



Executive Director's Report

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Period Ending February 28, 2006

February was a busy month with many meetings for the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada.

On January 31, 2006, a special combined meeting of the Human Resources/ Labour Relations/ Government Relations Committee was held. This was a productive session which allowed Human Resource Managers from our respective companies to share information and ideas for their Recruitment Strategies. Several of our members have experimented with the importation of Foreign Workers and their experience (both positive and negative) are interesting to the group.

The Progressive Contractors Association of Canada Board met on February 1, 2006. It was a productive meeting which included two guests: Dave Ross from McLennan Ross and Co Vanderlaan from the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

Mr. Ross talked about some Human Resources issues of concern to our membership. He also provided a briefing on the Ebsworth Decision, which precludes a worker compelled to participate in an Occupational Health and Safety investigation from having a lawyer present in the interview room.

The Board also dealt with the dispute that Ledcor is having with the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union (Local 488). Ledcor is dealing with a dispute with a Employee from the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local, who is being reprimanded by his Union for working on a CLAC site. Given the importance of this matter and the importance of mobility of workers from the Building Trades to CLAC, our Board is very interested in this matter.

Our board also discussed some British Columbia initiatives. We are in the process of organizing an Open House sponsored with CLAC out of British Columbia so that we can increase our presence in the British Columbia market.

On Thursday February 2, 2006, the Work Force Development Committee of the Construction Owners Association of Alberta met by video conference and we had a guest speaker from Alberta Human Resources and Employment with respect to the Provincial Labour Strategy. This presentation will also be presented by the Associate Deputy Minister, Susan Williams, at a Special Meeting of PCAC on March 20, 2006.

On Friday, February 3, 2006 the Golf Committee met. This was a productive meeting where members brought each other up to speed with respect to the tasks that have been assigned to them. Prizes have been purchased, registrations are beginning to come in and sponsorships are also coming in.

Other members of Committee are actively seeking Proximity Sponsors and Hole in One Sponsors. The Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday June 29, 2006 at Sturgeon Valley Golf and Country Club in St. Albert, Alberta.

On Tuesday February 7, 2006, I participated in an Emergency Conference call regarding the Alberta Transportation Awareness Partnership. This is a Partnership that essentially lobbies for stable and predictable funding for transportation and road building.

Members are very concerned that given the current budgetary preoccupation with Health spending that Highway Maintenance Projects are going to be cut for the up coming Provincial Budget.

I am involved in an aggressive lobbying effort to attempt to prevent that from happening.

On Thursday, February 9 and Friday February 10, 2006, I attended the Alberta Construction Association "Law and Construction Seminar" in Banff, Alberta. This was an intensive two day seminar covering virtually every Non Human Resource Legal Consideration of the Construction Industry. Some topics of consideration included: Contract Formation, the Bid and Tendering Processes, Remedy of Contractors when Owners are in Breach, Remedies of Owners when Contractors are in Breach, how damages are calculated following breach and Builders Liens and other collection remedies.

This was a very informative course with informative and succinct materials. A number of our companies had representatives at the seminar; however, if you would like the materials or more information on the topics presented, do not hesitate to contact me.

On February 14, 2006, I attended a Government Round Table on its Provincial Labour Strategy. This was a stake holder presentation and included representatives from the Alberta Construction Association, Construction Labour Relations, the Society for Engineering Technologists, NAIT, Canadian Federation of Independent Business, and other Industry Stake Holders.

We are in the process of completing our response to the Government Provincial Labour Strategy.

On Friday February 17, 2006, I attended and represented the Progressive Contractors Association at the Alberta Apprenticeship and Training Award Celebration at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Edmonton. This was a Gala evening where Alberta recognized Great Achievements among its Apprentices and also among Supervisors and Training Institutes. It is submitted that our companies ought to be more proactive in nominating apprentices for these awards as both the Apprentice and the Company is recognized.

On Friday February 24, 2006, I attended a luncheon seminar sponsored by the Northern Alberta Society of Economists and featuring Ken Boesenkool from Hill and Knowlton Consultants in Calgary. Mr. Boesenkool is a confidant and advisor to new Prime Minister, Stephen Harper and the purpose of his presentation was to outline the Prime Minister's vision for the up coming Minority Parliament. Many of our issues are going to become highlighted by the new Government including Changes to the System of Employment Insurance, Importation of Foreign Skilled Workers, Tax Relief for Trades People and generally placing a greater emphasis on Resource Development and Strategies to insure that, that occurs.

On Monday February 27, 2006, I attended an Ad Hoc, Alberta Construction Association meeting to discuss the Ebsworth matter. Wally Baer from Occupational Health and Safety and Brian Karrup from Alberta Justice were the presenters and they outlined what the decision means for Alberta Employers. They acknowledged that the Ebsworth matter is currently under appeal.

On Monday, February 27, 2006, the Construction Industries Relations Committee was scheduled to meet and on Wednesday March 1, 2006, the Membership Committee was scheduled to meet.

On the evening of Wednesday March 1, 2006, I attended the Alberta Construction Association MLA Reception and Dinner at the Royal Glendora Club in Edmonton. PCAC was a Gold Sponsor of this event and members from North American Construction and Pyramid Construction joined me at the event.

I believe that this event was positive in that matters important to the Industry as a whole were presented to the MLAs present including the Cost of Construction, Human Resource Shortages and issues regarding Landfills and the Disposal of Construction Waste.

This is to remind you of the special meeting of the Progressive Contractors Association to be held on Monday March 20, 2006 commencing at 11:00 am at the Chateau Louis Conference Center on Kingsway Avenue in Edmonton. The meeting will start at 11:00 with a presentation from Susan Williams, Associate Deputy Minister of Alberta Human Resources and Employment with respect to the Provincial Labour Strategy. Lunch will be served at 12 and at 1:00, Dave Ross will make a presentation concerning Human Resource Strategies for Progressive Contractors.

Finally this is to remind you that www.constructionjobstores.com is up and running. I have negotiated a deal with Merit Contractors Association that PCAC members can use this web site to attract employees at no cost. If you require passwords or information on how to use the site do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to seeing everybody on March 20, 2006.

Brent Rathgeber Q.C.
Executive Director
Progressive Contractors
Association of Canada