SPECIAL FEATURE

GENERAL & TRADE CONTRACTING

March 5, 2018

www.journalofcommerce.com

Journal of Commerce
by ConstructConnect™
ICI calls on Ottawa to reject B.C. attempt to stall pipeline

PETER CAULFIELD

Christopher Gardner, president of the Independent Contractors and Businesses Association of British Columbia (ICI), says he is fed up waiting for construction to begin on the controversial Alberta-to-B.C. Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline. “It’s time to get to work on this project,” said Gardner. “This pipeline is in the national interest, which is why the federal cabinet approved it in the first place.”

Gardner says all of the issues raised by George Heyman, B.C. Minister of Environment and Climate Change, have been already addressed in the 29-month-long Trans Mountain approval process by the federal government and endorsed by the provincial government.

“This is simply a stalling tactic meant to flout the federal government’s jurisdiction,” said Gardner. “It’s time for Prime Minister Trudeau to act.”

Gardner’s call to arms was in response to the B.C. government’s recent announcement that it has formed a committee to look at environmental impacts of pipelines.

The ICI says that ground was already covered during the Trans Mountain approval process, and after millions of tax dollars have been invested in spill response.

ICI recently added some rhetorical arrows to its quiver when it launched an email campaign through its Get2Yes website platform to move Trans Mountain along.

“The campaign started in early February and has already generated more than 2,000 emails in support of the pipeline to the B.C. government,” said Jordan Bateman, ICI director of communications.

Bateman says the ICI plans to continue the campaign “until it’s successful.”

“Sometimes politicians change their minds,” he said. “There’s always hope.”

The ICI also sent an open letter in support of the pipeline to Premier John Horgan.

Signatories to the letter, in addition to the ICI, were the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, the Business Council of British Columbia and the BC Chamber of Commerce.

Also in support of the Trans Mountain pipeline extension is the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada (PCA). “Canadians’ energy producers already adhere to the highest safety and environmental standards,” said Regghard van Enter, PCA regional director for British Columbia. “Pipelines are critical to Canada’s energy development and economy. Thwarting the transportation of Western Canadian oil to global energy markets is not in the best interests of British Columbians or Canadians.”

van Enter says the PCA has spoken to all of the parties in the dispute.

“We have talked to federal Minister of Natural Resources Jim Carr twice — he was positive about getting the pipeline built — to the Alberta government, and, indirectly, to the B.C. government.”

It is unclear how or when the stand-off will be resolved.

After BC called for further review of the oil-spill risk from the pipeline expansion, the Alberta government retaliated by boycotting all imports of wines from British Columbia.

The latest move in this political chess game, as of late February, has BC taking the wine boycott to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement.

PETER KENTER

The British Columbia construction workforce requires new recruits. A new program, The Shift, aims to help identify them among more than 1,000 young people who transition out of care in the province each year and begin their training for construction work—including helping them obtain a driver’s license.

“While in care, these young people are part of a supported environment, but when they become adults, they may lose their entire support system,” says Abigail Fulton, executive director of the Construction Foundation of B.C.

“Our program aims to connect with youth before and after their transition out of care to help them develop skills and abilities that will lead to a future in the construction industry.”

The foundation, which grew out of the B.C. Construction Association, has flexed plenty of charitable muscle in recent years. Its first initiative, Project Shop Class, has already raised and distributed more than $3 million in grants, to buy up-to-date tools and equipment for school shops.

“We’ve had a growing presence in the kindergarten to Grade 12 system,” says Fulton.

“That’s the area where we’re concentrating our charitable efforts, so that we can help support not only the next generation of construction workers, but help students to become employable and connect with all sorts of industries before they leave school.”

The Shift helps youth transitioning out of care to qualify for a job, so that they can begin an apprenticeship in any of the skilled construction trades.

“If you have the skills to get that first job, you can earn money while in apprenticeship,” says Fulton. “For kids leaving care, an apprenticeship is an opportunity to make money while going to school is particularly advantageous.”

The Shift will focus on achievements at schools students can put on their resume before they leave school, using the charity’s online FutureBuilder tool as a guide. These include earning safety certificates as well as developing important business skills, such as crafting a solid resume and application letter.

“Hopefully, after the charity canvassed its ‘catalysts’ — program supporters who work in high schools, but also provide a bridge to the construction industry — a driver’s license was identified as one of the most important items an applicant required to succeed. The Shift program begins with that goal.”

While attaining a driver’s license was once considered a prime pursuit among high school students, a cultural shift has seen younger Cana- dians taking less interest in owning or driving a car.

“If you’re going into the trades, you’d better have a way to get to a job, and often public transit or car hire apps aren’t going to get you there,” says Fulton. “Many companies also require workers to use company vehicles. Simply showing up for your interview with a driver’s license is indicative of some effort on the part of the applicant.”

In part funded by grant money from charitable organization the Victoria Foundation, The Shift is partnering with a driver’s training school to help participants earn their licenses.

“We have other construction association partners that we’re working with to help them further develop construction skills,” says Fulton. “Hopefully we will then help them get their first jobs. Even after a student continues into apprenticeship, we plan for The Shift team to continue to provide mentorship and funding support for tuition if it’s needed.”

The construction Foundation of B.C.’s newest effort is a program called Shift which teaches prospective construction workers how to drive.

The Construction Foundation of B.C.’s newest effort is a program called Shift which teaches prospective construction workers how to drive.
The BC CSA has developed the Silica Control Tool as a resource for the construction industry in BC. The Tool assists employers in conducting appropriate risk assessments and implementing effective controls and safe work practices where RCS dust may be an occupational hazard. The Tool identifies processes that may lead to exposures over the allowable exposure control limit, provides information about how to bring the exposure within the allowable limit, and produces a corresponding Exposure Control Plan (ECP) for the user.

**WHAT DOES IT DO?**

The Tool guides the user step-by-step for each of their identified RCS dust producing processes through:

- Assessment of the risk from exposure
- Identification of the expected exposure
- Suggestions for appropriate controls
- Identification of expected exposure with the controls
- Any PPE that may be required
- Production of components of a related Exposure Control Plan (ECP)

**EMPLOYERS’ KEY BENEFITS**

- Help to ensure the health & safety of workers engaged in RCS dust producing processes.
- Assist in complying with the requirements of the OHS Regulation relating to assessing & controlling RCS dust exposures to below the allowable exposure limit.
- In some situations, eliminate the need for air monitoring tests for planned work processes, which is particularly helpful given that testing can often be challenging on construction sites because of short duration of work, and changing nature of activities.
- Preparation of specific process-based ECP templates that can be tailored for each jobsite.

The BC CSA Silica Control Tool can be a valuable aid to qualified persons in conducting RCS dust risk assessments, selecting and implementing controls and developing ECPs. However, the Tool is NOT a replacement for professional advice or jobsite air monitoring tests as may be needed. Jobsites and construction projects can be highly complex with unique variables and ever changing nature of work. The Tool does not purport to provide a conclusive output for every possible RCS dust producing process. Employers are ultimately responsible for taking whatever steps are needed to ensure that the requirements of the OHS Regulation are met.
Forever monuments: Set in Stone creates projects for eternity

Kevin Elliott of Set in Stone says one his most challenging projects was engraving this rock entrance sign near Yellowknife in 2011.

PETER KENTER CORRESPONDENT

he owner of Set in Stone would never have started a stone engraving business if it weren’t for the ongoing softwood lumber dispute between Canada and the U.S.

“My family owned a logging business and the U.S. slapped a tariff on the lumber we produced,” Kevin Elliott recalls. “My family left Alberta and returned to B.C. to begin quarrying rock. I also got into rock, but I tried with a one-year-old baby I was all-in on the business, which went all-in on the business, which id never worked with,” he says.

Elliott had an affinity for art and had worked at a sign shop during his high school years. Newly married with a one-year-old baby he went all in on the business, which launched in Calgary in 1999. “I had a $500 credit card and bought a sand blaster,” he says. “A lot of stone memorials are currently imported,” he says. “That doesn’t seem right to me when you could choose a rock from Canadian soil. When people select a rock to bring to me, it comes with a personal story. They remember the details of choosing the rock, who was with them, whether it was raining that day and all sorts of other details. Rocks have their own personality, but for these projects, the client’s story becomes part of it.”

Kevin Elliott recently purchased a diamond-toothed dragshaw to shape and create engraved stones for clients, that will commemorate the engraved letters to “read true and clean.”

Elliott initially purchased stone engraved in them. “My family owned a logging business and the U.S. slapped a tariff on the lumber we produced, “ he says. “More than a dozen years ago I was working on a project for a golf course and completed hand cut templates for all of the tee markers and yardage signs. I realized then that I didn’t want to hand cut another template. Instead, I bought a plotter that converts computer designs into ready-cut templates after I push the ‘send’ button.”

Elliott went all-in on the business, which id never worked with,” he says. “I knew that if the template messed up, I wouldn’t be able to produce another one. I bought every bag of sand available in Yellowknife that day, so I knew there would be no margin for error. I’m happy to say that the job was a success.”

Elliott went all-in on the business, which id never worked with,” he says. “I knew that if the template messed up, I wouldn’t be able to produce another one. I bought every bag of sand available in Yellowknife that day, so I knew there would be no margin for error. I’m happy to say that the job was a success.”

Elliott went all-in on the business, which id never worked with,” he says. “I knew that if the template messed up, I wouldn’t be able to produce another one. I bought every bag of sand available in Yellowknife that day, so I knew there would be no margin for error. I’m happy to say that the job was a success.”

Elliott went all-in on the business, which id never worked with,” he says. “I knew that if the template messed up, I wouldn’t be able to produce another one. I bought every bag of sand available in Yellowknife that day, so I knew there would be no margin for error. I’m happy to say that the job was a success.”

Elliott went all-in on the business, which id never worked with,” he says. “I knew that if the template messed up, I wouldn’t be able to produce another one. I bought every bag of sand available in Yellowknife that day, so I knew there would be no margin for error. I’m happy to say that the job was a success.”