

## Implementing Changes to the Registered Technical Specialist Designations

Date: July 6, 2022

The Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC) is seeking feedback on implementing changes to the Registered Technical Specialists designations issued under the Professional Governance Act (PGA).

### Anticipated Impacts

- Registrants holding a Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner or Registered Fire Protection Technician designation will fundamentally remain the same. ASTTBC is expected to pursue reserved-title<sup>1</sup> and reserved-practice<sup>2</sup> status for registrants in these designations.
- Registrants holding a designation as a Certified Residential Designer, Registered Building Designer, Registered Site Improvement Surveyor, Certified Steel Detailer, or Registered Steel Detailer will have their Technical Specialist designations sunset and be referred to by their primary designation as a Certified Technician (CTech) or Applied Science Technologist (AScT). This will reduce regulatory redundancy and fees for individual registrants.
- Individuals holding a designation as Construction Safety Officer, Registered Construction Safety Officer, Registered Reserve Fund Analyst, Registered Public Works Technician, Certified Public Works Inspector (all levels), or Registered Utility Locator Technician will have their Technical Specialist Designation sunset. These individuals can continue to freely work within industry without the being registered at ASTTBC. ASTTBC is seeking feedback on redefining their roles within industry.
- Impacts for registrants holding the Certified Home Inspector or Registered Property Inspector designation will be determined following a separate government review by the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance.

### Timelines and Reporting

Feedback submitted through this consultation is expected to be consolidated and reported by December 2022.

Analysis and follow up on implementation recommendations are expected to be considered by ASTTBC Council and the Provincial Government through 2023 while changes to affected Registered Technical Specialist designations are anticipated to be implemented in 2024.

All reports relating to changes in the Registered Technical Specialist designations will be made publicly available prior to the implementation of changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Reserved-title is the where only registrants of ASTTBC are given the exclusive rights to use their specific professional title and abbreviations under the law.

<sup>2</sup> Reserved practice is where only individuals registered with ASTTBC have the right to independently practice their profession within BC.

## Background

ASTTBC oversees the professional designation for individuals registered as Technologists, Technicians, and Registered Technical Specialists in the engineering and applied science disciplines.

Under the existing structure, ASTTBC issues 17 designations to individuals registered as Technical Specialists across nine technical fields.

In May 2021, ASTTBC commissioned a review of all Technical Specialist designations to determine regulatory oversight requirements and any modifications required to meet professional designation standards. The review<sup>3</sup> provided the following conclusions and subsequent recommendations for each of the Technical Specialist designations:

Technical Field	Technical Specialist Designation(s)	ASTTBC Regulatory Oversight Required	Existing ASTTBC Regulatory Requirements	Recommended Action for the ASTTBC designation
Building Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Residential Designer</li> <li>• Registered Building Designer</li> </ul>	Yes	Inappropriate - duplication	Sunset
Construction Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction Safety Officer</li> <li>• Registered Construction Safety Officer</li> </ul>	No	Appropriate	Sunset
Fire Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Fire Protection Technicians</li> </ul>	Yes	Appropriate	Maintain
Property Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Home Inspector (CHI)</li> <li>• Certified Property Inspector (CPI)</li> <li>• Registered Reserve Fund Analyst (RRFA)</li> </ul>	Yes	Appropriate (CHI) Inappropriate – duplication (CPI and RRFA)	<i>Pending Government review</i>
Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Public Works Technician</li> <li>• Certified Public Works Inspector (levels 1, 2 and 3)</li> </ul>	No	Appropriate	Sunset
Site Improvement Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Site Improvement Surveyor</li> </ul>	Yes	Inappropriate - duplication	Sunset
Steel Detailing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified Steel Detailer</li> <li>• Registered Steel Detailer</li> </ul>	Yes	Inappropriate - duplication	Sunset
Onsite Wastewater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner</li> </ul>	Yes	Appropriate	Maintain
Underground Utility Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered Utility Locator Technician</li> </ul>	No	Appropriate	Sunset

While the mandate of the review contemplated identification of regulatory changes including alternative regulatory schemes for each of the designations, this was unnecessary as each of the designations fell into one of three categories:

<sup>3</sup> Report: Review of ASTTBC Registered Technical Specialists released in July 2022.

1. *ASTTBC regulatory oversight required – maintain professional regulation (Maintain).*

Designations that fell within this category should maintain their professional regulations and be considered for restricted title and protected practice.

2. *ASTTBC regulatory oversight required – remove duplicate designations and registrations (Sunset).*

Designations within this category require an individual to possess a CTech or ASCT designation as a prerequisite.

The recommended action for individuals holding these designations is to be primarily recognized by their CTech or ASCT designation and hence, all fees, processes, and additional requirements imposed by these Technical Specialist designations should be eliminated.

Moreover, it was recognized that ASTTBC should work to introduce clear guidelines about communicating professional areas of specialized expertise (as evidenced by these Technical Specialist designations) to ensure stakeholders are aware of the nature of the CTech or ASCT's practice.

3. *ASTTBC regulatory oversight not required (Sunset).*

These designations have been identified as not requiring regulatory oversight of their profession.

Individuals practicing in these technical fields will be able to continue working without adhering to the professional requirements mandated by ASTTBC, including but not limited to, annual continuing professional development requirements, adherence to the ASTTBC Bylaws and code of ethics, and registration at ASTTBC. Individuals continuing to practice are expected to be able to retain usage of their designation titles however the terms "certified" or "registered" must be removed (e.g. a Registered Public Works Technician can be referred to as a Public Works Technician).

Sunsetting these designations is expected to have minimal impact on public safety given that:

- there is another registered professional provides oversight and takes responsibility for work performed;
- other legislation may exist that directly addresses the public safety and/or public interest of that profession;
- consumers have other avenues to pursue recourse against an individual in the event of harm, misconduct, or misrepresentation (including legal recourse); and
- a degree of quality oversight and consumer protection is provided through employment requirements, and the creation of standard operating procedures by employers.

While regulatory oversight of these professions is not recommended under ASTTBC's mandate as a professional regulatory agency, ASTTBC should explore options for redefining their role within industry.

## Feedback

ASTTBC is seeking feedback over a 45-day period on key policy areas for bylaw development.

In particular, ASTTBC is seeking feedback on the following areas:

- Maintaining public safety and confidence in those technical fields where Technical Specialist designations that will be sunset,
- Identifying high risk situations that can result in the significant harm, to the either the environment or health of British Columbians, where work is performed by individuals who had their Technical Specialist designation sunset, and
- Is there a continued role for the sunset designations within industry?

ASTTBC will be actively engaging stakeholders from across industries, including but not limited to, governments, Indigenous peoples, regulatory agencies, professional associations, and the public.

To arrange a direct discussion with a representative of your organization with ASTTBC, contact us as [Techinfo@ASTTBC.org](mailto:Techinfo@ASTTBC.org).

Feedback will be accepted up to August 31, 2022.

Ready to Participate?

[Start Feedback Survey](#)

## Appendix A – Overview of the Review of ASTTBC Registered Technical Specialists

This overview provides background and explanations of the Review of ASTTBC Registered Technical Specialists released in July 2022.

The primary purpose of the review was to explain how the governance of professionals under the *Professional Governance Act (PGA)* impacts those professions that may not require the comprehensive and complex regulatory oversight that the *PGA* requires from regulatory bodies. Specific to this review is the principle that the level of regulation of professionals should be proportionate to the level of risk performance of their occupation poses to the public.

The review proceeded in several steps:

- A review of regulatory and ASTTBC operational documents, including relevant legislation, regulation, professional guidelines, or policies, ASTTBC operational policies and procedures, and available information concerning the initial decision to include each discipline in the ASTTBC
- An environmental scan of BC and relevant other jurisdictions (Canadian and select international) to identify other groups which currently offer education or provide certification of a technical specialist group, as well as a range of alternative regulatory approaches used for these workers and other types of workforces, in keeping with a risk-based right touch regulatory approach
- A literature scan to identify any research that has been conducted related to risk and regulation in this sector and a search for resources related to best practices in occupational risk analysis
- Key stakeholder interviews to learn more about the risk profile of each specialty and the potential implications of any change or recommendation for change
- Development of a transparent risk assessment framework and a risk profile for each RTS
- Validation of the risk profiles with subject matter experts

The review outlines the identified risk-based regulatory options, including identification of pros and cons of alternatives and implementation advice.

Upon review and careful consideration, ASTTBC has accepted the recommendations of this review and is proceeding with consultation on implementing these recommended changes.