

**Transportation Association of Canada  
ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL  
Terms of Reference (August 2015)**

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### **Mission Statement**

The Transportation Association of Canada's Environment Council (EC) provides a forum of excellence for information exchange on environmental matters including environmentally sustainable transportation, environmental impact avoidance and mitigation, environmental legislation and regulation and environmental management system best practices. The EC 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, regulatory approvals, 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 to:

- be Canada's transportation centre of expertise, providing a neutral forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of technical issues – to be achieved, in part, through council meetings.
- 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.
- be the pre-eminent source of transportation materials for Canadian practitioners – to be achieved through publications, internet-based services, partnerships, etc.
- develop and to update guidelines and best practices primarily for road and road-related transportation matters – to be achieved, in part by pooled fund projects.

The EC is supported by two Standing Committees:

- Environmental Advisory and Legislation Standing Committee and
- Environmental Issues Management Standing Committee.

### **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 preferred means of addressing environmental issues or problems;

- assess the effectiveness and encourage 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;
- recognize exemplary contributions of TAC members in the environmental area with respect to providing transportation services;
- take a lead role in identifying, promoting, reviewing and encouraging projects in the environmental area as deemed appropriate;
- gain funding 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 and nation-wide forum,
- A range of professional disciplines,
- Strong networking and information transfer capabilities,
- Support to TAC's goals and procedures for guidelines and best practices,
- Information on relevant topics, and
- An orientation to pragmatic solutions

The TAC Environmental Achievement Award has been established to recognize exemplary contributions to environmental aspects of 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 eligible for the award are those that have:

- contributed to the protection and enhancement of the environment; or
- been particularly innovative in their approach to solve an environmental problem.

## **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 EC Standing Committee Chairs, if not already Council members, serve as Council members for their term as committee chair.

The EC Executive will, from time to time, review the membership list and representation and may recommend changes. Voting members who miss three consecutive meetings without prior notification will be approached to confirm their commitment and participation on the Council.

## Other Attendees

A member of the TAC Secretariat is appointed by the Executive Director of TAC on an ongoing basis 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.

The EC Executive meets as needed by teleconference.

### Reporting

The Chair of the Environment Council provides semi-annual reports to the TAC Board of Directors on the activities 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 Executive is composed of up to eight members, including the Chair, Vice Chair, past Chair, the Chairs of the two Environment Council Standing Committees, the Secretary, 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 the event that 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 responsibilities of the Environment Council Executive are to:

- organize and manage the work of the EC
- run EC meetings and teleconferences
- 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 reviews and approves the final report and recommends the Council approve the report;
- The final report is circulated to the Council electronically approximately three weeks prior to the Council meeting at which the report will be discussed and approval sought;
- A presentation is made at a Council meeting about the final report's content and recommendations. Council members are provided an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments at the meeting; and
- A motion is passed by the Council approving the report for release in TAC's name.

### Matters Requiring an Environment Council Vote

Voting privileges are restricted to one vote per member organization. Proxies can be designated by voting members; written notification must be provided to the Council Executive prior to meetings where the proxy will be exercised.

Issues requiring an EC vote include, but are not limited to:

- Recipient of the Environmental Achievement Award
- Nominations for the Distinguished Service Award
- Recipients of the Award for Service
- Motions to be presented to the TAC Board
- Changes to the EC Terms of Reference
- Approval for release of reports generated by the EC
- Acceptance of EC meeting minutes
- Elections of EC Executive

Observers, including other representatives from member organizations, are invited to attend Council meetings, participate in discussions and contribute to the Council's work program, but are not entitled to vote on EC matters.