

TAC Publication Guidelines

Updated July 2025

Guiding Principles

- The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) is the principal source of roadway-related technical manuals, guidelines and best practices in Canada. The development, production, and distribution of TAC publications are core to successfully fulfilling the Association's vision, mission, and strategic objectives.
- TAC publications are the most visible legacy of TAC's technical program. Many are specialized technical documents that offer substantial value to those working in the road, highway and urban transportation sectors in their everyday decision-making and work.
- TAC publications generate revenue in support of general TAC operations as part of the Association's diversified revenue generation strategy.

Types of Publications

A **National Guideline** is a technical document that serves as a “how-to” reference document. Guidelines are typically the result of pooled fund projects (PFPs) conducted under the oversight of a TAC Council. They are intended to promote harmonization of practice across Canada and may be adopted in whole or in part as a standard or official operating procedure by individual jurisdictions. Before being accepted for publication, the documents are subject to approval by the Chief Engineers Panel. An example of a national guideline is the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada*.

A **Synthesis of Practices** is a technical document that compiles information on a particular subject, providing examples of techniques, tools, policies, or other approaches to address notable challenges and is often illustrated with supporting case studies. A Synthesis of Practices usually results from a PFP carried out under a TAC council, and must be approved for publication by the responsible council. An example is *Managing and Enhancing Terrestrial Road Ecology*.

A **Research Report** is a technical document that provides a collection of background information gathered through surveys, literature searches and expert knowledge on a particular topic. Research Reports require approval by the responsible council before being published. An example is *Developing Highly Qualified Personnel for an Era of Connected and Automated Vehicles*.

An **Emerging Practice Briefing** describes a relatively new practice that is not widely used across Canada and is not addressed in TAC's technical publications, but has been used sufficiently in Canadian contexts to assess its general applicability and effectiveness. Emerging Practice Briefings are developed through volunteer projects

and document the objectives, applicability and effectiveness of an emerging practice. They provide visible acknowledgement of emerging practices and encourage qualified practitioners to conduct further testing and evaluation. Emerging Practice Briefings are approved by an appropriate council before being published, and they may be updated or withdrawn as more information becomes available. An example is *Emerging Practice Briefing: Continuous Sidewalks and Bike Paths*.

Briefings and Primers are both short (less than 15 pages), high-level topic summaries. (Recently, the term “Briefing” has been reserved for “Emerging Practice Briefings”, as described above.) A Primer may provide an overview of a topic explored in depth by a larger TAC publication or may be the result of a volunteer project which needs approval by the responsible TAC council. Examples are *Briefing: Understanding Changes to the Fisheries Act, Impact Assessment Act, and Canadian Navigable Waters Act*, and *Primer: Evaluating Soil and Material Stabilization Products*.

Publications Operations

Development

TAC publications are the culmination of substantial contributions of time, resources and expertise by TAC’s members and volunteers, council and committee members, project funders, consultants and partner organizations. While some publications result from volunteer projects, the majority are the product of TAC’s Pooled Fund Project (PFP) model, and as such, would not be possible without the support and financial contributions of numerous agencies and organizations to the conduct of projects. Refer to TAC’s *Guidelines for Pooled-Fund Projects* on the website.

Pooled fund projects are overseen by a steering committee and managed by the TAC Secretariat. Technical work is generally contracted to a firm or team of consultants in the required area(s) of expertise. The work to be completed by the consultant is clearly defined in the scope of services and contract, which also specifies that the intellectual property rights contained in the work shall remain with TAC.

TAC provides consultants with expected deliverables and timelines as well as guidelines regarding software, file formats and layout styles to be used to deliver a final project report.

Preparing to publish

Once a project report is approved by the overseeing council and/or TAC’s Chief Engineers Panel, it is assigned to the TAC Secretariat to be released as a publication. Staff augment it with appropriate acknowledgments, disclaimers and credits, review and edit it (or hire professional editors, on occasion), and reformat it as required. The document is then priced, added to the Bookstore and marketed.

Translation

TAC is a bilingual association, offering services to customers, members and staff in both English and French, to the extent practical. It is expected that national guidelines will be published in English and French. Other documents are not required to be published in both languages, but may be if funds can be found to translate them. In cases where a document is published only in English, an executive summary in French is added to the English publication.

Quality assurance

TAC project deliverables are reviewed at key milestones by project steering committees (PSC) and Secretariat staff. Responsibility to accept or reject the final deliverable rests with the PSC and the oversight council. TAC's Chief Engineers Panel is also invited to review and comment on the final deliverables.

Format

Most TAC publications that are sold are available in both print and e-book formats. Exceptions may include older publications accompanied by documents or data, or publications at the lower end of the pricing spectrum, where it is not financially feasible to offer either print or e-book formats. Free publications are available only in an electronic, downloadable format.

Changes and errata

The Editing and Publishing Subcommittee of the Traffic Operations and Management Committee, and the Revisions and Additions Subcommittee of the Geometric Design Committee, respectively, are tasked with reviewing proposed changes to the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada* and the *Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads*. Reviews may lead to the decision to produce an updated edition of the publication or an updated chapter, which would then follow the same development process as the original publication. Errors that are identified in national guidelines are addressed by posting errata pages on TAC's website.

Pricing

Philosophy

The pricing structure used for TAC's publications is based on a market value philosophy encompassing a number of factors, including:

- the complexity of the information contained within the document
- the perceived value of the document's intellectual property
- the nature of the document (national guidelines, synthesis of practices, research reports, etc.)
- the intended purpose and audiences of the document
- the length of the publication
- production and fulfillment costs that need to be offset by sales
- whether the TAC Board has approved the need to retain a portion of the publication sales revenue in a dedicated reserve fund for the publication's ongoing maintenance

In addition to the factors above, TAC publications must offer preferred pricing for TAC members and limited-time promotional pricing for project funders.

Pricing guidelines

The table below provides a matrix for pricing saleable publications.

Complexity of information	Intended audience	Perceived value	Length of publication	Total score & pricing* (\$ in member rates)
Technical (5 pts)	Designers/practitioners (5 pts)	High (5 pts)	Long (150+ pages) (5 pts)	16 or more points Price = \$200+
Somewhat technical (3 pts)	Managers / decision-makers (3 pts)	Medium (3 pts)	Medium (75-100 pages) (3 pts)	10-15 points Price = \$100-\$200
Not necessarily technical (1 pt)	General (1 pt)	Low (1 pt)	Short (<75 pages) (1 pt)	9 or fewer points Price = \$30-\$100

Complexity + Intended Audience + Perceived Value + Length = Score to help determine price

*Pricing results, including student pricing, must still be judged against the publication's related production and distribution costs to ensure that the final retail price provides TAC with an appropriate profit margin, once production and order fulfillment costs are factored in. Monies related to the addition of any Board-approved Reserve Fund would be added to the established retail price.

Publications available for free download

At times, project funding partners or other organizations may choose to fund the free release of a TAC publication.

Pricing for funders

When a project is completed, one print and one e-book format copy of the finished publication are provided to each project funding organization free of charge. Additional copies can be purchased by project funding organizations at a 20% discount, using a provided promo code, for up to three months following the publication's release.

License agreements

License agreements for TAC members to post a specific publication on their intranet site can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

Discounts

A 10% discount is offered for purchases of 10 or more copies of the same title, delivered to the same location at one time.

Pricing of different formats

For a given publication, the price is the same regardless of format (print, e-book, other). Exceptions may occur for publications offering discounted student pricing.

Student pricing on select titles

A small number of TAC publications offer discounted rates to students. To access student pricing, post-secondary students enrolled full-time in a transportation-related program of study at a certified Canadian educational institution can create a TAC account for free.

Marketing

TAC publications, both free and for sale, are found in the **Knowledge Centre>Technical Resources Search** of TAC's website. Various means can be used to promote new and other TAC publications, including:

- Home Page of TAC website and/or other appropriate TAC communications
- Focus area secondary menu of TAC's website
- E-mails to TAC members and customers
- Social media
- Paid or bartered advertisements with appropriate associations or trade organizations
- Third-party arrangements with partner organizations
- Special promotions in conjunction with TAC events
- Targeted media releases

Consultant Guidelines

After a contract with a project consulting firm or team is in place, TAC provides a list of standards regarding the use of software programs, file formats and other technical formatting details that TAC demands of contractors when creating reports that will be subsequently released as a TAC publication.