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Home inspectors fill an important role for home buyers. Their advice about the condition of the home has a significant impact on the decision to purchase. While home buyers expect home inspectors to perform the job to a certain standard, there are no mandatory occupational and training standards for home inspectors in British Columbia.

A 2005 consultation conducted by the Homeowner Protection Office determined that the industry and related industry and consumer organizations supported regulation of home inspectors. The Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General was directed to develop a regulatory framework under the *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* requiring a licence to practice as a home inspector and establishing other rules to protect consumers. Regulations are intended to enhance consumer protection and to give consumers confidence that standards of qualification are in place.

The *Consultation Paper: Proposals for a Regulatory Framework for Home Inspectors* was posted on the PSSG website in January and February 2008. The consultation paper was e-mailed to approximately 350 home inspectors, professional organizations and related industry and consumer organizations.

Approximately 130 responses were received - mainly from home inspectors and related organizations. Several submissions were received from consumers and consumer organizations.

Almost all respondents agreed that home inspectors should be regulated. Most agreed that an independent body should be the regulator, although some preferred self governance by the industry or governance by one of the home inspector industry professional organizations.

Most respondents recommended a requirement for education specific to home inspection and supervised field training prior to allowing home inspectors to practice independently. Respondents highly recommended that there be a requirement to follow standards of practice and codes of ethics, such as those required by the Canadian Association of Home and Property Inspectors (BC), Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of British Columbia, the National Association of Certified Home Inspectors and the National Certification Program for Home and Property Inspectors.

Respondents generally agreed that there should be no exemptions and that everyone providing home inspections should require a licence. A transition period was recommended for home inspectors already working in the industry without formal education in home inspection.

Many home inspectors and professional organizations were concerned about additional fees and paperwork associated with licensing, and recommended low licence fees.

Additional recommendations focused on addressing conflict of interest, privacy of reports, and the quality of contracts and reports. There was also concern about home inspectors inspecting and reporting on matters beyond their scope of practice.