October 23, 2024   **9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Meeting held virtually via Zoom

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT	ESA EMPLOYEES PRESENT
Cameron Hann, OEL, Chair	Nansy Hanna
Larry Shaver, ECAO, Vice Chair	Patience Cathcart
Cathy Taylor, Community at Large	Declan Doyle
Larry Allison, CAC	Scott Eason
Stephen Green, ECAO	Cynthia Magill
Steve Del Guidice, OEL	Sarah Kempel
Vince De Gasperis, Utility Contractors Association	
Joe Kurpe, ECAO	
GUESTS	**REGRETS**
Laura Campbell, MPBSDP	Kelly Casey, ESA nominee
	Leo Grellette, UCAO

AGENDA ITEM	Call to Order Notice and Quorum No conflicts were declared with the Agenda
PRESENTER	Chair

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

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MOTION	The motion to accept the minutes of the May 9, 2024 meeting.
MOTIONED	Cathy Taylor
SECONDED	Larry Allison
	Motion carried

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Review of Open Action Items:

1. ESA will review the issue of licence holders permitting unqualified individuals/unlicensed entities to operate under their licence, contributing to the growth of the underground economy. Explore more effective methods to track and address this, utilizing RBO or other available tools. *See item # 4/5*

2. ESA to consider notifying DME's when an EC licence is no longer valid: *See item # 3 - ongoing*
   - The Licensing Technology Platform (LTP) will help address this; we will be able to attach some automated flags.

3. ESA to report back regarding progress of the pilot (High Risk Non-Compliant LECs): See *item #6*

4. ESA to review issue with Bulletin availability/access: *Can be removed from open action items.*
   - Bulletin Availability: CSA can typically publish bulletins within five days. However, they must be distributed through CSA communities, so availability depends on when those communities release them.
   - Members inquired whether bulletins are proprietary or if companies can distribute them to employees. Nansy Hanna confirmed that once a bulletin is purchased as a PDF, it can be freely shared within the purchasing organization. There are no copyright restrictions on internal distribution—companies can download the PDF, place it on servers, email it, or share it as needed. However, the Code itself is more restricted.
   - The CSA Advantage tool will centralize both the Code and bulletins in one location, providing easier access for users.

5. MEC Exam Update: *Ongoing – (in-camera)*

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AGENDA ITEM	2024 Code Update
PRESENTER	Nansy Hanna – Senior Director, Engineering and Regulations

- Shared new cover for 2024 OESC
- We are still awaiting government adoption, but preparations are underway in collaboration with CSA, who will handle the distribution of the Code.
- Key Dates:
  - Enforcement Date: May 1st.
  - Inspector Training: Scheduled for January/February.
  - Public Training: Dates TBD, likely in March.
- Members emphasized the importance of training and adequate preparation. Nansy

noted that ESA has aimed to provide the industry with at least a six-month window to prepare for the changes.

- A question was raised regarding how the technical nature of the document will be communicated to the general public, and whether layperson-friendly materials are available.
  - Declan clarified that ESA's public communications are focused on key changes that impact Electrical Contractors (ECs) and Master Electricians (MEs). The primary audience for these updates is the technical community, not the general public. ESA's messaging is centered on how ECs and MEs can access bulletins, training, and resources to prepare for enforcement.

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AGENDA ITEM	General Updates
PRESENTER	Patience Cathcart – Interim Director, Licensing

Licence Holder Meeting Update
- Date & Time: November 20th, 2:00–4:00pm
  - First Hour: Update on licensing information
  - Second Hour: Technical and non-technical Q&A
  - ESA CEO Josie Erzetic & Minister McCarthy will provide a recorded address, followed by updates from the ECRA AC Chair and Director of Licensing.
- Members noted that the Q&A session is very popular, with a suggestion to hold it twice a year or more frequently.
- Members expressed support for the virtual format as it enhances accessibility.

Celebrating 10,000 EC Licences
- Milestone for ESA & ECRA AC—will be shared in next edition of Plugged In.
- Members suggested sharing the highest and lowest licence numbers to help identify potential fraudulent ECs.

Fee Increase
- Over the past 7 years, licensing fees have increased by only 5%, despite absorbing 20% inflationary costs.
- A recommendation was made to offer the Fee Guide booklet for purchase through the LEC Online Store.

Award-Winning "Don't Risk It" Safety Campaign
- The campaign recently received its 8th award, with all accolades listed on our corporate website's Newsroom.
- The initiative achieved exceptional reach and engagement, driving a 41% year-over-year increase in the usage of the Contractor Look-up Tool.
- Campaign write-up and video can be found here.
- Members raised concerns regarding heat pumps, emphasizing the importance of

proper load calculations
- o There appears to be a disconnect between mechanical contractors and ECs, especially regarding HVAC systems, which can present significant inductive loads (e.g., heating systems), similar to the demand posed by electric vehicles.

Changes to Hours of Operation and Removal of Voicemail Function
- With the return to office operations, call data and administrative trends indicate that we are not receiving calls before 8:00am. To optimize coverage and best serve our stakeholders, we will maintain the call queue from 8:00am to 4:30pm, ensuring all calls received by 4:30pm are completed.
- The voicemail function has been removed, as it was generating more confusion than assistance due to callbacks and rework; customers can email or call back during regular business hours

Annual Meeting & Ontario Electrical Safety Awards
- The Annual General Meeting (AGM) on September 19th was a great success, with strong attendance both in-person and virtually.
- The Ontario Electrical Safety Awards recognized outstanding safety partners, highlighting their contributions to the electrical safety environment.
- For more on the awards, visit: https://esasafe.com/meetings-events/safety-awards/

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AGENDA ITEM	Publicly Searchable Database of Master Electricians
PRESENTER	Patience Cathcart – Interim Director, Licensing

Connecting MEs and ECs, and Credential Verification
- Discussed the value in credential verification to verify the active status of ME licences (similar to STO registry for C of Qs).
- MEs are seeking connections with ECs looking for DMEs and vice versa.
  - o A question was raised about the availability of a job board to connect MEs and ECs. At present, we are not aware of a platform that exists.
  - o Members also highlighted the importance of succession planning at the individual business level.
- Privacy concerns were raised, as MEs' names are confidential. A suggestion was made to allow MEs to opt-in to a list, where their credentials could be shared with others. Potential functionality can be explored within the Licensing Technology Platform (LTP), such as consent upon licence renewal.

- **Action Item:** ESA to continue to provide updates to ECRA on LTP functionality

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AGENDA ITEM	Licensing Technology Platform (LTP) Update
PRESENTER	Scott Eason – Licensing Coordinator

- The Licensing Technology Platform (LTP) represents a transition from SAP to Microsoft Dynamics (a new system of record). A new self-service portal will simplify licensing processes and increase access to information for licence holders. The portal is web-based and optimized for both mobile devices and desktops/laptops, making it easier for users to do business with licensing.
- The new system will help us meet evolving regulatory responsibilities by providing a cleaner, more efficient platform for compliance and supporting ESA's broader responsibilities.
- Currently, just less than 50% of MEs still getting correspondence by mail, and 200 LECs are still set up on fax. The new system will support the digital transition, encouraging more users to move away from traditional methods.
- Status of project: The vendor selection has been completed. The focus is now on development, data migration, and preparing a communications & training plan.
- A member inquired about redirects from the current ME Portal to the new system. Scott confirmed that, in LTP, access will be redirected both from the form page and the systems page to ensure a smooth transition.
- Members asked about additional functionality in the new system. Scott advised that the new system will provide public access to data such as expired/closed licences, APOs and convictions, enhanced mapping tools, and published conditions against licenses. Members expressed support for this increased transparency.
- Members raised concerns about overloading users with new features and training at once (e.g., LTP and Code changes). There was a request to carefully coordinate the timing of these updates to ensure a manageable transition for users.

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AGENDA ITEM	High Risk Non-Compliant LEC Pilot (HRP) - Update
PRESENTER	Sarah Kempel – Licensing Manager

- The pilot uses a data-informed approach to proactively identify LECs who are underperforming, categorize and triage complaints, and ensure compliance actions are proportionate to the identified risks.
- Meetings with contractors have provided valuable insights into the challenges they face.
- Complaints have been primarily concentrated in the Central regions (Toronto and GTA), with no issues reported from the Northern region.
- Preliminary findings show a reduction in instances of working without a notification, and that training has led to improvements in Code compliance.
- A review of outcomes and next steps will take place in February 2025, with members noting that the post-review data will provide more clarity on the pilot's impact.

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AGENDA ITEM	APOs: Update & Discussion on use of APO funds
PRESENTER	Patience Cathcart – Interim Director, Licensing

APO Update
- APOs are currently issued for unlicensed behaviour. Patience shared emerging cases where APOs may be appropriate for licence holders, especially in situations involving egregious, unacceptable, or ungovernable behaviour, such as: selling of a licence, leaving hundreds of notifications open and going off the job, operating without a DME for extended periods, etc.
- Members expressed that APOs should apply fairly across the board to uphold electrical safety for everyone—they shouldn't just be a tool to use against unlicensed individuals.
- Patience emphasized the importance of aligning compliance actions with both the severity and frequency of infractions to ensure proportionate consequences. APOs are part of a broader compliance model that begins with education and should serve as one of the tools to address serious non-compliance.
- Members expressed that ESA should consider APOs relative to the size of the company.
- Members recommended an educational module related to business administration; suggested that education puts them in a position of being better empowered.

Spending of APO Funds
- Members discussed priorities in terms of how APO funds should be spent:
  - Raise awareness and educate
  - Promote the "Hiring an LEC" message
  - Education/scholarship for LECs who are non-compliant & can't afford to have all employees attend training (financial hardship)
  - Anything related to training – DMEs, ECs, or their employees – have a third party create or curate training that licence holders would find valuable and can access for free or subsidized

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AGENDA ITEM	MEC composition Update
PRESENTER	Declan Doyle – Director, Strategy and Innovation

- Terms of Reference (ToR) for Master Electrician Exam Committee (MEC), sub-committee of ECRA AC:
  - The MEC consists of 6 members: 2 from ECAO, 2 from OEL, and 2 from ESA
  - There is no term limit for MEC members in the current ToR
- MEC Chair Doug McGinley's term expiry is upcoming. Doug will complete his ninth year in January.

- At the next ECRA AC meeting, the ToR for the MEC will be reviewed, and suggestions for potential changes will be discussed.
- ESA is also working to replace Ray Yousef, a former MEC member no longer with ESA

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AGENDA ITEM	ME Exam Update
PRESENTER	Sarah Kempel – Licensing Manager

Sarah Kempel, Licensing Manager, provided a ME Exam update on 2025 goals, format, and schedule.

2025 ME Exam Goals:
- Availability: Increased seating capacity by 20% and added five new locations to reduce travel time for applicants.
- Accessibility: Ensuring equitable access for candidates needing accommodations and supporting remote candidates.
- Security: Strengthening exam integrity through industry best practices.

2025 ME Exam Format & Schedule
- Exams will remain in-person and written.
- Updates to the question bank and versioning strategy are underway.
- Research and groundwork are being conducted to reintroduce a virtual exam option in the future.
- Schedule adjustments were made based on data analysis of applicant locations to better meet needs of prospective MEs; travel time will be reduced and accessibility for remote attendees has increased.
- The updated schedule will be posted online by the end of October.

OESC Update:
- New Code takes effect May 1, 2025.
- ME exams will pause for two weeks in mid-to-late May to transition to the new Code content.
- Exams reflecting the 2024 OESC will resume in early June.

Procedure Updates:
- Accommodation Procedure: An updated process will launch in early 2025 to better support candidates with disabilities or medical conditions. The new procedure continues to ensure fair and equitable treatment while upholding the integrity of the ME exam and licensing framework.
- Incident Report Procedure: Revised to capture more relevant details and clarify communicated consequences for applicants.

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AGENDA ITEM	Enforcement Update
PRESENTER	Cynthia Magill – Enforcement Coordinator

Cynthia Magill, Enforcement Coordinator, provided an update on RCP initiatives & enforcement.

EV Chargers:
- ESA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Transportation, identified 89 commercial and 142 residential locations with non-compliant EV charger installations.
- Over 150 locations have now come into compliance by obtaining proper notification and inspection, and efforts continue to achieve 100% compliance.
- Members suggested working with LDCs, realtors, dealerships, and car manufacturers to improve detection and compliance. ESA confirmed active partnerships with EVSA dealers and charger manufacturers like Chargepoint.

Building Permits:
- ESA reviewed Building Permit data in four municipalities, compared it with ESA notifications and confirmed that 140 sites had electrical work performed without obtaining an ESA notification or inspection.
- 103 of these locations have since come into compliance by obtaining a notification for the work. In addition, ESA was able to take the appropriate enforcement action amongst the 11 confirmed unlicensed contractors.

Upcoming RCP Initiatives:
- DME Employment Verification: Last round showed 24% of LECs didn't have a DME on payroll; this dropped to 19% in the second phase.
- WSIB Verification: ESA is cross-referencing WSIB data for electrical contracting businesses and sending clarification letters to businesses not holding an EC license. The goal is to address classification errors or bring non-compliant businesses into compliance.
- Expansion of Building Permits: ESA plans to expand building permit checks to additional municipalities, starting with Brampton, where data is available.
- Cynthia encouraged members to submit any suggestions for future initiatives.

Enforcement Update:
- Cynthia provided an update on enforcement statistics, including APOs.
- Notably, there has been a >30% increase in investigations.
- With APOs being issued, convictions are expected to decrease. Members agreed that the system benefits from the introduction of APOs as the dollars are fed back into the system for education and awareness.
- A question was raised regarding the collection of APO fees and the tools ESA uses to ensure payments are received. ESA is actively working with the Ministry and other DAAs to improve payment collection processes.

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AGENDA ITEM	Bi-Annual Survey of Advisory Council Members
PRESENTER	Declan Doyle – Director, Strategy and Innovation

- Reminder: every other year, we conduct a stakeholder survey to gather feedback.
- We ask questions about our stakeholder principles (available on our website) to better understand how we are interacting with you. This is part of our ongoing conversation with stakeholders, and we typically have a representative from Stakeholder Relations present during these discussions.
- The survey will include a clear and concise set of effective questions, and it should be sent before the end of November.

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AGENDA ITEM	Round Table
PRESENTER	All

Discussion:
- At the last meeting, it was noted that Larry Allison's cross-appointment with the CAC is expiring, and a new appointee will be named soon. Joe Kurpe also participated in his last meeting.
- The group discussed in-person meetings, noting that while one annual in-person meeting is held post-COVID, members expressed the benefit of reduced travel.
- Members highlighted the importance of maintaining a continuous connection between building permits and electrical permits.
- A reminder was given that changes to regulations regarding the ME Licence will come into effect in January.

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AGENDA ITEM	Financial Reporting
PRESENTER	All

Discussion:
- Patience led a discussion on what information should be included in future reports to ensure clarity and usefulness.
- Members expressed the desire to understand whether shortfalls are due to unanticipated expenses or if it represents an excess. A more detailed breakdown of costs (e.g., investigations) was requested for transparency. It was also suggested that costs be allocated to the specific department that is using them to ensure better tracking and accountability. It was noted that funds collected from APOs are being used to offset some of these costs.

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MOTION	To adjourn meeting.	
MOTIONED	Steve Del Guidice	
SECONDED	Larry Allison	
		Motion carried

ADJOURNMENT: 11:49 p.m.

End of ECRA AC meeting

> *If there are any discrepancies to these minutes, please report them by email to the Chair or Declan Doyle.*
>
> Next Meeting: Friday, February 7, 2025
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> Location: Virtual via Zoom