

**Accreditation is the process by which an agency, council or association gives official recognition to a training center, which meets pre-determined required standards.**

*There are few accredited training centers and certified instructors in Canada delivering training programs to meet the needs of the trucking industry for qualified truck drivers. Many feel that providing accreditation and certification standards would improve the quality of professional drivers.*

## Introduction

There are good training curriculums in Canada. Some of the better known ones includes: CTHRC's "Earning Your Wheels" (EYW) and Professional Truck Driver Institute's curriculum. And there are also excellent curriculums being used by truck driver training schools in many parts of the country including: Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. However, accreditation of training centers and certification of instructors vary widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

It is often said that in Canada, the vast majority of training that is carried out is driven by:

- What a student can pay
- What the market will bear and what can be funded
- Minimum amount of time to be able to pass the test

Consequently, some industry stakeholders believe that provincial driver license standards must be increased to a level that will require schools to train to a higher standard.

Most agree that it is a motor carrier's responsibility to properly assess the candidates they are hiring. Many transport fleets do have testing procedures in place.

CTHRC and the trucking industry have developed National Occupational Standards for the four key positions of:

- Professional Driver
- Dispatcher
- Professional Driver Trainer
- Transportation Safety Professional

These standards cover what a person needs to know to do the job. As well as technical skills it looks at the essential skills required to be successful.

Structured Provincial training programs based on a standard curriculum exist in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Manitoba.

Ontario has recently announced that it is moving to a voluntary apprenticeship format for training new commercial drivers, a new direction with significant promise to provide the carrier industry with qualified first time commercial drivers.

The program basics are:

- Apprenticeship registration with a training agreement between Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, employer and apprentice for 2,000 hours of training (1 year)
- 40 Weeks of on-the-job training
- 12 Weeks of one-on-one on the job training
- Competency based training standard with performance outcomes

Alberta has been working on a Professional Driver Certificate Program that is expected to be implemented in the spring of 2006 and delivered through a community college working with private training schools. The program will provide graduates with eh competencies, skills and experience necessary in entry-level professional driver positions. The program basics are:

- Professional Driving 110 –in-class and in-cab training (85 hrs of theory, 60 hrs behind the wheel and 50 hrs observation)
- Professional Driving 120 – driving practicum with a coach/mentor (25 hrs theory, 240 hrs practicum)
- Professional Driving 130 – paid co-op work experience under direction of professional driver (600 hrs).

## Background on Accreditation

CTHRC's study Review of Truck Driver Training Schools revealed that there are more than 200 truck driving training schools in Canada. The breakdown of schools is as follows:

### *Distribution of Driving Schools in Canada by province*

<b>Province</b>	<b>Number of schools</b>
Atlantic	15
Quebec	32
Ontario	48
Manitoba	11
Saskatchewan	13
Alberta	34
British Columbia	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>

## Training Schools Accreditation

There are probably more than 206 schools in Canada delivering some form of training for truck drivers. That number was a “best estimate” approach at the time. It is estimated that half of the truck driving training schools fall outside of any licensing or registration process and would be considered not regulated. Most operate only within provincial boundaries.

There is no uniform accreditation approach for dealing with truck driver training schools in Canada. In some Provinces truck driver training schools may be regulated by more than one agency. See Appendix A

Truck driver training schools across Canada can, in fact, fall under three categories:

- Schools that are licensed
- Schools that are registered
- Schools that are not regulated

These categories can co-exist within a Province/Territory

Training ranges from a few hours until the student feels they can pass the required tests to an average of 157 hours and can reach 615 hours in the case of Quebec Ministry of Education schools.

Instructors fall under various guidelines depending on the category the schools fall under. Obviously, the non-regulated schools have no standards to follow and the licensed schools have to abide by strict standards.

***The auditing of schools varies from Province to Province and is non-existent for the schools that are not regulated.***

Short of accrediting schools those interviewed have mentioned the idea that at the very least the trainers in the schools should be certified according to industry standards and validated by the industry organizations.

The CTHRC offers an accreditation of truck driver training schools. CTHRC's accreditation guidelines are attached as Appendix B. Only a few schools have gone through their process and are accredited by the CTHRC.

### **What are the limitations of the existing programs?**

The issue of the cost implications related to accreditation is raised immediately as an issue that must be looked at for any accreditation system. If accreditation means programs with more training hours or newer equipment for training then the cost of training will likely go up.

Of the new commercial licenses issued only about 50% of these are issued to people who went through any formal training system delivered by a truck driving training school. The rest take training at an hourly rate or with a “friend” and then go on to pass the government written and driving tests in order to obtain their Class 1/AZ license.

Information gathered from previous studies showed that truck driver training schools are provincial entities and respond well to provincial initiatives. For many, their interest in any national initiative may be limited. This then brings the need for alliances and partnership in implementing industry criteria.

Appendix C shows the wide diversity of programs for the certification of trainers. For many Provinces no standards exist.

## Jurisdictional Issues

The multitude of players involved across Canada in the accreditation process makes it very difficult to establish national uniform government or industry standards. In some provinces, Ministries of Education are involved, in others it is the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and in others it is another department. It does not appear that there are linkages between those various organizations at any inter-provincial level.

Training and education is a provincial jurisdiction and therefore it is and would be difficult for the Federal Government to see a role in any accreditation processes.

## Importance of meeting Industry requirements

CTHRC has developed National Occupational Standards for Professional Driver Trainers. The standards look at not only things like technical skills, but also some “softer” skills like communication, professionalism and dealing with others. This could be the base for discussions leading to the certification process for training school instructors.

***Some Provinces have also developed good standards that can be used to build a new approach for the certification of trainers.***

The idea of a registry containing the list of truck driver training schools and a detailed inventory of their programs, qualifications of trainers and equipment used for the training may be useful for the industry and for the new trainees as well. This registry would be Internet accessible and should be updated periodically.

## Discussion

Through the interview process for this paper several common themes developed from motor carriers and truck driver training schools.

### ***Important changes that need to occur were identified as:***

- a) A national standard for school curriculum and instructor training;
- b) Trucking industry support of national standards;
- c) Government's will to make changes to have a national uniform standard;
- d) It is imperative that both levels of government take leading roles in making the necessary changes to fund the implementation costs of the delivery of training to the standard;
- e) The NOC assigned to trucking needs to be reviewed to recognize the diversity of the industry.

There is a need to change existing training school accreditation to establish a minimum standard for the schools and the instructors. There also needs to be an audit process and the results of such audits should be published.

Curriculums need to place more emphasis on understanding the regulations, such as the new tie-down regulations, dangerous goods and not just what to know to pass the driven part of a driver-licensing test.

There should be a standard for training the instructors for the schools. Most have been driving commercial vehicles for at least five years, however there is little to no training undertaken to teach them how to be an instructor.

Ontario's recent announcement regarding the establishment of a voluntary apprenticeship program meet with a favorable response by all those interviewed however there was not enough information available to make a proper assessment.

The respondents mentioned a number of benefits and risks of having an accreditation of truck driver training schools and a certification of instructors. They are as follows:

### ***Benefits***

The benefit most frequently identified was that first time commercial drivers will be trained to an improved standard that carriers can have confidence in it when hiring.

Commercial driving training would receive better recognition.

Independent training of instructors under a recognized program and delivered through community colleges would benefit the driver training schools.

Audited curriculum and training schools will assure carriers and students that training is delivered properly. Trucking fleets may be inclined to support training that is regularly audited

### ***Risks***

There is a risk that increased standards and increased costs for training may discourage those interested in commercial driving as a career option in taking the training.

Some of the current instructors may not be able to qualify as an instructor when standards are increased and most schools will need financial support to make changes to a higher national standard.

## Summary

There is unified support among the respondents we interviewed for a national minimum standard for accreditation of training centers and a registry listing the centers with the curriculum they deliver, the facilities they offer and the qualifications of the instructors delivering the training. There is also general support for a certification of instructors.

Should schools be accredited, the assumption is that tuition fees would increase and there then needs to be recognition of the fees paid by students in the form of a tax credit similar to the credits for tuition fees at community colleges and universities.

Training schools may need to be compensated through tax credit so that they can afford to make the necessary changes in order to meet increased standards.

Technology is used for monitoring purposes on special permits and the results are positive. There is a significant cost to a carrier to have one-on-one in-cab coaching taking place. Therefore, maybe there is a need to explore the use of alternative ways such as electronic in-cab driver management systems to extend the evaluation of new drivers.

### *Questions for discussion*

2.8.1 Can a national registry providing information to trucking fleets, government funding agencies and new trainees dealing with the following items be established:

- The identification of the curriculum used for training
- The technical description of the equipment used for the training
- The qualifications of the instructors
- The physical description of the facilities

Can an accreditation of training schools standard be established and implemented nationally or by Province?

Can the CTHRC standard for Professional Driver Trainer be implemented across Canada in all Provinces and Territories for training schools instructors? Can a certification process be developed and under what time frame? In Provinces like Nova Scotia and Quebec there are Sector Councils that can probably be used for the development of standards and processes. Sector-like councils in Alberta and Ontario could also become involved.

Appendix A

## Organizations Responsible for Accreditation Certification/Licensing of Truck Driver Training Schools and Listing of Some of the Criteria (2002)

Jurisdiction	Organizations	Criteria for accreditation/certification
Nfld & Lab	Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education	Not an accreditation but a registration program Time requirement for types of equipment / Student ratio specified / Course outline specified/ Instructors qualifications
PEI	Department of Education	Certify schools Private Training Schools Regulations stipulate: - Rules on tuition / fees / refunds / formal contract with students / advertising /security bond - Must ensure that students are capable of taking the training - Curriculum and learning material must be within mainstream of provincial or national industry standards Trainers must be licensed
	Department of Transportation & Public Works	Instructors must be licensed according to provincial licensing requirements
NS	Department of Education	Certify schools looking at curriculum and other factors
	Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations	Schools and Instructors are licensed and covered under Motor Vehicle Act of Nova Scotia
NB	Department of Public Safety	Certify schools in conjunction with Department of Training and Employment Development. (DTED). DTED registers schools and requires security bonds. Once registration by DTED is issued then Registrar licenses school. Requirements included in Motor Vehicle Act: Regulates equipment / insurance / contract with students / classroom / files to be maintained / size of range and course content
QC	Ministère de l'Éducation	Certify schools to deliver Ministry's curriculum Stipulate facilities / yard / vehicles / instructor's qualifications / curriculum content and hours per subject
	Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec	Accreditation process for schools wishing to deliver driver licenses Stipulate instructor's qualifications, hours of training, type of equipment, facilities
ON	Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities	All schools offering career training must be registered as a private career college Registration of a college under the Act means that it has met the minimum requirements set out in Regulation 939, as amended under the Act, regarding curricula, teacher qualifications, advertising, and refund policies.

## Appendix A cont'd

Jurisdiction	Organizations	Criteria for accreditation/certification
MB	Private Vocational Schools Administration	Registration program covered by Private Vocational Schools Act Instructor training delivered by Manitoba Trucking Association
SK	Saskatchewan Government Insurance	Certify schools Security bond / certificate of liability insurance / copy of vehicle registration / copy of course curriculum / Business name registration / Résumés of instructors
AB	Alberta Infrastructure	License school Security bond / Vehicles insured / keep records for 2 years of each student trained / List of instructors and vehicles / List requirements set for maximum time for in-vehicle and classroom training / Minimum driver training curriculum
BC	Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC)	Security bond/ provide contract to students / keep records of students trained for 3 years/ applicant's qualifications are prescribed / instructor's standards / types of vehicles used for training prescribed / curriculum may be set by ICBC
	Private Post Secondary Education Commission	Advertising and tuition fees rules for student protection
YK	Department of Community & Transportation Services	Although the Department of Education does the certification of schools it is the senior Driver Examiner at the Department of Transportation who reviews the criteria
NWT	Department of Transport	NWT does not regulate driving schools
NU	NUN/A	No schools

## Appendix B

# Scope of CTHRC's Accreditation Program (2005)

CTHRC's accreditation program focuses on truck training institutes. In particular, CTHRC's accreditation program assesses: the quality and qualification of instruction, the methods used to train drivers, the institute where training is provided, and provision of training that leads to students meeting an entry level requirement, based on National Occupational Standards for Professional Drivers.

CTHRC will only accredit a training institute and its satellite institutes that are under common ownership, have the same policies and procedures, and carry the same insurance policy. It is an expectation of accreditation that an accredited training institute must operate in compliance with CTHRC's standards at all times. When a training institute operates at multiple, fixed training sites, all sites must be in compliance with CTHRC's standards at all times.

Students who complete training at an accredited institute have the assurance that the institute offers a certified curriculum, and must be notified prior to training whether or not the curriculum is CTHRC certified. Only the curriculum that has been certified is part of CTHRC's accreditation program; if other, un-certified curricula are also offered at the training institute, it is not part of the accreditation program and the quality of the curricula are not ensured.

It is the responsibility of the accredited training institute to inform students as to whether the curriculum they are enrolled in is certified. Students must sign a form indicating that they have been advised of the benefits of attending an accredited institute, and taking a certified curriculum. Should a training institute falsely represent certification of a curriculum, accreditation standing may be revoked.

CTHRC accreditation is designed to ensure that training programs are in compliance with CTHRC national standards for training programs.

All Canadian truck training institutes, both public and private, are eligible to apply for accreditation of their trucking industry training programs. Private schools include those operated by unions, trucking companies and training institutes. Prerequisites for training institutes who wish to be accredited are that they must have access to the necessary institutes, staffing and infrastructure for carrying out training, as established in CTHRC's standards, and that they must use a certified curriculum.

CTHRC has continued to increase focus on learning outcomes and standards, and in keeping with its support of performance-based evaluation, the CTHRC has established a formal system for "recognizing" programs or curricula that meet National Occupational Standards for Entry Level Professional Truck Drivers. By recognized curriculum, the CTHRC is not recognizing that two curricula are "equivalent", but rather that they are comparable, and are based on national standards.

The CTHRC expects that training institutes that offer “recognized” curriculum must be accountable for the curriculum they develop and deliver, and offer an assurance about the continued quality of their training. To this end, quality assurance and evaluation, via the CTHRC National Accreditation Program, continues to be a critical component - ensuring the quality of driver training.

## Appendix C

### Accreditation of Training Centers and Certification of Instructors by Province/Territory (2002)

Jurisdiction	Number of Schools Certified	Number of Vocational Private Schools	Instructor Standards	Audited	Accreditation/Certification	
					Renewed	Transferable with ownership change
Nfld & Lab		6	Combination of training and experience and not more than 4 demerit points for past 2 years	Annually	Yearly	No
PEI	2		Combination of training and experience and Ministry of Transport standards	Annually	Yearly	Yes
	Nil		Must pass Transport licensing test			
NS	2		Legislated standards	Annually	Yearly	No
	Same as above		Instructor License renewable yearly	Random	Yearly	No
NB	10		License Instructors / Specify conditions and Instructor's course given by schools licensed by Registrar	Annually	Yearly	No
QC	2 Ministry of Education schools and 4 Private schools		Instructors must have teacher's diploma (Bachelor or Certificate)	Every 3 years	Valid for 3 years and renewable every 5 years thereafter	Authorized by Ministry
	2 Ministry of Education Schools		Instructors must be accredited	Only at time of first accreditation	Valid for 2 years	N/A
ON		50	No requirements	Random inspection	Yearly	No
MN		10	Training or experience	No	Yearly	No

Jurisdiction	Number of Schools Certified	Number of Vocational Private Schools	Instructor Standards	Audited	Accreditation/Certification	
					Renewed	Transferable with ownership change
SK	10		Cerified by SGI Instructor's course delivered by College (SIASST)	Every year	Yearly	No
AB	34		No	Every 2 years	Yearly	Yes
BC	40		Licensed by IOBC	Yes but based on school history	Yearly	No
YK	2		No	No (only when a problem arises)	Valid as long as the school is in operation	No
NWT						
NU						