

### ***And how they could cost your firm hundreds of thousands of dollars...or more***

With the new sheet metal licensing law (Chapter 232 Of 2008), what do the “ratios” really mean?

Ratios set the number of apprentices – helpers or less experienced workers – who can work in conjunction with a certain number of journeypersons – workers with at least five years experience. Currently there are no required ratios in sheet metal, meaning that a contractor can employ as many apprentices or helpers as he desires, with no requirement that he employ a certain number of journeypersons. In most licensed trades, jobsite ratios are set at 1 to 1, meaning for each one apprentice working on a job, there must be one journeyperson supervising that apprentice.

The regulations given initial approval by the Board of Examiners of Sheet Metal Workers call for a three to one journeyperson to apprentice ratio for commercial work: “The on-site Apprentice-to-supervisor ratio shall be at least 1:1. *When there are more than two licensed sheet metal workers on a site that is non-residential and over 35,000 cubic feet, the ratio shall be 1 apprentice to 3 supervisors.*” This means that on all commercial jobs with more than two workers, contractors must work at a three to one ratio.

### **Take a look at what a 3 to 1 ratio will really mean for sheet metal contractors:**

#### **Small Contractor**

For a small contractor with 2 journeypersons and 2 apprentices, the company can only work two-person crews of one journey person and one apprentice, or it will have to hire 4 more journeypersons for a total of 6 to utilize its 2 apprentices on commercial jobs. **This company’s annual payroll costs will increase by \$288,000**

#### **Medium Contractor**

For a medium contractor with 15 journeypersons and 15 apprentices, the company must limit its work to two-man crews or it will have to hire 30 additional journeypersons for a total of 45 to put its 15 apprentices to work. **This company’s annual payroll costs will increase by \$2,160,000.**

#### **Large Contractor**

For a large contractor with 75 journeypersons and 75 apprentices, the notion of using only two-man crews is a non-starter. Thus, the three to one ratios mean the company will have to hire 150 additional journeypersons for a total of 225 to employ 75 apprentices. **This company’s annual payroll costs will increase by \$10,800,000.**

*These figures are based on the Board’s proposed 1600-hour work year and wages and benefits of \$45 per hour.*

We urge you to tell the Board of Sheet Metal Examiners what a 3-1 ratio will mean for your company and the industry. You can email comments to the Board at [Reg.Director@state.ma.us](mailto:Reg.Director@state.ma.us). We also encourage you to attend Board meetings, which are open to the public. View the meeting schedule by clicking [here](#).

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Mary Gilgallon at ACCA, 508-839-3407, [mary@accanewengland.org](mailto:mary@accanewengland.org), or Greg Beeman or John Rich at ABC, 781-273-0123, [greg@abcma.org](mailto:greg@abcma.org); [john@abcma.org](mailto:john@abcma.org).