

January 19, 2018

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency (Agency) and the Technical Safety Division of Labour and Advanced Education have committed to reviewing the existing training and certification pathway for the Communications Technician trade. As part of this process, it was determined that the training and certification of all designated trades will be the responsibility of the Agency.

Currently, the certification for Communications Cabling Specialist is issued by the Technical Safety Division and the Agency administers Communications Technician as a designated trade. These occupations have the same scope of work; therefore, to reduce duplication, the certification of the Communications Cabling Specialist will be eliminated and the Agency will certify individuals under the existing trade name - Communications Technician. This change will help streamline processes through a single regulatory body overseeing the Communications Technician trade, create a clear training pathway to certification and increase access to supports for apprentices throughout their apprenticeship program.

The Agency and the Technical Safety Division established a working group comprised of industry representatives to provide input into this new approach to certification and training. Based on these consultations, the Agency and Technical Safety are recommending the following for inclusion in an apprenticeship program for Communications Technician.

### Proposed Apprenticeship Program for Communications Technician

Apprenticeship is an industry-based training pathway leading to certification in a skilled trade. Apprenticeship for most trades combines training in the workplace with formal periods of technical training.

## APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY – in development

Communications Technician



**What scope of trade practice is completed by a Communications Technician?** This information is used to develop the training program and will be included in trade regulations under the heading 'Definition'.

- Installing, terminating, interconnecting, inspecting, testing, splicing, troubleshooting, repairing, maintaining or upgrading a communications system or any part of a communications system and includes any of the following functions associated with such a system:
  - (i) design and layout of a communications system or any part of a communications system,
  - (ii) installing any communications cabling supports, except cable trays, conduits or wire ways,
  - (iii) bonding of any communications equipment to the main electrical ground system.

**What is a communications system?**

- A system consisting of cabling and any associated hardware, software, infrastructure, equipment and cabling supports that are required to receive and transmit voice, data, power over the Ethernet, sound or light and may include any of the following types of systems:
  - (i) communications cabling,
  - (ii) intrusion alarm,
  - (iii) nurse call, intercommunications or paging,
  - (iv) wired music,
  - (v) radio,
  - (vi) television,
  - (vii) closed circuit television,
  - (viii) community antenna television.

**There are other requirements of an apprenticeship program including:**

- The minimum ratio of journeypersons to apprentices will be 1 journeyperson to every 2 apprentices.
- The hours for a trade qualifier will be 5400 hours. Trade Qualifiers are individuals who have considerable experience in the trade and do not possess a Certificate of Qualification.
- The wage schedule for each hour worked by a communications technician apprentice is a percentage of the wage for a certified communications technician in the same place of employment, as set out in the following table:

Wages for Communications Technician Apprentice		
Level of Apprenticeship	Hours in Level of Apprenticeship	Minimum Wage (% of journeyperson's wage)
1	0 –1800	50%
2	1801–3600	75%

### Implementation

- The Certificate of Competency for a Communications Cabling Specialist currently issued under the Electrical Code Regulations within the Technical Safety Division will be replaced with a provincial Certificate of Qualification in the Communications Technician trade. This certification will be issued by the Agency to individuals who successfully complete the apprenticeship program and the provincial certification exam.
- Those holding a Certificate of Qualification as a Communications Technician will be eligible to obtain a communications permit as prescribed under the Electrical Code Regulations to complete the work of a Communications Technician.
- Individuals currently holding a Communications Cabling Specialist Certificate of Competency will be issued a Certificate of Qualification in the Communications Technician trade and will continue to be eligible to obtain a communications permit as prescribed under the Electrical Code Regulations.
- Certified Construction Electricians will not be required to obtain a Communications Technician or a Communications Cabling Specialist certification to obtain a communications permit as prescribed under the Electrical Code Regulations.

### Timing

The proposed changes require regulatory amendments to the Electrical Code Regulations and the development of new Communications Technician Trade Regulations. Once consultation is completed, changes are expected to be complete by June 2018.

We are looking for your input on these proposed changes. Please submit your feedback to the following questions by emailing [apprenticeshiptraining@novascotia.ca](mailto:apprenticeshiptraining@novascotia.ca) by February 23, 2018.

1. Does the work identified above for Communications Technicians cover the requirements that should be included in the training and in the trade regulations? If not, please explain.
2. Is there anything that we should be aware of with the transfer of the training and certification of Communications Technicians from the Technical Safety Division to the Agency?
3. What other concerns might you have with the proposed apprenticeship program as presented?