

**Ministry of Education**

Capital Policy and Programs  
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**2013: SB3**

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Superintendents of Plant  
School Business Officials  
Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities

**FROM:** Nancy Whynot  
Director, Capital Programs Branch

**DATE:** February 25, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Condition Assessment Program: Preparing for Year 3

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This memorandum provides information to assist boards with preparing for the 2013 (Year 3) facility condition assessments.

The Ministry is pleased to report that over the first two years of the program, over 1,800 facilities have been inspected across all 72 school boards. This represents approximately 40% of the total number of facilities that are eligible to be inspected. The Ministry is now in the process of receiving and reviewing inspection data collected in 2012. The Ministry thanks all boards for their efforts to date in supporting this important initiative.

**Highlights:**

- Assessment schedule for 2013 to 2015 is attached
- Boards to select schools and prepare documents for assessments in a timely manner
- Target of April 19, 2013 to issue remaining final 2012 assessment reports
- Boards to focus on updating TCPS from March 14 to March 29, 2013.
- April 30, 2013 deadline to update 2011-12 renewal work

- New assessment data is an opportunity to update Remaining Service Life

## **VFA Canada**

As noted in memorandum **2012:SB17** dated July 3, 2012, the Ministry's Condition Assessment Program has been assigned to VFA Canada. VFA has committed to supporting all of the deliverables of the Condition Assessment Program and will serve as the lead provider of both the Total Capital Planning Solutions (TCPS) database and the facility condition inspections. Please note that the web portal address for the program is now [www.edu-vfa.com](http://www.edu-vfa.com). Boards that continue to use the old [www.edu-altus.com](http://www.edu-altus.com) web portal will be automatically re-directed to the new site. The web portal continues to house important information about the program, including schedules for TCPS training and information about preparing assessment reports. The Ministry is pleased to announce that Sazan Bimo, Senior Project Manager, will serve as the overall lead for the program. Contact information for key VFA program staff can be found in Appendix A.

## **Facility Condition Assessments**

### **2012 Assessments**

VFA Canada has the lead on all facility condition assessments and has informed the Ministry that all draft reports from 2012 assessments have now been issued to boards.

Boards are expected to adhere to the 60-day timeline to submit comments on draft report findings back to VFA. VFA has committed to issue the final reports for 2012 assessments by April 19, 2013, however this is dependent on boards having signed-off on the draft assessment reports.

### **2013 Assessments**

The high-level 2013 to 2015 assessment schedule, showing the total number of facilities to be assessed per board, is attached as Appendix B. Please note that if your board is not listed, it is because all of your board's facilities were assessed in the previous two years. VFA is now in the process of contacting boards to select and schedule the facilities to be inspected for 2013. Please refer to the document "School Selection Process" posted on the web portal for further information. Boards are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring that only eligible facilities are inspected.

Boards are also reminded that if they share a facility with another board, the entire facility must be assessed at the same time, as part of the lead board's assessment schedule. Boards in shared facilities have worked with the Ministry to determine the lead board, which is the board that houses the facility record in its database. Please contact the Ministry if you have any questions about your shared facilities.

After facilities for inspection have been selected, a list of the documents (including the Document Checklist and the Accessibility and Energy Checklists) required for the site inspection will be sent by VFA to each board in preparation for the Pre-Assessment

Meeting. It is highly recommended that all information requested by VFA be provided prior to the pre-assessment meeting to help expedite the process.

## **TCPS**

Boards are reminded that condition assessment data is updated in the TCPS application. TCPS is a valuable tool that enables boards to create capital plans and prioritize renewal projects, and therefore make efficient and effective use of assigning funding to capital projects. Boards are encouraged to take advantage of VFA training resources for basic and advanced user training in TCPS, either in class or on the web.

### **Annual Data Cleansing**

VFA will perform data cleansing in TCPS from March 14 to March 29, 2013. This data cleansing will include configuration changes and other activities as identified individually by each board. Boards should focus on updating TCPS from now until March 14, 2013 for those schools that have assessments scheduled in 2013. This includes updating project and building inventory information, and reviewing the active school inventory and consolidating data with SFIS. Since assets remain locked in TCPS until the final assessment reports are issued, boards are reminded that data cleansing by VFA and updating by boards for these assets can occur only after final reports are issued. Boards that are currently reviewing 2012 draft reports are encouraged to return their comments promptly so that final reports can be generated and those assets can be unlocked in TCPS.

Boards are also reminded to follow proper procedures in archiving completed renewal projects in TCPS and ensuring that renewal work funded by the Ministry's School Condition Improvement allocation is kept up-to-date in TCPS. The deadline for boards to update TCPS for all 2011-12 school year renewal work, including work funded by the School Condition Improvement allocation, is **April 30, 2013**.

### **Project Reporting**

Boards are reminded of the need to complete the TCPS annual reporting cycle, which includes entering information in TCPS about projects undertaken in the 2011-12 school year, archiving completed projects, and advancing any unfunded events from the 2011-12 school year to the 2012-13 school year. This information should be consistent with information submitted in the board's 2011-12 Financial Statements.

For facilities that will be selected for 2013 assessments, boards are strongly recommended to create projects for all planned renewal events for the 2012-13 school year in TCPS. This will allow boards to continue working on projects during the time that the facilities will be locked in TCPS (during assessments) and ensure that the reporting to the Ministry for all underway projects during the year is accurate.

### **List of Eligible Facilities for Assessment**

The Ministry is working to send each board a comprehensive list of eligible facilities to be assessed during the entire five-year Condition Assessment Program, using SFIS

data, in order to assist VFAs planning process. Boards are asked to inform the Ministry of any errors or omissions, as well as update SFIS to reflect any changes, such as school closures, school re-openings, etc.

## **Modeling New Facilities**

Each board facility inventory in TCPS is updated through SFIS-TCPS integration. When a board opens a new school and enters corresponding data in SFIS, the integration process creates an asset in the board's TCPS database. It is the responsibility of all boards to update the base building inventory and capital renewal information using the Asset Review Tool (ART) made available by VFA. Although new schools are not to be inspected, this process comes into play for all new schools, and re-activated schools (i.e. schools which had previously been closed but have since been re-opened), and should be completed in a timely manner.

VFA has developed a new feature to enable TCPS users to model their assets directly in TCPS. In the "Data Manager" module, users will have the ability to start the modeling process through a right click command for assets that are created in TCPS from the SFIS-TCPS integration. This feature is live within the latest TCPS version 12.2.1 (released on February 1, 2013). VFA will provide training both in class and through webinars for this new modeling feature.

Keeping this information updated is very important for long term reporting at both the board and provincial level, and will increase the efficiency in capturing asset condition data during the facility inspections. Please note that a facility with no ART file cannot be scheduled for an inspection. More information about the ART process can be found on the web portal.

VFA has requested that, by the end of March 2013, boards input any outstanding capital information for facilities that are not currently in TCPS (e.g., a previously closed school which is now open) for assessment purposes.

## **User Protocol**

The Ministry reminds boards of the annual review of the use and number of TCPS accounts by boards with respect to inactive accounts and situations where the number of accounts may be considered excessive. The Ministry is now in the process of following up with boards.

Boards are also reminded to send VFA any updates to the names of primary contacts for both the TCPS application and the overall Condition Assessment Program.

## **Remaining Service Life**

The PSAB handbook (PS 3150.29) recommends that the useful life of the remaining unamortized portion of a tangible capital asset be reviewed on a regular basis and revised when the appropriateness of a change can be clearly demonstrated. As a general practice, boards should review and make appropriate adjustments to the

Remaining Service Life (RSL) for any significant events that occur to their infrastructure assets.

The RSL of infrastructure assets should be reviewed at a minimum once every five years. Factors such as obsolescence, excessive wear and tear or other events could significantly diminish the service potential of the asset. On the other hand, significant renewal investments could create improvements to service potential which could extend the useful life of the asset.

The Ministry feels that updated condition assessment data should be used by boards to update the RSL of assets in a timely manner. One approach that boards can use to keep the RSL up-to-date is to review the RSLs for all assets inspected in a given year. For example, facilities inspected in 2012 should have their RSLs updated in the board's 2012-13 Financial Statements.

Examples with suggested approaches and guidelines of changing and / or estimating the RSL of tangible capital assets can be found in Appendix M – Remaining Service Life (RSL) of the District School Board & School Authority Tangible Capital Asset Provincial Policies & Implementation Guide:

[http://faab.edu.gov.on.ca/Capital%20Asset%20Valuation/TCA%20GUIDE%20-%20AUG%202012%20Release%20No%209%20\(ENG\).pdf](http://faab.edu.gov.on.ca/Capital%20Asset%20Valuation/TCA%20GUIDE%20-%20AUG%202012%20Release%20No%209%20(ENG).pdf)

Information about the RSL of schools can provide support for a board's capital priorities request.

If you have questions about the Condition Assessment Program, please contact Steven Mitchell, Capital Programs Branch, at (416) 325-2015 or [Steven.Mitchell@Ontario.ca](mailto:Steven.Mitchell@Ontario.ca)

Sincerely,

*Original signed by:*

Nancy Whynot  
Director,  
Capital Programs Branch

cc: Directors of Education

## **Appendix A:**

### **Key Staff Contacts**

#### **Overall Program Management:**

Sazan Bimo: (647) 497-5421 or [sbimo@vfa.com](mailto:sbimo@vfa.com)

Michael Kwok: (617) 772-8170 or [mkwok@vfa.com](mailto:mkwok@vfa.com)

#### **TCPS:**

Al Kostiuk: (647) 497-5405 or [akostiuk@vfa.com](mailto:akostiuk@vfa.com)

TCPS Support Line: 1 (877) 333-3537 or (905) 953-9948 ext 2517 or [help@vfa.com](mailto:help@vfa.com)

#### **Condition Assessments:**

Lamya Baraam: (647)-497-5417 or [lbaraam@vfa.com](mailto:lbaraam@vfa.com)

Al Kostiuk: (647) 497-5405 or [akostiuk@vfa.com](mailto:akostiuk@vfa.com)

**New web portal address:** <http://www.edu-vfa.com>