

Terms of Reference

Chief Engineers Panel

This update approved by the Board of Directors on December 10, 2021; updated August 2023

MANDATE

The Chief Engineers Panel works to support the mission of the Transportation Association of Canada:

**Working together to share ideas, build knowledge, promote best practices,
foster leadership, and encourage bold transportation solutions**

The Panel also guides the Association in fulfilling its vision of transportation that makes Canada safe, healthy and prosperous. More specifically, the Panel is a national forum for information exchange, coordination and collaboration across the full breadth of the Association's focus areas identified in its *Strategic Plan*:

**Safety ♦ Mobility ♦ Infrastructure and asset management
Environment and climate change ♦ Technology ♦ Workforce development**

GENERAL

Objectives. The Panel will:

- Approve national technical guidelines for publication by TAC
- Enable federal, provincial/territorial and municipal Chief Engineers to identify emerging and priority issues across the Association's focus areas
- Enable members to share information on issues and activities within the jurisdiction, organization or TAC volunteer body they represent
- Coordinate the work of TAC councils, including in response to emerging and priority issues
- Identify and promote projects that develop guidelines and best practices for TAC members
- Encourage collaboration on technical projects, outreach, learning initiatives or other actions that span multiple focus areas

Meetings. The Panel meets virtually during TAC's spring technical meetings, and in person during TAC's fall technical meetings. Members and auxiliary members of the Panel and TAC councils, employees of TAC member organizations, and individual TAC members may attend; others are also welcome at the discretion of the Chair.

Activities. The Panel may conduct or support activities including:

- Volunteer or pooled-fund projects on subjects that encompass multiple focus areas of the Association, resulting in technical guidelines, syntheses of practice, research reports, white papers or briefings
- Meetings, projects or events in collaboration with external organizations

Working groups. The Panel may create working groups, including owners-only working groups comprised of government representatives.

Reporting. The Panel reports to the TAC Board of Directors. It contributes to the formulation of TAC programs and strategic directions by delivering a verbal report to the Board on Panel priorities, activities and recommendations during TAC's spring and fall technical meetings, and by submitting an annual written report to the Board each fall.

Technical focus. The Panel may monitor policy to determine technical implications, and may support policy development by illuminating technical requirements; however, it does not make policy recommendations.

Representation. Panel resolutions do not represent official TAC positions unless they receive the subsequent approval of TAC's Board of Directors or Executive Director.

PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Identification. Panel members include:

- A Chief Engineer appointed by each TAC member federal/provincial/territorial government
- A Chief Engineer appointed by up to ten TAC member municipal governments chosen for two-year terms by the Board of Directors
- An employee appointed by other TAC member or non-member organizations as invited for renewable one-year terms by the Panel Executive
- The Chair of each council, task force and national committee that reports to the Board of Directors (ex officio)
- Ex officio members of the Panel Executive (i.e. Past Chair, Board Liaison)

Voting rights. *Voting members:* Appointed Chief Engineers have the right and responsibility to vote on Panel matters; if they cannot attend a meeting, they may delegate voting authority to another representative of their employer. *Non-voting members:* Other Panel members do not have voting rights.

Auxiliary members. TAC member organizations and other organizations that are eligible to appoint a Panel member may identify any number of auxiliary members, who can access information on Panel meetings.

PANEL EXECUTIVE

Executive members. The Panel Executive includes:

- A Chair and Vice-Chair (elected from among Chief Engineers)
- A Secretary (representing the TAC Secretariat)
- A Past Chair (ex officio)
- A Board Liaison (ex officio; appointed by the TAC Board of Directors)

Collective responsibilities. The Executive works on a consensus basis to:

- Recommend amendments to the Panel's Terms of Reference for approval by the Panel and Board of Directors
- Provide input to, review and approve Panel meeting agendas
- Meet in person or virtually and act on behalf of the Panel between meetings, as needed
- Approve an annual written report to the Board of Directors

Individual responsibilities. Core members of the Executive are expected to fulfil the following roles:

- Chair
 - Chairs meetings of the Panel and Panel Executive
 - Reports to the TAC Board of Directors
 - Delegates responsibilities to the Vice-Chair and other Panel members as needed
 - Reviews conflict of interest guidelines with Panel members
- Vice-Chair
 - Acts on behalf of the Chair as needed
- Secretary
 - Prepares meeting minutes
 - Distributes Panel documentation
 - Administers electronic ballots (e.g. to approve national technical guidelines for publication by TAC, or to elect a Vice-Chair)
 - Communicates with Panel members, on behalf of either the Panel Executive or TAC Secretariat, between in-person meetings using e-mail or other online platforms

Term and succession. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Past Chair serve a two-year term. *Planned succession:* At the end of the term, the Chair becomes Past Chair and the Vice-Chair becomes Chair; this occurs immediately after a fall meeting. *Unplanned succession:* If the Chair resigns before completing their term, the Vice-Chair immediately becomes Acting Chair and subsequently begins a two-year term as Chair after the Panel's next fall meeting (with the Past Chair remaining in office, if possible); if the Vice-Chair resigns before completing their term, or is required to become Acting Chair, the Panel elects a new Vice-Chair.

Election of Vice-Chair. The election of a Vice-Chair involves the following steps:

- The Secretary invites voting members to submit their nominations or expressions of interest for the Vice-Chair position. *Planned succession:* The invitation is distributed after the final spring Panel meeting of the two-year term. *Unplanned succession:* The invitation is made by email at the earliest practical opportunity.
- If multiple voting members are nominated or express interest in being a candidate for Vice-Chair, the Secretary confirms with each potential candidate that they are willing to participate in an election by secret ballot, and (if so) to obtain a statement of candidacy for consideration by Panel members. If multiple voting members choose to stand as candidates, the Secretary administers an electronic voting process; all voting members may participate except the Chair, who casts the deciding vote in case of a tie. The winning candidate becomes the Vice-Chair-Elect and is ratified by a show of hands among voting members at the next Panel meeting.
- When there is a single candidate for Vice-Chair, that candidate automatically becomes the Vice-Chair-Elect and is ratified by a show of hands among voting members at the next Panel meeting.

PANEL APPROVALS

Terms of Reference. Amendments to the Panel's Terms of Reference for consideration by the Board of Directors may be approved when: (a) a quorum of at least 66% of Panel voting members are present; and (b) at least 75% of Panel voting members present indicate their support through a show of hands. Where quorum is not met, an electronic ballot is conducted after the meeting; approval requires at least 66% of Panel voting members to cast a ballot, and at least 75% of votes cast must be in favour.

TAC publications. The Panel must approve national technical guidelines for publication by TAC, after initial approval by the originating council. The Secretary conducts an electronic ballot in order to provide agencies with adequate time to review and comment on the proposed guidelines; approval requires at least 66% of Panel voting members to cast a ballot, and at least 75% of votes cast must be in favour.

Other. Other approvals require the support of a simple majority of Panel voting members in attendance.