

# 2006/07 Policy Committee

## Terms of reference

### Objective

To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on current business issues that have the potential for policy development and advocacy by all Alberta Chambers. The ACC Policy Committee reports to Alberta Chambers of Commerce Executive Committee and has the responsibility to ensure all proposed policy resolutions going forward meet the criteria as set out in the policy guidelines and outlined in the responsibilities of this committee.

### Responsibilities

- To identify issues which are provincial and federal in nature and to communicate policy implications to member Chambers in a clear and concise manner.
- To facilitate the development of surveys, research papers and any other support devices, which will better, enable member chambers to respond to “emerging” business issues identified by the Committee. A flow chart is included at the end of this document.
- To advance existing policy positions taken by the Chambers' by making presentations to federal Members of Parliament, provincial Members of the Legislative Assembly, government Standing Policy Committees, and other government departments/organizations.
- To perform a review of the proposed policies submitted by member Chambers for the Alberta Chambers' annual meeting to ensure they meet the Policy Guidelines. Each of the proposed policy resolutions will be voted on at the last policy committee conference call before the Annual General Meeting, based on the criteria outlined in the policy guidelines, including:
  - Specific, complete, and relevant;
  - Reasonable and attainable;
  - Capable of being measured, assessed, or evaluated; and,
  - Of provincial, national, or international importance.

*Please remember that as a volunteer on the ACC Policy Committee you are expected to report back to your respective Chamber board and be proactive in your communication with ACC, to ensure an efficient flow of policy information for the Chamber movement in Alberta.*

### Meeting frequency

The Committee will meet on a bi-monthly schedule (From October to March), or as often as might be required to deal with emerging issues. The need for additional meetings will be determined by the Chair and the Co-Chair. Given the geographical diversity of the Committee, meetings will be conducted by teleconference or videoconference.

The conference call dates for the 2006/07 Policy Committee year have been tentatively set as follows (from 9:00 am to 10:30 am):

- Thursday, October 5, 2006
- Thursday, December 7, 2006
- Thursday, January 25, 2007
- Thursday, March 8, 2007
- Thursday, March 22, 2007

An in-person meeting is also held at the AGM, prior to the policy debate, to discuss any outstanding issues and late proposed resolutions.

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### **Online resources**

In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings, the ACC policy committee is also subscribed to online discussion forums on the ACC website, which are open for all member Chambers to review. The purpose of these discussions is to outline any emerging areas that should be addressed, as well to post any resources that others may find valuable. Some of the discussion threads include the policy priority areas as outlined by Policy Committee members, any new surveys, and emerging issues. ALL POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTRIBUTE AND PARTICIPATE IN THESE ONLINE DISCUSSIONS. To find out more, or for instructions, please contact [dbegin@abchamber.ca](mailto:dbegin@abchamber.ca).

### **Structure**

The ACC policy committee includes the following individuals:

- A Policy Committee Chair, filled by ACC's President Elect as outlined by ACC bylaws. This position has voting privileges, but is only to be exercised in the event of a tie.
- Permanent Policy Committee positions, filled by the ten Chambers with the highest membership, as determined by the previous year's numbers reported to the ACC. These positions hold voting privileges.
  - Of the Permanent Policy Committee positions, any Chamber with over 1,800 members will hold three seats/votes, any Chamber with over 900 members will hold two seats/votes, and all others with less than 900 members will hold one seat/vote.
- Annual Policy Committee appointments, filled by any other Chamber of Commerce that does not hold seats/votes under the Permanent Policy Committee positions, and that has an individual interested in policy development. These positions hold voting privileges.
- Two additional positions are held by the ACC's CEO and Manager of Policy and Communications, but do not carry any voting privileges.
- From all of these positions, four individuals will each be responsible to act as a Chair of a policy priority area. As chair, the individual responsible will serve as a key point person in the discussion (online, in conference calls, and when needed) for one of the four priority areas, as outlined below.
- From time to time, the ACC Executive Committee appoints representatives to various external industry and government committees. These representatives are also invited to attend ACC Policy Committee meetings and to contribute to the discussion, but do not hold voting privileges.

### **Priorities**

At the first policy committee meeting each year, members will be asked what their policy priorities are, for their own community Chambers. From the discussion four policy priority areas will be determined by the ACC for the current policy year. Priorities are chosen so that the ACC can effectively focus its advocacy efforts.

### **Voting**

While the ACC policy committee has the right to hold a vote at any of its conference calls, the most important votes are held at its last committee meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting. At this meeting, all of the ACC proposed policy resolutions will be voted on, to ensure their relevancy based on the criteria outlined in the policy guidelines and in the responsibilities of the Policy Committee. A vote is specific to the Chamber of Commerce, not to the individual appointed by the Chamber of Commerce. In order to have a vote, an individual from a Chamber with a seat on the Policy Committee must be present on the conference call. Proxies are not permitted for ACC Policy Committee conference calls.

Members of this committee will also be asked to vote on the response and position of the ACC when an emerging business issue arises that the ACC should respond to, as outlined by the following flow chart. This type of action may arise from a request of the ACC Executive Committee or from the Policy Committee itself.

The quorum for the ACC Policy Committee is seven seats, comprising of member Chambers that participate on the Policy Committee.