

Terms of Reference



Stewardship Advisory Committee (SAC)

Approved by council: July 12, 2005

Updated: March 4, 2008

1.0 Preamble

Although the association remains primarily a professional regulatory body, S. 4 (1) (a) of the *Foresters Act* imposes a duty on it to “serve and protect the public interest” and S. 4 (2) (c) makes it an object of the association “to advocate for and uphold principles of stewardship of forests, forest lands, forest resources and forest ecosystems.” While council is ultimately responsible to ensure this mandate is fulfilled, under the policy governance model adopted by council, these responsibilities are delegated to the chief executive officer¹ (CEO) subject to the policy framework and monitoring procedures established by council. In the interest of clear accountability, it is the prerogative of the CEO to decide whether to establish or not establish staff committees and to accept or not accept their advice.

2.0 Purpose

The primary purpose of this staff committee is to act as a team of “expert advisors” helping the CEO to achieve the stewardship advocacy goals and objectives set out in the association’s strategic plan.

To that end, the Stewardship Advisory Committee’s (SAC’s) primary role will be to:

- Identify and prioritize stewardship issues of concern;
- Research stewardship issues as selected by the SAC or as directed by council, such analyses to be carried out by the SAC itself, by working groups established in support of the SAC or by staff;
- Prepare or oversee the preparation of papers on selected stewardship issues.

In addition, the SAC will, from time to time:

- Collaborate with other ABCFP committees to develop professional practice guidance for members;
- Assist the CEO with other stewardship matters as requested from time to time.

¹ Under the policy governance model, council has only one employee, the chief executive officer. Thus, all staff responsibilities and accountabilities rest with the chief executive officer acting in accordance with the policy framework laid down by council. The chief executive officer has absolute authority to delegate aspects of his/her responsibilities to other staff determining which staff will serve which committees.

3.0 Composition, Appointments & Reporting

The SAC shall be composed of not less than five no more than 10 members appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the CEO plus one council liaison representative appointed annually by council. Preference shall be given to members with significant interest in and experience with forest stewardship matters. To the extent practical, the make-up of the committee shall reflect the make-up of the ABCFP membership.

The term of office for each committee member, other than the council liaison representative, shall be three years. No committee member shall be able to serve more than two consecutive terms. In the interest of continuity, every effort shall be made to stagger the terms of committee members.

The chair shall be selected by the committee on an annual basis at the first committee meeting following the association's annual general meeting.

The responsibility to report to council on the work of the SAC rests with the CEO but the council liaison representative may supplement those reports as he/she deems appropriate.

The SAC may, with the approval of the CEO, establish SAC working groups to assist with its work. Such working groups may be comprised either of SAC members exclusively or of SAC members plus other relevant individuals appointed on an ad hoc basis.

4.0 Meetings & Decision Making

Meetings will normally be held monthly and will be timed to precede council meetings by two weeks or more. Additional meetings may be called by the CEO as required. The intent is that most meetings will be held by conference call. However, at a minimum, the meeting following the annual meeting will normally be a face-to-face meeting.

The quorum required to conduct committee business shall be 50 per cent of the committee membership, including the council liaison representative.

Most decision-making is expected to be consensual. If a consensus is unclear or in doubt, the chair may clarify the committee's view by calling a vote in which a simple majority shall prevail. Any decisions made shall be considered non-binding advice to the CEO who is solely responsible to council for the management of the association's stewardship advocacy activities.

5.0 Staff Support

The CEO's responsibilities relative to the SAC will normally be delegated to the director of professional practice and forest stewardship who will also act as secretary to the committee and provide the bulk of staff support. Nevertheless, the CEO will work closely with the SAC and will try to attend SAC meetings. Staff may participate fully in SAC deliberations but, in the event of a vote, may not vote.

6.0 Communications & Confidentiality

Association committees, including council, are expected to “speak with one voice.” That is, any statements made on behalf of a committee must reflect the duly arrived at conclusions and decisions of the committee-as-a-whole, not those of individual members. Further, committee members are expected to support committee conclusions or decisions resulting from due process and full/fair debate. This does not preclude efforts by committee members to solicit and receive the views of members and others on issues before the committee.

Generally, statements on behalf of the committee, if any, will be made by the CEO. Except as noted above under REPORTING, other committee members may not speak on behalf of the committee unless specifically authorized to do so by the CEO.

Some of the matters going before the committee may be of a sensitive or confidential nature. Committee members are expected to exercise discretion and not engage in external communication of such matters unless explicitly authorized to do so by the CEO.

7.0 Budget

The committee’s budget shall provide for the cost of all necessary meeting expenses, including reasonable travel costs for face-to-face meetings. The committee must seek the approval of the CEO for any expenses over-and-above the budget provision.