

TLA VISION: COLLABORATION & DIVERSIFICATION



Part of writing a President's Message is reflecting on our efforts since the last edition of the magazine. This is an enjoyable time to revisit the past few months and realize the progress we have made. The TLA is fast becoming known as a proactive force within the industry, our coastal communities and the media.

Providing continuous member benefits and support through well-orchestrated plans drives our association and the many volunteers that help us every day. With this in mind, we have completed our strategic planning session and are finalizing our strategic plan. I would like to publically thank all those who attended and volunteered additional time away from their businesses for this process. A vision and clear direction is what will pave the way for success in our advocacy work.

I recently attended the ILA 57th Annual Conference and Trade Show in Vernon. To show our support for the ILA, we held a TLA board meeting in conjunction with this event. It was a huge success with most of our board in attendance. After the TLA board meeting, the ILA and NWLA boards joined us for further discussion. This meeting was instigated by the executives of the three associations in an effort to build our voice when speaking to government, licensees and communities.

This historic meeting dispelled some longstanding myths and presented a real opportunity for collaboration both during the convention and moving forward. All three associations attended a meeting with Minister Thomson during the convention and our common message was heard loud and clear. The Minister acknowledged that the joint meeting created a powerful, united front for the contracting community. We made it clear we are here to do business and provide realistic solutions with contractor sustainability at the core.

Another area the TLA remains focused on is safety. Our Safety, Training and Industrial Relations (STIR) com-

mittee worked hand-in-hand with our Education committee to launch a new project in May. Until December 2015, up to 12 TLA member employees can apply to receive reimbursement for their Occupational First Aid Level Three registration fee and a bursary of \$1,000 in additional financial support upon the successful completion of the course. This initiative is part of a results-based focus by Ted Beutler, Chair of STIR and Dave McNaught, Chair of Education and their committees. The project is designed to assist smaller contractors in our membership who may be looking to increase their level of professionalism and response time in the bush. Please contact Brenda Martin, Director of Communications, for details at brenda@tla.ca. It's great to see our committees working together to create value for our membership and the industry as a whole.

The TLA also continues to learn about First Nations' evolving roles within the forest sector. There are a lot of questions and some uncertainty. However, our Aboriginal Affairs committee continues to ask questions and develop answers and, in this way, keep the TLA informed so we can help bridge the gap in knowledge and keep our members up-to-date. The Aboriginal Affairs committee has already developed a TLA position statement on the Tsilhqot'in Decision that we launched at our convention in January (www.tla.ca/tsilhqotin). They are now working on a guiding principles document around First Nations partnerships which will be released later this year. Building up to this document, we have been highlighting existing TLA/First Nations partnerships in past issues of the magazine and there's an article in this issue on page 44 highlighting another partnership on the mid-coast. To see all the articles in this series, visit www.tla.ca/FirstNations.

As the marketplace changes to accommodate a broader spectrum of licensees such as First Nations, the way the coast

does business may change as well. This new era may swing some contractors away from the traditional clients we provide services to. Will this change log deliveries for the majors? Will there be better opportunities for contractor sustainability within these new relationships? One of our feature articles in this issue, "Goliath? No, That's the Other Guy," on page 32 definitely suggests there could be. With continued pressure on financing, our current inability to reinvest, an expiring softwood lumber agreement, poor market conditions, a forecasted hot summer and continual contractor dispersals, this may be a first step to a new successful supply chain where rents are shared and reinvestment is an option.

Let's remember, the TLA is a proactive association. Recently, several coastal communities have asked to join the TLA. This is exciting! They see the value of our voice and they understand that our members are the economic backbone of their communities. So it is more important than ever to ensure we get the industry on the right track. The TLA has solutions to ensure the supply chain remains intact. We can be objective in our approach and our phones are on always on. I look forward to working together with industry to build financially successful business relationships throughout the supply chain. Creating opportunity and value from our forests, maintaining and actually harvesting the AAC, investing in our communities through safe, well-paying jobs—this is what our province was built on.

If you have questions about our plans moving forward, please take two minutes to call me or David Elstone, TLA Executive Director, to discuss. And, as always, take two extra steps and two extra seconds to ensure you and your co-workers go home safely each day.▲

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