

**Ministry of Labour,  
Training and Skills  
Development**

Office of the Minister

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Ontario

Michael Sherrard  
Chair, Skilled Trades Ontario  
Toronto ON

April 29, 2022

Dear Chair Sherrard,

I am pleased to write to you in your capacity as the Chair of the Board of Directors, Skilled Trades Ontario (STO). As Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, my responsibility to the people of Ontario includes ensuring government works to prevent workplace injuries and illness, promote and enforce employment standards, oversee workplace disputes and collective agreements, system stewardship and oversight for the skilled trades and apprenticeship system, and workforce development.

As required by the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectations for STO as you move forward with your work for the 2022-23 fiscal year. **These expectations should be addressed in STO's 2022-23 business plan and annual report.**

Tradespeople are the backbone Ontario's economy and communities. As chair of a board-governed agency, you are a vital partner in ensuring that our skilled trades and apprenticeship system is client-focused, industry-informed and contributing to Ontario's economic success and to helping people find good jobs. The trades offer rewarding, lucrative careers, often secure with pensions and benefits. Workers can travel, advance into management, or become their own boss.

Together with your fellow board members, you are responsible for building a team dedicated to public service with private sector sensibilities to establish the goals and objectives consistent with your agency mandate per the *Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, 2021* (BOSTA), government policies, and my direction for the following priorities:

## **2022-23 Operational Priorities**

- Work with the ministry towards developing the Memorandum of Understanding between the chair and minister.
- Abide by applicable service and quality standards, government directives and policies, ensure transparency and accountability in reporting, including adherence to requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, accounting standards and practices, the *Public Service of Ontario Act* ethical framework, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, the *French Language Services Act*, and responding to audit findings, where applicable. Work with the ministry, where appropriate, to advance the *Ontario Onwards Action Plan*.
- Optimize organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery and immediate transition and roadmap to achieve the agency's mandate.
- Modernize and redeploy resources to priority areas when or where they are needed.
- Identify appropriate skills, knowledge and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in agency governance and accountability.
- Operate within the agency's budget, identify and pursue opportunities for revenue generation, efficiencies, and innovative practices. Procure a centralized office space according to Realty Interim Measures and comply with direction related to supply chain centralization.
- Prepare and implement an executive compensation framework for designated executives at STO in accordance with relevant legislation, including the *Broader Public Sector Executive Compensation Act* and its regulations. Seek relevant approvals, including from the President of the Treasury Board, and implement by April 1, 2023.
- Develop and implement an effective process for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks. This includes planning for, and responding to, health and other emergency situations. Emergency planning should include developing a continuity of operations plan that identifies time critical and essential services and personnel.
- Seek improvements in how the agency uses data in decision-making, information sharing and reporting, including by leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery. Support transparency and privacy requirements of data work and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.
- Support digital-first client services and continue to explore and implement digital modernization strategies, while preserving omni-channel service excellence and continuing to meet service standards through this transition. Adopt digital and service design principles, such as agile development, user-centered design, and product management.

- Identify and pursue service delivery methods that have evolved since March 2020 (digital or other) and focus on activities that support the recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 and enable appropriate, coordinated, and effective skilled trades and apprenticeship program delivery.
- Please reference the Agencies and Appointments Directive for further details.

### **2022-23 Priorities related to STO's objects under BOSTA**

At an overarching level, I expect STO to reflect the government's Skilled Trades Strategy in prioritizing its work to fulfill the mandated objects under BOSTA. To that end, you should include the following priorities in 2022-23:

- Prioritize developing, maintaining, and updating of apprenticeship programs to align with such matters as new trades prescribed by the Minister, technological advancements, and the economic needs of the province (e.g., public infrastructure projects). This may include working with the ministry, regulators, agencies, and other stakeholders to develop and update apprenticeship programs.
- Work with other governments in Canada with respect to the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program for apprenticeship, including Gasfitter – Class A, Gasfitter – Class B, and Oil Heat System Technician, subject to any applicable agreements and/or program requirements.
- If a Red Seal endorsement under the Interprovincial Red Seal Trades program is available for a trade prescribed under the BOSTA, seek Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship support to issue the Red Seal endorsement for these trades.
- Establish service level standards for issuing and renewing certificates and conducting trade equivalency assessments.
- Collect and report on data related to STO certification, recognizing that reporting would be subject to potential information sharing agreements between STO and the ministry.
- Develop a communications strategy and use of various tools and strategies to promote trades and apprenticeship, with an emphasis on promoting skilled trades and apprenticeship to young people and their families.
- Develop a research plan in relation to labour market needs in the skilled trades and include information on how STO would collaborate with stakeholders.
- Work with other jurisdictions to support labour mobility in the skilled trades.

### **Building towards medium and longer-term priorities**

In addition to 2022-23 priorities, I also expect STO to commence work on the following medium to longer-term priorities. Some of these address long-standing or systemic issues in skilled trades and apprenticeship, and variously require early activities in planning, capacity-building, and engagement. While the final results may not be seen in 2022-23, it is important that STO takes tangible action to build towards these long-term priorities in the 2022-23 fiscal year:

- Work with the ministry to support developing operational capacity for a mature-state integrated service delivery model.
- Build capacity to provide certificate of qualification examination preparation support.
- To support promotion and research of skilled trades and apprenticeship, commence development on ways to describe and categorize groups of trades in policy.
- Consider the following matters in establishing apprenticeship programs and researching or evaluating trades that are or may be prescribed, including, but not limited to:
  - Common-core standards for groups of trades, subject to the prescribed scopes of practice;
  - Whether similar trades could be considered for consolidation through regulatory amendment by the minister; and
  - Integration of occupational health and safety training and Coroner's Jury Recommendations into training and curriculum standards.
- To support promotion of skilled trades and apprenticeship, commence work with partners, such as Employment Ontario service providers, to identify pathways to apprenticeship.
- To support timely and efficient verification of skilled trades certification from other Canadian jurisdictions as part of trade equivalency assessments, engage other Canadian jurisdictions on the potential development of a digital-first solution.
- Explore opportunities with others on how STO could, within its mandate, support the coordination and delivery of activities related to youth outreach through initiatives such as experiential learning, partnership development, and career fairs.
- Work towards launching a marketing campaign to promote the skilled trades and apprenticeship.
- Commence work with the federal government to develop pathways into the trades for those with military service and training.
- Work towards conducting research on the recruitment and retention of apprentices, completion of apprenticeships, and employment outcomes to better support effective

delivery of services and promotion of skilled trades. Work towards research on training mobilization, including coordination with relevant parties to analyze and produce regular workforce forecasts.

I count on you to support our efforts to deliver programs and services in the most efficient and effective manner. Please keep my office and the Ministry informed with progress updates on the objectives monthly.

Your support is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Joshua Workman, my Chief of Staff, at 647-244-2078.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Monte McNaughton', written over a horizontal line.

Monte McNaughton  
Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development

C: The Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education  
Joshua Workman, Chief of Staff, Minister's Office  
Melissa Young, Chief Executive Officer and Registrar, Skilled Trades Ontario  
Greg Meredith, Deputy Minister, MLTSD  
Mallorie Lawson, Executive Advisor to the Deputy Minister  
Patricia Perez, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Management and Services  
Division/Chief Administrative Officer  
Cordelia Abankwa, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training Division  
Simone Atungo, Assistant Deputy Minister, Workforce Policy and Innovation Division  
Dr. Joel Moody, Chief Prevention Officer and Assistant Deputy Minister, Prevention  
Division