

## **Questions and Answers related to the passage of Quebec Bill 61 Unification of the Accounting Profession in Quebec**

**What does the new legislation in Quebec mean for the accounting profession in that province?**

Quebec's CA, CMA and CGA Orders have united their organizations, bringing together 35,000 professional accountants under the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation.

The accounting bodies in Quebec will speak with a unified voice integrated with one set of regulations. This will best serve the public interest by establishing a common code of professional conduct and disciplinary system.

**Why does the passing of the legislation in Quebec represent a significant milestone?**

The accounting bodies in Quebec are the first to unite under the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation in Canada. The legislation creating the CPA designation in Quebec can serve as a model for other provinces.

Canada now has four accounting designations: CA, CMA, CGA and CPA. The profession cannot go back to where it was before – that alignment no longer exists. One out of every five professional accountants in Canada is now a CPA.

The accounting bodies in Quebec will speak with a unified voice integrated with one set of regulations. This will best serve the public interest by establishing a common code of professional conduct and disciplinary system. Quebec is aligned with the Unification Framework being used to guide unification discussions in other provinces.

The timing for provincial merger proposals will vary among the provinces.

**Efforts to unite accounting bodies in other provinces are underway. How does the Quebec situation impact those efforts?**

The Quebec legislation shows that unification can indeed be accomplished at the provincial level. The approach adopted in Quebec fully respects provincial rights, responsibilities and authority while at the same time provides a model framework for the other provinces.

Quebec is aligned with the Unification Framework being used to guide unification discussions in other provinces. The timing for provincial merger proposals will vary among the provinces.

**The uniting of the accounting bodies in Quebec noticeably alters the accounting landscape in the country. What is the breakdown in terms of share of Canadian accounting professionals?**

There are now four Canadian accounting designations with the following shares: 35% CA, 24% CGA, 21% CMA and 20% CPA.

## **Why is the province of Quebec so far out in front in the effort to unite Canada's accounting profession?**

In Quebec, oversight of all professional bodies is the responsibility of the provincial government's Office des professions. In 2011, the Office invited the Quebec CA, CMA and CGA bodies to jointly reflect on the future of accounting profession in that province. The three Quebec accounting bodies were interested in exploring unification.

The guiding principles and highlights of the proposal to unify the accounting profession in Quebec were presented to members and other stakeholders during the summer of 2011. The Board of Directors of the three Quebec accounting bodies then issued a favourable unification recommendation to the Office that fall. The three bodies eventually became the first to unite under the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation in Canada.

As the three bodies were exploring a merger in Quebec, CAs and CMAs were discussing unification across the rest of Canada. The merger principles being explored in Quebec were aligned with those being used as the basis of discussions among the CAs and CMAs elsewhere.

Outside of Quebec, the CA and CMA discussions eventually moved to a three-way unification effort as CGA bodies joined the process. The unification talks are currently in different stages across the country.

## **What happens if not all the provinces or accounting bodies agree to move forward with unification?**

Things are going to vary province by province but the accounting landscape has changed in Canada with the three accounting bodies in Quebec uniting under the Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) designation. We may face a situation where Quebec and several other provinces are among the first to unite and some take longer. That scenario can be sustained for a while but it will prove challenging over time, especially with a new CPA certification program being developed regardless of whether or not there is full unification across the country.

## **The CMA and CGA bodies have pulled out of the unification talks in Ontario, Canada's largest province. How does that impact efforts to unite the profession?**

This is a complex process with 40 different bodies involved. One province does not necessarily dictate the pace or the mandate to any other province. The timing is going to vary among the provinces.

The good news is the merger in Quebec has successfully gone through the legislation development and passage process to become law. This shows that unification can indeed be accomplished at the provincial level. Quebec is aligned with the Unification Framework being used to guide unification discussions in other provinces.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ontario (ICAO) confirmed in a [message to its members](#) that unification of the profession remains its goal despite the announcements from

CMA Ontario and CGA Ontario. The ICAO emphasized that it remains part of the national unification effort, believing that unification would benefit all accountants, protect the public interest and strengthen the future of accounting in Canada.

The door remains open for the CMA and CGA bodies in Ontario to rejoin the unification effort.

**Who owns the rights to CPA in Canada?**

The CA profession has the right to use the name Chartered Professional Accountant and provide the CPA accreditation in Canada.

**What happens if accounting bodies in a province decide to merge under the CPA designation without the provincial CA body?**

The CA profession will support any provincial CPA organization established under the eight guiding principles of the Unification Framework.