
THE YEAR IS UP!! BUSINESS TASK FORCE RELEASES FINAL REPORT

The Business Task Force brought together by the Honourable Joy K. MacPhail last year, and given a one-year mandate to reduce the cost of doing business in BC and to cut red tape, has issued its final report. The Task Force consisted of representatives from business, labour and government, and was chaired by MacPhail. Stakeholders, including the BCCA, were canvassed for input.

Following various discussions and after seeking the opinions of members, BCCA submitted a number of issues to the Task Force last summer, including the following:

- ⇒ a list of eight suggested changes to the Builders Lien Act;
- ⇒ suggested amendments to the Limitations Act, reducing the ultimate limitation period from 30 years to 10;
- ⇒ issues with Provincial Sales Tax enforcement for non-resident contractors;
- ⇒ issues with the Municipal Act and Building Code, relating to duplication of regulations, conflicting regulations, liability v. authority, and time and money lost during the overall process of obtaining permits and waiting for inspections;
- ⇒ issues relating to the loss of the Building Standards Branch, and the need to do comprehensive Building Code interpretations, product reviews and

approvals;

- ⇒ concerns regarding the Heritage Conservation Act;
- ⇒ concerns regarding the Waste Management Act;
- ⇒ the need for the Regional Associations to provide the service of a Commissioner for Oaths on statutory declarations for members;
- ⇒ issues relating to the Skills Development and Fair Wage Act.

Now that the Task Force has completed its initial one year mandate, and issued its final report, it is interesting to note which of our requests and suggestions have shown results. While initial reports from the Task Force indicated that all suggestions were being placed under advisement, only a few were considered appropriate for quick response, and of those only two have been specifically acted upon, namely:

1. The Regional Associations will be allowed to apply for an appointment of a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits.
2. An exemption for Highways was included in the Builders Lien Act.

Other suggestions have been forwarded to the

appropriate Ministries and continue to be reviewed. The Consumer Tax Branch is reviewing its services with the intention of improving its systems. BCCA has representation on its Advisory Committee. Studies continue with regard to Environmental Assessments and the simplification of the administration of the Contaminated Sites Regulation. A Regulatory Administration Review is underway, looking for ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness of regulatory operations. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs is supporting initiatives designed to promote local government streamlining. The Report mentions many other initiatives and steps being taken to address concerns brought forward by other stakeholders and these can be viewed on-line at: www.fin.gov.bc.ca/streamline, or a copy of the report can be obtained by calling (250-387-3347).

While the one year mandate of this Task Force has come to its conclusion, a new Business Task Force on Regulatory Impact has risen like the proverbial Phoenix, and once again BCCA has been asked to submit suggestions and advice on how to “further” reduce the cost of doing business in BC by reducing red tape and regulatory burden. So, once again, we ask that any member who has such a suggestion, or would like to put forward their advice on this subject, contact either their regional association, or BCCA, and let us know. Perhaps the next year will bring two more steps in the right direction.

Members wishing to respond may contact Abigail Fulton at BCCA:

Phone: 250-475-1077
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email: abigailf@bccassn.com

HPO ISSUES ANNUAL REPORT

For those members interested in reading about the accomplishments to date of the new Homeowner Protection Office, their annual report can be viewed on their website at: www.hpo.bc.ca
The report discusses the activities of the Office for its first six months of operation and provides some

insights into what is coming up in the future, such as licensing for renovations and warranty for major wall repairs. The report also gives a summary of loan approvals under the Reconstruction Program and discusses features of the on-going research and education initiatives.

ADVANTAGES OF ELECTRONIC PLANROOM

One of the greatest advantages of the new BCCA Electronic Planroom is convenience. Specifications can be easily accessed on a particular job and printed off by Members without the need to drive over to a local planroom. Mr. Warren Perks, the BCCA Bid Depository Administrator points out a number of additional advantages for trade contractors using Bid Depository:

- ◆ easy access to all project documents
- ◆ project documents can be searched for any separate/alternate/unit prices
- ◆ separate/alternate/unit price listing can be copied and inserted into the electronic version of the Standard Bid Form
- ◆ addenda are available almost immediately after publication
- ◆ lists of Bid Depository trades is current

Compared to similar services available in the U.S.A. that could cost users up to \$400/month, the BCCA Electronic Planroom is a bargain for Members at about \$50/month.

Members should call their Regional Association for more information on this valuable service.