

Questions and Answers

The Process

Was this an industry led initiative or is this something that is being imposed by government?

The Alliance of Canadian Building Officials' Association (ACBOA) and the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors (CAHPI) worked with Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to develop national standards for the public and private sectors on the building inspection industry. The Canadian Home Inspectors and Building Officials Steering Committee for National Standards was formed to conduct occupational analyses and establish national standards.

If it's a national initiative, why weren't Quebec and Newfoundland included in the Steering Committee?

The home inspection sector had representation from all regions of the country. The Building Officials did not have a representative from Quebec as there is no organization that represents building officials. However, key stakeholders in Quebec were informed about the process and the building officials look forward to having a representative from Quebec in the future.

How do you get onto the steering committee?

In making up the Steering Committee, each sector identified representatives based on criteria established by HRDC in consultation with the industry.

Who are the Feds to tell us what to do?

While HRDC and CMHC have provided funding support for the process, members of the industry are making all the decisions through CHIBO.

Accreditation

I have a training school and it's been doing perfectly well. What's going to happen?

In Phase 2, CHIBO will be conducting what is called a 'gap analysis'. This process uses the Occupational Standards to identify the complete set of competencies required to

perform duties as a building official or home/property inspector. If the training addresses all the competencies required, it would eventually become recognized as a certified training agency. If not, then the missing pieces of the curriculum would have to be added before the training could be recognized as certified.

Will I have to take courses or write an exam to be certified?

- Everyone will be evaluated based on the principles of the prior learning assessment. The prior learning assessment will be developed under Phase II.
- Those who have taken the "required" training, or who have the necessary skills and knowledge can immediately challenge the national exam. The national exam will also be developed in Phase II.
- Those who are missing some aspects of "required" training and do not have the necessary skills and knowledge will be required to take the courses to complete their skills prior to challenging the exam
- It is anticipated that everyone employed as a home/property inspector building official will be required to write the national exam for their sector. We will be reviewing this in the next phase.

I've been doing this for 25 years. Why should I have to get accredited now?

Our aim in this process is to create a better image for the industry and to give consumers, banks and insurance confidence in the industry. National standards and a certification process will provide that confidence, as well as give industry professionals job mobility.

If I want to do inspections on new and existing houses, do I just need to follow the Common Core Competencies?

The Common Core Competencies are not Occupational Standards. They merely illustrate areas the two sectors have in common. You would have to follow the Occupational Standards for the Professional Home/Property Inspector and the Building Officials.

Why the third document, i.e., Common Core? Does it not duplicate the same standards that are included in the two Occupational Standards?

The Common Core is not an Occupational Standard, nor does it form part of the analyses developed separately for the two professions. The Common Core illustrates areas the two sectors have in common. It will be a useful tool to identify gaps in training. The document focuses on the common knowledge and abilities pertaining to an existing single family dwelling and does not include code compliance activities.

Government Role

Why is CMHC supporting this initiative?

National standards will give the home and building inspection industries credibility. Consumers, banks and insurance companies have been asking for this for a long time. Since CMHC's mandate is to promote the improvement of housing and living conditions for all Canadians, it made sense to support this excellent initiative.

Who are the stakeholders?

The stakeholders are ultimately all Canadians who need good, safe housing and buildings in which to conduct their lives. However, other stakeholders include banks, insurance companies, the building industry, the real estate industry, etc.

Validation

I disagree with the way these occupational standards are written.

Why didn't I get a chance to send my comments?

The occupational standards were posted on Association websites, were emailed to people electronically and were also sent by regular mail to members of the industry. In the case of the home/property inspectors, some 195 hard and electronic copies were sent out across the country. Within the budget limitations, we made every effort we could to disseminate the drafts to industry practitioners.

I just found out about the industry initiative and don't agree with the use of national occupational standards.

The initiative was announced on various websites for the home inspectors and building officials and the CMHC website. As well, information was published in various newsletters and articles were written in newspapers regarding the initiative.

Next Phases

What is the next step?

The next step, Phase II, is to confirm funding to proceed with analyzing existing training programs and to identify gaps according to the occupational standards. We will also be developing standards of practice, a certification program, a code of ethics, exams, and an accreditation process. Phase III will consist of implementing Phase II.

How long until this national initiative will be completed?

Assuming funding is confirmed by all the partners, we hope to complete the entire project and have it fully implemented by the end of 2002.

Funding

How much more will it cost to complete Phase I and Phase II?

Phase I of the project cost approximately \$188,400.00. For Phase II, the proposal is being drafted. Once approved it will be made available to anyone who wants a copy of it.

Did the ACBOA and CAHPI members contribute the same amount to this project?

Yes, each group contributed \$36,500.00. The members were also able to include in-kind contributions. In addition, CMHC contributed \$40,000 of which \$20,000 was given to ACBOA and \$20,000 to CAHPI.

Copies of Standards

How can I get a copy of the standards?

Electronic copies will be available on the ACBOA and CAHPI websites and the provincial associations' websites. A limited number of hard copies will be available from any of the provincial associations.

Are the standards available in French?

Yes. Copies of the standards will be available in French.