The reality of today’s market is that there is a greater need for individuals in our industry with product application and code knowledge, along with detailing and scheduling skills, than there is for those with the ability to write a specification.
What has precipitated this most significant change to DHI’s certification program in decades, if not ever? It is unquestionably the changing dynamics of our industry and the evolving needs of our members who work in this market, combined with certain shifting roles within the distribution channel. We learned this from our members during our recent research activities, formal surveys, informal communications, and personal meetings. There was consistent, critical commentary as to why we need to improve our program:

- It takes entirely too long to earn recognition; it’s an AHC/CDC/EHC credential or nothing
- It is far too expensive; the prerequisite education requirements are just a money grab
- The system does not recognize experience or education learned from other than DHI classes
- It is not relevant to today’s distribution channel roles; i.e., specification writing
- The testing methods are antiquated; i.e., hand written schedules and specifications
- Education to earn credentials needs to be more available remotely (online) and locally (chapters)

This member feedback made it clear several fundamental changes to our education and certification programs were necessary. They included:

- Advanced certifications that focused curriculum in three specific areas of knowledge:
  - complete openings expertise
  - specification writing expertise
  - access control systems expertise
- New certifications that recognize basic, intermediate and advanced levels of knowledge
- Computer-based testing to enhance the user experience
- Make all of these changes without damaging the strong reputation and trust associated with DHI’s legacy credentials (AHC, CDC, EHC) in the marketplace.

Members also wanted to see several changes in how DHI delivered education. These included:

- A more integrated curriculum where doors, frames, hardware and building codes are applied in the classroom to better simulate real world activities
- A more flexible delivery of training through the use of video and internet technologies to supplement classroom activities
- A simpler, enrollment-based road map for gaining the knowledge necessary to pass the appropriate certification exams

To better understand where we are going with our new program, we need to recognize how we got to where we are today, as well as how our legacy certifications—AHC, CDC and EHC—will evolve along with this updated and enhanced certification program.
First let us confirm, in no uncertain terms, that the legacy certifications will remain in full effect and we will continue to advocate their corresponding marks of technical expertise to our industry stakeholders, the design community, end users, and the Authorities Having Jurisdiction, alongside of the new credentials and certifications we are introducing. The funding to increase our advocacy efforts is also now in place.

The first step in the process of developing these new credentials and certifications was the creation by the DHI Certification Council, and approved by the DHI Board of Governors, of a set of “Guiding Principles” that drove the efforts of the Certification Council. The very first guiding principle is “we will do nothing to damage the extensive brand equity of the existing credentials or to the members who have already earned them.”

The legacy certifications are long standing and well recognized not just within our industry but by our industry stakeholders as well. This brand equity has evolved over a considerable period of time; 75 years for the AHC, 35 years for the CDC, and 10 years for the EHC certifications. These legacy credentials will continue to be offered until the new certification program is fully rolled out to the industry. We will then determine a reasonable sunsetting period, perhaps two to three years, to provide plenty of time for students in the pipeline to complete their AHC testing. More importantly, we will continue to advocate the expertise of these legacy certification holders until the very last one has retired!

In 1940, the American Society of Architectural Hardware Consultants (ASAHC) was formed to establish definitive standards of experience and knowledge of the relationship between architecture and hardware. The AHC credential was born, and for nearly 40 years the education and testing to receive this certification focused primarily on just hardware, as doors were generally supplied through a separate distribution channel and electrified hardware and electronic access control was still a vision of the future. Since 1940, thousands of individuals in our industry were awarded this certification, and today there are approximately 1,200 holders of the AHC certification.

In the late 70s and early 80s, the “total opening concept” was gaining traction and the distribution of wood and steel doors began to shift, meaning most AHCs also were specifying and/or selling doors in addition to hardware. The CDC certification was created in 1980 and candidates were educated and tested on advanced product applications of swinging doors, including various specialty doors. The initial response to this new certification showed great promise, however, the majority of CDC certifications have been awarded to AHC holders. Today, the number of CDCs is less than 10 percent of the total certified membership. There are less than two dozen individuals who hold only the CDC certification, meaning more than 80 percent of CDCs also hold another certification, most being AHCs.

As electrified hardware evolved and our industry became more involved with those products and electronic access control (EAC) systems, DHI’s educational program expanded to fill this need and the Electrified Hardware Consultant (EHC) certification was launched in 2005. Again, initial interest was promising, but unfortunately the rapidly changing pace of the technology of these products meant maintaining currency and relevancy of our curriculum and the corresponding consultant exam a nearly impossible task. DHI fell behind this curve and the program stagnated. Currently only a couple dozen individuals hold this certification, with only a handful holding just the EHC credential; as again, most also hold the AHC credential. This program was intended to recognize an individual as a “specialist” in electrified hardware and interfacing with electronic access control products and systems. That specialty is still important today and we feel it is still worthy of a specialist certification.
The primary impetus behind updating our certification program was the realization that these legacy credentials were not truly meeting the needs of today’s market. One particular point was that the AHC credential represents not just the ability to detail and schedule advanced product applications, and manage complex building projects, but to also write the CSI three-part hardware specification for the project as well. The reality of today’s market is that there is a greater need for individuals in our industry with product application and code knowledge, along with detailing and scheduling skills, than there is for those with the ability to write a specification. Therefore one of the most significant differences between the legacy and new certifications is the separation of the project management/technical knowledge and skills and the specification writing skills into two separate credentials.

Next, the separation of the knowledge base between hardware and doors required to operate in today’s world is very narrow, if at all. Likewise, the day to day of doors and hardware now includes significant exposure to more electrified hardware and EAC systems. The new credentials address this issue by including all of these products in the new curriculum and exams. Therefore, the eventual holder of these new credentials will have been tested to a more well-rounded level of technical expertise than any of the individual legacy credentials. To demonstrate the same level of knowledge under the new program, current certification holders will need to have earned all three of the legacy credentials.

The last significant driver of the certification program change is that our legacy program was an “all or nothing” recognition of technical expertise. It was an AHC, CDC, EHC, or no credential. A fitting analogy is that we offered only a Ph.D.-level degree in our school. Our new program is multi-tiered with opportunities to earn credentials and certifications at various stages of your education path and career, similar to an Associate, Bachelor, and Master degrees.

It is important to note that the Certification Council recently changed the award criteria for all credentials and certifications to be only the successful completion of the corresponding exam. While we believe most certification candidates will take most of the recommended DHI courses to adequately prepare for the credential exam, we must also recognize a student’s knowledge may be gained by other than DHI sources, including manufacturer classes, the student’s employer, from mentors, and on-the-job training.

Lastly, a most important initiative we are undertaking is to modernize our certification testing process so it better reflects an individual’s technical competency and not a physical endurance test. Along the way we will enhance the entire certification testing experience while realizing efficiencies and improving response time in grading these exams to provide the student more rapid results. We will also address the issue of the subjective nature of some technical details we test; not everything is black and white and there can be considerable gray in the area of product applications, which can lead to inconsistency in examination grading as well. And we will begin this modernization process with the legacy credential exams highlighting our commitment to continued investment in them.

To summarize how we have addressed the significant concerns of our members:

- **It takes entirely too long to earn recognition; it’s an AHC/CDC/EHC credential or nothing…** New three-tiered credential and certification program geared to earn recognition at several mileposts, from the beginning of and throughout your career

- **It is far too expensive; the prerequisite education requirements are just a money grab…** Prerequisites have been removed so you can take any or all of the classes you feel you are prepared to pass, or if you have extensive experience, simply take an exam to earn a credential or certification

- **The system does not recognize experience or education learned from other than DHI classes…** While we believe DHI is your best source for the most relevant education, other opportunities do exist, so you can just take an exam to earn a credential or certification

- **It is not relevant to today’s distribution channel roles; i.e., specification writing…** The new credentials recognize these changing roles with specialist certifications

- **The testing methods are antiquated; i.e., hand written schedules and specifications…** Examinations for both the legacy and the new credentials and certifications are evolving to real world tests of technical expertise and will be conducted and administered in a technologically advanced fashion with quicker results available

- **Education to earn credentials needs to be more available remotely (online) and locally…** Curriculum development to support the credentials and certifications will be driven to be available both online and locally whenever possible
Over the past year much work has taken place to build the new certification and supportive educational programs to address the concerns and meet the long-term needs of our members. In 2017, we will begin this new age at DHI as version 1.0 of the new program, and the supporting education will be launched. Your input was the impetus for launching this new vision and your participation and feedback will be instrumental to refining and improving our results after the initial launch with versions 2.0 and beyond. Together we will build a best-in-class educational environment with credentials and certifications that recognize growing expertise at every level of achievement. In doing so we will be better positioned to attract and retain the next generation of knowledge workers within our industry and develop them into Door Security and Safety Professionals.

So there you have it…our commitment to evolve into a relevant, cutting-edge credential program designed to meet the needs of our industry. The challenge is the amount of work necessary, by both staff and numerous volunteers, to reach the finish line in a timely manner. An estimated timeline of launch dates is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Q3-2016</th>
<th>Q4-2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DHIA Diploma Program</td>
<td></td>
<td>DHC &amp; DHSC New Integrated Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHT Credential Exam</td>
<td>Q4-2016</td>
<td>ACSC Certification Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHT New Integrated Curriculum</td>
<td>Q2-2017</td>
<td>ACSC New Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHC &amp; DHSC Certification Exams</td>
<td>Q2-2017</td>
<td>AHC to DHC or DHSC Bridge Exam</td>
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We are making these efforts our highest priority and committing the necessary resources to complete each stage as quickly as possible. We will release segments as completed to enable you to embrace this new direction soon. Thank you for your support!
This is a certificate program to recognize individuals working in a variety of positions in our industry who have achieved a basic technical understanding of product and code applications. It is targeted to newer industry members working with products in warehouse, administrative, or technical positions. The Associate designation appears on the certificate of completion only, and is not used as a credential. It is considered the first step for an individual to pursue a technical career in our industry.

**WHAT THEY CAN DO**
- Visual recognition of door and hardware products
- Conversant with basic product and industry terminology

**WHAT THEY NEED TO LEARN**
- Basic Product Knowledge – COR101 course
- Basics of Building Codes – COR102 course

**AWARD CRITERIA**
Must pass COR101 and 102 exams
This credential is earned by displaying the competence to provide product and code application, detailing, estimating, and project management skills on projects with an intermediate level of complexity of occupancy type.

**WHAT THEY CAN DO**

- Detail and estimate accurately and cost effectively for 10- to 20-door intermediately-complex projects such as office building, medical clinic, school, etc.
- Set a PM plan for project with tasks, duration and deadlines to meet the GC schedule
- Identify and resolve basic application and code errors
- Conduct a keying meeting and document the results
- Understand basic construction contracting:
  - Basic specification troubleshooting (doors and hardware)
  - Contracting methods (tripartite, owner/builder, allowance)
  - Schedules and sequencing, duration and deadlines
  - Change order process and dispute resolution
WHAT THEY NEED TO LEARN

- Intermediate door, frame, mechanical and electrified hardware products application
- Intermediate access control products application
- Intermediate codes and standards interpretation
- Intermediate detailing, scheduling, and estimating skills
- Project management skills for intermediate complex projects
- Intermediate specification interpretation
- Masterkeying basics

RECOMMENDED DHI COURSES

DHI is developing a new non-traditional curriculum and delivery structure for this new credential with a targeted launch in early 2017. This “integrated project curriculum” structure differs significantly from our current “individual skills curriculum” method. Students will be taught product application, codes, detailing, estimating, and project management skills in an integrated fashion on a basic occupancy type, rather than teaching each of these skills individually. From there they will advance to more complex occupancy types, learning all these integrated skills as they progress toward completion of the DHT program. For students already in the traditional curriculum pipeline, following are the suggested courses that should be completed to properly prepare for the DHT credential examination:

- COR103 – Construction Documents
- COR113 – Hardware Applications
- COR120 – Door & Frame Applications
- COR125 – Take-off & Estimating
- COR133 – Electrified Hardware
- COR140 – Codes & Standards
- COR147 – Intro to Specification Writing
- COR153 – Project Management
- COR160 – Purchasing Concepts
- AHC200 – Masterkeying
- AHC205 – Detailing Hardware
- CDC300 – Door & Frame Standards
- CDC305 – Detailing Doors & Frames

AWARD CRITERIA

Must pass DHT exam, no CEP required, code update courses recommended

ESTIMATED TIME FOR COMPLETION

Enrollment based, within 12 months
This certified individual has advanced product and code application knowledge and expertise, and skills proficient to detail, estimate and project manage large and complex projects and existing facility renovations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT THEY CAN DO</th>
<th>WHAT THEY NEED TO LEARN</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED DHI COURSES AFTER HAVING ATTAINED THE DHT CREDENTIAL</th>
<th>AWARD CRITERIA</th>
<th>ESTIMATED TIME FOR COMPLETION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>§ Detail and estimate complex projects accurately and cost effectively</td>
<td>§ Advanced door, frame, mechanical and electrified hardware products application</td>
<td>§ AHC207 - Advanced Hardware Detailing</td>
<td>Must pass DHC exam. As a certification, it will require a three-year renewal through continuing education or by re-testing</td>
<td>Enrollment based, within 12 to 18 months after receiving DHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>§ Advanced construction contracting (CDT Certification or equal)</td>
<td>§ Intermediate access control products application</td>
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<tr>
<td>§ Identify and resolve advanced application and code errors</td>
<td>§ Advanced codes and standards interpretation</td>
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<tr>
<td>§ Conduct and document an advanced key meeting</td>
<td>§ Advanced detailing, scheduling, and estimating skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>§ Advanced specification troubleshooting</td>
<td>§ Project management skills for advanced complex projects</td>
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<td>§ Advanced specification interpretation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>§ Advanced masterkeying skills</td>
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### DHSC Door & Hardware Specification Consultant

This certified individual has advanced product and code application knowledge and expertise, but differs from the DHC certification in that the focused skills are proficiency to write or edit CSI/DHI format specifications for doors, frames, hardware and electrified hardware systems for large and complex construction projects and existing facility renovations.

### WHAT THEY CAN DO
- Write or edit CSI/DHI format specifications for hardware
- Edit wood, hollow metal, and aluminum door specifications
- Coordinate with appropriate Electrical Divisions
- Write hardware schedules for a broad range of institutional projects (schools, hospitals, etc.)
- Troubleshoot electrical elevation drawings
- Write electrified hardware applications (NFPA 731 systems) and operation descriptions
- Interface with networks and networking software

### WHAT THEY NEED TO LEARN
- Advanced door, frame, and mechanical and electrified hardware products application
- Intermediate access control products application
- Advanced codes and standards interpretation
- Intermediate detailing, scheduling, and estimating skills
- Advanced door, frame, mechanical and electrified hardware specification development
- Advanced access control specifications development
- Intermediate masterkeying skills

### RECOMMENDED DHI COURSES AFTER HAVING ATTAINED THE DHT CREDENTIAL
- AHC207 – Advanced Hardware Detailing
- AHC215 – Advanced Hardware Spec Writing
- CDC310 – Door & Frame Spec Writing

### AWARD CRITERIA
Must pass DHSC exam. As a certification, it will require a three-year renewal through continuing education or by re-testing.

### ESTIMATED TIME FOR COMPLETION
Enrollment based, within 12 to 18 months after receiving DHT.
This certified individual has advanced product and code application knowledge and expertise, but has specialized skills proficient to design, specify, and oversee installation of small electronic access control systems, as well as supply doors and hardware, and provide trade coordination of EAC systems on larger projects.

**WHAT THEY CAN DO**
- Troubleshoot CSI/DHI format specifications for security systems
- Coordinate with automatic doors, intrusion alarms, video monitoring
- Design a small system including head-end software

**WHAT THEY NEED TO LEARN**
- Advanced mechanical and electrified hardware products application
- Intermediate door and frame products application
- Advanced access control products application
- Advanced codes and standards interpretation
- Intermediate detailing, scheduling, and estimating skills
- Project management skills for advanced complex projects
- Advanced mechanical hardware and access control specification interpretation
- Intermediate door and frame specification interpretation
- Intermediate masterkeying skills
- System and point-to-point wiring diagrams and interface to integrated systems
- Installation and troubleshooting of systems
- Understand and apply NFPA 731 requirements
- CompTIA Network Certification or equivalent
- Interface with automatic doors, intrusion alarm, video monitoring
- Turnkey small projects

**RECOMMENDED DHI COURSES AFTER HAVING ATTAINED THE DHT CREDENTIAL**
- AHC207 – Advanced Hardware Detailing
- EHC400 – EH Applications & Documentation
- EHC405 – EAC & EH Systems
- EHC410 – EAC & EH Installation & Troubleshooting

**AWARD CRITERIA**
Must pass ACSC exam and provide evidence of certification by (1) software and (1) locking system vendor. As a certification, it will require a three-year renewal through continuing education or by re-testing

**ESTIMATED TIME FOR COMPLETION**
Enrollment based, within 12 to 18 months after receiving DHT
Question & Answer Summary
New Credential and Certification Program

What is happening to the AHC Certificate under the new program?
The AHC certification was born in 1940 and over the years has come to represent the highest level of expertise and professionalism in the door industry. In fact, many architects and general contractors refer to their AHC as their “door guy.” DHI is fully committed to protecting this reputation even as we launch an exciting new educational and certification program for our members. DHI will continue to offer the AHC exam until the new Certification Program is in place and the new certifications are available. After this date, we will continue to promote the AHC credential as the legacy credential to the new DHC and DHSC credentials, thereby preserving its strong marketplace reputation.

What are the new top level certifications that will be offered?
The Door Hardware Consultant (DHC) is the certification DHI will market as the total opening expert with a concentration in the integration of doors, frames and hardware. The Door Hardware Specifications Consultant (DHSC) is the certification DHI will market as a total openings professional with a concentration in specification writing. The Access Control Systems Consultant (ACSC) is the certification DHI will market as the total openings professional with a concentration in access control systems.

If I am an existing AHC can I keep my credential?
Yes. If you are an existing AHC you can keep using your existing credential forever on the same basis you currently do. DHI will also continue to promote the AHC credential forever in the marketplace to preserve its long-standing reputation.

If I am an AHC can I transition my credential to the DHC?
Yes, by passing a bridge exam, you can transition your credential to the DHC. This bridge exam will be solely a test of the difference in the knowledge or skills required for the DHC and the current AHC certification. It will not to be a re-test of previously demonstrated knowledge or skill to obtain your AHC. All new DHC certifications going forward are subject to CEP requirements. This is a voluntary decision because you can also choose to keep your existing AHC credential.

If I am currently studying for my AHC exam, can I continue to do so?
Yes, the current AHC certification will continue to be offered until the new certification program is fully rolled out to the industry. At that time a sunsetting period of two to three years will be established to provide plenty of time to complete AHC testing if you choose not to transition to DHC certification.

Why is DHI re-branding the AHC credential with the DHC, DHSC and ACSC credentials?
Survey results indicated that DHI’s educational offerings and certifications needed to focus on three areas: (1) total opening expertise, (2) specification writing expertise, and (3) access control system expertise. In doing so, the decision was made to re-brand the credentials so that the credential name better reflected the services provided by our certified members. For example, Architectural Hardware Consultant is less descriptive of the service provided by our AHC members than is Door and Hardware Consultant.