



**Yukon
Water Board**

***Office des eaux
du Yukon***

YUKON WATER BOARD

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.1	Purpose:	1.6	Attending Conferences/Workshops, Public Events, Speaking Engagements and Public Education and Outreach:
1.2	Objectives:		
1.3	Context:	1.7	Identification of the Appropriate Spokesperson(s)
1.4	Guiding Principles:		
1.5	Responses to Media Enquiries:		



1.1 PURPOSE:

These guidelines are intended to create common understanding and guide the Board and Secretariat who may be involved in answering media enquiries, attending conferences/workshops, participating in public events, conducting speaking engagements, and taking part in proactive public education and outreach activities.

1.2 OBJECTIVES:

To effectively guide communications in order to provide accurate information on board processes, practices and guiding principles in a timely matter to external audiences.

To strengthen relationships and build trust by conducting proactive public education and outreach activities.

1.3 CONTEXT:

In order to act in a manner that is fair and unbiased in practice, and appearance, conflict of interest and perception of bias must be considered when evaluating all:

- Proactive public education and outreach activities; and,
- Invitations to attend conferences/workshops, public events, and speaking engagements.

There is a need to clarify the provision of external communications. The proper response to enquiries includes the identification of the appropriate spokesperson(s).

Budgetary restraints must be taken into consideration when deciding which activities the Board can actively participate in.

1.4 GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- The Board and Secretariat recognize the Chair is responsible for providing leadership to the Board, for effectively facilitating the work of the Board, and for communicating on behalf of the Board.
- The Board and Secretariat understand care must to be taken to ensure the preparation of effective and accurate communications in order to build trust in the board decision making process.
- The Board and Secretariat accept that they must conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner while conducting board business.
- The Board understands that given their quasi-judicial decision making authority they must take care to not enter into external communications on matters before them.
- The Board and Secretariat recognize the importance of conducting proactive public education and outreach activities to enhance general understanding, promote early involvement and foster transparency in the water licensing process.



- The Board and Secretariat accept there is a wide range of potential situations, and questions related to the water licensing process, and board deliberations. Communications are to be focused on the licensing process, and not related to applications or any other matter that is deemed confidential.
- The Board and Secretariat are to communicate in a manner which is consistent with the Board's mandate and jurisdiction. When required, prepared statements and key messages will be developed to help guide communications.
- The Board recognizes the need to represent Board values regardless of the position of individual member's nominating agencies.
- Board Members should respectfully direct parties to the Secretariat when in doubt.

1.5 RESPONSES TO MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

- All media enquiries will be referred to the Director before any information is released.
- The Director will consult with the Chair on matters other than general or routine operational enquiries.
- The Director will advise the Chair as soon as possible of all sensitive and significant enquiries.
- The Chair will inform the Board of situations which may garner significant media attention.

1.6 ATTENDING CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS, PUBLIC EVENTS, SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH:

- The Secretariat will inform the Director of requests to attend all conferences/workshops, public events and speaking engagements.
- The Board will inform the Chair of requests to attend all conferences/workshops, public events and speaking engagements.
- The Board and Secretariat will look for ways to conduct proactive public education and outreach activities.
- Decisions related to participation of the Secretariat of a routine operational nature will be made by the Director.
- Decisions related to requests for Board member participation will be made by the Chair in consultation with the Director.
- The Board and Secretariat who participate in these events will report on the details of the event at the next board meeting.

1.7 IDENTIFICATION OF THE APPROPRIATE SPOKESPERSON(S)

- A single spokesperson will be designated in most situations to respond on behalf of the Board to enquiries.
- The Director will normally speak to enquiries of a routine operational nature.



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- The Chair will normally speak to sensitive and significant matters and will give proper consideration to advising Government on matters which are considered sensitive and significant.