

# REGISTRAR'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

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## 1. GENERAL

The year end membership statistical data for 2008 is provided on attached spreadsheets. As was introduced in last year's reporting, a number of the statistic data sets have been created and provided as colour graphs, which are also attached to the report. The good news is that the total membership numbers are continuing to grow at a healthy overall net rate of 4.4%; Technologist/Technician categories at 4.9% and Technical Specialists at 2.5%. Our AScT and CTech numbers continue to be at an all time high, with most other categories remaining constant. The exception is that student application numbers are down when compared to 2007 (an exceptionally high year) but in line with other previous years. As of December 31, 2008 the total membership, including all Technologist / Technician categories and technical specialist groups, is **9,386**.

A comprehensive Professional Regulation Enhancement Program is being developed that will outline a plan of action for registration and professional practice activities into 2012. This initiative will be known by the acronym PREP2012. The initiative is being brought forward for Council information and discussion.

The PREP2012 Plan addresses the following subjects or issues:

- Full implementation of the National Technology Benchmarks by January 1, 2010
- Development of a Technology Credential Assessment & Continuing Education Course Database
- Development of new Professional Practice Examinations (PPE) with risk management training included as a module to PPE requirements
- Mandatory reporting for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- New initiatives are proposed for consumer protection and public responsibility by members.
  - The first phase is to further improve the ASTTBC E&O/CGL professional liability insurance (increased coverage required) plan along with clearly defined criteria for member access.
  - An initial phase of this element of the PREP2012 Plan is Council approval of a policy at the February 19th meeting that requires members, whose work and services require Technical Specialist competencies, to be registered in the appropriate Technical Specialist category for access to the insurance plan coverage specific to that service.
- Development of a policy for a Professional Assessment Program (PAP)
  - The first phase of the PAP initiative is currently under development, with a pilot program already introduced on a voluntarily basis for Onsite Wastewater Registrants.
- Development and review of new categories of certification
  - **RTMgr**  
A certification policy has been drafted and is ready for Council approval and launch at the AGM in May, with implementation in June, 2009.
  - **PTech**  
Implementation plan to be developed as allowed for in Regulations. The issue is currently being affected by TILMA and the use of PTech in Alberta.
  - **Silo Competency Recognition** (limited but highly specialized competencies)  
This is required due to Government's demand to remove barriers for recognition of competencies, as an outcome of AIT requirements. Actions being considered are the development of 'limited' or 'restricted' categories of membership.

PREP2012 represents an ambitious initiative that will draw greatly on the resources of the Registrations Department. This plan will address our Association's professional obligations to government, the public and members for the near future.

External influences that will/may affect Registrations moving to meet this proposed professional registration plateau will be the national Trade agreements of TILMA and AIT, licensing programs such as the plan to license house/home inspection practitioners and changes to the ASTTBC Act & Regulations.

Staff and Council need to understand the enormous resource challenges ahead for Registrations, as we must also continue to meet current policy requirements for existing day to day operations. It is anticipated that a recommendation will be presented to Council on the goals and time frames set by PREP2012 once appropriate Boards, staff and other stakeholders have been consulted.

### Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)

AIT continues to be a factor in the National Accreditation, Certification and Registration process. While ASTTBC is still considered reasonably compliant and positioned for the April implementation date, some issues remain. Recent correspondence with government indicated that they were reviewing the ASTT Act, with respect to the residency requirements and competency assessment powers. I have requested clarification on any concerns related to the two areas they identified as possibly requiring some revision, but as of yet, have not been contacted for further discussion related to this request.

On January 18<sup>th</sup> the Registrar attended a Government seminar on A.I.T. Implementation for professional associations. It would appear that BC is 6 months ahead of most other provinces in meeting the April implementation date. While we have fewer issues than many of the other professional associations in attendance, we still have some matters to deal with. The main issue is with our technical specialist disciplines. The challenge is having an awareness of all the standards of practice from other jurisdictions from which possible future applicants may wish to transfer. Clearly there are not the resources to research this issue. Through a Ministry of Health contract, to look at TILMA related matters, we have been able to identify the need for a 'Legitimate Objective' for Onsite Wastewater Practitioners wanting to practice in BC from Alberta; where the standard does not meet that of BC and the Alberta practitioner would present a risk to public health and welfare.

Under A.I.T. and TILMA, ASTTBC must deal with the 'PTech' certification for those members transferring from Alberta with this designation wishing to work in BC. Since this is a statutory title in Alberta, it may require a change to the ASTT Act to put into sync similar scope of practice competencies. At present, APEGBC has a few ASET - PTech members applying for registration as Limited Licensees.

## **2. PROFESSIONALISM**

### **E&O / CGL Insurance Plan**

The Registrar and Executive Director met with Willis Canada representatives on January 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss the current status of the ASTTBC Plan and initiatives for improvement. Discussion included acquiring coverage changes to the current policy to better meet the needs of members. It was determined that the current exclusions for water ingress and effluent (considered as a pollutant) did not meet the needs of our House/Property Inspectors or the Onsite Wastewater Practitioners. The Willis representatives felt optimistic that our current carrier (Catlin), or another carrier, could be convinced to remove these restrictions in coverage. Current policy pricing appears to be very competitive in most categories, but it was recognized that we are in a buyer's market for insurance. Self-insurance options were explored for some of our licensed groups.

A concern was raised with respect to access for coverage normal to Technical Specialists by ASCT/CTech members not certified in those specialist disciplines. A report has been provided to Council for approval that will address this concern.

Recently, with the Government requirement for House Inspectors to be licensed and to have E&O/CGL liability insurance coverage, a high priority has been put on the negotiations between Willis and Catlin with respect to the water ingress exclusion. At the time of writing this report it was indicated that we should have confirmation as to a response from Catlin very shortly.

### **Risk Management**

Building on the Risk Management Series (RMS) of CPD over the past two years, staff along with the support of Willis, our E&O insurance broker, plan on the delivery of a presentation at the upcoming ASTTBC AGM. You will note that in previous RMS presentations, our workshops dealt with risk management basics, and contract law. This time around, Willis Canada will speak about the mitigation of risk from the broker's perspective. These sessions have traditionally been very well attended and we are sure this will be the case once again. As a follow up to the AGM, we also plan to offer the presentation in three different geographical regions in June 2009. These regions are tentatively the Okanagan (Kelowna), Vancouver Island (Victoria or Nanaimo), and northern BC (Prince George).

### **CPD Week**

As part of the 2009 work plan, staff is looking at the feasibility of hosting a week long Continuing Professional Development Week. The tentative timeframe is Fall 2009. While details have yet to be developed, the general concept is that there will be a selected week close to National Technology Week (NTW) that will see a series of different CPD workshops, co-sponsored by ASTTBC, but mainly hosted by external partners or other parties with a variety of different learning opportunities. These opportunities will range between technical, to HR, to Risk Management in nature.

### **3. REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Implementation plans are well under way for use of the National Technology Benchmarks (NTB) standards for certification and registration. This continues to be a priority activity for the Registrar and Registrations' staff and is a key component of PREP2012. The leadership on national implementation continues to be provided by ASTTBC and ASET. The following points indicate the progress that has been made to date for certification based on the NTB standard:

- Initiative to harmonize certification process across all CMs based on National Technology Benchmarks
- ASTTBC project funded by BC Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development with original focus on ITPs
- BC and Alberta playing a leadership role in concert with Ontario and with participation of all COR members
- New process based on on-line self-assessment by applicants and auditing of submissions by reviewers
- Stronger emphasis of experiential learning
- Draft model being tested and revised in February
- To be presented to COR in early March for endorsement
- BC contract completion end of April
- Full implementation by ASTTBC Jan 1, 2010

The Registrar will be meeting with his Council of Registrar (COR) counter parts in Halifax on March 5<sup>th</sup> to further refine and approve in principle the current proposed implementation plan by BC and Alberta.

ASTTBC continues to develop a Continuing Education Technology Course Database for use by applicants and others in meeting the NTB standard. The following is the progress to date:

- Resource for applicants for certification with academic gaps - draft can be viewed at: <http://courses.asttbc.org/>
- ASTTBC project funded by BC and Federal governments
- Will list distance, part-time and correspondence courses from across the country, classified by NTB statements
- BCDot taking a lead on populating the database
- Expected to be fully functional mid-March
- ASTTBC will approve participating Educational Agencies (EAs) and enter baseline data - EAs then responsible for entry and maintenance of their information
- Good potential for cost recovery
- BC contract/project completion end of April

Work is currently underway on the development of a new Professional Practice Examination for applicants, which will be more responsive to professional practice standards of training and required for members, to protect the public interest. The following indicates the progress to date:

- Professional Practice and Ethics manual under development for applicants to ASTTBC, student members, students in technology programs across the country and ITPs
- Good potential for use by some CMs and post secondary institutions
- On-line format with on-line exam
- A practical document, focused on what technologists and technicians do
- Overarching themes: 1. Protecting the public interest, and 2. Risk management
- Drawing on OACETT and APEGBC materials
- Good potential for cost recovery
- Completion December 31, 2009

## **CCTT/CTAB**

In January CCTT launched **Innovation** - an electronic newsletter for Canada's Certified Technicians and Technologists, which is to be offered monthly in both English and French. CCTT determined that in an age of pervasive Blackberries, effective communications with any professional community must be Blackberry compatible. The previous 'Standard' newsletter, whose lengthy articles were not at all friendly to hand-held devices and, all too often were simply deleted upon receipt, needed to be updated and replaced. Innovation is intended to be a zippy newsletter with short articles on current events in Canada's community of technology professionals. If a topic interests you, simply click on it or otherwise scroll on. Innovation is the title because that's what technicians and technologists do. In keeping with the sense of community CCTT wishes to portray, logos at the bottom of the screen link directly to the websites of each provincial association. To circulate this newsletter to the entire community, CCTT's Constituent Members are requested to forward the monthly e-mail to their individual members.

Mr. Stephen Gould, CET, President of CCTT, is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Will Miller, BSc., CET as Chair of the Canadian Technology Accreditation Board for 2008-2010.

### International Qualifications Data Base Update

Seven new educational programs have been received from an educational agency in Australia and eleven from an educational agency in India. As with all programs received from schools directly, these programs are not rated, but they do contain course outlines. An additional twenty-nine new programs from an educational agency in Egypt have been contributed. These programs have been transferred and rated but do not contain course outlines. The latest upload makes the total number of programs in the IQDB 5226, including 5076 rated programs and 207 programs with course outlines.

The CCTT is developing a Passport System, which is a centralized database of CCTT online services user credentials. The system will allow a user to have one login name and password for all CCTT online applications for which there is authorized use. The IQDB will be the first application integrated with the CCTT Passport System. The other applications to be integrated with the CCTT Passport System include the CCTT Intranet, NTB Forum and NTBdb.

#### **4. BOARD REPORTS**

##### **Board of Examiners**

###### **RTMgr**

A draft policy has been completed and will be submitted to Council at the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting for approval. It is intended that this program will be launched at the AGM in May and applications for registration started to be processed by June, 2009. There is, however, much administrative work to be completed prior to implementation of the policy, once it has received Council approval.

##### **Practice Review Board**

As you will see from the Summary Chart below, 2008 complaints were at an all time high, when also considering the number of active investigations, in addition to cases closed.

### **PRB INVESTIGATION & DISCIPLINE SUMMARY** AS OF JULY 7, 2009

| <b>COMPLAINTS STATISTICS</b>                                    | <b>2009</b> | <b>2008</b> | <b>2007</b> | <b>2006</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>2004</b> | <b>2003</b> | <b>2002</b> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Technologist/Technician complaints</b>                       |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Unauthorized use of ASct, CTech, CET; Certified Technician etc. |             | 7           | 1           | 2           | 3           | 8           | 1           | 4           |
| Ethics/logo/procedural etc.                                     |             | 1           |             | 2           |             | 3           | 1           |             |
| Inquiry – no action   |             |             |             | 1           |             |             |             |             |
| <b>Special Certification Complaints</b>                         |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| Property Insp. Title/logo                                       |             | 2           | 6           | 5           | 12          | 5           | 2           | 4           |
| Property Insp. Ethics/other                                     |             | 2           | 5           | 2           | 2           | 3           | 2           | 2           |
| Fire Prot. Title/logo   |             |             | 2           |             |             | 2           |             |             |
| Fire Prot. Ethics/other   |             | 3           | 9           | 15          | 7           | 10          | 12          | 5           |
| Timber Cruiser Title/logo                                       |             |             |             | 1           |             |             |             |             |
| Timber Cruiser Ethics/other                                     |             |             |             |             | 2           | 1           |             |             |
| Onsite Waste. Title/logo  |             |             |             | 1           | 1           |             |             |             |
| Onsite Waste. Ethics/other                                      |             | 22          | 18          | 18          |             |             |             |             |
| All other Spec. Cert .groups – Title/logo                       |             | 7           | 1           |             |             |             |             |             |
| All other Spec. Cert. groups - Ethics/other                     |             | 1           |             | 2           |             |             |             |             |
| <b>FILES CLOSED TO-DATE</b>                                     |             | <b>45</b>   | <b>42</b>   | <b>49</b>   | <b>27</b>   | <b>32</b>   | <b>18</b>   | <b>15</b>   |

Note: Statistics for current year are year-to-date; other years are to year-end.

| <b>COMPLAINT OUTCOME</b>                       | <b>2009</b> | <b>2008</b> | <b>2007</b> | <b>2006</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>2004</b> | <b>2003</b> | <b>2002</b> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Cease & Desist - ethics/logo/titles – complied |             | 15          | 11          | 11          | 15          | 15          | 3           | 8           |
| Ethics Complaint - censure applied             |             | 14          | 12          | 11          | 4           | 5           | 6           | 4           |
| Ethics Complaint - no breach of code found     |             | 13          | 14          | 9           | 7           | 11          | 9           | 3           |
| Ethics Complaint withdrawn                     |             |             | 1           | 2           | 1           | 1           |             |             |
| Title/logo inquiry – no action taken by PRB    |             | 1           | 1           | 16          |             |             |             |             |
| Complaint in abeyance (membership cancelled)   |             | 2           | 3           |             |             |             |             |             |

| TOTAL COMPLAINTS                            |  | 45   | 42   | 49   | 27   | 32   | 18   | 15   |
|---|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| TYPE OF ACTION INVOLVED                     |  | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
| Disciplinary Hearing held                   |  |      | 1    |      | 1    |      | 5    |      |
| Special Investigative Meeting held          |  |      |      | 2    |      |      |      | 2    |
| Stipulated Order accepted                   |  | 4    | 1    | 9    |      |      |      |      |
| Stipulated Order rejected                   |  | 1    |      | 1    |      |      |      |      |
| Appeal to PRB upheld                        |  |      |      |      |      |      | 1    |      |
| Appeal to PRB denied                        |  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Appeal to ASTTBC Council upheld             |  |      | 1    |      | 1    |      |      |      |
| Appeal to ASTTBC Council denied             |  |      |      |      | 1    |      |      |      |
| Title/Logo/Stamp/Inquiry – no action by PRB |  |      | 2    | 3    |      |      |      |      |

Note: 'Type of Action' - included in totals of 'Complaint Outcomes'

| COMPLAINTS IN PROGRESS  | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Ethics Investigation in progress  | 35   | 29   | 16   | 13   | 13   |      |      |      |
| Cease & Desist order in progress (all – incl. ethics/title/logo/stamp/mis. inquiry) | 7    | 6    | 4    | 3    | 2    |      |      |      |

Note: 'Investigation in progress files' is not included in totals

The greatest number of complaint cases involves our Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners. Our Manager, Onsite Wastewater Registration Program has been of great assistance to the PRB in investigations and practice initiatives such as the PAP should help to reduce the number of complaints in the future.

## **SPECIAL CERTIFICATIONS UPDATE**

### **Construction Safety**

ASTTBC provided major support for the 2008 Construction Safety Symposium, receiving excellent exposure. New marketing initiatives are also underway to increase profile via BC Safety Council, Construction Safety Association (BC), Construction Safety Network and BC Safety Authority. Presentations have been made to BC Safety Council and BCIT. An application for course accreditation has been received, which if validated will provide a third course provider in BC. An accreditation audit process is now underway for this course. Interest has also been received from a potential fourth course provider for accreditation. A new CSO website and members forum is scheduled for development in the first 1/4 of 2009.

### **Fire Protection**

The following are updates related to the actions of the Manager of the Fire Protection Registration Program and the Fire Protection Certification Board:

#### Verification Fire Alarm Systems

- The FPCB has completed two challenge exams for the Verification – Fire Alarm System discipline. The FPCB is working with CFAA to refine the content of the exams.

#### Publications

- Two publications have been revised to reflect the changes in the Fire Protection Certification Program. These publications are:
  - Competency Guide for Inspection & Testing of Fire Protection Equipment, and
  - Inspection, Testing & Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment Practice Guidelines

#### Strategic Plan

- The FPCB is designing a plan to provide possible technical workshops for the technicians. The first stage will be to send out a survey to obtain an expression of interest from the technicians.

#### New Board members

- The FPCB has added three new members: two technicians and one municipal fire prevention officer. These additions will provide the Board with fresh input about the FPCP from the perspective of technicians and AHJ's.

#### Challenge Exams

- The FPCB has requested a change in the passing grade for the challenge exams from 70% to 80% and a report has been provided to Council for approval.

#### Position Paper

- The FPCB's Position Paper has been revised to reflect the new discipline – VI Verification Fire Alarm Systems, and also to include the two new municipalities (City of Coquitlam and Municipality of Pitt Meadows) that have passed recent bylaws requiring RFPT certification.

### **House and Property Inspection**

By now Council is aware that the BC Government passed a Regulation on January 29, 2009 making it mandatory for persons offering services as a house inspector to be licensed through the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority (BPCPA). The Regulation identified three associations or programs through which practitioners could be certified and then, with certification, apply for a license. The Regulation also provided a means for practitioners to apply directly to the BPCPA for an assessment and licensing. House Inspectors must be licensed as of March 31, 2009.

The challenge for our Certification Program will be the short time frame (March 31<sup>st</sup>) provided by Government to administer and certify new applicants. Many of these applicants have a great deal of industry experience, but may not have the requisite training identified in the current policy.

Council will shortly be provided with an emergency plan to address how Registrations will deal with the enormous challenge and opportunity that has resulted in the new Regulation governing House Inspection Licensing. This plan will address interim changes that may be required to the current policy requirements in order to manage the task at hand. At the time of writing this report this plan is still under development.

In addition to the challenges faced by new applicants into the program, the current economy is creating hardships for many of our CHI(P) members in the completion of their certification requirements. This group, under the current policy, must prior to June 24, 2009, complete three successful assessment reviews or be reclassified back to Inspector-In-Training (IIT) status. The result of a reclassification to IIT status would be the loss of their right to accept inspection assignments, due to the new Government legislation governing the licensing of House Inspectors. The cost to the CHI [P] is currently \$350 per inspection assessment; a total cost of \$1050 in order to complete their assessments. There are a total of 30 CHI(P) members within this circumstance and the Manager, Property/House Inspection Registration has spoken with many, reporting that the members cannot see completing the program due to the current economy induced financial circumstances. This is clear from the lack of reclassification applications and inspection assessments being reported.

In light of the current downturn in housing sales and the hardships that this presents for these CHI(P) members, it is being recommended that Council approve, for current CHI(P) members on a one time basis only, an adjustment to the policy to allow the current time frame for inspection assessments to be one inspection required every six months. Specifically this means one successfully completed by March 31, 2009 (effective date of Government Regulation governing House Inspection licensing), assessment two by September 30, 2009 and the final by March 31, 2010. While plans are being developed to help reduce costs for inspection assessments and initiatives to 'fast-track' and 'batch' CHI(P)s is being considered, the extension in the time frame would help reduce administration pressures caused by the new Government legislation and the current hardships on CHI(P)s created by the economy.

The Manager, Property/House Inspection Registration has met with the BCIPI Mentoring / Assessment Committee to establish working guidelines and a preferred list of members for involvement in Mentoring / Assessing engagements. As a result of this meeting:

- A training program was developed for Mentors and the first class conducted on November 28, 2008.
- A video was made of the first Mentoring class which will be added to in subsequent sessions for the production of a Mentoring / Assessor Training DVD.

## **Onsite Wastewater**

Assistance to ROWPs and the public through enquires received at the ASTTBC office continues to increase as the awareness of the role and support becomes known. For the ROWPs, information from ASTTBC news bulletins has helped increase this awareness, but an equally important source recently has come from Health Authorities, and in particular, Environmental Health Officers who are in contact with ROWPs.

Business aids for ROWPs were developed and provided to a small number of members, especially those who have recently come to the attention of the Manager, OWRP due to PRB matters. The intent is to show these members a better means of conducting their business through examples, checklists, and related forms donated from various sources within the wastewater industry and contained within a CD for ease of distribution. Templates within the CD allow the member to generate high-quality forms and related documents quickly and improve the image to their clients. Additional information and tips will be added to the CD over the coming months and adjustments made with feedback from the members.

As a result of increased communications with Health Authority staff around the province, requests by them for further meetings to discuss roles and increasing joint-monitoring and enforcement duties has occurred. The Manager, OWRP has attended Health Authority manager meetings at Northern Health and Interior Health offices to date, with Vancouver Coast Health to follow shortly. Standing offers to visit other health offices is being considered along with offers to give presentations to regional district staff and a training session for realtors. These opportunities will help foster increased awareness and a better understanding of ROWPs, the wastewater industry, and the role of ASTTBC within it.

The Practitioner Assessment Program (PAP) has moved into the pilot stage with the first round of ROWPs contacted to undertake an assessment on a voluntary basis. Results of the pilot project are expected towards the end of March 2009 with a report to follow soon after. To meet the future needs of the project, additional file reviewers are being gathered for the OWRB and six new Board members will be appointed by Council at the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Additional training will also be provided specific to the PAP project.

Efforts to increase the ROWP membership are also actively underway with other stakeholders and a potential significant source of new people may be possible for a sector of trades (plumbing and electrical as maintenance providers) not previously tapped into. Further discussions with contacts in that area are being conducted over the next few weeks to further explore these ideas.

More update information and bulletins are planned to be provided to the members by this Spring. ASTTBC is also reviewing how it can better improve communications to the public as well.