



Ontario College of Trades Releases First Apprenticeship Ratios



ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES
ORDRE DES MÉTIERS DE L'ONTARIO

The Ontario College of Trades (OCOT) Review Panels released their first grouping of Apprenticeship Ratio Review Reports. Following a call for “Written Submissions and public Oral Hearings”, independent Review Panels have recently recommended apprentice to journey person ratio changes for two of the four trades that were under review.

The OCOT Board of Governors will make regulations implementing these recommended ratio changes, following a 45-day posting on the College website. There will be no changes until the necessary regulation is put in place in 2013. The College maintains that “it will continue to turn to its stakeholders and future members on numerous occasions to get their feedback and hear their voices on important issues.” Copies of the reports by the Review Panels and a summary of Ratio Review Decisions are available online at www.collegeoftrades.ca/category/ratio-reviews

Safety Poster Enforcement In Effect

Health & Safety at Work Prevention Starts Here



As we reported in the July 2012 issue of this newsletter, employers are required to post a Health & Safety Poster that explains the key rights and responsibilities of the workplace parties (employers and employees), including how to obtain additional health and safety information and how to contact a Ministry of Labour (MOL) inspector. The Ministry of Labour (MOL) had given employers until **October 1st** to ensure that they had sufficient time to become aware of the new requirement.

displayed in a print size of not less than 8.5 x 11 inches. Limited quantities of printed copies are also available, free of charge, (English and French versions only) through the various health and safety organizations of the Province:

- Health & Safety Ontario
- Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers
- Workers Health & Safety Centre

Printed copies are also available, at no charge, through Service Ontario Publications.

As advised, the Poster can be downloaded, in several languages, from the Ministry of Labour at www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/poster_prevention.php. The Ministry requires that the poster be



The Mathews Dinsdale Minute



This month we are moving more in the direction of interest for the construction industry overall. We are going to discuss Bill 183 – The Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act.

While carpenters and drywallers are not current compulsory trades, this is an issue that many of you may want to keep in mind. In September 2008 the provincial government announced its intention to establish a College of Trades arms length body to “protect the public interest and regulate persons practicing in skilled trades in Ontario.” The idea is to create an arms length Board as part of revamping the previous framework under the Apprenticeship and Certification Act, 1998 and the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act.

To start the process, Kevin Whitaker (then Chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board) was appointed as Implementation Advisor and directed to consult with stakeholders and make recommendations of the mandate, governance and implementation structure of the proposed College of Trades.

Currently, there are 38 sections of Bill 183 that await proclamation. They are apparently triggering contentious debate. To describe their effect generally, they focus on creating the new regulating body (the College of Trades), which would be solely responsible for overseeing all individual tradespeople and all employers who employ, or in the case of apprentices, sponsor individuals in the trades. The system would regulate all aspects of the trades industry and would be an all encompassing and self-regulating scheme funded by the trades industry.

The Board would have 21 members with four each from the construction industry, the motive power (mechanics) industry, the industrial sector and the service sector (remember there are apprentices in places other than the construction industry). Two of the members from each sector would be “employee representatives” and two would be employer representatives. One clear point of concern is that “employee representatives” would likely end up drawing from the organized trades, potentially bringing a specific perspective to the Board and, therefore the system. In addition, given the number of trades that are currently compulsory in the construction industry, how would only four representatives possibly capture all the trades’ interests? Among the things the government (not the Board) would have the power to do is establish wage rates and hours of work for apprentices.

While this is not in place yet, it represents a significant potential change to the apprenticeship and trades system in Ontario. It will carry costs and the entire structure is designed to make sure those costs don’t fall on the government but are transferred to the parties. Could it be considered restrictive? Are there risks that the apprenticeship programs become shaded by perspectives or agendas that are beyond the focus of ensuring effective skilled trades? None of that is clear at this time but this is something that everyone may want to consider.



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