

# COCA Construction in Ontario

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## Accreditation Financial Incentive is a go

When COCA decided to support the development of an Accreditation program we developed three key criteria; that the program be voluntary, that it set a high standard of performance for construction and that it include a meaningful financial incentive.

We were shocked recently during a briefing when we were informed that the Accreditation pilot project would not include a financial incentive. When the word got out the entire industry went into shock. Members immediately asked for an explanation. Not

including a financial incentive in the pilot did not make sense. Why would the construction industry invest in an expensive program without the prospect of a financial return? Many associations, including the Ontario Business Coalition and the Ontario General Contractors Association and COCA wrote to WSIB Chairman Steve Mahoney to inform him of the impact this decision would have on the construction industry. COCA's own letter clearly stated that without a meaningful financial incentive we

could not recommend the program to our members.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup> Steve Mahoney called COCA President David Frame and committed to the inclusion of a financial incentive in the proposal that will be put before the WSIB Board of Directors later this month.

COCA appreciates Mr. Mahoney's swift response and we look forward to having a program that will help thousands of contractors achieve excellence in their health and safety efforts.



ISCA Assistant Executive Director Ron Johnson congratulates Graham Murray on an insightful and informative presentation.

## Post Election Analysis

On November 7, 2007 COCA members attended a post election seminar with Queen's Park observer Graham Murray. Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive. The COCA Guide to the McGuinty Cabinet prepared by COCA staff Laura Conrad and David Zurawel and distributed at the session was especially well received. Our sincere thanks to Hugh Laird and Ron Johnson at the Interior Systems Contractors Association for hosting the event at their beautiful location and treating everyone to a tasty breakfast.

## Former Labour Minister Elected New Speaker

Former Minister of Labour and MPP for Elgin-Middlesex-London, Steve Peters, was elected Speaker of the Ontario Legislature this past Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>. Entering the race after having been left out of Premier McGuinty's new cabinet, Mr. Peters defeated four other candidates vying for the position, including fellow Liberal Mike Brown, who was Speaker the last two years of McGuinty's first

term.

The opposition parties view Peters' election as a positive development as in the past both have criticized Mr. Brown performance, alleging he ignored unruly behaviour from the government benches. Recognizing the importance of representing all parties Peters has committed to cutting his ties to the Liberal caucus and to be non-partisan. "As speaker, I

don't represent any one party, I represent all 106 members of this House," he said.

Other members who ran for the position of speaker, listed in order of elimination from the ballot, were: Lorenzo Berardinetti (LIB-Scarborough Southwest); David Zimmer (LIB-Willowdale); Ted Arnott (PC-Wellington-Halton Hills); and, Mike Brown (LIB-Algoma-Manitoulin).

## COCA Members

- Acoustical Association of Ontario
- Architectural Glass & Metal Contractors of Ontario
- Association of Millwrighting Contractors of Ontario
- Barrie Construction Association
- Canadian Farm Builders Associations—Ontario Division
- Canadian Fence Industry Association
- Concrete Floor Contractors Association
- Construction Association of Thunder Bay
- Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario
- Grand Valley Construction Association
- Hamilton-Halton Construction Association
- Heavy Construction Association of Toronto
- Interior Systems Contractors Association of Ontario
- Kingston Construction Association
- London & District Construction Association
- Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario
- Ontario Demolition Contractors Association
- Ontario Electrical League
- Ontario General Contractors Association
- Ontario Industrial Roofing Contractors Association
- Ontario Painting Contractors Association
- Ontario Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Contractors
- Ontario Sewer & Watermain Construction Association
- Ottawa Construction Association
- Pipe Line Contractors Association of Canada
- Reinforcing Steel Institute of Ontario
- Resilient Flooring Contractors Association of Ontario
- Sarnia Construction Association
- Sault Ste. Marie Construction Association
- Sealant & Waterproofing Contractors Association
- Scaffold Industry Association of Ontario
- Sudbury Construction Association
- Terrazzo, Tile & Marble Guild of Ontario
- Toronto & Area Road Builders Association
- Toronto Construction Association
- Utility Contractors Association of Ontario
- Windsor Construction Association

# Does infrastructure risk becoming a POLITICAL HOT POTATO?

Newly installed Lieutenant Governor, David Onley, delivered the McGuinty government's blueprint for action for the next four years, his first Throne Speech, this past Thursday. The 13-page speech laid out the government's core themes of continuing to improve education and skills training, support for the provincial economy, an ongoing commitment to improving health care, the continued creation of a greener Ontario and, stronger relationships with Ontario's First Nations.

Noticeably absent from the Throne Speech was a renewed commitment from the province to address its massive infrastructure deficit. Despite non-transit infrastructure not constituting a significant campaign plank during the recent election, the McGuinty government called "on the federal government to help keep goods

and people moving by giving municipalities the equivalent of one percentage point of the Goods and Services Tax to invest in infrastructure and public transit." With the federal finance minister having already stated that Ottawa will not provide additional funding to provincial and municipal governments for infrastructure projects there appears to be real potential for the province's infrastructure and by extension, the construction industry, to find themselves a political hot potato.

Early signs of weakness are beginning to appear in the provincial economy as the McGuinty government waits for its Provincial-Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review, due from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in February. The results of this report will define what sort of uploading of social program costs municipalities

can expect. However, any program assistance from Queen's Park will be tempered by the fact that Ontario continues to lag the rest of the country in economic growth our unemployment rate continues to exceed the national average and the manufacturing sector remains stifled by the high value of the dollar. Anticipated write-downs of government investments are also anticipated as the province corrects for its exposure to the global shock of the U.S. sub-prime mortgage market.

Despite these challenges, the condition of the province's roadways, bridges and municipal water systems remain and will only compound with time. COCA urges the province to remain committed to renewing its infrastructure in order to ensure our future prosperity.

## Happy Holidays from the staff at COCA



Wishing everyone a safe holiday season.  
COCA's office will close Monday December 24th re-open Wednesday January 2nd 2008.

*Paul Frame*

*Paul Frame*

*David Swyts*

*Ane Ramsey*

*Laura Conrad*