

**Transportation Association of Canada
ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL
Terms of Reference**

Mission Statement

The Transportation Association of Canada's ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL (EC) provides a forum of excellence for information exchange on environmental issues including environmentally sustainable transportation, environmental impact avoidance and mitigation, environmental legislation and regulation and environmental management system best practices, and guides TAC in fulfilling its commitment to the protection of the environment in the delivery and operation of transportation services and infrastructure.

Overview

The EC is comprised of environmental specialists from the TAC membership and primarily addresses environmental issues related to transportation infrastructure planning, design, construction, maintenance, operation and rehabilitation.

The EC's focus on effective environmental stewardship and best practices supports the TAC mission statement: To promote the provision of safe, secure, efficient, effective and environmentally and financially sustainable transportation services in support of Canada's social and economic goals.

In operational terms, the EC supports the key objectives of TAC that are:

- to be Canada's transportation centre of expertise, providing a neutral forum for the exchange of ideas and the discussion of technical issues – to be achieved, in part, through council meetings.
- to contribute to the increased awareness of the importance of transportation to Canada's economic and social well-being and to the availability and technical currency of transportation professionals in Canada– to be achieved, in part, through the work of councils.
- to be the pre-eminent source of transportation materials for Canadian practitioners – to be achieved through publications, internet-based services, partnerships, etc.
- to develop and to update guidelines and best practices primarily for road and road-related transportation matters – to be achieved, in part by sponsored projects.

The EC is supported by two Standing Committees, the Environmental Advisory & Legislation Standing Committee and the Environmental Issues Management Standing Committee.

An Environmental Achievement Award has been established to recognize exemplary contributions by a TAC member in the environmental area with respect to providing transportation services. The award is open to all members of TAC and their respective staff including all individual members, private companies, public agencies, academic institutions and related transportation organizations. Members' projects which have made a contribution to the protection and enhancement of the environment or which have been particularly innovative in their approach to solve an environmental problem are eligible for the award.

Roles and Objectives

In support of the TAC objectives, the EC seeks to:

- raise awareness of environmental issues in transportation for the TAC membership
- provide a forum for the discussion, information exchange, examination and resolution of environmental issues in relation to sustainable transportation
- assist TAC members in developing and implementing environmentally sound business practices
- promote pollution prevention and avoidance of adverse environmental impacts as the preferable means of addressing environmental issues or problems
- assess the effectiveness and foster the harmonization of environmental regulations and instruments
- coordinate action - in conjunction with other Councils and committees - on major issues concerning the environment
- develop and encourage training and education on environmental issues
- take a lead role in identifying, promoting, reviewing and encouraging the application of research projects and studies in the environmental area as deemed appropriate
- gain sponsored support for projects and programs.

The ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL provides:

- A unique focus on environmental issues and mitigation measures pertaining to transportation infrastructure development and operation.
- A collegial problem-solving forum
- A nation-wide focus,
- A range of professional disciplines
- Strong networking and information transfer capabilities
- Support to TAC's goals and procedures for guidelines and best practices
- Considerable information generation on relevant topics
- An orientation to pragmatic solutions

Membership

The EC is comprised of environmental specialists from the TAC member federal government agencies, provincial and territorial transportation departments, municipal governments, industry/contractors, consultants, associations and academia.

The Membership list is reviewed regularly and an up-to-date listing is available from the Secretariat.

Other Attendees

- A member of the TAC Secretariat is appointed as the non-voting secretary to Council.
- The EC meetings are open to other invited guests and TAC members, although some portions of meetings may be closed.

Meetings

The EC normally meets twice a year, once in the spring and again at the annual TAC conference.

Additional meetings may be held if necessary. As well, the EC Executive conducts regular conference calls.

Reporting

The Chair of the ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL gives an annual report to the TAC Board of Directors on the activities and budget of the Council and its Standing Committees. The Chair also brings the EC's priorities and perspectives to the Board, thus contributing directly to the formulation of TAC's programs and direction.

Council Executive

The Council has an Executive that is composed of up to eight members, including the Chair, Vice Chair, past Chair, the Chairs of the two Environmental Standing Committees, the TAC Secretariat representative, and up to two members at large.

Chair

Elected for a two-year term

Vice Chair

Elected for a two-year term, then succeeds Chair for a two-year term

In event the Chair is unable to complete his/her term the Vice Chair will assume that position as interim chair. The actual two-year term for this interim chair will commence

from the time of the next ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL meeting.

The TAC Secretariat representative is appointed by the Executive Director of TAC on an ongoing basis and acts as the secretary for the EC meetings.

The responsibilities of the ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL Executive are:

- to organize and manage the work of the EC,
- to run EC meetings and teleconferences,
- to represent TAC membership on environmental issues where requested

Approval Process for Reports Generated Under the Auspices of the Environment Council

For a project to be approved:

- The project steering committee for that effort must review and approve the final report and bring a recommendation to the Council for the report to receive Council's approval
- The final report must be circulated to the Council electronically approximately 3 weeks prior to the Council meeting at which the report will be discussed and approval sought
- The Council members will receive a presentation on the final report's content and recommendations and have an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments at the meeting
- The Council members will vote by motion on whether they approve the report for release.