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**June 22, 2023****9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.****Meeting: ESA Provincial Office**

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**Present:** Sandy Manners (Chair)      Larry Allison  
Lucy Becker      Gurvinder Chopra  
Sunaina Menezes      Jennifer Reynolds

**Regrets:**

**ESA Staff:** Raymond Chan      Declan Doyle  
Soussanna Karas      Sarah Kempel  
Freda Lam      Claire Loucks  
Anna Turkalj

**Guests:** Anna Dunscombe, MPBSD

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**PRELIMINARIES**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Members conducted a roundtable of introductions.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest declared.

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

Motion to Approve Agenda.

1<sup>st</sup>: Jennifer Reynolds

Seconded by Larry Allison

*Carried*

Motion to Approve Minutes of May 18, 2023 meeting.

1<sup>st</sup>: Lucy Becker

Seconded by Gurvinder Chopra

*Carried*

**2. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

Claire Loucks (Stakeholder Advisor) provided the following updates:

- Include CAC members on ESA's daily media monitoring: ESA is unable to share the daily media scan as per the contract signed with the agency providing it.

*Action item: Stakeholder Advisor to confirm whether Communications produces environmental scans that can be shared with the council.*

- Develop an annual report of CAC's activities to highlight activities and emphasize the importance of consumer awareness and education: ESA sees benefit in this.

*Action item: In January 2024, Stakeholder Advisor to work with Chair and members to develop a summary of the council's 2023 activities.*

### **3. ESA STRATEGIC FOCUS**

Declan Doyle (Director of Strategy and Innovation) discussed ESA's work to develop and Indigenous engagement strategy, an electrification strategy and a new five year strategic plan.

Members discussed:

- CAC's role, and desire to be involved early, in the strategic planning process;
- How implementation of the existing strategic plan is reported on;
- The opportunities and challenges when developing an Indigenous strategy;
- The need to align strategically with the plans and goals of colleges and Skilled Trades Ontario;
- The potential partnerships with construction companies;

*Action item: ESA to consider using AI or machine-learning tools to its advantage.*

### **4. UPDATE ON CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Sarah Kempel (Program Coordinator) informed members that the Ministry advised ESA that the regulatory change to implement mandatory CE is not proceeding at this time, while the Ministry continues to assess how best to respond to the Auditor General's recommendation regarding continuing education, in consideration of stakeholder feedback it has received; updates will be provided on ESA's website and in a communication to licence-holders via Plugged In. At ESA, we continue to advocate and support the concept of continuing education for MEs and its electrical public safety benefits. Going forward, we will be working with internal and external stakeholders to review and consider ways to encourage MEs to take Code and other technical and non-technical courses necessary to perform their work safely and ethically. ESA will continue to look at ways to highlight voluntary education initiatives; could help to emphasize the value of ongoing education in the sector for the future.

Raymond Chan (Manager, Government and Stakeholder Relations) stated that continuing education remains a priority for ESA and ESA hopes to revisit this topic with the Ministry in the fall.

Members discussed:

- Their disappointment with the outcome, so far, and how unusual it is not to have continuing education.
- Looking at safety data on incidents in the provinces where continuing education is already mandatory.

*Chair moved the following motion:*

Motion to reaffirm CAC's support for mandatory continuing education and the drafting of the council's support in writing, upon advice of ESA for timing.

1<sup>st</sup>: Lucy Becker

Seconded by Larry Allison

Members expressed unanimous support for this motion.

## **5. MEMBER UPDATES**

Members provided updates on:

- ECRA AC update: use of ESA app and members' support for this initiative.
- UAC update: concerns about how hot tubs are connected; education and awareness.
- OFM update: proposed changes to the Fire Code; open for comments at the moment; no changes to fire or electrical safety.

## **6. PUBLIC AWARENESS OF POWERLINE SAFETY SURVEY RESULTS**

Freda Lam (Safety Program Manager and Epidemiologist) presented the results from the Ontario general population survey on powerline safety, which is a pre-campaign online survey to assess Ontarians' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs regarding powerline safety.

- 16% correctly identified correct distance to maintain from overhead powerlines.
  - Majority were just guessing this answer
  - Demonstrates need for additional work to communicate safety risks
- Proximity to downed powerlines.
  - 21% answered correctly
  - Majority were just guessing this answer
- Concern with electrical safety outdoors is at its highest level since tracking began in 2016.
  - New Canadians demonstrated the highest concern level

- Likelihood to call before digging is at its lowest since it began being tracked in 2016.
  - New Canadians are the least likely to call; discussion of perceived mistrust of government and fear of doing the wrong thing/being fined.
- Communications approach to reach those underrepresented segments; conduct survey post-campaign to gauge any change in perceptions.

Members discussed:

- The excellent use of data to inform the communications approach;
- The importance of education to youth and young children.

## **7. BURDEN REDUCTION INITIATIVES**

Soussanna Karas (Director of Licensing and Training) discussed the burden reduction initiatives that ESA has presented to the Ministry, which are related to LECs and MEs:

- Current Licensing Regulation (570/07) requires ESA to issue license to MEs in a form of a plastic card with a photo; MEs must provide a photo every five years. ESA has proposed to change the Regulation to remove the requirement of a photograph on a licence and make the license digital, issued via email or online portal as part of the annual renewal process. LEC license is issued digitally and ESA wants to align with this requirement and format.
- Consumer protection is an important consideration in this. Members were asked:
  - Were you aware that MEs have to have this license and have an obligation to produce it to the home owner on demand? Are there are negative consequences for consumer protection in going digital and no photo?

Members discussed:

- Members were not aware of the photo ID licence requirement for MEs;
- The potential for fraud in this process and required safeguards;
- The cost savings associated with this approach;
- The alignment with the government's emphasis on digitization of services;
- The addition of wording on the license informing consumers that they can call ESA to confirm the identity of an individual;
- Linking license information with the new ESA app.

*Action item: ESA to determine the feasibility of creating a database for consumers to identify MEs.*

## **8. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION OF CAC PRIORITIES**

Raymond Chan (Manager, Government and Stakeholder Relations) introduced the goal of developing a work plan with priorities to guide meetings and the council's work.

Members discussed:

- The potential to participate in a policy lab with ESA to learn more about ESA's policy priorities;
- The importance of consumers better understanding ESA's inspection program and the role of RBO;
- The role of published compliance standards and the feasibility of this for ESA;
  - The potential to focus on known areas of concern
- Leveraging inspections of new builds to provide education;
- Developing partnerships with the insurance industry;
- The importance of soliciting feedback on strategy well in advance and having leadership present to hear that feedback.

## **9. WRAP UP & ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Jennifer Reynolds

Seconded by Gurvinder Chopra

*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 6, 2024

Location: Via Zoom Meeting