



# Issue Update

## Safety Systems Update

The Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services has provided a progress report on their development of the new *Safety Standards Act* and regulations. The "Safety Engineering Services Transformation Project", as it is now called, has been broadened to include the following goals:

1. A new, consolidated Safety Standards Act and regulations
2. Replacement of information technology systems and updating of business processes referred to as the "Modernization Project".
3. The transfer of delivery of safety engineering services from government to a stand-alone agency.

According to the Ministry, the objective of this project is "to ensure that public safety is promoted through the delivery of safety engineering services in a manner that is efficient, effective and appropriate."

The new Act will consolidate four current Acts: *Electrical Safety Act*, *Elevating Devices Safety Act*, *Gas Safety Act* and *Power Engineers and Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Act*, as well as portions of the *Railway Act*. The new Act will supposedly cut red tape and reduce government intervention where appropriate. The new regulations are intended to be objective-based with stronger enforcement ability. The new Act is currently being reviewed by Safety Advisory Committees after having been re-drafted based on stakeholder comments. The revised draft is expected to be posted on the Ministry website by May 30, 2002. The final version is slated for completion by fall of 2002 and will be presented to the legislature in 2003.

The Modernization Project involves investing funds into new information systems and improving business processes. The outcome is supposed to be less reliance on paper-based processes and new methods of scheduling and tracking.

The Ministry is contemplating setting up an independent agency to handle the delivery safety engineering services. While Government will still be responsible for setting policies, the agency will deal with clients and collect fees. The stated objective is to deliver services in a more cost-effective and business-like manner. The target date for the transfer of services to this agency is slated for April 1, 2004.

More information on this project can be obtained at the Ministry's website:  
[www.marh.gov.bc.ca/SES/SSR/](http://www.marh.gov.bc.ca/SES/SSR/)

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