

## **Climate Change Task Force Spring 2016 Report**

### **Background**

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Climate Change Task Force has provided a forum for discussion on the topic of climate change since its creation in April 2008. The Task Force's membership (Appendix A) includes representatives from TAC's councils in order to ensure good exchange of information about climate change-related work being pursued by TAC's volunteer network. Key objectives have been to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of climate change and related issues amongst TAC councils, committees and membership; highlight the economic implications of climate change.
- Identify initiatives towards climate change mitigation and adaptation that are being undertaken by TAC councils and committees and recommend other initiatives that should be addressed.
- Provide leadership on the topic of climate change for the TAC community.
- Ensure that TAC councils and committees are not duplicating work by others within or outside the organization and are collaborating on their initiatives where it is beneficial to do so.
- Advance the understanding of the importance of high quality climatic data.
- Address climate change in TAC products, especially technical guidelines and best practices.

### **Task Force Achievements**

The Task Force mandate and work plan are provided in Appendix B and C, respectively. With the current mandate set to expire in April 2016, it is timely to reflect on the success of the Climate Change Task Force since it was created eight years ago.

Major achievements have included:

- Development of the Climate Change Checklist, which provides guidance to councils and committees about climate change considerations that should be addressed when undertaking TAC projects,
- Publication of more than 20 articles in TAC News (in print and on-line) that featured work of the Task Force or TAC members' initiatives relating to climate-change, and
- Regular presentations to councils and committees to promote the work of the task force, stimulate discussion of climate change, and encourage the inclusion of climate change issues throughout TAC's work.

Perhaps most noteworthy, since the Climate Change Task Force was created, awareness of the topic and related issues has significantly increased across TAC's membership and within the council and committee structure of the association. This is evidenced in the following activities:

- Climate change issues form part of the regular meeting agendas for TAC's councils and committees.

- Major projects undertaken by other councils and committees have addressed climate change mitigation and adaptation directly or indirectly. Recent examples include:
  - Moving Smarter - Exploring Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Solutions for Canadian Cities (Urban Transportation Council)
  - Canadian Guide for Greener Roads (Urban Transportation Council)
  - Climate Change and Road Safety (Chief Engineers' Council)
  - Risk Analysis and Responding to Climate Change (Environment Council)
  - Sustainability Considerations for Bridges Guide (Chief Engineers' Council)
- Between 2008 and 2015, nearly thirty TAC conference sessions focused on climate change. While several were organized by the Task Force in its early years, most recently other councils and committees have organized sessions about topics within their own areas of interest and made connections to climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives. This continues to be the case with events being planned for the 2016 Annual Conference and Exhibitions.
- TAC's new webinar program will present material relating to climate change, as a result of recommendations from other councils and committees. The following webinars are being planned for delivery in 2016:
  - Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Basic Awareness (recommended by the Geometric Design Standing Committee)
  - Climate Change Risk Assessment: Beyond the Storm - A Path to Resiliency (recommended by the Environment Council)
  - Incorporating Climate Change into Engineering Design (recommended by the Geometric Design Standing Committee)

## **FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

Climate change remains a major environmental and socio-economic challenge. Notwithstanding the success of the Climate Change Task Force in delivering on its mandate, there is a continuing need to share information and support TAC members in their work to mitigate the impacts of climate change and adapt infrastructure and services for greater climate-change resiliency. TAC must continue to maintain its profile and demonstrate leadership in this area.

Recognizing:

- The Climate Change Task Force has been successful in fulfilling its mandate in raising awareness of climate change issues and coordinating work on related topics being undertaken by TAC councils and committees,
- The continuing importance of climate change to TAC and its members,
- The need to continue sharing information on the subject across the association, and
- The opportunity to take a more active role in the development of guidelines and best practices for climate change mitigation and adaptation,

The Climate Change Task Force has recommended that the Board of Directors disband the Climate Change Task Force and approve creation of a Joint Subcommittee on Climate Change. Further details on committee membership will be shared with TAC membership once approved by the Board of Directors.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Climate Change Task Force Roster**

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **Climate Change Task Force Mandate (for 3<sup>rd</sup> Term)**

#### **Purpose**

Climate change is an important issue for all Canadians, and the transportation sector both contributes to and is affected by climate change. The Climate Change Task Force, reporting to the Board of Directors, provides leadership and coordination for addressing climate change issues by working with all TAC councils and standing committees to:

- Maintain awareness of developments in climate change and related issues amongst TAC councils, committees and membership.
- Work with TAC councils and committees to build the capacity (critical mass) needed to address greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the potential impacts of a changing climate.
- Monitor progress and lessons learned (barriers and gaps) from the efforts to implement the practices from the Canadian Guide for Greener Roads that apply to climate change.
- Provide a coordinating role on the topic of climate change, to ensure that:
  - TAC councils and committees are not duplicating work by others within or outside the organization,
  - TAC councils and committees collaborate on their initiatives where it is beneficial to do so, and
  - Subject-matter gaps are addressed by offering a climate change perspective for initiatives proposed (sponsored projects).
- Recommend additional projects or activities to the TAC Board of Directors as appropriate.

#### **Membership**

Membership, totalling up to 30, will include representatives from each of TAC's councils, the Board of Directors, one representative from each standing committee, and additional members to ensure sectoral and geographic balance. Members are expected to be active. Members that miss four consecutive meetings will be identified as corresponding and a replacement will be sought to allow others to participate.

#### **Task Force Executive**

**Chair** - The Chair is appointed for a two-year term and is normally succeeded by the Vice Chair. In the event that the Chair position should become vacant for any reason prior to the completion of this term, then the Vice Chair fills the position immediately.

**Vice Chair** - This position is filled by election by the Task Force members and is for a two-year term. In the event that the Vice Chair should become vacant for any reason prior to the completion of this term, then the position is filled by election by the Task Force members and is for the duration of the current two-year term.

**Past Chair** – This position is filled by the immediate previous Chair.

## **Meetings**

The Climate Change Task Force meets in person during the spring and fall meetings and by teleconference every second month between. Additional teleconferences may be scheduled as the need arises at the direction of members.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Climate Change Task Force Revised Work Plan 2014-2016**

#### **1. Key Issues / Purpose**

Work with TAC councils and committees to build the capacity (critical mass) needed to address greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the potential impacts of a changing climate. Provide a coordinating role to support TAC Councils, Committees, and general membership to identify TAC initiatives to develop options and cooperative strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and adapt to the impacts of changing climate and extreme weather events.

#### **2. Focus Areas**

- Adaptation options to a changing climate impacts on the transportation activities and infrastructures.
- Mitigation options to reduce GHG emissions from transportation activities and infrastructures.

#### **3. Topics**

- Technical information / reference material (such as climate scenarios))
- Impact / risk assessment (Enterprise Risk Management)
- Costs – benefits to adapt or mitigate

#### **4. Activities**

1. TAC News articles to maintain awareness of issues and opportunities. Work with Councils, Committees and Task Forces to develop articles related to climate change for each edition of TAC news.
2. Conference sessions or workshops, jointly organized with Councils / Standing Committees or Task Forces, on key topics. Plan to provide 2 sessions/workshops per conference, one on mitigation and one on adaptation.
3. Build capacity or “critical mass” in TAC to enable the work needed to address climate change issues to continue when the Task Force’s 3<sup>rd</sup> mandate is done in 2016.
4. Promote Canadian Guide for Greener Roads publication that can mitigate greenhouse gas emissions or better adapt transportation assets to impacts of changing climate. Identify barriers to implementation or gaps in knowledge. Work with EIMSC.
5. Contribute relevant material to TAC Library and Transportation Intelligence Bulletin, such as examples of best practices, standards, and policies of various transportation agencies and partners for dealing with climate change issues

6. Develop project outlines to respond to gaps found and test needs (value / support) through pooled fund process – willingness to fund.  
(Link to Standing Committees and Councils)
  7. Monitor Climate Change Guidance Document and update where applicable
    - This document is key to ensuring climate change topics/issues are not duplicated, overlooked or left unaddressed in TAC committees
  8. Monitor Climate Change Checklist and update where applicable
    - The checklist is a key starting point to approach climate change for committees
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