenda)

## **3. AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT – overview of recommendations and timelines**

- 14 DAAs in total were audited under theme “Value for Money” and report was published on December 7, 2020 and available on ESA newsroom section. Highlighted that ESA is proud that Electrical Safety improved in Ontario over the past 10 years and identified areas for improvement that are in alignment with the ESA Corporate Strategy 2020-2025.
- Auditor General's employees reviewed ESA for about a year. An audit is meant to find gaps and propose ways to improve.
- Auditor General will return in two years to assess progress on recommendations.
- ESA is currently working on an action plan to address the recommendations with the Ministry. Will be seeking input and working closely together with various stakeholders on implementing these recommendations.
- Each bullet point in report is an action item. Some action items will be in partnership with MGCS as they may require a regulatory change.
- There will be a lot of consultations going forward. Councils and industry will be consulted. ESA will also be researching other jurisdictions for best practices.
- External Action Plan will be posted at the end of February on the website.

### Comments:

- Member asked where a copy of the AG Report could be found.
- VP of Operations indicated that there was a link from the ESA website and the full report was on the [Auditor General's website](#). (link inserted to report)

## **4. OPERATIONS UPDATE**

*Vice President of Operations provided the Council with an update on activities.*

#### AG Recommendations for Operations:

- AG noted that 67 per cent of notifications were visited in ACP. Recommendation is already being addressed with the launch of RBO in July. Now are at 50 per cent of notifications visited.
- AG also noted that certificates of inspection were given even when the site was not visited. Have addressed this by changing all to “certificate of acceptance”. The code only requires ESA to “accept” an installation.

#### Comments:

- Could reduction in sites visited be a reflection of COVID rather than RBO?
- VP Operations responded that this could be a part of it because COVID did restrict access to some locations. At the same time home renovations have picked up dramatically so it's hard to pinpoint the exact effect.

#### RBO:

VP Operations introduced Will Barrett as Mark Taylor's replacement. He will officially begin as Operations BPI General Manager on February 1.

- Operations BPI General Manager thanked the council for welcoming him and provided an update on Pole Line Maintenance eligibility under RBO (see presentation)
- Investigated to see if RBO had changed some of the eligibility requirements and identified some possible issues. Changes have been proposed to address those items.
- Have been working on several enhancements to RBO to ensure that the data is accurate and properly retained. Are continuously monitoring to identify areas for improvement. Have identified small gaps and are working to address them.
- Team is using inspector and contractor feedback to drive enhancements.
- The online system has also been improved as RBO rolled out and feedback on the system has come in from stakeholders.
- Are currently working to further improve client communication. Will replace the inspector mapping system with an updated version so inspectors can better plan their day. The goal was to be able to communicate an approximate time window at the beginning of the day to the client and a further update when the inspector was on route to the location. The system is being tested and a pilot will launch shortly. Are inviting any contractors involved in pilot to provide feedback.
- VP Operations indicated this was the next stage in progression for communication and it will help address a number of concerns stakeholders have raised.

#### Comments:

- Member indicated that RBO fees are still an issue. In his specific instance (pole line maintenance) he felt Notification costs have doubled since RBO launched. The member indicated that the inspector in his area lacked knowledge about the installations. Member wanted to know when enhancements to system would be in place.

- VP Operations asked the member if the feedback regarding the inspector had been communications to the senior inspector. The requirements to get most of the RBO benefits of lower inspection rates are - in part – conditional on meeting volume and quality standards.
- Member indicated he had not provided the feedback but would do so following the meeting.
- Member commented the disconnect/reconnect issues are still occurring where the notification is not being finalized and some are very old. It sometimes triggers a new fee charge.
- Operations BPI General Manager indicated that this was an automated process under ACP and are aware of the issue. Have asked inspectors to address the issue, and it should not be a problem going forward. If any have not been addressed, please notify the CSC.
- VP Operations asked council how to get the message out to report disconnect/reconnect issues.
- Member responded the association newsletter would be appropriate. Member indicated he would personally contact contractors who had mentioned the issue to him.
- Member commented that the biggest RBO issue continues to be “small jobs” as the cost is discouraging people from hiring LECs. Indicated many are using “deemed competent” people to do the work because of the cost of the permit. Member felt that RBO removed many positive aspects of ACP. Member commented that if safety is the priority, the cost is a deterrent.
- VP Operations indicated he recognized the fees are an issue for some contractors but it is not a simple issue to address. [Additional Information: the fee changes through RBO had a net zero impact on ESA’s revenues. Some fees were increased and others decreased. Where fees were lowered, it was to encourage compliance in areas with the greatest leverage on homeowners – specifically renovations - , and therefore reduce the underground economy]
- Member commented that customers question why they have to pay for a notification but no inspector comes and suggested that the obligation to file the notification be passed to the property owner or manager.
- Member asked if more than one site contact can be added to a notification and indicated this would be helpful to ensure that the information had been received.
- Operations BPI General Manager indicated that will have to work with IT to address this within the system. If have a mobile number and an email listed can get both messages.

**ACTION ITEM: Operations BPI General Manager to return to update council on progress with pole line maintenance and report of system ability to have multiple contacts.**

## **5. LICENSING UPDATE**

- AG had a recommendation with regards to Master Electrician Examination and Licensing is working with members of the MEC to address it. MEC had already started working on updating the exam before the report was released. Plan is to hire a consultant who is an expert in adult learning to help put together a revised framework for the ME exam. Have already started putting together a working group of education experts and industry stakeholders.

- Licensing is progressing on digital strategy. The virtual proctoring project to allow online examinations is close to launching. COVID restrictions caused a number of disruptions to the exam. During the time that in-person exams were permitted, ESA offered as many as possible. ESA recognizes the importance of allowing online examinations and is working to roll out the project as soon as possible. The platform is provided by two vendors – one for exam questions and the other for proctoring. Testing is taking place right now to ensure everything works, and any issues uncovered have been addressed. The plan is to launch in March/April.
- Other digital project is online renewal of licenses for MEs. This project is expected to roll out in June.

Comments:

- Why did AG suggest there were not enough questions for the ME Exam? The pool seems sufficient.
- Director of Licensing indicated that the working group would be addressing the AG report and providing a recommendation.

## **6. REMOTE INSPECTIONS**

*Assistant General Counsel provided a presentation on project. Please see presentation for details.*

- Remote inspections are not new to ESA, however during COVID a more formalized process was started.
- Survey sent in the fall to LECs who had participated in remote inspections during COVID to get feedback. Responses were very positive about the experience.
- Remote inspection helps in areas such as burden reduction and health and safety as inspectors can still review installations that may have had difficulty visiting in past.
- ESA is currently gathering data on remote inspection and will use it to improve knowledge and processes going forward.
- ESA is examining the opportunity to formalize the remote inspection model and make it an integrated part of the inspection program. Will use RBO model so that it is consistent with current processes.
- AG report recommended remote inspections where possible so project is in alignment.
- Next steps will be to gather more data, look into other jurisdictions for best practices, and evaluating potential models.
- Slides were shared in pre-read materials for those who wish to reference.

## **7. CONTINUING EDUCATION**

*Senior Director of Engineering and Regulation and Director of Licensing provided an update.*

- ESA began working on continuing education prior to the release of the Auditor General's report. At the time, the Working Group working on this project was operating under the assumption it would be voluntary.
- ESA has been working with ECRA AC on a continuing education program and have heard from industry that continuing education is supported.
- Will consult with stakeholders to develop a framework of mandatory requirements.

- Are looking at a jurisdictional scan to incorporate best practices.

Comments:

- Member commented that Ministry handles licensing of trades. Will the continuing education program be just for Master Electricians or for all electricians? How will it work?
- Response: at the moment the program would apply to Master Electricians but ESA will work with the ministry to see if possible to expand as a partnership.

**ACTION ITEM: Senior Director of Engineering and Regulation to return to council to update on progress.**

## 8. OESC PROPOSED ADOPTION TIMELINES

*Senior Director of Engineering and Regulation provided an update on proposed OESC adoption process.*

- ESA has started working with the Ministry on the adoption process. The process is the same one that has been used in the past. ESA has worked on impact assessments from the CE Code and will then consider and Ontario Amendments that are required.
- Some existing amendments that are now addressed in the CE Code will be deleted.
- Public consultation will take place as usual when amendments are recommended (anticipated by mid-March).
- Adoptions will take place in fall 2021 and enforcement will begin in May 2022. The time in between will be used for training.

Comments:

- Member asked if the CE Code had adopted Ontario Amendments.
- Senior Director of Engineering and Regulation responded that some of the amendments had been added but not all of them. As a result with still require two separate books.

## 9. CODE OF CONDUCT

*Director of Licensing provided an overview of Code of Conduct document.*

- Document was shared with the council prior to the meeting. As a matter of good housekeeping, ESA had conducted a review of council best practices and have formalized some of the processes.
- Code of Conduct was drafted for council members on all councils. Several documents were used to guide the draft, including the ESA Board of Director's Code of Conduct.
- Code of Conduct also provides the opportunity to raise issues to ESA if there is a concern the Code is not being followed.
- One section is specific to ECRA AC as it is the only council that reports to the Board and has its members appointed by the Board. This is the only difference from other councils. Code is identical otherwise.

**ACTION ITEM: Members to review Code of Conduct document and sign by February 5, 2021. Any questions regarding the document can be directed to Carol Keiley.**

## 10. INCIDENT REVIEWS

Chief Public Safety Officer provided an overview of recent electrical incidents. Please see presentation.

- Chief Public Safety Officer provided an overview of incidents from 2019-2020.
- Incidents decreased in 2020. Some incidents are still under review and a determination has not been made.
- Incidents were a result of many factors including non-compliance.
- Looking into whether recommendations can be made to increase safety.

Comments:

- Member asked what the voltage was on the PV panels.
- Chief Public Safety Officer responded that the information was not available, but it was an energized system.
- Member asked what information in the presentation could be shared.
- Chief Public Safety Officer indicated that the presentation could be publicly shared. He reminded members that everyone has a part to play in safety and looked forward to working with the members.

**ACTION ITEM: Project Coordinator, Communications & Stakeholder Relations to send copies of presentations from meeting to council members. Completed.**

## 11. EXPENSE FORMS AND CALENDAR

- Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations requested that meetings for the remainder of the year be booked. The following dates were agreed upon:
  - March 25, 2021
  - April 15, 2021
  - June 16, 2021
  - October 14, 2021
- Director of Communications, Government and Stakeholder Relations reminded members to submit expense forms within 30 days of the meeting. Expense forms were included in the pre-read materials.

## 12. OTHER BUSINESS

- Member asked who was responsible for the Contractor Locator System and asked how it operated.
- Director of Licensing responded that it was partially managed by Licensing and partially by IT and indicated that ESA was aware that there were some issues after the launch of RBO and are working to correct those issues.
- Member indicated that some LECs were missing altogether and the information for others was incorrect.



- Director of Licensing indicated that any issues should be reported to ESA, and we will correct them.
- Chair indicated that elections for Chair and Vice Chair would be held in the next meeting.
- Member asked if proxies would be provided for those who were not able to attend.

**ACTION ITEM: Communications and Stakeholder Relations to provide proxies for members who are unable to attend March meeting.**

## 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 Chair and Carol Keiley.***

Next Meeting: March 25, 2021

Location: ZOOM Conference Call