

Councils of provincial institutes of CAs approve expansion of CA qualifying experience

On February 8, 2007, members of the Bureau of the Ordre des comptables agréés du Québec approved the expansion of CA experience criteria and agreed to approach the Office des professions to have the regulations amended accordingly. Once these changes are in effect, we will recognize qualifying experience in approved CA firm training offices in areas other than audit and assurance, and in carefully selected corporations and government departments with approved CA Training Programs.

The Ordre joins most other provincial institutes of chartered accountants across Canada and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bermuda in approving these changes. The members of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta will vote on the changes in late 2007 or in 2008. Some jurisdictions require legislative change prior to implementation, and the process for making such changes is now under way. Full implementation across Canada and in Bermuda is expected by the fall of 2008.

The CA profession currently offers the best training in public practice; with expanded experience opportunities, we will be able to offer the best training in the corporate and public sectors. The changes make it possible for CA firms and for select corporate and public sector organizations to create more entry-level positions for CA students, creating more opportunities for qualified university graduates to become CAs. The excellence of all our admission and qualification standards will be maintained, and the changes will be implemented across Canada and in Bermuda to ensure that the CA designation continues to be fully portable within Canada and Bermuda, and that all international criteria for mutual recognition agreements continue to be met.

In Quebec, the first CA students will be recruited into these new positions after required regulatory changes are approved, possibly not before the fall of 2008. Implementation in Alberta is subject to member approval.

In most jurisdictions, the first CA students will be recruited in the fall of 2007 for “new” training periods commencing in 2008. CA Training Offices currently approved to provide audit, assurance and taxation hours, as defined under current standards and regulations, will have to meet the additional criteria set out for hires into audit and assurance whose employment commences after May 31, 2008. Students employed by CA Training Offices in these positions prior to this date will continue to qualify under the previously approved chargeable hours requirements.

In Quebec, the *status quo* will be maintained for employers and CA students until the required legislative changes are approved.