



Professional Regulation: Serving the Public Interest

2009

Annual Report of the Public Representatives

**Serving on the Council of the
Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC)**

**Jim Blake, CA
John Murphy**

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ASTTBC Overview – Professional Regulation of Technology Professionals

The Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC) is a self-governing association of technology professionals including technologists, technicians and technical specialists. Formed in 1958 under the Society Act, ASTTBC was reincorporated in 1985 under the *Applied Science Technologists and Technicians Act (ASTT Act)*, the third province in Canada to enact stand-alone legislation governing technologists and technicians.

At the end of 2009 ASTTBC registrations totaled 9,893 technologists, technicians and technical specialists. ASTTBC operates with a budget of about \$2.5 million. ASTTBC's head office is located in Surrey, British Columbia. ASTTBC is referenced in the Business in Vancouver 2009 list of professional associations as the 8th largest in British Columbia by membership size. During 2008 and 2009 ASTTBC celebrated its first 50 years.

Purpose and Scope of the 2009 Annual Report of the Public Representatives

The 2009 Annual Report focuses on ASTTBC's initiatives to further serve the public interest by enhancing the Association's professional accountability framework, policies and programs.

The Annual Report of the Public Representatives for 2009 was developed by the Public Representatives serving on ASTTBC Council. Where the Public Representatives are not in accord with statements in the Report the variance is noted. The Report was developed with input from members of Boards and Committees, Council, members and staff. The Report is an independent statement, ie. it will not be presented for the approval by ASTTBC staff or Council.

This Annual Report of the Public Representatives for 2009 will be presented during the 51st ASTTBC Annual General Meeting on May 28, 2010 and forwarded to the BC Minister Responsible for the *ASTT Act*, Members of the BC Legislature, Members of Parliament and other interested stakeholders. The Report will be posted to ASTTBC's web site for easy access by the public. A summary of the Report will be included in ASTT e-NEWS and ASTT NEWS.

A. Professional Regulation : 2009 Overview

ASTTBC has a strong foundation for professional regulation. Modeled after other 'senior' professional associations, ASTTBC utilizes the *ASTT Regulations* and its Policies in governing the many elements of professional regulation. ASTTBC has implemented a Code of Ethics, Professionalism in Practice Program and Ethics and Practice Examination which must be completed by all applicants.

Errors and Omissions insurance is available to members through a program arranged by the Association.

In 2008 ASTTBC introduced a web-based tool for members to record and track their continuing professional development (CPD). This resource is a first step in moving toward formal reporting of CPD activities. At present it is mandatory for some ASTTBC registrants to record and report their CPD activities; however it is voluntary for most members to report their CPD. ASTTBC encourages use of the ASTTBC web-based software.

ASTTBC regularly reports in a general way on all complaints, outlining the reason for the complaint and decision rendered. Where the public will be best served, the report includes full details of the circumstances. Consideration is always given when reporting to the needs of the public and the interests of the practitioner. ASTTBC's obligation to serve the public interest will always weigh heaviest when deciding what to report. It has been suggested by at least one external party that ASTTBC does not report sufficient information. For this reason ASTTBC is examining its Regulations, policies and procedures to ascertain whether changes are needed to better serve the public interest. There is no hesitation in commending ASTTBC for its effectiveness and commitment to serving the public interest as it pertains to formal complaints against members.

B. Professional Regulation : 2009 Highlights

Professional Accountability : Complaints and Their Disposition

A function of a self-governing professional regulatory body in serving 'the public interest' is to have in place a process by which any person may file a formal 'complaint' against a registered professional and expect the professional association to fairly and equitably deal with the complaint. Since its early days and more recently since the *ASTT Act* in 1985, the Association has had in place Regulations and policies dealing with complaints and the disposition of complaints.

ASTTBC handled 90 formal complaints in 2009, triple the number received five years ago. This represents a significant jump and speaks to ASTTBC's added responsibilities, especially in Technical Specialist certification. The primary areas in which complaints have been received are Fire Protection, Onsite Wastewater and House and Property Inspection.

For a summary of complaints see Table #1. You will note from the Table that ASTTBC has managed different classes of complaints from inappropriate use of professional titles and designations to matters of practice. In 55 cases there was a breach of the Code of Ethics and censures were applied. ASTTBC determined in 9 instances that there was no breach of the Code and 4 cases were in abeyance.

Commendation: ASTTBC serves the public well with its handling of complaints.

Recommendation: ASTTBC is encouraged to report more fully and regularly on reasons for complaints.

Table #1 Report on Complaints and their Disposition 2009

COMPLAINTS STATISTICS	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Technologist/Technician complaints								
Unauthorized use of AScT, CTech, CET; Certified Technician etc.	6	7	1	2	3	8	1	4
Ethics/logo/procedural etc.	1	1		2		3	1	
Inquiry – no action				1				
Special Certification Complaints								
Property Insp. Title/logo	11	2	6	5	12	5	2	4
Property Insp. Ethics/other	11	2	5	2	2	3	2	2
Fire Prot. Title/logo	1		2			2		
Fire Prot. Ethics/other	8	3	9	15	7	10	12	5
Timber Cruiser Title/logo	N/A			1				
Timber Cruiser Ethics/other	N/A				2	1		
Onsite Waste. Title/logo				1	1			
Onsite Waste. Ethics/other	51	22	18	18				
All other Spec. Cert .groups – Title/logo	1	7	1					
All other Spec. Cert. groups - Ethics/other		1		2				
FILES CLOSED TO-DATE	90	45	42	49	27	32	18	15

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

COMPLAINT OUTCOME	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Cease & Desist - ethics/logo/titles – complied	22	15	11	11	15	15	3	8
Ethics Complaint - censure applied	55	14	12	11	4	5	6	4
Ethics Complaint - no breach of code found	9	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)	4	2	3					
TOTAL COMPLAINTS	90	45	42	49	27	32	18	15
TYPE OF ACTION INVOLVED	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Disciplinary Hearing held			1		1		5	
Special Investigative Meeting held				2				2
Stipulated Order accepted	4	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	42	29	16	13	13			
Cease & Desist order in progress (all – incl. ethics/title/logo/stamp/mis. inquiry)	1	6	4	3	2			

Professional Practice & Examinations (PPE)

Work commenced in 2009 on the development of a new Professional Practice & Examination for applicants. The overarching goal is to further enhance ASTTBC's program for professional practice standards and training and in this way ensure greater protection of the public interest. Professionalism and Ethics texts were drafted and approved in principle by the Practice Review Board. It is expected that the content will be completed by the summer of 2010 with full implementation to follow. The PPE Manual is being developed as an online package, including an online exam. This project was partially funded by a BC Government grant. It should be noted that Alberta is planning to adopt the PPE once it is developed to ensure harmonization under BC – Alberta Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA). As well, efforts are being made to embrace other technology professional associations as partners in this initiative.

Commendation: ASTTBC's work to enhance the Professional Practice & Examination program will ensure greater awareness by members of their professional obligations.

Recommendation: ASTTBC's efforts to engage other associations of technology professional throughout Canada in the use of a common Professional Practice & Examination program is encouraged.

Professional Assessment Program (PAP)

The first phase of the PAP initiative got underway with the Onsite Wastewater Program for Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners (ROWPs). The PRB has found the PAP a tremendous tool to determine competency issues for Onsite Wastewater Registrants. The PAP philosophy has also been applied to ASTTBC-registered Property and House Inspectors as a requirement for inspection assessments. Under development is a similar program for Fire Protection registrants.

Commendation: The Professional Assessment Program is an extraordinary initiative.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should extend the Professional Assessment Program to other certification programs.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The CPD Online Log is now available at <http://www.asttbc.com/login1.php>. This is a secure site and available for voluntary reporting of CPD for members; except for Property and House Inspectors, for which mandatory reporting is required. Members are encouraged to take advantage of this member service, as it is an ideal medium to track their CPD activities. As ASTTBC moves forward on the CPD front, Government's expectation is for technology professional associations to have mandatory CPD as part of the required public accountability for the professionals represented. All members should expect that CPD will become 'mandatory' at some point in the future. Voluntary reporting through the Website in 2009 is but the first step. For ASTTBC's CPD policy, visit the following web site: http://www.asttbc.com/practice/cpd/cpd_policy.php.

Commendation: ASTTBC's continued efforts to enhance members' understanding of, and commitment to, continuous improvement is applauded.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should require all members to demonstrate their commitment to CPD.

House Inspection Licensing in BC

ASTTBC has been certifying and registering house and property inspectors for over a decade.

In 2009 the provincial government legislated that all practicing home inspections within the province were required to be licensed through Consumer Protection BC (known then as the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority) which could be acquired based on certification by ASTTBC or one of two other organizations. The existing ASTTBC certification policy for CPI and CHI members was revised to address this new requirement. At the time there were ninety (90) house inspection members which has now increased to over 150, most of whom are now licensed.

ASTTBC has informed Consumer Protection BC of a few key issues requiring attention as the program unfolds, including the need for one common licensing standard and a minimum standard and capacity for dealing with formal complaints against members. ASTTBC wrote to the Minister outlining the key issues that require attention and is addressing these issues with CPBC. ASTTBC members who are licensed are required to carry errors & omissions insurance, which ASTTBC makes available at very reasonable rates.

Commendation: ASTTBC provided leadership in the application of the new house inspector licensing.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should continue to advance to Consumer Protection BC the need for a common standard for professional certification and regulation of house inspectors.

Onsite Waste Water Certification Program

ASTTBC has been certifying and registering onsite wastewater practitioners since 2005 when the Sewerage System Regulation designated ASTTBC as the association responsible for professional regulation of most of the practitioners in this field.

In 2009 changes were made to the Sewerage System Regulation by the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport that transferred the authority to set education standards for onsite wastewater from the BC Onsite Sewage Association to ASTTBC. This amendment is significant in that it properly recognizes the professional regulatory body, ASTTBC, as the appropriate body to set and determine education standards.

Commendation: ASTTBC's high standards in professional regulation have been exemplified in the Onsite Wastewater certification program.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should develop national competency standards for the Onsite Wastewater Certification program.

National Technology Benchmark Standards (NTB)

In 2009 implementation plans were well under way for use of the National Technology Benchmark (NTB) standards for certification and registration. Leadership on national implementation continues to be provided by ASTTBC, working with the Council of Registrars (COR) of the other technology professional associations. ASTTBC secured the support of the BC Government for funding for a national, web-based registrations model.

Commendation: ASTTBC has made great strides to implement the National Technology Benchmarks as the basis for professional certification of technologists and technicians.

Continuing Education Technology Course Database

ASTTBC developed a Continuing Education Technology Course Database for use by applicants and others in meeting the NTB standard. As part of a federal government contract through Human Resources and Development Canada (HRSDC) and the Canadian Council of Technicians and Technologists (CCTT), ASTTBC was assisted in developing and loading information into a website. To date there has been a low uptake by Educational Agencies (EAs), however with the declared support from the National Council of Deans of Technology (NCDoT), ASTTBC expects greater interest by EAs. The website was upgraded to reflect broader user requirements and integrated with the Technology Registrations Canada Website (TRC). In addition, the database will link with, and get exposure through, the Canadian Technology Immigration Network (CTIN), an initiative that will advance a strategic and coordinated approach to integrating technology-trained immigrants into the Canadian labour market. The CTIN project is intended to address the needs of technically trained immigrants as they journey across an immigration continuum, with the goal of achieving full employment in their chosen field.

Commendation: The Continuing Education Technology Education Course Database initiative will be of great service to internationally trained and other professionals looking for educational offerings leading to full professional certification and registration and to fulfill CPD requirements.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should engage with Educational Agencies to fully develop a database with a comprehensive offering of technical subjects for all disciplines.

Registered Technology Manager (RTMgr)

ASTTBC launched a new certification program for members wishing recognition of their expertise in supervision or management in a technology environment. A certification policy was approved and the program design and implementation completed in 2009. The Certification Board has been appointed, a RTMgr website was opened and 35 applications for certification received.

Commendation: The RTMgr will serve many members in BC and likely throughout Canada.

Professional Technologist - PTech

ASTTBC enacted changes to the *ASTT Regulations* in 2005 to introduce the 'Professional Technologist' (PTech) classification for those members who qualify. ASTTBC Council decided it would move ahead with the new title once a clear signal was evident as to the direction of other technology professional associations in Canada. ASTTBC Council has yet to implement the PTech.

In 2009 ASTTBC Council approved changes to the *ASTT Regulations* modifying the requirements to achieve Professional Technologist and the titles and designations to be used. The changes will help synchronize the PTech in BC with that in Alberta and allow harmonization by the two provinces under TILMA.

Commendation: ASTTBC's 'measured' approach to advancing Professional Technologist (PTech) certification best serves the public interest.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should continue to work with the BC Government, APEGBC and others toward the full implementation of Professional Technologist certification in a manner similar to Alberta.

AIT & TILMA Agreements

Effective April 1, 2009, and consistent with the terms of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) and the BC/AB Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA), ASTTBC must certify and register applicants who are currently certified/registered/licensed in another jurisdiction in Canada, in accordance with the provisions of these Agreements.

TILMA and Chapter 7 of AIT sets out rules by which all Canadian jurisdictions are to treat individuals in a regulated occupation who may wish to transfer to another province. Unless the standards are so different as to present a risk to the public interest (for which 'legitimate objectives' are allowed) the transfers are to happen in a timely manner with little effort and without a reassessment of credentials. The only requirement may be a non-material jurisprudence examination to demonstrate knowledge as to the jurisdiction's legislation and Association's ethics. Note: the provincially regulated occupations that affect ASTTBC are certification/registration/licensing for AScT, CTech, ROWP, CHI(P) and CHI. PTech will be included in the list once implemented.

Government indicated to ASTTBC that formal approval by Certification Boards for handling transfers under AIT/TILMA is unacceptable and non-compliant with AIT/TILMA rules, due to potential extensive time delays (Boards typically only meet once every 2 to 3 months). Government requires that the Registrar or other person designated by ASTTBC be the approving officer for such transfers, since no reassessment of the applicant's credentials under AIT/TILMA is permitted in any event. Therefore, in 2009, Council approved changes to the Board of Examiners Policy to enable the Registrar to be the approving officer for such transfers. The BC Government subsequently indicated that ASTTBC is totally compliant with the terms and conditions of both AIT and TILMA.

UPDATE in 2010: Early in March, 2010 the BC Government passed BILL 9, the Labour Mobility Act. This Bill allows certified workers from other jurisdictions to practice their occupations in British Columbia in accordance with Chapter Seven of the Agreement on Internal Trade, and, in particular, provides that British Columbia regulators must consider and apply Chapter Seven when workers who are certified for an occupation in a signatory jurisdiction apply to obtain British Columbia certification for that occupation. It allows the Supreme Court to consider whether Chapter Seven has been correctly applied and to make directions where that has not been the case. Information on the Bill can be found at: http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th5th/1st_read/gov09-1.htm

Commendation: ASTTBC continues to provide leadership in assuring portability of credentials both within Canada and between other countries and Canada.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should continue to evolve the ASTTBC certification and professional regulatory framework, policies and procedures to align as much as possible with Alberta and other technology professional associations.

Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications

While ASTTBC was determined to be TILMA/AIT compliant, the next evolution of this process was also started in 2009. The Federal Government announced that foreign-trained workers who apply to be licensed in 14 different fields will be told within one year whether or not their qualifications match Canadian standards. By the end of 2010, the one-year timetable will be in place for foreign-trained architects, engineers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, registered nurses, medical laboratory technologists, and financial auditors and accountants. The changes will be expanded to include six more fields by the end of December 2012: teachers, dentists, physicians, engineering technicians, licensed practical nurses, and medical radiation technologists.

The federal government is touting the changes - otherwise known as the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications - as a way to attract international talent to Canada and allow immigrants to reach their full potential. ASTTBC has been working closely with the BC Government on this new initiative.

Commendation: ASTTBC provides leadership in recognizing the credentials of Internationally Trained Professionals.

Recommendation: ASTTBC should continue with the development of Technology Registrations Canada in collaboration with other technology professional associations.

Forest Measurements Registration Board (FMRB)

ASTTBC Council approved the transfer of the FMRB from ASTTBC to the Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals (ABC FP) and required that ASTTBC wind down certification in Forest Measurements (Timber Cruisers) effective April 30, 2009. Council further required that certification will be canceled effective April 30, 2009 for those Timber Cruisers registered with ASTTBC who chose not to transfer their certification from ASTTBC to ABCFP. This requirement has now been fulfilled. The FMRB expressed its appreciation to ASTTBC for its leadership and continued support for forest measurements certification. This transfer was the final step in the evolution of the new *Forest Professionals Act* in which technologists, technicians and related technical workers are registered.

Commendation: ASTTBC managed the transfer of Timber Cruisers from ASTTBC to ABCFP in a professional and business-like manner.

ASTTBC Registrar Appointed as COR Chair

The ASTTBC Registrar was appointed as the new Chair of the Council of Registrars in 2009, with a term in office extending to the fall of 2012. The timing of the appointment could not be better with the development work by ASTTBC for initiatives such as the TRC, PPE and Technology Credential Assessment & Continuing Education Course Database.

Commendation: ASTTBC's staff is top of class. The election of ASTTBC's Registrar, John Shortreid, to the position of Chair of the Council of Registrars demonstrates the support of one's peers expected of ASTTBC staff.

The Public Representatives

Jim Blake, CA

An educational leader for much of his career, Jim is active in retirement as Chair of the Prince George Airport Authority, Member of the Council of Chairs of Canadian Airport Authorities, Treasurer and Director of The Exploration Place, Science Centre and Museum, and a Director of the British Columbia Aviation Council.

Jim retired in 2000 from the position of Vice President, Administration and Bursar with the College of New Caledonia after a 23 year career with the College. Prior to CNC Jim was employed with the Department of Regional Economic Development Expansion with the Federal Government in Ottawa and several private firms in Ottawa and Quebec.

In community services Jim has been a leader or affiliated with the Rotary, Institute of Public Administration of Canada, Chamber of Commerce and he served as Chair and Director of the local Economic Development Agency for 12 years.

John Murphy

A leader in technical standards development, regulatory and inspection services, safety testing and certification, John is currently the Manager, Western Canada for Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada (ULC) where he has responsibility for Conformity Assessment Services.

Prior to joining ULC John was Vice President, Engineering and Standards for the BC Safety Authority. From 2000 to 2004 John was with the BC Government as Director, Electrical and Elevating Devices Safety Branch and as Executive Director of Safety Engineering Services. In the late 1990s, John relocated to Ontario and held senior positions with the Technical Standards & Safety Authority and the Canadian Standards Association. Since his migration to Canada from Scotland in 1977 John has immersed himself in various technical and senior public safety management positions within the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario.

John has an extensive technical background with credentials as an Elevator Technician, Electrical Technician, and leadership development. He is a member of a number of technical organizations including the Canadian Manufacturer's and Exporter's Association, American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the CSA National Codes and Standards Steering Committee.

APPENDIX to Report of the Public Representatives 2009

Public Representation on ASTTBC Council - History

As a professional regulatory body it is appropriate and customary for the ASTTBC Council, the governing board, to have representation from the community. Public Representatives provide a professional regulatory body with input on decision-making and ensure a third party oversight over the work of a self-governing body such as ASTTBC.

It is usual that the public representatives are required under the governing statute and appointed by the Minister Responsible; however when the *ASTT Act* was enacted it was decided that public representation would be appointed by Council to serve on the Practice Review Board (PRB) as this is the body which has responsibility for the professional standards relating to member registration and practice including member accountabilities. As ASTTBC Council considered the role of the public in the governance of ASTTBC, the Council concluded it would be appropriate to include public representation.

ASTTBC Council has asked Government to amend the *ASTT Act* to include public representation on Council. Acknowledging that changes to the *ASTT Act* would most likely take some time, the Council decided to move ahead and appoint representatives, an option that is possible within the current statute which does not restrict Council only to members of the association. There is an option for other than ASTTBC members to serve on Council. To formally allow for and define the appointment of public representatives, in 2005 Council amended, and members subsequently confirmed, changes to the *ASTT Regulations*. Two Public Representatives were formally nominated by the ASTTBC Nominating Committee and appointed by ASTTBC Council in May 2007. In 2009 the Nominating Committee and ASTTBC Council both indicated an interest in increasing the number of Public Representatives to three to bring the proportion in line with other self-regulating professions.

Role of Public Representatives

Leading up to, and immediately following, the appointment of the first Public Representatives, ASTTBC initiated a search for information governing the roles of Public Representatives serving in other professional associations. The goal was to find information that would best enable the Public Representatives to contribute as members of the Council, report to Government and ASTTBC members, and serve the public interest. We found a dearth of information and as a result created our own model and best practices.

The following framework was developed to guide the Public Representatives on ASTTBC Council:

- provide a tangible link between the expectations of the public, society and provincial government and a professional regulatory body
- serve as an independent voice
- contribute opinions and recommendations to Council governance and decision-making related to issues of public interest
- monitor the governance of the association with a view to ensuring the association serves the public interest
- focus in areas affecting public health & safety and a sustainable environment
- assure a high level of public trust in the association's professional standards, certification, and the accountability and compliance of the members of the association as they provide quality and value-added services to the public
- assist with continuous improvement initiatives that promote the legislated 'Objects' and Council's Vision, Mission and Goals
- refrain from engaging in ASTTBC Council decisions related to business operations

Public Representatives are expected to:

- represent the interests of the ‘general public’ by raising issues related to decisions being prepared for implementation by Council that have the potential to impact the general public
- solicit appropriate stakeholders to assure adequate consultation and guidance to inform opinions and recommendations to Council
- at appropriate intervals, provide the Public Representatives report to the Provincial Government (Minister Responsible), the general public and ASTTBC members.

In these early days of Public Representatives serving on ASTTBC Council, we are developing and evolving appropriate practices as we establish a new foundation that best represents the public interest and augments the high standards of ASTTBC. Through diligent engagement within Council, we continuously seek comments and suggestions from recognized resources that will enhance our role and mandate.

1. Legislative Foundation: ASTT Act and Regulations

While the foundational purposes of ASTTBC did not change substantially with the 1985 enactment, the *ASTT Act* provided a level of public accountability usual for self-governing professional organizations, as is evidenced by the following excerpt from the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians Act “objects”:

- (a) to maintain, improve and increase the knowledge, ability and competence of the members of the association;*
- (b) to regulate standards of training and practice of and for its members and to protect the interests of the public;*
- (c) to establish, maintain and develop standards of ethics among its members;*
- (d) to do all lawful things that are incidental or conducive to the accomplishment of these objects.*

In the ensuing 24 years under the *ASTT Act* the Association has evolved into a mature and well-respected professional association. ASTTBC is an association committed to protecting the public interest through high standards of professional regulation.

Endorsements from similar provincial and national associations confirm that ASTTBC is an acknowledged leader in professional regulation and that it has proactively implemented initiatives that demonstrate its commitment and accountability to serve the public interest.

While the Council is performing ably within the framework of the *ASTT Act*, it is of concern to ASTTBC Council that the *ASTT Act* is somewhat lacking in its ability as professional legislation to effect continuous improvements. The *ASTT Act* is limited in its powers, and, until the Provincial Government enacts much needed changes, the only interim, but limited option available to ASTTBC to drive change, is to utilize the *ASTT Regulations* wherever possible.

2. ASTTBC Bylaws and Policies

The ASTTBC Council has approved Bylaws and Policies that provide a contemporary model of policy governance. Council operates in an open and transparent manner, with its meetings open to the public.

While the current Bylaws and Policies are representative of self-governing professional associations we are aware that Council and the Executive Director strive to enhance these documents, in particular to ensure a consistent approach to the policy governance model under which Council operates.

3. Council Governance

ASTTBC Council operates under a complementary policy governance model. The meetings are run professionally and efficiently with clear policy recommendations and decisions relative to ASTTBC's legislated mandate and the Council's Vision, Mission and Goals. At all times, the public Representatives are afforded the opportunity to fully engage and participate in providing contributions, opinions and recommendations to Council governance and decision-making relative to issues of public interest.

To enhance linkages with other professional associations ASTTBC and APEGBC share the agenda for their Council meetings. This collaborative practice, in place for many years, serves as a valuable way to provide constructive linkages between the professional associations and serve the public interest. ASTTBC and ABCFP exchanged information for several years but this has been discontinued. ASTTBC has sought similar approach with other related professions. The model warrants further expansion to others fields.

4. Council Work Plan, Budget, Organization and Staffing

The ASTTBC Council has approved the following statements of its Vision, Mission and its eight (8) Goals to govern and drive forward the direction of the association. These statements are the foundation and standards of reference utilized to empower Councils' consistency and accountability when reviewing its decisions.

Vision

ASTTBC is the model association for technology professionals.

Mission:

To serve the public by regulating and supporting technology professionals' commitment to a safe, healthy, and sustainable society and environment.

Goals:

1. Self governing professional legislation and regulation that protects the public interest.
2. Assured rights to practice and utilization of qualifications within the scope of the Technology Professionals' education, training and experience.
3. Professional standards and regulation for certification, accreditation, ethics and accountability that reflect contemporary social expectations.
4. Consistent and universal recognition of Technology Professionals by employers, governments, other professionals and regulatory bodies.
5. Member services that enhance professional, career, business and personal interests.
6. Technology education and careers are valued and supported.
7. The association and its members are involved as key stakeholders and contributors to public policy in areas in which Technology Professionals have a demonstrated interest and expertise.
8. Sustained excellence in governance and management of the association.

ASTTBC's Vision, Mission and Goals are specific in their commitment to consider the public interest of safety, health and sustainability through the highest standards of Council and members' professional practice, qualifications and ethics.

ASTTBC operates with an annual budget of about \$2.5 million, with most revenue derived from member annual dues and other fees. The association operates from an office building it purchased in Surrey BC in the mid 1990s. In 2005 ASTTBC paid off the mortgage. As required by the *ASTT Act and Regulations* the Association conducts and publishes an annual audit of the association's finances.

ASTTBC has a well-qualified and very dedicated full time staff of 17 FTE. There are two staff officers appointed by the Council: Executive Director and Registrar.

5. Boards and Committees

ASTTBC has established Boards and Committees that facilitate achieving its legislated mandate, for example, in setting and maintaining the standards for professional certification and registration, accreditation and practice review. The Board of Examiners and Certification Boards for technical specialist programs provide an invaluable contribution as ASTTBC meets its legislated responsibilities to protect the public interest. The Council and the Executive Director establish committees as needed to carry out its operations. Examples of special groups set up to address public policy matters: BC Women in Technology, First Nations Careers Council, TechGREEN, and Technology Education and Careers Council.

6. Professional Registration and Regulation

ASTTBC's primary role is the professional regulation of technologists, technicians and technical specialists. ASTTBC has in place policies governing the certification and registration of technicians and technologists in sixteen (16) disciplines and technical specialists in eight (8) disciplines. From all accounts ASTTBC has high standards for certification, largely based on an assessment of competencies.

ASTTBC has taken a lead role in working with the Association of Science and Engineering Technology Professionals of Alberta (ASET) and the BC Government to meet the full requirements of the Alberta – BC Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA). Building on a national portability agreement reached over a decade ago with all other associations regulating technologists and technicians, ASTTBC and ASET have made the minor but necessary adjustments to policy and processes to meet TILMA. The two associations have signed a mutual agreement to commit to the principles of TILMA.

On the national scene ASTTBC worked with other technologist and technician associations to ensure full portability of credentials Canada-wide, all part of the re-invigorated Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT).

7. Professional Regulation Benchmarks

ASTTBC has a strong foundation for professional regulation. Modeled after other 'senior' professional associations, ASTTBC utilizes the *ASTT Regulations* and its Policies in governing the many elements of professional regulation. ASTTBC has implemented a Code of Ethics, Professionalism in Practice Program and Ethics and Practice Examination which must be completed by all applicants.

Errors and Omissions insurance is available to members through a program arranged by the association.

In 2008 ASTTBC introduced a web-based tool members can use to record and track their continuing professional development (CPD). This resource is a first step in moving toward formal reporting of CPD activities. With the exception of house and property inspectors, it is voluntary for members to report their CPD using the web-based software.

ASTTBC regularly reports in a general way on all complaints, outlining the reason for the complaint and decision rendered. Where the public will be best served, the report includes full details of the circumstances. Consideration is always given when reporting to the needs of the public and the interests of the practitioner. ASTTBC's obligation to serve the public interest will always weigh heaviest when deciding what to report. It has been suggested by at least one external party that ASTTBC does not report sufficient information. For this reason ASTTBC is examining its Regulations, policies and procedures to ascertain as to whether changes are needed to better serve the public interest. There is no hesitation in commending ASTTBC for its effectiveness and commitment to serving the public interest as it pertains to formal complaints against members.

8. Professional Accountability: Complaints and their Disposition

A primary function of a professional regulatory body such as ASTTBC is to protect the public interest. In addition to assuring high standards of professional registration ASTTBC also has in place a regulated process for assuring professional accountability, including receiving and managing public complaints against members. The *ASTT Regulations* spell out in great detail the process that will be followed by the Association in handling a formal public complaint. The *ASTTBC Regulations* governing complaints has been adapted over the years to achieve best practices and meet the current circumstances and legal precedence.

9. Association Programs : Public Policy

ASTTBC is actively engaged in various public policy initiatives where they are directly linked to ASTTBC's role as a self-governing professional association for technology professionals. These programs generally fit into three areas: (a) promoting technology education and careers; (b) ensuring BC has a highly qualified and fully sustainable technology workforce; and (c) public matters in which technology professionals play a critical role. A few examples of each:

- a) promoting technology education and careers:
 - ASTTBC awards program
 - ASTTBC awards through regional science and technology councils
 - Big Little Science Centre (Kamloops)
 - Support for the Bert Edwards Science & Technology Elementary School (Kamloops)
 - Support for career programs: catapult, spaghetti bridge, and robotics competitions; Skills Canada (BC); Girls Exploring Trades and Technology;
 - Tech WORKS! awareness program
 - career and trade fairs
 - National Technology Week

- b) technology workforce:
 - Technology Education and Careers Council (TECC)
 - First Nations Careers Council (FNCC)
 - BC Women in Technology (BCWiT)
 - Roundtables on Technology Skills Shortages (Campbell River, Castlegar, Kelowna, Prince George & Vancouver)
 - Agreement on Internal Trade and TILMA – ASTTBC taking a lead role
 - AIT – ASTTBC taking a lead role

- c) technology professionals play a critical role:
- Sustainability – ASTTBC created the TechGREEN program
 - Building Code and Standards – BC and national
 - environmental standards and regulation
 - safety standards and regulation
 - Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) – ASTTBC is a sponsor

ASTTBC has acquitted itself very well in this general area and is recognized as a leader within the associations of technology professionals nationally.

10. Association Programs : Member Services & Benefits

ASTTBC has an array of member services and benefits, many of which are directed to members' professional growth and development and careers. Examples include:

- errors & omissions insurance
- information on professional development seminars and workshops
- e-News monthly for current information
- CTEN – Canadian Technical Employment Network in cooperation with sister associations
- ASTT News
- compensation survey
- member benefits such as health and dental insurance and other similar programs
- www.asttbc.org