



Communication Policy

August 24, 2017

Disclaimer/Notice

The information presented in this document is designed to provide guidance to members issuing communication on behalf of the Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals.

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1. Purpose:

The purpose of the Communication Policy is to establish a process for the Association to respond to inquiries from the public, existing and future members, the media and outside agencies. Further, the communication policy sets the bounds and format which the Association may use to:

- Establish a position on issues related to the profession;
- Address Right to Practice issues; and,
- Address opportunities for Educating the Public and Promoting the Profession.

2. Structure of this Policy:

This policy is set out in two general sections. The first addresses issues and inquiries that may come into the Association from outside sources such as the media or potential future members. The second section addresses situations where the Association is considering external communication and establishing a position on a larger issue in the media or engaging the public or outside agencies. Each of these sections is then sub-divided into more specific communication opportunities which contain the guidance and protocol for communicating the position of the Association. The communication decision tree contained in Appendix C can be used to help determine which section applies to the specific communication opportunity.

3. Outside Inquiries

a) General Inquiries

Description	General inquiries made to the Association. These may include: Questions related to what the Association is and does; applications for membership; what is included in the scope of practice; and, questions related to the policies and guidelines. These inquiries may be made to the Registrar, Office Manager, and Officials of the Association.
Mandate to Respond	None required beyond that which has already been established with the position. This assumes that the inquiry can be addressed by providing information already set out in the policies and guidelines; information available on the website of the Association or the day to day activities of the Association.
Source of Response	Policies, guidelines, by-laws and other information as contained on the website
Delivery of Response	Where possible, the inquiry should be directed to the website as an initial response. A more specific response can then be made by phone or in person should it be required.
Other Considerations	Annual reminder to the membership to refer people to the website if they have questions about the Association; more specific/informed questions can then be directed to the Office Manager/Registrar.
Response Target	Few days to a week depending on how the inquiry came in.

b) Request for Support/Endorsement

Description	<p>One-off requests made to the Association to provide letters or other expressions of support for initiatives/projects.</p> <p>These would typically arrive as a letter or phone request made to the President or Registrar.</p>
Mandate to Respond	<p>Requires a Vote by Council with a 2/3 majority of members attending in favour of supporting the initiative.</p> <p>The member bringing the initiative forward should prepare an issue brief outlining the request and the initiative/project in question (refer to Issue Brief Template). This brief should also include a draft letter with the approximate wording of what would be stated as the expression of support.</p> <p>Voting would then take place by ad hoc phone meeting with the voting done by rollcall unless the request has been deferred or the timing corresponds to a scheduled Council meeting.</p> <p>Where there is a 2/3 majority vote to respond, a member appointed by Council would then draft the letter of support for the President`s (or designates signature).</p> <p>Where there is a not a 2/3 majority vote to respond, a member appointed by Council would then advise the member that brought the initiative forward of the voting result.</p>
Source of Response	Letter (as approved by Council)
Delivery of Response	President of the Association, Registrar or other as designated by the Executive and Council.
Other Considerations	
Response Target	Specific to each request. The President may defer discussion on the request until the next scheduled Council meeting.

c) Inquiry Regarding the Position of the ASFP

Description	Most likely occurs as an inquiry from the media asking for the Association to comment (establish a position) on an issue. May also come from another outside agency.
Mandate to Respond	<p>Requires a Vote by Council with a 2/3 majority of members attending in favour of supporting the initiative.</p> <p>The official bringing the initiative forward should prepare an issue brief outlining the request and the issue in question (refer to Issue Brief Template). This brief should also include a draft letter with the approximate wording of what would be stated as the position of the Association.</p> <p>Voting would then take place by ad hoc phone meeting with the voting done by rollcall unless the request has been deferred or the timing corresponds to a scheduled Council meeting.</p> <p>Where there is a 2/3 majority vote to establish a position, a member appointed by Council would then draft the letter of support for the President's (or designates signature). Effort should be made to draw upon the expertise of members in preparing the response.</p> <p>Where there is a not a 2/3 majority vote to respond, the Executive and Council should consider providing a general response referring to the objectives of the Association.</p>
Source of Response	Letter as approved by Council
Delivery of Response	President of the Association, Registrar or other as designated by the Executive and Council.
Other Considerations	<p>It is highly likely that the Association will have members that sit on varying sides of the issue. In that event, the Executive and Council should consider providing a response that states as much and then refers to the objectives of the Association with emphasis on the ethical conduct and professionalism demonstrated by members.</p> <p>Refer to example contained in Appendix B-1: General Response Letter</p> <p>May want to consider sending a general response indicating that the inquiry is to be discussed by Council and a specific response will be sent after the discussion.</p>
Response Target	Specific to each inquiry. The President may defer discussion on the inquiry until the next scheduled Council meeting.

4. External Communication by the ASFP

a) Issue that the ASFP Wants to Establish a Position On

Description	<p>Specific issues or comments made publicly or appearing in the media that the Association deems as requiring a comment/response.</p> <p>The issue or comment should be specific to the profession of forestry and potential direct impacts to the Association.</p>
Mandate to Respond	<p>Requires a Vote by Council with a 2/3 majority of members attending in favour of supporting the initiative.</p> <p>The official bringing the issue/situation forward should prepare an issue brief outlining the issue in question (refer to Issue Brief Template). This brief should also include a draft letter with the approximate wording of what would be stated as the position of the Association.</p> <p>Voting would then take place by ad hoc phone meeting with the voting done by rollcall unless the request has been deferred or the timing corresponds to a scheduled Council meeting.</p> <p>Where there is a 2/3 majority vote to establish a position, a member appointed by Council would then draft the letter of support for the President's (or designates signature). Effort should be made to draw upon the expertise of members in preparing the response.</p> <p>Where there is a not a 2/3 majority vote to respond, the Executive and Council should consider providing a general response referring to the objectives of the Association.</p>
Source of Response	Letter as approved by Council. The response should draw upon the expertise of members wherever possible.
Delivery of Response	As determined by the Executive and Council
Other Considerations	<p>Individual members reserve the right to state their own views on matters that appear in the media (letters to the editor, etc).</p> <p>An initial assessment of risk to the Association should be included in the Issue Brief.</p>
Response Target	Specific to each situation. The President may defer discussion on the issue until the next scheduled Council meeting.

b) Communication Relating to Right to Practice

Description	Deals specifically with misuse of title. For example, use of the title of Forester in job descriptions that do not fall within the scope of practice.
Mandate to Respond	Pre-endorsement by Council
Source of Response	President, Registrar or Chair of Professional Conduct Committee
Delivery of Response	Standardized message. Refer to Appendix B.
Other Considerations	<p>In the event that the initial letter does not resolve the situation then a second letter should be considered. After a second letter, the issue should be elevated in importance and brought to the Executive and Council for further consideration.</p> <p>Cases that deal with continued misuse of title or with individuals outside of the association but operating within the scope of practice should be referred to the Professional Conduct Committee.</p>
Response Target	One Week

c) Opportunities to Promote the Association and the Profession

Description	Deals specifically with opportunities to present to schools, guidance counsellors, appear at trade and career fairs.
Mandate to Respond	Simple majority vote by Council (<i>and a member willing to deliver the material...</i>)
Source of Response	<p>Association website content, Policies and By-laws or materials developed specifically for the communication opportunity.</p> <p>Presentations that are specific to the objectives and practice of the Association should be reviewed by the Executive and Council prior to delivery.</p> <p>May want to ask the membership to include a brief mention of the Association when they are making presentations to the public while carrying out work within the scope of practice.</p>
Delivery of Response	Can be delivered by any member (if given the mandate by Council) utilizing the information maintained on the Association website or obtained in their professional practice.
Other Considerations	This type of communication is really about advancing the profession, educating the public and recruiting the future forestry professionals that will make up the Association (and work towards its objectives).
Response Target	Specific to each opportunity.

Appendix A: Communication Brief Template



Communications Brief

Name of Issue/Event/Situation

Date

Prepared by:

- What:** Brief description of issue, event, situation. What are the facts of the situation/issue? *(The entire document should be no more than two pages.)*
- Where:** Where did or does this take place?
- When:** If an event, say when it occurred or is to occur.
- Details:** Add any pertinent details about the event.
- Strategy** How you plan on communicating, when you will communicate, where you will communicate and who will communicate.
- Key Messages** Two-three key messages that will form the body of the response / statement.
- Objectives:** What do we hope to accomplish through these communications? Or, why are we doing the communications?
- Risks:** What are the risks to the Association?
- Tools:** How will the communication take place?
If the response / statement is to be made by email or letter then include a draft.

If this is for a presentation at an event then what materials will be used or need to be developed.

- Spokespersons**
- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Name | Phone Number |
| Name (Backup) | Phone Number |
- Contact**
- | | |
|--|--------------|
| Individual or organization that the response / statement is being made to; contact information of event organizer. | |
| Name | Phone Number |

ASFP
102C – 1061 Central Ave., Prince Albert, SK, S6V 4V4

Appendix B: Letter Templates

1. General Response Letter



XXX XX, 201X

Name
Agency
Address
City, Prov, Postal Code

ATTENTION: Name

Dear Sir:

RE: Inquiry Regarding the Position of the ASFP on the Issue of XXXXXXXX

Thank you for contacting the Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals (ASFP) regarding the issue of XXXXXXXX. As you may be aware, the ASFP seeks both to promote the profession of forestry and its members and to satisfy the public demand for competent and ethical management of the province's forests.

Our members, be they Registered Professional Foresters or Registered Professional Forest Technologists, work in all facets of forestry in Saskatchewan and are employed with organizations ranging from Government and Industry to Academia and Research. While the work of our members is diverse they all share the desire to demonstrate their dedication and ongoing commitment to the profession.

The issue you have raised is significant but I am confident in the high standards of professional ethics and excellence of our members addressing the issue as part of the professional practice of forestry. Further still, I believe that through their knowledge, skill, proficiency, and competency the issue will be addressed in a manner that is in the public interest of the people of Saskatchewan.

Sincerely,

John Doucette
Registrar
ASFP

ASFP
102C – 1061 Central Ave., Prince Albert, SK, S6V 4V4

2. Right to Practice Letter 1

Note: Use the Sask Power letter as a template (obtain a copy from John Doucette)

3. Right to Practice Letter 2

Appendix C: Communication Decision Tree

