

OPTA NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

AODA

OPTA recently met with MCSS and MTO to discuss their submission on the latest round of public consultation on the Integrated Regulation, which includes accessibility requirements relating to Information and Communications, Employment and Transportation. It is expected there will be one final opportunity for public consultation on the Integrated Regulation in February 2011. It is imperative that government is aware of the potential implications of this regulation on the transit industry in Ontario prior to adopting this regulation, and as such, OPTA will provide commentary for the industry at large and work with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) to ensure the transit message is incorporated in their feedback, however individual systems are **strongly encouraged** to respond to the Ministry, copying local MPP's and municipal council members.

OPTA TO STUDY ELIMINATION OF THE OBRP

OPTA has retained a consultant to conduct a study and provide a report on the impact of the elimination of the OBRP program. The research will commence in the early New Year and will look at how the program has been a success for transit systems in the past, and the impact that its elimination will have on things such as service delivery, fleet age, maintenance costs etc. Both large and small transit properties will be surveyed as part of the study, and it is anticipated that the final report will be delivered by March 31st.

PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

OPTA's Board has approved the [2011 Pre-Budget Submission](#) to Finance Minister Dwight Duncan as part of the pre-budget consultations which are now underway. Among other things, the submission calls for:

- the re-instatement of the OBRP Program
- maintaining the gas tax at its current rate
- legislation to implement the no-fault recommendations in the 2009 FSCO report
- a full and permanent exemption under Bill 118 [Distracted Driving legislation] of on-board communication devices for transit systems.

EASING OF VEHICLE WEIGHT REGULATIONS

OPTA and CUTA have worked with the MTO in their initiative to amend the Ontario Transit Bus Axle Weights and Dimension regulations. The amendment will permit an increase from 10,000 kg to 11,400 kg for single drive axle vehicles, and an increase to 11,400 kg for the drive axle of articulated buses as

well as the drive axle of two-axle transit buses when equipped with sufficiently wide dual tires. The recommended changes are expected to become effective July 1, 2011.

NO-FAULT INSURANCE LEGISLATION

OPTA has written to the Minister of Finance to request enabling legislation to implement the "no crash/no cash" change to No-Fault rules in the province. The change, supported by OPTA during the consultation period, was recommended in the 2009 Financial Services Commission's (FSCO) Report on auto insurance, but will require legislative amendment. The province has agreed in principle to the recommendation, and as such, we are encouraging Finance to bring forward the enabling legislation this Spring. OPTA members are encouraged to write to the Minister, copying their local MPP's, in an effort to get action on this very important file. If you want a copy of the OPTA letter to use as a model for your own, please contact [Norm Cheesman](#).

BILL 168 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR INSTRUCTOR MANUAL

OPTA has obtained a copy of the MoL Inspector Training Manual which has been used by the Ministry to train inspectors in carrying out their inspection and enforcement duties with respect to Bill 168 – Violence and Harassment in the Workplace—which became law in June 2010. The document contains information on mediation, the limits on the inspector's review, domestic violence, high risk workplaces, harassment complaints, risk assessments, and handling of work refusals. OPTA members may obtain a copy of the document on DVD by emailing [Norm Cheesman](#) at the OPTA office; please include the name and address of the contact person to whom it should be directed. OPTA plans to devote a panel session of subject experts at OTE to discuss this issue in greater detail.

OTE – APRIL 11-13, 2011

OTE 2011 will take place April 11-13th, and will be held at the Sheraton Airport on Dixon Road in Toronto.

Conference session topics will include:

- Managing Attendance
- Compliance with Bill 168 (Violence in the Workplace)
- Social Media, Marketing & Branding
- The Business of Customer Service
- Roundtable sessions on specialized services, maintenance and conventional service issues.

Stay tuned for more information!