



Consultation Summary

Topic: Proposed annual membership fees
Consultation period: May 4 – June 3, 2012
Total submissions: 444

Background

The Ontario College of Trades (the College) completed a public consultation on its proposed annual membership fees in June, 2012. The consultation included in-person interactions as well as input solicited through an online survey tool. All stakeholders in the College's database were notified of the online consultation by email and the College distributed a news release via Canada Newswire and announced it through a newspaper campaign. Stakeholders were also consulted during in-person presentations made during 28 Trade Board meetings hosted by the College throughout March to June 2012. During those meetings, stakeholders were encouraged to raise awareness of the online consultation within their communities. This consultation used a price range for each proposed class of membership in the College consistent with the following table:

Membership Class	Proposed Annual Membership Fee range
Apprentice	\$50 - \$100 annually
Tradesworker (compulsory and voluntary)	\$50 – \$100 annually
Journeyman	\$100 – \$200 annually
Employer/Sponsor Small (0-5 Trades employees) Medium (6-50 Trades Employees) Large (over 50 Trades Employees)	\$100 - \$200 annually \$200 - \$400 annually \$400 - \$600 annually



Status

The College received 444 submissions in total and an analysis of responses is provided below. All submissions were reviewed by College staff, summarized and presented to the College's Board of Governors. Some of the submissions contained comments that were outside the scope of the annual membership fee consultation (e.g. some comments were about the classes of membership). The College recognizes that many of the "out of scope" comments are about critical issues that may be part of previous or subsequent College consultations or that will be addressed through other College processes.

Outcomes

The following provides a high-level summary of the level of acceptance for the proposed range of annual membership fees and the stakeholder groups that provided input.

In-person:

The in-person presentations with stakeholders resulted in a general understanding and acceptance of the College, its mandate and the fees proposed to ensure its sustainability and ability to deliver on its commitments. These presentations were to Trade Board members between March and June, who are experienced with the trades system and have also received an overview of the College, its mandate, and value proposition.

Online:

Respondents to the online call for input identified themselves against the classes of membership as follows:

- Apprentices and Tradesworkers: 7%
- Journeypersons: 61%
- Employer/Sponsors: 32%

Online respondents offered input that was categorized by the follow levels of acceptance:

- General Acceptance 42%
- General Dissatisfaction 58%

For those who indicated a general acceptance, the following are a sampling of the actual comments received:



1. "I think the proposed fee will benefit its members to receive a better help from Ontario College of Trades."
2. "I am behind this 100 % as the trades in this country need proper recognition, and should be valued based on the work and training. An ongoing training required to maintain their status in the individual trades. The consumer has no idea what is involved in most cases, so along with the regulatory side of this process, it needs to address the public's perception and understanding of these professions - a general advertising budget is an essential part of this process if it is going to be successful. When the potential new members see their representation in the media, it will go a long way to increasing their perceived value of being part of a successful and prominent organization, not unlike the ads for the insurance brokers association explaining why you should deal with a " licensed broker " and the value you receive for their expertise ."
3. "I would definitely be interested in paying fees if the college helps or can provide information on work for apprentices, tradesmen and licensed people are the only ones able to find work."
4. "It seems that these fees are reasonable and within each classes reach".
5. "Seems like a reasonable fee structure which I think is modest when compared to the fee structure of other similar professional bodies. The College governors should strive to keep costs down and avoid becoming a big expensive bureaucracy..."

For those who indicated a general dissatisfaction, the following are a sampling of the actual comments received:

1. "I feel like this is a tax for me to work. What benefits if any will this give other than you are taking more money out of my pocket? I also feel that this is going to drive up prices of the cost of construction and so down an already fragile economy"
2. "My belief is that imposing another fee for employees and employers will continue to drive costs up affecting the overall cost to customers."
3. "I believe in the need for a regulatory body to oversee the various trades. I however do not agree with the fact that the new college of trades will require more financial assistance from its members then the various ministries that currently handle the various trades. I am currently paying \$20.00 per year to maintain my Trade license and now you are asking for a minimum 500% increase to that fee without really explaining



the necessity for the increase. I find that the fee schedule is too high and I am wondering why we have this process at all.”

4. “People will need a clear and concise understanding of why belonging to a College of Trades is important. This will help them understand why they should pay to belong and be okay with the amount you decide as a membership fee. It is the Colleges' job to “sell” themselves to tradespeople. Until you've done that, asking even one dollar from someone will be a challenge.”
5. “This whole thing seems to be a bad idea. I would like to leave things just as they are.”

The key themes that emerged from the consultation include:

1. The value proposition for membership in the College must be more strongly articulated:
 - Especially for voluntary trades.
 - Multiple Certificate of Qualification holders should not require multiple College memberships.
 - More detailed information is required to distinguish the value that can be expected from the College mandate and its services against the current system.
2. It was highly anticipated that regulation and enforcement to be the key deliverables from the College.
3. The Employer/Sponsor class is complex and requires more consideration of the many employment and sponsorship scenarios.
4. Respondents expressed a strong desire for more specific information related to membership, asking: “What are the specific requirements that relate to me?”
 - Personalized notice of the proposed fees requires completion of a data sharing agreement with the Ministry in compliance with privacy laws.
 - The precise effective date for fees requires approval of a regulation (including a public consultation) for the deeming in of members into the College.
 - At the back-end College is working on finalizing regulations and by-laws, and the framework for the College. As soon as this is done, we will start communicating the specifics to members, as we know how important this is.



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Next steps

Further work has been completed and continues to articulate the value proposition for membership in the College aligned to the different perspectives of member candidates. This includes an objective to maintain fees that are the lowest of any regulatory college in Ontario.