

July 2005

The Conduit

News and Views of the Electrical Contractors Association of BC

Some pictures just for fun



Bill Rathlef above—Wayne Dowler below



Richard Campbell and Graham Trafford above
Bob and Ginny Alger below



ECABC Annual General Meeting & Hall of Fame Dinner

Our 54th AGM and Hall of Fame Dinner was held on Friday, June 10th at the Executive Hotel on North Road in Coquitlam. This year we decided to move the event to a nice hotel outside of downtown and spend the savings on entertainment. For entertainment we had Tracey Bell who does hilarious impersonations of 8 divas, followed by the Note-Ables Show Band who quickly filled the dance floor.

Prior to the service of a superb buffet dinner, there were several awards. Bill Crarer, CEO of Canem Systems and recent ECABC director, was inducted into the Hall of Fame as was Bob O'Brien. Bob was president of ECABC from 1972 to 1974. Both men have made significant contributions to the electrical industry over the years. Unfortunately, Bob was unable to join us, but will be presented with his award by the

ECABC Board of Directors at the next meeting scheduled for July 13th.

Two apprentices were also recognized. Joel Feenstra, a 20 year old 4th term apprentice, won the Provincial and the National Skills Canada competitions in electrical wiring this year. This means that Joel will be invited to compete in the World Skills competitions in Calgary in 2007. The other apprentice was Dave Dexter who is a 2nd term apprentice for **Mott Electric**. Dave won the Provincial Industrial Wiring competition and was a very close second in the National competition.

Both gentlemen were presented with framed Certificates of Excellence, \$250.00 from ECABC and Fluke meters courtesy of **Wesco Distribution**. Many thanks go to Wesco for their generous donation.



Hall of Fame Inductee Bill Crarer and Ron Fettback, President, ECABC



(Left) Entertainer Tracey Bell (aka Dolly Parton) and past President Bob Leese



(Right) Hall of Famer, Art Reid (aka Ike Turner)

BC Electrical Association 2005 Scholarship Program

The application deadline for BCEA scholarship applications is July 29th, 2005. There are ten \$1000 scholarships to be awarded and one new scholarship called the **Tommy Haddock Memorial Scholarship**.

This scholarship is also for \$1,000, but is specific to students pursuing careers in the electrical industry.

ECABC is a member of the BCEA, which is why we have access to their scholarship pro-

gram. We also contribute equally to the Tommy Haddock Memorial Scholarship and their regular scholarship program. As many of you know, Tommy was a Hall of Fame Member of this Association.

We have the application forms in the office which we will be pleased to mail to you, or download and print the form from: <http://www.bcea.bc.ca/scholarships.html>

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BC Safety Authority Proposes Installation Fee Increases for 2006

The BCSA is proposing significant installation fee increases for 2006. The increases vary considerably in accordance with the jobs size and what they claim is the degree of involvement. Following is a chart that will give you a quick snapshot as to the amount of the increases and a comparison with an example of municipal fees.

Job Size	2005	2006	% Increase	Municipal Fees
\$10,000	\$244	\$285	16.8%	\$476
\$50,000	\$566	\$735	29.8%	\$1382
\$100,000	\$969	\$1300	34.2%	\$2,050
\$300,000	\$2303	\$2650	15.1%	?
\$500,000	?	\$3450	?	\$5,760

Compared to municipal fees, BCSA fees seem like a bargain, but what are you getting for your money? BCSA Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Trevor Fedyna provided the following explanation for the increases:

- Historical Freezing of fees** - true fee rebalancing and analysis of fees hasn't been undertaken since the late 1990's. While there was a general inflation adjustment in 2004, that was based on the fee structure that reflected the old safety services model.
- Structural costs** - the BCSA has undergone a significant amount of structural changes to its organization as it now stands outside of Government. Many of these services used to be provided some where else in the government bureaucracy. (i.e. Finance department, legal services, insurance, Government service agency fees, GST)
- Enhanced Services** - the BCSA has increased services for example:
 - 40 hour work week for technical staff
 - Over the phone purchasing
 - Acceptance of credit cards
 - Enhanced on-line access
- 2006/2007 future costs** - increases that are beyond standard inflation rates, such as targeted increases in the number of certain types of field staff positions, recruitment and retention costs and customer service training costs.

It's of note that the fees themselves were not just arbitrarily increased. The advisory firm KPMG led the BCSA through a cost analysis that considered time and effort to provide each service item and the cost of each technology. KPMG's work provided a more rational basis for setting fees. There were also guiding principles to the process.

Those being:

- **Fairness** - is the fee fair to those who operate safely and efficiently and does it make steps towards the technology and service line item paying its own way.
- **Transparent** - clients must be consulted with regarding the fees and know what they can expect for each service
- **Simple** - the price of a service should be relatively simple to determine and where possible fees should be consolidated and made consistent across technologies
- **Motivate** - the fee should encourage safety and one way to do this by having the unsafe pay a higher rate.

The result of this analysis is that not all fees in every technology have increased. The proposed fees have been adjusted to varying degrees. Depending on the technology and the service line item some proposed fees have gone down, some stayed the same, some experienced only modest increases, while others may have increased more substantially.

Additionally, although BCSA's fees are being proposed to increase in 2006, I am sure you will agree that they are reasonable in comparison to other jurisdictions in BC and Canada. Not all programs or fees can be compared due to differences in cost and program structures, but what comparisons do tell us is that our fees are "generally reasonable" and that we are generally not the price leaders.

Editor's Note: The new fee schedule is a draft proposal only and the BCSA is requesting feedback. The following two websites provide detailed schedules for current and proposed fees. The email address will direct your comments to Trevor Fedyna.

Current Fees:

<http://www.safetyauthority.ca/services/fees/index.html>

Proposed Fees:

http://www.safetyauthority.ca/services/fees/proposed_fee_schedules_2006_2007.html

Comments to:

feecomments@safetyauthority.ca

Western Provinces to Lead 2005 GDP Growth: CIBC

Courtesy: CBC Business News

Alberta and British Columbia will lead all Canadian provinces in growth this year as energy strength helps the west and a strong loonie hurts central Canada, according to a forecast from CIBC World Markets. "Robust domestic demand and a vibrant energy sector continue to trigger heady GDP growth in Alberta," the report said. CIBC World Markets forecasts 2005 growth of 3.8 per cent in Alberta, far exceeding the national average of 2.6 per cent. British Columbia's GDP is forecast to rise by 3.5 per cent, helped by a solid resource sector and a growing housing market that

the report's authors see remaining "brisk" through 2006. Ontario's GDP is forecast to grow by only 2.2 per cent. "Ontario's manufacturing sector...faces the lingering drag from earlier currency appreciation," the report said. "Like Ontario, Quebec is forced to import the oil and gas needed to keep its economy running," as the investment dealer forecast growth for Quebec of 2.4 per cent for 2005.

Electrical Program Standards Project Update

The Electrical Program Standards Project (EPSP) has made significant progress.

In early June a workshop was held with qualified participants from around the province to review the existing Provincial Outline for the construction electrician program and to align it with the National Occupational Analysis (for Red Seal).

A new draft program outline was developed for initial review by the EPSP Steering Committee. The Steering Committee met June 23rd to discuss the outline. A process for further developing the outline was determined which would include additional input from Electricians, Electrical Contractors and the colleges.

It is anticipated that a final draft outline will be developed by the end of August, 2005. At that time, the draft will be forwarded to organizations and other interested parties for their input. The draft outline will also be posted to the BCCA website (www.bccasn.com) for downloading.

Regional forums will be established in the fall through local construction associations for further consultation.

The Steering Committee will be meeting again in August to begin formulating a number of policy recommendations for the Electrical program. Policies under consideration will be presented for public consultation prior to any recommendations going forward.

Any Inquiries should be directed to:

Abigail Fulton
 BC Construction Association
 Phone: 250.475.1077
 Fax: 250.475.1078
 Email: abigailf@bccasn.com

Activities for the project will include the following:

1. Aligning the existing BC program outline with the National Occupation Analysis (for Red Seal).
2. A review of the content and structure of the program outline to ensure it is meeting industry needs and standards.
3. Producing a 'Table of Specifications' following revision of the pro-

4. Producing examination item banks with a minimum of 450 questions for each level.
5. Providing a recommendation on whether to re-establish a BC Certificate of Qualification following a level 4 examination (which would then be followed by the Inter-provincial exam for Red Seal endorsement). If it is a positive recommendation this will have impact on the program outline review and exam bank development.
6. Providing a recommendation on establishing provincial standards for electrical entry-level training, such as duration, content, technical training credit.
7. Providing a recommendation on establishing provincial standards for electrical ACE-IT and Secondary School Apprenticeship programs.

The Committee will also consider updating/re-designing supporting tools and resources i.e. Training Guides & Log Books

EPSP Steering Committee	Ex Officio Members
Peter Krause Paragon Electrical Installations	Geoff Stevens ITA
Gerald Reinders	Abigail Fulton
Ron Fettback Western Pacific Enterprises	Keith Dunbar Curriculum Consultant
Dan Mott	Mickey Bliss
Rod Goy	Richard Campbell
	Brendon Farrell VRCA



BC Central Credit Union Optimistic

According to BC Credit Union Central's forecast, BC's real GDP will continue to post robust growth in 2005 (+3.6%) and 2006 (+3.9%).

Although a larger trade deficit will slow the GDP growth, low interest rates, rising private

and public investment and business & consumer confidence will continue to drive the economy forward.

The province's population will continue to expand with positive net inter-provincial migration.

The unemployment rate will drop to 6.4% in 2005 and 6.0% in 2006, as forecasts in most industry sectors are for fairly robust growth in this period.

Data Source: Credit Union Central

BC Economic Forecast Update 2005-2006



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Federal Government Announces Latest Kyoto Implementation Plan

Courtesy: VRCA Jackhammer

The Federal Government's latest incarnation of its Kyoto implementation plan was released.

For the construction industry, the most notable observation was that as in the past, there are no mandatory measures that the construction industry must take in its day-to-day operations as a result of Kyoto. There were, however, several announcements that may have a direct or indirect impact on the national construction industry. Starting this year, the federal government will require that the construction of all new government office buildings will meet the LEED Gold standard. This standard will also be sought in the case of new long-term leases. It has not yet been decided if the LEED Gold standard will be required for all buildings, or

only those exceeding a \$10 million threshold.

The federal government will also retrofit 20% of its existing commercial buildings by 2010 to improve energy efficiency. These retrofits will be financed from the energy savings that will be accrued. In partnership with the provinces, the federal government will review existing building codes, with the intention of making codes more in line with climate change objectives.

The National Roundtable on the Economy and the Environment (NRTEE) is being asked to conduct a study into "fee-bates" whereby people who purchase more fuel efficient vehicles would be provided with a rebate, and purchasers of less fuel efficient vehicles would pay a fee. This is important, given the CCA is lobbying for

the introduction of a rebate for the purchase of fuel-efficient off-road diesel powered vehicles and equipment.

Any project or company that can demonstrate measurable reductions of greenhouse gases will be able to sell "credits" in an emissions trading system that will be established. Reductions would need to comply with certain minimum levels. Holders of these credits could then sell them for cash value. The CCA appeared before the House of Commons Environment Committee on May 5 to provide input on how the construction industry has, and will continue, to enact measures designed to reduce greenhouse gases.

World Skills Competition in Helsinki, Finland

You may recall the second term **Mott Electric** apprentice, **Adam Byron**, who went to Helsinki in May to compete in the World Skills competition in Electrical wiring. Adam didn't win, but he made a very respectable showing given what he was up against in terms of European equipment, materials and methods.

ECABC contributed to Adam's trip and congratulates Adam for having the courage to compete and for doing as well as he did. We know that he has a very successful career given his positive attitude and aptitude for the trade.

Electrical Joint Training Committee Benefactor Awards

On June 11th, at the Electrical Industry Training Institute (EITI) in Surrey, the EJTC presented awards to several of many contractors and suppliers who donated equipment and materials to their ELTT school. The catalyst who brought it all together was **Bob Leese**, who is shown accepting an award from **Harry Van Beest** of IBEW Local 213. Shown

in the group photo are: **John Pesa** of IBEW Local 213 and **Joe Jordan**; one of two instructors. The other is **Gord Denham** who wasn't able to join us. Next to Joe is **Mark Fettback** of Western Pacific Enterprises, **Graham Trafford** of Mott Electric, **Bob Leese** and **Greg Wong** of Sasco Systems.

BCIT Introduces 3 Year Advance Registration

The BCIT registration system now displays training intakes for the next three years. This will allow apprentices and employers the ability to select training

dates well in advance for each level of apprenticeship. It is anticipated that these improvements will greatly reduce the artificial wait lists that currently exist.

WCB Changes Minimum Personal Optional Protection Coverage

Courtesy: VRCA Jackhammer

For 2005 The Workers' Compensation Board has changed the minimum allowable monthly coverage for Personal Optional Protection (POP) to \$1500 from \$1000 per month. POP is the WCB's insurance plan for partners and sole proprietors who are not covered by the WCB Act. Like worker coverage, POP provides income replacement benefits for those who choose to purchase the coverage.

The \$1500 in POP coverage translates into a net benefit of \$1179.50 of tax free income replace-

ment benefits in the event of a disabling workplace injury.

The maximum that can be purchased without any proof of prior earnings; remains at \$2500 or \$1833.84 net. The maximum monthly coverage for POP that can be purchased; increases to \$5108 or approx \$3700/month net, a reflection of the maximum assessable wage rate of \$61,300.

In addition to income replacement benefits, the WCB's POP coverage can provide additional

benefits in the form of medical, rehabilitative, vocational services and pensions to proprietors and partners who are injured at work.

As the name implies, personal option protection coverage is optional. Purchasers of POP coverage should purchase an amount that reflects their actual earnings so that in the event of a disabling workplace injury, adequate income replacement benefits are maintained. Call the Employers' Advisers if you require any further information.

Humor - Attitude & Altitude

A guy sitting at an airport bar in Atlanta noticed a beautiful woman sitting next to him. He thought to himself, "Wow, she's so gorgeous; she must be a flight attendant. But which airline does she work for?"

Hoping to gain her attention, he leaned towards her and uttered the Delta Slogan, "Love to fly and it shows?" She gave him a blank, confused stare and

he immediately thought to himself, Nope, not Delta."

A moment later, another slogan popped into his head. He leaned toward her again, "Something special in the air? She gave him the same confused look. He mentally scratched American Airlines off the list.

Next, he tried the United Airlines slogan, "I would

really love to fly your friendly skies?" This time the woman savagely turned on him, "What the hell do you want?"

"No," the woman replies. "I work for Internal Revenue Service man smiled, then slumped back in his chair, and said...." Ahhh, Air Canada!"

BILL C-45 - Stronger Laws Now Affect Criminal Liability of Organizations

Courtesy: RCABC "On Top" Newsletter, April/May '05 Edition

Bill C-45, an act to amend the Criminal Code, came into effect March 31, 2004. Bill C-45 amends the criminal code to clearly define who is responsible for the safety of persons in the workplace and to allow for prosecution under charges of "criminal negligence" when those responsibilities are recklessly or willfully disregarded.

The amendment states that:

"Every one who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task."

This clearly indicates that organizations can and will be held responsible for the actions of all of their employees, and for their lack of action. This includes directors, executive officers, operations managers, plant managers, production managers, and so on. These are the people with authority to make decisions about day-to-day operations.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, an individual found guilty of a contravention may be fined up to a maximum of \$25,000 and / or sentenced to up to one year in jail, per offence. The fine for a corporation can be up to \$500,000. Fines under the criminal code in an indictable offence have no predetermined limit. The maximum sentence for an

individual convicted of "criminal negligence causing death" is life imprisonment.

Employers must take these responsibilities seriously. They need to review their existing policies and procedures, training requirements and budgets, and the dedication of their employees to a safe workplace, and make changes where changes are needed. Where good programs exist, they need support, encouragement, and more than just lip service. The benefits of a good program are many, the cost of a poor one, far too high.

Workplace Safety

Clause 3 of the bill amends the *Criminal Code* by adding a new section 217.1 which will provide that those who are responsible for directing the work of others are under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to any person arising from such work. This provision does not create a new criminal offence. However, by clarifying the existence of such a legal duty, the provision facilitates the application of the offence of criminal negligence, which is predicated, in part, on the existence of a legal duty.

Succession Planning: Preparing the Next Generation to Lead Your Business

by David C. Hepple

Thinking ahead is a cardinal rule of business. In addition to monitoring the daily operation of your business, you need to think about the future. And, as difficult as it may be, it's important to envision the day when you no longer will be in charge. You leave your heirs and your business vulnerable to considerable estate taxes and management upheaval if you don't plan ahead.

Recent surveys provide some alarming statistics. Only one percent of family-owned businesses in North America reach a third generation with family members running them. Another report shows that 30 percent of all family-owned businesses have not considered a successor, with only 63 percent having done so when the owner has already reached age 65. Finally, another recent survey shows that more than 58 percent of small-business owners list inadequate succession planning as the biggest threat facing their business.

Given the fact that 90 percent of the 18 million-plus businesses in America are family-owned and managed, it's obvious that a solid succession plan will be important should the majority owner die, become disabled or retire.

Handing it all down

Typically, succession planning entails three steps: a decision-making stage (choosing a successor), the gradual transfer of minority stock holdings and the transfer of ownership and management responsibilities to the successor.

In choosing a successor, don't force a member of your family to assume unwanted responsibilities. First, find out whether he or she is willing and able to assume the role. If so, make sure you are in agreement that a moderately paced transition will provide the best environment for the company's bottom line and overall stability.

Throughout deliberations, you might even find that the burden of managing your business requires the skills of a professional with few or no ties to your family. If such a person is already in your employ, his or her

ascend to leadership may prove more advantageous to the business than carrying on a "family tradition."

Most experts in the field of succession planning suggest using these steps to pave the way for a suitable successor:

- Set a target date as your last day with the company and start shifting responsibilities ahead of time. You want to be able to oversee the transition while you're still there.
- Set standards that take into consideration the needs of your successor.
- Decide whether to offer stock to retain key employees after the transition.
- Provide for buying out a family member's stock, if necessary.

Poor planning

Failure to reach a suitable line-of-action or consensus among all parties involved with an impending succession can be disastrous. Holding down future estate taxes is another priority that needs to be dealt with while you're alive and well. Your death may trigger a huge federal estate-tax bill that might force your family to sell the business merely to pay the IRS. Many business owners have no idea that tax liabilities and estate settlement costs can run as high as 60 percent of their assets.

But, through careful estate planning, the cost and complications resulting from years of probate, etc., can be minimized, and the transfer of power can be assured. Often, life insurance is needed to provide the necessary liquidity to pay estate settlement costs.

Choosing the right method of passing on your closely held company can not only save you tax dollars, but can also provide an added dividend -- peace of mind. It is important to consult your own tax advisor and lawyer when setting up this type of arrangement.

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Schedule of Events

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>July 27, 2005
 Fireworks Cruise
 Vancouver, BC</p> <p>September 8, 2005
 Vancouver Island Chapter Meeting
 Location—TBA</p> <p>September 20, 2005
 Central Chapter Meeting
 Ramada Inn, Prince George</p> | <p>September 22, 2005
 Vancouver Chapter Golf Tournament
 Pitt Meadows Golf Course</p> <p>September 27, 2005
 Vancouver Chapter Meeting
 Location—TBA</p> <p>September 30, 2005
 Vancouver Island Chapter Golf Tournament
 Location—TBA</p> |
|---|--|

A Close Call

A Dad walks into a market with his young son. The kid is holding a quarter. Suddenly, the boy starts choking, going blue in the face. The dad realizes the boy has swallowed the quarter and starts panicking, shouting for help. A well dressed, attractive, but serious looking woman in a blue business suit is sitting at a coffee bar in the market reading her newspaper and sipping a cup of coffee. At the sound of the commotion, she looks up, puts her coffee cup down on the saucer, neatly folds the newspaper and places it on the counter, gets up from her seat and makes her way, unhurried, across the market. Reaching the boy, the woman carefully takes hold of the boy's testicles and starts to squeeze, gently at first and then ever more firmly. After a few seconds the boy convulses violently and coughs up the quarter, which the woman deftly catches in her free hand. Releasing the boy, the woman hands the coin to the father and walks back to her seat in the coffee bar without saying a word. As soon as he is sure that his son has suffered no lasting ill effects, the father rushes over to the woman and starts thanking her by saying, "I've never seen anybody do anything like that before, it was fantastic. Are you a doctor?" "No," the woman replied. "I work for the Canada Revenue Agency."

Benefits of Membership in ECABC

Advocacy

- A strong united voice to government for expressing opinions and concerns regarding issues that directly affect the electrical industry
- Representation on other associations, committees and councils that deal with apprenticeship, safety, WCB and other issues

Consulting

- Contract Interpretation Service

Education

- Seminars or information sessions and speakers at chapter meetings
- Salaried Employees Training Trust Fund (recovers costs for some seminars/courses)
- Scholarship fund through our membership in the BC Electrical Association (BCEA)
- Seminars and courses offered from other associations

Health Care

- BCCA Group Benefit Plan

Insurance

- Industry specific insurance from Federated Insurance and a gasoline discount program

Networking

- Regular networking opportunities at monthly chapter meetings, annual general meetings, an annual national conference and social events.

News

- Safety alerts and the ECA newsletter The Conduit (monthly) and Relay (annually) to keep members current on industry events and issues

Marketing

- Electrical engineers/contractors joint committee, the ECA website, the ECA logo for stationery and web page use, and membership stickers for industry recognition

Publications

- Member only access to videos, publications and manuals such as the Seismic Restraint Standards Manual and Health & Safety Policy Manual.
- When your membership application has been accepted you receive a Seismic Restraint Standards Manual and Health & Safety Policy Manual free (2 x \$80 = \$160 value).
- Only ECA members can access CECA and NECA publications.

Discounts and Preferred Rates

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • NEBS forms discounted rates | • Accent Inn Corporate Rates |
| • Esso gasoline discount program | • Coast Hotels and Resorts |
| • Group benefit plan rates | • PetroCan SuperPass Program |
| • Legal services | • Fleet purchase/lease program |
| • Accounting services | • Answering service |
| • Imagewear - Marks WorkWearHouse | • Cellular phone rates |
| • Courier rates | • Consulting rates |

