



Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association of Saskatchewan
Provincial Report to WCRHCA
March 2004

Our Association has been impacted by continually low budgets and that is coupled with a very large road network that needs upgrading or, at the very least, a strong maintenance program. The industry is very competitive and, although our members are starting to diversify, there is still a large percentage that depends on the Department of Highways (DOH) for their livelihood. Despite all the adversity, the Association works hard to serve its members and in 2003, was able to maintain its membership base of 162 members and move its headquarters into a new office.

For Department of Highways work in 2003-04, the department estimates that the road building industry moved:

- 6.21 million cubic metres of earth
- 1.46 million tonnes of sub base
- 1.09 million tonnes of base
- 943 500 tonnes of asphalt concrete

The department, in conjunction with the road building industry, completed:

- 107 km of grading
- 114 km of surfacing
- 135 km of combined grading and surfacing
- 350 km of resurfacing

We do not have estimates for the other segments of our industry.

Our Association struggles with the same issues other associations across the country are facing. In 2003, our Human Resources committee released their "We Build Careers" video/CD Rom and it has been well received. The committee makes personal presentations to secondary schools around the province, hoping to encourage young people to consider a career in our industry.

Our executive has been in dialogue with our Deputy Minister in regards to the Federal Hours of Service and the association is in the first stages of producing a Fatigue Management Program. We have also begun discussions on our province's position on allocation of federal fuel taxes and their role as the concept becomes reality. The DOH continues to validate their budget based on quality of work and will try to meet that criteria through the tender contract. Pilot projects have caused concern for contractors this past summer and our board is pressuring the Department to validate the issues and resolve the conflict. Safety plays an important role in the industry, for the owner and the contractor. Our Safety Association works diligently with contractors to promote the COR program and, with contractors now having to meet COR requirements on smaller dollar value contracts, they will have an increased work load to meet qualification deadlines. COR certificate is required for any projects over \$100,000, it will drop to \$50,000 in 2005 and \$10,000 in 2006.

In 2003, the DOH implemented a "Commitment to Workplace Diversity Employment." Highways contracts (over \$200,000) are required to report employment of "Women in Non-Traditional roles, Persons of Aboriginal Ancestry, Persons with a Disability, Members of Visible Minority" on a monthly basis.

We have a sub-committee that is in the final stages of completing a Dispute Resolution policy and have also established sub-committees to work on Northern Labour Content, and Site-Occupancy regarding penalties and bonus days.

The Association is a member of a newly formed Transportation and Environment Committee (TEC), which includes Saskatchewan Environment, Department of Highways and Transportation, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, Saskatchewan Environment Industry and Managers Association, Western Economic Diversification Canada, Association of Consulting Engineers of Saskatchewan and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Environment Canada, Sask

Environment Fish and Wildlife Branch, Committee of Saskatchewan Forest Industries, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Heritage Resources Unit (Culture Youth and Recreation) and Saskatchewan Watershed Authority.

The 2002-03 Board has instituted a Past President's Club comprised of past presidents of the association. Membership is not mandatory and the mandate of the club is to act as a source of information to the current board. The club will meet informally to discuss issues that are relevant to the association but that are directly affected by knowledge and experience in the industry.

The Association completed our annual planning sessions in January where priorities for each of our standing committees are set. Those of interest would include:

Rural Development

- Representation at Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) convention
- RM federal funding status, promotion of individual RM's using engineers when tendering, and promoting industry tendering practices.
- Meet with Area Transportation Planning Committees

Membership

- Target areas, keying on 3-5 new members a year
- Prepare an information package for distribution to possible new members
- Attend social events in smaller communities to promote the association
- Consider additional social events that may attract new members

Human Resources

- Attend SMART conference in November 2004
- Work with affiliated associations on career days, seminars, mentoring
- Send out copy of video to selected schools
- Arrange for school site visits on contractor sites

Government Relations

- Strategic Planning involving the creation of a database that inventories horizontal infrastructure in Saskatchewan, complete with financial data supporting costs to rehabilitate, rebuild, and costs of deficit.
- WCB rates
- "Publicize a budget required to bring Saskatchewan roads to acceptable level." Would not target or attack government, would be an information campaign prior to budget, making people aware of what is required.
- Lessen impact of perceived budget cuts

Priorities for the Association in 2004 include:

- Fatigue Management Program
- Dedicated Fuel Tax
- National Highway Program
- Environment
- Tender Database Outlining Work Done in the Province
- Dispute Resolution Policy

Our Board does not have very high expectations for this year's Highway's budget. In fact, we think we will be lucky if we can just maintain last year's budget. We are also concerned about the organized labour factor and their influence on our current government. It could be an interesting year.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Hendry, President
RBHCA of Saskatchewan