

## WCR&HCA Chair's Annual Report 2010

The heavy construction industry in western Canada, much like the rest of the industry in our country, saw reasonably full budgets and enhanced levels of investment in infrastructure. These were largely a result of the emphasis, driven by the federal government and co-opting provincial and municipal governments, on stimulating economic activity in a global recession.

With the stimulus programs coming to an end by October 2011 and the Building Canada Plan by 2014, we are already witnessing reduced municipal infrastructure budgets and anticipating the same in provincial programs. As a result, an emphasis will have to be placed on pursuing the continuation of a sustained federally led national infrastructure investment strategy. This will likely consume the bulk of government and public relations attention in the foreseeable future for the WCR&HCA and the entities with which it interfaces.

Apart from the aforementioned, there remain a number of pressing matters including:

- Promoting the notion of a Western Canada Transportation System designed to strategically footprint and enable the western provinces to globally participate in and compete for trade.
- Resolution of the federal Hours of Service regulation. While WCR&HCA member associations individually and collectively have worked with the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) on this issue, the constant review and additional questions have frustratingly slowed progress. We must continue pressing for a reasonable resolution.
- Harmonization of regulations to enable the efficient flow of goods and products between the four western provinces.
- Elimination of the duplication of environmental approvals.
- The streamlining of the Navigable Waters Act approvals process.
- Immigration changes to address the skill sets required by the construction industry in Canada.

Progress in public policy is a long and often cumbersome process. This is particularly true in a country as vast and diverse as Canada. The fact that change is difficult should not dissuade the WCR&HCA's continued engagement for the benefit of our region and our country.

Yours truly,



Roger Walls  
WCR&HCA Chair 2010