

Contractor Advisory Council (CoAC)
 Minutes of Meeting

April 9, 2026
 9:00am, Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Present:

AC Members	ESA	MPBSDP	Regrets
Acting Chair, Mat Scratch Member, Brendan Fenton Member, Colin Mercier Member, Deva Sarathchandran Member, Doug McGinley Member, Rick Leduc Member, Ryan Delisle Member, Scott Yemen	Alex Piccini, Stakeholder Advisor Alicia Smith, General Manager, Wiring Eric Cynthia Magill, Enforcement Coordinator Gabriel Bone, Technical Training Developer Kingston, Vice President of Operations Development	Esther Turner	Member, Colin Mercier

SUBJECT

Welcome and Preliminaries

Alex Piccini confirmed quorum.

With the Chair absent, the Vice Chair became acting Chair for the purposes of today's meeting.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Motion: *Approval of the Minutes of Meeting for 26-Feb-26*

Moved by: Doug McGinley

Seconded: Deva Sarathchandran

Carried

Motion: *Approval of the Minutes of Meeting for 9-Apr-25*

Moved by: Scott Yemen

Seconded: Deva Sarathchandran

Carried

Open Action Items:

- Meeting minutes and materials: On feedback form the council, Alex noted distribution of AI minutes could be done approximately one week post meeting and draft minutes two weeks post meeting. The council further requested all materials to be included as part of the distribution of the minutes.
- Z7 Update: Eric noted ESA's goal of reaching 5,800 Z7 (hazard investigation) and noted that ESA is closer to 7,000 (strictly working without a permit, licence). Eric further noted high Z7 uptick on Electric Vehicle chargers.

Comments:

- Doug asked how many charges were laid. Eric noted that we can speak to licensing to get that compliance data.
- Mat notes that he experienced locally he had seen it in his community and worries there isn't enough compliance. Alex noted we could take as feedback.
- Scott notes having billing codes added to ESA invoices. Eric noted this could be added to ERP discussions for consideration.

Motions: None

Actions: None

Council Membership Update

The Vice Chair provided a membership update noting the resignation of Chris Ruber from CoAC as Chair, and Mathiew Scratch to assume the role of Acting Chair in the interim.

Comments: The council through the Vice Chair expressed thanks to Chris Ruber during his time as Chair and as Member of CoAC.

Motions: None.

Actions: None.

ESA Stakeholder Survey Results

Alex presented the results of ESA's 2025 multi-stakeholder accountability survey, conducted in partnership with Innovative Research Group. The overall accountability index score across all stakeholder groups remained consistent at 8.3 out of 10, with LECs and MEs achieving a score of 8.5, an all-time high since the survey began over 10 years ago.

Key improvements were noted in perceptions of fairness, respect, trust, and service among electricians, while homeowners showed a slight decline in fairness perceptions. The survey measures three dimensions: access, practice, and outcomes, with particular strength shown in areas like transparency, expertise, and fairness in treatment. Alex shared that the biannual multi-stakeholder survey results were now live on the ESA website and noted the link would be shared following the meeting.

Comments:

- *Deva questioned the relevance of questions over time, and Alex confirmed they review and update questions ahead of each survey to ensure continued relevance.*
- *Doug McGinley raised concerns about potentially surveying only compliant LECs rather than reaching non-compliant actors in the underground economy, which Alex Piccini responded to noting that those operating without a license would be difficult to contact and ESA's focus and priority would be to drive them to compliance with the compliance tools as opposed to survey participation.*
- *Scott Yemen inquired about regional data collection and if the survey takes local data points into account. Eric Kingston explained that while their monthly wiring feedback survey provides regional breakdowns, the biannual report is provincial in nature. The council discussed regional variations in experiences with LECs, with Doug McGinley and Scott Yemen sharing concerns about challenging relationships in certain areas, leading to a discussion about potentially incorporating regional sampling in future surveys.*

Motions: None.

Actions: None.

Inspector Training Update

Alicia Smith shared an update on recent ESA inspector training sessions, which were conducted regionally to minimize impact on field service levels. She explained that the training covered updates on technology, including Energy Storage Systems and Distributed Energy Resources, as well as bulletin updates scheduled for May.

Comments:

- Doug McGinley raised a concern about communication regarding when inspectors are in training. Alicia Smith acknowledged the challenges during training sessions but noted that contractors are informed through voicemail messages and scheduling adjustments are made to defer notifications during training periods.

- Scott inquired about feedback on remote inspections, and Alicia clarified that while remote inspections are coded as "no visit" and do not contribute a visit to bucket ratio calculations, they do count as a visit toward the defect ratio, when a defect is issued.
- Scott Yemen highlighted issues with communication delays affecting defect follow-ups. Alicia Smith explained that an action plan had been implemented to improve consistency and timely messaging, though individual communication preferences make standardization challenging.

Motions: None.

Actions: None.

Technical Bulletins

Gabriel Bone from ESA's Engineering division presented updates on several new and revised bulletins, including Bulletin 2-33-0 on meter base plug and transfer devices, Bulletin 8-8-0 on power control systems, and updates to underground cable installations and raceway requirements. He explained that power control systems are now recognized as type of energy management systems, allowing for better load management without service upgrades. Gabriel also presented changes to bulletin 2-25-* regarding retrofitted electrical products, announcing changes to the luminaire retrofit program, stating that pre-assessments for 50 or more luminaires would no longer be required as of May 4th, along with the associated fee removal.

Gabriel shared further updates to several technical bulletins. For bulletin 30-13-* on roadway lighting systems, new requirements for bonding conductors were introduced to address shock hazards to pets, and potentially people, when replacing 3 or 50% of roadway lighting. Bulletin 36-10-* received two clarifications regarding non-conductive sleeves for bollards near pad-mounted transformers and the bonding requirements for substation fence mid-rails. Bulletin 68-8-* on swimming pool bonding requirements was updated to clarify bonding practices for concrete collars and provide guidance on proper installation methods to ensure compliance with safety rules.

Gabriel shared updates to bonding grid requirements for pools and hot tubs, including reducing the required extension from 1.5 meters to 1 meter and allowing manufacturer bonding grids with specific criteria. He also clarified differences between portable and permanently installed hot tubs regarding bonding requirements. Gabriel explained that replacing a hot tub (of the same characteristics) does not require meeting new bonding requirements (68-058), though following recommended methods in table B4 of the Bulletin is advisable to mitigate stray voltage risks.

Comments:

- *Deva raised a question about the implementation of new requirements for supporting vertical conductors in raceways, particularly regarding existing projects. Gabriel clarified that ESA would consider deviation submissions for projects under construction with planned review submissions before January 1st, 2026, and agreed to share the relevant bulletin section with Deva for further distribution to the association.*
- *Doug raised concerns about the difficulty contractors face in accessing bulletins from CSA, suggesting they should be more readily available on ESA's website. Eric and Gabe noted that we understand the challenge here but noted that the code is a national process that involves harmonization and that places limitations on what can be published outside of CSA.*
- *Rick Leduc asked what date the bulletins would be live. Gabe noted as a takeback to confirm if it would be May 1 or May 4 and to confirm back with Alex.*
- *The discussion clarified that new installations on existing concrete pads would need to follow the code requirements, and Gabriel agreed to follow up on a question about converting portable 120V hot tubs to hardwired 240V systems.*
- *If the conversion exceeds the portable hot tub ratings, which in this case it would (120 v to 240 v), then the installation must meet the bonding requirements set in the Bulletin.*
- *The group also discussed concerns about monitoring hot tub installations and the effectiveness of bonding in addressing stray voltage issues, with Mathiew offering to share a study on this topic.*

Motions: None.

Actions: None.

Regulatory Compliance Initiatives

Cynthia Magill from ESA's licensing team presented an update on their Regulatory Compliance Program (RCP) activities targeting unlicensed contractors and non-compliant electrical work. Cynthia detailed three main initiatives from the past year: building permit reviews in Markham where 22 out of 94 locations had unpermitted electrical work, real estate listing blitzes that identified 151 homes with unpermitted electrical work out of 230 suspect listings, and Kijiji advertisement reviews which resulted in 33 notices of violation being issued.

She further noted that the ESA licensing team is currently conducting building permit reviews in Toronto and plans to expand these efforts to other municipalities throughout the year, with potential new targets including pot lights. Members of CoAC indicated that a potential focus could be holiday lighting installations, HVAC work, and/or hot tubs.

Comments: General sentiment from the council was these initiatives where positive ways ESA is cracking down on the underground economy. The council wishes to receive another update later in the year on further progress on compliance initiatives.

Motions: None.

Actions: None.

Other Business

The Vice Chair raised concerns about hidden hazards, including underground cables, and discussed the impact of defect ratios on contractors' authorized status.

Alex highlighted the upcoming Ontario Electrical Safety Awards in September noting the council members would receive an invitation in July and that the nomination deadline is May 4, 2026, for all categories.

Doug noted that defect ratios have an outsized impact on us. He shared a story of an LEC WHO got an email about a defect with a wrong cover plate, the customer had plugged in non-compliant equipment and the LEC is now receiving a defect. Alex has followed up with Operations who have connected with the LEC accordingly to ensure the situation is rectified.

Council members also raised concerns with the RBO system, including discrepancies in defect ratios and the need for clarification on neutral meter base connections. Several members, including Doug and Scott, shared experiences with defect ratios and requested improvements to the RBO 2.0 system. Eric noted their concerns and emphasized changes to RBO will take time and are part of broader enterprise enhancements.

Alex Piccini opens the floor to any items that CoAC members wish to see at the next meeting, taking place in-person at ESA's offices on Thursday, June 11 from 9:00 AM -12:00 PM

The Acting Chair requested that the AI summary be shared alongside the meeting minutes as well as all meeting materials. Alex noted this can be done, but the minutes are the official account of the meeting, not the AI summary.

Comments:

Motions: None.

Actions: None.

Action Items

- Alicia: Consider sharing data on the correlation between Z7 enforcement actions and resulting charges/APOs/license and communication plans at future CoAC meetings.
- Alex: Speak with the Director of Licensing after the meeting to obtain the latest compliance action numbers (APOs, charges, license actions, suspensions, revocations) to share with the council.
- Alex: Consider amending the Terms of Reference in a future iteration to specify turnaround times for meeting minutes and AI summaries.
- Alex: Follow up with Eric and Alicia on the meter-base neutral question raised by the OEL, and explore whether a future bulletin clarification is needed.
- ESA Engineering: Take back the question about whether a hot tub being upgraded from 120V portable to 240V permanently installed triggers new bonding requirements and communicate the answer to Alex for distribution to the group.
- ESA Engineering: Confirm whether the full Bulletin 12-29 (or the relevant section on vertical conductor supports) can be shared with Deva ahead of the May publication date, and coordinate with Alex.
- ESA Engineering: Confirm the exact publication date (May 1st or May 4th) for the upcoming bulletin release and communicate to Alex for distribution.
- Alex: Send CoAC members the formal invitation to the ESA Safety Awards (September 16th) once available and remind them of the nomination deadline of May 4th, 2026 at 5pm.
- ESA Licensing: Consider adding HVAC contractor electrical work and holiday lighting installations as future RCP blitz targets, as suggested by Scott.

Adjournment

Having completed the agenda, the Acting Chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting,

Contractor Advisory Council (CoAC)

Minutes of Meeting

April 9, 2026

9:00am, Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Motion to adjourn the meeting

Moved: Rick Leduc

Second: Scott Yemen

Carried

The minutes and transcript will be shared ahead of the next CoAC meeting. The next meeting will take place in person at ESA's offices on Thursday, June 11 from 9:00 AM -12:00 PM.

Please advise the Chair or ESA staff of any discrepancies in these minutes.