

MTO Meets with Industry Stakeholders on Changes to Driver Certification Program (DCP)

On Wednesday June 26, MTO met with approximately 140 Recognized Authorities (RAs) or their designees and industry associations (including OMCA) for a half-day to discuss the future of MTO's Driver Certification Program. As previously reported in *OMCA Report* and as discussed at OTE last April, MTO is making significant modifications to DCP to tighten up program oversight, increase program integrity and for the program to be administered by MTO on a "full cost recovery" basis. During the meeting MTO announced how it intends to modify the program which includes the following highlights:

RA (Company) Requirements

RAs will be required to sign a contract which will set out RA responsibilities. Existing RAs will receive the contract along with a new Policy Manual in late **August 2013** and will have until **December 31, 2013** to sign and return the contract to MTO. The contract will take effect **January 2, 2014**.

- Existing RAs must comply with all new program requirements including new course curriculum as of **September 30, 2014**
- New RAs (on or after September 30, 2013) must abide by the new contract and program requirements on date of signing
- RA official's normal work location must be in Ontario and RA must submit criminal background check (new)
- Training location (classroom) will be subject to more specific criteria re: municipal zoning, access by auditors, etc.
- RAs will be required to conduct at least 1 driver upgrade per year to remain in DCP
- To be eligible for DCP, RAs must be a motor carrier for at last 5 years (no change)
- RAs must maintain a carrier safety rating of at least "satisfactory-unaudited" (no change)
- RAs must have 25 or more vehicles in the applicable licence class (no change)

SA (Trainer) Requirements

- SAs must have zero demerit points at time of application and not exceed four points to maintain SA status (new)
- SA applicants can't have an HTA suspension or Criminal Code driving-related suspension in 2 years preceding application, and such suspensions will cause SAs to lose their SA status (new)
- SAs will have to sign a "no conflict of interest" declaration (new)
- SAs will be required to recertify every five years – probably a one day course (new)
- New SA applicants will have to submit a criminal background check and existing SAs will have to submit a background check upon request by MTO (new)

- SAs must complete ministry-approved course (such as P.R.I.D.E.) within 5 years preceding application (no change)
- Signing Authorities (SAs) must hold the licence class (to which they are training/testing) for at least 3 years (no change)

Training Course Curriculum

- New curriculum standards will be developed over the summer with input from industry stakeholders with completion date of October 31, 2013
- New curriculum standards must be met by:
 - November 1, 2013 for new RAs
 - September 30, 2014 for existing RAs

Program Automation

- In order to reduce paperwork, improve efficiencies and allow for better MTO monitoring/oversight, RAs will be required to have internet connection to the new DCP system. RAs will need to have a scanner device
- Paper activity reporting will be eliminated
- Referral envelope will be eliminated – but drivers will still go to DriveTest to obtain a Temporary Drivers Licence
- New RAs and SAs will be able to apply online

Cost recovery

- MTO will collect fees for every driver renewal and upgrade to ensure DCP is cost neutral to government (estimated fee will be in the \$18 - \$22 range)
- MTO fees yet to be approved by government – must be “Eurig-compliant” – i.e. cannot exceed MTO’s cost to run the DCP program
- MTO will collect fees on a quarterly basis
- Fee implementation date expected to be January 2, 2014

Program Audit

- MTO will require audits by external independent auditors paid by RA’s
- Auditors must be a member of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) or equivalent
- Audit will include financial and non-financial compliance with all program requirements including RA and SA requirements, curriculum, test routes, etc.
- New RAs will undergo enforcement audit at start-up, and again after 12 months of operation
- Existing RAs will require audit by September 2014 and every three years thereafter, provided the RA is deemed to have a low risk level

OSBA will continue to monitor developments as MTO moves towards implementation of the new DCP program and report these to members via the newsletter. OMCA will also participate in the curriculum development work with MTO and other industry stakeholders over the summer. For further information, contact Dave Carroll at dave@omca.com.