

TRAINING UPDATE

June, 2008

COMPULSORY CERTIFICATION: MTCU REPORT

The review of compulsory certification of trades, reported in the March Training Update has been completed. Tim Armstrong, who conducted the review, has submitted a 184-page report to the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities.

The report does not recommend compulsory certification of all trades, although Armstrong does make the statement: "I have concluded . . . there is a strong probability that compulsory certification results in net overall benefits." However, he expresses concerns about overlaps between trades and specifically states that trade designation should not be used in jurisdictional disputes regarding work.

His major recommendation is that there should be establishment of an all-trades governance institution, a *College of Trades*, to deal with compulsory certification status, and to deal with issues like journeyman to apprentice ratios. There have been some concerns about Provincial Advisory Committees and Industry Committees having limited focus and often acting like advocates for specific views. The College of Trades would use expert panels, would hear submissions from PACs, but would be much more representative of the public at large.

On enforcement, Armstrong suggests using industry – employers, labour representatives, and others – to assist the Ministry of Labour. There are also a number of recommendations on who to put on the Board of Governors of the College of Trades, on legislation (mainly simplification and combining all trades under one statute, instead of the two separate Acts as at present), and on promoting trades.

It's not a given, of course, that these recommendations will be adopted by MTCU. But it does seem likely some agency – a trades advisory panel or a College of Trades – will be created to deal with applications for compulsory certification. Then it becomes a problem of dealing with issues like the overlap of skills between trades. And, most important, whether compulsory certification would be in the general interest, not just a benefit to the group applying.