

CANADIAN COMMISSION ON BUILDING AND FIRE CODES

**STRATEGY SESSION HIGHLIGHTS
SEPTEMBER 15-16, 2008
REVISION 0**

Participants:

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In Association with:

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Executive Summary

Attached are meeting proceedings from the CCBFC workshop held on September 15-16, 2008 in Kingston. The purpose of the workshop was to develop the major elements of a strategic plan for the next five years. The group began by conducting an assessment of the environment and the organization's current state. Then the group created a mission and vision for the future. Based on the above, four near term priorities were agreed upon. Action plans were created for each priority. Four task teams were formed to refine the plans and will report out at the November Executive Meeting. The group also discussed potential performance measures and the role of the Executive. This document contains the entire meeting proceedings as well as a summary of each major section. It is not intended as a "final report" but rather the initial building blocks of the plan.

Mission

To develop and maintain model national building and fire codes for Canada.

Vision

The CCBFC is recognized in Canada and internationally as the leader in developing and maintaining model building and fire codes. The following components are in place:

1. *Robust process.* Consensus-based code development process trusted by our stakeholders and policy makers;
2. *Responsiveness.* Code development process responsive to emerging issues and needs;
3. *Recognition.* Acknowledged leader in model code development and others look to our model codes as best practice;
4. *Engagement.* Solid linkages with all stakeholders (govts, regulators, departments, industry, consumers);
5. *Awareness.* Construction community and public understand the code development system and the roles of various players;
6. *Harmonization.* Uniform core building and fire code regulations adopted across Canada;
7. *Timeliness.* Our stakeholders are satisfied that changes are addressed in a timely manner;
8. *Proactivity.* Actively seeks better/earlier information on hot or sensitive issues;
9. *Communication.* Sharing information with stakeholders is an ongoing, customary practice in our activities.

Priorities

1. Communications, marketing, awareness and education;
2. Timeliness and responsiveness to changes (e.g. code change requests, new objectives);
3. Work towards harmonization of National, Provincial and Territorial codes;
4. Future sensing. Identify trends & issues, and develop action plan to address

Action Plans (by priority)*Note: see section 5 for detailed action plans*

- 1. Communications, marketing, awareness and education**
 - 1.1. CCBFC task group to develop & implement the communication plan;
 - 1.2. While developing plan, address low hanging fruit such as: web site: review current content to make sure it is current; review design of site to ensure ease of navigation; test system with users and outsiders; test for "transparency" - decide what should/needs to be there etc.;
 - 1.3. Create CCBFC speakers bureau to increase direct interactions about the process between CCBFC members and code users

- 2. Timeliness and responsiveness to changes.**
 - 2.1. Use work planning process to constantly re-assess priorities.. ensure there is an avenue to "fast" track certain issues;
 - 2.2. Code change tracking system. Continue to pursue tech solutions to the review and production processes;
 - 2.3. Assessment to determine gaps & deficiencies in our process (re: timeliness)... regular sensing with code user community

- 3. Work towards harmonization of provincial, territorial, and national codes**
 - 3.1. Code development process. Work with individual PTPACC members in preparation for public review and adoption of codes (to ensure that everyone is ok with the process);
 - 3.2. Model codes content. Regular sensing with code user community to determine areas where lack of harmonization is causing problems;
 - 3.3. Partnership. Develop approaches for dealing with P/T needs where total consensus has not been achieved

- 4. Future sensing. Identify trends & issues, and develop action plan to address**
 - 4.1. Must communicate this priority to staff and senior exec at NRC;
 - 4.2. Consult with PTPACC on their emerging issues;
 - 4.3. Complete protocol for new objectives;
 - 4.4. Work with sdo's to establish regular process to provide information of their work/progress on standards that affect the codes. Establish process to ensure this information is incorporated into sc work as appropriate;
 - 4.5. Dedicated staff resource complete tasks "a-j" (see section 5.4 for full details)

Key Issues Identified during Environmental Scan

1. *Demographic changes.* For example, aging/disabled, urban intensification. Both requiring a new approach to the built environment;
2. *Enforcement and education.* Codes as we author them are not fully utilised e.g. alternative solutions - affordability, education & enforcement (see part9) // improved and more persuasive education of enforcement of code regulation;
3. *Globalization and standardization* driven by cost &/or technology lead to national projects designed with inter-provincial codes - need for consistency -> harmonization for code writers... makes us more competitive;
4. *Adaptive re-use of building:* prioritizing code upgrades in existing buildings based on the cost of renovation;
5. *Green energies and alternate sources* of electricity fuel cell, hydrogen, solar etc-> new types of energy in built environment, infrastructure for fire management that we must be ready for;

6. *Cost pressures - both for use and construction* -> leading to additional regulation costs \$... we are perceived as adding costs to industry (not savings);
7. *High expectations of community for the CCBFC & the national process* (people think code is "cure-all") -> lose credibility if we don't meet needs/expectations - implications for our communications efforts - reactive approach;
8. *Infrastructure* (municipal, institutional,) - aging and inadequate for emerging expectations. - > some new approaches are not reflected in our building codes (reuse, new materials etc);
9. *Provincial political pressures lead to diversity in codes* -> increases need for understanding and demand for new objectives;
10. *Emergence of new certifiers* who portray CCBFC as "the problem" ... who exactly is resp for base level of regulation of buildings? -> need for us to increase awareness of our role/value/contribution;
11. *Legal "end runs" of building regulations...* e.g. some planning depts are requiring additional building regulations as part of development approval -> we have harmonization at prov level but not municipal. Must ensure our relevance.

Current state assessment

Strengths

- Technical competence of both staff and standing committees. ...quality of committees' members
- NRC/staff support ...Linkage to NRC providing access to research support and credibility
- Code development Process. Robust technically-based, open transparent and impartial process
- Appropriate resistance to wrong influences/lobbying
- Partnership with Provinces & Territories -> integrated code development
- Some good stakeholder relationships
- Respected quality product ..consistency of our goals by producing good codes
- Standing committee structure/process
- Objective based codes

Opportunities

- Become better at sensing trends and issues so we can face them pro actively. -> proactivity could lead the CCBFC to a leadership role
- New-additional objectives getting it right
- Relationships with others (beyond PTs) ...identify new or expanded stakeholder groups
- Develop better partnership with Provinces and Territories on key policy issues
- Awareness of the NBC is increasing (at political level) - interest in using Code as a tool of policy (e.g. energy, environment)

Weaknesses

- Communications/Marketing e.g. awareness /getting our message out.... web site.
- Definition of roles of PTPACC and CCBFC can lead to confusion and ineffectiveness
- Reactive as opposed to proactive approach (need to get better at anticipating issues)
- NRC. Fluctuating, limited staff resources to support the system ..long lead times to recruit staff
- Timeliness ...we are not quick e.g. we don't anticipate the needs of industry (timeliness)

Threats

- Diversity of the provincial codes ...Because of any inability to produce timely, relevant changes, lose the credibility and relevance of the code. This could ultimately lead to a proliferation of other codes & regs.
- Rising expectations of public, PTs - can we deliver?
- Rise of other certifiers, independent companies. new criteria supplanting instead of supplementing them (other orgs taking centre stage) ..roles of other organisations to penetrate the system, bypassing the integrated system

The primary **roles of the Executive** are to:

1. Prepare agendas and make recommendations to CCBFC
2. Monitor and recommend SC work plans & priorities
3. Review policy issues on behalf of CCBFC
4. Approval of task group terms of reference (membership etc)

The best **measures of performance** for the Commission are:

1. Has the code been adopted? Use of model national codes by PT jurisdictions as basis for their building and fire regulations (number of provinces, time taken to adopt, importance of variances - changes to model codes / separate regulations)
2. What is status of Strategic action plan - are we on schedule (milestones, action plans, etc)?
3. What are the current stresses/problems?

End of Session Commitment Survey

At the conclusion of the session, the team was asked to consider the plans developed:

<i>In terms of the plans and priorities...</i>	<i>Group Average (1=Low..... 10=High)</i>
1. Comprehension. I understand the plans we have developed	9.42
2. Agreement & Commitment. I agree with and am committed to the plans we have developed	9.08
3. Likelihood of Success. I believe we will be successful in implementing our plans	7.50

Path Forward

Task	Resp/Date	
1. Distribute results of Kingston retreat	Erik	9/18
2. Refine action plans, resource needs, o/s issues & risks -> one pager to Anne 10/19		
• Communications	Margaret	
• Timeliness	Brian	
• Harmonization	Joan	
• Future sensing	Richard	
3. Feedback on vision/mission from NRC, DG, VP	Bruce	11/6
4. Follow up strategy session to share feedback, refine plans and determine resource needs		
5. Present & discuss at Commission meeting	Bruce	February

Editor's Notes:

- a. The symbol // indicates that two similar ideas have been merged together.
- b. This document contains the meeting proceedings and is not intended as a "Final Report"