

IBEW



Local 230

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March 11, 2020

Industry Training Authority
800-8100 Granville Avenue
Richmond, BC V6Y 3T6

Attention: Shelley Gray
CEO

Re: Electric Motor System Technician (Winder Electrician)

Dear Ms. Gray:

I'm writing you with great concern in regards to recent information I received expressing the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) intention to de-designate the Electric Motor System Technician (Winder Electrician) as a Red Seal Trade. I understand the technical training portion of a Motor Winding apprenticeship hasn't existed in British Columbia in any practical terms for decades, however the administrative supports to pursue an apprenticeship in motor winding has, and that support has been provided by the ITA.

Local 230 has sponsored 17 Motor Winder Apprentices over the past 10 years. Most have attended their technical training at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) in Calgary. They work full time, and attain their on the job training in various motor winding shops throughout their communities on Vancouver Island. The apprentices, Journey Winders, and their employers all contribute to the local, Provincial and Federal tax base, and economy while earning a good living at their trade. They also support other tertiary trades such as machinists, welders, carpenters and more in their respective shops.

In consideration of the age demographic of our current motor winders, alongside our current aging winding infrastructure or machinery would dictate that, it would be prudent to maintain this same level of training for the next decade, and possibly increase it.

The resource industry is highly dependent on this niche section of the electrical industry. British Columbia's primary power source is generated from water running through turbines which turn an armature internal to a generator, creating electricity while in motion through principles of induction during a varying electro-magnetic field. A generator is a motor by design with the purpose to create electricity as opposed to using electricity to perform a function.

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Private employers today keep BC Hydro generators producing electricity, by maintaining, refurbishing or replacing these large generators. The resource industries are highly reliant on motors to keep their plants, mines and mills running. When one of these very large motors fail, they require immediate attention and repair, as the longer the motor is not running the longer the plant, mine or mill is literally shut-down. When they are not producing whatever they are in business to produce, essentially, they are out of business until the failed motor is often taken apart to replace bearings, a coil, or it could be as extensive as a complete re-wind.

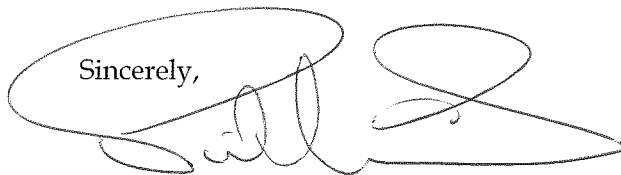
Marine vessels are highly reliant on motors and generators to operate and function, and experienced motor winders to keep them in operation. I raise this with you as our Province is experiencing a resurgence in the marine shipbuilding and repair industry, and on the verge of an industrial wave over the next decade like our Province has not seen in almost half a century. At the same time a significant portion of the skilled motor winders are baby boomers and setting to retire. To abandon one of the most important and highly skilled trades required in the environment of an industrial boom, while a good portion of the workers in this field are considering retirement would be a soup sandwich.

Although this trade requires less qualified trades workers, it is just as complex and adheres to the same scientific standards and principles as construction or industrial electricians. To decide a trade no longer should be designated as "Red Seal" solely due to an arbitrary number of set apprentices is simplistic and sends the wrong message to industry and everyone who works within it. This same thinking would de-designate brain surgeons and remove their M.D. status as there just not enough of them. This move to de-designate also does the apprentices financial harm as they will no longer have current scholarships and grants available to them. This of course is compounded by the fact many apprentices have to travel out-of-province to obtain their technical schooling.

We implore you to take our concerns back to the CCDA so they may carefully consider their current direction. Further, to consult with the stakeholders in the industry, as I do not recall any request for submissions, or for me to attend a meeting of stakeholders. Lastly, I would request that the provincial ITA's reinstate the administrative work performed by the ITA's to continue to service motor winder apprentices until a full national canvass of industry stakeholders can be used to determine the right direction, and minimally until the end of the calendar year 2024, while at the same time honouring all current apprentices enrolled in the trade today, with the idea to phase out the program allowing for all current registered Electric Motor System Technicians to finish with a Red Seal in their chosen trade. This will allow for the provinces to figure out what work they need to do, to continue with trade programming.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this correspondence, please do not hesitate to contact me in our business office.

Sincerely,



Philip Venoit
Business Manager/
Financial Secretary

CC. Melissa Young, E.D. NETCO
Tom Reid, IBEW V.P. Canada

PMV/ec
MoveUp