

NACs delivering added value to the industry

Following a very successful Hill Day, the National Advisory Councils met in person to receive an update from Chair Brendan Nobes and President Mary Van Buren on CCA initiatives and then to discuss their own deliverables and share regional updates at the sector meetings.

In addition, each NAC received an update on the [September board meeting](#):

- By-laws to accept integrated partner associations as members that will go to vote at the March AGM
- Canada Trade Infrastructure Plan
- New CCDC documents endorsed
- Approval of 2024 CCA plan and budget

The updates from each Council are as follows:

1.0 MS&S

UPDATE ON SUB-COMMITTEE WORK

a) Increase influence on the government by better promoting the industry's varied and well-paying careers with many opportunities. This includes highlighting not only the success stories of individuals but also organizations who are making their workplaces a "workplace of choice."

The committee will be exploring the following ideas further:

- Share best practices, what was implemented, what worked, etc. to give ideas to other LCAs. Note: this was requested of LCAs in June 2023.
- Explore if CCA can develop a set of branded tools to provide to LCAs highlighting career pathways, salary, safety, etc. in construction with consistent messaging targeting teachers, student counsellors, parents, influencers, etc.
- Explore if TFH 2.0 can position construction as a safe and rewarding career. Note: TFH is focusing on guidance counsellors/teachers in Fall 2023 and a rewarding career is currently part of the messaging.

b) Our construction associations work together to advocate to the provincial and federal governments that Canada is a country of choice for construction immigrants.

The committee will be exploring how CCA could showcase the career pathway and opportunities for those new immigrants who are exploring construction as a choice (one-stop info page). It could also serve as a tool for the embassy, trade staff, etc. Example: <https://www.live-work.immigration.govt.nz/resources/working-in-construction>.

NEW INITIATIVES

a) Advancing industry knowledge and adoption of technology.

The sub-committee objectives include:

- Provide CCA, LCAs, and all members with technology information that will help strengthen the Canadian construction industry.
- Consider all forms of construction technology including digital software, hardware, construction equipment, and processes.
- Bring evidence-based and unbiased information and best practices advice to the Association members.
- Become a trusted source for information and knowledge across the construction industry.
- Work with industry stakeholders to promote the effective utilization of construction technology in Canada.

Deliverables:

- Develop a series of member education technology webinars (at least three webinars in 2024):
 - **Implementing BIM:** processes and technology
 - **Construction 4.0:** what is it and why
 - **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** impacts and opportunities in construction
 - **Cybersecurity:** risk factors and mitigation
- Collaborate with industry stakeholders and technology thought leaders i.e., KPMG.
- Provide advice and direction to LCAs on local technology initiatives.
- Work with educational institutions to build programs to attract talented, tech-savvy people to the industry.

It was suggested we could help the SMEs in the industry to categorize what technologies to use. A Subcommittee will explore this.

b) Federal Prompt Payment

- Execution of Federal Prompt Payment webinar (Q1)

ROUNDTABLE: HILL DAY DEBRIEF

Members said that the new format was helpful. Some suggestions that were made included:

- Groups and materials provided in advance to get to know and meet each other in advance (if possible) so that messaging to MPs is clear (who says which part, etc.)
- Having a glossary of some key terms/themes/important points (example: National Infrastructure Assessment, CTIP, etc.)

2.0 General Contractors NAC

UPDATE ON SUBCOMMITTEE WORK

a) Subcommittee 1: Prepare a material/supply cost escalation inflation best practices paper

The council discussed the previously circulated draft bulletin for peer review and subject to some final wordsmithing, the Council gave its approval to release the bulletin.

b) Prepare an overview of the current procurement models and a webinar

The council had approved the webinar at a separately held peer review meeting. The webinar will be hosted virtually on November 21 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

NEW INITIATIVES

Three additional subcommittees will focus on:

- **Construction playbook** – Create a white paper on what balanced risk between GC and Public Owners looks like
- **Supplementary conditions** – Create an onerous clauses bulletin and approach with a tier system that will communicate which clauses to look for in an agreement
- **AI Awareness** – Create a bulletin on AI followed by a potential webinar

3.0 Trade Contractors NAC

UPDATE ON COMMITTEE WORK

a) Cost escalation language and guide

The members reviewed the latest draft of the “Managing Cost Instability” bulletin. Changes were suggested, including moving some items to the risk management resource discussed later. Members were asked to provide any additional comments by November 30th, but agreed that the bulletin was ready for publication, pending the noted changes.

b) Update and feedback on trade contractor risk mitigation best practice resource

Discussions ensued on the trade contractor risk management resource, including format and areas of focus. Rick Wagner offered to chair a sub-committee to work on this initiative, with Christina O’Donnell, Derek Brown, Russ Kerr, and Bill Black volunteering to join.

WORKFORCE

It was discussed that education should start as early as primary school, but also focus on parents and adults changing careers. It was also noted that, in addition to more prominent initiatives like school visits, to change the culture efforts schools should look at all areas of influence, including seemingly minor ones such as featuring trade contractor math problems in lessons.

Regarding immigration, members agreed that the current process requires fixing to address the workforce shortage. The need for a construction-specific visa was also suggested, as immigrants are underrepresented in the construction industry due to the immigration process’ favouring of higher education. It was noted that, in addition to trades, the industry needs estimators, coordinators, surveyors, and many other positions. It was also mentioned that the current timelines are not sufficient for seasonal work.

ROUNDTABLE & HILL DAY BRIEF

Members reported that their Hill Day meetings went well and the politicians they met with were largely receptive. Regarding their local industry, members agreed that the workforce shortage remained the most pressing issue. Work remained steady with several large projects across most of Canada. Some issues of note for specific regions included Québec’s potential reform of Bill R-20, the Alberta government’s prompt payment exemptions, and the compounding effects on the workforce shortages from the cost of living in British Columbia and lack of child care in Newfoundland.

4.0 Civil NAC

WORKING GROUP INITIATIVES

a) Canada Trade Infrastructure Plan

Prospectus and Associates presented the public and government campaign that was launched in October.

b) CICC

A short update on the Civil Infrastructure Corporation.

c) Greening of the heavy construction industry

MHCA requested that the Civil NAC consider striking a working group on the following:

1. Assess the state, environmental advantages, and opportunities of:
 - a. Emerging and market-ready options for heavy equipment - fleet trucks, on-road and off-road, autonomous vehicles, equipment, and technology
 - b. New materials
 - c. Operational practices
2. Assess the practical, political, and industry barriers to accelerated adoption of environmentally responsible practices, including:
 - a. Resource management
 - b. Integration of low-carbon technologies into processes
 - c. Recovery, recycling, and reuse of materials
 - d. Cost-benefits of new equipment and practices
3. Examine opportunities for retrofitting and decommissioning of equipment:
 - a. Options
 - b. Incentives
 - c. ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) reporting and metrics
 - d. Certifications
 - e. Financing support
 - f. Procurement processes and approaches
4. Assess the implications to industry, business, and workforce re-training arising from public policy and regulatory direction mandating reduction of the carbon footprint through the adoption of environmentally sustainable practices contemplated above.

Matt Pitcairn and Chris Lorenc, supported by Rod Gilbert, will assess the request and come back to the committee with a recommendation.

WORKFORCE

The recommendation is that CCA should focus on priority three: simplifying the current immigration process.

ROUNDTABLE & HILL DAY DEBRIEF

Overall, a great experience for everyone.

5.0 Local Construction Association NAC

UPDATE ON SUB-COMMITTEE WORK

a) Construction workers immigration update

Three pieces of work that are in progress:

- A best practices guide for immigration that provides an overview of programs, services and strategies from local construction associations across Canada. LCAs are invited to add their material to the document by emailing patrick.mcmanus@oswca.org.
- A study from BuildForce Canada looking at immigration points across the country and how the need is or isn't being matched.
- Finally, based on the research study, the plan is that CCA and BuildForce will host a webinar to launch the report when ready.

b) Workforce [based on feedback from the survey results] – What actions should CCA focus on most out of the top three identified priorities?

The council ultimately decided that while CCA could add value through advocacy around immigration, developing canned, digital promotional material for the industry and/or amassing data for LCAs to use, the LCAs could take more responsibility to lead this through the development of a new working group. This conversation is to be continued at the next NAC meeting.

6.0 ROUNDTABLE & HILL DAY DEBRIEF

6.1 Hill Day discussion

The LCA NAC agreed that this year's Hill Day was one of the best we've ever had, with great engagement from MPs and great participation from our industry. The council agreed that the industry has great momentum right now, so between CCA and our Partner Associations, if we can collectively move forward with a unified voice, we can have a greater impact.

It was proposed that there be an ask for committed funding and the ability for those funds to move freely from the federal level to provinces and municipalities.

6.2 Partner Association Symposium

A working group will be formed to create the agenda for the April meeting.