

Cabinet shuffle re-establishes stand-alone Ministry of Infrastructure

Early this afternoon Premier Dalton McGuinty shuffled his cabinet, reordering his inner circle for the second time in just seven months. This newly reconstituted senior team is undoubtedly the one intended to carry his government into next fall's election. Six ministers have assumed new responsibilities and two new ministers have been named to cabinet.

The Premier's last shuffle was triggered by the departure of Energy and Infrastructure Minister and Deputy Premier George Smitherman for a run at the Mayor of Toronto's seat. Today's announcement clearly sends the message that the Premier is focusing on key priorities leading up to the fall 2011 election. Welcomed into cabinet are two seasoned politicians having recently won by-elections, promoted are those who have performed well having handled difficult policy files.

Most importantly for the construction industry, today's announcement re-establishes a stand-alone Ministry of Infrastructure. The newly minted Minister Bob Chiarelli, MPP for Ottawa West-Nepean, brings significant experience to the cabinet table as the former Mayor of Ottawa and President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). Brad Duguid will remain as Minister of Energy.

Joining Chiarelli is new Research and Innovation Minister Glenn Murray, the well-known former Mayor of Winnipeg who now holds the downtown Toronto seat of Toronto Centre, vacated by George Smitherman for his Toronto mayoral run.

In what is being regarded as a promotion for his successful handling of the HST file, John Wilkinson moves to head the Environment Ministry. Taking his place at Revenue and also assuming responsibility for the Seniors portfolio is Minister Sophia Aggelonitis.

Jim Bradley assumes the mantle of Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, from Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Rick Bartolucci takes on responsibilities as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, from Community Safety and Correctional Services.

John Gerretsen, coming out of the Environment portfolio, becomes Minister of Consumer Services.

Also highlighted in today's cabinet announcement is the creation of a new Priorities and Planning Committee of Cabinet. The Committee mandate is to focus government attention on core priorities and to steer the Open Ontario Plan to ensure measurable progress is achieved ahead of the fall 2011 election in key policy areas such as economic growth, student test scores, emergency room wait times and access to frontline healthcare.

Serving on the committee are:

- Premier Dalton McGuinty (Chair)
- Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance
- Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry
- Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Economic Development and Trade
- Chris Bentley, Attorney General and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
- Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Transportation
- Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Education

Anyone with questions concerning the cabinet shuffle can contact David Zurawel directly at 416-968-7200 ext. 223 or dzurawel@coqa.on.ca