



BusRoots

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Welcome to Your First Edition of **BusRoots!**

MEET THE BUS COUNCIL OF CANADA

Canada's Bus Council, the Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada (MCPCC) was created by the bus industry, in 1999. The five distinct sectors (transit, intercity, tour/charter, school, accessible) came together in an effort to address both immediate and long-term human resources challenges.

The Council's unique partnerships with Human Resources & Social Development Canada (HRSDC), labour, education, other levels of government, and the industry enable us to create programs that address needs in the most vital area of our business – our people! Since our inception, we're proud to share with you that our Council has achieved significant recognition, providing us the means to create programs... programs that have real impact on our industry, that deliver bottom line results and value to all concerned.

Our top priorities include:

- improving the image of the

industry and our employees, with the public, government on all levels, other industries, and those within busing, itself

- attracting new entrants especially drivers and mechanics to fill opportunities from projected growth and vacancies to offset the more than 45% who will be retiring over the next 5 – 10 years
- creating and promoting National Occupational Standards, Certification of Professional Bus Operators, and Accreditation of Company Training programs
- finding new and innovative ways to raise the profile of the industry and our people.

And, now we have created this publication, **BusRoots**, the first of its kind in the world, the only one dedicated to you, our professional drivers. The name, **BusRoots**, arose from the fact that you, our

drivers, are the anchor of this great industry. And, through you, that our 'roots' are deep within Canada's communities, and our economic and social structure.

We're very proud of this initiative celebrating, inspiring and informing you. **BusRoots** will be mailed directly to the homes of all the Certified Professional Bus Operators in our data bank, as part of our service to you. For a limited time, we will also be distributing this publication through several companies to all their drivers to ensure that their drivers are aware of this new opportunity.

We want you to enjoy **BusRoots**, and we want to hear ideas, stories and feedback from you, so that we can truly deliver a meaningful publication, each and every time.

Write to the Council (address on the back) or email us at editor@buscouncil.ca. We look forward to hearing from you!

WHAT CERTIFICATION MEANS TO YOU.



Canada is the first country in the world to create a nationally recognized (voluntary) professional designation for the mainstay of the bus industry, our drivers. This achievement took almost four years of development, involving all sectors of the industry including drivers, trainers, management and union, as well as educators, government and human resources experts. Spearheaded by the Council, Certification of Professional Bus Operators has now been successfully launched across the country.

MEET THE COUNCIL: JOAN CRAWFORD

Here's a brief look at one of the professionals who represent your interests, and those of our industry, as part of Canada's Bus Council.

Joan Crawford, CHRP,

Executive Director: Joan is an acknowledged expert in human resources issues, and has led the Council since its inception in 1999. Her vision has driven the innovative programs that we have developed for the industry, such as Certification and the National Occupational Standards (NOS), and she continues to seek ways to promote you, our

professional bus operators, and Canada's bus industry as a career of choice. Joan says, "We're proud that the people of this industry are knowledgeable, responsible, and experienced, and we are dedicated to communicating that to all our stakeholders – the public, the government, and, the industry itself. And, we congratulate all of you who have chosen professional certification as a career highlight."

The Council staff have been visiting a wide variety of properties, from transit to school to coach operations, highlighting the vision and concepts of Certification to hundreds of drivers. Often, the first question is, "What's in it for me?" According to Julie Black, Communications Consultant, MCPCC, "It's an obvious question – here's how some of your fellow drivers answer that..." As the first two drivers in Canada to become certified, Gilles Groleau, CPBO, and Bob Brule, CPBO of Greyhound Canada are enthusiastic about the program. Gilles says, "I'm proud to show our passengers, other motorists, and our competition that I've earned this recognition." Bob adds, "Certification means that I'm formally recognized by both the industry and the public across Canada, as a professional." In the Certification section of our website, one of our video driver profiles, Brian Beattie says, "We don't have the proper recognition that I feel we should have because we are professionals. Certification is another form of recognition, and being recognized for that would improve the business. Getting behind certification, it's someone else saying 'you did well'."

Julie continues, "I think that attaining a nationally recognized designation is unique and special. There is the opportunity of that distinction being recognized through your pin and badge, by your peers, your employers, and your passengers. I feel it's an excellent opportunity to

**As our Registrar
Elayne McDermid says,
a professional driver
deserves a professional
designation.**

educate the public about both the technical expertise and 'softer skills' that every bus operator must have, every day. If you're looking for career mobility, it is an excellent tool, because any hiring company knows that a CPBO has already achieved a level of professionalism that meets the National Occupational Standards (NOS).

"For those at the beginning or middle of their driving careers, it is a great thing for the coming years. For those closer to the end of their careers, I feel that it is a wonderful recognition of all those successful years of service, and, a lasting legacy to the industry itself."

"Now, we're bringing you this publication, which will feature your stories and ideas that will inform and entertain you. So, we are hoping that you will proudly wear your badges and pins, display your certificate, and encourage your peers to apply for Certification, too. Congratulations to all of you, and welcome!"

PROFILE OF COURAGE: **ERICKA BUHLER,** DRIVER, CALGARY TRANSIT



Each year, the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) recognizes the outstanding achievements of Canada's bus drivers through their Employee Excellence Awards. This distinguished award recognizes a major contribution, such as heroism, special projects, or volunteerism within the community. Here is one of this year's winners, who we believe exemplifies all that is great about Canada's professional bus operators.

Last Christmas, Ericka Buhler was driving her bus along her usual route in Calgary, unaware that she was about to face an unusual and very dangerous situation. A passenger approached her and said, 'When I get off the bus, I'm going to phone the police because I saw some passengers at the back of the bus passing a gun.' Ericka asked the passenger to remain on the vehicle and discreetly radioed the information and description of the suspects to Calgary Transit's Operations Control Centre, which in turn notified police. Meanwhile, Ericka parked her bus and put on her four-way flashers, informing the passengers on the crowded bus that the vehicle was having mechanical difficulties. Within minutes, police officers approached the vehicle. They stormed the

bus with guns drawn, seizing a weapon and arresting several male suspects. Because of Ericka's cool, calm and collected manner, there was no panic and no one was hurt.

Nominated by Calgary Transit, Ericka was flown to Toronto to attend the annual CUTA Conference, and presented with a beautiful glass trophy at the Awards Breakfast. "It was a wonderful honour and very exciting to receive this," says Ericka. "I'm just grateful that no one was hurt – I was pretty concerned because there was a lady on board with her baby in a stroller. When the police burst in, it was just like a movie, but luckily it had a happy ending!"

Ericka's career in busing got started by her father. As a single mother of a two-year old, working at a drugstore, she was looking for a better life. Her dad, a trucker, suggested long distance driving, but she wanted to work more with people, so she decided to apply to Calgary Transit. Almost nineteen years later, she's still behind the wheel. "I really like working with the public," says Ericka, "and I still enjoy driving the bus. I'm glad to say that my dad got to have one ride with me, and he was very proud that I had 'made it' as a big rig driver."

Joe Brown, Training Officer, Calgary Transit, says, "Calgary Transit values employees who exemplify stellar qualities like our very own Erica Buhler. Her positive approach to the job allows her to deal with the overwhelming pressures that our growing city is under. Erica dealt with a very difficult situation that demonstrated concern for the safety of her passengers, herself and property. We are very lucky to have her on our team and she deserves all the recognition she gets!"

We're proud of her, too, and pleased to say that Ericka is applying for her professional designation as a Certified Professional Bus Operator. **Great job, Ericka!**

We would love to hear from YOU

This is **truly your** newsletter, written for and about Canada's professional Bus Operators. So, to keep it relevant and interesting to you, please let us know what you think, and the types of stories you'd like to see. Better yet – if you have a great story about how you dealt with a tricky situation, professional tips, interesting 'life on the road' anecdote, or an outstanding achievement of yours or a colleague, please contact us at the addresses on the back of the newsletter. For each story published, you will receive a unique token of our appreciation. And, please remember to send us any change of your address, so that you can continue to receive your copy of **BusRoots**.

WEAR YOUR CERTIFICATION WITH PRIDE



Each newly Certified Professional Bus Operator receives a package of gold pin, certificate and two badges. But, if you require additional badges for winter/summer jackets, or your badge gets damaged in cleaning, please email our Registrar, **Elayne McDermid**, for limited additional badges at no charge.

Email registrar@buscouncil.ca or call **1-866-271-1107**, or write to our office with your request.



Ergonomic Driving

Here are some reminders that may help you keep your back and neck healthy and strong, while behind the wheel.

- If possible, your seat back should be tilted slightly back from your legs, reducing disc pressure and relaxing your back muscles.
- A padded seat cushion can absorb road vibration.
- Use a lumbar support – even something as simple as a rolled-up towel properly placed will offer relief.
- As you are able, shift positions regularly while driving.

- Don't slouch! Your mother was right – sitting up straight will help ease strain.
- Adjust your seat and steering wheel to your satisfaction. Make certain that you can press the pedals without moving your back off the seat.
- If you can, change the tilt on your seat slightly every 30 minutes. It will alter the direction of the vibration on your body.
- Stretch carefully, and try to wait one to two minutes before lifting anything heavy immediately after driving.

FUN BUS STORIES Dog on a bus

But, did he have the **correct** fare?

Gary Kay, a dog owner from Dunnington, York in northern England, has to chain his pet to prevent his terrier from taking a bus ride to go on nightly bar hoppings. Kay said his dog named Ratty, regularly takes the bus on his own to a bar known as Black Bull in Hull Road, York. According to the York Post newspaper, the dog visits the bar twice a week because the barmaid feeds him sausages. However, the bar started catering to the elite market and banned all animals from entering the premises. Kay said Ratty found a new local bar named Rose and Crown Pub in Lawrence Street to frequent. He told the newspaper that his dog gets off the bus at the Black Bull on his own then crosses the street and turns up at the Rose and Crown. Kay said, "I've had to start chaining him up because, although he can get to the pub on his own he can't get home. I've no idea how he is doing any of this or how he crosses the road. This dog just has a mind of his own."

BusRoots is a publication of the Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada (MCPCC).

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Please submit your story ideas, feedback and comments to: editor@buscouncil.ca or Editor, **BusRoots**, Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada, 9555 Yonge Street, Suite 306, Richmond Hill, Ontario, L4C 9M5. We reserve the right to edit submissions for content and length.