



P R E S S R E L E A S E

The five regional building material retail associations take strategic measures to better defend their 2,400 member merchants and suppliers' interests

Mississauga, April 15, 2016 – After a general meeting on April 14 and 15, 2016 in Mississauga, Ontario, executives of the five regional material retail associations forming the Canadian Retail Building Supply Council (CRBSC) voted in favour of changes that mark a turning point toward the representation of 2,400 member merchants and of their suppliers.

“Founded in the mid-1980s, the umbrella organization established its mission without taking into account the means of achieving it,” explains Council President Richard Darveau.

The group has always acted as a forum in which member organisations exchange ideas, information and practices that benefit the entire industry. The revised rationale behind the CRBSC is to represent the industry in the public place, especially at the federal government level, while proactively addressing national issues.

Legal existence and resources

The first decision taken was to forgo the informal model and incorporate the CRBSC in accordance with the Canada not-for-profit corporations Act.

The second decision pertained resource allocation. The organization’s headquarters will be based in Ottawa and will count on five regional offices: Surrey (BC), Winnipeg (MN), Mississauga (ON), Longueuil (QC), and Dieppe (NB). The budget will consist of funds specific to each founding association and the industry.

The weight of home renovation on the economy and society

Regional delegates have come together to document the recent federal tax credits to stimulate renovation activity in terms of impacts on the society, the economy and the public finances. The goal is to objectively discuss which measures to take in the future with the ministers involved. An independent economist and tax specialist will carry out a study.

A step toward a truly national conference

With this fourth decision taken in Mississauga, CRBSC and its five founding Associations give their official endorsement to the Annual Hardlines Conference so the Canadian industry will enjoy an event that is both worthy of its vitality and scale, and in line with the challenges it currently faces. Therefore, changes in image and organisation of this Conference are expected starting the 22nd edition scheduled for the fall of 2017.

Also on the menu: recruitment and training

We also addressed the personnel recruitment, the most poignant problem faced to ensure the successful development of hardware stores and renovation centres throughout Canada. A broad approach - consisting of treating personnel from a career perspective - will give member companies concrete tools to select employees. A national hiring campaign will subsequently be launched.

Online training for renovation and construction project quoting will also be available starting this fall, at better conditions than similar in-class training sessions.

Accordingly, the minimalist website (www.crbsc.ca) will be improved with the addition of several modules, including a press area allowing to follow our organisation's actions.

The last formal meeting between all five associations took place in Ottawa in 2012. There will now be two statutory meetings per year, in addition to two conference calls. The next meetings will take place on October 19-20 in Niagara Falls, and in May at North Hatley in Quebec.

Richard Darveau concludes: "We have just taken big step toward implementing real resources within the CRBSC, allowing the latter to fulfill its promises and more importantly, to meet the expectations clearly set by banners, manufacturers, distributors, and by hardware and home improvement store owners that make up our global membership".

About the five regional associations

ATLANTIC:

Atlantic Building Supply Dealers Association (www.ABSDA.ca), Dieppe, New Brunswick

QUEBEC:

Quebec Hardware and Building Supply Association (www.AQMAT.org), Longueuil, Quebec

ONTARIO:

Lumber and Building Materials Association of Ontario (www.LBMAO.on.ca), Mississauga, On

PRAIRIES:

Western Retail Lumber Association (www.WRLA.org), Winnipeg, Manitoba

BRITISH COLUMBIA:

Building Supply Industry Association of BC (www.BSIABC.ca), Surrey, B.C.

Photo legend:

A common front working toward the fulfillment of a pan Canadian organization's mission, from West to East: Brad McCluskie and Thomas Foreman from BSIA, Gary Hamilton, Mark Westrum and Tom Bell from WRLA, Ron Schell, Ken Forbes and David W. Campbell from LBMAO, Richard Darveau and Nicolas Couture from AQMAT, Chris Deveaux and Denis Melanson from ABSDA.