

The Electrical Subcommittee report to WSATC – October 2023

The subcommittee met once following the August 2023 WSATC meeting. Participation continues to be strong in the group, and the members collaborate very well with one another. The subcommittee's focus has been on the implementation of ESSB 5320 (Apprenticeship only bill).

New Secretary Selected:

Co-chair Pat Martin informed the group that he would be stepping down as co-chair due to accepting a new position within LNI. The group unanimously elected Mike Yusi (Titan Electrical Apprenticeship) as the Subcommittee's Vice Chair.

Request from Chairman Riker:

The Electrical Subcommittee received a request to consider the new law (ESSB 5320) which creates a dual pathway way for electrical employers, for the next three years. This allows contractors to continue employing trainees who already have 3,000 hours toward their 01 certification, but requiring that any new employees enter an apprenticeship program. The request noted the new law may conflict with apprenticeship rules prohibiting contractors from employing both trainees and apprentices. After consideration of this issue, direction was given to report back to the Council with any findings or recommendations at the next WSATC quarterly meeting in October 2023. This request was prompted by a letter from Senator Saldaña and Representative Schmidt asking that the Council consider creating a temporary variance or variances to address a potential conflict.

A lengthy discussion ensued outlining the pros and cons of a variance which would allow the mixing of apprentices and trainees. All in attendance were given a chance to speak on the subject. Generally, the pros of a variance included how the intent of ESSB 5320 was to allow the mixing of trainees and apprentices, how this supports new Training Agents with transitioning their existing workforce into apprenticeships, and how it supports the expansion of apprenticeship opportunities. The cons included how this could potentially create unfair treatment of apprentices and trainees by the employer, potential apprenticeship

compliance issues, and how this conflicts with the well-established practice of apprenticeships not allowing the mixing of apprentices and trainees. After hearing the pros and cons, several Training Directors mentioned that they would not be able to vote for or against recommending a variance until they spoke with their respective Committees.

Given that we were unable to finalize a response to Mr. Riker at this time, it was decided that the best course of action would be to ask each Program to submit a letter indicating their support or opposition to the variance. Then, LNI's Apprenticeship Compliance Specialist, Brittany Craighead, indicated that she would collect the letters, summarize the Subcommittee's discussion, and submit this to the Council.

Other business:

The Subcommittee briefly discussed:

- How 01 apprentices could potentially work as 02 or 06 certified journey level workers with and without suspending their apprenticeship registration.
- The appropriate percentage of RSI that could be granted at registration.

No action was taken.

Respectfully submitted by:

Rob Bartel, Chairman, and Mike Yusi, Vice Chair, Electrical Standards Subcommittee