PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS CANADA
GÉOMÈTRES PROFESSIONNELS DU CANADA

Report to Membership July 2016

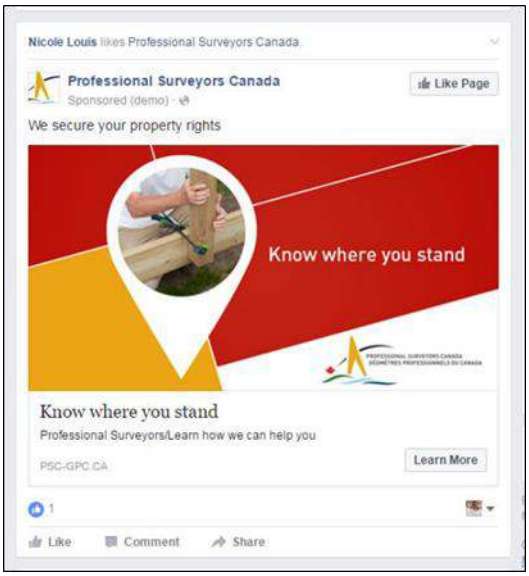
What's the latest?

A lot. Our board and our committees have been working hard on a number of fronts detailed below. These initiatives will go a long way to serving the members and broaden the understanding of the public of why a professional surveyor should be their first choice in any land related development. Please review previous quarterly reports and interim reports as everything is not covered in this issue. This report is a briefing, not a detailed dissertation of all the work of your board and committees. Working with our members across Canada, we are taking a leadership roles on many important issues highlighted in this report.

Promoting Professional Surveyors – The gates are open

Since our last report, the board has approved advertising that has been used on-line under various banners such as CBC News, BBC News, Facebook, Yahoo and other digital channels. Many of you have seen these ads and we can monitor the amount of 'click-throughs' for the ads. An example of a few of them are below. These examples don't show the scrolling, but if you haven't been paying attention lately, this will give you some idea of the context. This is just the beginning but dedicated funds will be needed to keep this momentum going.

Our advertisement has three specific targets, one is home renovations, one at real estate transactions, and one is focused on the construction industry. This is the one that focuses on home renovations.



Webpage – Information Age

The corollary to these ads is having the website set up in such a way that advertising messages, when clicked on by the public, leads to messaging that is easily understood and relatable to the reader. There is no point in having a good ad if the click through result is a boring page, or something irrelevant to the reader. For this

reason we are redesigning our webpage to be more reflective of the target audience and more tailored to messaging coming from the ad campaigns. In the future, more video based advertisements and public information videos about a certain topic like underground infrastructure, or title insurance will be produced for the public consumption to promote understanding of the benefits of a professional surveyor. All this takes time and money and we have spent a lot of both to bring our standards up to par with other associations. Again, this is a lot of work and a big thank you goes out to the committee for seeing these tasks through.

In the fall we hope to have sufficient material and videos to start targeted campaigns that will be even more effective at reaching a specific audience. This advertising would be reflected on the PSC website for click-though and general consumption. This method should yield the most bang for buck of any advertising and promotion campaigns. We hope to have the webpage and the new materials ready by the fall campaign.

Another aspect being explored is a member and companies directory for willing professional surveyors and companies across Canada. This can benefit members, companies and the public by allowing members of the public to both find a qualified surveyor, and click through for the region of their choice, i.e. a map. It is one thing to have a message, it is quite another to be able to easily find a professional surveyor in Glace Bay, or Squamish, or Yellowknife. This would give the public a clear point of assessment for finding qualified professional surveyors.

Advocate this!

The advocacy committee and the PSC board have been working very hard on multiple issues simultaneously with some degree of success. The positon papers on UAVs, Underground Infrastructure, Coordinated Infrastructure, and Title Insurance have either been completed or are still being completed.

The paper on UAVs is still being reworked with an eye to the pending regulations from Transport Canada that are currently under review, with an estimated time frame for implementation mid-2017. Quebec UAV users are observing different service levels from that of the rest of Canada, and it is hoped that the service levels can be normalized. Mutual understanding of the current problems and best course forward which will serve the public interest and the professionals that serve them is our goal. A dedicated group of land surveyors from Quebec have been leading the charge on this initiative and should be commended for their efforts. It is very likely that an interim report on the Transport Canada proposed regulations will be issued in the coming month or so.

The underground utilities issue has consumed a lot of brain space and power in the last three months regarding the proposed Bill S-233, the Underground Infrastructure Safety Enhancement Act and C-46 the Pipeline Safety Act regulations. Position papers for both were submitted to the Senate and the National Energy Board (NEB) respectively. We have received comments back from the NEB C-46 regulations and there was no uptake to the regulations proposed. While disappointing, the requested additions to legislation may be a better fit to Bill S-233. It was mentioned by the CCGA that the CSA Standards may be a suitable place for some of the suggestions proposed. On limited areas this may be the case. However, this is not the case regarding general principles and property rights issues are not dealt with in the CSA standards. It is very likely that the best place for changes now rests with Bill S-233 which should be brought forward in the fall sitting.

Canada Still Third Rate

It is unfortunate that the standards Canada uses for underground infrastructure survey, mapping and land owner notification and registration are not even third rate compared to Germany, Japan and other OECD countries. The sustained transfer of cost and liability from the underground infrastructure companies to the general public and municipalities is mind boggling, especially given the cost to capture and share data is insignificant, barely a rounding error. Other countries have seen the folly of the way Canada operates and have

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changed. Calgary is an example of how things can be better, but the cost is born by the taxpayer and it isn't integrated into the rest of the province. Hopefully Canada will change and lead.

As an example some of you may remember when seatbelts weren't mandatory or drinking and driving was the norm. Some thought it was only that person that was at risk, but that was not the truth and never was. The cost to the health care system alone, along with the trauma to those that dealt with the fallout directly was enough to change our attitude. How is that mindset different from what we are now facing with buried gas lines or electrical cables that are not properly mapped? If a fibre optic cable is hit, which is not rare, and phone service is knocked out for thousands of customers, does the person phoning 911 care about why it was down? Leadership is needed and PSC is leading this charge. We will be working on raising the public's awareness about this issue in the very near future.

Alberta

The Alberta conference was held in April and PSC's Chair attended. For those of you in attendance you were treated to an excellent program. As you are well aware, the surveying sector in Alberta has been hit hard by the downturn; and Saskatchewan and BC are no exception. It is not easy and Professional Surveyors Canada is working to promote professional surveyor services in areas that we are not top of mind such as planning, mapping, GIS and construction. Our efforts over the next period will focus particularly on related fields that professional surveyors already lead in and can expand further.

ACLS Conference

The ACLS conference was held in Edmonton in early May. The conference was well attended as the topics for discussion were pertinent to the industry, however as far as regional voices being heard from the cadastral sector the scope was limited.
PSC's Chair along with the Alberta representative attended the meeting and made a brief presentation. The first ever joint meeting of the Canadian Council on Geomatics (CCOG) with the presidents of the associations and the PSC chair was held. The discussion was very good and much was learned from one another on issues such as training standards, implications of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and initiatives to help the public understand the expertise of professional surveyors. It is hoped that a continued dialogue can be had between PSC and government agencies to allow government to understand the important role the professional surveyors, private and public sector, have in our shared system.

Geo Alliance

No teleconferences were held in this quarter for Geo Alliance. The group is still forming its mission and we look forward to liaising further once a clear path forward has been chosen.

Talk with me, not at me

Our communications are continuing to improve as we hope you can tell. Good communication starts with having one's mouth closed for the majority, and we have been taking this advice. That is to say, we have been having conversations with members and interest groups across Canada to find out what is important to you and your businesses and your experience. From this dialogue we try to incorporate your goals with the messaging that is being sent out in our advertising and our advocacy to government and the public. This has been a major focus of our changes at PSC the last half year and we hope it is showing. We strive to be quick with our responses to you and we hope you see that.

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Communicating with the public and government require a different approach and we have tried to simplify issues so that they can be easily understood. An example of this is the advertising being used currently. The current initiatives are focused on homeowners and land developers that would use a professional surveyor. As seen and read by a professional surveyor, you may not think the format is familiar to our usually technical approach. This is done on purpose and is part of our change in approach to describing complex issues in a way that is more relatable to the public.

Foreign Trained Professionals

The Canadian Board of Examiners for Professional Surveyors is seeking funding from government to correlate better mechanisms for foreign trained professionals and students. This initiative is supported by PSC and it is hoped that a common standard can be achieved across Canada. This is a multi-year initiative and will require input at the provincial levels extensively. If you would like more information on this, please speak to your local association or your CBEPS representative.

Public Protection

Recent events have brought to mind the need for a transfer away from continuing professional development models (CPD), to peer practice review models (PPR). Although mandatory CPD has shown some positive effects, the metrics for measurement as a level of continued competency are difficult to prove. PPR systems allow for better ongoing measurement and therefore protection to the public, and are currently the best model above mandatory CPD. PPR models exist at the ACLS, have been trialed in various jurisdictions, but have not been taken to broader integration. The Chair believes this is not in the professionals best interests and more discussion on this topic will be led by PSC in the coming months.

Special Note

In the interim report, published in May of 2016, the Chair of PSC took it upon himself to make an assumption about the involvement of RICS in Canada. This assumption should not have been made and was put forth in error. If anyone was offended by the comments please accept the Chair's sincerest apology. Further, if any professional surveyor thinks that it would be advantageous to join RICS, please feel free to do so. It was never the intent to imply that the joining RICS was not to be sought, but rather a concern to the timing of events currently under way.

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Version française à venir.

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