



ECA Update

News and Views of the
Electrical Contractors Association of BC
June 2003

ECA Staff Change

After seven years with ECA, Sandra Kschischang left in April to pursue other interests. As many of you know, Sandra did an excellent job for the association and we wish her well in her future endeavours. Our new Administrative Coordinator is **Zana Gordon** who joined us on May 12th. Zana's qualifications, work experience and cheerful disposition are already proving her to be a real asset to the association. Zana and her husband James live in Surrey and have three sons in their late teens or twenties. I know you will all join me in welcoming Zana to ECA.

ECABC 52nd Annual General Meeting & Hall of Fame Dinner

On Friday, June 6, 2003, ECA will be holding its 52nd Annual General Meeting and Hall of Fame Dinner at the Hilton Vancouver-Metrotown in beautiful downtown Burnaby. The AGM will be followed by a reception and dinner for close to 100 guests. There will be music, entertainment, speeches, awards, a sumptuous buffet and more. This year we will be inducting three well-known industry figures into the Hall of Fame. They include **Wayne Dowler**, **Gerry Lane** and last, but certainly not least, **Cliff Pilkey**. We will also be recognizing **Andrew Watt** of Canem Systems for once again winning the Provincial Skills Canada Competition and coming in a close second at the national competition in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario last month.

If you haven't registered yet, but would like to join us for a great evening, please call **Zana Gordon** for details at: **604-294-4123**

Industry Training Authority Act

This legislation establishes the Industry Training Authority to oversee a flexible and innovative training system that will be responsive to the needs of trainees and employers, as well as to economic change.

The authority will initially regulate training and certification for 167 trades and occupations, such as electrician, carpenter, automotive technician, cook and plumber. B.C. currently has about 16,000 apprentices, plus 8,000 trainees in entry-level trades training at public post-secondary institutions, for a total of 24,000 enrolled throughout the system. Government has set a three-year target of 30,000 trainees under the new model.

The problems

Government has identified widespread problems with the current training system. Credit for courses taken has been granted inconsistently, and programs offering the same training credit can differ in length and quality. Training methods are inflexible, and learners must start over when shifting their career goals – even if the knowledge and skills they've already acquired apply directly to their new focus.

The average age of apprentices is 28, and many are in their 30s or 40s before they complete their training, reducing the number of years in which they will remain in the workforce. As a result of these and other problems, employers' needs for skilled workers are not being met.

As well, demographic projections point to an aging Canadian population and slower labour-force growth. Meanwhile, demand is projected to increase rapidly for many highly skilled occupations. According to the Conference Board of Canada, demand outstrips domestic supply in building, automotive and aerospace trades, among others.

The solutions

Improvements to the current system can best be achieved by working with industry so solutions that benefit both employers and trainees can be put in place. A closer relationship between trainers and industry will result in better training that is relevant to the needs of industry, workers and learners.

A system that offers flexibility, recognizes formal and informal learning and practical experience and is co-ordinated with the K-12 education system will produce more skilled workers who can take advantage of shortages in highly paid fields.

Sixteen pilot projects are currently underway across the province to test innovative training approaches. The pilot projects were chosen based on demonstrated industry partnerships, the likelihood that people completing the program would find jobs, and training development or delivery that met regional or provincial needs. More pilot projects that focus on competency-based assessment and expand secondary school participation will be developed this year.



The new model

The new system will be built to respond quickly to the changing needs of individuals, the labour market and emerging occupations. Key changes include:

- **Adding modular training.** Trainees will be able to earn certificates for specific skill sets as they progress towards full credentials. A trainee can qualify as a framing carpenter, for example, before learning all the skills needed to complete his or her carpentry apprenticeship.

In the past, if trainees did not finish their apprenticeships, they ended up with no qualifications at all, even if they acquired considerable expertise in some areas. Apprentices were often forced to find a series of jobs to cover all facets of their trade, rather than staying with an employer they liked, doing a job they enjoyed. This increased flexibility will attract more young people into the trades, by offering them more ways to train, closer to home and with more training pathways.

- **Building transferability.** Under the new system, skills and knowledge learned in one trade can be applied to another. For example, a millwright whose training included a solid foundation in math, plus the ability to read drawings and understand technical specifications, could apply those skills towards certification as a machinist, which has the same requirements.

Under the old system, a millwright would have to repeat training unnecessarily, wasting time and resources. This reduced the number of trades people adding to their skills to move to trades where better opportunities were available. With these changes, training can be streamlined, employers have access to more workers with the right skills for the market and trades people can further their careers.

For example, the new model will allow trainees to build on their skills and knowledge to the applied degree or degree level. Kwantlen University College is already developing training in the millwright and machinist trades that can lead to an applied degree.

- **Opening up “compulsory trades” training.** In the past, 11 trades in B.C. were deemed “compulsory,” meaning that only certified trades workers and apprentices under their supervision could work in these trades. About half of B.C.’s apprentices are in compulsory trades.

The intent of compulsory trades was to protect public and employee safety. However, in practice it has prevented workers in one trade from receiving training that is designated part of another compulsory trade.

Regulations that restricted entry into trades like plumbing and automotive refinishing will be removed, allowing people to become proficient in those fields through alternative routes as well as through four-year apprenticeships, which are currently the only doorway to this field.

The new Safety Standards Act will protect public and worker safety, requiring employers to have qualified workers do restricted work in 75 trades and occupations. A safety authority will register workers and inspect work sites to ensure the performance of safe, quality work. As a result, alternative training methods can be used, allowing an increased number of trained trades people.

- **Keeping workers and the public safe.** All training must meet requirements set by the province’s new Safety Standards Act. Safety standards will be enforced by the Safety Standards Authority, which will license, inspect and review credentials.
- **Using flexible training methods.** A variety of training methods will be used, including on-the-job training, up-front training, short- and long-term institution-based training, co-op training, online training, entry level and advanced training, and training leading to diplomas and applied degrees. This will increase access and allow more employers and workers to become involved.
- **Recognizing prior learning.** People will be able to take written or practical exams to prove they are competent, rather than having to take courses that cover areas in which they already have experience and expertise. This will increase the supply of qualified workers.
- **Internet registration.** Apprentices and other trainees will register training agreements online, which will reduce red tape and keep data accurate and up to date, allowing the system to be more efficient. Information can be updated as required by trainees, employers and public and private training institutions using one comprehensive system.



Key elements of the current industry training and apprenticeship system will be maintained

- Traditional apprenticeships will continue to be supported, and other kinds of training will be added to provide more options.
- Government will still approve provincial and inter-provincial programs and credentials.
- Red Seal standards, which allow people in 45 accredited trades to use their skills anywhere in Canada, will be maintained. British Columbia will continue to participate in developing national trade standards.
- Training must continue to meet safety standards required by such bodies as the Workers' Compensation Board, Transport Canada and other agencies, in addition to the requirements of the province's new Safety Standards Act.

BCEA Scholarship Program

BCEA and Electro Federation scholarships are available to dependents of personnel of ECABC member companies in good standing. The BCEA has budgeted to award \$10,000 in scholarships in 2003. Criteria are different for each program. The deadline for submitting applications for both the BCEA and EFC programs is July 31, 2003. We have a few brochures for both programs in the ECA office if you would like us to mail them out to you. Give Zana a call at **604-294-4123**. You may also wish to contact BCEA directly at **604-291-7708**.

BCIT Training Update

The following is a brief synopsis of the activities to date:

1. Provincial Apprentice program is in a transition period.
2. The remaining ITAC offices are scheduled to close by March 31
 - a) A transitional office with approximately 15 staff is located in the Burnaby Metrotown office. The transitional office will handle:
 - Registration of new apprentices; and
 - Credentialing of apprentices completing their training
 - b) ITAC's transitional toll free telephone number is **1-866-660-6011**
3. In February, ITAC wrote to apprentices advising that they are now required to self schedule their educational training. For example, apprentices may select their training provider and the training dates of their choice.
4. **Before March 31:** Apprentices already scheduled are guaranteed their training in 2003-2004 as long as they confirm with their assigned training provider prior to March 31.
5. **Beginning April 1:** Any apprentice may contact the training provider of their choice and register for an available training date.
6. **Future Scheduling:** If an apprentice requests a specific training period in 2005, 2006 etc. they will be entered into BCIT's database and will be contacted in the future.
 - a) This new self-scheduling system means that BCIT must be prepared to handle the registration of apprentices interested in training at BCIT. The recruitment and registration of apprentices is a key institutional process for BCIT.
7. BCIT is taking an assertive step forward during this transitional period to support the apprentice registration process. The BCIT Apprentice Services office has:
 - a) Extended its hours of operation to include evening service (Monday to Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. and Fridays 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.);
 - b) Provided a toll free telephone number for BC (1 800 667-0676);
 - c) Significantly increased its staff to provide more service to apprentices; and
 - d) Introduced a new BCIT Apprentice website: **www.bcit.ca/apprenticeship**.
8. Inter-provincial exams (IP) and Certificated of Qualifications exams (C of Q) will continue and will be administered by the Government Agents Branch.
9. How do apprentices register for BCIT apprentice training? Please refer to:

BCIT Apprentice Services
Building SW1 Room 2135
3700 Willingdon Avenue, Burnaby B.C. V5G 3H2
Telephone: 604-456-8100 T. F. in BC: 1-800-667-0676

Fax: 604.435.1197
Email: apprentice@bcit.ca
Web site: www.bcit.ca/apprenticeship
Manager: Amanda Hill 604.451.7059



Michael Geoghegan to Lead BC Construction Association (BCCA)

The largest and most inclusive construction organization in the province, has announced that **Michael Geoghegan** has been hired as President and Chief Executive Officer. Geoghegan's extensive experience as a government and media relations consultant puts him in an excellent position to lead the BCCA through the current and emerging issues surrounding the construction industry. His background includes top management roles in business as well as government.

Geoghegan's experience includes managing his own consulting firm specializing in media and government relations in British Columbia. Over the past several years he has been a regular guest on the **Joe Easingwood** Show on CFX AM 1070 and the Rafe Mair Show in Vancouver debating a variety of political issues. Geoghegan has also worked within government focusing on small business concerns and economic development. Geoghegan holds a BA in Economics from the University of Victoria.

Courtesy: VRCA Jackhammer

Change Orders and Directives under the CCA1

Another important difference between CCA1 and BCCA200 is the way in which the respective contracts deal with changes to the contract work.

The CCA1 Change Order (SCC 6.2) and Change Directive (SCC 6.3) provisions are much more extensive than the "Payment for Changes" (Article III (e)) of BCCA200. As with many changes in the CCA1, the language is now much more similar to the language contained in CCDC 2 (see GC 6.2 and 6.3).

Under the CCA1, when the general contractor and the trade contractor agree to adjustments in the contract price or the contract time, or the method to be used to determine the adjustments arising from a change in the work, such agreement is to be recorded in a Change Order signed by the general contractor and the trade contractor.

Where the general contractor requires the trade contractor to proceed with a change but no agreement has been reached on the adjustment, the general contractor must issue a Change Directive, and the trade contractor is required to proceed promptly with the change.

The CCA1 sets out in extensive detail how an adjustment to the contract price is to be determined when a Change Directive is issued. The adjustment is to be calculated based on the actual cost to the trade contractor of the change, with an allowance for overhead and profit if the change results in a net increase in the contract price. A list of allowable costs is set out in SCC 6.3.6. Where a change results in a net reduction in the contract price, the contract price is decreased by the amount of the decrease in the trade contractor's actual costs without deduction for the trade contractor's profit. When agreement is eventually achieved on the adjustments to the contract price and contract time, the agreement is recorded in a signed Change Order.

The detailed guidance provided in the CCA1 should assist both the general contractor and the trade contractor in dealing with changes in a timely and effective manner and should minimize the number of contract change related disagreements that end up in arbitration or litigation.

As with the BCCA200, trade contractors operating under the CCA1 should bear in mind that if they proceed with changes without a signed order or directive, they do so at their own peril. Loose assurances by a general contractor to "take care of" a trade contractor's extra claim, is fertile ground for later disputes -- disputes where an unwary trade contractor will be left holding the short end of the stick.

Courtesy: BCCA Bulletin

DID YOU KNOW . . . that The BCCA Group Benefit Plan provides all member firms with increased purchasing power? There are over 4,600 employees on the Plan, which means that more of each premium dollar spent goes toward claims, with less toward insurer administration. The result is lower and stable costs for member firms. Call Karen Dickenson at (604) 683-7353 or 1-800-665-1077 for more information about The BCCA Group Benefit Plan. **Get more out of your membership!**



ECABC Calendar of Events

June 6, 2003

ECABC AGM & Hall of Fame Dinner
Hilton Vancouver-Metrotown, Burnaby, BC

June 7, 2003

Electric Vehicle Show
Science World parking lot – 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

June 18 – 22, 2003

CECA National Conference
St. John's, Nfld

July 30, 2003

Vancouver Chapter Fireworks Dinner Cruise
Westin Bayshore Marina

September 11, 2003

Vancouver Island Chapter Meeting
Location TBA

September 17, 2003

Vancouver Chapter Meeting
Accent Inn, Burnaby, BC

September 19, 2003

Vancouver Chapter Golf Tournament
Country Meadows Golf Course, Richmond, BC

October 2, 2003

BCEA Electrical Showcase
Abbotsford, BC

Lighter Moments

Bad Food

A dietitian was once addressing a large audience in Chicago:

"The material we put into our stomachs is enough to have killed most of us sitting here, years ago. Red meat is awful. Soft drinks erode your stomach lining. Chinese food is loaded with MSG. Vegetables can be disastrous, and none of us realizes the long-term harm caused by the germs in our drinking water.

"But there is one thing that is the most dangerous of all and we all have eaten or will eat it. Can anyone here tell me what food it is that causes the most grief and suffering for years after eating it?"

A 75-year-old man in the front row stood up and said,

"Wedding cake."

A Good Memory but it's Short

An elderly couple had dinner at another couple's house, and after eating, the wives left the table and went into the kitchen. The two elderly gentlemen were talking, and one said,

"Last night we went out to a new restaurant, and it was really great. I would recommend it very highly." The other man said, "What's the name of the restaurant?"

The first man knits his brow in obvious concentration, and finally said to his companion,

"Aahh, what is the name of that red flower you give to someone you love?"

His friend replies, "A Carnation?"

"No. The other one" the man says.

His friend offers another suggestion, "The Poppy?"

"Naahh, growls the man. You know the one that is red and has thorns."

His friend said, "Do you mean a rose?"

"Yes, Yes that's it. Thank you!" the first man says.

He then turns towards the kitchen and yells,

"Rose, what's the name of that restaurant we went to last night?"