



APEGBC'S SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION PLAN

APEGBC MISSION STATEMENT

To forge a cohesive, able and articulate membership to lead in the protection of public safety, health and well being; the creation of value through engineering and geoscience, and the promotion and achievement of sustainability.

Sustainability can be defined as a process or state that can be maintained indefinitely.

Sustainability integrates three aspects: a viable economy, protection of the environment and social well-being.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this communication plan is threefold:

To create awareness of the value of incorporating sustainability into engineering and geoscience practices.

To improve the way APEGBC communicates sustainability messages to the targeted audiences.

To establish support for the Sustainability Committee's objectives among the membership, APEGBC committees and Council in order to position the Association as an industry leader in this initiative.

BACKGROUND

- In 1993, APEGBC initiated sustainability objectives and incorporated this vision into its corporate mission statement.
- In 1995, the Sustainability Guidelines were developed as a tool for members wanting to incorporate sustainability into engineering and geoscience practices.
- In 1996, the Sustainability Committee was established to ensure the mandate described in the Association's mission statement was implemented.
- The Sustainability Management System (SMS) was developed in 2000 to provide a holistic framework to guide the systematic consideration of sustainability issues throughout APEGBC. Strategy Four of the SMS established a need to "improve communication and collaboration on sustainability practices and standards."
- Two Communication Workshops were held January and April 2002 in preparation for writing this Communication Plan.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Strengths

- The sustainability message is relatively easy to sell because sustainability practices are contemporary and their economic value recognized.
- The public has demonstrated an interest in sustainable engineering and geoscience practices, monitored by the number of hits on the website. This creates an opportunity to improve communications through this medium.
- The "Sustainability Now" newsletter is well received judging from feedback, creating an opportunity for further communication through this medium.
- APEGBC Council has demonstrated acceptance of the Sustainability Committee initiatives through approval of its guidelines and the Sustainability Management System document (SMS).
- According to the 1995 Member Opinion Survey, 95% of APEGBC members believe the Association should do more to enhance the image of the professions.
- There are a number of committed volunteers available to enact APEGBC Sustainability Committee's initiatives.

Weaknesses

- There is an apparent inability to define "sustainability" in terms accepted by targeted audiences.

- By the nature of a volunteer committee, work is done sporadically and by only a few.
- There is a lack of knowledge of audience understanding of sustainability.
- Human and financial resources are limited since mostly are in-kind.

Opportunities

- Members look to APEGBC for guidance on sustainability
- The website will require the ongoing support and work of a dedicated staff or volunteer to maintain its effectiveness
- The Sustainability Committee is well positioned to communicate with government and other target audiences because it is a working committee of the Association.
- There is an established interest in sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience which have been well received by the public and APEGBC.
- The LEEDS guidelines provide a nationally recognized measurement of sustainability practices in engineering and geoscience.
- The Canadian Council of Professional Engineers (CCPE) has accepted sustainability practices in its organization.
- The APEGBC and the Architectural Institute of BC (AIBC) “Doors to Sustainability” exhibition, was well received by the public and stimulated interest in the topic.
- The Committee has established meetings with AIBC, ASTT, and UBC, suggesting a recognized interest in sustainability practices in engineering and geoscience.
- There is international support for sustainability practices in engineering and geoscience.
- Some engineering firms have successfully adopted sustainability practices in their work thereby creating a further demand for other sustainability products and services.
- The principle of sustainability is included in the plans of the Greater Vancouver Regional District, the City of Vancouver, large corporations and the federal government, suggesting strong public support. In the U.S., for example, procuring practices need sustainability practices before they are accepted.

- Sustainability offers an opportunity for APEGBC to take a public stand and demonstrate leadership. In the 1995 Member Opinion Survey, 91% agree (53% strongly) that APEGBC should take a public stand on major issues that affect society and are relevant to the professions.
- The Continuing Professional Development program will provide an opportunity to promote the sustainability messages to the membership.
- Sustainability is becoming an industry in itself, creating business opportunities for those with the skills to identify and exploit them.

Threats

- It is difficult to apply sustainability principles to the practice of engineering and/or geoscience because of a perceived irrelevance.
- There are perceptions of sustainability as a “fringe” movement.
- The sustainability committee is perceived by other committees to have a political, “anti-business” or “green” agenda.
- Internal perception that social and environmental dimensions of sustainability are the same, therefore messaging needs to address this.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives were selected as the priorities for this plan.

- To associate APEGBC with sustainability in the public’s opinion
- To gain the support of APEGBC Council for initiatives of the Sustainability Committee
- To promote sustainable practices among APEGBC members
- To educate clients/consumers of the benefits of sustainable engineering/geoscience practices
- To position “sustainability” as fundamental to the business practices of professional engineers and professional geoscientists

KEY MESSAGES

This list is a summary of all messages to be delivered by this Plan. The targeted messages by audience follow in the subsections below.

1. Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
2. Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
3. Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.
4. Helping the environment is not a cost of doing business; it's an opportunity for business.
5. The first principle of APEGBC's Code of Ethics: to hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety within the workplace — suggests the importance of sustainability for professional engineers and geoscientists.
6. Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.
7. If not now, when? If not us, who?

PRIMARY AUDIENCES

Numerous target audiences were prioritized and are listed below. Primary audiences are those to approach with available financial and human resources and within the time line of this plan. Secondary audiences are those to approach after the primary audiences have been reached.

Primary Audiences

- APEGBC members
- Employers of APEGBC members
- Clients of APEGBC members

Secondary Audiences

- Governments
- APEGBC committees
- Students
- Other professional organizations
- Bankers and insurance companies

APEGBC Members

Objectives

To gain increased awareness of the scope of sustainability in engineering and geoscience practices in terms of economic, social and environmental considerations.

To demonstrate the economic feasibility of sustainability practices

To inform members about how to incorporate sustainability in their daily work.

Key messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.
- Helping the environment is not a cost of doing business; it's an opportunity for business.
- The first principle of APEGBC's Code of Ethics: to hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety within the workplace ? suggests the importance of sustainability for professional engineers and geoscientists.
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.
- If not now, when? If not us, who?

APEGBC Committees

Objective

To create awareness of ongoing sustainability activities internal and external to APEGBC.

Key Messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.
- The first principle of APEGBC's Code of Ethics: to hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety within the workplace ? suggests the importance of sustainability for professional engineers and geoscientists.
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.
- If not now, when? If not us, who?

Employers of APEGBC Members

Objectives

To demonstrate the importance and relevance of sustainability in engineering and geoscience practices.

To demonstrate to employers, the economic and social benefits to incorporating sustainability into their businesses.

Key Messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.

Clients of APEGBC Members

Objectives

To promote the value of sustainability in projects.

To promote the long-term benefits that accrue by investing in engineering and geoscience practices.

Key messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.
- If not now, when? If not us, who?

SECONDARY AUDIENCES

Governments including municipal, regional, provincial and federal

Objectives

To inform governments about APEGBC's leadership role in promoting sustainability.

To create awareness of the value-added benefits resulting from the self-regulation of engineering and geoscience practices, regulated through the Association, bylaws and *Acts*

Key Messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practices add market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.

- The first principle of APEGBC's Code of Ethics: to hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety within the workplace ? suggests the importance of sustainability for professional engineers and geoscientists.
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.
- If not now, when? If not us, who?

Students

Objectives

To demonstrate APEGBC's commitment to sustainability.

To promote awareness that sustainability in engineering and geoscience requires continuous learning.

To create a new image of what sustainability means in engineering and geoscience.

Key Messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- The first principle of APEGBC's Code of Ethics: to hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment and the promotion of health and safety within the workplace ? suggests the importance of sustainability for professional engineers and geoscientists.
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement
- If not now, when? If not us, who?

Other professional organizations (AIBC,ASTTBC,ABCPF,CCPE,CEBC)

Objective

To develop a greater industrial profile for sustainability by partnering communication opportunities with other organizations.

Key Messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainable practices in engineering and geoscience meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives
- Sustainability involves continuous learning and improvement.

- If not now, when? If not us, who?

Bankers and insurance companies

Objectives

To increase awareness of the cost effectiveness and the long-term benefits that accrue by investing in engineering and geoscience sustainability services.

To encourage banks and insurance companies to consider the often ignored or hidden costs associated with a project — particularly the long-term social and environmental costs that are difficult to define.

Key Messages

- Sustainability in engineering and geoscience practice adds market value that is increasingly recognized by clients in the public and private sectors.
- Sustainability practices integrate economic, social and environmental objectives.
- Helping the environment is not a cost of doing business; it's an opportunity for business.

ACTION PLAN

Primary Audiences:

Audience 1.0	MEMBERS
Objectives To gain increased awareness of the scope of sustainability in engineering and geoscience practices in terms of economic, social and environmental considerations. To demonstrate the economic feasibility of sustainability practices. To inform members about how to incorporate sustainability in their daily work.	
Action 1.1	Prepare Primer for Distribution
Achievements	Edited final version for grammatical corrections June 2002 Final draft approved for distribution via sustainability website
Future Action	Completed (may decide at a later date to hire a graphic design to package document)
By	
Notes	
Action 1.2	Inform membership about Primer
Achievements	Announcement made at Branch Representative meeting May 2002 Promoted on News and Views website November 2002
Future Action	Include launch article in Sustainability Now newsletter (November) Announce Primer in Innovation

	Include announcement in DAWEG mailout (November)
By	CL
Notes	
Action 1.3	Distribute Primer to Membership
Achievements	Not completed
Future Action	E-mail link to document to membership (include in Career Development email)
By	Comm. dept (GM)/CL
Notes	
Action 1.4	Expand Primer
Achievements	Ongoing
Future Action	Update Mining module; expand Building module Research and write new modules (Transportation, Energy, Consulting?) Committee to decide who should take the lead on specific topics; address need for “expert” input
By	CL/Sustainability Committee
Notes	
Action 1.5	Create strong link between APEGBC policy and Sustainability Guidelines
Achievements	Not completed
Future Action	MdS to draft a policy statement in consultation with PwC to ensure consistency with ISO 14001 requirements Forward to Professional Practice and then council to adopt as a resolution
By	MdS/RR/Council
Notes	This policy link is needed both for ISO 14001 certification and to support the inclusion of sustainability in the practice review
Action 1.6	Incorporate sustainability guidelines in practice review manual
Achievements	Worked with Practice Review committee to develop questions/procedure (MW/FB/PM) Mentioned in practice review notice letter that reviewees are responsible for reading Sustainability Guidelines Peter Mitchell has drafted a new section in the practice reviewer’s reference manual as well as a general question about sustainability for the actual practice review. Also included is space for reviewee’s questions to be relayed back to the susty committee for direct reply.
Future Action	PM to take question and proposed additions to next Practice Review Committee meeting for approval; then to Professional Practice and Council for approval Train reviewers Implement program Assess results of awareness gauging phase, implement more extensive requirements
By	MW, Practice Review Committee and Professional Practice Dept

Notes	It was agreed by those involved in the question development that a phased-in approach would be most appropriate for incorporating Sustainability Guidelines. The first phase, then is simply gauging awareness.
Action 1.7	Promote sustainability to APEGBC membership/link APEGBC with sustainability
Achievements	Companies interviewed/profiled in Susty Now newsletter Articles about projects published in Susty Now Articles uploaded on Sustainability website
Future Action	Continue Susty Now newsletter Compile, write and/or solicit articles for Innovation Include sustainability message in annual billing/receipt mailout
By	CL
Notes	
Action 1.8	Promote the creation of Sustainability Reps within individual branches
Achievements	Not completed
Future Action	Send email to branch reps requesting that they seek potential sustainability reps amongst the executive (or 'executives at large') Meet with new reps where feasible or otherwise communicate orientation information Develop methods for regular two-way communication between Sustainability Committee and branch sustainability reps Develop potential speakers list, tour possibilities, and act as resource to branch sustainability reps
By	GM/CL/MdS/Cmarr
Notes	
Action 1.9	Promote LEED to membership
Achievements	LEED issue of Susty Now (Jan 2002) LEED workshop held in Sept 2002
Future Action	Implement LITF
By	CL
Notes	
Action 1.10	Develop Sustainability Awards
Achievements	Some options explored
Future Action	Brainstorm ideas
By	Susty Committee
Notes	The goal of this award is to achieve the greatest level of engagement and effect, so it does not necessarily have to follow the format of Awards Committee-moderated awards.
Action 1.11	Create member dialogue about sustainability
Achievements	Not completed
Future Action	Establish community, professional development meetings and workshops Create on-line forum and/or list serve for APEGBC members Postpone action on forum/list serve for 6 months to first gauge effect

	of other communication efforts and determine most effective medium for new action
By	CL, Comm Dept
Notes	
Audience 2.0	EMPLOYERS AND CLIENTS OF MEMBERS
Objectives: Employers: To demonstrate the importance and relevance of sustainability in engineering and geoscience practices. To demonstrate to employers the economic and social benefits of incorporating sustainability into their businesses. Clients: To promote the value of sustainability in projects. To promote the long-term benefits that accrue by investing in sustainable engineering and geoscience practices.	
Action 2.1	Promote APEGBC/sustainability to employers and clients of members
Achievements	
Future Action	Draft articles for newspapers Publish articles in inserts for National Engineering Week 2003; ensure that sustainability message is included in general APEGBC descriptions.
By	CL, Comm Dept/CMarr
Notes	

Secondary Audiences:

Audience 3.0	APEGBC Committees
Objectives To create awareness of ongoing sustainability activities internal and external to APEGBC.	
Action 3.1	Establish two-way communication opportunities with key committees
Achievements	
Future Action	Clarify this action item Incorporate sustainability announcement into agendas of Exec. Council, PP, and Communication Committees?
By	Comm. Dept/Committee, CL
Notes	
Audience 4.0	Governments including municipal, regional, provincial, federal

Objectives To inform governments about APEGBC's leadership role in promoting sustainability. To create awareness of the value-added benefits resulting from the self-regulation of engineering and geoscience practices, regulated through the Association, bylaws and <i>Acts</i>	
Action 4.1	Promote APEGBC/sustainability to government
Achievements	
Future Action	Draft sustainability insert for Government Relations package Include sustainability message (eg. contribution to the Triple Bottom Line) in ALL literature/inserts (GM to discuss with Executive Committee) Begin distribution in Govt Relations circles Meet with Government Reps to inform about APEGBC's sustainability commitment/activities (Mds)
By	CL/GM/Exec. Council
Notes	
Audience 5.0	Other Professional Organizations (AIBC, ASTTBC, ABCPF, CCPE, CEBC)
Objectives To develop a greater industrial profile for sustainability by partnering communication opportunities with other organizations.	
Action 5.1	Maintain ongoing communication with relevant groups including ASTTBC, UBC, and AIBC
Achievements	ASTTBC, UBC, and AIBC all have representatives on the Sustainability Committee (Geoff Sale received 25 applications from ASTTBC members to replace him on the committee) Contributed to and helped AIBC organize Doors to Sustainability exhibit
Future Action	Ensure that there is ongoing representation of these groups on the committee Collaborate with AIBC for next Door to Sustainability Exhibit ASTTBC members are investigating the creation of an on-line forum and may be willing to also create/moderate one for sustainability.ca
By	CL/Committee
Notes	
Audience 6.0	Students
Objectives To demonstrate APEGBC's commitment to sustainability. To promote awareness that sustainability in engineering and geoscience requires continuous learning. To create a new image of what sustainability means in engineering and geoscience.	
Action 6.1	Maintain ongoing communication with UBC re: APEGBC's commitment to sustainability, and the changing nature of industry
Achievements	Presentation to UBC Engineering students March 2002 (RD)

Future Action	Maintain APEGBC and SC presence at networking/career info events
By	CL
Notes	
Action 6.2	Incorporate sustainability message when describing role of an engineer
Achievements	
Future Action	Incorporate sustainability message in career info packages
By	CL/Comm Dept/Career Awareness Committee
Notes	These action items were added by CL and have not been approved by the SC or the Comm Dept. The objectives, however, are contained within the body of this report.