THE
CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL
INSPECTION INDUSTRY

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A Report To
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Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Federal Government's housing agency, is responsible for administering the National Housing Act.

This legislation is designed to aid in the improvement of housing and living in Canada. As a result, the Corporation has interests in all aspects of housing and urban growth and development.

Under Part IX of this Act, the Government of Canada provides funds to CMHC to conduct research into the social, economic and technical aspects of housing and related fields, and to undertake the publishing and distribution of the results of this research. CMHC therefore has a statutory responsibility to make widely available information which may be useful in the improvement of housing and living conditions.

This publication is one of the many items of information published by CMHC with the assistance of federal funds.

DISCLAIMER

This study was conducted by Wagner, Daigle, Revay Ltée for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation under Part IX of the National Housing Act. The analysis, interpretations and recommendations are those of the consultant and do not necessarily reflect the views of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation or those divisions of the Corporation that assisted in the study and its publication.

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

1.0.0 PROLOGUE 6

1.1.0 Background to the Survey 6

1.2.0 Procedures Followed by WDR 8

1.3.0 Acknowledgements 9

2.0.0 OVERVIEW OF THE RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION SCENE IN CANADA 11

2.1.0 The Private Sector 11

2.1.1 Inspection Firms 11

2.1.2 Inspectors' Associations 13

2.1.3 R-2000 Inspectors 18

2.1.4 Housing Warranty Program Inspectors 19

2.2.0 The Public Sector 20

2.2.1 Municipal Building Officials 21

2.2.2 Building Officials' Associations 22

2.2.3 Provincial Governments 27

2.2.4 CMHC Inspectors 28

2.3.0 Residential Inspection Services As Seen By Others 29

2.3.1 Builders' and Renovators' Associations 29

2.3.2 New Home Warranty Programs 30

2.3.3 Consumers and Better Business Bureaux 32

2.3.4 Mortgage Lenders and Insurers 33

2.3.5 Realtors 34

3.0.0 REGIONAL ANALYSES 36

3.1.0 British Columbia 36

3.1.1 Inspection Firms 36

3.1.2 Municipal Inspectors 39

3.1.3 Training and Certification 40

3.2.0 Alberta 42

3.2.1 Inspection Firms 42

3.2.2 Municipal Inspectors 43

3.2.3 Training and Certification 45

3.3.0 Saskatchewan 46

3.3.1 Inspection Firms 46

3.3.2 Municipal Inspectors 47

3.3.3 Training and Certification 48

3.4.0 Manitoba 49

3.4.1 Inspection Firms 49

3.4.2 Municipal Inspectors 50

3.4.3 Training and Certification 51

3.5.0 Ontario 52

3.5.1 Inspection Firms 52

3.5.2 Municipal Inspectors 55

3.5.3 Training and Certification 56

3.6.0 Quebec 57

3.6.1 Inspection Firms 57

3.6.2 Municipal Inspectors 61

3.6.3 Training and Certification 62

3.7.0 New Brunswick 63

3.7.1 Inspection Firms 63

3.7.2 Municipal Inspectors 65

3.7.3 Training and Certification 66

3.8.0 Prince Edward Island 66

3.9.0 Nova Scotia 67

3.9.1 Inspection Firms 67

3.9.2 Municipal Inspectors 69

3.9.3 Training and Certification 70

3.10.0 Newfoundland 71

3.11.0 Territories 72

4.0.0 THE UNITED STATES SCENE 74

5.0.0 CONSULTANT'S COMMENTS 77

5.1.0 1995 Focus on National Codes -- Training Policy Implications 77

5.2.0 Scope for Cooperation in Inspectors' Training and Certification Programs 78

5.3.0 Home Inspectors and the Quality of Residential Renovations and Maintenance 80

6.0.0 OPTIONS FOR CMHC ASSISTANCE 82

6.1.0 CMHC Manuals on Housing Rehabilitation Skills -- Inspection 82

6.2.0 Sponsorship of a Meeting of the Principal Stakeholders in the Private and Public Residential Inspection Sectors 82

6.3.0 National Standards for Inspectors' Training and Certification 83

6.4.0 Seminar and Workshop Support 83

6.5.0 Assistance to Home Inspectors' Associations 84

6.6.0 CMHC Renovation Pamphlets, Videos and Displays 84

FIGURES

1. 1991 Housing Expenditures 7
2. Housing Starts and MLS Housing Re-Sales, 1981-1991 7
3. Certification of Building Officials 73

APPENDICES

"A" Texts of Survey Questionnaires
"B" "Inspecting the Home Inspectors", Article and 1992 Press Clippings
"C" Partial Bibliography

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation commissioned a survey on "The Canadian Residential Inspection Industry" to determine its status, the entry criteria for membership in inspection associations, the existence of training and certification programs, and the scope for CMHC assistance in the transfer of new technologies to inspectors and in the provision by the industry of a professional service in the planning and execution of housing renovations. The survey was conducted throughout the summer and fall of 1992. The residential inspection industry was defined to cover both the private and public sectors.

The factors and concerns contributing to the sponsorship of the survey included:

- The annual value of residential renovation and repair work now exceeds that of new housing.
- Whereas new housing is subject to inspections and, in most cases, to New Home Warranty Programs, much of the renovation work is done by small firms, individual tradesmen or do-it-yourselfers without attracting building permits and ensuing inspections.
- Much of the renovation outlays are for cosmetic purposes at considerable cost, whereas work in other areas of the home may have a higher priority in terms of safety, health and building performance.
- Periodic check-ups by a qualified inspector are rarely ordered by homeowners; inspections of existing homes are mainly paid for by prospective owners as a pre-purchase precaution.
- If, as had been proposed, it is recommended that homes be inspected prior to their renovation to identify priorities, what assurance is there that qualified inspectors are available?
- A number of reports had alleged that, even when new housing or renovations are subject to building permits, the level of competence and quality of inspections vary widely across Canada, especially in the smaller centres.

Principal Findings

1. There is a widely expressed interest on the part of both municipal building officials/inspectors and of private sector house inspectors to obtain training or refresher courses to assist them in their work. Code compliance, new code provisions, and liability factors are especially important to the public sector respondents. Both groups recorded particular interest in training on the inspection function, the building structure, the building envelope (e.g. air barriers, rain screen), and new building technology/products (e.g. acoustics, roofing). There is a strong preference for interactive seminars, workshops and classes.

2. There is widespread support among both municipal officials/inspectors and private sector house inspectors for the establishment in their respective fields of standards and a certification system by which qualified inspectors may be identified.

3. The private sector Residential Inspection Industry exists mainly in the major centres. Some firms employ a number of inspectors but typically the firms have but one or two people engaged in house inspection work. Many have been recently established. The preponderant source of business relates to pre-purchase inspections of existing houses. The respondents reported relatively little business relating to the renovation of homes, to energy efficiency checks, or to new homes during and after construction.

4. The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors (CAHI) is engaged in an expansion program. All members must also belong to the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI). The Ontario and British Columbia chapters have been established for some time. New chapters have been formed this summer in Alberta (Prairie Chapter), Eastern Ontario and Montreal, each with about a dozen charter members. Candidate members must belong for six months, pass three written examinations on house inspections, and have 250 paid house inspections in order to become a full member. Errors and Omissions Insurance is available through a group policy and, in Ontario, is mandatory to all members and to those who have passed their first examination.

5. There is also the Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors. This relatively small group is comprised of experienced engineers, architects and builders and also has a group professional liability insurance plan. In addition, charters for the Canadian Institute of Professional Home Inspectors and a related training body, the National Home Inspection Institute, have been granted but are not operational. The sponsors of these Vancouver-based organizations contend that a degree in the building sciences should be a requirement for a professional home inspector.

6. The issue of whether or not a residential inspector should be a member of a profession is a matter of controversy. A good many CAHI members are engineers, architects or construction technicians or technologists, but the majority emphasize "hands-on" practical experience as being more relevant. ASHI has issued a position paper stating that engineers are not performing an engineering function when making a visual inspection of a residence. ASHI has published manuals on house inspection and sponsors seminars; the CAHI groups are also providing training opportunities. On the other hand, some CAHI members have expressed the view that ASHI standards should be raised and that there be additional "Canadian content".

7. Whereas home inspection firms are rarely engaged by homeowners to give advice on priority needs before renovation work is commenced, virtually all of the respondents believed that they could provide a valuable unbiased service in this regard. This service would also include rough cost estimates, protection from unskilled or unscrupulous renovators, inspections during the work, and advice on the release of payments.

8. Most home inspection firm respondents were of the opinion that it would be possible to develop a market demand by homeowners to engage qualified residential inspectors to perform periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency audits.

This view, however, was not shared by many who are located in smaller centres. It was generally agreed that a large-scale publicity and educational program would be necessary to promote regular check-ups. Some stressed that under present conditions subsidies from the utilities would be a prerequisite for energy efficiency audits and related renovations.

9. In the public sector, several provinces (Ontario and Alberta in particular) have developed comprehensive training courses for building inspectors and building officials. Licensing arrangements have been offered to other areas. There are also noteworthy regional training programs in major centres such as Metro Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. In Nova Scotia the DACUM training and certification program is being strengthened. In British Columbia the Ministries of Advanced Education and Municipal Affairs have sponsored the publication of a comprehensive DACUM for Building Inspection. Funding is now being sought for the development of training packages. Courses at three CEGEPs in Quebec, leading to a designation for municipal inspectors, are scheduled to commence in January, 1993. The Saskatchewan Building Officials Association is launching a Building Inspection Certification Program with Weyburn College next fall.

10. However, many respondents reported that there were difficulties in obtaining training because of budget constraints or lack of opportunities.

11. Certification programs for municipal building officials/inspectors are operating in Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and Nova Scotia; are about to be launched in Quebec and Saskatchewan; and are being formally considered in New Brunswick and Manitoba.

12. The new president of the Canadian Council of Building Officials' Associations has set as a goal the establishment of a reciprocal certification program across Canada whereby the credentials of a certified municipal building inspector granted in one jurisdiction would be accepted in another.

13. Some municipalities are contracting out their building inspection responsibilities to private sector inspection firms. Other innovations include the hiring of municipal inspectors to perform inspections not related to building permits and a pilot study on the possible expansion of municipal code-compliance inspections and/or use of home inspection firms to cover New Home Warranty Program requirements.

14. There would seem to be considerable scope for increased inter-governmental cooperation in the development of training and certification programs for building officials/inspectors.

15. Similarly, there would seem to be scope for cooperation and cross-pollination in the training of public and private sector housing inspectors. Currently there are few linkages between the two groups. One exception is the advisory committee assisting in the DACUM development in British Columbia -- its membership includes not only

representatives of the Building Inspectors' Association of B.C. but also the president of the B.C. Chapter of CAHI. Consideration is being given to the expansion of its training modules for code compliance etc. to include those of specific relevance to inspection of existing residential properties.

16. Many respondents from both the private and public sectors stated that an appreciable number of renovators and installers gave owners poor value for their money. Several also stated that some house inspection firms were badly qualified and even unscrupulous in their advice to owners, realtors or potential purchasers. A certification plan was advocated as being in the public interest.

17. The Canadian Home Builders' Association's Renovators' Council has been replicated by some of the provincial and local Home Builders' Associations. Several New Home Warranty Councils have under consideration the extension of warranties to Renovations. In Quebec there is a guarantee program for the quality of work carried out by members of designated builders' and contractors' associations.

Consultant's Comments and Suggestions

- There will be a particular focus on Codes in 1995 with the release of new versions of the National Building Code, National Fire Code, Canadian Plumbing Code and Canadian Farm Building Code, plus two new documents -- the Canadian Housing Code and the Canadian Energy Code. The new NBC will have significant changes. There is a Memorandum of Understanding on the elimination of significant variations to the 1995 NBC in the various jurisdictions. The new Energy Code is to be promoted vigorously.

- There will be in turn an increased focus on building inspection training during the interval to better ensure that inspectors are prepared for the new code provisions.

- Current trends suggest that there will be an increased scope in the inspection work to be carried out by both public sector and private sector inspectors. Possibly a core training course could be developed, with additional modules for the various specialty inspection requirements.

- The development of standard levels of competence for the certification of public sector building officials/inspectors could be developed in concert with the training courses. Possibly the Provincial/Territorial Committee on Building Standards could play a supporting or coordinating role.

- Options for private sector home inspectors would include qualifying for some or all of the certificates available to those in the public sector; the restricted use of association logos to those who have met certain standards; and the establishment of a private sector certification program.

Possible areas for CMHC action include:

a) The convening of a meeting of the principal players in the private and public residential inspection sectors to discuss the practical scope for the cooperative establishment of national standards for inspector training, certification and re-qualification across Canada, and for the increased involvement of inspectors' skills in the housing renovation market.

(Note: Back in 1989 a Canadian Construction Research Board report proposed that a large-scale Building Regulatory Congress be convened by the provinces to be attended by representatives of all of the key stakeholders involved in the process. It is contemplated that the proposed meeting would be much smaller and have a concentrated focus on the above issues. It would be exploratory in nature).

b) The provision of assistance in the development of national standards for inspectors' training and certification.

c) The up-dating of the Residential Inspection sections of the CMHC 1983-84 manuals on housing rehabilitation skills.[1]

d) The offer of assistance in the staffing of seminars and workshops for residential building inspectors in both the public and private sectors on a increased scale. Possible subject areas would include new housing technology and code compliance.

e) The provision of assistance for a limited time to the establishment or strengthening of home inspectors' associations across Canada devoted to the provision to consumers of well-qualified inspection services related to the purchase, renovation or maintenance of their homes.

f) The inclusion of a recommendation, when safe to do so, in CMHC renovation pamphlets, videos and displays, that priorities be established by a qualified home inspector before the work begins.

[1]This suggestion, contained in the Interim Report in September, 1992, is already being implemented.

RÉSUMÉ

La Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement a commandé une étude sur «Le secteur canadien de l'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels» afin de déterminer son état, les critères d'adhésion aux associations d'inspecteurs, l'existence de programmes de formation et d'accréditation, ainsi que l'ampleur de la participation de la SCHL en ce qui concerne la diffusion de nouvelles techniques aux inspecteurs ainsi que la prestation par l'industrie de services professionnels en matière de planification et d'exécution de travaux de rénovation résidentiels. L'étude a été menée au cours de l'été et de l'automne 1992. Les inspections de bâtiments résidentiels s'étendent ici aux secteurs tant privé que public.

Voici certains des facteurs et des préoccupations à l'origine de l'étude :

- La valeur annuelle des travaux de rénovation et de réparation résidentiels dépasse maintenant celle des constructions neuves.
- Alors que la construction neuve est assujettie à des inspections et, dans la plupart des cas, à des programmes de garantie des maisons neuves, la majorité des travaux de rénovation sont effectués par de petites entreprises, des gens de métier et des bricoleurs, sans permis de construire ni inspections ultérieures.
- Une grande partie des dépenses de rénovation sont consacrées à l'esthétique, à un coût considérable, alors que des travaux dans d'autres domaines pourraient avoir un degré d'importance supérieur en ce qui a trait à la sécurité, à la santé et à la performance du bâtiment.
- Des vérifications périodiques effectuées par un inspecteur compétent sont rarement demandées par les propriétaires-occupants; les inspections des logements existants sont principalement à la charge des futurs propriétaires qui les demandent par mesure de précaution.
- Si, comme il a été proposé, il est recommandé que les logements soient inspectés avant leur rénovation afin que l'on puisse déterminer les priorités, quelle garantie avons-nous de la disponibilité d'inspecteurs compétents?
- Un certain nombre de rapports laissaient entendre que, même lorsque les travaux de construction de logements neufs ou de rénovation sont assujettis à l'approbation d'un permis de construire, le degré de compétence et de qualité des inspections varie énormément à l'intérieur du Canada, particulièrement dans les petites collectivités.

Principaux résultats

1. Les agents/inspecteurs du bâtiment des municipalités ainsi que les inspecteurs du secteur privé se montrent très intéressés à bénéficier de cours de formation et de perfectionnement qui pourraient les aider dans leur travail. La conformité au code, les dispositions du nouveau code et les facteurs de responsabilité revêtent une importance particulière aux yeux des répondants du secteur public. Les deux groupes ont manifesté de l'intérêt pour la formation en matière d'inspection, de structure du bâtiment, de l'enveloppe du bâtiment (p. ex. pare-air, écran pare-pluie) et les nouveaux produits ou la nouvelle technologie du bâtiment (p. ex. l'acoustique, les couvertures). La

préférence va nettement aux séminaires, aux ateliers et aux cours interactifs.

2. Les agents/inspecteurs du bâtiment des municipalités et les inspecteurs de bâtiments résidentiels du secteur privé appuient fortement l'établissement, dans leur domaine respectif, de normes et d'un système d'accréditation par lequel les inspecteurs compétents pourraient être reconnus.

3. L'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels du secteur privé est surtout présente dans les principaux centres. Quelques entreprises emploient un certain nombre d'inspecteurs mais elles n'ont habituellement qu'une ou deux personnes spécialisées dans l'inspection des maisons. Plusieurs entreprises ont récemment été créées. La première source d'activités est liée aux inspections précédant l'achat de maisons existantes. Les répondants signalent relativement peu de contrats liés à la rénovation des maisons, aux vérifications de l'efficacité énergétique ou aux maisons neuves, pendant ou après leur construction.

4. La Canadian Association of Home Inspectors (CAHI) s'occupe d'un programme d'expansion et tous ses membres doivent également faire partie de l'American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI). Les sections de l'Ontario et de la Colombie-Britannique existent depuis déjà quelque temps. De nouvelles sections ont été créées l'été dernier en Alberta (section des Prairies), dans l'Est de l'Ontario et à Montréal, chacune comptant une douzaine de membres fondateurs. Pour devenir membres à part entière, les candidats doivent faire partie de l'association depuis six mois, passer trois examens d'inspections résidentielles et avoir été rémunérés pour 250 inspections de maisons. Une assurance de la responsabilité civile professionnelle est offerte par l'entremise d'une assurance collective. En Ontario, elle est obligatoire pour tous les membres ainsi que pour ceux qui ont réussi leur premier examen.

5. Il y a aussi l'Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors. Cette association plutôt restreinte comprend des ingénieurs, des architectes et des constructeurs d'expérience et bénéficie également d'un régime collectif d'assurance responsabilité professionnelle. De plus, le Canadian Institute of Professional Home Inspectors et un groupe connexe responsable de la formation, le National Home Inspection Institute, ont maintenant une charte mais ne sont pas encore en activité. Les promoteurs de ces organismes de Vancouver soutiennent que l'on devrait exiger des inspecteurs professionnels qu'ils soient diplômés en science du bâtiment.

6. La question de savoir si un inspecteur de bâtiments résidentiels doit ou non être membre d'une association professionnelle soulève la controverse. Bon nombre de membres de la CAHI sont des ingénieurs, des architectes ou des techniciens ou technologues de la construction, mais la majorité insiste pour dire que l'expérience pratique est la plus pertinente. L'ASHI a présenté un exposé de principes indiquant que les ingénieurs n'exercent pas leur véritable profession lorsqu'ils procèdent à l'inspection visuelle d'une maison. L'ASHI a publié des manuels sur l'inspection résidentielle et organise des séminaires. Les groupes de la CAHI offrent également de la formation. Par contre,

certains membres de la CAHI ont laissé entendre que les normes ASHI devraient être élevées et avoir plus de «contenu canadien».

7. Alors que les propriétaires ont rarement recours à des entreprises d'inspection pour des conseils sur les besoins prioritaires avant le début des travaux de rénovation, presque tous les répondants croient qu'ils pourraient offrir des services objectifs et précieux à cet égard. Ces services comprendraient également des estimations approximatives des coûts, une protection contre les rénovateurs incompétents et sans scrupules, des inspections pendant les travaux et des conseils sur les autorisations de paiement.

8. La plupart des répondants des entreprises d'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels pensent qu'il serait possible d'amener les propriétaires-occupants à engager des inspecteurs résidentiels compétents pour vérifier périodiquement leur maison et l'efficacité énergétique. De nombreux répondants des petites collectivités ne partagent cependant pas ces vues. Il a été convenu, de façon générale, qu'un programme de promotion et d'éducation de grande envergure serait nécessaire pour promouvoir les vérifications régulières. Certains ont souligné que dans les circonstances actuelles, des subventions provenant des services publics seraient un préalable aux vérifications de l'efficacité énergétique et aux rénovations qui s'y rattachent.

9. Dans le secteur public, plusieurs provinces (en particulier l'Ontario et l'Alberta) ont élaboré des cours de formation complets à l'intention des inspecteurs des bâtiments résidentiels et des agents du bâtiment. Des dispositions visant la remise de permis ont été offertes à d'autres régions. Il existe également des programmes de formation régionaux importants dans les grands centres comme Toronto, Calgary et Vancouver. En Nouvelle-Écosse, on renforce le programme de formation et d'accréditation DACUM. En Colombie-Britannique, les ministères de l'éducation supérieure et des affaires municipales ont financé la publication d'un guide DACUM complet sur l'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels. On cherche actuellement à financer l'élaboration de programmes de formation. Trois cégeps du Québec offriront en janvier 1993 des cours d'inspecteur au niveau municipal. En collaboration avec le collège Weyburn, la Saskatchewan Building Officials Association lancera un programme d'accréditation en inspection du bâtiment l'automne prochain.

10. Par contre, de nombreux répondants ont indiqué qu'il était difficile d'obtenir de la formation en raison des restrictions budgétaires ou du manque de possibilités.

11. Des programmes d'accréditation à l'intention des inspecteurs/agents du bâtiment municipaux sont en vigueur en Ontario, en Alberta et en Colombie-Britannique. Des programmes semblables débuteront bientôt en Nouvelle-Écosse, au Québec et en Saskatchewan. On considère officiellement cette option au Nouveau-Brunswick et au Manitoba.

12. Le nouveau président du Canadian Council of Building Officials' Associations s'est fixé comme objectif d'établir au Canada un programme d'accréditation universel grâce auquel les titres d'un inspecteur

municipal accrédité accordés dans un territoire seraient reconnus dans un autre.

13. Certaines municipalités confient leurs inspections résidentielles à des entreprises du secteur privé. D'autres innovations incluent l'emploi d'inspecteurs municipaux pour les inspections non liées aux permis de construire et une étude pilote sur l'expansion possible des inspections municipales conformes au code et (ou) l'utilisation des entreprises d'inspection résidentielle pour répondre aux exigences du programme de garantie des maisons neuves.

14. Il semble y avoir de bonnes possibilités de collaboration intergouvernementale pour l'élaboration de programmes de formation et d'accréditation pour les inspecteurs et agents du bâtiment.

15. De même, il semble y avoir de bonnes possibilités de collaboration et d'échange entre les inspecteurs résidentiels des secteurs public et privé dans le domaine de la formation. Actuellement, peu de liens existent entre les deux groupes, exception faite du comité consultatif participant à l'élaboration du DACUM en Colombie-Britannique. Ses membres incluent non seulement des représentants de la Building Inspectors' Association of B.C. mais aussi le président de la section de la Colombie-Britannique de la CAHI. On tient compte de l'expansion de ses modules de formation pour la conformité au code etc. afin d'inclure ceux qui se rapportent précisément à l'inspection des logements existants.

16. De nombreux répondants des secteurs privé et public ont mentionné qu'un nombre appréciable de rénovateurs et d'installateurs n'ont pas donné un bon rendement aux propriétaires. Plusieurs ont également mentionné que certaines entreprises d'inspection résidentielle étaient incompétentes et même sans scrupules lorsqu'il s'agissait de donner des conseils aux propriétaires, aux realtors et aux acheteurs potentiels. On a préconisé le plan d'accréditation comme étant dans l'intérêt du public.

17. Le conseil de la rénovation de l'Association canadienne des constructeurs d'habitations a servi de modèle à certaines des associations de constructeurs locales et provinciales. Plusieurs conseils de garantie des maisons neuves songent à étendre les garanties aux rénovations. Au Québec, il existe un programme de garantie de la qualité des travaux effectués par les membres de certaines associations de constructeurs et d'entrepreneurs.

Propositions et commentaires des consultants

. En 1995, l'accent sera mis sur les codes étant donné la parution des nouvelles versions du Code national du bâtiment (CNB), du Code national de prévention des incendies, du Code canadien de la plomberie et du Code canadien de construction des bâtiments agricoles, en plus de deux nouveaux documents, le code canadien de construction d'habitations et le code canadien de l'énergie. Le nouveau CNB comportera des changements importants. Pour le code de 1995, il existe un protocole d'entente qui vise à éliminer les écarts entre les divers territoires

de compétence. On doit promouvoir avec vigueur le nouveau code de l'énergie.

- Entre-temps, on mettra l'accent sur la formation en inspection des bâtiments résidentiels afin de mieux s'assurer que les inspecteurs sauront s'adapter aux dispositions du nouveau code.

- Les tendances actuelles laissent croire qu'il y aura de plus en plus de possibilités pour que les activités d'inspection soient exécutées à la fois par les inspecteurs du secteur public et du secteur privé. Un cours de formation général pourrait être mis sur pied ainsi que des modules supplémentaires abordant les diverses exigences des inspections spécialisées.

- Des niveaux de compétence uniformes pour l'accréditation des agents du bâtiment et des inspecteurs de bâtiments résidentiels du secteur public pourraient être élaborés en même temps que les cours de formation. Le comité provincial-territorial sur les normes du bâtiment pourrait jouer un rôle de soutien ou de coordination.

- Les possibilités offertes aux inspecteurs résidentiels du secteur privé incluent l'obtention des compétences correspondant à certains ou à tous les certificats accessibles aux inspecteurs du secteur public, l'usage restreint des logos d'associations réservé à ceux qui remplissent certains critères et l'établissement d'un programme d'accréditation pour le secteur privé.

Voici certains des domaines d'activité potentiels de la SCHL :

a) La tenue d'une réunion entre les principaux intervenants de l'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels des secteurs privé et public afin qu'ils discutent de l'aspect pratique de l'établissement conjoint de normes nationales pour la formation, l'accréditation et la requalification des inspecteurs au Canada ainsi que pour l'importance accrue des compétences des inspecteurs dans le marché de la rénovation résidentielle.

(Remarque : En 1989, un rapport de la Commission canadienne de recherche sur la construction proposait qu'une conférence de grande envergure sur la réglementation du bâtiment soit organisée par les provinces et que les principaux intervenants du processus y soient représentés. On envisage que la réunion soit moins importante que prévu et qu'elle se concentre sur les questions susmentionnées. Elle serait de nature exploratoire.)

b) L'élaboration de normes nationales relatives à la formation et à l'accréditation des inspecteurs.

c) La mise à jour des sections sur l'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels contenues dans les manuels de 1983-1984 de la SCHL sur les compétences de remise en état des logements.[1]

d) L'aide pour trouver les personnes nécessaires à la tenue, à grande échelle, de séminaires et d'ateliers pour les inspecteurs des bâtiments

résidentiels dans les secteurs public et privé. Les sujets traités pourraient inclure la nouvelle technologie du logement et le respect du code.

e) Pendant un temps limité, l'établissement ou le renforcement des associations d'inspecteurs de bâtiments résidentiels du Canada vouées à fournir aux consommateurs des services d'inspection compétents liés à l'achat, à la rénovation ou à l'entretien des maisons.

f) Lorsque cela s'y prête, une mention dans les brochures, les vidéos et les expositions sur la rénovation pour recommander que les priorités soient établies par un inspecteur résidentiel compétent avant le début des travaux.

[1] Cette proposition, contenue dans le rapport provisoire de 1992, est déjà en train d'être mise en oeuvre.

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1.0.0 PROLOGUE

1.1.0 Background to the Survey

The reduction in the annual number of housing starts in Canada compared to previous levels has been accompanied by a less publicized but perhaps more significant development. The value of RRR construction (repairs, renovations, and retrofits) has greatly increased as Canadians have decided to enlarge or otherwise improve existing dwellings rather than to buy new ones. This value now exceeds that for new residential construction (Figure 1). The number of housing re-sales by Multiple Listings alone in 1991 was roughly double the number of new units built (Figure 2).

New dwellings are subject to inspections by municipal building officials and, in most cases, are covered under New Home Warranty Programs. Second hand housing, on the other hand, may well be from twenty to forty or more years old and may not have been inspected since it was built. If a mortgage is involved, there may be an inspection to satisfy the lender that the mortgage is secure, but the new owner usually does not see the report and any defect may only result in a reduced evaluation for mortgage purposes. The dwelling may not be inspected again until after many of the systems are well beyond their normal life expectancy.

Renovation contractors are commonly not engaged in new construction work and may not be as well informed about building code requirements. In essence, they constitute a separate and largely non-organized sub-sector of the industry. Many small renovations and repair jobs are done by small firms, individual tradesmen or do-it-yourselfers without attracting building permits and ensuing inspections. The skills of renovation contractors vary widely.

Most property owners are unaware of any correct or systematic approach to the renovation or repair of their building. The majority proceed to execute a work program for cosmetic reasons only, without realizing how it may affect the whole house. This haphazard approach can have serious consequences for the long term well-being of the structure and sometimes also for the health and safety of the occupants.

Public consultations sponsored by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on the state of the renovation industry concluded that CMHC should advocate high standards of home maintenance, provide information on home repairs and give support to the private house inspection industry. Professional inspections, it was contended, would identify priorities for property owners to consider before embarking on a renovation program.

The size of the CMHC Inspection Staff has been greatly reduced in deference to the 'authorities having jurisdiction' for the compliance of new housing to the building code. CMHC inspectors are now engaged mainly in rural and native (off-reserve)

1991 HOUSING EXPENDITURES

RRR		
Alterations and Improvements	12,017.0	million
Conversions	125.6	million
Repairs	4,879.4	million
	17,021.0	million
NEW		
Singles, Doubles, Multiples	15,098.7	million
Mobiles	101.8	million
Cottages	639.3	million
	15,839.8	million

Source: Statistics Canada

Figure 1

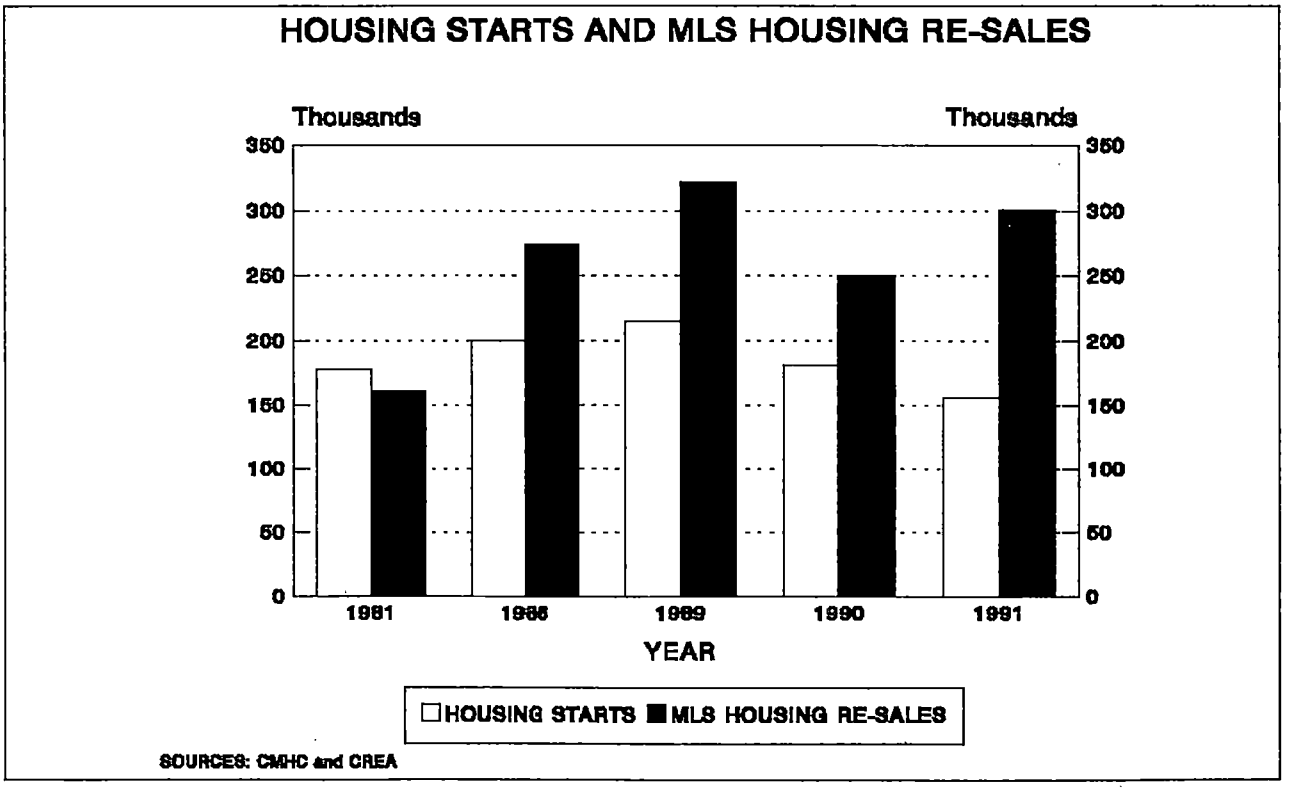

Figure 2

housing programs, in spot monitoring of the housing market, and in dealing with 'problem builders'. In addition, they have been called upon in some regions to put on or to participate in seminars for building inspectors dealing with the National Building Code and new building technology.

The training and qualification of municipal building inspectors -- especially in the case of smaller municipalities -- are subjects that have attracted considerable attention in recent years. A 1989 report commissioned by the Canadian Construction Research Board noted that much of the focus had been at the provincial/territorial government level and recommended that increased in-puts be obtained from municipal building officials, the building industry and associations representing the inspection process. Training programs are well established in some regions but virtually non-existent in others. Some municipalities are allegedly ill-prepared to execute their building code compliance function.

All of which have combined to place a new focus on the importance of the residential inspection function. Proposals were invited by CMHC for the conduct of a National Survey of the Canadian Residential Inspection Industry to address the above issues as part of its advisory role in the enhancement of housing quality in Canada. In particular, the terms of reference called for:

- a national survey to determine in detail the state of the Residential Inspection industry in Canada,

- the entry criteria for membership in inspection associations,

- the availability of training and certification programs.

The consultant was also directed to present options whereby CMHC might assist in training programs and in the development of the residential inspection industry whose members could perform a professional service in the planning and execution of sound renovation in addition to their other activities.

1.2.0 Procedures Followed by WDR

Background knowledge of the survey subject area was expanded by discussions with representatives of the Ontario and Alberta Governments; senior building officials in Toronto and Vancouver; the Council of Canadian Building Officials' Associations; the Canadian Home Builders' Association Renovators' Council; the Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors; the American Society of Home Inspectors; the CMHC Inspection Service; and the Canadian Codes Centre. Reports on building inspection activities prepared for CMHC, the Provincial/Territorial Deputy

Ministers Responsible for the Construction Industry, Canadian Construction Research Board and Ontario Ministry of Housing were reviewed, as was the manual for CMHC's Training in Housing Rehabilitation Skills Course #1 dealing with Inspecting Dwellings (1983 and 1984).

A series of four questionnaires in English and French was prepared directed at (1) private sector building inspection firms, (2) public sector building officials, (3) associations representing members in both groups, and (4) New Home Warranty Programs and associations representing builders and renovators.[2] The mailing list for building inspection firms was compiled from three association membership lists, supplemented by names selected from the 'Yellow Pages' phone books for major centres. The list of municipal building inspectors was comprised of the Boards of Directors of the CCBOA and provincial building officials' associations, supplemented by officials from major centres not represented on the provincial association boards. Over 450 questionnaires were mailed out; the response rate was remarkably high. As of November 13, 1992, 295 questionnaires had been received as follows:

Building Inspection Firms	142
Municipal Building Officials	119
Building Inspection Associations	5
Building Officials' Associations	10
Builders' and Renovators' Associations	11
New Home Warranty Programs	8
	295

Personal interviews were also conducted to elaborate on or augment the responses to the survey questionnaires. Up-dates were also obtained in some cases in order to cover developments during the late summer and fall. (Some material in the report, however, may be no longer current because of the dynamic nature of the study subject area).

Contact was also made with the Council of American Building Officials and its three member regional groups to check the United States experience concerning the training and certification of building officials.

The survey material was analysed and the report prepared.

1.3.0 Acknowledgements

The objectives of the survey were in general warmly received by those who were approached in connection with it and they expressed keen interest in its outcome. Many have requested a copy of the full report. Even so, particular appreciation must be

[2]The texts are contained in Appendix "A".

expressed to all of those who cooperated by completing a questionnaire, who devoted time to an interview, who provided supporting printed material, and who suggested worthwhile additional leads.

2.0.0 OVERVIEW OF THE RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION SCENE

2.1.0 The Private Sector

The main private sector components of the residential inspection industry in Canada are the firms and individuals who perform inspections, their associations, and specialized inspectors acting in connection with the R-2000 Program and The New Home Warranty Programs.

2.1.1 Inspection Firms

The 'Residential Inspection Industry' in Canada exists mainly in the major centres. The 'Yellow Pages' telephone books in such areas typically contain a sizeable listing under the heading of 'Building Inspection Service'. Some of the firms are consulting engineers and testing companies engaged in specialized technical inspections on larger buildings, but the great majority advertise as 'home inspectors'. On the other hand, there are little or no such listings in the 'Yellow Pages' directories for many cities and towns.

The operation of companies whose sole or principal business relates to residential inspection work dates back only to around 1975. Previously individuals or companies performing house inspection work for a fee did so as a part-time activity -- a situation that continues today in the overall work program of architects, builders, testing and inspection firms etc. Many of the home inspection firms have been recently established. Some are franchised businesses and follow a prescribed inspection process.

A few home inspection firms employ a number of inspectors but typically they have but one or two. The preponderant source of business relates to pre-purchase inspections of existing houses. The respondents to the survey reported relatively little business connected with the renovation of homes, to energy efficiency checks or audits, or to new homes during and after construction. A minority stated that they were also engaged in building renovation work and/or professional design activity.

The bulk of the private sector home inspectors cited experience in the building trades or as contractors prior to entering inspection work. A significant number had a technical background of architecture, engineering or engineering technology. Those firms which follow a comprehensive check list and provide a copy to the client typically specify what is or is not included. The inspection may be entirely visual in nature; in other instances the inspection will penetrate the surface. A minority stated that their regular inspections included energy efficiency and utility savers. With regard to potential health hazards, a number of respondents reported that they checked for the presence of UFFI or asbestos building materials. Only a very few were equipped to check for radon. A somewhat larger number were licensed to perform R-2000 Home design evaluations and verification inspections.

The great majority stated that they provided a written report and many said that they would give rough estimates of the cost of repairs -- either as a regular practice or if requested. Some respondents, however, did not answer these questions. The comment was made by several (who did provide written reports and cost estimates) that their competitors included those who gave only oral reports, possibly as a means of avoiding responsibility for their findings.

The cost range of a full inspection of an average house varied somewhat by regions, but the most prevalent cost categories were '$200 - $250' and 'over $250'. The range in Southern Ontario was reported to be from $250 - $500. The inspection of an 'average' house lasted about two hours.

Courses relating to inspection work had been taken by most respondents from one or more sources -- building inspectors associations, community colleges, provincial governments, CMHC etc. -- but virtually all stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in house inspection skills. The favoured vehicle for such training was Workshops or Seminars. The main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training system were identified, firstly, to be qualified instructors, followed by training manuals and videos. A number of respondents stated that an update of the 1983-84 CMHC Housing Rehabilitation Skills Manuals dealing with Residential Inspections would serve a useful purpose.

A large majority thought that it was both desirable and feasible to establish recognized qualification standards for home inspectors and that certificate holders be required to take refresher courses. Most chose associations to serve as the issuer of such certificates, although educational institutions and public bodies were preferred by some or listed as an acceptable option.

A large majority believed that it would be possible to develop a market demand for homeowners to engage qualified residential inspectors to perform periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency audits at an average cost of $250 and $150 respectively. This view, however, was not shared by many who are located in smaller centres. Others commented that a large promotional campaign (presumably by government) would be needed to develop such a market. Several expressed the view that energy audits under present circumstances would not likely be ordered unless paid for by the utilities. Others answered this question negatively or cautioned that the development of a market for periodic check-ups would take a long time to achieve.

Although inspection assignments related to the planning and execution of renovation work were reported to constitute only a small portion of the present business, there was a strong consensus that qualified residential inspectors could perform a very valuable service to property owners in this regard. The principal factors cited included:

- Unbiased prioritizing of repair needs
- Assistance to homeowners in pre-planning of cost-effective renovations before budget set, funding secured and construction started
- Quality control during renovation work and advice to owners when to release payments
- Protection of owners, particularly older people and women, from unscrupulous contractors
- Help to provide better, safer, code-complying, less costly homes.

A number of respondents cautioned that not all who offered their services to the public as residential inspectors were currently competent to provide such services. Additional training on the one hand and guidance to owners on the selection of qualified inspectors on the other were stated to be necessary factors in the comprehensive use of residential inspectors in connection with renovation work. Some were sceptical of this coming to pass or flatly stated that they did not see a role for themselves in servicing owners on renovation work.

The following example of ambivalent feelings came from a home inspector who conducts 600 inspections a year, only 2% of which related to existing homes prior to repair or renovation:

> "The dominant public philosophy is to wait until a component stops working before upgrading or making repairs. People also put their money into items that show well or improve the saleability of the house, such as kitchens, bathrooms, and decoration. The renovation industry is both responding to these demands, as well as promoting renovation items which are high markup items. This behaviour is no different from car buyers selecting wire wheel covers rather than better tires. Everyone knows the benefits of improving the fundamentals of a house, but few are willing to put their money into insulation instead of a whirlpool when the latter will have a higher return on investment when selling the house. No amount of publicity or ad campaigns will change this dominant philosophy. CMHC should promote the concept of a house tune-up during renovations, to be sure that underlying systems are updated during renovations."

2.1.2. Inspectors' Associations

The oldest association of private sector building inspectors in Canada is the Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors, formed in 1985. Canadian members

of the American Society of Home Inspectors (ASHI) established a chapter in Ontario in 1987 and the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors. A B.C. chapter followed in 1991. Additional chapters are in their formative stages. Reports were received from a Prairie Chapter and an Eastern Ontario Chapter. Another chapter is said to be forming in Quebec (Montreal). CAHI material has been translated into French. There are also some CAHI members in the Atlantic Provinces. In July, 1992 the Canadian Association of Home Inspectors was recognized as a region of ASHI, comprised of the Ontario and British Columbia chapters.

In addition, charters for the 'Canadian Institute of Professional Home Inspectors' and a related training body, the 'National Home Inspection Institute', have been granted but these Vancouver-based bodies are not operational. The concept for the former encompasses training courses for home inspectors at community colleges and for membership in the institute being restricted to graduates of a college certified program. The concept for the latter is an educational institute for lay people on what to inspect in their own home.

None of the above existing associations has a formal designation of 'Certified Building/Home Inspector'. The right to display an association logo, however, is restricted to those who have been accepted by their peers and who have qualified under a candidacy or probationary process involving completed inspections and, in the case of the largest group, written examinations.

Another United States association, the Environmental Assessment Association (EAA), has recently conducted one-day and two-day seminars in several Canadian centres. The EAA is based in Scottsdale, Arizona and has set up a Canadian office in Guelph, Ont. It offers the designation of 'Certified Environmental Inspector' (CEI). 'The purpose of the Association is to provide the real estate and lending industries with qualified inspectors and further establish the professionalism and competency within the field of environmental inspection, both residential and commercial'. The Residential Phase 1 Environmental Inspection Report covers a visual site inspection. Phase 2 involves sampling for hazardous materials and Phase 3 involves a risk assessment.

The Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors (AOCBI) has as its principal purpose the provision of a forum for local firms to improve their standards and practices through knowledge/technology transfer at its monthly meetings, both from exterior sources and between members. Its Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics were approved by the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations in 1988. The Association has a group plan for Errors and Omissions Insurance. Currently it has 8 full members (annual fees $250) and 12 associate members -- the latter are comprised of inspection firms entering the association on a one-year probationary basis and public and private organizations interested in maintaining on-going liaison. The association's charter members were all established firms conducting building inspections. Peer acceptance is still a basic requirement for membership as a full member. Associate

members must be familiar with the association's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics and perform a test inspection to the satisfaction of a group of peers before graduating into full membership.

The AOCBI's member inspection firms are equally divided among architects, engineers and contractors -- 'a good mix'. A distinction is made between Inspection and Consulting services. It is stated, however, that there can be a thin line between the two activities. For example, many people buy small houses with a view to up-grading or expanding them. If it is desired to change a wall, there may be structural implications. An inspector engaged to conduct a pre-purchase or pre-renovation inspection may not be qualified to assess this design factor and may accordingly give misleading advice.

The decision to maintain an independent association was deliberate. About five years ago a number of Ottawa building inspectors attended a meeting in Toronto sponsored by the American Society of Home Inspectors. They concluded that the differences in climate and building codes, the payment of sizeable fees to a U.S. organization, and the application of an examination process and disciplinary actions decided in another country rendered the invitation to join ASHI unattractive. The emphasis given by AOCBI is on local issues in its meeting programs. Similarly, the use of building inspectors in the Ottawa-Carleton market is promoted through a group listing in the 'Yellow Pages', the use of a distinctive logo, the operation of a booth at Home Shows, presentations to mortgage and real estate companies, and media interviews. Any complaints are handled locally without delay.

The American Society of Home Inspectors Inc. was established in 1976. Its headquarters and staff are located in Arlington, Virginia. Some 35 chapters have been chartered in the United States and Canada. Six of the chapters are located in California, where an inspection by a private firm prior to the re-sale of a house is mandatory. (The State of Texas is the only one which licenses and regulates home inspectors). ASHI full and candidate members totalled roughly 2,800 in the United States and Canada in June, 1992. ASHI has a 'Standards of Practice' which outlines what is required and what is not required in a standard home inspection. The General Limitation states that inspections 'are visual and not technically exhaustive'. The mandatory written report is specifically not required to deal with the life expectancy of any component or system, the cost of repairs, or compliance or non-compliance with governing codes. The Standards of Practice also states that inspectors are not limited to the prescribed services; more or fewer may be provided if requested by the client.

A page-long ASHI Code of Ethics is attached to the Standards of Practice. Its provisions include those stating that 'The inspection work may not be used as a vehicle by the home inspector to deliberately obtain additional work in another field' and that 'The member will not accept nor offer commissions or allowances directly or indirectly from other parties dealing with their client in connection with work for which the member is responsible'. An ASHI pamphlet deals with these matters more succinctly: 'Avoid

conflicts of interest ... don't build, repair, or remodel homes you inspect. Don't endorse or recommend businesses or individuals for repair work'.

ASHI has developed a comprehensive Training Manual, prepared from an inspector's point of view; publishes a Technical Journal twice a year; and puts on four technical seminars each year. It also approves a number of training programs offered by private institutions. The monthly newsletter details the training programs that may be of interest to home inspectors. The ASHI annual conference program is largely educational in nature. Full membership requirements include the successful completion of a series of three examinations on Building Systems and Components, Report Writing and Standards, and Diagnosis of Building Defects; 250 fee-paid inspections performed in accordance with the ASHI Standards; and a minimum six month candidacy period. There is also a Continuing Education obligation of 40 hours of classroom training every two years.

ASHI charges a $75 membership application processing fee and a $175 annual fee for candidate members and $200 a year for full members. There is a fee of $75 to write each of the three qualifying examinations. (All amounts are in U.S. funds).

ASHI has published a position paper designed to address the issue of whether or not a professional engineer is required to carry out a home inspection. Many members of the Institute are professional engineers but it is stated that they are not performing an engineering function when conducting a visual home inspection. 'Engineering is an entirely different type of investigation, which entails detailed scientific measurements, tests, calculations and/or analysis... Such a technically exhaustive analysis involves considerable time and expense, and is only appropriate on rare occasions when visual evidence exists to indicate design problems which require further, specialized investigation'. The paper asserts that ASHI's standards are accepted by government agencies as the definitive performance guide for home inspectors and that it is the only organization of its kind with stringent membership requirements.

The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors (CAHI) was recognized as a region of AHSI in July, 1992. A 'region' is made up of the ASHI chapters within it. At present there are two chapters (Ontario and British Columbia) and four others in various stages of formation. Membership in ASHI is a prerequisite for chapter members. The president of the Ontario Chapter has been nominated as President-Elect of ASHI; the formal election takes place in January, 1993. It is stated that 'Over the long term, it is anticipated that CAHI will become a parallel, rather than subordinate organization to ASHI'.

The mission statements of each CAHI chapter are similar. The one furnished by the Ontario Chapter is the most detailed:

- To build public awareness and confidence in the home

inspector.

- To promote excellence within the profession and to improve inspection service through the application of the ASHI Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.

- To provide members and others with a forum in which to enhance their professionalism through education, an informed exchange of ideas, and other related benefits which can be provided best by an international association.

- To interact with related professions, the legal community and legislative/regulatory bodies as the leading authority in the home and building inspection profession.

The British Columbia Chapter of ASHI and of CAHI was established in 1991. It has 10 full members and 35 candidate members. They pay chapter fees in the $100 - $250 range in addition to those paid to ASHI. The chapter also obtains some funding from ASHI. The B.C. Chapter co-sponsors with the Seattle Chapter a 1 1/2 day technical seminar each year and also conducts local workshops. Liaison with the public sector Building Inspectors' Association of British Columbia exists through membership in the DACUM Program Advisory Committee assisting in the development of a building officials' training program; complementary modules for home inspectors may be a future consideration. The B.C. Chapter has also operated as the British Columbia Association of Home Inspectors. It has published a leaflet on 'Home Inspections -- A Guide for Real Estate Professionals' for use in presentations to realtors.

The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors (Prairies) is based in Calgary and is registered under the Alberta Societies Act. It had 18 founding members at its initial meeting in July, 1992. Annual fees supplementing those paid to ASHI are in the $100 - $250 range. An Education Committee has been given the mandate 'to build a program utilizing all appropriate sources'. Another stated objective is to establish a strong self-regulating and licensing authority.

The Ontario Chapter was established in 1987 as the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors. In June, 1992 it had 21 full members, 52 candidate members and 17 associate members. The latter category relates to candidate members who have successfully completed ASHI Exam 1. The supplementary annual fees in Ontario are $150 for a Candidate Member, $200 for an Associate Member and $250 for a Full Member. Those located outside of a one-hour's drive from Toronto (Yonge St. at Highway 401) pay $100, $125 and $175 respectively for the above membership categories. Fee revenues constitute over 75% of total revenues.

Effective September 1, 1992 it became mandatory that all Full and Associate Members participate in the CAHI Professional/General Liability and Crime Insurance Program. Coverage for Errors and Omissions and Third Party Liability insurance is up to $1 million per claim and to an annual aggregate of $2 million per firm. The Employee Dishonesty and Theft Policy Limitation is $100,000 per claim.

The chapter convenes an annual weekend seminar in Toronto in conjunction with ASHI and there are monthly meetings for the membership. Joint meetings have been held with the Ontario New Home Warranty Program Council, Ontario Real Estate Association, Appraisal Institute of Canada (Ontario), and the Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute. In the public sector, a CMHC presentation was made at a chapter meeting and meetings took place with the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Ontario Association of Home Inspectors publications include an extensive brochure containing the Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics, membership classifications, current officers and a Recommended Reading list; a leaflet concerning home inspections directed at realtors; and a news release directed at home buyers. A booth at home shows and an Ontario members' logo have been used as additional marketing tools to promote home inspection services.

Concentrated two week training programs for home inspectors are operated in Toronto by Inspection Training Associates.

The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors (Eastern Ontario) was formed in the summer of 1992 with a membership of ten full members and a number of candidate members. It has expressed particular interest in obtaining technical assistance from the National Research Council and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. When this group is formally accepted as a CAHI chapter, there will likely be a change in the name of the present Ontario chapter.

Another formative chapter of CAHI has been established for Quebec. Its Montreal chairman reported in September that there were about ten charter members.

2.1.3 R-2000 Inspectors

The Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) administers the R-2000 Home Program on behalf of Energy, Mines and Resources Canada. The Association licenses R-2000 Inspectors to evaluate the design of a house in accordance with the R-2000 standards and to verify that the completed dwelling does conform to these requirements. The Inspector Licensing Agreement between CHBA and the R-2000 Inspector is a six-page document, to which is appended a five-page schedule, 'R-2000 Home Program Technical Requirements'.

As of March, 1992 there were 69 licensed R-2000 Inspectors in Canada, compared to 50 in March, 1991. The distribution was as follows:

British Columbia and Yukon	7
Alberta	6
Saskatchewan	3
Ontario	36
New Brunswick	6
Prince Edward Island	3
Nova Scotia	4
Newfoundland	4
	69

Sixteen of the building inspection firms responding to the survey had a licensed R-2000 Inspector.

2.1.4 Housing Warranty Program Inspectors

New Home Warranty Programs operate across Canada with respect to new housing. In Ontario it is mandatory that all builders be registered and pay a fee for each unit built; elsewhere participation in the warranty program is voluntary but widespread. During the warranty period the builders are required to make good any confirmed deficiencies or stand to lose their registration. If the builder does not take remedial action, the work is paid for by the Warranty Program.

Each New Home Warranty Program employs a small staff of inspectors to deal primarily with post-construction complaints and conciliation procedures. Only a small portion of inspections are conducted during construction; these are performed on a selective basis to check on the ability of newly registered builders.

In New Brunswick the Atlantic Home Warranty Program engages inspectors employed by the N.B. Dept. of Municipalities, Culture & Housing to inspect certain houses on its behalf for a unit fee of $200.

The Ontario New Home Warranty Program (ONHWP) recently launched a 'defect prevention strategy' designed to reduce the number and expense of warranty claims. These claims have totalled $100 million in the past 16 years and the annual rate has risen significantly in recent times. The new strategy could involve intensive inspections on the work of new builders and the minority of 'problem builders' during construction and expanded inspections over the construction phase of new dwellings generally. Rather than expand its own inspection staff, consideration is being given to the feasibility of paying municipalities to have their building officials expand their code compliance inspections by perhaps 10% to include warranty items such as finishes and standards of workmanship. The pilot study is being conducted by a project team

representing the ONHWP, the City of Hamilton Building Department and the Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association. It is anticipated that field testing could commence in early 1993.

The defect prevention strategy also contemplates the use of private sector home inspectors. Another option would be to engage a building official from an adjacent municipality who wishes to earn extra money on a part-time or own-time basis. In all cases, special training would be required to meet the warranty program requirements.

Another development of particular interest to the survey on the part of New Home Warranty Programs is that consideration is being given in some quarters to the extension of the warranty coverage to residential renovation contracts of at least a certain size.

2.2.0 The Public Sector

Residential inspection work involves officials at all levels of government in Canada. The largest group is comprised of municipal building inspectors and plumbing inspectors charged with the responsibility of ensuring that new housing and repairs requiring a building permit conform to the building code and related regulations. There are provincial associations and a Canadian Council of Building Officials' Associations. Other municipal officials involved in residential inspections include fire prevention officers and property standards officers. They also have associations.

Responsibility for building regulations rests primarily at the provincial government level, although the charters of some cities permit them to issue building codes or by-laws also. Accordingly, provincial departments or ministries are engaged in building code publication and interpretation, training programs and related activities.

At the federal government level, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation provides a housing inspection service on a limited scale. (See Section 2.2.4). It has also rendered assistance in the development of training material related to residential inspections and members of its staff have participated widely in seminars on code compliance and new construction technology.

The Institute for Research in Construction, National Research Council Canada, publishes a number of national model code documents -- the National Building Code of Canada, the National Fire Code of Canada, the Canadian Housing Code, the Canadian Energy Code, the Canadian Plumbing Code and the Canadian Farm Building Code. They are written in a form suitable for adoption by provincial, territorial or municipal governments. Some do so by reference; others incorporate much of the text in their own codes. The revision of the national codes is the responsibility of the Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes (CCBFC), appointed by the National Research Council. The Institute for Research in Construction (IRC) houses the Canadian

Codes Centre, provides technical assistance, funds the travel expenses of revision committee members, and conducts a very extensive public review process for proposed code changes.

In recognition of the strong movement toward the renovation of existing building stock, the CCBFC has developed a model guideline to ensure public safety in accordance with the objectives of the National Building Code in the execution of renovations. This guideline is to be published in March, 1993 and will deal initially with Part 3, National Building Code provisions for larger buildings, including apartments and other multi-unit housing. It is planned to expand the guidelines so as to cover Part 9, National Building Code, for houses and other smaller buildings.

Building inspectors are usually well represented at the IRC forums on proposed code revisions and at the IRC seminars on new provisions that have been approved. In addition, IRC participates widely in seminars dealing with building inspection matters organized by other groups. Moreover, IRC will provide building inspectors with opinions on the intent of the National Building Code's provisions. IRC also operates the Canadian Construction Materials Centre to evaluate innovative materials, products and systems that are not covered by a standard called up in the Code or by a third-party certification program. Most provinces and territories use the Centre's evaluation reports as a basis for their acceptance of new products in code compliance inspections.

2.2.1 Municipal Building Officials

The main thrust of the survey among municipal building officials was to obtain information on their sources of training and to determine if CMHC can usefully assist in the transfer of new housing technology to them. Most of the respondents had many years of experience and a substantial number held supervisory positions.

Those who were employed in smaller municipalities typically inspected all aspects of a house with the exception of electrical installations (a function normally reserved for the electrical utility). In larger centres where the size of the municipal Building Department is correspondingly larger, there is a marked tendency to specialize in structural inspections, plumbing/mechanical inspections and fire prevention inspections, and in residential or larger building inspections.

Many building inspectors stated that they had had prior experience in the building industry or in design offices. Most -- although by no means all -- had taken courses related to building inspection. These had been given by a variety of organizations, but particularly Building Inspectors' Associations, Community Colleges, and Provincial Ministries or Departments. Courses given by CMHC and the Home Warranty Program and R-2000 workshops were reported by over half of the respondents in the Atlantic Provinces. In some regions certification as a Building Inspector/Official is or was

available; such programs are under active consideration in others. Many stated in the 'Other Comment' section of the questionnaire that they strongly favoured a certification system.

A very large majority stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in inspection skills and building technology. Indeed, most expressed interest in all twelve subject areas listed in the questionnaire. The balance tended to select new building code requirements and compliance, the inspection function, the building structure, the building envelope, and new building technology. Those who were plumbing inspectors and fire safety inspectors naturally tended to select their respective fields. Energy efficiency attracted a minority of respondents.

Workshops and seminars were the most popular medium for training or up-grading. However, night classes, videos and correspondence courses were also widely acceptable. Qualified instructors, training manuals and videos were identified as the main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training program. Few outside of Atlantic Canada included 'funds' in this listing but it was reported that many municipalities had relatively small training budgets for their building inspector(s). Moreover, the size of this budget often depended directly or indirectly upon building permits or other departmental revenues. The decline in building activity in many regions had accordingly adversely affected registrations in seminars etc. for building officials, especially if travel costs were involved.

A majority of the respondents from the Atlantic Provinces were familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC training manuals dealing with residential inspections. Elsewhere there was a relatively small minority in this category. Most of those who knew of the manuals favoured their revision -- as did a number of others, 'sight unseen'.

2.2.2 Building Officials' Associations

The main concentration of associations is at the provincial level. The Ontario Building Officials Association is by far the largest and has 23 chapters. Moreover, there is in Ontario a group named the Large Municipalities' Chief Building Officials (LMCBO) which represents the 38 municipalities with populations of 50,000 or more. Its members meet twice a year to discuss the overall operations of Buildings Departments, policy issues and new provisions in the building code. In addition, building officials in Metropolitan Toronto have formed the Toronto Area Chief Building Officials Committee (TACBOC). This committee has six or more sub-committees dealing with technical matters and/or training programs. In Western Canada similar groups operate -- e.g. Seven Western Cities Building Officials, and a Metro Vancouver Permits and Licenses Committee involving 15 jurisdictions.

Each province has an association of building officials/inspectors, although those in Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland are currently dormant. The sole

requirement of association membership is employment or interest in the building inspection field.

The previous Canadian Building Officials Association was transformed into the Canadian Council of Building Officials' Associations (CCBOA) in 1985. The fee schedule for member provincial associations is $2.00 per capita up to a maximum of $500.00. The 'CCBOA Bulletin' contains news on council and association activities, including the latter's training courses. A directory of building officials in larger centres is being prepared. 'Building Safety Week' is promoted by CCBOA each spring; a copy of a draft proclamation and some promotional material are sent to the provincial associations and to some major cities with a request that mayors and reeves proclaim the week and that displays be prepared. To date the CCBOA has not actively engaged in training or certification programs for building officials or in technology transfer. Its new president, however, has set as a goal the establishment of a reciprocal certification program across Canada.

The CCBOA and the provincial and regional associations of building officials are all volunteer-operated with the exception of the Ontario Building Officials Association, which has a part-time Executive Secretary-Treasurer. The highest annual fees for regular members are $70.00; most are in the $25.00 to $50.00 range. Certification programs for municipal building officials operate in three provinces and are being developed or restored in four others. Only one provincial association reported that it had a link with a private sector home inspectors' association (through membership on a training advisory committee). At least one provincial association has building inspection firms as members. Three associations reported that CMHC inspectors had been actively engaged in association seminars, giving presentations on code compliance and/or new building technology. In one instance a CMHC inspector was chairman of the annual conference and principal organizer of the technical program.

The Building Inspectors Association of British Columbia (BIABC) was formed in 1953 to help to promote a set of uniform building standards with a view to ensuring public safety in building, and to foster cooperation between government, the public and the building industry. The association has 430 members who have full-time employment in a building regulatory capacity and 150 associate members in related fields. The BIABC has an active program of seminars and workshops and holds bi-monthly zone membership meetings. A certification program was established in 1975 with three levels. Examinations are held in conjunction with the annual meeting. The certificate program related to Part 9 of the Building Code is also available through a correspondence course offered by the B.C. Institute of Technology. The association joined the International Conference of Building Officials (USA) because of its particular interest in this organization's education program.

The BIABC concluded that, as a volunteer organization, it could not adequately train and certify building officials to meet the growing demand. A successful

appeal was made to the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education to develop a comprehensive career program for those wishing to enter the building inspector field. The association has subsequently participated in the advisory group appointed to assist in this development. To date DACUMs had been developed for building inspectors and plumbing inspectors; a fire inspection module is being developed The BIABC had not made use of CMHC inspectors in its seminars but would welcome assistance in this regard.

The Alberta Building Officials Association (ABOA) was founded in 1959 to promote the concepts of health and safety in the design construction, demolition, use and maintenance of buildings in so far as such matters relate to fire prevention, fire protection and structural adequacy. It has 350 members. Seminars are conducted each spring and fall. The association assisted in the preparation of the illustrated guide for Part 9 of the building code for use in the province and will be represented on the Building and Fire Safety Code Council under the new Safety Codes Act. The Safety Standards Branch of Alberta Labour now certifies building officials on a voluntary basis; in the future certification will be mandatory. The ABOA recognizes certified inspectors with a special lapel pin..

The Saskatchewan Building Officials Association Inc. (SBOA) has operated for approximately 30 years. Among its objectives are those which seek 'to advance the skills and seek certification of those engaged in the administration and enforcement of building statutes and regulations in the Province' and 'to promote understanding and uniform interpretation of the National Building Code of Canada and of building statutes and regulations'. Its membership exceeds 150 in number and includes a few CMHC inspectors, Native inspectors, and private inspection firms.

The SBOA conducted a detailed survey in 1989 among its members and municipalities on whether or not a certification system for building officials and a related training program were desirable. A positive response was received in 64% of the 102 completed questionnaires. A majority was of the opinion that from 2 to 5 years would be required to achieve certification. Preferences were expressed for correspondence courses, seminars at selected locations, and daytime courses among the various type of course delivery. The fields of training deemed to be the most needed were Legal Aspects of Code Administration, NBC Part 3, NBC Part 9, and Upgrading and Repair of Older Residential Buildings. Among the general comments received were those advocating that the training program be administered through an educational institution in order to obtain public recognition; that 'grandfathering' should be kept to a minimum; and that builders' associations are currently educating their members -- 'building inspectors cannot be left behind'.

A ten year agreement was subsequently made between the Southeast Regional College in Weyburn and the SBOA whereby a 3-level Building Officials Certification Program was to have been launched in the fall of 1992; this date has now been deferred one year. The education program is based on that which was previously

developed in Ontario. The Level I Certificate covers single and two family dwellings and accessory buildings under Part 9 of the National Building Code. The Level II Certificate will cover all buildings under Part 9 and the Level III Certificate will cover all buildings under Part 3 of the code. The association has undertaken to ensure that there will be participants in the program. It is contemplated that in due course municipalities, government agencies and private consultants will list a Building Inspector's Licence as a job requirement in the field. Existing inspectors will have a grace period to obtain a level of certification required by the individual's job-description -- 3 years for Level I; 5 years for Level II; and 7 years for Level III.

The Manitoba Building Officials Association Inc. (MBOA) was founded in 1965 with its primary objective being 'to guide and direct the professional development of its members'. The association has 120 members and 20 sustaining members. It not only belongs to the CCBOA but is also a chapter of the three regional organizations for building officials in the United States (Section 4.0.0). The MBOA conducts semi-annual technical seminars and 'facilitated' the Part 9 Building Code Course launched in 1990 at the Brandon Fire College. The association has under consideration the setting of standards for certification levels and also prerequisites for entry in the inspection training program - e.g. a building trade journeyman or an engineering technologist. It reports that it liaises with private sector inspectors and that CMHC inspectors have made presentations at its seminars.

The Ontario Building Officials Association Inc. (OBOA) was established in 1956. It began to develop and deliver extensive educational courses in 1974 and introduced a certification program for qualifying members in 1982. Currently the OBOA has a membership of 2,200 building officials. Of those 666 have been certified by the association. Twenty-three chapters operate throughout the province. OBOA fees are paid primarily by municipalities rather than by individual building officials. There is a sliding scale whereby the fees are based on population ranges. Memberships cover all designated members of a Building Department. The lowest annual fee is $70.00 and is for municipalities of up to 25,000 population. The highest is $850.00, for cities of over 500,000 population. The per capita fee in this case could be less than $70.00.

Previously the OBOA developed all of its training courses, but in the mid-1980s the task became too great and assistance was requested from the Ontario Ministry of Housing. The ministry sponsored the Municipal Inspection Training and Education Committee (MITEC) which has prepared a comprehensive series of courses related to building inspection. The OBOA continues to be an active participant in course development through MITEC and has the rights for course delivery through its chapter network. Up to 75 courses will be offered in the 1992-93 Fall/Winter Training Program. Some MITEC courses are also available through community colleges. Moreover, OBOA was one of the proponents of a post diploma Community College course, 'Building Construction Regulations Administration', which was initiated at Seneca College in 1991 to provide code training to prospective building officials and designers. The association

has also in recent times developed two-day seminars on 'Ontario Building Code', 'Better Built House' and 'Zoning Aspects' and is active in joint ventures in the training field with the Ontario New Housing Warranty Program, Ontario Home Builders' Association, and Ontario Hydro.

The OBOA Certification Program is undergoing a transition to a new set of qualifications. Members may become a 'Certified Building Code Official' (CBCO) upon successfully completing three mandatory courses (Legal, Part 9 and Part 3) and three optional courses from the following: Plumbing, HVAC, Part 11, Wood Energy and Zoning. Additional options will be included upon their approval by the association's Board of Directors. A private member's bill now before the Ontario Parliament is designed to protect the OBOA's logo and certification title. Many municipalities, when hiring, state in advertisements that preference will be given to Certified Building Code Officials.

L'Association québécoise des agents du bâtiment inc. (AQAB-Quebec Building Officials Association) was established in 1967. Its principal objectives are to improve the quality and practice of building inspection to protect the public and consumers, and to aid building officials through the organization of technical sessions, courses and seminars and the distribution of information. The association has 420 active members (officials) and 40 student members. Courses on the 1990 National Building Code are offered across Quebec; technical information is distributed through its publication, 'Le Lien'; and technical programs are presented during the annual meeting.

The association has been actively involved in the development of an official program of studies for municipal inspectors required to obtain the designation of A.E.C. (Attestation d'études collégiales) approved by the Quebec Ministry of Education. These courses are scheduled to begin in January, 1993 in three CEGEPs located in Montreal, Quebec City and Sherbrooke. These colleges also have the mandate to give the courses in other areas where there is a sufficient demand for either day-time or part-time instruction. This program is also sponsored by the Quebec Ministry of Municipal Affairs and will be publicized by the AQAB. Students are required to take six mandatory courses totalling 285 hours of instruction plus a number of optional courses. Four of the latter are of specific relevance to building inspectors.

The New Brunswick Building Officials Association was established in 1973 with the principal purpose of training building inspectors. The main medium for this has been the annual conference and an annual technical workshop. Guest speakers and technical information have been obtained from a number of government departments and agencies. CMHC Inspectors have not participated to date but a possible role is seen in this regard. The association has upwards of 100 members. Its Executive Committee has under consideration the introduction of a certification program.

The Building Inspectors Association of Nova Scotia (BIANS) was established in 1963. Its aims are to increase the knowledge, ability and competence of its members,

to improve building inspection standards, and to encourage the use and uniform interpretation of the National Building Code. In 1991 it had 110 regular members. The association conducts two well-attended week-long courses each year.

Previously the Atlantic Building Officials Council certified building inspectors but this body no longer exists. A BIANS certification program is being developed, following the preparation of a DACUM skill profile and a mandate from the Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs. In order to qualify as a Certified Building Inspector (CBI) the candidate must obtain a 70% mark in a 3-hour examination following each of five courses dealing with Part 9 - Housing and Small Buildings. If a CBI subsequently successfully completes another five courses dealing with construction safety, use and occupancy, fire protection, plans review - advanced, and concrete and steel, he or she will qualify as a Certified Building Official (CBO). It is anticipated by BIANS that all of these courses can be taken in a five year period. The program is now under way.

As previously mentioned, plumbing inspectors, fire inspectors and property standards officers employed by municipal governments have, in a number of instances, their own associations. Reference is made here to the Ontario Association of Property Standards Officers Inc. (OAPSO) because it has created its own certification program and has been recently granted the right by the Ontario legislature to use the designation of 'Certified Property Standards Officer' (C.P.S.O.). This right was obtained through the passage of a Private Member's Bill in June, 1992. Certificates are issued upon the completion of educational courses. The OAPSO was established in 1975 and has 200 members. Annual seminars and study sessions commenced in the previous year. These have been held at either a university or a community college. The certificate may be obtained through private study and by successfully writing an examination at Seneca College.

2.2.3 Provincial Governments

As reported above, a number of Provincial Governments have become increasingly proactive in the development of training programs for building officials. Moreover, a majority of them have supported the establishment of certification programs for building inspectors, and, in three cases, are the issuers of such certificates.

Provincial governments commonly provide specialized inspection services for elevators, boilers/pressure vessels, gas etc. However, within the focus of this survey -- i.e. the residential inspection industry -- inspection activities by provincial ministries, departments or agencies are quite limited. For example, the Ontario Housing Corporation has an inspection staff which inspects not only its own projects, but also those being built under the Non-Profit Housing Program. Such inspections supplement those conducted by municipal building officials. They are made from one to four times a month to ensure that standards are maintained and that progress payments do correspond with actual job-site progress.

The previous New Brunswick Housing Corporation has been merged into the N.B. Dept. of Municipalities, Culture and Housing. The department has 28 building inspectors. They are primarily involved in the delivery of their own building projects. However, as noted in Section 2.1.4, they also conduct Home Warranty Program inspections. Moreover, the department is now empowered under the Municipal Planning Act to perform code compliance inspections in non-incorporated areas where there are no municipal building inspectors. A pilot project in the Edmundston Region involving four inspections per building is due to commence in early 1993.

In Alberta, the new Safety Codes Act provides for the accreditation of municipalities, agencies and corporations to administer its provisions. A two or three year transition period is contemplated for the accreditation process. "Participation is voluntary and municipalities may apply to administer only those parts of the Act that they feel capable of taking on ... The Department of Labour will be responsible for those parts of the Act that municipalities are not able to administer and may provide services directly or through accredited agencies".

A Transition Paper issued by the department states that "Accredited agencies will include private inspection firms accredited and regulated by the province to carry out the functions of a Safety Codes Officer (safety inspector). A municipality may also use the services of accredited agencies as a way to cope with heavy workloads or become involved in areas in which it lacks manpower or expertise". The paper states that three levels of competency are contemplated in the province-wide certification of Safety Codes Officers (inspectors) and notes that "the needs of each municipality will differ and the higher levels may not be required".

2.2.4 CMHC Inspectors

As mentioned in the Introduction, the size of the CMHC Inspection staff has been greatly reduced, in deference to the "authorities having jurisdiction" for the compliance of new housing to the building code. (Previously, all housing financed or insured under the National Housing Act was subject to CMHC inspections). CMHC inspectors are now members of the Corporation's Technical Resources Group. Approximately 100 are based in upwards of 50 locations across Canada. They are primarily engaged in rural and native (off-reserve) housing programs in areas where the provincial or territorial authorities do not have an inspection service. Spot inspections in urban markets are also performed in order to monitor housebuilding activities and to "keep a finger on the pulse". "Problem builders" and do-it-yourself projects will also attract inspections.

CMHC inspectors are also called upon to assume a teaching role in technical workshops organized by the Corporation's Housing Innovation Group, building officials' associations etc. A "Training for the Trainers" seminar is put on periodically to better prepare the inspectors for such assignments. A number of CMHC inspectors have, following retirement, moved into the training field.

2.3.0 Residential Inspection Services As Seen By Others

Questionnaires were sent to Builders' and Renovators' Associations and to New Home Warranty Programs to solicit their views on building inspectors' qualifications and certification. Contact was also made with organizations representing consumers, realtors and mortgage lenders and insurers for comment on private sector inspection firms.

2.3.1 Builders' and Renovators' Associations

Eleven builders' associations responded to the questionnaire. This group was comprised of the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) and seven provincial Home Builders' Associations, two provincial construction associations, and the Ontario Renovators' Council. The returns were made by association executives on behalf of their members.

The CHBA and five of the provincial Home Builders' Associations reported that their memberships included inspection firms and/or building officials. The majority of the builders' associations stated that their Boards of Directors had discussed residential inspection services during the past two years. The topics discussed had included: competency, consistency and the need for standards and training; the level of training and need for certification; building permit applications; liability for services; and discrepancies among municipal inspection practices.

A majority did not think that the current supply of qualified inspectors would be equal to the task if, when houses or condos are being resold, the requirements that there be a "Declaration of Fitness" or mortgage company-instigated inspection became more widespread. Five of the respondents favoured a "Declaration of Fitness". Two stated that it should be optional or a market-driven decision -- i.e. if the purchaser or mortgage-holder wanted one, it should be available. Another was concerned that the identification of minor defects might take on exaggerated importance in the eyes of the potential purchaser or mortgagor. The same association reported some complaints that inspection firms identified alleged defects with a view to developing repair business for themselves or an associated firm. A majority thought that copies of any inspection report to mortgage companies should also be provided to homeowners.

A majority of the respondents were of the opinion that building inspection firms should refrain from doing repair work or recommending anyone to do such work. Two, however, said that there were cases in which such advice would be valuable to uninformed homeowners.

It was noted that Employment and Immigration Canada had prepared Occupational Analyses for both homebuilders and renovators. The provincial Home Builders' Associations reported that they were all operating educational courses for their members,

leading in some cases to the designation of "Master Builder" or "Professional Builder". Among the courses, seminars and workshops offered were those relating to the building code -- especially to new provisions -- and to New Building Technology. Five associations reported that they made use of CMHC inspectors as instructors in their educational programs. There was unanimous agreement that it was desirable to make such courses open to both builders and to building inspectors. For example, one respondent said, "Absolutely! The exchange of ideas, perceptions and biases creates greater understanding for both groups". Another said, "The issues concern both parties. Their fields are not mutually exclusive, and should develop together".

There were mixed opinions on the contention that renovations were often "cosmetic" and did not address the priority needs. One respondent stated that market forces are the only way to sustainable activity. There was general agreement, however, that more information should be made available to consumers and that the provision of an inspection service that would objectively identify priority areas needing attention was desirable. Quebec associations have a guaranty program covering their members' work.

The Ontario Home Builders' Association offered Renovator Workshops aimed at both contractors and consumers. Its Renovators' Council has published three Consumers' Guides on "Standard Renovation Practices", "Standard Renovation Contract", and "Choosing a Renovation Contractor".

The most prevalent response was "Don't know" to the question as to whether firms listed in the "Yellow Pages" of telephone books under the heading of "Building Inspection Services" are qualified to conduct a thorough inspection of all aspects of a house. Four respondents reported feedback that at least some of the firms are limited in their ability. One noted that anyone could insert an advertisement. There was unanimous agreement that homeowners and builders and renovators alike would benefit if a recognized standard of qualification for residential inspectors was established. Five respondents chose associations as the preferred issuer of certificates. One had no preference as long as the issuer was credible and accountable. All stated that any certification program should include the passing of periodic refresher courses as a requirement for continued certified status.

With regard to municipal building officials/inspectors, only two respondents stated that, generally speaking, such people are well qualified to assess code compliance. Complaints by members were cited about a lack of consistency in code interpretations. One noted that municipal inspections in the more rural areas were virtually non-existent.

2.3.2 New Home Warranty Programs

The same questionnaire was sent to New Home Warranty Programs across Canada as to builders' associations. Eight responses were received from the chairman of the National Warranty Council, from the chairman and a staff member of the Ontario

New Home Warranty Program, and from staff members of five other Warranty Programs.

The National Warranty Council and three of the Warranty Programs reported that their Boards of Directors discussed residential inspection services during the past two years. Topics included standards and enforcement; inspections for conciliation and code compliance; and possible use of outside services (private and public) in "boom" periods to supplement their own inspection staff. The Atlantic New Home Warranty Corporation reported that it had a contract with CMHC covering the inspection of homes built by "New Builders"; the service needed to be expanded to additional locations.

Half of the respondents did not think that the supply of qualified inspectors was equal to the task if "Declaration of Fitness" and mortgage company-required inspections became more widespread prior to the resale of houses and condos. Two others were doubtful and the remaining two thought that the supply would be adequate. There were also mixed opinions as to whether or not "Declarations of Fitness" were desirable. Half were of the opinion that copies of inspection reports to mortgage companies should also be provided to homeowners; in two cases a reservation "if cost borne by owner" was added.

Only one respondent reported a serious problem related to inspection firms identifying alleged defects in a home with a view to developing business for themselves or an associated company. Six stated that inspection firms, when engaged to perform an inspection, should refrain from doing ensuing repairs or recommending anyone to do the work. One said that it would be acceptable if the firm had a high level of integrity, and the remaining respondent said that the firm should not do the repairs itself but could recommend others.

All favoured having courses, seminars and workshops on New Building Code Provisions and New Building Technology open to both Builders and to Building Inspectors. It was stated that joint sessions led to a better mutual understanding of problems and a more cooperative working relationship. One commented that in his region inspectors did take such courses but few builders had the time to do so.

Six respondents thought that in most cases repairs and renovations were made where most needed; one disagreed; and one stated that health and safety factors needed more consideration. Four favoured the provision of an inspection service to provide owners with an objective identification of priority needs. Two of them added that such a service should be a voluntary option and one stipulated that the service should be paid for by the owner, not the taxpayers.

Only four respondents expressed an opinion on whether, generally speaking, firms listed in the Yellow Pages under "Building Inspection Services" are qualified to conduct a thorough inspection of a house -- one "yes", two "no", one "depends on problem and level of expertise", and four "don't know". Seven respondents stated that homeowners

and builders or renovators alike would benefit from the establishment of a recognized standard of qualification for residential inspectors. Three chose associations as the issuers of certificates testifying to the qualifications of private sector building inspectors; three chose educational institutions; and three chose either associations or educational institutions. All said that those who were certified should be required to take refresher courses periodically to maintain their status.

A majority stated that municipal building officials were in general well qualified to assess code compliance but three said that the situation varied. One observed that the larger centres had better qualified and more specialized inspectors, whereas those in the smaller centres tended to be generalists and less qualified.

The Ontario New Home Warranty Program reported that the "improvement of inspection support is a corporate goal". Consideration is being given to the establishment of a licensing/certification/accreditation plan for inspectors, both internal and external. As reported in Section 2.1.4, a test program is being conducted in the Hamilton area to see if private home inspectors and municipal building inspectors can be used to detect defects and thereby reduce the volume of claims under the warranty on new homes.

2.3.3 Consumers and Better Business Bureaux

The Canadian Consumer for March, 1989 contained a four-page article entitled, "Inspecting the Home Inspectors". The abstract stated, "They're supposed to sell complete, unbiased written reports on your prospective new home. Too many don't". This article followed a June, 1988 review of consumer legislation commissioned by the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations. The report identified problems within the home inspection industry such as the lack of qualifications on the part of many inspectors, the misconception that an inspector's work is fully guaranteed, and the potential conflict of interest between real estate and home inspection services. However, no legislation was introduced to regulate home inspections.

The article stated that "The vast majority of complaints about home inspectors come from Ontario, primarily because the practice is more developed in that province". It warned consumers against "puffery" in advertisements, referrals from realtors (who allegedly might give a kick-back for a favourable report), inspectors who also engaged in renovations, and extensive disclaimers in inspection reports. It was recommended that an inspector be selected who was covered by liability insurance and who provided a written report and a rough estimate of the cost of repairs. It was stated that a graduate architect, engineer, former building contractor or quantity surveyor "may be suitably qualified to perform the inspection". Reference was made to the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors and to the Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors.[3]

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[3]The full text of the article and a selection of 1992 press clippings about house inspections are included in Appendix "B".

No further articles on home inspectors have been printed subsequently in the Canadian Consumer. The Canadian Consumers' Association advised that shortcomings on the part of house inspectors has not been an agenda item or subject of reported complaint to it in recent years.

The current (December, 1992) issue of Today's Seniors contains a brief article on "Tips on hiring a home inspector" written by Paul Tuz, president of the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan Toronto. Mr.Tuz recommends that a professional home inspector be hired to check out a house before it is purchased and that any offer to purchase be contingent upon a satisfactory inspection report being received. He advocates that only a suitably recommended home inspector be employed and that he or she be asked about the length of business experience as an inspector of residential properties. "Also, find out if the inspector belongs to a professional association such as the Association of Professional Engineers". Mr. Tuz stated in a telephone interview that his Bureau received many requests for the names of qualified home inspectors. The article had not been written in response to complaints about the activities of house inspectors but it was known that their "qualifications" ranged from experience as a carpenter or building handyman to that of an architect or engineer. On the other hand, complaints about renovation contractors and builders normally ranked within the top ten of 212 categories compiled by the Bureau. Accordingly, the article had been written to advise home-buyers to have an inspection performed before doing so -- and, in the absence of any regulations governing house inspectors, to check out their qualifications carefully before engaging one.

The Better Business Bureau of Ottawa and Hull Inc. stated that 6% of complaints received during 1991 related to house renovations and repairs. However, only one complaint had ever been received concerning any of the 23 house inspection firms listed in the "Yellow Pages" telephone directory for Ottawa-Hull. In one case the firm's file in the Bureau had been opened in 1967.

2.3.4 Mortgage Lenders and Insurers

No detailed survey was made concerning the procedures followed by mortgage lenders involving house inspections and their opinions concerning house inspectors. Representatives in the Ottawa area stated that they generally relied on the appraisals provided by realtors on housing re-sales. In the case of older homes or in the event of any special doubt about the condition of a residential property, however, an actual house inspection rather than an appraisal could be ordered or required to ensure that their mortgage interest was adequately covered. Such instances included new mortgages for the renovation or expansion of houses. If the lender ordered the inspection a copy would ordinarily not be given to the prospective mortgagee. The permission of the house inspector would be required in the event that a copy was indeed provided.

The Ottawa Mortgage Lenders Association was asked if it had ever discussed the

activities of home inspectors with respect to their qualifications, training and possible certification. The association was also asked if it or its individual members recommended the use of a home inspector in either a pre-purchase or pre-renovation situation when a mortgage was involved. Comments on how home inspectors were selected were also invited. In reply, the association stated, "We must advise that, due to the limited knowledge surrounding this topic, the association is unable to provide an opinion one way or another with respect to the merits of "home inspection". However, one of our breakfast seminars this past fall dealt with the topic, its purpose, cost, technical training etc., and we had as a guest speaker a representative of a local home inspection company. The information provided, while helpful, was insufficient to the extent that an informed conclusion could not be drawn."

The Mortgage Insurance Company of Canada does not currently have an inspection staff but uses independent appraisers' services. For relatively new houses, only a "drive-by" appraisal is normally made, but in the case of older units a more detailed check is made on the condition of the house as part of its appraised market value. The insurance is based on a percentage of the appraised value. Houses containing UFFI are not insured. The MICC chairman was of the opinion that "Declarations of Fitness" for houses are desirable but should not be mandatory. Homeowners who were prepared to pay for an inspection report to a mortgage company should be provided with a copy. With regard to the identification of priority areas needing attention in the repair or renovation of residential properties, an inspection service would be helpful, "if offered under open market conditions". The establishment of a recognized standard for residential inspectors was supported, with certificates being issued by either an association or a technical education institution.

As reported in Section 2.2.4, C.M.H.C. inspectors perform a monitoring function with respect to new market housing whose mortgages are insured by the Corporation. On average, perhaps half of the units are visited at least once. In the case of new mortgages taken out for older housing, the appraisal is usually relied upon for the issuance of insurance covering mortgage payments and there is no inspection visit.

2.3.5 Realtors

The Canadian Real Estate Association has no policies concerning the activities of house inspectors or municipal building inspectors. The Real Estate Board of Ottawa-Carleton has similarly not had the subject on its agenda. Some years ago the Toronto Real Estate Board recommended that home inspectors be regulated by the provincial government. No action was taken and the present trend is towards a reduction in government licensing functions. The Ontario Real Estate Association has no policy concerning the activities, training or certification of house inspectors and the subject has not been included on its annual meeting programs or Board of Directors meeting agendas. The OREA has met informally with representatives of the Ontario Chapter of the Canadian Association of Home Inspectors and has also included speakers and

considerable reference material on home inspections in its training programs.

At the working level, a branch manager of a large national real estate brokerage firm advised that about one-third of their residential sales were conditional upon there being a satisfactory report by an independent house inspector. He welcomed this procedure, provided that the inspector acted in a professional manner. As a matter of policy, his staff did not recommend any one house inspector but, if so requested, would provide several names. Association memberships were said to be useful in this regard. He noted that there were established standards among appraisers. The Real Estate Institute of Canada had a designation of Market Value Appraiser-Residential (MVA-R) and the Appraisal Institute of Canada had two -- Canadian Residential Appraiser (CRA), and Accredited Appraiser Canadian Institute (AACI). However, there was nothing equivalent for home inspectors.

He cited instances of unqualified house inspectors making unfavourable and unmerited reports which threatened to block a sale -- in which case his firm had to go to the expense of hiring a professional engineer or to enlist the support of the local fire department to refute the inspection report. His regional manager also was ambivalent about the performance of home inspectors. He was strongly of the opinion that they should be regulated or identified in some way as to their qualification; as it was, anyone could say that they were a home inspector and there was no recourse if their allegations were groundless or seriously exaggerated as to importance.

3.0.0 REGIONAL ANALYSES

This section of the report summarizes the responses to the questionnaires directed at house inspection firms and municipal building inspectors, province by province. In addition, a status report is given on the training and certification of public sector inspectors and of provincial government activities in these fields. A table summarizing the provincial certification programs appears in Figure 3.

The breakdown of the national totals for the two inspector categories is as follows:

	Home Inspectors	Building Officials
B.C.	23	10
Alta.	11	17
Sask.	3	7
Man.	3	9
Ont.	74	34
Que.	21	17
N.B.	2	12
P.E.I.	1	1
N.S.	4	8
Nfld.	1	1
NWT	-	3
Totals	142	119

3.1.0 British Columbia

3.1.1 Inspection Firms

Out of 23 British Columbia firms responding, 12 were located in urban centres and 11 in smaller municipalities. They had been in business for an average of 6 1/2 years; 10 for 2 years or less, and only 3 for 10 years or more. Fifteen are incorporated businesses. The firms were, on average, engaged 88% in residential inspections; the balance of the inspections were in other buildings, engineering and pest control. Fourteen respondents stated that inspections constitute their sole or principal business activity. One firm reported 40 employees in building inspection work and another 14, but the others were all in the 1-2 full-time employees category.

The number of residential inspections per firm per year ranged from 6 to 2,000, with the average being 232. The second largest number reported was 500 inspections per year (by one individual) but the balance were 250 or less. An average of 83% of the home inspections were reported to be pre-purchase.

Four of the firms had personnel who are licensed for R-2000 Home design

evaluations and verification inspections and two are "Certified Building Inspectors" (BIA of BC). Five others stated that they were entitled to this designation because of their membership in ASHI or because they taught home inspection courses. Three firms reported that they also engaged in building renovation work; two in professional design activity; and three in building cost estimating. Seventeen of the respondents had had experience in the building trades or as contractors before entering inspection work; seven had served as municipal building inspectors; and five as engineers or architects. The firm reporting 40 inspectors stated that only professionals were employed because of the liability factor. A majority of the other firms held a membership in the ASHI/CAHI or are candidates for membership.

Virtually all respondents performed comprehensive inspections and a majority also reported executing energy efficiency and health hazard inspections. One also certified mobile homes. All provided their clients with written reports but only ten included rough cost estimates for repairs. Ten charged $200 - $250 for an inspection and another nine charged over $250. One reported an average fee in the $100 - $150 range, and three in the $150 - $200 range.

Half of the respondents had taken building inspection courses offered by associations. Over one quarter had received instruction from Consultants and/or Community Colleges. A large majority stated that they would welcome training or upgrading in The Inspection Function, The Building Structure, The Mechanical and Electrical Systems, The Building Envelope, Fire Safety, and New Building Technology. Thirteen indicated interest in New Code Requirements and nine in Energy Efficiency and Insulation. Four observed that these topics were all covered by ASHI seminars over a period of time. Interest was also expressed by some in courses on pest and termite control, and on the life expectancy of building systems and components. A strong preference was shown for workshops and seminars; correspondence courses and videos were also popular training media.

All but one of the respondents favoured the establishment of recognized qualification standards for home inspectors. Seventeen stated that the certificates should be issued by associations; seven signified educational institutes; and four public bodies (some accepted more than one such certifying organization). Twenty stated that certificate holders should be required to take refresher courses. The main needs for a training system were stated to be qualified instructors and training manuals. One respondent, however, stated that "We have manuals and videos galore". Sixteen were unfamiliar with the CMHC manuals on Rehabilitation Skills dealing with Residential Inspections. Five stated that they had seen them. Eleven favoured the preparation of up-dates; one opposed such action; and another said: "Possibly -- if a cooperative joint venture with the industry".

Seven respondents thought that it was unlikely that homeowners would engage inspectors to perform periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency audits.

Twelve believed that such a market demand could be developed. Most set a figure in the $165 - $300 range as being what homeowners would be prepared to pay for full inspections, but two went as high as $800 and $2,000. The market for energy efficiency ratings fell mainly in the $65 - $200 range.

The role of qualified residential inspectors in the planning and execution of sound renovation work in Canadian homes was described as follows:

- provide better, safer, less costly homes
- prioritize repairs and ensure that contractor follows specifications
- give advice on renovation planning and make progress inspections
- carry out annual maintenance inspections and provide records which owner can use when selling house
- enable pre-planning of necessary repairs before budget set, funding secured and construction starts
- provide advice on electrical, venting, insulation etc. and quality control during the work - i.e. monitor the contractor and advise owners when to release payments

One commented that it was ridiculous for owners to have vehicle inspections but not for their largest investment, their home. Others commented that most owners are not interested in keeping their house in perfect condition and would not likely pay for periodic inspections: "Most owners do their own repairs and it is hard to squeeze a buck out of their pocket". Three proposed that banks and other financial institutions should encourage or require pre-purchase inspections ("I never had a vendor request one!").

Many expressed views on the certification of home inspectors. These were quite mixed:

- "A home inspection can be the cheapest insurance available but there is no way of knowing if the inspector is qualified or competent".
- "Inspectors must be trained and experienced. Licenses are needed to ensure this".
- "The governing and certification of home inspectors should be left to associations like ASHI. Stringent exams and practical experience are required to qualify for full membership. Guidelines should be available on conflicts of interest and insurance".
- "Standards should not be less than ASHI's. Home inspectors should police themselves and operate free of bureaucratic stifling".
- "I am not particularly impressed by ASHI standards. Too much emphasis is placed on specific items that can be fully inspected and not enough on roofing, structure etc. Some guideline is necessary -- too many "goofs" are entering the business with little relevant background". (An ASHI member).
- "Housing costs are so high that inspection is critical to public good. Benefit to all if all inspectors can be upgraded and trained to CMHC level of competence".

- "Serious lack of guidance to public, especially older people and women falling prey to merciless contractors".

One respondent noted that an advisory service for homeowners who wished to renovate their home had operated since 1970 in Vancouver -- i.e. the Architects' Advisory Service -- and was provided free of charge by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia. A pamphlet stated that Saturday morning sessions were devoted to homeowners on how to embark on renovating their house, how to save energy, and how to conform to building codes and municipal by-laws.

Interviews were held with the two co-chairmen of the advisory service. They explained that most of their visitors were homeowners who wished to add a room or two, rather than indulge in "cosmetic" renovations. Discussions were held in the Institute's offices; there were no inspections to identify priorities for renovation work. If the discussion led to a professional assignment, the architect would give advice to the client without involving a home inspector.

3.1.2 Municipal Inspectors

Out of the 10 British Columbia responses, 5 were from urban centres and 5 from smaller municipalities. The respondents had an average of 15 years experience as a building inspector. All were experienced in performing structural inspections and most in performing plumbing and fire prevention inspections. Five had attained supervisory positions. Nearly 40% of their inspections, on average, related to new housing. Two were the sole inspectors; four Building Departments had from 2 to 10 inspectors; and the other four had more than 10. Seven inspectors had had prior experience in the building trades and four in a building firm. Two had degrees in architecture. All belonged to the Building Inspectors Association of British Columbia (BIABC). Two were members of the Applied Science Technicians and Technologists of B.C. and one to the Architectural Institute of B.C. One was a Sessional Lecturer at the B.C. Institute of Technology.

Seven had taken building inspection courses put on by the BIABC and nine had been designated as Certified Building Inspectors by the Association. Five had taken building inspection courses given by BCIT; four by CMHC; three by the University Extension Department and three at School Board night classes.

All ten said that they would welcome training or up-grading in Part 3 of the Building Code; eight in Part 9; seven in the Inspection Function and in Fire Safety; six in New Code Requirements and in the Mechanical System; and five in the Building Envelope and in New Building Technology/Products. Only one expressed interest in Energy Efficiency. Other topics suggested were Communicative and Interpretive Skills, and Wind. A strong preference was shown for Workshops or Seminars. Videos or Satellite also was the choice of the majority. Half checked off Correspondence Courses and only three chose Night Courses.

All had a departmental training budget. Two reported a direct dependence on building permit revenues for its size and another said that there was an indirect linkage. One reported that the Training Budget was a set percentage of the total Departmental Budget. The main needs for the delivery of an appropriate training system were stated to be Training Manuals and Qualified Instructors. Videos were cited by half. Only three mentioned Funds.

Three were familiar with the CMHC 1983-84 material on Residential Inspections. One was of the opinion the its revision would not be useful if geared only to the RRAP program. The other two favoured its up-dating, as did another respondent "sight unseen".

Several echoed the BIABC statement reported on in Section 2.2.2 that, whereas the Association operated a well-developed building inspectors' training and certification program, its scale was now such that it was more than a group of volunteers could effectively handle. This, and a parallel growing demand for an educational program for inspectors in the private sector, had led to the establishment of a task group to investigate the creation of an overall inspection career training program.

3.1.3 Training and Certification

To recapitulate, the private sector respondents strongly supported the establishment of a recognized qualification standard for home inspectors. Most stated that this should be operated by the industry, although some said that certification by the government or an educational institution could have a positive factor, so long as the industry was able to make its in-puts effectively. The public sector already had a long-established association-operated program. Municipal governments had identified the desirability, when employing new building inspectors, of requiring that they be certified as qualified for the task. This expanded demand had over-taxed the association's resources and it had sought help from the provincial government.

A DACUM project ensued, sponsored by the Ministries of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, and of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture. Its purpose was to analyze the Building Inspection function in order to identify the skills and knowledge necessary for competent performance by a building official. A Program Advisory Committee was formed to identify and validate these needs. It was comprised of senior representatives of the two ministries (3), the Building Inspectors' Association of B.C. (4), the Canadian Association of Home Inspectors - B.C. (1), the Canadian Home Builders' Association of B.C.(1), the Union of B.C. Municipalities (1), the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of B.C.(1), the Architectural Institute of B.C.(1), and the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of B.C.(1). Additional representatives served on the Task Analysis and Validation Groups. A 55-page DACUM was completed in April, 1992. Additional funding is required to develop the training

package.

One possibility is that the Justice Institute of B.C. will act as the implementing body. The institute is funded through a basic budget provided by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and offers community service training programs -- e.g. police, fire, paramedic and corrections -- throughout the province.

A DACUM has also been prepared for plumbing inspectors. It has been suggested that the core training material for building inspectors could be augmented by supplementary modules to cover the various categories of specialized inspectors -- residential, fire, safety, environmental etc. -- in both the public and private sectors.

The underlying policy objectives of DACUMS and supporting training packages are:

- to provide access to the occupation by anyone interested,
- to establish standards throughout the province,
- to furnish the basis for a certification program, and
- to provide refresher/up-grader courses for current practitioners.

Another noteworthy development in British Columbia is the "Education 2000" program designed to include more career-oriented content in the school system and thereby help to reduce the present high drop-out rate. Commencing in 1996, the secondary school graduation certificate will be based on a transcript containing 24 "personal career" credits out of a total of 56. It is possible that some Building Inspection credits could be obtained at high school, which would lead to a faster qualification in subsequent training and provide more incentive to remain in school.

In passing, reference is made to an innovative "Certified Professional" designation recognized by the municipalities of Vancouver, Delta and Surrey. Architects and consulting engineers have complained about the delays incurred in having their drawings approved and building permits issued. Building officials have responded that these delays occur because members of the design professions are in general not fully aware of the requirements of the building code. The City of Vancouver issued an offer: if architects and engineers attended a course of studies and passed an examination on building code requirements, their drawings would be exempted from the usual plan-checking process. The initial failure rate was high but now there are approximately 150 "Certified Professionals". The course is operated by the University of British Columbia's Continuing Education Department. About 50 register each year. It deals with Part 3 of the Building Code, and not with Part 9 (Housing). Lectures are given on ten Mondays by representatives of the university faculty, the City of Vancouver, the legal profession and the fire prevention sector. There is a 2-day examination. The B.C. Union of Municipalities has under consideration the province-wide recognition of the "C.P." designation.

3.2.0 Alberta

3.2.1 Inspection Firms

All 11 respondents operated in major cities. One had been in business for 15 years, but all of the others had operated for 4 years or less. Five of the firms were companies, 4 were sole proprietorships and 2 were partnerships. On average, 84% of their inspections were for housing. Seven of the firms were devoted solely to inspection work; the other 4 spent less than half but more than a quarter of their time on inspections. Two firms had 4 inspectors; the average was 2. One firm conducted from 1,000 to 1,500 inspections a year; the average was 295. 79% of the inspections were pre-purchase; 12% were on new homes; 6% were pre-renovation; and 3% were for energy audits, litigations, and condo associations. Nine reported that some of their inspections were commissioned by municipalities, bonding companies, realtors, utilities and property management firms.

One respondent was licensed under the R-2000 Home Program and another was a Certified Building Inspector (Alberta Labour). Six of the firms were also engaged in building renovation/design/cost estimating activities. Seven had acquired their technical background in the building trades, five as professional engineers, three as municipal building officials and two in the Armed Forces. One each reported experience as a home security law enforcement officer, as an insurance company loss control officer, and as an architectural technician. All eleven gave comprehensive building inspections; eight inspected for UFFI and asbestos; seven made energy audits; two inspected for building security factors; and one for site contamination. All provided written inspection reports and six gave rough cost estimates (three only if requested).

Three firms reported that they charged $150 - $200 for a house inspection; five from $200 - $250; and three over $250. Six belonged to the Canadian Association of Home Inspectors and two were candidates. Six had obtained inspection training at community colleges; four from Provincial Departments and/or university Extension Departments; three from associations; and one each from School Board evening classes and from Consultants.

All eleven respondents stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in New Code Requirements and in New Building Technology/Products. Eight expressed interest in Energy Efficiency and Insulation, and in the Inspection Function. Seven checked off The Building Structure, The Mechanical and Electrical Systems, The Building Envelope and Fire Safety. One also proposed training in Cost-Effective Materials and Repairs, and another in Indoor Air Quality. Three selected all nine training categories; one stated that, as professional building scientists, they would also be prepared to teach any of the subjects. Workshops or seminars were the preferred medium, followed by correspondence courses, and then by videos. Only two were interested in night courses. All eleven advocated that recognized qualification standards be established for home

inspectors and all but one stated that certificate holders should be required to take refresher courses. Seven said that the certifying body should be an association; one said either an association or an educational institution; three chose Public Bodies; and one solely an educational institution.

All but one were of the opinion that a market demand for periodic home inspections could be developed, although one added that it would not be practical or cost-effective at this time. An average cost of $275 was cited. Most put the cost of an energy efficiency rating lower -- the average was $135 -- but one gave a range of from $250 to $750. Ten selected training manuals as being the main need in a training program, but qualified instructors and videos also rated highly in importance. One proposed that apprentice inspectors learn from qualified inspectors and another that there be group discussions and experience sharings on home inspection topics. Three of the eleven respondents were familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC Rehabilitation Skills Manuals dealing in part with Residential Inspections. Six recommended that this material be up-dated and published.

The role of qualified home inspectors in the planning and execution of sound residential renovation work was described as follows:

- Establish priorities, cost estimates and repair procedures.
- Improve quality. Assist in planning of efficient, cost-effective renovations and avoid costly structural errors.
- Identify priority needs and ensure adherence to proper building standards and construction techniques.
- Identify to authorities ambiguous items in the building code that should be removed or revised.
- Offer practical advice on priorities, cost-effective repair methods, material selection and trades people.
- Advise owners on alternatives and monitor work.
- Effective, realistic planning; prevention of disputes; review of plans and specs; and resolution of differences.

One added a warning: "To be viable, however, the entire house and all of its components should be viewed as an integrated system. Partial inspections may lead to dangerous and costly misinformation".

3.2.2 Municipal Inspectors

The 17 respondents were quite equally divided between the major centres and smaller municipalities. Two identified themselves as provincial officials. The average length of service as a building official was over 11 years. Eleven performed structural inspections. Six performed plumbing and/or fire prevention inspections; one carried out all three. Those who responded to the question spent, on average, half of their inspection

time on new housing. (Some stated that they now had supervisory positions or were mainly engaged in plans review work). Nine of the respondents were in Building Departments with from one to five inspectors. At the other end of the range, six were in departments with ten or more inspectors. Eight had had prior experience as a building tradesman or builder; six had worked in a design office; and others had been employed by a Fire Department, the Alberta Government etc. Most belonged to the Alberta Building Officials Association; others to professional and/or technical standards organizations.

Most had taken building inspection courses offered by the provincial government. Several had also received training at Institutes of Technology, or from courses given by associations, CMHC, R-2000 workshops or School Board night classes. Seven had been designated as Certified Building Inspectors by Alberta Labour. Twelve stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in Fire Safety; eleven in Code Compliance (Part 3); ten in New Building Code Requirements and in Code Compliance (Part 9); eight in New Building Technology/Products; seven in Code Compliance - Other (fire, HVAC, enforcement, failures), The Mechanical System, and The Building Envelope; six in the Inspection Function, The Building Structure, and Energy Efficiency; and four in The Electrical System. A strong preference was expressed for seminars and correspondence courses for training delivery.

Ten reported that their Department had a training budget. In only a few cases did it depend upon building permit or other departmental revenues. The main needs in the delivery of a training system were identified as training manuals and qualified instructors. Training on the job and the availability of resource people to help students were also cited.

Only one respondent was familiar with the CMHC manual material dealing with Residential Inspections. Five recommended that it be up-dated for use by building inspectors.

Among the general comments expressed were the following:

- "Uniform training and certification is a "must" throughout the province. It should be mandatory to ensure uniform interpretation of the Code".
- "Most inspectors that I know were, like myself, not qualified. This was both worrisome and stressful. The 1983-84 CMHC training manual was the most helpful course I have ever taken. It gave me more insight into building inspections".
- "Every building inspector must have a carpentry trade certificate and at least 5 years practical experience".
- "Find it difficult to keep up with new Codes ... So busy, no time to train our staff properly".

3.2.3 Training and Certification

The Alberta Department of Labour is responsible for the administration of the Uniform Building Standards Act, Fire Prevention Act and five other statutes governing electrical, gas, plumbing and private sewage disposal systems; elevators, and pressure equipment. It has designated as "Certified Building Inspectors" those who have qualified with respect to the Alberta Building Code. In June, 1991, the Safety Codes Act was passed by the Alberta Legislature. This consolidated the previous seven statutes into one; established a Safety Codes Council; and encouraged partnership arrangements in a more comprehensive system of public safety. The regulations relating to the various codes will be phased in over a period of several years. The appointment of the Safety Codes Council is expected to occur in late 1992 or in January, 1993.

Under the new legislation municipalities apply to be accredited to administer only those parts of the Act that they feel capable of taking on. The province will be responsible for the balance and, to this end, will supplement its own staff with the use of accredited agencies such as private inspection firms. The latter will be accredited and regulated by the province to carry out the functions of a Safety Code Officer (inspector). Accredited municipalities may also contract out work to accredited agencies (firms) as a means of coping with heavy workloads or specialized areas in which they lack expertise on staff.

A key factor in the program is the certification to province-wide standards of all inspectors. A five-year transition period is contemplated for the implementation of the "Certificate of Competency" program by which inspectors in the various disciplines will be certified as to their appropriate level of competence. Current experienced inspectors will likely be "grandfathered". Others will have to qualify. It is planned to permit the writing of "challenge exams" in all disciplines at all levels by those who believe that they have sufficient knowledge and skills without going through the training program. A 33-page discussion paper proposes three different areas of qualification in the case of new inspectors:

1. entry level education/training
2. basic skills and knowledge needed to enforce the Safety Codes Act
3. full technical and code knowledge for the specific discipline.

For example, the proposed entry requirements for Level I Safety Codes Officers - Buildings are Journeyman certification for a trade covered by the Building Code and nine years relevant experience; or Engineering Technologist certification and six years relevant experience; or membership or eligibility for membership in the Alberta associations for architects or professional engineers and two years relevant experience as a Registered Architect or P.Eng. There is a Base Competency Program lasting 3 weeks which is common to all disciplines. Level I - Buildings involves courses in plan reading, administration and Part 9 lasting six weeks. Those specializing in Heating, Ventilating

and Air-Conditioning Level I have a separate six weeks course related to the relevant mechanical requirements of the Alberta Building Code. Level II deals with Part 3 administration requirements (with some exceptions) and Level III covers training necessary to administer all other parts of the Code. Both contemplate courses of six weeks duration. Course material for the building discipline is being developed by the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary.

In time, the responsibility for developing suitable training programs will be transferred to the Safety Codes Council. Until then the Department of Labour is actively fulfilling this function. The provincial Institutes of Technology and technical colleges are to be the principal media of course delivery except for the fire discipline; the Alberta Fire Training School will provide the fire courses. Correspondence courses will also be used where appropriate. Employers are expected to cover the cost of certification training for their own staffs. In due course, new inspectors may acquire most of their training in the post-secondary education system. Private sector home inspectors will have to become certified for code compliance inspection work if their firms wish to be accredited agencies under the Act.

3.3.0 Saskatchewan

3.3.1 Inspection Firms

There are few listings in the Yellow Pages for building inspection firms in Saskatchewan. Three responses were received. One firm had been in business for 7 years; one for 3; and one had recently been incorporated but with very experienced people. The other two are sole proprietorships. Two firms had 95% of their work in the residential field; the other 50%. Inspections ranged from less than half of their work to "only occasionally" (i.e. 3 inspections a year). One conducted 120 inspections and the other 250 inspections a year. Of particular interest is the fact that one of the latter worked exclusively for municipalities in inspecting new homes for code compliance and the other obtained nearly half of its business in this field. One of the firms was also engaged in renovation work and two in cost estimating.

All three respondents had had experience in the building trades and one of them in engineering. Two conducted comprehensive house inspections, but the third covered only general exterior, structural, insulation and interiors. They all furnished clients with written reports and one provided a rough cost estimate for repairs. The two active inspection firms charged over $250 for a full inspection of an average house. One belonged to the Saskatchewan Building Officials Association (SBOA) and the other to CAHI and the Professional Engineers Association of Saskatchewan. They reported that they had taken inspection courses either from consultants, a provincial department or the SBOA. One of them expressed interest in taking training or up-grading across the board. Workshops and correspondence courses were the preferred medium.

All three supported the establishment of recognized qualification standards for home inspectors. Two favoured the issuance of certificates by an association and one by a public body. Two said that certificate holders should be required to take refresher courses. Practical on-site training and testing, and the establishment of levels of ability and experience were cited among the primary needs of the delivery system. They all thought that it would be possible to develop a market demand for periodic check-ups of homes. Cost estimates ranged from $100 to $700 and averaged $280.

General comments included the following:

- "I'd welcome any effort from above to organize, educate, certify and regulate this industry. The National Building Code has been adopted by Saskatchewan but assistance is needed in the related inspection function".
- "Inspections prior to renovations would assure homeowners that funds are properly spent. There is no economy in renovating finishes if the structure is poor or below new standards".
- "Inspectors could ensure that proposed renovation work met Code and economic payback level acceptable to the payee".

3.3.2 Municipal Inspectors

Seven responded to the questionnaire -- three from major centres and four from smaller municipalities. They had an average of 15 years experience as a building official. Several held supervisory positions. All performed structural inspections; three also performed fire prevention inspections; and one performed plumbing inspections. The proportion of their inspections related to new housing ranged from 15% to 95% and averaged 44%. The size of the Building Inspection Departments also varied. One had a sole inspector; three had from 2 to 5; two had from 6 to 10; and one had more than ten.

Five of the respondents had had prior experience in the building trades or in a building company. Another had risen from the ranks in the Municipal Engineering Department. All belonged to the Saskatchewan Building Officials Association. Six had taken courses related to building inspection work from one to four sources. Building Inspectors' Associations and Community Colleges had each attracted four of the officials; CMHC and a Provincial Ministry had each trained three; and a School Board night class had been the choice of one.

All expressed a strong thirst for training or up-grading in inspection skills and building technology. Seven selected Code Compliance - Part 3; six Code Compliance - Part 9, New Building Code Requirements, and The Building Structure; five Code Compliance (Legal Aspects, the Code as a System, and WETT), The Inspection Function, The Building Envelope, Fire Safety, and New Building Technology/Products; four Energy Efficiency; and three The Mechanical System, and the Electrical System. One said "Any course available"! There was a strong preference for Workshops and Correspondence

Courses (or a combination) as the delivery system of choice. Three also were agreeable to Night Classes or Videos.

Four reported that their Department had a training budget; one that it had a "minimal" allowance; and two that there was no budget at all. Two stated that their budget was dependent upon building permit or other departmental revenues. One advised that budget cuts would mean the deletion of his position.

Training manuals and qualified instructors were identified as the main needs in a training system (5 each), closely followed by funds (4). Two expressed an interest in videos and one stated that a national system with interprovincial recognition of certification was a prime need.

General comments included the following:

- "Our training program is open to the private sector".
- "SBOA is trying to establish a provincial training program combined with certification, so I can fully understand the monumental task of setting up a nationally accepted certified building inspection program. Such a goal has my support".
- "I would love to see a national program of education and certification in the building inspection field".

3.3.3 Training and Certification

As reported in Section 2.2.2, the Saskatchewan Building Officials Association and the Southeast Regional College at Weyburn have entered into a partnership for the operation of a Building Inspectors' training and certification program. Assistance is being provided by the Building Standards Branch, Saskatchewan Ministry of Community Services. The first course is due to be given in the fall of 1993.

Three levels of certification have been established. Those who successfully complete Level I courses will be certified to inspect single and two family dwellings and accessory buildings under Part 9 of the National Building Code. The completion of Level II courses will engender a certificate covering the inspection of all buildings covered under Part 9. Those completing Level III will be certified to inspect all buildings under Part 3 of the National Building Code. It is contemplated that classroom classes (mainly at night) will be available throughout the province, supplemented by correspondence courses and satellite telecommunications.

Once the certification program is established, existing inspectors will have a grace period to obtain the level of certification required by their job descriptions: Level I - 3 years, Level II - 5 years, and Level III - 7 years. It is also contemplated that in time municipalities, government agencies and private consultants requiring the services of

building inspectors will list the appropriate certificate as an employment requirement.

3.4.0 Manitoba

3.4.1 Inspection Firms

As in Saskatchewan, only three responses were received from building inspection firms in Manitoba. They had been in business for an average of 11 years. One was a sole proprietor; the other two were companies. Residential inspections constituted virtually all of their inspection work. Only one stated that it was its sole or principal business activity; another stated that the share was less than 50%; and the third said it was less than 25%. They performed an average of 123 house inspections a year.

One reported that 75% of his inspections related to new homes during their construction; the others reported only 20% or 5% in this category. One stated that 95% of the inspections related to pre-purchase assignments; the others reported 25%. Litigation support inspections accounted for one-quarter of the house inspections of the firm with the largest total. Relatively little pre-renovation work was reported. One of the firms was also engaged in renovation work and another in professional design activity. Two of the inspectors had been building inspectors in the public sector and one was a professional engineer. Two of them also had certified UFFI training. Two performed comprehensive inspections; the third inspected only General Exteriors and Interiors, Structural, Insulation and Sealing, and Health Hazards. All provided written reports and rough cost estimates (two only if requested). Prices charged ranged from $100 to over $250. Two of these private sector inspectors belonged to the Manitoba Building Officials Association.

Training had been obtained from a variety of sources. The inspector with the most was only interested in a refresher course in The Inspection Function, but the other two expressed interest in eight or nine categories. Seminars, Correspondence Courses and Videos each received two votes out of three as the preferred medium. Training manuals, qualified instructors, funds and videos were all stated to be needed.

All three favoured the certification of home inspectors. Two said that an association should issue the certificates; the third chose an educational institution. All supported a requirement that certificate holders take refresher courses in order to maintain their status. One cautioned that the public perception might be that inspectors are also licensed engineers because this work is typically performed by engineers. If so, the Professional Engineers' Associations might view the certification of inspectors as a potential conflict. Another questioned if CMHC would accept structural reports from certified or licensed inspectors if they were not professional engineers? He noted that MICC accepted Construction Engineering Technicians for mortgage insurance inspections, but CMHC did not.

None of the three respondents thought that it would be possible to develop a market for the periodic inspection of homes. One said, "Only if free -- the Hydro's CHEK program was great!" and another stated that the typical homeowner was not interested in paying the cost of an inspection.

Similarly, one did not think that there was much scope for a home inspector in helping homeowners plan and carry out renovation work. The others, however, cited the following potential benefits from this service:

- Prioritize work list for owner; prepare designs and specifications; and inspect contractor's work.
- Determine what work is urgently needed.
- Save owners money in the provision of a more comfortable, energy efficient and safer home.

3.4.2 Municipal Inspectors

Nine building officials responded to the questionnaire; all but two were located in major centres. They had on average 12 years service. All but one performed fire prevention inspections; six performed structural inspections; and five performed plumbing inspections. Two also inspected electrical work. Four of the respondents said that 5% or less of their inspections now related to new housing. The other five said that the share ranged from 10% to 80%, for an average of 33%. The size of the Building Department inspection staff also varied -- two had one inspector each; three had from two to ten; and four had over ten. Five had had prior experience in the building industry; two in design offices; and one each as an Armed Services technician and as a fireman. All belonged to the Manitoba Building Officials Association and two to the National Fire Prevention Association.

Building inspection courses provided by associations and community colleges had been taken by five of the officials. Four had attended those offered by the provincial government and three had taken CMHC courses. One or two had obtained training at R-2000 workshops, university extension department courses, home warranty programs and school board night classes. Reference was also made to City of Winnipeg in-house training.

Strong interest was shown in training or up-grading courses in Code Compliance, Fire Safety, The Inspection Function and The Building Structure. Six also checked off The Mechanical System, The Building Envelope, Energy Efficiency and New Building Technology/Products. Only three expressed interest in The Electrical Code. Workshops or seminars were the preferred method of training delivery, followed by correspondence courses, videos and night classes. Five of the Building Departments had an annual training budget; in only two cases did its size depend on building permit or other departmental revenues. The main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training

program were identified as qualified instructors, followed by training manuals and funds. Two added under "other needs" the "recognition by municipalities of the importance of building inspectors" and "the certification of inspectors to provide professional recognition and standing".

Two of the respondents were familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC manuals on Residential Inspections. Three recommended that they be up-dated.

General comments included the following:

- "Most provinces adopt the National Building Code and the National Fire Code with few amendments. It would be very useful to have a nation-wide training program. This would ensure consistent training of inspectors, contractors etc. and lead eventually to inspector certification".
- "Outside of the major cities, most building inspectors are not qualified. There must be up-grading to be properly certified. It is very difficult for people with no building construction experience to enforce the building code effectively".
- "You cannot make people into building inspectors if they don't have extensive construction experience... We must make the rural areas aware of the highly technical skills that are required to make a Building Inspector".
- "A much better job must be done in convincing the consumer and local jurisdictions having authority that code compliance (minimum standards) is essential for the preservation of life and safety and the maintenance of property values over time".
- "We need: One national unamended building code with undated reference standards -- climate and soil conditions etc. notwithstanding;
  Training in code equivalence;
  Training in conversion of single family residences to commercial -- 3/4 hour FRR basement to main;
  Training re Part 9 small buildings that evolve into Part 3 buildings".
- "National standards, certification and continuing up-grading, re-testing etc. should be mandatory".

3.4.3 Training and Certification

The Manitoba Building Officials Association is reported to be working with the Manitoba Government to convert the Ontario Buildings Branch courses for building inspectors for use in Manitoba. Some Part 9 courses were presented in 1991; other courses are planned to follow in several centres. The establishment of a certification program is under consideration.

3.5.0 Ontario

3.5.1 Inspection Firms

One-third of the 74 responses came from firms located in the Greater Toronto area. Upon analysis, there was no significant difference in the two groups other than their scale of operations. Four of the Toronto firms conducted from 1,000 to 3,500 home inspections annually and another reported a total of 900. Only one firm in the other group reached the 1,000 level and the next largest operator reported a range of 600 to 800. In terms of inspection coverage, inspection training courses taken and training courses desired, however, the two groups were quite similar.

Twenty-one of the non-Toronto firms were located in major centres and 27 in smaller municipalities (virtually all in Southern Ontario). Nearly one quarter of the respondents had been in business for only one year or less -- 7 in Greater Toronto and 11 in other parts of the province. On the other hand, 5 of the Toronto firms and 10 of the non-Toronto group had been in business for 10 years or more -- six for from 20 to 33 years. Almost two-thirds of the firms were companies; two were partnerships; and the rest sole proprietorships.

In all but four cases, residential inspections constituted 90% or more of the firm's inspection work and in 55% of the firms it constituted their sole or principal occupation. The average annual number of home inspections carried out by firms which had been in business for more than a year was 695 in Greater Toronto and 163 for other Ontario centres.

In almost all cases the home inspections were pre-purchase of existing houses. Twenty-five firms reported that home inspection assignments prior to repair or renovation amounted to 5% to 10% of their total and five gave a range of from 20% to 45%. Only four firms reported any significant volume of home inspections to check on energy efficiency. Five firms stated that from 15% to 25% of their house inspections related to new homes during or after construction but 34 of the other 42 firms reporting any activity in this area cited 5% or less. Ten of the firms reporting were licensed to perform R-2000 Home design evaluations and verification inspections.

Relatively few of the respondents from Greater Toronto reported that they also engaged in renovation work (3), professional design activity (5) or cost estimating (3). The proportions in the other areas were much higher -- totals of 16, 18 and 17 respectively.

Ten of the firms reported that one or more of their staff had served as building inspectors in the public sector. The largest number (53) had obtained experience in the building trades or as contractors. Thirty-five had a technical background in engineering or architecture. Almost all of the respondents normally conducted comprehensive home

inspections. A significant number excluded energy efficiency and health hazard checks. All stated that they gave their clients a written report and the great majority also included a cost estimate for repairs. Some only gave the latter if requested to do so. Six in the Greater Toronto area charge a fee of from $150 to $200 for inspecting an average house; 20 charged over $250. One expressed the opinion that the average fee charged was $400. Elsewhere about half charged below $250 and half above $250.

Thirteen of the Toronto group had taken courses on inspection work given by the Canadian Association of Home Inspectors. The next most popular sources were courses given by community colleges or by consultants. Thirty of those from other Ontario centres had taken courses offered by CAHI; 21 by community colleges; 14 by the R-2000 Program; and 10 by the Ontario New Home Warranty Program. Sixteen of the Toronto group stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in all nine subject areas included in the questionnaire. The rest checked off from one to eight topics. Six or more expressed no interest in The Building Structure, The Mechanical and Electrical Systems, The Building Envelope, and Energy Efficiency. Elsewhere, 24 our of 48 expressed interest in all nine subject areas. At the other extreme, three did not show any interest in taking courses; one was an architect who offered to teach any of the subjects. Twenty-one checked off from one to eight topics. Both groups expressed a preference for workshops or seminars as the training medium. After that, night classes, correspondence courses, and videos all scored the same.

All 74 of the Ontario respondents thought that it was desirable and feasible to establish recognized qualification standards for home inspectors. Forty-five were of the opinion that the issuer of the certificates should be an association. Another 17 chose an association or either a public body or an educational institution; one accepted all three choices. Six chose only a public body and one stated that a public body should oversee an association-operated certification plan. Five chose only an educational institution as the certificate-issuing body. Conversely, one respondent strongly stated that an educational institution should never be the medium for a training and certification program; his opposition was primarily based on a concern that instructors would be chosen in accordance with their seniority as established by collective agreements, rather than any personal knowledge of the home or building inspection functions. All but four favoured a requirement that certificate holders take refresher courses periodically in order to retain their status. One respondent commented that a national standard was desirable in any certification plan for home inspectors, in the interests of consistency. He suggested that on this basis the Canadian Association of Home Inspectors would be potentially the logical issuer of certificates.

The main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training and qualification system were perceived to be qualified instructors, followed by training manuals. Videos, funds, on-site evaluations, government recognition, and good communications were among the other elements identified by respondents as being necessary.

Fifty-seven of the 74 Ontario responses expressed the view that it was possible to develop a market demand by homeowners to engage qualified residential inspectors to perform periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency audits. On average, it was suggested that homeowners would be prepared to pay $300 for a full inspection and a lesser amount for an energy efficiency rating. Another ten said that the development of this new market was possible, but its achievement would require very strong marketing or a large rise in energy costs or mandatory regulations. Still others did not think that it was possible, at least not now. It was noted that the majority of people did not engage a home inspector even when purchasing a used house; the concept of having a check-up every, say, five years would require a new mindset on the part of the owners.

Nineteen of the respondents were familiar with the three 1983-84 CMHC manuals on residential rehabilitation skills dealing with residential inspections. Thirty-two supported the up-dating of this material.

Many positive statements were made on the role that a qualified home inspector could perform in the planning and execution of renovation work in Canadian homes. A sampling follows:

- "Education of homeowners by knowledgeable and unbiased reporting on importance and approximate cost of repairs".
- "CAHI can amass data on common problems and solutions for homes of different types and ages".
- "Impartial advice on feasibility, priority and likely costs".
- "Owners and builders spend too much on cosmetics. Too many newer homes have poor electrical and mechanical equipment".
- "Unbiased analysis of existing conditions and needs; priorities in accordance with safety and economics. But need higher level of training, education and understanding not presently prevalent".
- "Provision of experienced, impartial advice to owners in the most cost-effective upgrading and maintenance of their homes".
- "Give advice leading to avoidance of the many poorly conceived and executed renovations now being done".
- "The proposed use of home inspectors should prove to be highly effective in helping to upgrade the quality of Canada's housing".

General comments included the following:

- "In medical circles, a prescription without diagnosis amounts to malpractice. The renovation industry is the same. The house-as-a-system concept must be adopted -- otherwise owners or renovators cannot understand potential negative impact of a given change to the rest of the house".
- "Many inspection reports are still only oral and are given by unqualified people".
- "Inspectors should be architects -- they are trained in design".

- "Many of my litigation jobs are due to poor, misleading jobs of home inspection done by engineers. They and architects do not necessarily know much about housing. Often a good hands-on person who has been in the building business is better qualified".
- "There is a need for a national body to set minimum standards for the certification of inspectors. Training should be left to the training professionals".
- "Current Association of Home Inspectors is well organized and disciplined, however, training courses are non-existent and information transfer is spasmodic, limited and uncoordinated. Many current inspectors are poorly qualified. Courses should cover Health, Safety, Durability, Comfort and Operating Costs. Current inspection guidelines pay only lip service to these issues".

3.5.2 Municipal Inspectors

Eleven of the 34 Ontario building officials who responded to the questionnaire were located in major centres. The fact that the chairmen of the Ontario Building Officials Association chapters throughout the province were included in the survey contributed to the above-average number of responses (23) from smaller municipalities. Overall, the Ontario group had served as building officials on average for over 13 years. Thirty-three had performed structural inspections; 2 had performed electrical inspections; 17 had performed plumbing inspections, and 20 had performed fire prevention inspections. One-third held supervisory positions.

The 29 who were active in on-site inspection work were engaged on average 54% on new housing. Six were the sole inspector in their Building Department. Ten of them worked in inspection staffs ranging in size from 2 to 5; four in staffs numbering from 6 to 10; and fourteen in larger staffs with over 10 inspectors each. Twenty-two of them had had prior experience in the building trades or as a contractor, and seven had worked in design offices -- five belonged to the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario.

All 34 had taken courses related to building inspection work -- 30 in those offered by the Ontario Building Officials Association; 28 from the Ontario Ministry of Housing ; 15 each from the Ontario New Home Warranty Program and from community colleges; and 9 each from CMHC and from R-2000 workshops. Twenty-three had been designated as a Certified Building Inspector by the O.B.O.A.

All said that they would welcome training or up-grading in inspection skills and building technology. Twenty-seven of the 34 chose the subjects of Code Compliance - Part 3, New Building Code Requirements and New Building Technology/Products. The next most popular topic was The Mechanical System, followed by Code Compliance - Part 9, and The Building Envelope (21 each), Code Compliance -- Other (20), Fire Safety (19), The Inspection Function and Energy Efficiency (17 each), and The Building Structure (16). Twenty-seven of the 34 respondents chose workshops and seminars as the preferred vehicle for instruction. One added that adequate time for discussion with the

instructors should be provided. Thirteen gave correspondence courses as an alternative training medium.

All but two stated that there was a training budget in their Buildings Department. In slightly over half of these cases the size of this budget was reported to have no dependency upon building permit or other departmental revenues. Eleven said that there was a relationship and three said that there was one in part or indirectly. The main needs in a training program were identified by most as being qualified instructors and training manuals. Three respondents said that they were familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC training manuals on housing rehabilitation skills dealing with residential inspections. They and three others thought that up-dates would serve them a useful purpose.

General comments included the following:

- "Inspection process is a visual verification process. Most inspectors (including Chief Building Officials) in small towns have no time for technical examination of plans, but are concerned with the safety of what they see. Training must focus on what to look for".
- "OBOA already has a full complement of courses delivered through night classes and/or workshops. 1992-93 schedule contains 75 courses lasting from one to ten days".
- "Unfortunately, many inspectors are restricted by time, budgets or uninformed politicians or administrators who have little knowledge of or interest in the building process".
- "There is a key role for CMHC. Technology - Yes. Training delivery - No, except maybe for small jurisdictions".
- "Funding help is needed. Also, awareness of the importance of building officials and of their independent inspections".
- "The encouragement of private sector inspections for renovations should be done cautiously. Who sets their standards? To whom are they responsible? Will they be contracted for by the municipalities?"

3.5.3 Training and Certification

As reported in Section 2.2.2, the Ontario Building Officials Association inaugurated an extensive training program in 1974. A certification program was initiated by the association a decade ago and had certified 666 building officials by mid-1992. Two levels of qualification were established in the certification program. Level I was phased out in 1991 but certificate-holders may retain the designation as long as they are eligible or until they up-grade to "Certified Building Code Official" (formerly Level II). Under the present certification program, candidates must belong to the OBOA, and complete three mandatory approved courses ("Legal Processes and Liabilities", and Ontario Building Code Part 9 and Part 3) and three courses chosen from the optional course list approved by the association. The three mandatory courses may be obtained from the OBOA, the

Ministry of Housing (M.I.T.E.C.) or the Toronto Area Chief Building Officials Committee (M.A.C.I.C.). Professional engineers, architects, and certified engineering or architectural technicians and technologists may be eligible for credits for some of the courses if they have a specified number of years of experience "in an occupation closely related to the enforcement, administration or development of building codes and which is acceptable to the Certification Review Board."

The Ontario Buildings Branch of the Ministry of Housing is reported to have spent a million dollars on the development of training courses for building officials and those who also work with the Ontario Building Code -- e.g. builders and designers. These courses are developed in consultation with the Municipal and Industry Training and Educational Council (MITEC). The latest in the series is a two week course on "Building Officials' Work Skills".

The Buildings Branch sponsored over sixty Building Code courses, 1992-93, in a variety of locations. Those delivered by OBOA chapters are usually offered on a one or two days a week basis, spread over several weeks. In addition, a number of community colleges give courses, normally in the evenings and once or twice a week. Courses on the Ontario Building Code, and Legal Processes and Responsibilities are also given by the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association, City of Toronto etc. Seneca College introduced a full-time course in 1992 on "Building Construction Regulations Administration".

The Buildings Branch provides a Building Officials Training Incentive for courses with a minimum of 15 hours of instruction and which are not offered by the Ministry of Housing. Funding is awarded to the municipality based on 50% of tuition fees and associated costs to a maximum of $400 for each approved course. The incentive is subject to availability of funds and is awarded on a first come, first served basis.

The first "Home Inspection Training Course" was presented by Inspection Training Associates in Toronto, March 30 - April 10, 1992, based on the Standards of Practice of the American Society of Home Inspectors. The registration fee was $2,950, including printed course material valued at over $900. A test at the end of each day was stated to prepare participants to take ASHI examinations. An additional 5-day field training option was offered for $850. The course was repeated in Toronto in the fall and was reported to be over-subscribed. In addition, shorter Building Inspection seminars have been offered in Ontario by the Continuing Education Department of the Technical University of Nova Scotia.

3.6.0 Quebec

3.6.1 Inspection Firms

Most of the respondents were "home inspectors" but five of the 21 building

inspection firms completing the questionnaire reported that only 4% to 10% of their inspections were in the residential sector. Two of these firms operated out of the same address, have been in business for a century, and perform a wide range of inspection and testing services. Another firm's housing inspections related 90% to energy efficiency audits. The fourth firm's inspection activities related solely to foundations and soil conditions; cracked basements and walls were stated to constitute a serious problem in the Montreal area. The fifth respondent is a testing laboratory; its residential inspections, however, preponderantly concerned houses prior to their repair or renovation. Yet another firm sent back a nil return, stating that it did not perform home inspections prior to their purchase or renovation, but specialized in damaged properties and worked mainly on behalf of insurance companies in the investigation of claims.

The 21 respondents had been in business for an average of 23 years. (If the two century-old firms were deducted, the average was 15). Eleven of the firms were companies; eight were sole proprietorships and two were partnerships. On average, 70% of the 21 firms' inspections were in the residential sector -- eight of them reported a share of from 95% to 100%. Ten of the firms stated that inspections constituted their sole or principal occupation; four stated that it was less than one-half but more than one-quarter; and seven stated that it was less than one-quarter. The average number of residential inspections conducted annually was 113. Four firms were in the 200 to 500 range.

On average, 51% of the total residential inspections related to pre-purchase assignments; 15% to those prior to repair or renovations; 5% to those checking on energy efficiency; and 7% to new homes during and after construction. In addition, one respondent stated that 90% of his firm's residential inspections related to the provision of expert technical advice on legal matters and on the application of guarantees. Another, as reported above, was wholly engaged in problems relating to cracked foundations and walls. One firm had a licensed R-2000 inspector in its employ.

Over half of the respondents were also engaged in building renovation work and cost estimating. Over one-third acted as professional designers (architecture or engineering). Indeed, eighteen had obtained their technical backgrounds in the design professions before engaging in inspection work. Only one had been a building inspector in the public sector, and two had been in the building trades or had been a contractor.

Over three-quarters normally inspected the General Exterior, Structural, Insulation and Sealing, Electrical and Mechanical features of a home. Twelve reported that they normally also inspected Interiors. Only eight inspected for Energy Efficiency and for Health Hazards. All stated that they furnished their client with an inspection report in writing. Nine also provided a rough cost estimate for repairs. (Four did so only if requested). Twelve said that their fee for the inspection of an average house was "Over $250". Five gave a range of $200 - $250 and four of $150 - $200. Some responses indicated that some fees in the "Over $250" category were considerably so. Half of the respondents stated that they belonged to the Quebec Orders of Architects or Engineers;

several to the Corporation professionelle des technologies des sciences appliquées du Québec; and one to the American Society of Home Inspectors.

Eleven of the respondents reported that they or their colleagues had taken courses related to building and renovation inspection. Of these five had taken courses offered by CMHC or by University Extension Departments, and four at Colleges or Institutes of Technology. All but seven respondents stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in a variety of home inspection skills. The most popular selection was New Building Technology/Products (17), followed by New Code Requirements (16), and The Mechanical and Electrical Systems and Energy Efficiency and Insulation (14 each); The Inspection Function, The Building Structure, and Fire Safety (13 each); and The Building Envelope (12). Environmental Risks and Legal Implications of Inspections were among those cited in the "Other" category. Night classes and Workshops or Seminars were the favoured training delivery media (10 each), followed by Correspondence Courses (7) and Videos (5).

Most identified the main needs in the delivery of a training program as being qualified instructors and training manuals. Nine respondents said that they were familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC manuals on housing rehabilitation skills dealing with Residential Inspections. One said, "I attended a week's course by CMHC at Queen's University and still refer to the manuals". Seven believed that an up-date would be useful; one qualifying this by saying that the revision should be adapted to the local conditions of Quebec -- e.g. the responsibilities set forth in the Quebec Civil Code, and old methods of construction.

Fifteen respondents thought that it is desirable and feasible to establish recognized qualification standards for home inspectors; two opposed the concept; and four did not express an opinion. Of those who favoured a certification plan, eight said that the certificates should be issued by public bodies; five selected associations; another five chose educational institutes; and two said either an association or a public body. Fifteen said that certificate holders in any such plan should be required to take refresher courses to retain their status. Three respondents did not think so.

Thirteen respondents agreed that it was possible to develop a market demand by homeowners to engage qualified residential inspectors to perform periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency audits. The suggested inspection fee ranged from $250 to $2,000, depending upon the size of the house, by the 14 who answered this question. The six who gave a figure for energy efficiency rating inspections ranged in price from $150 to $500.

Three respondents expressed the view that the development of such a market demand was not possible. Another took exception to the question: "The demand exists. The problem is one of competence among the inspectors and of capacity to pay among the homeowners".

The potential role of qualified home inspectors in helping homeowners in the planning and execution of renovations was described as follows:

- Vérification des plans avant exécution et effectuer des inspections périodiques pendant la réalisation. (Check the plans beforehand and inspect periodically during construction)
- Ils devraient être une source d'information intègre concernant les priorités des travaux à effectuer. (They must be an honest source of information on the priorities of the work to be carried out)
- The leading role. Only a professionally qualified inspector can assess and prioritize impartially the requirements and with the best interests of the owners in mind.
- Établir les besoins prioritaires. S'assurer que les normes et règlements sont respectés. Adviser le propriétaire à l'avance des coûts de ces travaux. (Establish the need. Ensure that the standards and regulations are respected. Advise the owner about costs in advance.)
- Déterminer l'état actuel du bâtiment, établir des priorités de réparations, élaborer les principales méthodes à utiliser pour les réparations et donner un estimé des coûts des travaux. (Determine the general condition of the building, set the repair work priorities, work out the main methods, and give an estimate of the cost of the work).
- To provide a realistic assessment of properties, including structural, electrical, plumbing, roofing, exterior walls, masonry, and foundations, and recommendations to repair defects.
- Un rôle de conseiller et de vulgarisateur de l'information. (A role as counsellor expressed in layman's terms).

Among the general comments were these:

- L'aspect normatif de la vérification ne prend pas en considération certaines problématiques de construction où de toute évidence les normes minimales ne suffisent pas à garantir la qualité d'un bâtiment ... Example: Comment peut-on appliquer les exigences minimales en matière de revêtement de toit si on ne tient pas compte de la direction des vent dominants. (The prescribed check doesn't take into account construction problems where the minimum standard doesn't suffice to guarantee building quality ... For example: How to apply the minimum requirements of roofing materials if one doesn't consider the direction of the prevailing wind).
- I think that this survey is most necessary and I hope that it leads to action in order to bring some order into the marketplace. There are too many unqualified people posing as home inspectors. Some of these are not only unscrupulous but downright dishonest in their relations with the public and the real estate industry.
- Pour la protection du public en général, les inspecteurs devraient obligatoirement être membres d'une corporation proféssionelle et être régie par l'Office des

Professions. (For the protection of the general public, inspectors must be required to belong to a regulated professional corporation (society).)

- Je crois que SCHL a définitivement un rôle à jouer au niveau de la sensibilisation du public et des intervenants du mileau de la construction et de la rénovation. Elle pourrait également avoir comme rôle, l'échange et la transmission d'information. (I believe that CMHC definitely has a role to play at the level of sensitizing the public and the players in the building scene. It equally has a role concerning the exchange and passing on of information.)
- Il y a actuellement d'énormes variations d'une firme à l'autre au niveau de contenu, du nombre d'éléments inspectés. (There are enormous variations in the level of contents and the number of elements inspected, from one firm to the other.)

3.6.2 Municipal Inspectors

Of the 17 building officials who responded to the questionnaire, 7 were located in major centres and 10 in smaller municipalities. On average, they had served as a building official for 13.5 years. All but two had performed structural inspections. Eleven of them had also performed fire prevention inspections; seven had done plumbing inspections; and four had inspected electrical work. Ten held supervisory positions. Roughly 38% of their inspections related to new housing; only three were in the 75% to 95% range.

Four of the officials were the sole building inspector in their department. In seven cases there were from two to five inspectors, and five of the Building Departments had from six to ten inspectors. Only one respondent was in a department with more than ten inspectors. Prior to becoming an inspector, five had gained experience in a building firm, four as architectural technicians, and three in design offices.

All but one had taken courses relating to building inspection work. Twelve had taken one or more offered by the Association québécoise des agents du bâtiment inc. (AQAB); ten by colleges; and six by a provincial ministry. Six stated that they were a Certified Building Inspector and identified as the certifying body either the AQAB, the Société d'Habitation du Québec, or an Institute of Technology.

All stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in inspection skills and building technology. On average, they expressed interest in seven of the thirteen subject areas included in the questionnaire. The most popular were Code Compliance -- Part 9 and 3 (14 each); New Building Technology/Products (12); The Inspection Function, The Building Envelope, and Fire Safety (11 each); and New Building Code Requirements (10). Workshops and Seminars were the preferred vehicle for training (13 out of 17). Videos or via satellite came next with 6, and night or day classes at CEGEPs with 5. Qualified instructors, training manuals and videos were selected as the main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training system for inspectors. Three were familiar with the CMHC

1983-84 manuals dealing with Residential Inspections. Four favoured their revision and publication.

All but three of the respondents reported that their Building Department had an annual training budget for the inspection staff. Its size did not depend upon building permit or other departmental revenues.

General comments included the following:

- Nous attendons avec impatience que des cours de formation soient donnés en région. (We impatiently await the offering of courses regionally).
- Certains inspecteurs ont un besoin de cours de perfectionnement afin que les services d'inspecteurs soient uniformes sur le territoire de la Province de Québec. (Certain inspectors need improver courses so that inspection services will be uniform throughout Quebec).

3.6.3 Training and Certification

As briefly reported in Section 2.2.2, the Quebec Ministry of Education has approved a course of studies for municipal inspectors which is required for the designation of "Attestation d'études collégiales (A.E.C.). The program is also sponsored by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The initial courses are scheduled to begin in January, 1993 in three CEGEPs located in Montreal, Quebec and Sherbrooke. The AQAB was actively involved in this development and is publicizing the courses.

The program is designed to accommodate the training needs of a variety of inspection disciplines -- buildings, environment, roads, water and sewer systems, noxious weeds etc. Building inspection candidates are required to take six mandatory courses of a general nature, plus a number of optional courses. Four of the second group relate specifically to building inspection. Details of the courses are contained in a document of over 200 pages, published jointly by the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and of Higher Education and Science.

The obligatory courses are:

1. Municipal inspection in all aspects (45 hours)
2. Municipal inspection and the legal framework (45 hours)
3. Municipal inspection and town planning regulations (60 hours)
4. Municipal inspection, environmental responsibilities (60 hours)
5. Municipal inspection, administrative wording, and records management (45 hours)
6. Communication techniques and municipal inspection (30 hours)

These six courses provide 10 units. In order to qualify for the A.E.C. designation, a candidate must have a total of 15 credits. Those relating specifically to building

inspection are:

1. The municipal inspector: a resource person in town planning (30 hours -- 1 1/3 credits)
2. Construction elements covered by municipal inspection (45 hours -- 1 2/3 credits)
3. Building Standards - Part 9 (30 hours -- 1 1/3 credits)
4 Use and analysis of topographical maps in the municipal environment (45 hours -- 1 2/3 credits)

Other optional courses and credits are available under headings of General Interest, Municipal Services and High Technology.

In December, 1991 the Quebec Government consolidated nine statutes in a revised Building Act designed to improve the quality of construction work and to ensure the safety of those who use public buildings. The Régie du bâtiment du Québec had its mandate reinforced in February, 1992 to apply the Act. This corporation has a 5-member Board of Directors appointed by the government and a 16-member advisory committee. The Régie is empowered to adopt by regulation a Building Code and a Fire Safety Code. It also may oblige any contractor to join a guaranty plan covering construction work. Furthermore, the Board may require security from any contractor to compensate the contractor's clients who sustain a loss as a result of a failure to carry out construction work satisfactorily for work not covered by a guaranty plan. Contractors must qualify on three bases to obtain their license to operate - administration and finance, safety and technology. Their failure to remedy unsatisfactory work can lead to the suspension or cancellation of their license.

This consumer protection plan encompasses renovation work as well as new construction. The Corporations of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors of Quebec have long operated programs whereby they would see that any necessary remedial work was carried out if members did not perform satisfactorily and declined to fix deficiencies. The construction and home builders associations have now adopted a guaranty program covering their members. They point out, however, that considerable building renovation work is done outside of the regulations and the collective agreement by non-registered contractors.

3.7.0 New Brunswick

3.7.1 Inspection Firms

The small numbers of home inspection firms operating in New Brunswick did not permit the drawing of an extensive profile. The two firms participating in the survey were both located in major centres. One had been in business for 3.5 years and inspections constituted its principal occupation. It conducted 80 home inspections last year. The other firm was nearing the end of its first year of operation as an inspection firm, although

its personnel had had extensive prior experience in building or in design work. Inspections represented more than one-quarter but less than one-half of its business.

Both firms reported that they were sole proprietorships; that they had personnel who belonged to the New Brunswick Society of Engineering Technicians and Technologists; and that a high percentage of their home inspections (96% and 85%) were pre-purchase assignments. One stated that 10% of its home inspections related to new homes during or after construction, and 5% were prior to repair or renovation work. One respondent preferred the title of "Real Estate Inspection Firm" on the grounds that a "home inspector" was insufficiently qualified. He stated that his inspections exceeded the ASHI/CAHI standards.

One firm also was engaged in building renovation work and both did design and building cost estimating work as part of their business activities. Both performed extensive inspections, although one excluded utility savers and the other radon-checking. Both provided written reports, but only one included a cost estimate for repairs, if requested. One elaborated that it offered "a full, money back, no-time-limit guaranty with all reports" and that all reports contained drawings and, if desired, cost estimates.

Both stated that they would welcome training in New Building Technology/Products. One also checked off all eight other titles of training or up-grading courses in home inspection skills. Correspondence courses or, in one case, night classes were selected as the preferred media for training courses. Qualified instructors, training manuals and funds were cited as the main needs for a training and certification system for home inspectors.

Both thought that it was desirable and feasible to establish recognized qualification standards for home inspectors. One said that the certificates should be issued by an association and the other by a public body. Both favoured a requirement that certificate holders take refresher courses.

Opinions were divided as to whether or not a market demand for periodic home inspections could be developed. The one who answered positively thought that homeowners would be prepared to pay from $200 to $400 for a full inspection and $500 for an energy efficiency rating.

One offered the following general comment:

"In general, the Standards required by ASHI and CAHI are too low and their reports too skimpy... Home inspectors are not architects or engineers, nor are they usually Certified Technicians or Technologists. Most do superficial inspections and report the condition, but rarely the cause or the remedy, because they normally are not qualified to do so."

3.7.2 Municipal Inspectors

All but two of the twelve New Brunswick municipal building officials were located in major centres. On average, they had nearly 14 years of service. Eleven had performed structural inspections; eight had done fire prevention inspections; four also had done plumbing inspections; and three had done electrical inspections. Four held supervisory positions. Only three reported that the share of inspections relating to new housing was 75% or more; the average was about 40%. Five of the respondents were in Building Departments with from 2 to 5 inspectors; three had inspection staffs numbering from 6 to 10; two had only one inspector, and one had more than ten.

Half of the inspectors had had prior experience in the building trades or in a building firm. Three had worked previously in design offices. All belonged to the N.B. Building Officials' Association; four to the N.B. Society of Engineering Technicians and Technologists, and one to the N.B. Association of Professional Engineers. The majority had taken courses related to building inspection offered by the N.B. Building Officials Association, CMHC, and Institutes of Technology. Four had also taken courses offered by the Home Warranty Program and the R-2000 Program. Seven stated that they were Certified Building Inspectors. Six of these had been certified by the previous Atlantic Building Officials Council. The seventh said that he had been certified in British Columbia as a Level II Inspector, but that this was not recognized in New Brunswick.

All stated that they would welcome training or up-grading in inspection skills and building technology. The most popular subjects were Code Compliance - Part 9(11 out of the 12); Code Compliance - Part 3(10); New Code Requirements, The Inspection Function, and The Building Structure (9 each); Fire Safety and New Building Technology/Products (8 each). Workshops or seminars were the preferred medium for training delivery by a wide margin. Qualified instructors and training manuals were identified as being the main needs for a training program. Eight were familiar with the three 1983-84 CMHC training manuals on housing rehabilitation skills dealing with residential inspections. Six respondents thought that updates would be useful to them; one questioned their relevance to the municipal inspection function.

All but one reported that their Building Department had an annual training budget for its inspection staff. Only two stated that this budget was dependent upon building permit or other departmental revenues.

General Comments made by this group included the folowing:

- The DACUM system, through which I received a certificate a number of years ago, is no longer available to building officials in New Brunswick. I would like to see a certification system, which would be recognized across the country.

- Nova Scotia DACUM system is very interesting. There is a need for building

inspectors to be able to obtain proper training and certification.

- I believe that an intense training program is required to certify building inspectors who have a good working knowledge and understanding of the National Building Code, Canadian Electrical Code, Canadian Plumbing Code and National Fire Code. Certification is imperative in order to ensure that homeowners get quality inspections.

- Training and certification for building officials are a must. A national program would be the best but, failing that, regional programs would be nice.

- Building inspector training is very much needed in New Brunswick. At present my staff have to travel outside of the province to obtain any kind of qualified, useful training. With budget restraints, this travel has been seriously limited.

- An office providing inspection service has a use for many levels of expertise. I'd like to see a national body create levels of achievement for inspectors, which would state desired qualifications, and perhaps call for written exams or supervised inspections.

3.7.3 Training and Certification

Preliminary discussions have been held between the New Brunswick Department of Advanced Education and the N.B. Building Officials Association concerning the possibility of a stepped-up training program and the introduction of a certification system for municipal building inspectors. The next joint meeting is tentatively set for February, 1993. Many of the building inspectors in the N.B. Dept. of Municipalities, Culture & Housing have taken R-2000 Home Program courses.

3.8.0 Prince Edward Island

One response was received from a company which performed home inspections as less than one-quarter of its business activities. Twelve such inspections were performed annually -- half were pre-purchase and half pre-renovation. The firm is also engaged in building renovation work and cost estimating. Home inspections are comprehensive but exclude utility savers and health hazards. Written reports, including a cost estimate for repairs, are provided to homeowners. The cost for the inspection work is in the $100 to $150 range. The principal of the firm said that he would welcome training in The Inspection Function, New Code Requirements, The Mechanical System, Fire Safety, and New Building Technology/Products. He supported the establishment of recognized qualification standards for home inspectors, administered by a public body. He stated that the P.E.I. market at the present time is not sufficiently large to support a business devoted solely to home inspections. Similarly, he did not think that it was yet possible to develop a demand for periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency

audits.

One of the two municipal building officials in Prince Edward Island responded to the questionnaire. New housing inspections, covering structural elements, fire prevention and general code compliance, amounted to roughly 40% of his inspection work. He is a member of the P.E.I. Society of Certified Engineering Technicians and a Certified Building Inspector (the former Atlantic Building Officials Council). He had taken courses related to building inspection offered by a community college and by CMHC. Further courses in Code Compliance (parts 9 and 3), The Inspection Function, and New Building Technology/Products would be welcome. Interpretations of building code provisions, especially in Part 3, were stated to be of particular importance and he advocated the publication of a manual containing interpretation guidelines and illustrations. Workshops or seminars, and correspondence courses were the preferred media for such training. Training manuals, qualified instructors, and funds, were cited as the main needs in a training program. His budget for training seminars depended upon the revenue received from building permits and other Building Department revenues. He was familiar with the three 1983-84 CMHC training manuals on housing rehabilitation skills dealing with inspections and stated that an up-date would serve a useful purpose.

3.9.0 Nova Scotia

3.9.1 Inspection Firms

Four Nova Scotia inspection firms participated in the survey -- three on the mainland and one on Cape Breton Island. They had been in business for an average of over six years. One was a sole proprietorship and the other three were companies. Over 90% of their inspections were, on average, in the residential sector. In two cases home inspections were the principal occupation -- one conducted over 700 annually. Another firm reported that home inspections were half of its business and the fourth said that they amounted to less than half but more than a quarter. On average they performed over 330 home inspections a year.

Three firms stated that from 90% to 95% of the home inspections were pre-purchase, but the fourth reported only 55% in this category and that 40% were pre-repair or pre-renovation. All performed a small percentage of their home inspections during and after construction -- in three instances the municipality was sometimes the client. One was a licensed R-2000 Home Inspector and two were Certified Building Inspectors -- one by the Building Inspectors Association of Nova Scotia and one by the Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs. Two were also engaged in building renovation work and/or cost estimating and one in professional design activities. Two had previously worked in the building industry and two as design professionals.

All normally made comprehensive home inspections and one checked for UFFI; none inspected for utility savers (energy efficiency) or for asbestos or radon. All provided

a written report and a cost estimate for repairs. It was stated that two Nova Scotia firms charged $200 for an average home inspection but that the most prevalent fee was about $150. Two of the respondents belonged to ASHI/CAHI and one to the Building Inspections Association of Nova Scotia.

Three had taken building inspection courses offered by BIANS; two by CMHC; two by educational institutions; one each by the R-2000 Program and the Department of Municipal Affairs. Two said that they would welcome training or up-grading in The Mechanical System and New Building Technology/Products, and one on The Electrical System. The fourth noted that the BIANS already offered courses in the nine subject areas listed. Workshops or seminars were the favoured vehicle for training. Two were familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC manuals on housing rehabilitation skills dealing with residential inspections; one said that an up-date would serve him a useful purpose. All stated that qualified instructors were a main need in the delivery of an appropriate training and qualification system for home inspectors. Two also cited training manuals and funds. Three thought that it is desirable and feasible to recognize qualification standards for home inspectors and that certificate holders should be required to take refresher courses.

Two stated that it would be possible to develop a market demand for periodic home check-ups by qualified inspectors. One added that the market would be small in Nova Scotia. They cited a price range of from $150 to $250. The other two respondents did not think that such a market could be developed. They all agreed that qualified home inspectors could perform a service to homeowners who wished to renovate their homes:

- Provide an accurate, unbiased opinion on the condition of a property, with a range of options for repairs and up-grading.

- Provide professional services to clients regardless of circumstances. Demonstrate accountability.

- Perform inspections with recommendations for immediate repairs and on-going maintenance programs.

- Use data of inspections for the types of renovation most needed for homes of a given age and size. Major role, if involved in early stages.

General comments included the following:

- Certification should be a high priority. Adequate Errors and Omissions and Liability Insurance should be a must.

- Local or provincial associations would be best able to establish appropriate standards for varying conditions across Canada regarding HVAC equipment, building materials, insects etc. - e.g. heat pumps are rarely seen in this region.

3.9.2 Municipal Inspectors

Five of the eight Nova Scotia municipal inspectors taking part in the survey were located in smaller municipalities and three in major centres. On average, they had been a building official for nearly nine years. They all performed structural inspections and six also did plumbing and fire prevention inspections. One also carried out electrical inspections. Five reported that from 50% to 90% of their inspections related to new housing. The other three reported a figure of 30%; the average for the whole group was 57%.

Half of the group were the sole inspector in their Building Department. Two were in departments with from 2 to 5 inspectors, and two in departments with over 10. Seven had obtained prior experience in the building industry and one in a design office. All had taken courses offered by the Building Inspectors Association of Nova Scotia and/or the Department of Municipal Affairs (seven each). CMHC courses, R-2000 Workshops and university extension department courses had been attended by 5 each. Four each had taken building inspection training from courses offered by the Home Warranty Program and by Institutes of Technology.

Six of the participants were Certified Building Inspectors -- five by the Building Inspectors Association of Nova Scotia, and one by the Department of Municipal Affairs. All stated that they would welcome further training in inspection skills and in building technology. The most popular choices were Code Compliance - Part 3, and Fire Safety (8 each); and Code Compliance - Part 9, The Inspection Function, The Building Envelope, and New Building Technology/Products (7 each). All chose Workshops or Seminars as the preferred way of obtaining training or up-grading; three also mentioned correspondence courses and/or videos as acceptable alternatives. Qualified instructors and training manuals were deemed to be the main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training program. Two were familiar with the three 1983-84 CMHC training manuals which dealt with residential inspections, and recommended their up-dating. All stated that their Building Department had an annual training budget for the inspection staff. One said that this budget was "very small" and six reported that its size depended on building permit fees or other departmental revenues.

General comments included the following:

- Seminars and courses with qualified instructors are good, but manuals are a must for study and reference. A certification program requiring a certain minimum of training and knowledge is also a must to ensure competent inspections and to minimize liabilities back on the inspectors and their employers.

- The BIANS is revamping its courses to better inform the inspectors. Since the Building Code Act came into effect in 1987 many new inspectors came on stream without a construction background. This led to a potential danger of lawsuits. The

Act should state that each municipality is responsible to certify its inspectors. Some choose not to send them on courses and expect them to do their job with limited mistakes.

- Training or up-grading should be made mandatory so there would be a consistent level of inspection service.

- In my opinion, R-2000 is the wave of the future. It is energy efficient and environmentally friendly. These are the two big objectives of today's market. More emphasis should be placed to obtain these standards. More training courses for inspectors should be offered.

3.9.3 Training and Certification

Currently there are two training avenues open to inspectors in Nova Scotia. The Department of Municipal Affairs presents courses which are open to municipal inspectors and private sector inspectors alike. Those who complete the studies receive a certificate signed by the Minister. This program will be phased out in two years' time in favour of the revised DACUM Certification Program developed by the Building Inspectors Association of Nova Scotia.

The DACUM outline of required skills is contained in a 17-page document and lists over 200 activities. Ten 5-day courses are scheduled for each April and October over a 5-year period. Certification will have two categories. A Certified Building Inspector (CBI) designation will be available to those who complete the first five training modules and obtain a 70% passing grade in the 3-hour examination following each course module. These modules cover administrative and plans review matters plus building code requirements for Part 9 - Housing and Small Buildings:

Module 101	Administration - Municipal and Provincial
	Legal/Ethics
	Barrier Free Design
Module 102	Housing
	Vapour/Air Barriers
Module 103	Plans Review - Intermediate
	Insulation
Module 104	HVAC
	Wood Heat
Module 105	Plumbing
	Electrical
	Masonry Construction

The designation of Certified Building Official will be available to those who have their CBI and who successfully complete an additional five modules based upon Part 3 -

Use and Occupancy, and advanced building construction:

Module 201	Construction Safety
	Specification Writing
Module 202	Use and Occupancy
	Inter-personal Relations
Module 203	Fire Protection
	National Fire Code
Module 204	Plans Review
	Computer Technology
Module 205	Concrete Construction
	Steel Construction

CMHC is listed as a source of instructors for Modules 102 and 104.

Departmental officials stated that the new program is designed to establish a solid credibility for the certification of building inspectors and to remove the present element of confusion related to past and present certification programs.

3.10.0 Newfoundland

A single response was received from a Newfoundland firm engaged in home inspection work. The latter represented less than one-quarter of its business but amounted to 75 residential inspections a year. 60% of these were pre-purchase; 20% pre-renovation; 15% were energy efficiency checks; and 5% dealt with new homes during and after construction.

The company's principal businesses were those of general contractors, builders, renovators, energy efficiency specialists and professional design consultants. It was licensed to perform R-2000 Home Inspections. Home inspection coverage was comprehensive, including utility savers and health hazards. Written reports, including cost estimates for repairs, were provided. The inspection fee for a typical house was in the $100 to $150 range. Courses related to inspection work had been taken by company personnel offered by the Home Warranty Program, CMHC, R-2000 Program and Institutes of Technology. Workshops would be welcomed on all nine topics contained in the survey questionnaire, plus Code Implications of Renovations to Existing Buildings. The respondent was familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC manuals dealing with inspection functions and thought that up-dates would be useful.

The establishment of a qualification standard for home inspectors was deemed to be desirable and feasible. Certificates should be issued by associations and certificate holders should be required to take refresher courses. The development of a market demand for periodic home check-ups or energy efficiency audits at a price of $150 was held to be possible. Similarly, the services of a qualified home inspector prior to

renovations would guide owners and also enhance the credibility of the renovation industry.

The sole Newfoundland municipal building official taking part in the survey had 20 years service and performed structural, plumbing and fire protection inspections. About 40% of his inspections related to new housing. The Building Department had from 2 to 5 building inspectors. It had an annual training budget. The size depended on building permit and other departmental revenues. The respondent belonged to the Building Inspectors Association of Nova Scotia and to the Association of Engineering Technicians and Technologists of Newfoundland. He had taken building inspection courses offered by BIANS, CMHC, and the Provincial Government, and was a Certified Building Inspector (BIANS). Further training on the National Building Code and associated documents would be welcome, either via night classes or seminars. He was familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC training manuals dealing with residential inspections and said that their up-date would be useful to those performing house inspection work.

The following general comment was made: "It is important to have a uniform National Building Code that all Canadians could use, but with local variations or enforcing by-laws -- e.g. Newfoundland uses standard wood frame construction but B.C. may utilize more plank, beam and glu-lam construction. Also, some soils in Canada are more prone to deterioration of sanitary piping and therefore require special attention or deviation from the national code."

3.11.0 Territories

Three building officials -- all based in Yellowknife, NWT -- participated in the survey. They had, on average, four years' experience in this occupation. Two performed structural inspections; one also did fire prevention inspections; and one specialized in plumbing, heating and ventilation inspections. All had had prior experience in the building industry. Two belonged to the Building Inspectors Association of B.C. and one also to the Alberta Building Officials Association. Two had roughly 75% of their inspections related to new housing; the other only 50%. Their Building Department had from 3 to 5 inspectors and had an annual training budget. One of the respondents had taken courses offered by a Building Inspectors' Association; another had taken courses given by CMHC; and the third had attended New Home Warranty courses and those offered by a Provincial Government. All stated that they would welcome further training. The mechanical specialist chose The Mechanical System and Code Compliance - Part 9; another chose Code Compliance - Parts 9 and 3, and The Inspection Function; and the third checked off all topics except The Electrical System. All three selected Correspondence Courses as a preferred medium for training; two also selected Seminars and Videos or Via Satellite. Two each cited training manuals and qualified instructors as the main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training program. One was familiar with the 1983-84 CMHC training manuals on housing rehabilitation skills. He thought that up-dates of the Residential Inspections material could be helpful in the case of building

permits for housing renovation.

General comments included the following:

- I'd like to see a correspondence course developed for inspectors that covers the various parts of the National Building Code, along with levels of certification. This course should include plan check, inspection and legal requirements, along with code compliance instruction.

- I have been unable to find any courses that relate directly to mechanical inspections. Today's homes are getting many new innovative mechanical systems. They may be up to 25% of the project. To keep pace as an inspector is quite frustrating.

	CERTIFICATION OF BUILDING OFFICIALS		
	ESTABLISHED	STARTING	BEING CONSIDERED
B.C.	X		
ALBERTA	X		
SASK.		X	
MANITOBA			X
ONTARIO	X		
QUEBEC		X	
N.B.			X
NOVA SCOTIA	X	X (Revised Program)	

Figure 3

4.0.0 THE UNITED STATES SCENE

Trends and developments in the United States of America may well be portents of what lies ahead in Canada. Material concerning the American Society of Home Inspectors is contained in some detail in Section 2.1.2. Reference was also made to the facts that California requires that there be an inspection by a private home inspector prior to the re-sale of a house and that Texas licenses private home inspectors.

In the U.S. public sector, the training and certification of building officials are performed by the three model building code organizations, all of which have comprehensive, well-established and well-funded education programs:

- International Congress of Building Officials (ICBO), Whittier, California, and 5 regional offices. Founded in 1922.

- Building Officials and Code Administrators Inc., (BOCA), Country Club Hills, Illinois, and 3 regional offices. Founded in 1915.

- Southern Building Code Congress International Inc., (SBCCI), Birmingham, Alabama, and 2 regional offices. Founded in 1940.

Their membership structures accommodate both municipalities and individual building officials. In contrast to the situation in Canada whereby the low fees paid to the provincial associations of building inspectors are insufficient to support full-time staffs, those levied by the U.S. building officials organizations are substantial. They have sizeable staffs; publish codes, manuals, high quality monthly magazines and a host of other documents; and operate large-scale educational programs. Indeed, it is reported that their training and certification program budgets now exceed their outlays on building code revision work.

In addition, there is an umbrella organization, the Council of American Building Officials (CABO) with a small staff at Falls Church, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. CABO also operates a certification program for building officials, established in 1980. By May, 1992, a total of 1,821 individuals had been certified from throughout the country but with concentrations in those states where certification is mandatory and the CABO examination is recognized (i.e. Florida, Ohio and Virginia). The 14-page CABO Candidate Bulletin for Certified Building Official Examination notes that:

> "The duties of a building official constitute a unique and distinct profession. He or she is expected to be a technician in all aspects of the construction industry, a paralegal in municipal law, and an office manager -- all at the same time. To establish a standard to measure the qualifications inherent in this professional position, CABO has instituted a Certification Examination covering the three major areas of a Building Official's responsibilities -- Technology, Law and Management.

"Members of BOCA, ICBO and SBCCI have contributed extensively to the development of this program and the examinations."

Candidates may write their examinations at 39 centres. The fees are $120. Repeat examination fees are $45 per module. It is stated that "many jurisdictions have learned the value of the program and have introduced requirements for certification prior to employment or on condition that it is achieved within a certain time period after employment."

The 1992 ICBO Annual Report contains a balance sheet showing assets of $9.7 million and a surplus of $5.8 million. Over 10,000 attended its seminars during 1991. A 2-week Inspection Institute in March, 1992 had 270 attendees. Over 6,700 applicants were tested July, 1990 - June, 1991 in the ICBO Voluntary Certification Program in one or more of its certification categories -- Building, Electrical, Plumbing, Mechanical, Dwelling, Combination, Rehabilitation/Conservation, Fire, Plans Examiners and "Special" (i.e. reinforced concrete, prestressed concrete, structural masonry, and structural steel and welding). The Plumbing and Fire Code Inspection Certification Programs are jointly sponsored with the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials and the Western Fire Chiefs Association respectively.

The ICBO Voluntary Certification Program was initiated in 1973 to encourage professionalism among inspection and plan check personnel but "participation has grown dramatically in recent years, a trend that can be largely attributed to the use of the program for employment purposes". As examples, ICBO reports that Oregon and Minnesota require building officials to be certified; that Utah and Alaska require certain inspectors to be certified in some manner; and that a large number of municipalities use certification as a mandatory component for hiring and promotion.

ICBO has a recommended Building Inspection Technology curriculum for one-year and two-year programs, developed in concert with various community colleges. Twenty-three courses are contained in the syllabus. Moreover, it is working with the American Institute of Architects in developing training programs for design professionals. To date there has been no linkage with the home inspection industry, but it was noted that the education and certification programs for "Special Inspectors" (concrete, steel etc.) were developed with private sector practitioners and testing laboratory representatives.

ICBO publishes over a dozen codes and supplements, reference manuals, handbooks, workbooks, and a monthly journal, "Building Standards". Moreover, it has produced comprehensive series of software products and videos. The Uniform Building Code is also available on microfiche cards and "Dwelling Construction Under the Uniform Building Code" in Spanish.

BOCA similarly publishes a wide range of codes, supplements, commentaries, manuals, workbooks, checklists etc. and the BOCA Magazine and a newsletter. Its

training services also include a correspondence course, audio cassettes and videos. The 1992 catalogue of BOCA-sponsored seminars, workshops and institutes contains over 130 offerings.

BOCA operates a Certification Program covering 22 categories of inspectors, plans examiners, and officials. Moreover, certificate holders in nine categories may also apply for a joint BOCA-SBCCI certificate and those in three categories for a joint BOCA-International Association of Electrical Inspectors certificate. Kentucky and New Jersey are cited by BOCA as additional states which require certification for continued employment.

An Ontario building commissioner is a member of the current BOCA Board of Directors. BOCA advises that it has not had any formal discussion with ASHI officials for many years.

In like fashion, SBCCI publishes many Standard Codes, commentaries, manuals and other code publications, the Southern Building Magazine, and Research and Compliance Reports. It also offers microfiche, videos, instructional slides and computer software. Fifteen courses are presented in its educational program.

The SBCCI certification program covers four levels and 21 areas of certification. Prior to 1984 SBCCI issued certificates for Housing Inspector, Chief Building Inspector, and Chief Plumbing/Electrical/Mechanical Inspector. These have been replaced by new categories in Level 1 or Level 2. The present Level 4 certification is for "Code Enforcement and Administration Professional". SBCCI advises that two states in its membership require inspector certification. North Carolina has developed its own training program and examinations. Oklahoma accepts the certifications available from all three model code programs.

It will be noted that CABO is the only one of the above organizations to use the nation-wide designation of Certified Building Official (CBO). 61% of the directors of the three model code organizations hold it. In the case of ICBO all but one of the sixteen directors are CBOs.

5.0.0 CONSULTANT'S COMMENTS

The principal findings of the survey are listed in the Executive Summary. Those of a factual nature are reported on in greater detail in the body of the report. Those which are more in the nature of the consultant's own conclusions are dealt with below.

5.1.0 1995 Focus on National Codes -- Training Policy Implications

There will be a special focus on Codes in Canada in 1995. That is the year in which new versions of the National Building Code, the National Fire Code, the Canadian Plumbing Code and the Canadian Farm Building Code will be released. Moreover, they will be joined by two new documents -- the Canadian Housing Code and the Canadian Energy Code. Their contents have already been established. Also, the text of the Guidelines for the renovation of existing houses and other smaller buildings covered by Part 9 of the National Building Code will be available in the next year or so.

The new National Building Code will contain significant changes. Seven provinces have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that they will move towards the elimination of significant variations to the 1995 National Building Code in their respective jurisdictions. Of the remainder, Quebec has in the past adopted the code without amendment. It has been proposed that the past time lags between the publication of the new edition of the national code and its provincial and territorial applications will be reduced as well.

The increased focus on Codes in 1995 will in turn generate an increased focus on building inspection training during the interval, to better ensure that inspectors are prepared for the new code provisions. In addition, although relatively little interest in energy efficiency inspections was reflected in the responses from home inspectors or municipal building inspectors in the survey, this situation could well change. Whereas only Quebec and CMHC formally adopted the 1978 companion document to the National Building Code entitled "Measures for Energy Conservation in New Buildings", the new "Canadian Energy Code 1995" is to be vigorously promoted. This in turn will necessitate special training on the part of many inspectors in both the public and private sectors.

In the United States the three model code organizations have allocated very considerable resources to (1) the development and revision of codes and (2) the educational support programs to facilitate their enforcement and administration. In Canada the development and revision of codes have also attracted very considerable resources with excellent results, but the situation with respect to the related training programs is quite mixed. In some regions the opportunities are exceptionally good, whereas elsewhere they may range down to the indifferent or virtually non-existent.

Interest on the part of both municipal building inspectors and private sector home inspectors to obtain training or refresher courses to assist them in the work was widely expressed in the survey returns. Code compliance, new code provisions and liability

factors are especially important to the public sector respondents. Both groups recorded particular interest in courses on the inspection function, the building structure, the building envelope, and new building technology/products. However, many respondents also reported that there were difficulties in obtaining training because of budget restraints or lack of opportunities.

The volunteer provincial associations of building officials and their national council have in general insufficient resources with which to operate extensive training and certification programs. In several instances they have deferred in whole or in part in this regard to their provincial governments. The argument has been made that, inasmuch as the provinces and territories issue building regulations and require the municipalities to administer them, there is a responsibility on the part of the issuers to provide or assist in the related educational support programs. Possibly the Provincial/Territorial Committee on Building Standards could play a supporting or coordinating role in the achievement of national standards for the training and certification of building inspectors.

A vital resource in any training program is the human resource -- the instructor, discussion leader and workshop facilitator. Indeed, when respondents were asked to identify the main needs in the delivery of a training program, "qualified instructors" gained more citations than manuals, videos and funds. Desirable qualifications, in the minds of many, included the ability to interpret the building code's provisions, practical experience, and familiarity with new building products, processes, assemblies and systems in their areas of expertise. Criticisms were expressed about instructors who merely read out their lectures from a book. All of which suggests that an expanded training program must fully consider the recruitment, training, nurturing and possibly sharing of instructors.

5.2.0 Scope for Co-operation in Inspectors' Training and Certification Programs

In general, the preparation of outlines of inspectors' functions and required knowledge and skills, and of associated course training packages, has been carried out with relatively little cooperation between jurisdictions. As continuing progress is made in the adoption of building codes on a nation-wide basis, the need for separate curricula, manuals, videos and other training materials is correspondingly reduced. These elements in an educational program are expensive to develop and to maintain. There would seem to be considerable scope for increased inter-governmental cooperation and economy in this regard.

The survey responses showed widespread support among municipal inspectors and private sector home inspectors for the establishment in their respective fields of standards and a certification system by which qualified inspectors may be identified. In the public sector there are already certification programs in operation in most provinces, with certificates issued either by building inspectors' associations or provincial government departments or ministries. Again, there would seem to be considerable scope for common standards inasmuch as the basic building code is substantially the same. This

in turn would facilitate the reciprocal recognition of the certified designations for building inspectors in different jurisdictions. Those regions still considering the establishment of a certification program for building inspectors could benefit from the development work of others.

Some municipalities are contracting out their building inspection responsibilities to private sector inspection firms. An expansion of this practice may well be accompanied by a requirement that the private inspectors are certified as being competent in code compliance inspections. A pilot study is about to commence on the possible expansion of municipal code compliance inspections and/or the use of home inspection firms to cover New Home Warranty requirements covering quality of workmanship, finishes and other non-code factors. Conversely, some Municipal Building Departments provide the services of their inspectors to perform pre-purchase inspections or other check-ups on a fee-for-service basis.

These innovations suggest that in the future there may well be an increased overlapping of functions between the public and private sector cadres of residential inspectors. The inspection procedure innovations will need to be backed up by training program innovations. Some of the courses offered on building codes etc. are specifically offered to municipal inspectors, builders, designers and inspection firm personnel. At least two provincial Building Officials Associations have private sector home inspectors in their memberships. Then again, a number of home inspectors display their Certified Building Inspector designation which was acquired when they were employed as municipal building officials.

It is perhaps significant that the advisory committee assisting in the DACUM development in British Columbia includes representation from both the Building Inspectors' Association of B.C. and the B.C. Chapter of CAHI. Consideration is being given to the expansion of its core training modules for code compliance to include those of specific relevance to the inspection of existing residential properties and to other specialized inspections.

A number of respondents from the ranks of both public and private inspectors stated that some home inspectors were ill-qualified. A certification plan was advocated as being in the public interest. CAHI operates a training program and limits its membership to those who pass the required examinations and perform 250 paid home inspections conducted in accordance with its Standards of Practice. Its members and those of the Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors must carry professional liability insurance. To date, however, the numbers involved are relatively small and with few chapter groupings. Perhaps the home inspection industry can participate in the training and certification programs in the public sector or at least benefit from their experience and resources. In summary, there would seem to be scope for cooperation and cross-pollination in the training of public and private sector housing inspectors. Options for members of the residential inspection industry include qualifying for

certificates available in the public sector; promoting the recognition of association logos as an indication of a level of proficiency; and the establishment of a private sector certification program.

5.3.0 Home Inspectors and The Quality of Residential Renovations and Maintenance

Many inspector respondents from both the private and public sectors stated that an appreciable number of renovators and installers gave homeowners poor value for their money. Home inspectors reported that little or (in most cases) no business was derived from pre-renovation inspections, although some were engaged in another capacity to execute the renovations or repairs desired by the owners. Virtually all of the home inspectors believed that they could provide a valuable service by inspecting the home, giving advice as to priority needs, furnishing rough cost estimates, protecting clients from unskilled or unscrupulous contractors and renovators, monitoring the work, and counselling on the release of payments.

Other responses to the problem are reflected by the association guarantee program in Quebec for the quality of their members' work, and the consideration by some New Home Warranty Programs of the possible extension of warranties to renovations. Both of these approaches involve an increased use of inspectors.

The concept of homeowners hiring qualified home inspectors to perform periodic check-ups on the condition of their property and/or energy efficiency audits was evidently novel -- although naturally attractive -- to the home inspectors participating in the survey. Some noted, however, that a number of condominium owners' associations followed this practice. Parallels were drawn by several respondents to the widespread practices of annual medical examinations and of spring and fall automobile tune-ups and they pointed out that the purchase of a home represented a far larger investment than that of a motor vehicle.

Most home inspection firm respondents were of the opinion that it would be possible to develop such a market demand -- at least in the larger centres and for the more costly homes. Even so, it was stated by many that a strong educational and promotional program would be needed in order to develop such a market. Some commented that periodic energy efficiency audits and related renovations would require motivators such as a subsidy by the local energy utility or another energy supply crisis.

It is possible that the larger home inspection firms could promote pre-renovation inspections and periodic home check-ups in their sales literature. Associations could do the same. At this stage, however, most home inspection firms have only one or two inspectors. In the smaller and medium-sized municipalities, such firms typically must also engage in other activities in order to make a living. The associations are small, volunteer groups and are not yet organized in many regions of the country.

In order for public bodies to advocate to homeowners that they hire a qualified home inspector prior to renovating their home and/or to conduct a thorough check-up every five years or so, they must have an assurance that inspectors who are properly qualified to perform these functions satisfactorily are available, and can be readily identified by homeowners.

The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors has an expansion program under way and is understood to have obtained financial assistance from ASHI to help it to organize. Members must pay fees to both bodies. The numbers of full members and of candidate members have increased steadily of late. Even so, it will likely be quite some time before the association's chapter network, training program (including more Canadian content) and roster of "full members" will meet the above prerequisite across the country. (The Association of Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors has not expressed any desire to expand outside of its region). It is axiomatic that membership promotion, training and certification, and technology transfer programs must have full-time attention in order to be effective, particularly on a nation-wide basis.

Perhaps the process could be expedited through judicious joint action. There have been many examples in which private sector associations in Canada, whose activities are in concert with public policy objectives, have received assistance in a variety of forms, and without losing their independence. Seed grants, declining balances, and sunset provisions provide assurance that any financial support is of limited duration. The development of course material; the provision of seminar instructors, translation services, and technical information; and the sponsorship of technical studies; are among other forms of support that can serve the public interest.

Perhaps there is scope, also, for the use of incentives to encourage homeowners to use members of the residential inspection industry to improve the quality of Canada's housing stock through more effective renovation, repair and maintenance. The hiring of a home inspector for most homeowners will be a new experience. One possible opportunity might be in the electrical utilities' demand side management/energy conservation programs and the future promotion of the Canadian Energy Code.

6.0.0 OPTIONS FOR C.M.H.C. ASSISTANCE

The terms of reference for the national survey on the Canadian Residential Inspection Industry concludes as follows:

> "The report will contain a separate section containing options for CMHC assistance to the industry. The objectives of the CMHC assistance will focus on developing the industry to a level where its membership will be regarded as professionals, with an essential role in planning and execution of sound renovation."

6.1.0 CMHC Manuals on Housing Rehabilitation Skills -- Inspection

The Interim Report submitted in September, 1992, included in its recommendations that the Residential Inspection sections of the CMHC 1983-84 manuals on (housing) Rehabilitation Skills be up-dated. This action had been advocated by the majority of the survey respondents who were familiar with this material.

Action has already been implemented by the Corporation, through the award of a contract to a prominent home inspection firm.

6.2.0 Sponsorship of a Meeting of the Principal Stakeholders in the Private and Public Residential Inspection Sectors

It is likely that in the future there will be an overlapping of the functions of private sector housing inspectors and public sector building officials. A Memorandum of Understanding signed by most provincial governments commits them to work towards the removal of significant differences in their building codes following the publication of the 1995 National Building Code of Canada. A Canadian Housing Code and a Canadian Energy Code will be added to the other three national codes to be published in 1995. The increased focus on new and revised codes will require an increased focus on training to meet the new requirements.

The preparation of training course material is an expensive undertaking. At the present time the training opportunities for building inspectors varies widely across Canada, ranging from excellent to minimal. Most provinces have a certification program for public sector building inspectors or are committed to establishing one. There is no standard level of qualification for certification.

The Canadian Association of Home Inspectors is a relatively new organization. It has no certification program but full membership requires the passing of three examinations and the execution of 250 paid inspections in accordance with the Standards of Practice established by the American Society of Home Inspectors. CAHI members who participated in the survey favoured the certification concept. Some suggested that the ASHI Training Manual should be expanded and contain more "Canadian Content".

Home inspection firms are seldom engaged to advise in the planning, establishment of priorities, or execution of renovations.

The private sector could well benefit from some of the training programs established for public sector building inspectors. There would appear to be considerable scope for increased inter-governmental cooperation in the development of training and certification programs, and also for cooperation and cross-pollination in the training of public and private sector housing inspectors. To date there has been scant linkage between the two sectors.

A 1989 Canadian Construction Research Board report on Provincial and Territorial Inspection Services proposed that a large-scale Building Regulatory Congress be convened by the provinces to be attended by representatives of all of the key stakeholders involved in the process and its training support programs. It is recommended that a smaller meeting be convened by CMHC of the principal players in the private and public residential inspection sectors. The purpose of the meeting would be to explore the practical scope for (1) the cooperative establishment of national standards for inspector training, certification and re-qualification across Canada, and (2) the increased involvement of inspectors' skills in the housing renovation program.

CMHC's role as the convenor would be that of "an honest broker" whose initiative is based on the Corporation's mandate to improve the quality of housing in Canada. Many of the potential participants in the meeting have indicated informally their interest in attending.

6.3.0 National Standards for Inspectors' Training and Certification

For the most part, the development of DACUMs of inspectors' skill requirements and related training programs have taken place across Canada with little in the way of consultations. Similarly, the certification systems that have been developed are such that a Certified Building Inspector/Official in one jurisdiction would not necessarily have the same level of qualification as those in another.

The Provincial/Territorial Committee on Building Standards and the Canadian Council of Building Officials' Associations have expressed interest in the past in working towards the development of national standards in these fields. Possibly there is scope for CMHC assistance in this regard. A comparative study of the present programs would be a good start.

6.4.0 Seminar and Workshop Support

A strong thirst for training and refresher courses in building inspection subjects was expressed by a great majority of home inspectors and building officials alike who participated in the national survey. Seminars and Workshops were identified as the

preferred medium. Qualified Instructors were identified as a prime need.

CMHC personnel already take part in many such seminars and workshops sponsored by other organizations but it would seem that this activity varies across the country. Some associations stated that it had not occurred to them to ask the Corporation for speakers and that they would take advantage of this resource in the future.

A more pro-active role across the country is recommended. In this way, the resident expertise in CMHC could be used to assist residential inspectors in their work. It would also be an opportunity to pass on the results of the Corporation's technical research projects -- New Building Technology/Products was one of the top subjects selected by inspectors as being of interest to them in future training programs.

6.5.0 Assistance to Home Inspectors' Associations

The "Canadian Residential Inspection Industry" is as yet not widely recognised as an "industry". The organization of home inspectors' associations is in its formative stage. The individual firms are with few exceptions very small, so collective action through associations will be of particular importance in the future development of the industry.

Given that homeowners would benefit from the services of well-qualified home inspectors related to the purchase, renovation and maintenance of their homes, it would be in the public interest to assist in the establishment or strengthening of home inspectors' associations. Possible means for such assistance are described in Section 5.3.0 and are in keeping with the Corporation's mandate to improve the quality of housing in Canada.

6.6.0 CMHC Renovation Pamphlets, Videos and Displays

CMHC has issued a sizeable series of pamphlets and booklets on "Renovation". Reference is made in "Planning Renovation" to the desirability of talking to the local municipal building inspector to ensure that the planned renovations comply with the building code. Other leaflets recommend annual check-ups on a house to determine repairs. However, none in the series seen to date has suggested that a home inspection firm be engaged prior to commencing renovations to establish priorities and to provide cost estimates and other services in the planning and execution of the work.

When it is deemed to be appropriate to recommend the use of home inspectors -- i.e. when qualified inspectors are available and are identifiable as such -- it would be helpful if the Corporation could draw attention to their services in its publications, videos, displays and talks on renovation.

APPENDIX 'A'

Survey Instruments

1.0 Covering Letters from CMHC

2.0 Letters and Questionnaires

- 2.1 To Building Inspection Firms
- 2.2 To Municipal Building Inspectors
- 2.3 To Inspectors' Associations
- 2.4 To Builders' Associations and Home Warranty Organizations

CMHC SCHL

Helping to house Canadians

Question habitation, comptez sur nous

National Office

Bureau National

700 Montreal Road
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0P7

700 chemin Montréal
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0P7

15 May 1992

TO ALL SURVEY PARTICIPANTS:

Dear Madame/Sir,

Please don't dismiss this as just another questionnaire!

It is being sent to you because we believe that you are interested in improving the quality of housing throughout the country. This is also the mandate of CMHC.

It has been suggested that the Corporation can help in the area of residential inspections by:

- assisting in the transfer of new technologies to inspectors for new house construction and
- encouraging the emergence of a private sector inspection service for homeowners who are considering renovations.

A consultant has been commissioned to compile information and opinions from people like you in order that an informed assessment of possible actions may be made. Please help!

Yours sincerely,

Jacques Rousseau
Project Manager
Housing Innovation Division

CMHC SCHL

Helping to house Canadians

Question habitation, comptez sur nous

National Office

700 Montreal Road
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0P7

Bureau National

700 chemin Montréal
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0P7

Le 15 mai 1992

À TOUS LES PARTICIPANTS À L'ENQUÊTE

Monsieur/Madame

Ne considérez pas ceci simplement comme un autre questionnaire!

Le questionnaire vous est adressé puisque nous croyons que vous vous intéressez à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'habitation dans tout le pays, tout comme la SCHL s'y intéresse de par son mandat.

On fait valoir que la Société peut contribuer dans le domaine de l'inspection des bâtiments résidentiels 1) en aidant à diffuser aux inspecteurs les nouvelles technologies concernant la construction de maisons neuves et 2) en favorisant la création d'un service d'inspection du secteur privé pour les propriétaires-occupants qui envisagent des travaux de rénovation.

Un consultant a été mandaté pour rassembler de l'information et recueillir l'opinion de gens comme vous dans le but d'en arriver à une évaluation éclairée des marches à suivre possibles. Nous comptons sur votre collaboration!

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur/Madame, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

Jacques Rousseau
Directeur de projet
Division de l'innovation dans l'habitation

WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE

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TÉL. (514) 932-9596
FAX (514) 939-0776
TÉLEX 055-60403

mai 1992

objet: ÉTUDE NATIONALE SUR LE MARCHÉ DE L'INSPECTION RÉSIDENTIELLE AU CANADA

Les résultats de cette étude pourraient avoir une influence importante sur l'avenir de vos affaires.

Pourquoi? La Société Canadienne d'Hypothèque et de Logement a commandé des consultations publiques sur l'état du marché de l'inspection résidentielle au Canada. Une des conclusions suggère que l'on encourage le recours au secteur privé pour l'inspection des bâtiments afin d'assurer que les propriétaires adoptent les bonnes priorités lors de la rénovation de leur résidence. Autrement, les consommateurs pourraient faire des dépenses sur des aspects purement esthétiques alors que le besoin principal se situe ailleurs.

A cette fin, on a jugé qu'il fallait stimuler la confiance du consommateur envers les services professionnels d'inspection. Parallèlement, les propriétaires devraient avoir l'assurance que l'inspection de leur maison soit effectuée par un personnel qualifié.

Y-a-t-il un "Marché de l'Inspection Résidentielle au Canada"? Eh bien! L'annuaire des pages jaunes de plusieurs villes contient bon nombre de firmes offrant des services d'inspection résidentielle. On a même vu, dans certaines régions, la formation d'Associations. Mais quelles sont les qualifications exigées pour adhérer à ces associations ?... Que faire de la majorité des régions qui n'ont pas de telles Associations? Combien de firmes font de l'inspection résidentielle leur activité principale?... Existe-t-il des cours de formation? Quels standards sont établis?... Les propriétaires font-ils inspecter leur résidence régulièrement tel un examen médical périodique ou font-ils faire une inspection seulement lors de la vente?... Quels sont les principales caractéristiques du marché de l'inspection?... Les inspecteurs résidentiels ont-ils un rôle valable à jouer lors de la planification et de l'exécution d'une rénovation?

Le but du questionnaire ci-joint est de trouver les réponses à ces questions. Votre apport pourrait vraiment faire une différence alors, s'il vous plaît, répondez sans tarder.

Wagner, Daigle, Revay Ltée

Louise Bertrand
pour:

Carol Wagner, ing., Arb.C.
Président
CW/lb

Tous les participants recevront une copie du sommaire exécutif de l'étude et une copie du rapport complet, sur demande.

VOICI VOTRE QUESTIONNAIRE
SUR LE MARCHÉ DE L'INSPECTION
DES BÂTIMENTS RÉSIDENTIELS AU CANADA

S'il vous plaît, inscrivez les coordonnées de votre firme:

Nom de la firme _____

Adresse postale _____

_____ code postal _____

Personne à contacter _____

No de téléphone _____ Télécopieur _____

Veuillez répondre à quelques questions sur le profil et l'expérience de votre firme:

1. Depuis combien de temps votre firme est-elle en opération ? _____ ans.

2. Est-ce une compagnie à propriétaire unique ☐ une société ☐ ou une compagnie ☐

3. Quel pourcentage approximatif de vos inspections est effectué dans le secteur résidentiel? _____ % et non-résidentiel _____ %.

4 Les inspections sont-elles votre occupation principale ou votre seule occupation ☐ moins que la moitié ☐ seulement occasionnelles ☐ ?

5 En moyenne, depuis 1990, combien de vos employés ont été impliqués dans les services d'inspection de bâtiment ? _____

6 Combien d'inspections résidentielles votre firme réalise-t-elle approximativement par année ? _____

7 En général, quelle proportion de vos inspections concernent:
- 7.1 Des maisons existantes, avant la revente? _____ %
- 7.2 Des maisons existantes avant la restauration ou la rénovation? _____ %
- 7.3 Des maisons existantes afin de vérifier leur efficacité énergétique? _____ %
- 7.4 Des maisons neuves pendant et après la construction? _____ %
- 7.5 Autres ? (s.v.p. spécifier) _____ %

8 Vos services sont-ils retenus par des non-propriétaires ? ☐

8.1 Par des municipalités afin de vérifier le respect des codes du bâtiment et des codes de prévention d'incendie _____ %

8.2 Par des services publics afin de vérifier l'efficacité énergétique des résidences _____ %

8.3 Par des cautions ou par des associations dans le cadre de programmes de garantie. _____ %

9 Est-ce que vous ou un de vos collègues êtes certifiés pour l'évaluation et l'inspection des maisons du programme R-2000. oui ☐ non ☐

10 Etes-vous également impliqué dans:

10.1 ☐ La rénovation des bâtiments?

10.2 ☐ Le design ou la conception?

10.3 ☐ L'estimation des coûts de construction?

11 Avant de faire de l'inspection résidentielle, de quel milieu technique vous et les membres de votre équipe proveniez-vous?

11.1 ☐ Inspecteur en bâtiment dans le secteur public

11.2 ☐ Entrepreneur général ou spécialisé

11.3 ☐ Professionnel (architecte ou ingénieur)

11.4 ☐ Technicien des forces armées et/ou diplômé

11.5 ☐ Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

12 S'il vous plaît, veuillez noter les items faisant normalement partie de vos services réguliers d'inspection.

12.1 ☐ Extérieur (nivellement du terrain et drainage, toiture, solin, cheminées; gouttières et conduits pluviaux; parement extérieur, porches et terrasses)

12.2 ☐ Structure (fondation, fissures, charpentes de bois, dommages causés par les termites et autres insectes, murs porteurs)

12.3 ☐ Electricité (entrée de service, mise à la terre, panneau de distribution, prises, interrupteurs, luminaires)

12.4 ☐ Chauffage, ventilation et climatisation (fournaises ou bouilloires, système de distribution, apport d'air frais, ventilation)

12.5 ☐ Plomberie (eau de service et tuyauterie, chauffe-eau, tuyauterie de drainage, appareils)

12.6 ☐ Isolation et calfeutrage (types, valeurs-R, coupe vapeur, calfeutrage, coupe-froid, cheminées de foyer ou de poêle à combustion)

12.7 ☐ Intérieurs (plafonds, murs, planchers, boiserie, fixtures et appareils)

12.8 ☐ Mesures d'économie (éclairage d'efficacité énergétique, thermomètres de détection, tête de douche à économiser, cabinet d'aisance et robinetterie)

12.9 ☐ Mesures de santé (MIUFF, amiante, radon)

12.10 ☐ Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

13 A la fin de votre inspection, fournissez-vous?

☐ un rapport écrit

☐ une estimation des coûts de réparation

14 Quel est le coût de l'inspection complète d'une habitation moyenne ?
☐ 100 $ à 150 $ ☐ 150 $ à 200 $, ☐ 200 $ à 250 $ ☐ plus de 250 $.

15 Votre firme ou des membres de son personnel appartiennent-ils à des associations de métiers ou professionnelles reliées à votre travail? Si oui, veuillez spécifier _____
_____

16 Si une ou plusieurs de ces associations sont directement reliées au secteur de l'inspection résidentielle, quels sont les critères d'admission ?
16.1 ☐ acceptation par un collègue
16.2 ☐ un examen écrit
16.3 ☐ l'inspection d'une maison témoin sous la supervision d'un collègue
16.4 ☐ autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____
_____

17 Est-ce que vos inspecteurs ou vous-mêmes avez suivi des cours en inspection de bâtiment ou en rénovation? ☐ oui ☐ non. Si oui, ces cours étaient-ils offerts par :
17.1 ☐ une association d'inspecteurs en bâtiment
17.2 ☐ programme de garantie des maisons
17.3 ☐ Société Centrale d'Hypothèque et de Logement
17.4 ☐ programme R-2000
17.5 ☐ collèges ou institutions techniques
17.6 ☐ cours du soir des commissions scolaires
17.7 ☐ un consultant
17.8 ☐ un ministère du gouvernement provincial
17.9 ☐ une université

18 Est-ce que l'un de ces cours ou une des associations mentionnées aux articles 15 et 17 vous permettent l'usage du terme "Inspecteur en bâtiment certifié" _____ ? Si oui, veuillez mentionner lesquels _____

19 Seriez-vous favorable à l'établissement de cours de perfectionnement en matière d'inspection résidentielle sur les sujets suivants ?
19.1 ☐ La fonction d'inspecteur
19.2 ☐ Les codes et normes récentes
19.3 ☐ La charpente
19.4 ☐ Les systèmes mécaniques
19.5 ☐ Les systèmes électriques
19.6 ☐ L'enveloppe
19.7 ☐ La prévention d'incendie
19.8 ☐ L'isolation et les économies d'énergie
19.9 ☐ Les nouveaux produits et les nouvelles techniques
19.10 ☐ Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____
_____

20 De quelle façon souhaiteriez-vous que ces cours soient dispensés ?

20.1 ☐ Cours du soir
20.2 ☐ Ateliers ou séminaires
20.3 ☐ Cours par correspondance
20.4 ☐ Video ou satellite
20.5 ☐ Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

_____

ET FINALEMENT, NOUS AIMERIONS AVOIR VOTRE OPINION !

21 Croyez-vous qu'il est souhaitable d'établir des critères de qualifications reconnus pour les inspecteurs résidentiels ? _____

Si oui, qui devrait émettre la certification?

21.1 ☐ une association ☐ une société publique ☐ une institution d'enseignement

Est-ce que les inspecteurs ainsi certifiés devraient suivre des cours de révision, périodiquement ?

21.2 ☐ oui
21.3 ☐ non

22 Croyez-vous qu'il est possible de créer une demande pour des services d'inspecteurs qualifiés dans le secteur résidentiel afin de faire des inspections périodiques des maisons ou des études d'économies d'énergies ? _____

Si oui, quelle gamme de prix suggéreriez-vous pour:

22.1 Une inspection complète _____ $
22.2 Une évaluation de l'efficacité énergétique ? _____ $

23 Où situez-vous le besoin essentiel pour la livraison d'un enseignement adéquat et un système de qualification approprié des inspecteurs ?

23.1 ☐ manuel de formation
23.2 ☐ des instructeurs qualifiés
23.3 ☐ des videos
23.4 ☐ des fonds
23.5 ☐ autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

24 Etes-vous familier avec les trois manuels de la SCHL (1983-84) sur la formation pour la restauration des habitations traitant des inspections résidentielles pour les instructeurs, les étudiants et les organisateurs de cours ? ☐ oui ☐ non Si oui, croyez-vous que ces manuels devraient être mis à jour? _____

25 D'après vous, quel peut être le rôle des inspecteurs qualifiés lors de la planification et l'exécution des travaux de rénovations des résidences au Canada ? _____

_____

_____

_____

26 Autres commentaires: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DATE: _____ Signature: _____

Merci beaucoup de votre aimable collaboration. Veuillez poster le questionnaire dûment complété dans l'enveloppe affranchie à:

Carol Wagner, président
WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE
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4333, rue Ste-Catherine Ouest
Montréal (Québec)
H3Z 1P9

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RAL

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Toronto, Ontario
Calgary, Alberta
Vancouver, B.C.
Hartford, Connecticut

1992-0

Re: NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION INDUSTRY

The results of this survey could have a large impact on the future of your business.

Why? Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation sponsored public consultations on the state of the residential renovation industry in Canada. Among the conclusions was that the operations of the private sector building inspection industry should be encouraged and expanded to ensure that the right priorities were adopted by home owners when renovating their homes. Otherwise, people might spend their renovation dollars on 'cosmetic' features when the prime need was really elsewhere in their house.

The stimulation of consumer awareness and confidence in the use of professional inspection services was identified as one means of doing so. At the same time, it was stressed that homeowners should have assurance that the inspection service they purchased is performed by qualified personnel.

Is there a 'Canadian Residential Inspection Industry'? Well, the yellow pages in the telephone book for most cities list many firms or people who offer to perform residential inspection services. Associations have been formed in a few regions.

But what qualifications are needed for membership? ...What about the majority of regions where there are no associations? ...How many firms are performing inspections as their main activity? ...What training courses are available? ...What standards exist? ...Do many homeowners have their home inspected periodically in the same way that they have a medical check-up, or only when they wish to sell? ...What are the main features of the home inspection market? ...Do residential inspectors have a valuable role to perform in the planning and execution of sound renovation?

The enclosed questionnaire is designed to provide answers to the above questions. Your input really could make a difference -- so please respond, and please do so quickly!

Yours sincerely,

S.D.C. Chutter
Ottawa Bureau Chief

All respondents will be sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the report and then, if requested, a copy of the full text.

REVAY AND ASSOCIATES LIMITED

HERE IS YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT
OF THE RESIDENTIAL BUILDING INSPECTION INDUSTRY IN CANADA

FIRSTLY, PLEASE TELL US SOME BASIC FACTS ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION:

Its Name _____

Mailing Address _____

_____

_____(Postal Code) _____

Contact Name _____

Phone Number _____ Fax? _____

NEXT, SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT EXPERIENCE AND SCOPE:

1. How long has your firm been in business? _____ Years
2. Is it a (_) sole proprietorship? (_) partnership? (_) company?
3. Approximately what share of your inspections are in the residential sector? _____% and in the non-residential building sector?_____%
4. Are inspections (_) your sole or principal occupation? (_) less than half? (_) less than a quarter? (_) only occasionally?
5. On average since 1990, how many full time members of your organization (including working owners) have been engaged in building inspection work? _____
6. Approximately how many residential inspections does your firm typically conduct in a year? _____
7. Roughly what proportions of your inspections relate to:
   - 7.1 Existing homes prior to re-sale? _____%
   - 7.2 Existing homes prior to repair or renovation? _____%
   - 7.3 Existing homes to check on their energy efficiency? _____%
   - 7.4 New homes during and after construction? _____%
   - 7.5 Other? (Please describe) _____%
8. Are you ever hired by non-owners? _____
   - 8.1 By municipalities to assess conformity to building codes and fire codes? _____%
   - 8.2 By utilities to perform an energy efficiency inspection/audit on a home? _____%
   - 8.3 By bonding companies or associations to provide services guarantees? _____%

9. Are you or a colleague licensed to perform R-2000 Home design evaluations and verification inspections? _____

10. Is your organization also engaged in:

10.1 (_) Building Renovation Work?

10.2 (_) Professional Design Activity?

10.3 (_) Cost Estimating (building)?

11. What technical backgrounds did you or other staff members have before conducting residential inspections?

11.1 (_) Building Inspectors in the Public Sector

11.2 (_) Construction Trades/Contractors

11.3 (_) Design Professionals (engineering or architecture)

11.4 (_) Armed Forces Technicians

11.5 (_) Other (please describe) _____

_____

12. Please check the items that are normally inspected and reported on as part of your regular house inspection service:

12.1 (_) General Exterior (surface grading and drainage; roof, flashing, venting and chimney; eavestroughs and downspouts; cladding; porches and decks)

12.2 (_) Structural (foundations, cracks, interior wood framing, termite and insect damage, load-bearing walls)

12.3 (_) Electrical (size of service, grounding, distribution panel and wiring, receptacles, switches, lights)

12.4 (_) HVAC (furnace or boiler, distribution systems, fresh air supply, combustion air supply, and ventilation)

12.5 (_) Plumbing (main water and distribution piping, water heater, drainage piping, fixtures)

12.6 (_) Insulation and sealing (types, R-values, vapour barriers, caulking, weatherstripping, fireplaces and wood stovepipes)

12.7 (_) Interiors (ceilings, walls, flooring, woodwork, fittings, and fixtures)

12.8 (_) Utility Savers (energy efficient lighting, setback thermometers, and water-saving showerheads, toilets and faucets)

12.9 (_) Health Hazards (UFFI, asbestos, radon)

12.10 (_) Other (please describe) _____

_____

13. After your inspection, do you provide 13.1 (_) a written report? 13.2 (_) cost estimates for repairs?

14. What would be the cost range of a full inspection of an average house? 14.1 (_) $100 to $150? 14.2 (_) $150 - $200? 14.3 (_) $200 - $250? 14.4 (_) over $250?

15. Does your firm or its inspection personnel belong to trade associations or professional societies related to the business? If so, please list _____

_____

_____

16. If one or more of the above associations or societies are specifically related to home inspection services, what are the requirements for membership?
16.1 (_) Acceptance by ones peers? 16.2 (_) written examination?
16.3 (_) Test house inspection supervised by peers?
16.4 (_) Other (please describe) _____

17. Have you or your firm's inspectors taken courses related to building and renovation inspection? _____ If so, were they offered by:
17.1 (_) Building Inspectors' Associations?
17.2 (_) Home Warranty Programs? 17.3 (_) C.M.H.C.
17.4 (_) R-2000 Program?
17.5 (_) Community Colleges or Institutes of Technology?
17.6 (_) School Board Night Classes? 17.7 (_) Consultants?
17.8 (_) Provincial Depts/Ministries?
17.9 (_) University Extension Departments?

18. Do any of the above memberships or completed courses entitle you or a colleague to be described as a 'Certified Building Inspector'? _____ If so, which? _____

_____

19 Would you welcome training or up-grading in home inspection skills?
19.1 (_) The Inspection Function 19.2 (_) New Code Requirements
19.3 (_) The Building Structure 19.4 (_) The Mechanical System
19.5 (_) The Electrical System 19.6 (_) The Building Envelope
19.7 (_) Fire Safety 19.8 (_) Energy Efficiency and Insulation
19.9 (_) New Building Technology/Products
19.10 (_) Other (please describe) _____

_____

20. How would you prefer to obtain training?
20.1 (_) Night classes? 20.2 (_) Workshops or seminars?
20.3 (_) Correspondence courses? 20.4 (_) Video or satellite?
20.5 (_) Other (please describe) _____

AND, FINALLY, YOUR OPINIONS - PLEASE!

21. Do you think that it is desirable and feasible to establish recognized qualification standards for home inspectors? _____
If so, who should issue the certificates?
21.1 (_) Associations? (_) Public Bodies? (_) Educational Institutions?
Should certificate holders be required to take refresher courses?
21.2 (_) Yes 21.3 (_) No

22. Do you think that it is possible to develop a market demand by homeowners to engage qualified residential inspectors to perform periodic check-ups of homes and/or energy efficiency audits? _____
If so, in what price range do you think they would be prepared to pay for
22.1 a full inspection? _____
22.2 an energy efficiency rating? _____

23. What do you think are the main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training and qualification system for home inspectors?
23.1 (_) training manuals 23.2 (_) qualified instructors
23.3 (_) videos 23.4 (_) funds 23.5 (_) other (please describe)
_____

24. Are you familiar with the three 1983-84 CMHC manuals on (housing) Rehabilitation Skills dealing with Residential Inspections for instructors, students and convenors respectively? _____
If so, do you think that up-dates would serve you a helpful purpose? _____
_____

25. What role do you think qualified residential inspectors can perform in the planning and execution of sound, priority-needed renovation work in Canadian homes?
_____
_____
_____
_____

26. Other Comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Many, many thanks for your time and effort!

Please mail your response in the stamped, addressed envelope to:

S.D.C. Chutter
The Revay Group
600 - 85 Albert Street
Ottawa, Ontario - K1P 6A4

Tel: (613) 238-7184

FAX: (613) 567-3277

A - 2.2

WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE

4333, rue Ste-Catherine ouest
Montréal (Québec) H3Z 1P9

TÉL. (514) 932-9596
FAX (514) 939-0776
TÉLEX 055-60403

mai 1992

objet: ÉTUDE NATIONALE SUR LE MARCHÉ DE L'INSPECTION RÉSIDENTIELLE AU CANADA

Nous aimerions connaître votre opinion sur un projet de programme de perfectionnement des inspecteurs/trices en bâtiment. La Société Canadienne d'Hypothèque et de Logement (SCHL) a commandé une étude comportant deux objectifs. Premièrement, déterminer si la SCHL peut efficacement collaborer au transfert des nouvelles technologies de construction résidentielles vers les officiels du bâtiment. Deuxièmement, déterminer la composition, les forces et les faiblesses actuelles du marché de l'inspection et voir si ce secteur ne pourrait pas jouer un rôle plus important lors de la planification de travaux de rénovation plutôt que de se limiter à l'aspect esthétique.

Il y a évidemment plusieurs points communs entre les inspecteurs/trices du secteur privé et ceux/celles, comme vous, du domaine public. Des questions se posent. Les services d'inspection offerts reflètent-ils un degré de formation adéquat menant à une certaine forme d'attestation, et où les inspecteurs/trices reçoivent-ils leur enseignement ? Par exemple, si les personnes offrant des services d'inspection doivent obtenir un niveau de formation adéquat menant possiblement à une certaine forme d'attestation afin d'offrir aux consommateurs un service de qualité, où peuvent-ils obtenir une telle formation.

Quelques organismes provinciaux et municipaux ont mis sur pied d'excellents programmes de formation pour les officiels du bâtiment. D'autres groupes offrent plutôt des séminaires ou des ateliers de travail. Toutefois, l'ampleur et la portée de tels cours de formation varient d'une région à l'autre, et sont presqu'inexistants dans certaines régions.

Les organismes provinciaux et municipaux offrant de tels programmes de formation sont priés de transmettre des détails et les données provenant des protagonistes dans ce domaine sont particulièrement recherchées. En conclusion, votre collaboration, en répondant au questionnaire ci-joint, serait appréciée.

Tous les participants recevront une copie du sommaire exécutif de l'étude et une copie du rapport complet, sur demande.

Wagner, Daigle, Revay Ltée

pour

Carol Wagner, ing., Arb.C.
Président
CW/lb
P.S. N'hésitez pas à faire des copies de ce questionnaire pour vos collègues. Leur participation serait aussi très utile.

VOICI VOTRE QUESTIONNAIRE SUR UN PROJET DE
PROGRAMME DE FORMATION
DES INSPECTEURS EN BÂTIMENTS

S'il vous plaît, veuillez inscrire vos coordonnées, au cas où nous désirerions vous rejoindre pour de plus amples renseignements.

Nom _____

Adresse postale _____

_____ code postal _____

No de téléphone _____ Télécopieur _____

Veuillez répondre à quelques questions portant sur votre expérience:

1. Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous un officiel du bâtiment ? _____ ans.

2. Avez-vous déjà effectué des ☐ inspections de charpente ☐ des inspections de systèmes électriques ☐ des inspections de plomberie ☐ des inspection de prévention d'incendie ☐ ou autres (précisez) _____
Si vous occupez un poste de supervision, précisez lequel _____

3. Quelle proportion de vos inspections concernent des maisons neuves ? _____ %.

4 Combien d'inspecteurs y-a-t-il dans votre département, incluant le chef inspecteur ?
- 4.1 ☐ un seul
- 4.2 ☐ 2 à 5
- 4.3 ☐ 6 à 10
- 4.4 ☐ plus de 10

5 Avant de devenir inspecteur, aviez-vous de l'expérience comme
- 5.1 ☐ membre d'un corps de métier
- 5.2 ☐ employé d'une compagnie de construction
- 5.3 ☐ technicien des forces armées
- 5.4 ☐ employé d'un bureau de design
- 5.5 ☐ autres (précises) _____

6 Etes-vous membre d'un ou plusieurs organismes reliés à l'inspection des bâtiments ou à la construction en général. Si oui, veuillez les nommer. _____
_____

7 Avez-vous suivi des cours de formation reliés à l'inspection des bâtiments, dispensés par:

7.1 ☐ une association d'inspecteurs en bâtiment
7.2 ☐ un programme de garantie des habitations
7.3 ☐ la Société Canadienne d'Hypothèque et de Logement
7.4 ☐ un atelier du programme R-2000
7.5 ☐ des cours du soir d'une commission scolaire
7.6 ☐ un collège ou un institut de technologie
7.7 ☐ un ministère du gouvernement provincial
7.8 ☐ un consultant
7.9 ☐ une université
7.10 ☐ autres (précisez) _____

8 Etes-vous un inspecteur en bâtiment certifié ? ☐ oui ☐ non Si oui, quel organisme vous a accordé cette certification ? _____

9 Seriez-vous favorable à l'établissement de cours de perfectionnement en inspection ou technologie du bâtiment ?

9.1 ☐ Adhérence au code - Partie 9 (habitation et petites résidences)
9.2 ☐ Adhérence au code - Partie 3 (Usage et occupation)
9.3 ☐ Nouvelles normes provinciales ou locales
9.4 ☐ Respect des codes et normes, autres (précisez) _____
9.5 ☐ La fonction d'inspection
9.6 ☐ La charpente des bâtiments
9.7 ☐ Le système mécanique
9.8 ☐ Le système électrique
9.9 ☐ L'enveloppe (exemple: pare-vapeur, écran de pluie)
9.10 ☐ Prévention des incendies
9.11 ☐ Economie d'énergie
9.12 ☐ Nouvelles technologies et nouveaux produits du bâtiment
9.13 ☐ Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

_____

10 Comment souhaiteriez-vous que soit dispensée cette formation ou perfectionnement ?

10.1 ☐ par des cours du soir
10.2 ☐ par des ateliers ou des séminaires
10.3 ☐ par des cours par correspondance
10.4 ☐ par video ou par satellite
10.5 ☐ Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

_____

11 Votre département a-t-il un budget annuel réservé au perfectionnement du personnel d'inspection. ☐ oui ☐ non

12 Si oui, est-ce que l'importance de ce budget dépend du nombre de permis accordés ou de d'autres sources de revenus du département ☐ oui ☐ non

13 Où situez-vous le besoin essentiel en matière de formation des inspecteurs résidentiels en construction ou rénovation ?

13.1 ☐ manuel de formation
13.2 ☐ des instructeurs qualifiés
13.3 ☐ des videos
13.4 ☐ des fonds appropriés
13.5 ☐ autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

14 Etes-vous familier avec les trois manuels de la SCHL (1983-84) sur la formation pour la restauration des habitations traitant des inspections résidentielles pour les instructeurs, les étudiants et les organisateurs de cours ? ☐ oui ☐ non Si oui, croyez-vous que ces manuels devraient être mis à jour? _____

15 Autres commentaires: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DATE: _____ Signature: _____

Merci beaucoup pour votre aimable collaboration. Veuillez poster le questionnaire dûment complété dans l'enveloppe affranchie à:

Carol Wagner, président
WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE
suite 500
4333, rue Ste-Catherine Ouest
Montréal (Québec)
H3Z 1P9

téléphone: (514) 932-9596 télécopieur (514) 939-0776

RAL

Construction Economists and
Management Consultants

Revay and Associates Limited

85 Albert Street
Suite 600
Ottawa, Ontario
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Tel. (613) 238-7184
Fax (613) 567-3277

Montréal, Québec
Ottawa, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Calgary, Alberta
Vancouver, B.C.
Hartford, Connecticut

1992-0

Dear Sir:

Re: NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION INDUSTRY

Your opinions are needed on training programs for building inspectors. A study has been commissioned by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It has two goals. Firstly, to see if CMHC can usefully assist in the transfer of new housing technology to building officials. Secondly, to learn more about the inspection industry's composition, strengths and weaknesses, and whether it might play a larger role in the planning of priority rather than cosmetic renovations in Canadian homes.

There are some obvious common factors between the residential inspectors in business and those in the public sector, like yourself. For example, if those offering home inspection services are to be properly trained, and then possibly certified, so as to give homeowner consumers good service and assurance that they are qualified, where can they get this training? Where do municipal building inspectors get their training?

Some provincial and municipal governments have developed excellent training courses for building officials. Other groups put on seminars and workshops. But the scope of such courses varies and in some regions would appear to be minimal.

The provincial governments and the municipal groups with active training programs for building inspectors are being asked to supply details. The input of those 'serving in front lines' is particularly desired -- hence this appeal to you to fill out the enclosed brief questionnaire.

Yours sincerely,

Don Chutter

S.D.C. Chutter
Ottawa Bureau Chief

All respondents will be sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the report and then, if requested, a copy of the full text.

P.S. If you'd like to make copies of the questionnaire for colleagues to fill out, their inputs would, of course, also be most welcome.

SDCC/jmc
Encl.

REVAY AND ASSOCIATES LIMITED

HERE IS YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUR VIEWS ON

BUILDING INSPECTORS' TRAINING PROGRAMS

FIRSTLY, A FEW PERSONAL DETAILS IN CASE WE'D LIKE TO CONTACT YOU FOR FURTHER INPUTS:

NAME _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

_____

_____(POSTAL CODE) _____

PHONE NUMBER _____FAX? _____

NEXT, A FEW BASIC QUESTIONS ABOUT EXPERIENCE:

1. How long have you been a Building Official _____ years
2. Do you or did you perform (_) Structural Inspections?
   (_) Electrical Inspections? (_) Plumbing Inspections?
   (_) Fire Prevention Inspections? (_) Other? _____
   If you are now in a supervisory position please describe: _____
3. Roughly what proportion of your inspections relate to new housing? _____%
4. How many building inspectors are there in your Department, including the Chief Building Official?
   4.1 (_) One? 4.2 (_) 2-5? 4.3 (_) 6-10? 4.4 (_) more than 10?
5. Before you became an inspector, did you have prior experience
   5.1 (_) in the building trades? 5.2 (_) in a building company?
   5.3 (_) as an Armed Forces technician? 5.4 (_) in a design office?
   5.5 (_) other _____
6. Do you have a membership in associations or professional societies related to building inspection or construction? _____
   If so, please list: _____

   _____

   _____
7. Have you taken courses related to building inspection? _____
   If so, were they offered by: 7.1 (_) Bldg. Inspectors' Associations?
   7.2 (_) Home Warranty Programs? 7.3 (_) CMHC Courses
   7.4 (_) R-2000 Workshops? 7.5 (_) School Board night classes?
   7.6 (_) Community Colleges or Institutes of Technology?
   7.7 (_) Provincial Ministry/Department? 7.8 (_) Consultants?
   7.9 (_) University Extension Department? 7.10 (_) Other _____

   _____

8. Are you a Certified Building Inspector? _____ If so, what was the certifying body? _____

9. Would you welcome training or up-grading in inspection skills and building technology? _____

9.1 (_) Code Compliance - Part 9 (Housing and Small Buildings)
9.2 (_) Code Compliance - Part 3 (Use and Occupancy)
9.3 (_) New Provincial or Local Building Code Requirements
9.4 (_) Code Compliance - Other _____

_____

9.5 (_) The Inspection Function 9.6 (_) The Building Structure
9.7 (_) The Mechanical System 9.8 (_) The Electrical System
9.9 (_) The Building Envelope (e.g. air barriers, rain screen)
9.10 (_) Fire Safety 9.11 (_) Energy Efficiency
9.12 (_) New Building Technology/Products (e.g. acoustics, roofing)
9.13 (_) Other (please describe) _____

_____

10. How would you prefer to obtain training or up-grading:
10.1 (_) Night classes? 10.2 (_) Workshops or seminars?
10.3 (_) Correspondence Courses? 10.4 (_) Videos or via satellite?
10.5 (_) Other (please describe) _____

_____

11. Does your department have an annual training budget for the inspection staff? _____

12. If so, does the size of this budget depend upon building permit or other departmental revenues? _____

13. What do you think are the main needs in the delivery of an appropriate training system for residential construction and renovation inspectors? 13.1 (_) training manuals
13.2 (_) qualified instructors 13.3 (_) videos 13.4 (_) funds
13.5 (_) other (please describe) _____

_____

_____

14. Are you familiar with the three 1983-84 C.M.H.C. training manuals on (housing) Rehabilitation Skills dealing with Residential Inspections for instructors, students and convenors respectively? _____
If so, do you think that updates would serve you a helpful purpose? _____

15. Other Comment: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date: _____ Signature _____

Many, many thanks for your time and effort!

Please mail your response in the stamped, addressed envelope to:

S.D.C. Chutter,
The Revay Group,
600 - 85 Albert Street,
Ottawa, Ontario - K1P 6A4

Tel: (613) 238-7184

FAX: (613) 567-3277

A - 2.3

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Montréal (Québec) H3Z 1P9

TÉL. (514) 932-9596
FAX (514) 939-0776
TÉLEX 055-60403

mai 1992

objet: ÉTUDE NATIONALE SUR LE MARCHÉ DE L'INSPECTION RÉSIDENTIELLE AU CANADA

Veuillez trouver ci-joint copie d'une lettre et d'un questionnaire destinés aux inspecteurs en bâtiments des secteurs publics et privés dans le cadre d'une étude nationale commandée par la Société Canadienne d'Hypothèque et de Logement.

Votre collaboration pour compléter et retourner les parties pertinentes du questionnaire serait grandement appréciée. Nous désirons également obtenir votre opinion.

De plus, on a besoin de votre aide pour obtenir des renseignements sur votre Association.

Aussi, vous trouverez ci-joint un bref questionnaire sur votre façon d'opérer. Certaines questions peuvent ne pas s'appliquer à votre association. Si c'est le cas, alors ne répondez qu'aux autres questions et retournez-nous les questionnaires dès que possible.

Du matériel imprimé concernant votre organisme serait très apprécié (par exemple : rapport annuel, formulaire de demande d'adhésion, bulletins sur les programmes de formation, règlements et procédures, etc.).

Nous vous remercions de votre aimable collaboration.

Wagner, Daigle, Revay Ltée

Tous les participants recevront une copie du sommaire exécutif de l'étude et une copie du rapport complet, sur demande.

Louise Bertrand
pour:

Carol Wagner, ing., Arb.C.
Président
CW/lb

P.S. Si vous désirez soumettre le questionnaire à vos officiels ou au conseil de direction, leur apport serait bien entendu très apprécié.

ETUDE NATIONALE SUR LE MARCHÉ DE L'INSPECTION RÉSIDENTIELLE AU CANADA

QUESTIONNAIRE POUR LES ASSOCIATIONS

S'il vous plaît, veuillez poster le questionnaire dûment complété dans l'enveloppe affranchie à :

Carol Wagner
Président
WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE
suite 500
4333, rue Ste-Catherine Ouest
Montréal (Québec)
H3Z 1P9

téléphone: (514) 932-9596 télécopieur: (514) 939-0776

1. Nom de l'Association _____

   Adresse postale _____

   _____ code postal _____

   No de téléphone _____ Télécopieur _____

2. Année de constitution _____

3. But principal _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Nombre approximatif de membres à part entière _____

5. Nombre approximatif de
   5.1 Membres stagiaires _____

   5.2 Membres associés _____

   Comment définissez-vous ces catégories de membre? _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. Quels sont les critères d'admission?
   6.1 ☐ à l'emploi d'une firme d'inspection ou intérêt au domaine
   6.2 ☐ acceptation par un tiers
   6.3 ☐ achèvement d'une formation spécialisée
   6.4 ☐ examen écrit
   6.5 ☐ test pratique d'inspection (sur place)
   6.6 ☐ autre (s.v.p. spécifier)

7. Votre association s'implique-t-elle dans l'éducation ou la formation Si oui, veuillez décrire:
   7.1 ☐ Dispense des cours, des séminaires ou des ateliers _____

   _____

   _____

   7.2 ☐ Programme technique lors des assemblées annuelles _____

   _____

   _____

   7.3 ☐ Distribue des bulletins à contenu technique sur le travail d'inspection

   _____

   _____

   7.4 ☐ Prépare du matériel de formation _____

   _____

   _____

7.5 ☐ Liaison avec le gouvernement, les agences, les autres associations, les institutions d'enseignement, etc. afin de favoriser les opportunités de formation pour vos membres _____

_____

_____

7.6 ☐ Publicité en regard de cours de formation offerts par d'autres organisations

_____

_____

7.7 ☐ Autres activités (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

_____

_____

8. Si votre association n'est pas encore active dans le domaine de la formation, a-t-elle des plans d'avenir à ce sujet? Si oui, veuillez décrire. _____

_____

_____

9. Votre association reconnaît-elle une certaine forme de qualification en matière d'inspection de bâtiment soit par le biais de certification, d'accréditation ou permis? Si oui, veuillez décrire. _____

_____

_____

10. Si des standards de qualifications tel que décrit à la question 9 n'existent pas encore, votre association est-elle sur la voie de considérer l'élaboration de tels standards? _____

_____

11. Votre association comporte-t-elle un personnel salarié
    - 11.1 ☐ à temps plein? _____
    - 11.2 ☐ à temps partiel? _____
    - 11.3 ☐ est-elle opérée par du personnel volontaire? _____

12. Y a-t-il des frais d'admission et/ou d'examen? _____ $

13. Quel est le coût de la cotisation annuelle?

13.1	☐	25$ ou moins	13.2	☐	de 26$ à 50$
13.3	☐	de 51$ à 100$	13.4	☐	de 101$ à 250$
13.5	☐	de 251$ à 500$	13.6	☐	plus de 500$

14. Les cotisations annuelles représentent quelle part des revenus totals de votre association ?

14.1	☐	la totalité ou presque	14.2	☐	plus de 75%
14.3	☐	plus de 50%	14.4	☐	plus de 25%

15. (Pour les associations du secteur privé uniquement)
Votre association s'engage-t-elle dans des activités de marketing de groupe ou dans des services d'inspection de bâtiments?

15.1	☐	Annonces dans les "pages jaunes"
15.2	☐	Logo pour les membres
15.3	☐	Kiosque lors des foires commerciales
15.4	☐	Annonces télévisées sur le câble
15.5	☐	Annonces dans la section "habitation" des journaux
15.6	☐	Présentations aux sociétés immobilières et financières
15.7	☐	La fourniture de la liste des membres au "Better Business Bureau"
15.8	☐	Autres (s.v.p. spécifier) _____

_____

16. Dans votre région, y a-t-il des activités conjointes entre les associations privées et publiques d'inspecteurs en bâtiments? _____

_____

17. Certains inspecteurs de la SCHL ont présenté des séminaires sur le respect des normes du code et la nouvelle technologie du bâtiment.

17.1 Votre association a-t-elle eu recours à ces séminaires? _____

17.2 Si non, voyez-vous un rôle possible pour la SCHL, en ce regard? _____

_____

18. Autres commentaires: _____

_____

_____

_____

Merci beaucoup de votre aimable collaboration.

DATE: _____ Signature: _____

RAL

Construction Economists and
Management Consultants

Revay and Associates Limited

85 Albert Street
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Ottawa, Ontario
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Tel. (613) 238-7184
Fax (613) 567-3277
1992-0

Montréal, Québec
Ottawa, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Calgary, Alberta
Vancouver, B.C.
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear

Re: NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION INDUSTRY

Enclosed is a copy of a letter and questionnaire that are being directed at either Private Sector Residential Building Inspection Firms or Municipal Building Inspectors and Officals as part of a national survey commissioned by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete all of the applicable sections of the questionnaire and return it -- your opinions are especially desired.

In addition, your help is particularly needed with regard to providing some information about your Association.

A special, brief questionnaire concerning its operations is also enclosed. Some of the questions may not fit your association -- if so, please just answer the rest and send it back as soon as possible.

Printed material about your organization would also be most welcome -- e.g. annual reports, membership application forms, bulletins about training programs, Codes of Practice, etc.

Many thanks in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,

Don Chutter

S.D.C. Chutter
Ottawa Bureau Chief

All respondents will be sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the report and then, if requested, a copy of the full text.

P.S. If you'd like to send copies of the material to your association's officers or Board of Directors, their inputs would, of course, also be highly valued.

SDCC/jmc
Encl.

REVAY AND ASSOCIATES LIMITED

NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION INDUSTRY -QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ASSOCIATIONS

1. Name of Association: _____

   Mailing Address: _____

   _____ (Postal Code) _____

   Phone Number _____ Fax:? _____

2. Year Established: _____

3. Principal Purpose: _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. Approximate Number of Full-Fledged Members _____

5. Approximate Number of

   5.1 Probationary Members _____ 5.2 Associate Members _____

   How are these membership categories defined? _____

   _____

   _____

6. What are the requirements of membership?

   6.1 (_) Employment or interest in building inspection field

   6.2 (_) Peer acceptance 6.3 (_) Completion of specialized training

   6.4 (_) Written examination 6.5 (_) Practical inspection test (on-site)

   6.6 (_) Other (please describe) _____

7. Does your Association engage in Training or Technology Transfer Activities? If so, please describe:

   7.1 (_) Operation of courses, seminars or workshops _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

7.2 (_) Technical programs at Annual Meetings _____

_____

_____

_____

7.3 (_) Distribution of technical bulletins to assist in building inspection work _____

_____

_____

7.4 (_) Preparation of training material _____

_____

_____

_____

7.5 (_) Liaison with government departments or agencies, other associations, educational institutions etc. directed at the provision of training opportunities for your members

_____

_____

_____

7.6 (_) Publicity concerning training offered by other organizations

_____

_____

_____

7.7 (_) Other activities (please describe) _____

_____

_____

_____

8. If not active as yet in Training or Technology Transfer, does your Association have any plans in these areas under active consideration? _____ If so, please describe _____

_____

_____

3/...

9. Does your association recognize certain levels of qualification in the building inspection field through a certification, accreditation or licensing program? _____If so, please describe:

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. If standards such as are described in Question No. 9 have not been established by your Association, is a proposal to this end under consideration? _____

_____

11. Does your Association have a paid staff:
11.1 (_) Full-Time 11.2 (_) Part-time
11.3 (_) Or is it entirely volunteer-operated?

12. Does your Association have an entry-initiation fee $_____ and/or an examination fee $ _____

13. Into what range do your annual membership fees fall?
13.1 (_) $25 or less 13.2 (_) $26 - $50 13.3 (_) $51 - $100
13.4 (_) $100 - $250 13.5 (_) $250 - $500 13.6 (_) over $500

14. What share of your Association's total revenues do membership fees represent?
14.1 (_) All or nearly so 14.2 (_) Over 75% 14.3 (_) Over 50%
14.4 (_) Over 25%

15. (For Private Sector Associations only)
Does your Association engage in group marketing of building inspection services?
15.1 (_) Group listing in 'Yellow Pages' 15.2 (_) Members' logo
15.3 (_) Booth at Home Shows 15.4 (_) Cable TV advertisements
15.5 (_) Advertisements in Home or Renovation Sections of newspapers
15.6 (_) Presentations to mortgage and real estate companies
15.7 (_) Provision of membership list to Better Business Bureaux
15.8 (_) Other (please describe) _____

_____

_____

16. Are there any joint activities or liaison between private sector associations of building inspection firms and public sector associations of building inspectors and officials in your area?

_____

_____

17. Some CMHC Inspectors have been actively engaged in association seminars dealing with Code Compliance and with new Building Technology.

17.1 Has your Association made use of their services in this regard? _____

17.2 If not, do you see a possible role for them in this respect?

_____

18. Other Comments or Concerns: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Date: _____ Signature _____

Many thanks for your information and opinions!

Please mail your response in the stamped, return envelope to:

S.D.C. Chutter, CAE
The Revay Group
600-85 Albert Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6A4

Tel: 613/238-7184
Fax: 613/567-3277

A - 2.4

WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE

4333, rue Ste-Catherine ouest
Montréal (Québec) H3Z 1P9

TÉL. (514) 932-9596
FAX (514) 939-0776
TÉLEX 055-60403

mai 1992

objet: ÉTUDE NATIONALE SUR LE MARCHÉ DE L'INSPECTION RÉSIDENTIELLE AU CANADA

Que pensez-vous de la compétence des firmes d'inspection de bâtiment et des inspecteurs municipaux ? Est-ce que leurs services ou leurs activités pourraient être améliorés pour le bénéfice des propriétaires autant que pour celui des membres de l'industrie de la construction et de la rénovation ? On vous demande votre avis.

La Société Canadienne d'Hypothèque et de Logement (SCHL) a commandé des consultations auprès du public afin d'évaluer l'état de l'industrie de la rénovation au Canada. Les conclusions de ces études suggèrent que plus d'importance soit accordée au marché de l'inspection des bâtiments privés afin que les propriétaires soient bien conseillés pour décider des priorités de rénovation.

Afin d'approfondir le sujet, la SCHL a commandé une étude sur l'"Etat du marché de l'inspection résidentielle". Ce marché est-il représenté à travers tout le Canada ? Est-il organisé en association diverses ? Quels sont les critères d'admission ? Est-ce que les propriétaires peuvent obtenir un rapport fiable sur les réparations nécessaires, les priorités de rénovation et les coûts inhérents ? Quel est le prix d'une inspection comprenant un rapport ?

L'étude vise surtout les habitations existantes, mais des questions sont aussi soulevées concernant les maisons neuves. Les grands centres urbains comportent bon nombre d'inspecteurs municipaux, mais qu'en est-il des petits centres ruraux. Certains provinces et municipalités ont des programmes de formation bien établis et émettent des attestations aux participants à ces programmes. D'autres n'ont pratiquement aucun programme de formation. Y-a-t'il un besoin d'améliorer la formation des inspecteurs privés et municipaux ? Un système de qualification uniformisé pour les inspecteurs résidentiels serait-il souhaitable ?

Le but du questionnaire ci-joint est de trouver les réponses à ces questions. Votre apport pourrait vraiment faire une différence, alors, s'il vous plaît, répondez sans tarder.

Wagner, Daigle, Revay Ltée

Laurie Bertrand
pour:

Carol Wagner, ing., Arb.C.
Président
CW/lb

Tous les participants recevront une copie du sommaire exécutif de l'étude et une copie du rapport complet, sur demande.

VOICI VOTRE QUESTIONNAIRE VISANT À
RECUEILLIR VOTRE OPINION SUR LA
QUALIFICATION DES INSPECTEURS EN BÂTIMENTS

Nom _____

Adresse postale _____

_____ code postal _____

No de téléphone _____ Télécopieur _____

1 Y-a-t'il parmi les membres de votre association des inspecteurs en bâtiment ? _____

2 Votre conseil de direction a-t-il, au cours des deux dernières années, discuté des services d'inspection résidentielle ? _____ Si oui, à quel propos _____

_____

3 Certaines provinces exigent maintenant une **attestation de bon état**, « Declaration of Fitness » lorsqu'une habitation est mise en vente. Les compagnies financières demandent souvent l'inspection d'une unité d'habitation lorsque celle-ci doit être revendue. Si ces exigences devenaient de rigueur,...

3.1 Croyez-vous qu'il y aurait suffisamment d'inspecteurs qualifiés pour suffire à la tâche ? _____

3.2 Croyez-vous qu'une **attestation de bon état** « Declaration of fitness » serait souhaitable ? _____

3.3 Croyez-vous qu'une copie du rapport d'inspection soumis aux compagnies financières devrait être remise au propriétaire ? _____

4 Certaines plaintes ont été formulées par les constructeurs à l'effet que des firmes d'inspection pouvaient identifier des défauts sur une habitation dans le but de s'approprier du travail de rénovation pour eux-mêmes ou pour une entreprise qui leur est associée d'une façon quelconque.

4.1 Est-ce que cela a déjà causé des problèmes dans votre région ? _____

_____

4.2 Croyez-vous qu'une firme retenue pour ses services d'inspection devrait s'abstenir d'effectuer tout travail de restauration ou de recommander une firme à cet effet ?

_____

5 Des cours de formation, des séminaires et des ateliers sur les récentes dispositions du code du bâtiment ou sur les nouvelles techniques de construction sont parfois offerts aux

entrepreneurs ainsi qu'aux inspecteurs en bâtiment.

5.1 Croyez-vous que cela est souhaitable et devrait être encouragé ? _____

_____

5.2 Croyez-vous plutôt que des séances de formation distinctes permettraient une meilleure approche ? _____

5.3 Autres commentaires: _____

_____

6 La valeur totale des travaux de rénovation réalisés à chaque année dépasse souvent la valeur des travaux de construction de maisons neuves. Les travaux de rénovation concernent souvent des aspects purement esthétiques. Des inspections complètes ne sont effectuées que lorsque l'habitation doit être vendue.

6.1 Croyez-vous que dans la majorité des cas, les ressources sont employées où le besoin se fait le plus sentir ou devrait-on laisser les forces du marché agir naturellement ? _____

_____

6.2 Devrait-on plutôt encourager l'emploi des firmes d'inspection pour établir objectivement la priorité dans la liste des travaux à effectuer ? _____

_____

7 Les "pages jaunes" des annuaires téléphoniques contiennent plusieurs inscriptions sous la rubrique "Inspection en bâtiment".

7.1 En général, ces firmes sont-elles qualifiées pour effectuer l'inspection de l'ensemble des éléments d'une résidence ? _____

_____

7.2 Est-ce que les qualifications de certaines de ces firmes seraient limitées à quelques spécialités du domaine de la construction ? _____

_____

7.3 Croyez-vous que les propriétaires aussi bien que les constructeurs/rénovateurs bénéficieraient de la création d'un système de qualification uniforme pour les inspecteurs du secteur résidentiel ? _____

_____

7.4 Si oui, croyez-vous qu'une attestation de qualification devrait être émise par :

- ☐ une association
- ☐ un corps public
- ☐ une institution d'enseignement
- ☐ autre (s.v.p. spécifiez)_____

7.5 Et croyez-vous que les inspecteurs détenant une telle attestation devraient suivre à l'occasion des cours de perfectionnement afin de maintenir leur statut ?

_____

7.6 Autres commentaires: _____

_____

8 Les constructions neuves ainsi que les rénovations importantes exigeant un permis de construction sont assujetties à une inspection officielle par un inspecteur municipal.

8.1 En général, ces inspecteurs sont-ils aptes à déterminer si les codes et normes en vigueur sont respectés ? _____

_____

8.2 Le degré de connaissances des inspecteurs concernant l'application des codes et normes varie-t-il d'un inspecteur à l'autre ? _____

8.3 Peut-on tirer des conclusions sur le niveau de qualification des inspecteurs à partir de leur age et de leur expérience, de l'importance de la municipalité où ils oeuvrent, de la proximité des centres de formation, etc. ? _____

_____

9 Autres commentaires: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

DATE: _____ Signature: _____

Merci de votre aimable collaboration. Veuillez poster le questionnaire dûment complété dans l'enveloppe affranchie à:

Carol Wagner, président
WAGNER, DAIGLE, REVAY LTÉE
suite 500
4333, rue Ste-Catherine Ouest
Montréal (Québec)
H3Z 1P9
téléphone: (514) 932-9596 ou 932-2188 télécopieur (514) 939-0776

RAL

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Management Consultants

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85 Albert Street
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Montréal, Québec
Ottawa, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Calgary, Alberta
Vancouver, B.C.
Hartford, Connecticut

1992-05

Dear

Re: NATIONAL SURVEY OF THE CANADIAN RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION INDUSTRY

What do you think of the qualifications of building inspection firms and of municipal building inspectors? Could their services and activities be improved to the mutual benefit of homeowners and of members of the building and renovations industry? Your inputs are requested!

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation sponsored public consultations on the state of the residential renovation industry in Canada. Among the conclusions was that the operations of the private sector building inspection industry should be encouraged and expanded to enable owners to establish proper priorities in their renovations.

In order to give this conclusion proper consideration, CMHC has sponsored a study to determine the state of the 'Residential Inspection Industry'. Is it represented throughout Canada? Is it organized into associations? What are the qualifications for entry? Can homeowners obtain a thorough assessment of the state of repair of their home, priority needs and related costs? What does such an inspection and report cost?

The main focus is on existing homes but questions have also been raised concerning the inspections of new ones. The larger centres have experienced municipal building inspectors but how about the smaller centres? Some provinces and cities have extensive training programs for building officials and issue certificates to graduates. Others have virtually no training programs.

Is there a need for improved training programs for private sector building inspectors and municipal building officials alike? Would some sort of qualification standard for residential inspectors be desirable?

Yours sincerely,

Don Chutter

S.D.C. Chutter
Ottawa Bureau Chief

All respondents will be sent a copy of the Executive Summary of the report and then, if requested, a copy of the full text.

SDCC/jmc
Encl.

REVAY AND ASSOCIATES LIMITED

THIS IS YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOUR VIEWS ON
BUILDING INSPECTORS' QUALIFICATIONS AND CERTIFICATION

NAME OF ASSOCIATION/COUNCIL _____

ADDRESS _____

_____ (postal code) _____

CONTACT NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER _____ FAX? _____

1. Do you have representatives of building inspection firms and/or building officials in your organization's membership? _____
2. Has your Board of Directors discussed residential inspection services during the past two years? _____ If so, in what regard? _____

_____

_____

3. Some provinces are now requiring a 'Declaration of Fitness' when houses are being sold. Mortgage companies often require a house or condo to be inspected when it is re-sold. If such programs or activities become more widespread,
   3.1 Do you think that the supply of qualified inspectors is equal to the task? _____

   _____

   3.2 Are 'Declarations of Fitness' desirable? _____

   _____

   3.3 Do you think that copies of inspection reports to mortgage companies should also be provided to homeowners? _____
4. There have been some complaints from builders that inspection firms will identify alleged defects in a home with a view to developing business for themselves -- i.e. they or an associated firm will do the repairs.
   4.1 Has this been a serious problem in your region? _____

   _____

   4.2 Do you think that firms, when engaged to perform an inspection, should refrain from doing ensuing repairs or from recommending anyone to do such work? _____

   _____

5. Courses, Seminars and Workshops on new Building Code provisions, and new Building Technology, are sometimes open to both Builders and to Building Inspectors.

5.1 Do you think that this arrangement is desirable and should be encouraged? _____

_____

5.2 Or do you think that separate training programs would provide a desirable closer focus? _____

_____

5.3 Other Comment: _____

_____

_____

6. The value of the annual program of the renovation and repair of residential properties often equals or exceeds that of new residential construction. Renovations are often said to be 'cosmetic'. Thorough inspections are usually only made when a property is to be sold.

6.1 Do you think that in most cases outlays are made when they are most needed and that the existing market forces should be left alone? _____

_____

6.2 Or would it be desirable to provide homeowners with an inspection service that would objectively identify priority areas needing attention? _____

_____

_____

7. The 'Yellow Pages' in the telephone books often contain many listings under the heading of 'Building Inspection Services'.

7.1 Generally speaking, are these firms qualified to conduct a thorough inspection of all aspects of a house? _____

_____

_____

7.2 Or are at least some of them limited in their ability?

_____

_____

7.3 Would homeowners and builders/renovators alike benefit if a recognized standard of qualification for residential inspectors was established? _____

_____

_____

7.4 If so, do you think that certificates testifying to the qualifications of private sector building inspectors should be issued by: 7.4.1 (_) Associations? 7.4.2 (_) Educational Institutions? 7.4.3(_) or Public Bodies? 7.4.4 (_) or Other? (Please describe)

_____

7.4.5 and require participation in refresher courses periodically to maintain their certified status? _____

_____

7.5 Other Comment: _____

_____

_____

8. New housing and at least structural and other substantial renovations require building permits and therefore are subject to inspections by municipal building officials.

8.1 Generally speaking, are these building inspectors well qualified to assess code compliance? _____

_____

_____

8.2 Or is a significant variation encountered with respect to their knowledge of current code provisions and of new technology?

_____

_____

_____

8.3 Can any generalizations be made concerning levels of qualification among municipal building inspectors depending upon their age and experience, size of municipality, proximity to training centres etc.?

_____

_____

_____

9. Additional Comment or Concerns: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Many thanks for your inputs!

Please mail your response in the stamped, addressed envelope to:

S.D.C. Chutter, CAE
The Revay Group,
600-85 Albert Street,
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6A4
Tel: 613/238-7184
Fax: 613/567-3277

APPENDIX 'B'

Article

"Inspecting the Home Inspectors"

- Canadian Consumer, March, 1989

1992 Press Clippings

Scarborough Mirror, February 23, 1992

Ottawa Sunday Sun, September 13, 1992

The Evening Times-Globe, Saint John, September 14, 1992

Ottawa Citizen, September 27, 1992

Today's Seniors, December, 1992

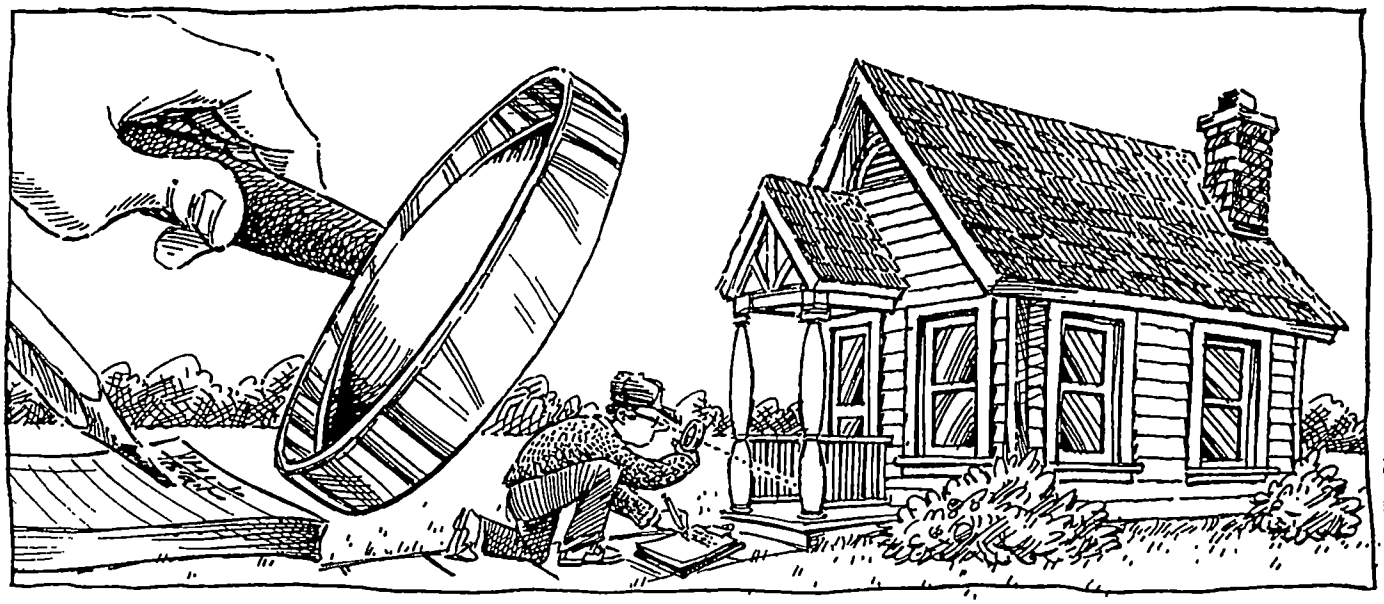


Illustration Albert Prisner

INSPECTING THE HOME INSPECTORS

They're supposed to sell complete, unbiased written reports on your prospective new home. Too many don't

By Susan Hirshorn

A house is the most expensive investment the average Canadian will ever make. Little wonder that a growing number of Canadians, wary of succumbing too quickly to the charms of their "dream" house, have it checked out by a home inspector before signing on the dotted line.

One Southern Ontario couple, for example, was ready to sign an offer to purchase a lakefront home when they suddenly remembered stories about marshy ground in the area. They hired a home inspector who checked out the house and reported the couple would need at least $12 000 to correct several cracks in the foundation - or live with a basement full of water every spring. The couple bought the house anyway, but armed with the inspection report, they negotiated a lower price from the seller.

CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

Unfortunately, not all home inspection stories end happily. Ontario MPP Barbara Sullivan said she's received over the past year nearly a dozen complaints about home inspectors who failed to detect problems. "In one case the inspector didn't report the crumbling bricks on a chimney," she recalled. "In another, the inspector failed to identify a weak support system where a dining room had been added on. The people went ahead and bought the house, only to have the dining room cave in."

Even when inspectors detect problems, you can't be sure their assessments are correct. According to an October 1988 article in *The Toronto Star,* three home inspection firms examined the same house and turned in different reports. The reports varied as to the condition of the roof and the furnace, and the suitability of oil-

based paint used on the exterior of the house. Strangely, one report noted that the main interior stair handrail was secure. There was no handrail.

The vast majority of complaints about home inspectors come from Ontario, primarily because the practice is more developed in that province. Complaints from other provinces are beginning to surface, however. One Quebec resident said that the home inspector she hired gave one verbal report to her and an entirely different report to the seller. (The seller was a building contractor whom the inspector didn't want to offend.) The diverging reports created so much confusion and distrust that the sale of the house fell through.

GET AN APPROPRIATE REFERRAL

It may seem as if the home inspection field is fraught with consumer traps. Yet, you can avoid an unhappy experience if you choose your inspector wisely. Where can you find a reliable home inspector? While many of them run impressive-looking advertisements in newspapers and in the Yellow Pages (under "Building inspection service"), we suggest that you take their puffery with a grain of salt. Instead, get a referral from someone you trust - a real estate lawyer (or notary, in Quebec) or a friend who's had satisfactory dealings with an inspector.

Disregard referrals from real estate agents. Some inspectors have been known to take kickbacks from real estate agents in return for issuing a report in favour of the seller. Be skeptical as well of home inspectors who do building renovations on the side or who are affiliated with repair or renovation firms. You don't want a supposedly "unbiased" inspector trying to sell you repair services that you don't need.

CHECK TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Once you've located two or three inspectors who look reliable, check out their qualifications and experience. Unlike the lawyer and real estate agent involved with your purchase, the home inspector is not legally required to meet minimum qualifications. Since anyone can call himself or herself a "home inspector," this step is important.

A graduate architect, building engineer or former construction contractor may be suitably qualified to perform the inspection. You may also want to consider a "chartered surveyor" - someone who's a member of Britain's Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. Unlike the familiar Canadian land surveyor, a chartered surveyor has received five to seven years' training in the mechanical and structural complexities of buildings. He or she has passed a set of examinations and is distinguished by the letters FRICS (Fellow) or ARICS (Professional Associate). There are as many as 600 chartered surveyors currently working in Canada; most of them operate out of Ontario.

Even if an inspector's academic credentials seem impressive, they shouldn't be the only qualifications you look at. Equally important is the type and amount of practical experience. Find out how long he or she has been in business - and where. For example, someone who's spent the last 10 years inspecting homes solely in Britain or the United States may not know enough about Canadian construction (specifically, climatic requirements such as insulation) to turn in an appropriate report.

GET IT IN WRITING

While you're checking the credentials of the inspectors in your area, you may find that they differ not only in the amount of expertise they have. The amount of effort they put into an inspection may vary greatly as well. (See our sidebar "The Complete Home Inspection.")

Once you and the inspector have agreed on the scope of the inspection, make sure to insist on getting the details in writing. While conducting the examination, the inspector should jot down comments for eventual inclusion in a written report. This is an important step to remember. If you discover problems after you've bought the house, you may be able to use the written report in a suit against the inspector. (Verbal reports offer you little or no recourse if the inspector goofs up, and don't carry much weight in price negotiations with the seller.)

The comprehensive report should identify the areas to be inspected, evaluate their condition and suggest repairs and approximate costs. Paul Wilson, chairman, Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors' Association, notes that only "ballpark" figures will be quoted. Buyers should later confirm these figures with estimates from repair companies. For ethical reasons, the inspector should never recommend an individual or firm to do the repair work.

Mortgage inspections no help

There's a widely held belief that the inspections called for by mortgage lenders are enough to assure buyer peace of mind. That's a mistaken assumption. The sole purpose of a lending institution's inspection is to ensure that the loan is secure. If you fail to meet your payments, the lender has some hope of recovering its money by selling the property. For this reason, mortgage company inspections are primarily concerned with the location of the property, its overall appearance and other factors affecting its market value.

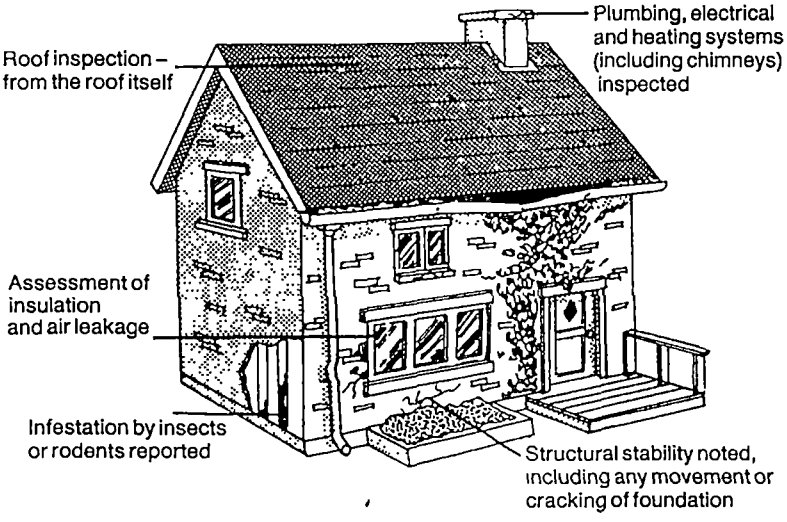
This type of inspection is rarely (if ever) a comprehensive basement-to-attic affair. In fact, some lending company inspectors make their reports based on viewing properties from their cars. If you want to ensure that your new house will be structurally sound and require few repairs, you'll need a comprehensive home inspection.□

Few, if any, home inspectors guarantee the thoroughness and accuracy of their reports. But even if there isn't a written guarantee, an inspector may be held liable by a court of law. In one case, a firm was ordered to pay $2000 for repairs caused by a crack in the foundation that the inspector had failed to notice.

To ensure that you can get redress if the foundation cracks, pick an inspector who carries liability insurance. Otherwise, you may have difficulty collecting if the damages turn out to be large. Inspectors operating through an incorporated company are protected from having their personal assets used to pay legal damages. You'll be limited in that case to the assets of the company.

Some inspectors try to reduce their liability by including "disclaimers" in their contracts or reports. (Disclaimers are statements that limit responsibility to the customer.) For example, one inspection firm states in its contract, "We will not tell you everything about the property.... Emphasis is placed on major problems and expenses." If an inspection contract contains such a statement, it should go on to specify exactly what is meant by "major problems and expenses."

The complete home inspection



We asked two experts – Paul Wilson of the Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors' Association and Ian Woods, a chartered surveyor – to describe an appropriate home inspection for us.

Both agreed that inspectors should look for (among other things) any signs of foundation movement, moisture penetration, infestation by insects and rodents – and problems with the structural stability of the building (such as with the wood frame). The inspection should also focus on the quality and safety of roofing, plumbing, electrical and heating systems (including chimneys). It should also give you some idea of how much heat the house may lose in the winter, whether because of improper insulation or air leakage through deteriorating windows, doors and caulking.

While inspectors shouldn't be expected to take the house to pieces and examine every part, they should be willing to dig in and get their hands dirty, according to Mr Wilson. "That means getting into the fireplace and checking the chimney for loose bricks and creosote build-up; inspecting the attic for adequate and proper insulation, and for signs of roofing and structural problems; checking electrical wiring and, where applicable, opening up parts of the heating system to determine its state of maintenance."

"Unless the roof is unsafe, the inspector should definitely go up there," said Mr Woods. Some inspectors merely look at the roof with binoculars from street level, but this isn't likely to reveal such warning signs as loose shingles, uncaulked joints and loose or deteriorating masonry.

Make a point of asking the inspector what he or she *doesn't* look at. Some inspectors, for example, won't check insulation, or look for infestation by insects and rodents. Both of our experts said these exclusions are ridiculous since they affect the basic soundness of the building. Some inspectors won't evaluate the condition of storm windows, doors, shutters, awnings, locks and other security devices. You can likely check these yourself.

Understandably, most inspectors won't risk an accident by moving heavy articles such as furniture or debris that may limit access or visibility. It's up to you, the buyer, to insist that the homeowner make all areas of the property accessible to the inspector. The closet leading to the attic should be free of clutter; the view of walls shouldn't be obstructed. (Some sellers try to camouflage cracks and moisture spots on foundation walls by stacking furniture and other heavy objects against them.)

Don't expect the inspector to comment on the property's market value. For this and other such information you should consult an experienced, unbiased real estate appraiser (someone who doesn't profit from the sale of the house).□

Consumers should consider all the exclusions before committing themselves.

PICK A FEE – ANY FEE

The fees charged by home inspectors are as varied as their services and abilities. Fees can be anywhere from $100 to $1200, our experts told us. "Weak" verbal reports are in the $100 to $150 range. "Fairly comprehensive" inspections with written reports run about $300 to $350. For a "very detailed" inspection (one involving four hours of actual inspection time and two hours of office time writing up the report), $500 to $600 is common. Ian Woods, a Markham, Ontario, chartered surveyor, added that home inspections costing more than $750 or so are "ripoffs"; consumers shouldn't be taken in.

If several hundred dollars seems a lot of money for an "uncertain" service and you can spare the time and effort to do a little research, you may be able to conduct an inspection yourself. Books such as *Inspecting a House* by A. Carson and R. Dunlop or *How to Inspect a House* by G. Hoffman will explain what you need to look for and, more importantly, how to look for it. The July 1983 issue of *Canadian Consumer* contains a checklist of things to examine when inspecting a house. As well, it includes the most common and expensive-to-correct defects you're likely to encounter.

REGULATION ATTEMPTS

With qualifications, standards, ethics and fees so diverse, some Ontario home inspectors have tried to standardize their industry by forming associations. Thirty Toronto home inspection firms are voluntary members of the Ontario Association of Home Inspectors. The association is a chapter of the self-regulating American Society of Home Inspectors and has adopted a set of business standards and a code of ethics. Interestingly, the association's rules of practice include a host of items (most of the exemptions we listed earlier in this article) that the member inspectors won't examine. The Ottawa-Carleton Building Inspectors Association has 15 members, with another 15 companies waiting to pass the requirements for joining. At one point, the two associations considered merging. That would be helpful for consumers, who could then count on a degree of uniformity in those two major housing markets. Unfortunately, the two associations couldn't agree on standards and business practices.

There have been some attempts to involve government in the issue. Last year, MPP Sullivan called on the Ontario government to regulate the home inspection field. Her view was echoed by Ed Hou, former president of the Toronto Real Estate Board.

In June 1988, a review of consumer legislation commissioned by Ontario's Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations identified problems within the home inspection industry. It noted the lack of qualifications on the part of many inspectors, the misconception that an inspector's work is fully guaranteed and the potential conflict of interest between real estate and home inspection services. However, the review made no recommendations. According to Gabrielle Baldazzi, legislative assistant to William Wrye, Ontario Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, the ministry has no plans as yet to introduce legislation to regulate the home inspection field.

ABOUT LICENSING

As the home inspection field grows, governments and consumers will no doubt have to consider a number of thorny questions. Buying a house is the biggest financial decision most Canadians face, one that's fraught with technical details that many homebuyers can't handle. A home inspector can help them sort through that complicated process – and avoid financial headaches. But should consumers have to embark on a lengthy self-education process to be able to choose responsible home inspectors?.

To help consumers avoid such a task, governments may want to consider a comprehensive regulation system. A system of licensing would help consumers feel confident that any inspector they hire is qualified to do the job. Regulations might specify the type of academic credentials and the amount and quality of practical experience inspectors should have. Governments might consider issuing permits on the basis of successful completion of written and practical examinations.

Governments may consider, as well, the degree to which homebuying problems could be avoided if inspection practices were more uniform, and if inspectors had standardized contracts and reports to use. They'll also turn their attention to the quality and content of the written report. Inspectors may well be required not only to describe a structural problem, for example, but also to identify its exact cause. Most important, governments will have to consider whether the inspector should be held accountable for the accuracy of the report.

A CODE OF ETHICS

Because there's a risk of conflict of interest in this field (agreements between inspectors and real estate agents, for example) governments will have to grapple with whether home inspectors should be required to abide by a code of ethics. They might decide, for example, that inspectors who fail to provide unbiased reporting could lose their licences.

Even if the inspector isn't biased, inspectors can miss problems that lead to damage after the house is bought. Governments and consumers may want to look at ways in which damage disputes could be settled without the costly and time-consuming option of going to court, which is now the only recourse. For example, a mediation body made up of technical, legal and consumer representatives might be set up.

Given adequate regulation of this now largely unconstrained industry, consumers might be able to embark on the often stressful process of buying a home with a fair degree of confidence. ■

Susan Hirshorn is a freelance writer working in Montreal and specializing in consumer affairs.

Training course for home inspectors called first of its kind in Canada

The emergence of Canada's first home inpection training course, presented by Inspection Training Associates (ITA) in Toronto from March 30th to April 10th, is yet another indication that the home inspection industry has become an increasingly respected and sought-after profession.

Canada's lack of courses specifically geared to training home inspectors is most likely due to the fact that no official regulations or requirements exist for someone to become a home inspector.

"It really is amazing that a course like this hasn't been offered before," says Alan Carson, co-founder of Canada's largest home inspection firm, Carson, Dunlop & Associates, which is based in Toronto. Carson is one of the course instructors who, with partner Bob Dunlop, P. Eng., and Duncan Hannay, P. Eng., bring over 30 years of experience in all facets of the home inspection business.

"Home buyers these days are realizing the advantages of inspections," says Carson. "They are also becoming more savvy about choosing an inspector. So now, more than ever, there is quite a demand for legitimate, thorough training. ASHI's influence on the industry has also increased the need for this type of course."

ASHI, the American Society of Home Inspectors, is the home inspection industry's self-regulatory body aimed at developing and maintaining professional service in the industry to protect and thereby encourage the consumer. An inspector must meet ASHI's strict standards to become a member. Canadian chapters of ASHI have been formed in Ontario and British Columbia.

Course fees are $2,550 (plus GST) for registrations received by March 16th. A comprehensive package of course materials (value $900) is included. Five days of additional field training are also available.

For more information, call Carson, Dunlop in Toronto at 1-800-268-2070.

Things to inspect when buying house

MIKE GRENBY

You are out to buy a home. You walk through one place but are put off by some unpainted walls and ceilings — and the hairline cracks you see, especially around the doors and windows.

The next place sports new paint and wallpaper throughout, giving it a bright, clean look. You are more inclined to put in an offer on this one.

That could be a sound move — or a potentially expensive mistake.

"Most people spend less than 40 minutes examining a house before buying it," said Ed Witzke, of Witco Building Inspection Services. "They are swayed by the emotional impact and also often don't know what to look for."

Witzke said the unpainted surfaces and hairline cracks are typical of things "that look bad on the surface but really aren't difficult to fix, replace or repair."

On the other hand, the new paint and wallpaper could mask wood rot in the structure — which could cost from $2,000 to $80,000 to repair, he said.

The worst things Witzke has seen in addition to wood rot include structural settlement of a house (repairs could cost as much as $180,000) and a poor drainage system around the home causing water to run into the basement or crawlspace (repair bill: $4,000 to $28,000).

The minor problems include squeaking floors and stairs; vertical cracks less than one-eighth of an inch wide in old concrete foundation walls and similarly narrow cracks in old concrete basement or crawl space floors; worn flooring; old kitchen and bathroom sinks, counter tops, cupboards and fixtures; and poor insulation.

Witzke, whose book The Complete Home Inspection Guide is due out by the end of this year, enlivens the talks he gives with a large barrow overflowing with "exhibits" to illustrate what should be inspected. Some of the key points:

Visit the neighborhood at different times of the day and week. Check the design and maintenance of the home's features like lot drainage, driveways, retaining walls, fences and porches.

Look for signs of insect infestation and rotting wood which can seriously weaken the structure. Use binoculars to inspect the roof, especially the south side exposed to the sun. Look for roof sags; check the chimney, flashing, skylights, gutters and downspouts.

The exterior walls, windows and doors keep the elements out. Look for deterioration, especially at corners, joints and places where siding, trim, windows and doors meet. Check for bulging walls.

The foundation supports everything. Water penetration, cold air leaks and rodent infestation can often be traced to a faulty foundation — which in turn can be traced to improper soil grading, a high water table and poor original design and construction.

Check the basement or crawl space if there is one. If you notice a musty odor, find its source.

Inspect all the inside areas; correlate damage and defects you find outside with any signs inside. Turn on all the lights and open all the blinds or curtains. Check rooms from all four sides, from both a standing and kneeling position.

Pay particular attention to bathrooms and kitchen, which suffer the most wear and tear. Have they been well built and maintained?

Visit the attic. Look at chimney, vent pipes, skylights and the roof itself — from the inside. Check the insulation. If there is no attic or it's inaccessible, carefully inspect the ceilings and walls of rooms directly below the roof.

Look at the heating system and ask to see the bills for the past 12 months. Is the house energy efficient? Check the condition of any fireplace(s). Inspect all chimneys and signs of soot inside the house. What is the condition of the hot water heater?

Spend some time on both the plumbing and electrical systems: repair and replacement here can be very expensive. You can usually inspect pipes and wiring in the basement, crawl space and attic.

Don't forget to check climate control devices like air conditioning, (de)humidifier, air filter and so on. How effective are security devices and smoke alarms?

"House flaws can be classified as major, serious or minor," Witzke said. "Once you know the costs of repair or replacement, you can decide whether the house is still worth buying — and if so, whether the asking price is reasonable. If you feel it's too high, give your reasons." You could ask for the repair to be made, or lower your offer accordingly.

NEW HOMES

REN MOLNAR
HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Inspection a smart move

Pre-purchase inspection of houses has come a long way in the past few years.

From not being able to find inspectors, to finding so many that one has to ask how they can survive in a town this size.

The next question, of course, is what backgrounds do these people have? Who is to say the individual you hire is credible? All are supposed to be liable, and yet none are licensed, few are bonded, and some are willing to do "oral" inspections (which tells you that you don't have anything after they're done but a receipt for the money you spent).

In a nut shell, a pre-purchase inspection should keep you from buying any structural, mechanical or electrical surprises.

It has become almost normal routine to install into the all-important "Agreement of Purchase and Sale" a sort clause that reads something like "this offer is made subject to vendor obtaining a satisfactory, independent pre-purchase inspection report."

Purchasers often feel they might want to have a brand new home inspected. This can end up being a waste of money, because if the home is being purchased through a developer, there are clauses in the agreement to purchase which talk about the "occupiability " (quite an elastic term) of the house.

Once having bought a new home, the purchaser is normally asked to submit to the developer three "lists of deficiencies." Generally, the first of these is submitted within the first week after occupancy. The second is asked for within 30 days after occupancy because little things come up, and as they do the new homeowner makes note of them. Most important of the three lists (and in some cases the only one really taken seriously) is the one submitted just prior to the house having been occupied for 12 months. This is the one I would suggest be influenced by a pre-purchase inspector.

This third list is also the one that the homeowner makes at least three copies of. One copy is for file, one for the owner's solictor and the third is sent, via receipted mail, to the developer. Another may be needed if a given situation demands the people administering the new home warranty program be informed.

Pre-purchase inspections can be arranged within two or three working days, as a rule. The wise purchaser budgets $200 to $300 for the services of an experienced pre-purchase home inspector.

Ren Molnar is president of Ren Molnar Inspections

Safety First: Inspector can save grief

By Susan Yellin
The Canadian Press

They may hide around the basement floor, underneath the kitchen sink or on the roof.

Structural and mechanical problems in a home are hard to spot unless you know what you're doing.

If you're thinking about buying a house, you should be aware of possible problems for your own safety and possibly to reduce the price.

Perhaps astonishingly considering home prices, studies show most potential buyers spend only a few minutes checking out a property, says Douglas Gray, a Vancouver lawyer and author of Making Money in Real Estate, The Canadian Residential Investment Guide.

"The average person buying a home, be it a condo or a single-family home, spends 17 minutes looking at the house before they make a commitment to buy." Gray says. "In most cases, they never go back a second time."

That's hardly enough time to make an accurate assessment of the condition of the heating and cooling systems or the state of the roof.

And even though home inspectors have been around for years, the "vast majority" of people don't use them to check houses over first, says Gray.

Nor do most buyers include a clause in their purchase offer stipulating that the deal depends on an inspector approving the house.

An inspection is critical in buying a house, Gray says. Many new homes will have a warranty from the builder, but even then, he suggests, an inspector will be able to determine the quality of the building.

It's even more important in the case of a resale home: the older the building, the more possible problems.

"Just like human beings, homes age and as they age they start to deteriorate."

An investigation by a reputable inspector will give a potential homeowner an unbiased view of the house, says Tom Woolley, owner of Boulevard Property Inspection in Mississauga, Ont.

"It's a technical analysis of the home," says Wooley. "We look at nine systems of the house, right from foundation through plumbing, heating, electrical, air conditioning — all the major systems of your home."

Home inspectors don't usually nitpick on cosmetic fix-ups like cracked kitchen tile. They're out to find major deficiencies in big-ticket items.

An inspector should be able, for example, to determine the age of the furnace, how much longer it's likely to last, if any parts need to be repaired or replaced immediately and approximately what you can expect to pay.

A house inspection typically takes 2½ to 3½ hours. Woolley says it's best if the prospective homeowner goes along.

Woolley enters his findings and recommendations in a 400-page manual published by his firm which deals with the workings of the house. Other home inspectors may deliver a written report a day or so later.

Inspections are limited — the inspector doesn't pull apart walls or dig up basements.

"If you go into a finished basement, we can't see through walls to see any potential problems that lurk behind," says Woolley.

Gray says safety is the No. 1 reason to get a home inspector, who will probably charge around $300. But it may also give you some leverage in negotiating the house price.

If, for example, you know it's going to cost $2,000 to fix something, you might be able to push the price lower by $2,000, says Gray. However, note that there is no regulatory agency, federal or provincial, for inspectors.

Gray suggests talking to at least three different inspectors, picking one that satisfies your wallet and idea of qualifications.

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Tips on hiring a home inspector

BY PAUL TUZ

When you buy a house, you probably are making the biggest investment of your life.

To be certain that your dream house does not turn out to be a nightmare, you should hire a professional home inspector to check it out before you buy.

The home inspector you hire represents you, the buyer. He or she should give objective information about the physical condition of the property after visually examining the structure and installed systems, including plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning.

Many home inspectors are residential architects, structural engineers, or building contractors. Inspectors are not regulated by any federal government agencies and, in most areas, are not required to be licensed. Structural engineers, however, are required to have a licence.

To find a home inspector, ask friends and coworkers for recommendations. Or check the telephone directory under Building Inspection Services.

Look for an inspector who is most familiar with the type of home to be inspected. Ask how long the inspector has been in business and whether he or she specializes in residential or commercial property.

Also, find out if the inspector belongs to a professional association, such as the Association of Professional Engineers. Membership in such a professional association may offer added assurance of an inspector's qualifications.

When you find a house you think you want to buy, be sure your written offer states that the purchase is contingent upon a satisfactory inspection report. If the inspector detects that major repairs are needed, any price adjustments or sale conditions can be written into the the purchase agreement. Or you can opt not to buy the house.

During the inspection, accompany the inspector as he or she tours the house. Do not hesitate to ask questions.

Depending on the size of the house, the inspection may last up to four hours. Any inspection of less than one hour probably will not be thorough.

After the inspection is completed, the inspector will prepare a written report detailing the findings, which you can use in negotiating the price of the house.

Paul Tuz is president of the Better Business Bureau of Metropolitan Toronto

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