

III. General

Section 15 – Communications and Stakeholder Relations

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15.01 Purpose

This document contains the policies the Public Employees Pension Board (the Board) adheres to in managing communications and stakeholder relations related to the Public Employees Pension Plan (PEPP).

The policies have been created to support communications and stakeholder relations requirements under *The Pension Benefits Act, 1992*, *The Pension Benefits Regulations, 1993*, *The Public Employees Pension Plan Act* and the PEPP Strategic Business Plan. These policies are to be followed to ensure that Plan communications meet the requirements set out in those documents.

15.02 Rationale

Communications Strategy

The Board is aware of the importance of effective communications for Plan members and employers. The challenges are considerable given both the complexity of the information being communicated and the number of relatively small organizations participating in the Plan.

The Board believes that it is important to target communications to members at various stages in their Plan membership and, particularly, to focus on members who are nearing retirement. The Board is mindful, as well, of the need to facilitate two-way communications with stakeholders and to facilitate member feedback.

Plan Communications involves:

- Communicating with the Plan’s various membership demographics to deliver information and education through the Public Employee Benefits Agency (PEBA) as the Plan administrator website, financial statements, newsletters, correspondence, public meetings and seminars.
- Managing the risks inherent in the communication of Plan information. The Plan works to provide information in a clear and concise manner with sensitivity to members’ level of understanding. The Plan is responsive to members’ interests and concerns.

The policies set forth here have been developed mindful of those goals and elements.

15.03 Policy

Communications Strategy

All communications with media or stakeholder groups should be planned to ensure a consistent, coordinated and professional approach. The Public Employees Benefits Agency works on behalf of the Board to comply with the objectives and goals for communications as set out here.

Spokespersons

Senior PEBA officials provide information, research, consultation, advice, and support to the Chair of the Board.

The Chair of the Public Employees Pension Board has the authority to act as the spokesperson on behalf of the Plan and the Board. As the individual so designated, the Chair may delegate this authority as deemed appropriate.

When a PEBA employee is contacted for comments on or about the Plan, he or she is to bring the request to the attention of a senior PEBA official acting on behalf of the Plan. Following internal consultation with the appropriate PEBA officer(s), the appropriate spokesperson is recommended to the Chair.

Key Audiences

Plan Members and Beneficiaries

Plan members and their beneficiaries are primary amongst the Plan’s key audiences, and the majority of communication materials produced by the Plan

are designed for their benefit. The Plan develops and delivers information and educational materials to support Plan members and their beneficiaries in understanding their options within the Plan. Materials include print materials provided via mail, materials posted on the Plan's website, and materials provided during live presentations.

Participating Employers

Employers receive both general and targeted information via mail, e-mail (employer bulletins), the Plan website, and through live presentations. Communications with participating employers are proactive whenever possible, and responsive whenever an issue requiring attention is identified. PEBA's Customer Focus Coordinators monitor employer issues and serve as the primary liaison between the Plan and participating employers.

Unions

Unions, through employer bulletins, are provided the same information as participating employers.

Government

The Government of Saskatchewan is one of two legislative authorities under which the Plan operates, being responsible for *The Pension Benefits Act, 1992* and the Plan document, *The Public Employees Pension Plan Act*, and associated regulations. PEBA is an agency of the Government of Saskatchewan, and is the primary liaison between the Board and Executive Government, facilitating frequent and issue-specific communications.

Appointing Organizations

There are 13 organizations that together appoint the eight members of the Public Employees Pension Board:

- Public Service Commission (PSC)
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic and the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority (SLGA)
- SaskEnergy, SaskPower, and SaskTel
- Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC), Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency
- Unifor Union of Canada, Regina Office
- Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 600 (CUPE)
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 2067 (IBEW)
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees Union (SGEU)

Communication by the Board with the appointing organizations is typically limited to matters relating to the appointment of members to the Board and is conducted by the Chair of the Board or by the Executive Secretary.

Pension, Investment Industry Leaders and News Media

The Plan is the largest defined contribution pension plan in Canada; as a result, the Chair of the Board or PEBA management may be interviewed from time to time or asked to speak about the Plan in general. PEBA management is authorized to be interviewed or give presentations about the Plan in general. In these situations, if a member of PEBA management offers an opinion, the person must explicitly indicate that the opinion does not reflect the opinion of the Board.

In terms of media enquires regarding specific issues, the process regarding Media Enquires is to be used.

Communications Materials

Annual Reports

Section **29** of *The Public Employees Pension Plan Act* requires the Board to produce an annual report in accordance with the provisions of *The Executive Government Administration Act*. This report is prepared by PEBA officials acting on behalf of PEPP and approved by the Board prior to being tabled.

Financial Statements

Annual and quarterly financial statements contain the information required under *The Executive Government Administration Act* and such other information as management may determine as relevant and the Board approves.

Board Governance Documents

The Board maintains a number of governance documents relating to issues of proper oversight and administration of the Plan. Documents such as the Board's Strategic Business Plan and its Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Procedures provide information that demonstrates the Board's commitment to effective governance and are relevant to the Board's stakeholders. As a means of disclosing its governance policies and practices to Plan members and other stakeholders, the Board has placed the following documents on the Plan website:

- CAPSA Pension Plan Governance Self-Assessment Questionnaire;
- Statement of Investment Policies and Goals; and
- PEPB Governance Manual.

Other Board documents to be made available upon request include:

- PEPP Policy Manual (excluding Board minutes);
- Risk Management Plan (current year);
- Risk Management Review (previous year); and
- Periodic Checklist (previous year).

Minutes of Board meetings are confidential. These documents can only be released on the Board's approval.

Release of Other Published Materials and Information

All published materials and information that do not require prior approval of the Board (information sheets, newsletters, correspondence) must receive appropriate PEBA Senior Management approval. News releases are subject to approval by the Chair of the Board as well as the approval processes set out by Executive Council Communications Co-ordination Unit.

Any materials published by PEPP will be available to members at no charge.

Notice and Stakeholder Enquiries

Enquiries regarding publicly available information will be dealt with promptly by the Associate Deputy Minister, PEBA (ADM), or designate. Whenever possible, the enquirer will be referred to the PEPP web site.

Enquiries from the Minister of Finance or Ministers or Members of the Legislative Assembly will generally will be dealt with by the ADM or the ADM's delegate, in accordance with their roles as support or alternate spokespersons.

Other enquiries from stakeholders generally will be directed to the Manager, PEPP or Assistant Director, Pension and Benefit Information Services to evaluate the request, respond directly, or respond through a designate when appropriate, or gather the necessary background information and direct the request to the officer best able to address the request.

Member's Annual Statements

Members receive an annual statement (or as otherwise required by *The Pension Benefits Act, 1992* and *Regulations, 1993*) that provides pension information and projections. A Retire@Ease statement and pension projection is provided annually. The statements are mailed to the most recent addresses for members PEPP has on file. (*The Pension Benefits Act, 1992* section 13, *The Pension Benefits Regulations, 1993* sections 13 through 21)

Media Enquiries

The Associate Deputy Minister, PEBA, or the Board's Executive Secretary will inform the Chair of the Board of any media enquiries with respect to the Board or the Plan. The information provided will include background on the enquiry and the recommended course of action, as well as designate the PEBA official who will respond to the enquiry on the Board's behalf. The Chair will approve or amend PEBA's recommendation.

Background briefings and interviews are subject to prior approval by the Chair of the Public Employees Pension Board and will be developed in collaboration with the Associate Deputy Minister, PEBA and Assistant Director, Pension and Benefit Information Services. Generally, interviews and background briefings will be on-the-record.

Presentations

PEPP conducts member presentations about the Plan. PEPP considers requests for presentations for all areas of the province

Website

The PEPP web information is part of the PEBA website (as the administrator the Plan). The PEPP website is a primary means of providing current and accurate member and public communications. Only published material and information previously approved by an appropriate PEBA official is posted on the website. PEPP Communications staff is responsible for checking the timeliness, accuracy, and general content of information of the website.

Any possible changes or updates proposed for the website will be brought to the attention of the Assistant Director, Pension and Benefit Information Services.

PEPP Member Booklet

Responsibility for creating the PEPP Member Booklet belongs to the Public Employees Benefits Agency. The PEPP Member Booklet provides an overview of the main provisions of PEPP. The PEPP Member booklet may be produced annually (or as required) depending on the number and level of changes to the Plan (*The Pension Benefits Act, 1992* section 13, *The Pension Benefits Regulations, 1993* section 11, *The Public Employees Pension Act, section 56*).

Pension Perspectives

Pension Perspectives is the Plan newsletter PEPP publishes and mails to members and pensioners. It is produced four times per calendar year on a quarterly basis. The newsletter provides general information about the Plan and its operation.

PEPP Talk

PEPP *Talks* are publications with details about specific Plan topics. They are posted on the website, and are available to be mailed to members upon request. These are referenced in the PEPP Member Booklet, *Pension Perspectives*, and member forms. For example, PEPP *Talks* have been created for *Designation of Beneficiary*, *Breakdown of Spousal Relationships*, *Changing Your Investment Options*, among other topics. New PEPP *Talk* publications will be created as need is identified.

Review

The Board will review communications initiatives periodically.

15.04 History

Approval date:	January 26, 2011; November 28, 2012; March 28, 2018
Last review:	March 28, 2018
Next scheduled review:	November 2019