

# ROAD **Builder**

SUMMER 2017

The quarterly publication of Ontario Road Builders' Association

## **MAKING DRIVERS THINK TWICE**

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# CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S MESSAGE



by **GEOFF WILKINSON**  
Chief Operating Officer

**W**elcome to the summer issue of ORBA's *Road Builder*. We have plenty to report from the first half of 2017, and I'm hopeful you have also been keeping busy. Before you flip ahead, I want to call attention to a handful of initiatives and events that are on our radar.

One of ORBA's current projects is working with our partners to address some of the more accurate asphalt quality issues identified in the Auditor General's report. There are a number of erroneous and misleading statements we identified in the report. Earlier this year, we asked Global Public Affairs to conduct several meetings with members, which led to a better understanding of our issues and challenges, and the ways we can overcome them in partnership with Ontario's municipalities.

To that end, we've surveyed all 444 municipalities across Ontario for their

feedback on quality of asphalt issues and opinions on how to approach them. We also conducted two web presentations with the Ontario Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) and Ontario Good Roads Associations (OGRA) members to discuss the findings of that survey and gain their additional insights. KPMG will be working on a review of both the Auditor General's report and the Ministry of Transportation's (MTO) responses and will provide potential options as we move forward. As always, we will keep you updated on our progress.

Moving on, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Brian Messerschmidt, who is joining us this summer to work on policy issues while we begin the process of finding a new Director of Policy and Stakeholder Relations to replace Ashley De Souza, who has left us recently to explore other career options. I'm sure

you'll run into Brian during one of our summer events, so be sure to say hello.

I would like to introduce Mala Singh as our Manager of Marketing and Communications, who is replacing Abbi Wright.

Speaking of ORBA events, I was happy to see many of you out at our 2017 Summer Round Up earlier this summer. Attendance was high at the Fraticelli's Italian Grill and Bar and all of our sponsorship opportunities were sold out. Thank you to everyone who came out and supported this increasingly popular event.

Coming up, I hope to see you again at the ORBA/OAPC Annual Golf Tournament on August 31, and later in the year at our newly branded Holiday Gala (formerly Ladies' Night) on November 18 at the Ritz-Carlton in Toronto. This end-of-year gala is relaunching with a few new surprises, so I'm sure you'll want to mark it on your calendars.

Last but far from least, I am proud to announce the return of our Site Unseen road safety campaign. Building on the immense success of the 2016 campaign, this year's slate of radio, TV, and web ads will blend with new contractor stories and a focus on distracted driving. I look forward to once again getting our road safety messages out to Ontarians and welcome any members who wish to support the campaign to contact me directly at [geoff@orba.org](mailto:geoff@orba.org).

I wish all members a safe and productive summer construction season.



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# ON THE ROAD TO ADVOCACY

## ON THE ROAD TO ADVOCACY

There has been no shortage of activity for ORBA's staff and volunteers with our partners at Queen's Park. As such, there are several updates to pass along from the first half of 2017.

## AROUND (AND IN) QUEEN'S PARK

On May 1, ORBA hosted its third Queen's Park reception at Toronto's historic legislature building. Over 100 government officials joined ORBA staff and Board of Directors for the evening event, including Minister of Transportation Steven Del Duca, Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Michael Harris, and Essex MPP Taras Natyshak. The message coming out of the reception was clear: Ontario's roads and highways are top of mind among the province's leaders and ORBA's members are being heard. Neverthe-

less, we will continue working closely with our municipal and provincial representatives to ensure commitments are being kept and those words turn into action.

## BILL 127 GAINING GROUND

Bill 127, aka the *Stronger, Healthier Ontario Act* (omnibus budget bill), received royal assent on May 17, 2017. It includes Schedule 33 (amendments to the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*), which provides workers benefits under the insurance plan for chronic mental stress arising from their employment. A draft Mental Stress Policy was made available for comment up until early July. It combines traumatic and chronic stress, the latter of which includes bullying, harassment, and interpersonal conflicts.

## ENHANCING WORKER REGULATIONS

A number of moves are being made to improve workplace regulations for our industry's workers. First, Bill 148, *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017*, received its first reading on June 1. It proposes amendments to both the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* and the *Labour Relations Act* – the sum of which will likely have the greatest impact on retail and service sectors. They include increasing the provincial minimum hourly wage and making changes to scheduling, overtime pay, vacation entitlement, and leaves of absence.

After its first reading, Bill 148 was referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, which has scheduled hearings in various locations since.

Ontario's Fair Wage Policy is also being reviewed by the Ministry of Labour. Last updated in 1995, the policy was initially developed to prevent unfair competition (aka "a race to the bottom") and applies to bidders on government contracts. However, the policy contains wage rates that have long been out of date, making it largely redundant in today's environment. To that end, ORBA has become involved in the policy's review and attended a consultation session on June 15, 2017. The deadline for further comments is September 29, 2017.

## PROPOSALS FOR THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Two regulation proposals under the *Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009* are now open for comment on the Regulatory Registry.

The Ontario College of Trades Board of Governors is required to create a new regulation prescribing the process for the College's referral of trade classification review requests to the Classification Roster. The sections of existing O. Reg. 458/11, which deals with trade classification reviews, will be revoked and replaced by a new board regulation dealing with referrals.



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In December 2016, the Act was amended to creating the College of Trades Appointments Council and Classification Roster, an agency that will be responsible for conducting trade classification reviews. As part of the implementation of these amendments, the Ministry of Labour is consulting on elements of a Minister's regulations that would outline details such as criteria and process, transitional issues and continuity of classification panels. Comments were due on July 30, 2017.

### EXCESS SOIL REGULATIONS

ORBA has submitted a response to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's (MOECC) Excess Soils Regulatory Proposal (posted on the Environmental Registry # 013-0299 for comment). Slated for adoption under the *Environmental Protection Act*, it seeks to define excess soils as a "waste" until certain conditions are met.

In our response, ORBA expressed serious concerns about the complexity of the proposed requirements and the administrative burden that we can accurately assume will be largely passed on to the construction industry. We also believe the proposed changes raise serious concerns about the public's willingness to see beneficial reuse of soils - especially in rural areas. With this in mind, ORBA has clearly indicated it does not support the regulation in its current form.

### MTO'S 5-YEAR EXEMPTION REVIEW FOR HAND-HELD RADIO USE

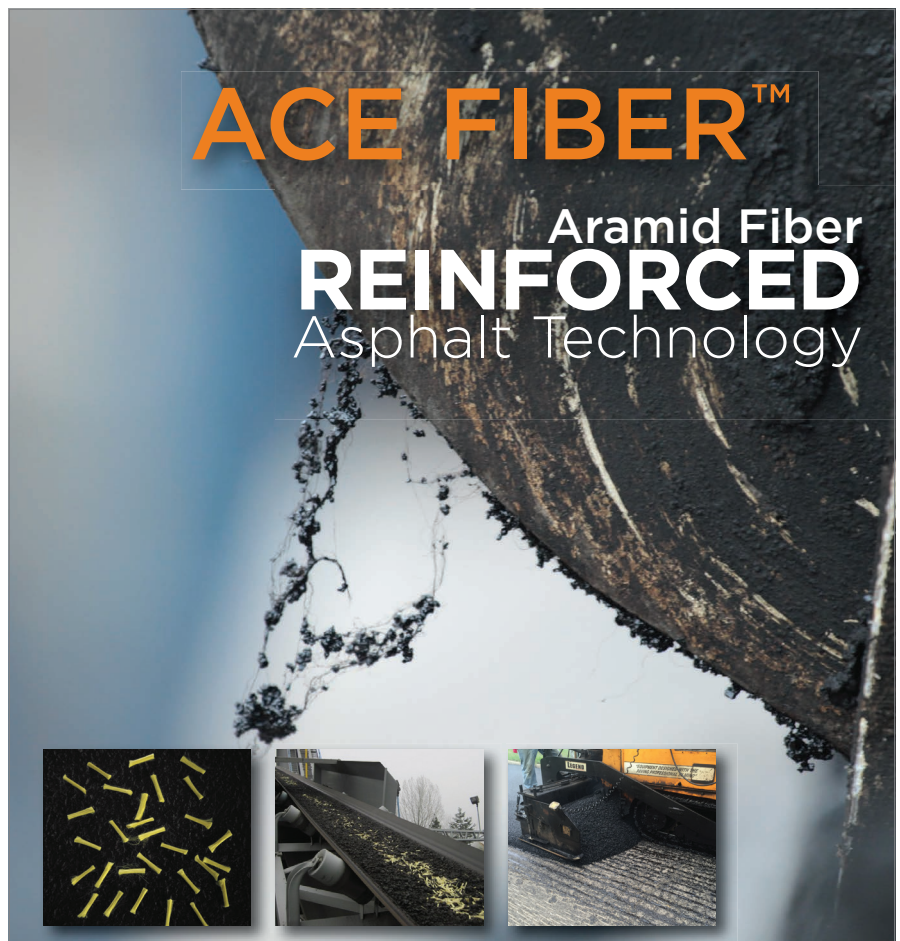
Exemptions for the use of hand-held devices - which currently impacts people driving road building machines or engaged in road patrol, repair, maintenance or construction activities - are scheduled to expire on January 1, 2018. With the deadline approaching, MTO has asked for comments on a series of options. ORBA responded with its comments in June 2017, in which we indicated our support to see the current exemption extended for another five to

seven years. An option to make the hand-held exemption permanent would otherwise dissuade manufacturers from developing hands-free technologies for equipment, thereby creating long-term technologies solutions that address the potential issues of hand-held radio use. For reference, these provisions are found in Ontario Reg. 366/09 under the *Highway Traffic Act*.

There are more than a few important issues receiving ORBA's attention in 2017. As we move forward into the

second half of this year, we encourage members to get involved by either joining one of ORBA's committees or volunteering with one of its many initiatives. We also welcome your questions and feedback, so please don't hesitate to contact Brian Messerschmidt, Policy Consultant, at [brian@orba.org](mailto:brian@orba.org).

As a parting note, Ashley De Souza has decided to leave ORBA to pursue other career options. We would like to thank Ashley for the work he did with ORBA, and we wish him well.



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# AMALGAMATION UPDATE

## HOW ORBA AND OAPC ARE COMING TOGETHER

by **MATTHEW BRADFORD**

**M**embers of ORBA and OAPC (Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council - formerly the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association) met on October 31, 2016, to cast their ballots in favour of amalgamating the two associations. Now, after years of planning and over eight months of implementation, it's safe to say the journey towards a complete partnership has been promising - albeit not without its growing pains.

"[Our amalgamation] is a process and we're still working through it," says OAPC Executive Director Vince Aurilio. "There isn't a switch we can flip and have it done. That said, we're very pleased with how things have gone and I hope our members are as well."

Certainly, a lot has been accomplished over the first quarter of 2017. From the start, ORBA contractors, asphalt producers and supplier members received a 10 per cent discount on membership fees. As well, both associations have been working to streamline phone, email, and social media systems to make it easier for members to connect to both entities. And while OAPC and

ORBA will continue to maintain their individual websites and publications - ORBA's *Road Builder* and OAPC's *ASPHALT*Topics - the plan is to eventually create an overall style and consistency for all communications.

Ultimately, says ORBA Chief Operating Officer Geoff Wilkinson, the goal is to leverage the strengths of both associations for the benefit of all members. "We've done a lot so far to use our two associations to create one voice for the industry. At the same time, we know it's important to maintain the Ontario Asphalt Paving Council's vision, which is why we're still focused on marketing asphalt and addressing quality of asphalt issues with our new, united voice."

Aurilio adds that the amalgamation came at an opportune time for road building stakeholders, noting, "With the challenges everyone has heard about in the news, it's good timing to have a stronger and united voice to find solutions to the issues ahead of us all."

In addition to combining their influence, ORBA and OAPC have opened up their signature events to all

members. That includes the recent Summer Round Up, the upcoming Golf Tournament, the year-end Holiday Gala, and ORBA's 2018 Road Building Academy, which is set to take place next February. OAPC members will also play a large role in ORBA's 91st Convention, set to run February 5-6, 2018, at Toronto's Fairmont Royal York Hotel.

As for next steps, ORBA looks forward to welcoming members from both associations into existing committees. Says Wilkinson, "Although a lot of work has been done on the amalgamation, we still have more to do. We encourage members to help by giving us their input and suggestions as to how we can improve our communications and in getting involved with our committees and events."

Aurilio agrees, adding, "Right from the beginning of this process, I've said we need to keep an open mind. We all have a job to do and challenges to overcome. But instead of seeing those as challenges, we can take them as opportunities to work together as a team to strengthen our voice and make this amalgamation a success."

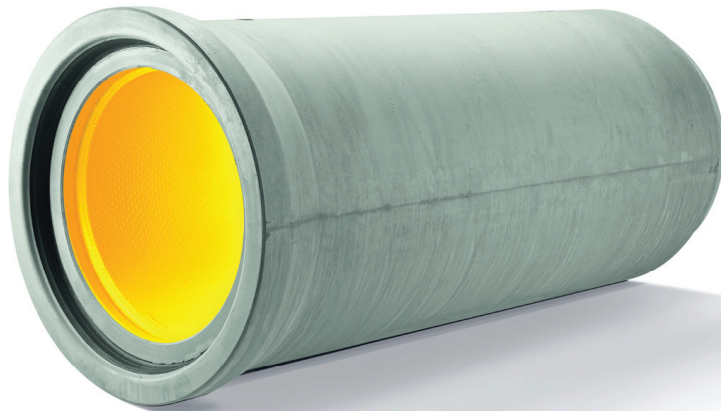
**With every major transformation comes a few setbacks. And while both ORBA and OAPC have said goodbye to a handful of key staff members, they are proud to be moving ahead with the following team:**

Geoff Wilkinson, Chief Operating Officer  
Vince Aurilio, Executive Director, OAPC  
Mala Singh, Manager,  
Marketing and Communications  
Karen Walker, Communications Coordinator  
Princess Buni, Accounting and Office Coordinator

Stacey Lee Wright,  
Membership and Education Coordinator  
Saaliha Malik, Events Coordinator  
Technical Director, OAPC  
(Currently vacant, shared with the Asphalt Institute)

**For more information on staff roles, please visit [orba.org/staff](http://orba.org/staff).**

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## ON THE ROAD

### OAPC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MARCH 30, 2017  
TORONTO, ON

The Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council (OAPC) hosted its Annual Conference at the Fairmont Royal Hotel in Toronto. The conference brought in over 100 delegates and the theme of the event was the celebration of the amalgamation of the Ontario Road Builders' Association (ORBA) and the OAPC (formerly the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association).



*ORBA President Geoffrey Stephens addresses OAPC conference delegates.*

### OAPC PARTNERS IN QUALITY (PIQ) ROAD TOUR SEMINARS

APRIL 18 - 27, 2017  
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(VARIOUS CITIES)



*OAPC chairman Mike McLean presents to Ottawa PIQ delegates.*

The OAPC made stops in Sudbury, Ottawa, Kitchener and Vaughan bringing together producer members and contractor representatives to get the latest industry information that will impact their work in 2017 and to meet face-to-face with local Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and municipal and consulting engineers. The seminars brought together total over 250 attendees in all four locations. Presentations from the seminars can be found on the OAPC's website under the Publications & Education tab at [www.onasphalt.org](http://www.onasphalt.org).

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## ORBA QUEEN'S PARK RECEPTION

MAY 1, 2017  
TORONTO, ON

Over 100 Ontario leaders and decision makers joined ORBA in Toronto for its third Annual Queen's Park Reception. Held downtown at the iconic legislative building, the event brought together ORBA representatives and government officials for an evening designed to raise ORBA's profile and the voices of its members.



*Hon. Steven Del Duca, Ontario Minister of Transportation addresses the Queen's Park reception.*

## CONSTRUCTION HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTION PLAN

MAY 11, 2017  
TORONTO, ON

Minister of Labour, Kevin Flynn, announced the release of the province's Construction Health and Safety Action Plan. Created with input from the construction employers, workers and other industry stakeholders, Ontario's plan contains recommendations to strengthen the prevention of work-related injury and illness for construction workers on sites of all sizes across the province.



## ORBA'S ANNUAL SUMMER ROUND UP

JUNE 28, 2017  
BURLINGTON, ON

The sun and warm weather greeted ORBA and OAPC members at this year's Summer Round Up held at Fraticelli's Italian Grill & Bar. The annual event saw its largest attendance with over 250 members enjoying a great evening filled with networking, and delicious food and drinks. Thank you to all the sponsors, as the event wouldn't have been possible without your help!



*ORBA President Geoffrey Stephens and Roto-Mill Inc. (presenting sponsor of the event) President Ted Arcott*



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## MAKING DRIVERS THINK TWICE WITH THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL SITE UNSEEN CAMPAIGN

by RICHARD WOODBURY

**A**fter a hugely successful campaign last year, the Ontario Road Builders' Association relaunched Site Unseen this June, an award-winning marketing campaign aimed at promoting safe driving in construction zones.

The campaign, which consists of three videos, a radio ad and poster for print advertising, imagines what would happen if the types of behaviours drivers display in construction zones were instead applied to a traditional office.

While drivers know they are not obeying the law by speeding in construction zones, they continue to do so. The campaign's aim is to encourage drivers to change

their behaviour and help them see how recklessness and poor etiquette in construction zones endangers workers.

The videos each last about 30 seconds and the three behaviours (or major offences) of speeding, road rage and failure to merge that construction workers see on the job are transported to a traditional office.

As one example, imagine being in an office, armed with papers, supplies and a cup of coffee. Out of nowhere, a colleague runs through at full speed and collides with you. Your papers go everywhere and you're covered in coffee. The video then ends with a digital sign saying

"Wouldn't happen at your work. Shouldn't happen at ours." While road construction zones are not traditional workplaces, they are the workplaces for ORBA's members.

The campaign generated over 7.3 million media impressions, but more importantly, left a lasting impression on those who watched it.

According to an IPSOS survey conducted at the end of last year's campaign, 31 per cent of Ontarians recall seeing, hearing or reading about the campaign; of that 31 per cent, nine out of 10 drivers said it made them slow down in construction zones, and 91 per cent said they think more about the welfare of workers in construction zones.

ORBA wants to build on the momentum last year's campaign generated.

"I think it's a great start. We want to get people thinking when they go through a construction site, they need to think twice. They need to think about their safety and the safety of the workers ... but we want to see real change in driver behaviour," says Chief Operating Officer, Geoff Wilkinson. "Within the next couple years, hopefully we'll get the statistics back saying the [number] of incidents are reduced."

While the campaign certainly left an impression on people, it's important to consider what people's views were like before the campaign. Research conducted before Site Unseen launched last year found:

- Nearly one in every three drivers (28 per cent) reported they're not always focused on the road while driving.
- Ninety-three per cent of Ontario drivers agreed people at construction sites were simply doing their job, while 75 per cent viewed construction sites as an inconvenience.

The campaign was launched last year in May during the Victoria Day long weekend and ran through Labour Day. It garnered rave reviews from marketing professionals, as evidenced by four notable awards it won, and a certificate of merit:

- 2016 Merit Award from the Canadian Society of Association Executives Awards of Distinction.
- 2016 Best Integrated Campaign in the associations category for the Canadian Association of Marketing Professionals.
- 2017 Diamond SABRE Award North America in the associations category.
- 2017 International Association of Business Communications



Ovation Award for Excellence in Social Media.

- Certificate of Merit in the 2017 Canada Public Relations Society ACE Awards.

This isn't the first campaign ORBA has undertaken. Others include the CAA Worst Roads, which ORBA got involved in about 15 years ago. ORBA is the technical expert that verifies the conditions of the top worst roads. The campaign is used to advocate to municipalities for the importance of investing in, maintaining and rehabilitating roads and bridges.

ORBA has also promoted safe driving around snow plows in its Let Us Lead the Way campaign. Each year, winter maintenance contractor snow plow drivers are involved in numerous accidents with motorists, many of whom are driving too fast around snow plows or worse yet, trying to pass them. Much like Site Unseen, the goal is to protect workers, but ORBA is also doing it to

protect motorists at an obvious size, weight and visibility disadvantage compared to snow plows.

An addition to this year's campaign is distracted driving, which includes things like texting, eating and other distractions while driving. Since 2000, deaths caused by distracted driving in Ontario have doubled, according to the province.

According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), nearly three out of four Canadians admit to driving distracted. Besides being illegal in all provinces and most of the territories, some other sobering stats IBC sites about distracted driving are:

- People texting while driving are 23 times more likely to be involved in a collision.
- People talking on a cell phone while driving – regardless of whether it's a handheld or hands-free device – are four times more likely to get into a crash.
- Distracted drivers may not see up to 50 per cent of the information available to them.

While dangerous for the drivers themselves, it also endangers everyone else on the road, including other drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

"It makes the work of our members even more dangerous," says Wilkinson.

Besides the runaway success of Site Unseen last year, another reason for re-launching the campaign is because the message is one that'll always be needed.

"At the end of the day, it's to save lives. We want our workers to go home at the end of the day," says Wilkinson.

Even if one collision that prevents a serious injury or saves a life is eliminated, ORBA officials say Site Unseen is worth it.

# PAVING THE WAY

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# GET SMART

## ORBA PARTNERS WITH BUILDFORCE TO ENHANCE CONTINUING EDUCATION

by JAMES PETERS

In keeping with ORBA’s mission to provide the very best training and educational offerings to its members, the organization has recently partnered with BuildForce Canada. BuildForce has been around since 2001, originally under a different name, but the company’s mission has always been the same—to work together with Canada’s construction industry by providing topical information and online resources for workers, team

leaders, and managers. BuildForce offers links to relevant industry websites, newsletters and courses—all directly applicable to Ontario’s construction industry.

Stacey Wright, ORBA’s Membership and Education Coordinator, says, “Our partnership with BuildForce has been extremely productive. There are multiple layers


### 2018 ROAD BUILDING ACADEMY

Because of the growing popularity of ORBA’s annual Road Building Academy, information and registration options for the academy will be launched on August 31. The Academy will be held at the BMO Institute for Learning in Scarborough—which offers an all-inclusive package for attendees including meals, Wi-Fi, parking and accommodations.

The venue itself is an inspirational learning environment. Designed by renowned Canadian architect Raymond Moriyama, the Institute for Learning provides 260,000 square feet of space. The complex is comprised of three distinct areas—a Learning Centre, a state of the art Presentation Hall and a Residential Wing. One of the more distinguished architectural features at the centre is the soaring three-storey glass-enclosed Grand Hall, known colloquially as “the bow” because of its unique shape. The theme is reflected throughout the institute in its luxuriously modern furniture and fixtures.

Wright says, “We’re promoting the Academy earlier than ever before to make sure people have more time to plan and acquire the funds they need from their companies and professional organizations to attend. For the very first time, the Academy will have 20 rooms on site for attendees travelling from out of town—including dinner and breakfast as well as their course and lunch for the day. We’re also making sure members know about registering early for the Academy to take advantage of securing their funding from the Canada-Ontario Job Grant.”

ORBA’s 2018 Road Building Academy will run from February 26 to March 2 at the BMO Institute for Learning. Watch for the more information at the end of August on ORBA’s website.



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of relevant industry courses and resources available through BuildForce. Because everything is online, members can take advantage of learning at their own speed and from any computer/laptop with an Internet connection. Absolutely one of the greatest benefits of the BuildForce eLearning program is its flexibility. Many of our members are looking for that kind of accessibility—and the courses are also very reasonably priced.”



Wright says, “ORBA has worked very closely with BuildForce and the Canadian Construction Association to ensure that several Gold Seal courses were made available—especially significant for the construction industry. For example, one of the newer courses being offered is called Construction Industry Ethics—designed to help employees at all levels understand ethics specific to the construction industry and now mandatory for anyone seeking Gold Seal accreditation. The course provides practical examples of ethical decision-making, and contains videos, case studies, interactive elements and a course glossary.”

## BUILDFORCE ONLINE COURSES

COURSE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
<b>CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ETHICS</b>	Ethical behaviour is paramount in the construction industry. By maintaining high ethical standards, and being consistent in our practices, we thrive both personally and professionally. The Construction Industry Ethics course can help your employees navigate the ethical grey areas they face every day.	<b>\$200</b>
<b>FIRST LEVEL SUPERVISOR TRAINING PROGRAM</b>	This course offers the critical basic skills and concepts needed to supervise a crew in the residential, institutional, commercial, industrial and civil construction sectors.	<b>\$400</b>
<b>CONFINED SPACES SAFETY AWARENESS</b>	Whether you are preparing to work in confined spaces for the first time or have been working in this type of construction for years, the information presented in this course will help you to understand what you can do to keep yourself, your co-workers and the environment you work in safe every day.	<b>\$100</b>
<b>NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION SAFETY AWARENESS TRAINING</b>	Whether you are just starting out or have been in the industry for years, the information presented in this course will help you to understand what you can do to keep yourself, your co-workers and the environment you work in safe every day.	<b>\$100</b>
<b>PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TRAINING</b>	This course has been designed and developed by the construction industry to address health and safety issues specific to pipeline construction in the oil and gas industry.	<b>\$100</b>
<b>COMMUNICATIONS, NEGOTIATION, CONFLICT RESOLUTION</b>	The information presented in this course will help you to improve your communication skills both written and oral, your negotiating skills and conflict resolution abilities alongside co-workers and on the job site every day.	<b>\$150</b>
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<b>INTRODUCTION TO BUILDING INFORMATION MODELING</b>	As an emerging technology, Building Information Modeling (BIM) is generating a lot of buzz in the construction industry. This course provides an overview of how this technology positively impacts the construction process.	<b>\$150</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION TO CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATING</b>	Accurate and precise estimating is critical to the financial viability of a construction firm. This course provides an introduction to the field of construction estimating and covers all aspects of the production of an accurate estimate.	<b>\$150</b>

Registration for these courses is available at [orba.org/onlinecourses](http://orba.org/onlinecourses).

For more information about the online courses offered, please contact Stacey-Lee Wright, Membership and Education Coordinator, at (905) 507-1107, ext. 222 or [stacey@orba.org](mailto:stacey@orba.org).



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# REPORT MINCES NO WORDS AND ORBA IS WASTING NO TIME ACTING ON IT

by RICHARD WOODBURY

**L**ate last year, Ontario’s auditor general issued a report looking into the awarding of contracts and oversight of road infrastructure construction. Bonnie Lysyk didn’t mince her words about what she found.

“The pavement on major provincial roads has failed prematurely because contractors hired by the province have sometimes used substandard

asphalt,” says a Nov. 30, 2016, press release announcing the findings.

The findings didn’t come as a surprise to ORBA as it has actively worked to root out issues like this.

“The industry as a whole feels that the actions of a few contractors are harming the reputation of the industry and creating an unlevel playing field,” says John Allen, vice president of Global Public Affairs.

In early 2015, the Ontario Hot Mix Producers Association – now known as Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council (OAPC) – created a task force to address concerns over asphalt pavement performance. The task force is responsible for reviewing and investigating “the main factors impacting pavement quality in Ontario and to make recommendations to road owners, asphalt producers and road builders that will help to ensure good quality, long lasting pavements.”

In the wake of Lysyk’s report, Allen was hired by ORBA to conduct research to get the perspectives of the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO), municipalities and ORBA’s members and then write a report.

ORBA has three overall objectives with the project:

- Fully understand the current issues and experiences around MTO and municipal asphalt paving contracts.
- Firmly address reputational issues by taking strong action as an

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association and respond quickly to issues that pop up.

- Present a forward-looking approach to develop an effective, fair and consistent system across the province.

“Our approach is really about collaboration, talking to ORBA’s members, talking to the project owners and getting a sense of what are the win-wins we can put forward,” says Allen.

He expects to have a draft of the report finalized by the fall. From there, it will be up to ORBA to build and implement a plan to address the report’s findings.

The project owners and ORBA have shared goals, such as the desire to deliver safe, quality, durable roads that provide good value for Ontarians. As well, the competitive environment must be fair and not open to abuse, but also be trusted and transparent.

The auditor general’s report also pointed to problems within how MTO carried out its business.

“The Ministry is lenient with contractors who perform poorly, allowing those that have received unsatisfactory ratings to continue to bid for and win significant amounts of work,” notes the auditor general’s release.

These findings highlight the need for a new way of doing business on both sides.

Allen’s research reveals the interesting perspectives ORBA members and municipal and provincial stakeholders bring to the table. For ORBA members, how specifications are developed is a major concern.

“From a province-wide perspective, each municipality or region seems to develop their own specifications or gold plate the provincial ones based on local circumstances like traffic or soil conditions,” says Allen. “This makes the environment overly



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complicated and potentially open to abuse.”

He says the process of developing specifications should be more robust, take into consideration real-world conditions and have more formal processes in place.

Enforcement of specifications and standards is another big concern. Allen says members would like to see enforcement ramped up to ensure unethical activities are caught and corrected.

Allen says these are the most important issues because if left unaddressed, an uneven playing field could occur.

“If certain specifications are requested and a contractor wins their bid based on that, then they deliver something much cheaper. That is not fair to other bidders who priced the work honestly,” he says.

Some of the specific comments Allen heard from ORBA members over the present processes were:

- “Unrealistic schedules and timelines could lead to poor quality and deficiencies.”
- Current lowest price system may deprive quality and could promote sacrifices to gain work and maintain business.
- “Specifications are open to different interpretations by different contract administrators; there is no consistency.”
- “Specifications change rapidly and numerous times – often during the bidding season and just prior to bids.”

The other top three priorities of ORBA members are monitoring of pavement performance, oversight of work and the procurement process. Interestingly, 100 per cent of respon-

dents who expressed an opinion felt ORBA should play a greater role in raising standards.

Allen says the main thing he heard from project owners related to specifications and what should go into the asphalt mix. “There is quite a broad approach to that,” he says, noting different municipalities have different standards.

Allen says one of the things being considered is to have fewer sets of specifications, which would allow for easier and more effective enforcement.

Another major concern is how the procurement models are structured to ensure the finished product is a solid one that lasts longer. The question is how to achieve this, whether it’s through how much weight to give in procurement, to the past performance of contractors or what is the right payment/warranty/incentive model to promote quality?

Allen is pleased with the process ORBA is undertaking. “It seems to be a good way to get beyond the day-to-day interactions and just take a step back and take a broader approach to things and make recommendations on best practices,” he says.

While it’s easy to get absorbed in the details of what makes a good specification or what measures should be taken to clamp down on serious offences or failures, to see a change there needs to be a look at the system for how paving contracts are awarded and delivered.

Allen says some municipalities are changing their systems to factor in prior contractor performance, as well as cost.

“This will help, but while it remains cheapest bid wins, there is always a risk that a bidder could bid low and have to look at ways to make this up,” he says.



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# A ROADMAP FOR RISK MANAGEMENT

Article provided by **PLATFORM INSURANCE**

**H**aving an effective risk management program is an essential tool for reducing operational costs; this is especially true for heavy civil contractors in the road building industry. The operations of a typical road builder create several exposures that could lead to losses and increased costs if the risks are not identified and managed properly. Road builders have large fleets of equipment at risk for damage, slip and fall liability claims that are common with winter maintenance and sidewalk work, auto

liability exposures with a fleet of trucks on the road, and emerging trends such as claims for faulty workmanship related to failing pavement or concrete.

Insurance can be used to transfer away much of this risk, however, that also comes at a cost. The key to minimizing your insurance spending while maximizing the benefit from your insurance program is to invest in a broad-based risk management strategy that focusses on three key areas:

- 1) **RISK CONTROL** to prevent losses from happening in the first place
- 2) **RESTRUCTURED INSURANCE PROGRAM** to fit your appetite for self-insurance
- 3) **EFFECTIVE CLAIMS MANAGEMENT** to control costs once a loss has occurred

Risk control for a road contractor can cover a lot of topics depending on the operation, but a good place to focus would be ensuring proper

loss prevention for the equipment and vehicle fleet. We always encourage my clients to seek outside help if they don't know where to start. A fleet management consultant can assist in putting controls in place for things such as driver training and hiring practices, vehicle and equipment controls (ie: telematics), a CVOR management plan, fleet safety training, and Ministry of Transportation (MTO) vehicle inspection and audit training.

Tap into your insurance company's resources; some of the more construction focused insurers have fantastic resources and they provide expert assistance for no charge. Regardless, losses will eventually happen so it's all

about reducing their frequency and ensuring your insurance program structure suits your company's needs.

For example, increasing your deductible or using a larger Self-Insured Retention (ie: \$25,000) will generate an upfront savings, and will allow you to exert more control over the claims process when losses occur. This strategy will allow you to manage smaller, more frivolous losses in-house, controlling costs and avoiding inflated expenses that would otherwise taint your insurance history. The best way to employ this strategy is to work with your insurance broker and insurer



to select a dedicated, independent claims adjuster that will manage all your losses whether they hit your deductible or not. This approach also provides you with improved insight on your total cost of risk, and will give you the information you need to adapt and evolve.



*Scott Beitel and Charles Quenneville are owners of Platform Insurance Management, a brokerage specialized in surety and insurance for the construction industry. Scott can be reached at [sbeitel@platforminsurance.com](mailto:sbeitel@platforminsurance.com) or 416-525-4152. Charles can be reached at [cquenneville@platforminsurance.com](mailto:cquenneville@platforminsurance.com) or 647-291-2254.*

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## ONTARIO'S 2017-18 BUDGET

### UPS INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

by **MATTHEW BRADFORD**

**A**pril 27, 2017, marked the release of Ontario's budget for 2017-18. Dubbed "A Stronger, Healthier Ontario", the financial gameplan was positioned by the Kathleen Wynne Government as the first balanced budget since the 2008-09 global recession, and as one that will invest significantly in the everyday lives of Ontario residents.

"This balanced budget sets a new course for our province. Building on our balanced approach, we will invest in those things that set us apart ... we will invest in our infrastructure, so our new roads, highways, and public transportation get people to work more quickly and home at night safely to their families," said Minister of Finance Charles Sousa in his legislature address.

The bulk of Ontario's 2017-18 investments are weighted towards improving the health, education, and well-being of Canadians. High-lights include:

- A \$7 billion "booster shot" for health care;
- A Children and Youth Pharmacare program that will provide free prescription medication for all provincial residents under the age of 24, with no deductible or co-payment required;
- Assistance to make childcare more affordable for upwards of 100,000 children aged 4 and under;
- A Fair Housing Plan designed to stabilize the real estate market and make housing more affordable for home buyers and renters;
- Plans to reduce residential hydro rates by an additional 17 per cent;
- Expanded resources and support for students of all ages, including free tuition for more than 210,000 students; and
- The foundations for the Ontario Basic Income Pilot project.

Of particular interest are plans to invest heavily in Ontario's public infrastructure through the development of new hospitals, schools, and road works throughout the province; as well as continue funding for several transportation programs and initiatives.

"Our multi-year plan to invest in infrastructure has grown to more than \$190 billion. This is the greatest infrastructure investment in our province's history," said Sousa.

Within that investment is a \$205 million increase in transportation infrastructure funding that brings the 2017-18 total to \$8.512 billion. It also includes a slight bump for transit investments up to an annual total of \$5.44 billion.

The Provincial Highways Management Budget, which was a cause for concern among ORBA members due to the lack of tenders being issued in the latter part of the 2016-17 year, will also receive an increase of \$750 million. This puts total funding for the program at \$2.9 billion.

"A few years ago we saw a drop in the budget with regards to infrastructure, but this budget seems to take things in the right direction again," says ORBA Chief Operating Officer Geoff Wilkinson, adding, "It's very encouraging to see that number increase. Along with federal infrastructure funds, this will make for a promising industry over the next few years."

Feeding that optimism is the budget's \$13.5 billion commitment to the Moving Ontario Forward initiative, which was created to enhance public transit in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) and

#### Light Rail Transit Opportunities

The 2017-18 Ontario Budget identified several public transit projects that will likely mean more work for ORBA members. They include the Eglinton Crosstown LRT (light rail transit); a dedicated Hamilton Rapid Transit Line; a Mississauga Transitway; a downtown relief line in Toronto; a proposed \$43 million transit hub in Kitchener; and Stage 2 of the Ottawa LRT project, which itself is estimated at a value of \$1 billion.

"There's money in the budget for public transportation, and I believe that means more opportunities for ORBA members to do more work in public transportation, especially around light rail transit," says Geoff Wilkinson.

contribute to transportation and priority infrastructure across the province. This latest funding is in addition to existing commitments of \$7.8 billion earmarked by the Wynne government for state of good repair, optimization, and expansion work across the GO network.

“The GO capital program is the largest commuter rail program in Canada. By leveraging the federal government’s recent \$1.9-billion commitment to support GO RER (Regional Express Rail), the province now has the ability to invest in even more priority projects,” the budget reads.

**PRIORITY PROJECTS**

Ontario’s 2017-18 Budget spotlights several key transportation projects that are currently in development throughout the province. These include the rehabilitation of Highway 400 in York Region, the replacement of bridges over Grand River on Highway 401 in Kitchener, and the rehabilitation of Highway 401 in Chatham-Kent, to name just a few.

The budget also documents ongoing support for Ontario’s Connecting Links program. It will provide \$25 million in 2017-18 towards construction and repair costs for municipal roads that connect two ends of a provincial highway.

“The Connecting Links program provides an opportunity for municipalities to fund projects that are relative to MTO projects, and that funding will likely provide a lot of opportunities for our members,” says Wilkinson.

A number of Connecting Links projects are also called out within the budget, including:

- Town of Renfrew’s Raglan Street reconstruction from Hall Avenue to Bonnechere River Valley Bridge (\$3M).
- Township of Champlain’s High Street reconstruction from

Highway 34 and Main Street in Vankleek Hill to southern limits of the Township (\$2.9M).

- Town of Hearst’s Front Street rehabilitation (\$2.7M).
- City of Stratford’s Erie Street resurfacing (\$2.4M).
- City of Sault Ste Marie’s Second Line resurfacing (\$2.3M).

Ultimately, the budget will provide funds to build or rehabilitate an estimated 5,000 kilometres of highways and more than 750 bridges across the province. That includes nearly 2,400 kilometres of highways and 200 bridges in northern Ontario by 2021–22.

Wilkinson believes this is good news for road building stakeholders,

saying, “Our budget numbers are up and that’s positive news for members who felt there wasn’t as much work last summer as there was in the past. Fortunately, we’ve seen a lot of early tender calls already and more are being tended as we speak, so we’re very optimistic about this summer construction season.”

Evaluating the budget on a whole, Wilkinson says it’s a move in the right direction, but hopes the MTO will continue that momentum: “Overall, this is a strong budget for our industry, and one we think will make for a healthy industry for all of our members.”

Read the full *2017 Budget* at [www.ontario.ca/page/budget-2017](http://www.ontario.ca/page/budget-2017).

SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS	2016-17 SPENDING	2016-17 CALCULATED EXPENDITURES	2017-18 ANNOUNCED SPENDING
Provincial highways	\$2.15 billion	\$2.137 billion	\$2.9 billion
Transit projects	\$5.389 billion	\$3.806 billion	\$5.440 billion
Other transportation (e.g., property acquisition, highway service centres, and planning)	\$768 million	\$642 million	\$172 million
<b>Total infrastructure spending</b>	<b>\$13.03 billion</b>	<b>\$14.311 billion</b>	<b>\$15.566 billion</b>

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## R.W. TOMLINSON

### AIDS OTTAWA VALLEY FLOOD EFFORTS

#### TOMLINSON

It began with record-breaking rainfall and parts of the Rideau River rising above ground in some areas. That caused a general unease over communities and some people began seeking out sand bags. Then over Easter, close to 30 more millimetres of rain fell, and walkways and streets began to be lost to the rising water. An increasing number of residents began their own sand-bagging, with sand bags provided by the City of Gatineau.

By the third week in April, the record rainfalls and snowmelt were causing serious damage, and Saint-André-Avelin, Quebec, declared a state of emergency. That same week, houses began to be evacuated, and by the first week of May so much more rain had fallen that emergency officials

advised hundreds of residents to evacuate immediately.

Another community, this time in Ontario, declared a state of emergency, and then even more rain fell. Army support was requested for several regions in Quebec, thousands of volunteers showed up to fill sand bags, soldiers and engineers arrived to help out, hospitals cancelled elective surgeries, and hundreds of people were displaced as their homes were consumed by the rising water.

Then finally, as the second week of May rolled in, water levels began to drop, slowly but surely, and thoughts of cleanup began to emerge.

Ever present through all the worry, sadness and turmoil, though, was the true sense of what Canada is known for; kindness. Neighbours helping each other, families rallying, and even volunteers who hadn't

been affected at all, were on hand to help the strangers who needed it.

One of those volunteers turned out to be an entire company – R.W. Tomlinson.

The Ottawa-based ORBA member took action when in the wake of the Ottawa Valley flooding. On the weekend of May 13-14, they donated sand bags to help with the efforts to stop flooding in Constance Bay.

The company had previously purchased the 3,000 sand bags, and had also previously filled approximately 2,200 more, which they donated and delivered to the efforts in the community. In fact, Tomlinson had employees on hand around the clock to help mobilize volunteer efforts in response to emergency situations such as this flooding.

Much of the general cleanup has been completed, and now it's a matter of people rebuilding their lives while rebuilding their homes. And it's thanks to the efforts of volunteers and companies like Tomlinson that they get to rebuild that much faster.

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