

**Consumer Advisory Council****8-Sep-2025****0900 – 1105 hrs – Meeting held virtually****Present:**

<b>AC Members</b>	<b>ESA</b>	<b>MPBSDP</b>	<b>Regrets</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Sunaina Menezes Sue Forcier Kelly McMath Karim Nazarali James Boritz Salim Khodari	Declan Doyle Alex Piccini Shana Hole Alex Janack Scott Eason	Anna Dunscombe		None

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Preliminaries</b></p> <p>The meeting formally started with introductions, though some participants including Kelly, Salim, and Jennifer were still joining and the quorum was confirmed to be just over a majority of members. Welcoming new members, including the new stakeholder advisor and Consumer Advisory Council chair.</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared.</p> <p>Karim pointed out numbering inconsistencies from the previous meeting minutes. Declan noted these would be corrected. He also noted the workplan was distributed with the meeting materials.</p> <p>Motion: <i>Approval of the Minutes of Meeting for 8-Sep-2025</i></p>	

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	<p><i>Moved by: James</i> <i>Seconded: Sue</i> <i>Carried</i></p>	
2.	<p><b>Municipal Expert Recruitment Initiative</b></p> <p>The Council discussed the ongoing effort to recruit new members with expertise in insurance and municipal affairs, noting that previous outreach efforts had been unsuccessful with groups like AMCTO. Alex was tasked with leading the recruitment initiative, with the goal of presenting updated recommendations at the next meeting. The discussion clarified that the desired municipal perspective could come from various backgrounds, not necessarily engineering or building officials, and emphasized the importance of maintaining relationships with municipalities for safety services and groundings. Alex to develop a recruitment plan for the next CAC meeting</p>	
3.	<p><b>Licensing Platform and Harmonization Updates</b></p> <p>This update from the licensing team covered an update of the licensing technology platform led by Scott Eason as well as a reference to the upcoming annual licence holder meeting</p> <p>Scott Eason presented the new licensing platform, which includes a revised contractor locator tool launching on October 20. The tool will list unlicensed contractors, convictions, and administrative penalties, allowing consumers to make more informed decisions. James and Kelly asked questions about the legal implications and potential impact on contractors' employment.</p>	

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4.	<p>A plug for the CAC members to attend the upcoming annual licence holder meeting was also shared. The LHM will occur on Wednesday, November 26 from 2:30 – 4:00 PM.</p> <p><b>Labor Mobility Act Implementation Update</b></p> <p>Shana Hole explained the new Labor Mobility Act provisions that took effect on July 1st, 2023, and will fully implement on January 1, 2026, allowing certified master electricians from British Columbia and Alberta to work in Ontario under a streamlined registration process. She clarified that while Quebec residents can work in Ontario, they must meet additional requirements due to Quebec's use of the 2021 code version, unlike the 2024 version used in Ontario. The discussion revealed that while the electrical code is 99% harmonized across provinces, Quebec's slower adoption of the updated code remains a challenge, with ongoing discussions about full harmonization. The council shared their support for cautious movement forward on this file to ensure a level licencing playing field.</p> <p>Shana also spoke about preparation or the upcoming licence holder meeting and extended the invitation to all AC members.</p> <p><b>ESA's Administrative Penalty Orders Overview</b></p> <p>Alexander Janack presented an overview of ESA's use of administrative penalty orders (APOs) since April 2023, when Ontario amended the Electricity Act to grant ESA this authority. He explained that APOs have been effective in addressing non-compliance by participants in the underground economy, with ESA issuing 172 penalties totaling \$627,000 across 104 cases. Alexander highlighted that ESA has collected approximately</p>	
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	<p>\$118,000 to date, and discussed their new consumer awareness campaign launched in August 2023, which uses collected funds to educate homeowners about the importance of obtaining permits for electrical work. He also noted that while ESA has developed a framework for applying APOs to license holders, no penalties have been issued against licensed contractors, as they generally maintain compliance.</p> <p>Alexander explained that metrics to assess the effectiveness of APOs include tracking new license holders and repeat offenders, with no repeat offenders observed yet. PO clarified that while APOs are a resource-intensive process, they serve as a tool to differentiate compliant from non-compliant licensees, ultimately benefiting the broader public safety goal. James raised concerns about the cost-effectiveness of APOs, but Alexander emphasized that APOs allow ESA to address more cases than would be possible with full prosecutions, thereby demonstrating commitment to tackling illegal work in the underground economy.</p> <p><b>Cross Council Updates</b></p> <p>Declan provided details from the Utilities Advisory Council meeting, highlighting discussions on ice storm responses and copper theft issues. Jim shared insights from the ECRA meeting, focusing on updates to the Master Examination Committee and public awareness campaigns. Sunaina discussed upcoming changes to the Ontario Fire Code, including new requirements for carbon monoxide alarms. The group also reviewed plans for the 2025 Annual Meeting and Safety Awards, scheduled for September 17th. Council members were encouraged to register</p>	
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	<p>for the in-person or virtual event to recognize excellence in electrical safety.</p> <p><b>Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Ontario Green Energy and Electrification Safety Discussion</b> The final section of the meeting focused on green energy transition, electrification, and safety standards in Ontario. Karim raised concerns about storage-to-grid technology and its safety implications, which ESA addressed by explaining existing tools like bulletins and incentives for adoption of storage and heat pumps.</p> <p>James brought up the issue of uncertified consumer products on platforms like Amazon, which ESA agreed to follow up on with the product safety team. The group discussed Ontario's nuclear-focused energy plan and ESA's role in ensuring safety across the energy value chain.</p> <p><b>Ontario Fire Code Update</b> The Chair shared an updated form the Ministry of the Solicitor General on Fire Code updates to be in force on January 1, 2026. Changes to the Ontario Fire Code will see more carbon monoxide alarms in residential spaces. Starting Jan. 1, 2026, alarms targeting the silent killer will be required on all storeys, not just near bedrooms, in residences with potential sources of the deadly gas.</p> <p><b>2025 Annual Meeting</b> Alex and Declan extended an invite to all AC members to attend the 2025 ESA Safety Awards.</p> <p><b>Meeting Adjournment</b></p>	
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	<p>Motion:</p> <p><i>Adjourn Meeting at 11:05</i></p> <p><i>Moved by: James</i></p> <p><i>Seconded: Karim</i></p> <p><i>Carried</i></p>	
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