

Joint Submission of MCAM and ECAM Minimum Wage Rate Review for Apprentices

Submitted By: Ramona Coey

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BACKGROUND

In August of 2022, the Manitoba Government announced its plan to increase the minimum wage from \$11.95 to \$15 by October 2023. The Minister acknowledged the minimum wage increase will have a direct impact on apprentices and industry employers for those trades whereby wages are based on a percentage of the provincial minimum wage.

In February 2023, Honorable Sarah Guillemard, Minister of Advanced Education and Training and Harvey Miller, Apprenticeship and Certification Board Chair published the Minimum Wage Rate review for Apprentices Survey through the Engage Manitoba public portal.

The review preamble highlighted the principles by which apprenticeship wages are based in Manitoba, a percentage of the provincial minimum wage or a percentage of a journey man's wage according to The Construction Industry Wages Act(CIWA).

As key stakeholders of issues related to apprenticeship wage rates, MCAM and ECAM identified the review as an item of significance for the membership and Boards of Directors. Primary and separate discussion of the Boards included:

- Identification of trades impacted by the increase in the provincial minimum wage.
- The history of the CIWA relative to the residential construction Industry.
- Uncertainty with original premise and preamble of the review, relative to the wording and open-ended format of the survey.
- Concern for potential liberties in the interpretation of survey results relating to the uncertainty above.
- The importance of maintaining the CIWA Wage Schedule for the ICI Industry.
- Survey engagement and analysis
- The importance of meaningful engagement with the Manitoba Home Builder's association.



Mechanical Contractors Association of Manitoba

The Mechanical Contractors Association of Manitoba (MCAM) is a provincial trade association working to represent the unified voice of and provide leadership for the Mechanical Contracting Industry of Manitoba. Established in 1971, MCAM is an autonomous membership driven organization including contractor, manufacturer, supplier, design consultant, business associate and sub-trade contractor members. MCAM Contractor members reflect the diversity of the industry; union, non-union, urban, rural, service providers and constructors of residential, institutional, commercial, and heavy industrial mechanical systems within Manitoba's vertical infrastructure.

MCAM values:

- High Professional Standards
- Authentic Transparent Communication and Active Listening
- Diversity of Membership, Workforce and Leadership
- Adaptability
- Growth - Training and Education

Electrical Contractors Association of Manitoba

The Electrical Contractors Association of Manitoba (ECAM) works to unite, represent, and lead the Electrical Contracting Industry in Manitoba. Established in 1957, ECAM is an autonomous membership driven organization including contractor, manufacturer, supplier, design consultant, business associate, sub-trade contractor and legacy members. ECAM Contractor members reflect the diversity of the industry; union, non-union, urban, rural, service providers and constructors of residential, institutional, commercial, industrial, low voltage and data electrical systems within Manitoba's vertical infrastructure.

ECAM values:

- Industry Diversity
- Professional Integrity
- Membership Driven

INDUSTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY WAGE ACT

The CIWA legislation serves as a stabilizing factor for the construction industry and the Manitobans it employs. It ensures the competitive wages necessary to attract a highly skilled workforce required to support the construction industry. An Industry responsible for approximately 7% of Manitoba's GDP. **MCAM and ECAM support the continuance of the CIWA establishing minimum wage rates for Mechanical and Electrical trades in the ICI sectors and its relationship in establishing apprentice wage rates.**

2. MAINTENANCE OF THE CIWA WAGE SCHEDULE

The construction industry is not isolated from the labour shortages and high inflation rates impacting the greater economy. Up-to-date maintenance of the CIWA wage schedule provides a means to attract, develop and retain the industry workforce. The workforce that builds Manitoba and is an asset in attracting investments to our Province. **MCAM and ECAM request Apprenticeship and Certification Board communicate the importance of maintaining the CIWA to the Minister of Advanced Education and Training, The Minister of Labour and Immigration and the Minister of Finance as a means of attracting and retaining apprentices in the ICI Construction Trades. Further that the Minister of Finance re-establish the CIWA Review Committee comprised of Industry stakeholders to consider updates to the wage schedule.**

3. ENGAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY PROCESS

Survey results should be considered through both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Survey preamble created varying perceptions as to the intended stakeholder audience. Commonly, stakeholders involved with the 29 trades regulated by the CIWA interpreted the survey as to not pertaining to them. This interpretation will have a direct impact on engagement within this stakeholder group.

If the intent of the review was to limit the scope to the 26 trades impacted by changes to the Provincial Minimum Wage, MCAM and ECAM request the Board ensure authentic stakeholder engagement was achieved with the Manitoba Home Builders Association. **If the intent of the survey was to consider changes to all trades including those regulated by CIWA, MCAM and ECAM request the Apprenticeship and Certification Board rely on qualitative analysis and engage in additional authentic stakeholder engagement with MCAM, ECAM and other ICI partner associations.**

Conclusion

MCAM and ECAM appreciate the opportunity to be involved with the Minimum Wage Rate Review for Apprentices. We respect and support the goals of the Apprenticeship and Certification Board to:

- ensure Manitoba apprentices earn wages appropriate to their skilled trades program
- meets the needs and demands of industry

In conclusion, we respectfully request:

- 1. The Apprenticeship and Certification recommend the continuance of the CIWA establishing wage rates for the Mechanical and Electrical Trades within the ICI Sector and its relationship in establishing apprenticeship wage rates.***
- 2. The Apprenticeship and Certification Board communicate the importance of maintaining the CIWA to the Minister of Advanced Education and Training, The Minister of Labour and Immigration and the Minister of Finance as a means of attracting and retaining apprentices in the ICI Construction Trades. Further that the Minister of Finance re-establish the CIWA Review Committee comprised of Industry stakeholders.***
- 3. The Apprenticeship and Certification clarify the scope of survey and engage in additional stakeholder engagement and rely on qualitative analysis in their interpretation of results.***

Respectfully Submitted



Ramona Coey
Executive Director, MCAM and ECAM