

January 29, 2020



ABEC South Membership

RE: Building Science Specialist (BSS) Designation – Alberta Rollout

Dear ABEC South Members:

In late 2018, the ABEC South Executive Committee was approached by the Building Science Specialist Board of Canada (i.e. the BSSB). The BSSB contacted us with the intent to roll out a designation nationally which had previously been administered exclusively in Ontario by the Ontario Building Envelope Council (OBEC). The designation was, at the time, referred to as the BSSO – Building Science Specialist of Ontario.

The BSSB initiated discussions with ABEC South as well as a number of other BEC's across the country. An agreement was presented to us which would have seen ABEC South administer and regulate the use of the Building Science Specialist (BSS) designation in our Province, including granting qualifying members the right to use the credential of 'BSS' following their name on behalf of the BSSB.

Their proposal initiated some significant discussion amongst the Executive Committee through 2019. As part of our due diligence, the Executive solicited opinions from other BEC's as well as the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta and the Architects Association of Alberta (APEGA and AAA, respectively) as to the applicability of the proposed designation and credential. APEGA presented the following to us during this consultation:

1. APEGA and the AAA have been granted sole authority, through Provincial Legislation, to regulate the practice of Professional Engineers and Professional Architects in Alberta.
2. The Building Enclosure, and therefore the practice of Building Science, is included under the National Building Code of Canada (NBC) and the application of the NBC in Alberta requires administration and oversight by Registered Professional Architects or Professional Engineers.
3. APEGA does not recognize the BSS or BSSO designation. To their knowledge, neither do the AAA.

In addition to the position presented by APEGA as stated above, a similar opinion from Engineers Geoscientists of British Columbia was presented by the BC Building Envelope Council.

Based on the information available to us and in a vote among the majority of the ABEC South Executive Committee, ABEC South has concluded not to support the roll out of the BSS designation in Alberta until such a time that APEGA, the AAA or both recognize and support this credential. Neither ABEC South nor the BSSB have the authority to assign or regulate any credential pertaining to the Practice of Architecture or Engineering in Alberta.

The ABEC South Executive Committee does, however, unanimously support the educational opportunity and course content required by the BSSB to attain the BSS designation. This course material has been developed through the University of Toronto by their qualified Academic body and is based on a significant volume of peer-reviewed literature. We strongly encourage our members to review the course syllabus offered by the BSSB and consider undertaking the course work on solely on the merit of this unique educational opportunity.

Please forward any questions you may have on this matter to info@abecsouth.org.

Yours truly,

Fred Edwards, P. Eng.
President, ABEC South

On Behalf of
Alberta Building Envelope Council South 2019-2020 Executive Committee

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