

Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) – Meeting Minutes

13-May-26

0900 – 1100 hrs – Meeting held in person at Electrical Safety Authority Provincial Office, 155 Matheson Blvd W, Mississauga, ON L5R 3L5

Present:

AC Members	ESA	MPBSDP	Regrets	Guests
Sunaina Menzes Karim Nazarali James (Jim) Boritz Salim Al Khodari Jennifer Reynolds (Virtual)	Alex Piccini Cynthia Magill Aateff Hussaini Gabriel Bone	Allison Nicholls	Sue Forcier Kelly McMath	

SUBJECT	LEAD	ACTION
<u>Welcome and Preliminaries</u> No conflicts of interest were declared. Alex Piccini noted to the Chair that a quorum of CAC members were present with Jennifer appearing virtually. The Chair moved a motion to approve the minutes from the prior CAC meeting. Motion: <i>Approval of the Minutes of Meeting for 11-Feb-2026</i> <i>Moved by: Salim Khodari</i> <i>Seconded: Karim Nazarali</i> <i>Carried</i>	Chair	None
<u>Action Items from Previous Meeting</u> Update on Recruitment Alex provided an update on the posting for the Consumer Advisory Council that the public posting for the current	Alex Piccini	Explore opportunities to share CAC recruitment posting through MPBSDP channels – COMPLETE, MPBSDP has shared through AMO newsletter

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vacancy. We are seeking candidates with either consumer protection or municipal experience. The posting is live on LinkedIn and Charity Village platforms. • Alex Piccini further noted that the posting has been further amplified by sharing with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and their regular publications. • Alex Piccini shared that the CAC posting had been shared with existing CAC members and requested that members amplify through their own networks. • Jennifer Reynolds suggested virtual interviews with candidates prior to presentation to the Council; expressed support for an ad hoc meeting process. • Karim Nazarali suggested the Council review and rank candidates on paper to produce a shortlist, rather than conducting interviews themselves. • The Chair noted that historically ESA selected members with Council input on gaps only, open to a more involved process. (Alex notes after the meeting that per the Terms of Reference, ESA does maintain final decision-making authority over appointments.) <i>Motion: The AC agreed that a recruitment process for this vacancy should be pursued in which ESA will conduct initial vetting and interviews and bring a short list of candidates to the CAC Chair for input.</i> <i>Moved by: James Boritz</i> <i>Seconded: Karim Nazarali</i> <i>Carried</i>		Schedule an ad hoc meeting to review shortlisted CAC candidates for input with CAC Chair— meeting to be held before the next quarterly meeting. .
<u>Cross-Council Updates</u> Electrical Contractor Registration Agency – James Boritz	James Boritz &	

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• James Boritz shared an update from the latest Electrical Contractor Registration Agency Advisory Council (ECRA) • Master Electrician exam pass rate is currently 66%, slightly below the long-term average, likely due to the recently revised electrical code. • Jim shared an updated-on labour mobility noting that five applications for Master Electrician equivalency received as of the meeting date. Equivalency recognized from British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. • Jim Boritz: ESA's new online licensing platform has been live for approximately four months. Most contractors are finding it faster and easy to use. As always there is a very small subset of some contractors who prefer analog methods of renewing licences etc. • Jim further noted that applicants from jurisdictions deemed having an equivalent ME can begin working in Ontario within 10 days but must still pass the Ontario ME exam within six months. • Allison Nicholls from the Ministry confirmed labor mobility is a key government priority but had no new details to share on LEC equivalency. • The Chair noted that a reciprocal agreement currently exists between provinces; drew comparison to PEO/APEGA engineering license recognition. • Salim raised a question of ESA's jurisdiction over out-of-province electricians who perform substandard work in Ontario and then leave the province. Alex confirmed ESA has jurisdiction over work performed in Ontario; deferred the specific question of cross-provincial enforcement to Cynthia McGill (licensing expert, present later in the meeting).	Salim Khodari	
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Utility Advisory Council – Salim Khodari • Salim shared an update from the latest Utility Advisory Council (UAC) meeting on February 24, 2026, and shared the following: • Toronto Hydro identified a trend of oversized transformer installations by developers; a survey was created to assess demand versus connected load. Other utilities (Hydro One, London Hydro) reported the same issue. • Copper theft remains an ongoing concern raised at every UAC meeting, no significant resolution from police in any jurisdiction. • Roadway lighting systems (Section 3013) will be discussed further at the next UAC meeting regarding bonding, grounding, and replacement standards. • Gabriel Bone who also attended the UAC meeting noted ESA has an upcoming bulletin (30-13) on roadway lighting and an existing guideline on the ESA website; offered potential collaboration with the UAC standard development effort. ESA's Patrick Falzone is an expert on this topic and sits on the Ontario Provincial Standards Committee. • Karim asked about jurisdictions for roadway lighting (utilities vs. municipalities). Salim noted the jurisdiction varies by area; some are utility-managed, some municipal. • Salim concluded that roadway lighting standard development at UAC may benefit from collaboration with ESA's technical team and existing bulletin/guideline resources and that transformer oversizing is a province-wide issue affecting grid capacity planning.		
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<u>2025 Multi-Stakeholder Survey Results</u> • Alex Piccini provided a high-level overview of ESA's multi-stakeholder survey results noting that overall, ESA is generating positive traction with its licensed community. • Alex further noted that ESA's score in relation to homeowners, meets our corporate objective, but there is room for improvement. He noted that homeowner interactions with ESA can be situational and connected to a specific project, so their experience is very narrow on interacting with ESA. • Alex further noted that ESA is putting more efforts towards safety campaigns directed to homeowners and will bring a sneak preview to the CAC when the next campaign is ready. • Asked about geographic distribution of survey respondents; Alex Piccini confirmed Innovative Strategy weights by postal code to ensure provincial distribution; ESA does not select respondents. • Karim suggested comparing ESA's survey methodology and results with counterpart agencies in other provinces; Alex agreed to take this as an action. • Karim further questioned the relevance of "innovation" as a metric for homeowners; Alex Piccini acknowledged it is the most difficult metric to communicate to episodic users. Karim suggested rephrasing in future editions of a "would you recommend" for homeowner questions; Alex Piccini agreed to raise with Innovative Strategy. • Jim noted that new technology platforms (licensing portal, contractor finder) may improve innovation scores in the 2027 survey.	Alex Piccini	Connect with other regulators on their survey methodology.

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Alex Piccini: EV charger installations are a growing area of concern for underground economy activity; anticipated increased homeowner interactions as EV incentives grow.		
<u>Technical Updates and Bulletins Spring 2026</u> - Gabriel Bone (Technical Training Developer, ESA presented upcoming bulletins to be published before end of May 2026 to the CAC. - Bulletins covered various topics including retrofitted electrical products, meter base plus in transfer devices, power control systems, underground cable installations, raceway installations, diesel fuel and propane dispensers and roadway lighting. - Jennifer asked what the cost implications to homeowners on deciding between a power control system for their home or upgrading their panel. Gabe noted it largely depends on the installation specific and convenience factors. - On roadway lighting, Gabe noted that when replacing a minimum of three poles or 50% of poles on an interconnected circuit, new underground wiring incorporating a bonding conductor is required, along with service entrance equipment and bonding of all non-current-carrying parts. This change was triggered by incidents involving pets being shocked due to deteriorating infrastructure. - Gabe noted major revisions to a bulletin first published May 2025. Key changes include: bonding requirement for concrete collars in contact with patio surfaces; permission for patio bonding grid to extend no less than 1 meter (rather than 1.5 meters) from pool edge, aligned with NEC; permission to use manufactured bonding gradient mats; clarification on non-conductive materials (wood/composite $\geq 13\text{mm}$ or rubber matting $\geq 27\text{mm}$) as alternatives to copper ring for hot tubs;	Gabriel Bone	None

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differentiation between portable (120V/15A, cord-connected) and permanently installed hot tubs. • Karim asked whether bulletins eventually become part of the Canadian Electrical Code; Gabriel confirmed bulletins often become Ontario amendments and then CEC proposals, with Ontario frequently pioneering such changes. • Jim emphasized that consumer-facing messaging should focus on hiring a licensed contractor and obtaining a permit, rather than technical details. Ateff noted bulletins allow ESA to address consumer needs on an accelerated timeline between three-year code cycles; inspectors are trained on new bulletins bi-annually.		
<u>Regulatory Compliance Initiatives with Municipalities and Online Marketplaces</u> • Cynthia Magill (Enforcement Coordinator, ESA) presented ESA's enforcement overview for CAC on how ESA works to push regulatory compliance for unlicensed work. • Cynthia covered how complaints are received via customer service center or online reporting tool; validated by inspectors or investigators; as well as outcomes ranging from education/warning (Notice of Violation) to Administrative Penalty Orders (APOs) or prosecution. • Cynthia Magill noted that around half of investigated cases originate from ESA inspectors in the field; licensed community also reports unlicensed activity. • Cynthia noted that APOs and prosecutions are published on ESA's website, Plugged In and through the Contractor Locator Tool; major cases receive press releases	Cynthia Magill	None

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• Cynthia shared insights on how ESA was working with the municipal building department in Markham to identify uninspected electrical work. Through the initiative, 22 of the 94 inspected locations were found to have electrical work completed without inspection; with 18 subsequently obtaining notifications within 60 days. Enhanced outreach letters are now being provided alongside door hangers to raise awareness of who ESA is, as well as the requirements for notifications and licensing. • Cynthia noted how ESA has a Kijiji partnership which allows ESA to use a web scraper to identify unlicensed electrical advertising; 33 Notices of Violation issued; Kijiji has been a positive partner in this and removes flagged ads within 24 hours. • Karim asked about convergence of building permit and ESA permit processes; Cynthia noted ESA is working with municipalities (e.g., Brampton previously required ESA inspection before passing building permit inspection) but municipal fragmentation and capacity are barriers. • Alex further noted that 444 municipalities in Ontario with varying resources; municipal sector representation on CAC is a recruitment priority. • Jim asked whether homeowners could verify if notifications/permits were obtained for work on their property; Cynthia confirmed property owners can contact the ESA Customer Service Center. • The Chair asked about enforcement against homeowners who knowingly allow unlicensed work; Cynthia noted ESA primarily pursues the unlicensed contractor; homeowners may receive a warning; general contractors who knowingly hire unlicensed workers may receive APOs.		
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• The Chair proposed that the CAC consider sending a letter to relevant real estate organizations (e.g., CREA, RECO) expressing consumer safety concerns regarding uninspected electrical work in listed properties. • Karim suggested broadening any such letter beyond a single platform; noted MLS is national. • Salim asked whether ESA could pursue out-of-province electricians who perform substandard work in Ontario and return to their home province. • Alex noted that has jurisdiction over work performed in Ontario; cross-provincial pursuit would involve coordination with the relevant provincial regulator; deferred to licensing team for a definitive answer. Alex to get answer in a follow up with licensing.		
<u>ESA Public Consultation: Proposed Easement to Plan Review Submission Requirements: 10-12 kW</u> • Aateff Hussaini (Senior Electrical Safety Engineer, ESA) presented a proposed Director's Order to increase the plan review threshold for distributed energy resources (DERs) from 10 kW to 12 kW. • Aateff noted this proposed Director's Order would bring ESA in line with industry and OEB threshold. • Estimated cost saving of approximately \$700 per installation by eliminating mandatory plan review for systems under 12 kW. Plan review remains available optionally. • Aateff noted that public consultation was opened on April 20, 2026; closes May 20, 2026. OPCC vote for approval scheduled May 28; Board meeting June 2–3; effective date anticipated July 2026 but is TBD.	Aateff Hussaini	None

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<u>Other Business</u> Salim and Karim noted an interest in a future update on product safety, particularly around lithium-ion batteries and USB outlets.	All	None
<u>Meeting Adjournment</u> Motion: <i>Adjourn Meeting at 11:00</i> <i>Moved by: James Boritz</i> <i>Seconded: Karim Nazarali</i> <i>Carried</i>	Chair	None
<u>Next Meeting</u> Date: 24-Sep-2026 Time: 9:00-11:00 AM Format: Virtual	Alex Piccini	Alex to ensure all CAC members have the next meeting calendar hold. Defer the walk-on agenda item (Power Line Safety Week communications campaign presentation) to the next CAC meeting or arrange for it to be presented when timing allows. – To be available post November 2026. Add USB wiring/ICT integration with the Canadian Electrical Code as an agenda item for the next CAC meeting.

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		Add lithium-ion battery packs, portable solar products as a product safety focus for the next CAC meeting. Reach out to counterpart regulatory agencies across Canada (e.g., Technical Safety BC, Codes Alberta) to ask how they measure stakeholder performance, whether it is mandatory or voluntary, how often they conduct surveys, and what their methodology is — for benchmarking purposes. ESA Engineering to provide a further update at the next CAC meeting on upcoming bulletins.
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