



## ***Construction Safety Association to offer industry-based training and education***

*Don Nelson,  
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The formation of a new safety association for the construction industry will increase safety training, education and prevention initiatives throughout the industry. The Workers' Compensation Board of B.C. is pleased to be working with this new association to create effective health and safety initiatives for the industry.

The Construction Safety Association of B.C. was formed by the Council of Construction Associations (COCA). After consulting with its members COCA took a proactive role to create a sector-specific health and safety association that would have a positive effect on reducing both the number and cost of work related injuries.

B.C. has been the only province in Canada without a safety association for its construction industry. The WCB will assist industry develop capacity and self-sufficiency in the management of occupational health and safety.

The new association will be operated as a division of COCA, with COCA President Grant McMillan taking on the role of interim executive director.

“We felt that the most effective way of helping our industry promote health and safety would be to establish our own safety association with a focus on training and education,” says McMillan. “We’re now working to identify areas where training is most needed to prevent injury and accidents. We hope that by doing a good job in training we will lessen the need for enforcement.”

McMillan expects that the CSABC will help instill a greater sense of ownership and responsibility for health and safety issues among employers and workers in the sector. He says the reaction from both employers and workers in the construction sector from all regions in the province has been very positive.

Initially, the CSABC will work on a business plan that will include a limited number of courses focusing on the best opportunities for injury reduction.

McMillan is enthusiastic about the partnership with WCB. “We’ve had excellent cooperation from the Board, allowing the project to go ahead quite quickly,” he says. “We meet with them on a regular basis to discuss our strategic plan, our intentions for running courses and our strategy for using contract providers to run the courses.”

He expects good results from the formation of the CSABC. “We have enough people enthused about it that I think we’re going to get a far reaching and long term effect.”

For more information on preventing injuries in construction, visit our Construction Health and Safety Centre at <http://construction.healthandsafetycentre.org>.

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*I would like to include your ideas and questions in future columns. Send your ideas for future columns to me at [dnelson@wcb.bc.ca](mailto:dnelson@wcb.bc.ca) or call me at (604) 231-8631 or toll free in B.C. at 1 888 621-7233.*