
December 5, 2024**9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.****Meeting: Virtual – via Zoom**

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|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Present: | Sandy Manners (Chair) | Larry Allison |
| | Lucy Becker | Jennifer Reynolds |
| | Sunaina Menezes | Kelly McMath |
| | Karim Nazarali | James Boritz |
| | Salim Khodari | |
| Regrets: | Sue Forcier | |
| ESA Staff: | Declan Doyle | Guests: Saira Husain, ESA |
| | Sylvia Gaidauskas | Freda Lam, ESA |

1. Welcome and Preliminaries

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Members and ESA staff conducted an in-depth roundtable of introductions given the number of new members joining the council.

The Chair reviewed the mandate of the Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) as referenced in the Terms of Reference and reinforced the collaborative nature in which the CAC has been successfully operating over previous years.

No conflicts of interest declared. A quorum for the meeting was confirmed.

Motion to Approve Agenda.

1st: Larry Allison

Seconded by Lucy Becker

Carried

Motion to Approve Minutes of August 27, 2024 meeting.

1st: Jennifer Reynolds

Seconded by Lucy Becker

Carried

2. 2024 Ontario Electrical Safety Report (OESR)

Freda Lam, Safety Programs Manager & Epidemiologist, presented the 2023 OESR and highlighted findings such as overall trends in electrical fatalities and injuries including an overview of the input sources. Information regarding the most effective demographic and a breakdown of incidents within the home, industry and construction was provided. A link to the complete report was provided for future reference:

<https://esasafe.com/corporate-reports/>

The presentation garnered significant interest with multiple questions and comments from the majority of council members that may inform the future direction of the report and also help in identifying communication channels. A flavour of the discussion has been captured as follows:

- Categorization of consumer transformers / power banks used in phone charging, as an example, are handled by the Ontario Fire Marshall (OFM).
- Journalists could be a good outreach target to help raise awareness of the OESR as well as information on how to manage harms
- Tracking of injuries attributed to new technologies is difficult to quantify as information is not included in classifications received from the medical reporting systems. There are no known fatalities of this sort in Ontario in previous years according to OFM.
- It is not clear how statistics for power line workers dispatched to other jurisdictions e.g. out of province / country are accounted for. Council members affiliated with Local Distribution Companies (LDC) may have access to recording protocols. Kelly McMath agreed to research this and report back to the CAC.
- The number of years of experience in the electrical field (as opposed to age) could be a good metric to track in relation to industrial injuries. Some information regarding years of experience is available which is used when selecting the target audience for awareness campaigns.

3. Communication Campaign

Saira Husain, Manager, External and Internal Communications, presented results of a powerline safety campaign, that was primarily focused on younger workers (ages 18 – 39) in the trades, including innovative targeting using a variety of tools (social media, radio, billboard ads).

Council members enthusiastically applauded the ESA Communications team on the innovative and sophisticated targeting and great results the campaign achieved. A few inputs from council members included:

- Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) distribute electronic newsletters which might be an avenue to share content. Electric vehicle (EV) campaign was shared with various city councillors.
- Tracking impressions against the addressable audience could be interesting. This particular campaign was intended to target trades to general public in a 70:30 ratio.
- Participating in existing podcasts such as Canadian Rental Company and Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) is underway rather than ESA establishing their own podcast. Ottawa Hydro also has a podcast.
- Materials were sent to both large and small to medium construction companies. It is more practical to conduct presentations to larger companies due to their reach across the province as well as limited resources to deliver training.
- Collaboration with LDCs to target direct customer base would be an ideal channel to increase awareness of electrical safety campaigns.
- Association collaboration could include the Electricity Distributors Association (EDA), Canadian Electricity Association (CEA), collaboration with other provincial jurisdictions or incorporation with “working from heights” training.

4. Summary of 2024 Activities and Open Action Items

Sylvia Gaidauskas, Stakeholder Advisor, indicated that there is one open action from prior meetings which concerns the development of a Work Plan for 2025. A draft will be prepared by the ESA, based on the annual cycle of documents, for discussion at the next meeting.

The Chair addressed the report of CAC activities for 2024, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, and asked for feedback. Several members agreed that it was a good document and thanked the Chair for drafting the report. They would like to see the activities of the CAC get more exposure by ensuring that ESA management is informed of discussions and perhaps by posting the report on the Stakeholder website. Declan Doyle, Director of Strategy and Innovation, acknowledged that members of the ESA Board and Executive Management Team (EMT) occasionally attend CAC meetings.

The Chair made a suggestion that the report be adjusted to read as from the council rather than from the Chair.

5. 2024 Safety Award Winners

Declan Doyle provided an update on two key events that ESA holds on an annual basis. (1) ESA Annual Meeting and Safety Awards including those individuals and

organizations that were recognized in several safety categories. (2) License Holders Meeting.

6. Member Updates

CAC Members provided brief updates on the activities at ECRA and UAC.

7. Chair and Cross-Council Appointment

Sylvia Gaidauskas communicated that election of a new Chair will be held at the next meeting due to the existing Chair reaching her term limit. Nominees must have been on the CAC for at least one year as per the Terms of Reference.

Additionally, the nomination of one member for cross-council participation of each of ECRA and UAC will be held at the next meeting. Current members Larry Allison and Sandy Manners respectively have offered to support the transition and are thanked for their cooperation.

The Chair and Declan Doyle thanked Larry Allison, having reached his term limit and this being his last meeting, for his contributions over the last nine years to CAC and cross-council support to ECRA.

8. Other Business and Wrap

There was only one conflict noted for the proposed meeting dates for 2025. Once adjusted, meeting notices will be sent out.

Motion to adjourn by Larry Allison
Seconded by Lucy Becker

Carried

End of Consumer Advisory Council Meeting

If there are any discrepancies to these minutes, please report them by email to Chair and stakeholder.esa@electricalsafety.on.ca

Next Meeting: February 12, 2025

Location: Virtual Meeting (via Zoom)

ACTION ITEMS

- Kelly McMath to report back on LDC reporting on out-of-jurisdiction incidents.
 - Prepare and distribute draft 2025 Work Plan and add to agenda for next meeting (Sylvia Gaidauskas)
 - Update 2024 CAC Annual Report to be on behalf of CAC and post on ESA Stakeholder website with minutes. (Sylvia Gaidauskas)
 - Send meeting notices for 2025 (Sylvia Gaidauskas)
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ESA Consumer Advisory Council – Summary Report for Calendar Year 2024

On behalf of the ESA Consumer Advisory Council (CAC), we are pleased to submit the CAC's report on activities for calendar year 2024.

CAC Membership

Membership on the CAC slipped from six to five in June. With term limits coming up for two of the five members, CAC provided advice to ESA staff on possible ways to recruit new CAC members. After executing on the recruitment plan, new members were onboarded to the Council for the December meeting.

CAC Activities

CAC members listened to presentations, engaged in discussions, and provided feedback and advice to ESA staff on a variety of topics of interest to consumers.

Emerging and product safety issues discussed included powerlines over swimming pools, new buildings encroaching on powerline safety zones, hot tub connections, and electric vehicles and charging stations.

The CAC member representing the Office of the Fire Marshall provided a presentation on the Fire Safety Mandate and Consumers to increase the understanding of CAC members of the role of the Fire Marshall's Office as well as the number of fires caused by electrical hazards.

Two members of the CAC supported cross-council collaboration with ECRA AC and UAC.

Advice and Guidance

CAC members provided advice and guidance to ESA staff as follows:

Emerging Issues and Other Safety Services

- Voiced strong support for mandatory continuing education for licensed electrical contractors.
- Suggested that an online database of Master Electricians would be of help to consumers.
- Inquired about potential use of artificial intelligence (AI) to provide accurate regulatory information.
- Provided feedback on a presentation about ESA's behind-the-scenes activities at the CNE.

Mandate

The mandate of the Consumer Advisory Council is to provide the ESA with advice and guidance on the interests of the Ontario public as they relate to ESA's mandate and activities.

Objectives

- Bring forward and provide advice and guidance on emerging issues that may impact consumers of electricity, electrical products, and/or other safety services/issues in keeping with ESA's corporate goals and objectives.
- Provide recommendations on the development and implementation of ESA's planning documents when there is a consumer or public interest.
- Provide recommendations on approach and channels for communications and other initiatives designed to advance consumer and public awareness.
- Identify electric related public safety areas requiring additional consumer input or research.
- Contribute to a societal perspective to assist with ESA's decision-making (impact vs. cost-benefit).

ESA's Planning Documents

- ESA's Ontario Electrical Safety Report – 2023 – Discussed objectives, outcomes and target audiences.
- ESA's Strategic Plan – Provided input via a survey, discussed progress in developing the plan and encouraged the ESA to consider diversifying communications to reach different audiences.
- Discussed the value of environmental scans and provided a copy of an environmental scan produced by another DAA as an example for ESA staff.
- Offered to provide input / feedback on the ESA work plan.

Communications to Consumers

- ESA Communications Campaign Planning – Provided feedback including the suggestion to consider additional partnerships including insurance companies/ brokers and other DAAs.
- Essex Powerlines PowerShare program which allows participants to generate, store and sell electricity to the utility. – Discussed outreach methods of reaching consumers.

Acknowledgements

The CAC would like to acknowledge the following individuals who provided valuable input by representing consumers on the CAC in 2024:

- Sandy Manners – Chair
- Sunaina Menezes – Vice-Chair
- Larry Allison
- Lucy Becker
- Gurvinder Chopra – Resigned June 2024
- Jennifer Reynolds

The CAC would like to thank Josie Erzetic, President and CEO, and Vivi White, ESA Board of Directors and Chair of the Regulatory Affairs Committee, for taking the time to attend a meeting of the CAC to introduce themselves and discuss the ESA's strategic planning process, workplan, and efforts to reach different groups of consumers, including newcomers to Ontario.

The CAC extends its sincere thanks to ESA staff who support the Council year-round and solicit feedback from the CAC in order to more effectively and efficiently deliver the ESA's public interest mandate. Thank you also to the representatives of the Ontario Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement who attend the meetings.