

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION REPORT NO.

MEETING DATE: May 24, 2013

SUBJECT: UPDATE - SAFETY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR
CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board endorse the adoption of the Certificate of Recognition (COR™) or equivalent safety programs for TTC construction projects.

BACKGROUND

At the Board meeting held on January 21, 2013, TTC staff reported about a relatively new initiative being implemented by the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association (IHSA) to certify construction contractors in several areas with respect to safety on construction sites and recommended the Board receive a further report on its potential application to TTC construction contracts.

DISCUSSION

The IHSA was founded in January 2010 by amalgamating the Construction Safety Association of Ontario, the Electrical & Utilities Safety Association of Ontario and the Transportation Health and Safety Association of Ontario. One of their initiatives was the introduction of the COR™ program in Ontario.

COR™ is nationally trademarked and endorsed by participating members of the Canadian Federation of Construction Safety Associations (CFCSA) of which the IHSA is a member. It provides employers with an effective tool to assess their health and safety management system. COR™ is aimed at driving positive workplace behaviour and practices that lead to improved performance. It is currently being used across Canada and is a pre-qualification requirement for many contractors bidding for public and private-sector projects. The COR™ program began in Alberta more than 20 years ago. While the bulk of COR™ firms are in construction, the standard is used by major business sectors in Alberta and British Columbia.

The IHSA is the not-for-profit organization that grants COR™ in the province of Ontario. In achieving this national safety program accreditation in Ontario, IHSA is responsible to ensure that the COR™ standards are upheld. IHSA certify contractors in Ontario workplaces who demonstrate their standards of health and safety management systems through a structured audit process. COR™ provides validation to constructors and owners that the contractor demonstrates they are controlling hazards and risks on their work sites through the on-going

development of appropriate standards, employee communications and training, as well as regular reviews. The COR™ certification process includes construction work site field audits involving interviews with workers, construction residents and management to ensure they are aware of and follow safe workplace practices. There are nominal fees associated with a contractor obtaining and maintaining COR™ which average \$2,000 initially and \$1,000 per year thereafter. Renewal of COR™ is required every three years.

The CFCSA and the Ontario General Contractors Association (OGCA) are fully supportive of this program and are promoting it to its membership and are confident that the majority of its member contractors will have the certification over the next few years. Various Canadian municipalities and provinces already require COR™ or an audited comparable safety program as a pre-qualification to bidding, including the Governments of Manitoba, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The IHSA is currently focusing on leaders who will assist in implementing COR™ in Ontario commencing with public transit organizations, municipal governments, public utilities, educational institutions and health care providers and are looking for those leaders to adapt this standard. Specifically, in addition to TTC, the IHSA is also working with other leaders in the province including Metrolinx and Infrastructure Ontario. Currently, there are over twenty certified COR™ contractors and over two hundred registered contractors in the process of obtaining certification in Ontario.

TTC staff plan on implementing the safety certification program COR™, in a phased in approach. By achieving COR™, TTC contractors can demonstrate that their health and safety management system has been developed, implemented and evaluated on an annual basis through comprehensive internal review and third party external audits. The TTC's construction bid documents will include COR™ as a pre-qualification safety criterion in order to bid on construction capital projects starting initially with contracts estimated at greater than \$25 million, by a target date of July 1, 2014. The next target will be January 1, 2015 for any construction contracts valued at greater than \$5M with full implementation of the COR™ requirement for all construction contracts regardless of value by January 1, 2016. TTC staff will continue discussions with IHSA and may adjust the target dates to ensure the number of certified contractors is considered sufficient to allow for competitive bidding of construction work.

Although TTC will be rolling out the COR™ requirement over the next couple of years, this additional safety requirement will supplement the current safety requirements which include requesting a WSIB Clearance Certificate, confirming the contractor is in good standing with the WSIB, as a condition of award and ensuring no work on a construction site can commence until a specific site safety plan has been submitted and approved by TTC.

TTC staff will undertake a communication plan that will make contractors aware of its intention to implement COR™ by issuing notification to all current and previous TTC contractors, advising the OGCA and IHSA, including information letters with all outgoing bid documents, and updating the TTC website to reflect the adoption of COR™ for its construction projects. TTC staff will initiate the communication plan upon receipt of Board COR™ endorsement.

JUSTIFICATION

The endorsement of COR™ will ensure future construction contractors for TTC projects have a third-party audited safety plan in place in order to be considered for an award of contract for TTC construction work.

May 24, 2013
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