PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS CANADA
GÉOMÈTRES PROFESSIONNELS DU CANADA

Report to Membership January 2017

Where did 2016 go?

2016 was a very busy and productive year. We have made significant progress on several fronts, for our members and the public. Our activities are important first steps toward broadening the public's understanding of the professional surveyor's role as an agent and advisor, and furthering our professional responsibility to advocate in the public's interest on issues and policies of national scope. We briefly summarize some of these accomplishments below, and address our priorities for building on these initiatives in the coming year. It's all good stuff, and we hope you remain curious and set your expectations and involvement high. Our new website has some of the documentation of the work we have been doing, but to get a full appraisal it is best to check with your local representative or with the staff on everything that is happening.

Building Public Awareness

Rolling out our public outreach communication strategy was a key initiative of 2016. PSC ran two campaigns, spring and autumn. These consisted of banner ads on several sites such as CBC News, BBC Canada, Yahoo, social media platforms such as Facebook, and others. Targeted outreach marketing through social media provides a very effective and economical avenue of communication compared to traditional print or broadcast mediums. Our initial campaigns targeted three areas where land surveyors provide advice and assistance of benefit to the public: - home renovation, real estate transactions, and construction. The theme is "Know where you stand", coupled with a message such as "Professional surveyors secure your property rights" and a link "Learn how we can help you" to the PSC web page.

Both campaigns were very successful. In total the two, six week, campaigns generated over twenty million viewings of the three ads, and over thirty-five thousand click-throughs to the PSC website. The response to the messaging has been positive, and additional ads are being prepared for a second spring run in April of 2017. This is an important first step in our initiatives and the messaging will be reinforced throughout new public awareness initiatives. The new PSC website is reflective of the changes that were needed and allowed the messaging to be heard by members of the public.

Working with marketing professionals has greatly improved our messaging and effectiveness. We have distributed the banner ads both static and animated to each association so that the ads can be used again and again, to provide a harmonized message. There are many subtle things in these ads and we hope you appreciate the effort that has gone into developing the message. Messaging in the coming year on matters of public interest will use these concepts as its base.

CONTENT IS KING

If 'the medium is the message' as the famous saying goes, content and the language to deliver that content are the elephants in the room. In the coming year we will be developing content from videos, to quizzes, to info-text, and info-graphs, to draw the reader/viewer to their message. We have a tremendous advantage in that we have great messages about all the benefits that the public realizes from our professional surveying members. Our goal then is to get that message out in a format that the average person wants to see. We want your phone to ring or the emails to come to you, so that the public can realize the benefits of professional surveyors and their training and see the advocacy on their behalf.

SHARED COST ADVERTISING

PSC was asked to examine possible costs for shared development of content and media buys. Costs for media buys would be significantly lower the larger the spread of the buy. As well, once content was created it could be used over and over again with less and less unit cost. A proposal was sent out to each association to gauge interest in both standardizing the messaging and sharing the cost of content development and media channel buys. The proposal explained what an approximate one-time cost for content creation and ad runs on TV or radio would be. Unfortunately at this time there was not significant enough interest so no additional content will be produced or distributed under this plan. Provinces that have expressed an interest will have a cost share of 50/50 with PSC. It should be noted that at a president's forum, there was considerable misunderstanding of the intent of the program, and this, with more explanation may have to be revisited.

A Harmonized National Brand

We will continue in 2017 to seek a Trademark of a harmonized designation for professional surveyors in Canada. The standard designation P. Surv which resonates with the public that also ties back to each jurisdictional designation would greatly simplify communication and benefit both the practitioners and the public. We are currently working with the Saskatchewan Land Surveyors Association that has expressed concern over any changes. We are confident any issues can be resolved in good faith. Many professional surveyors across Canada have contacted PSC to express support for this initiative and inquired as to its implementation dates. We are not there yet, but we hope to obtain agreements in the coming year. This initiative will take leadership at the national and local levels.

PSC Corporate Office / Bureau principal :
101B – 900 chemin Dynes Road
Ottawa, ON K2C 3L6
45° 22' 10.45" N 75° 42' 16.50" W 82m elev.
Phone / Tél : 613-695-8333 Toll free/Sans frais 1-800-241-7200

Speaking to the Issues

Underground infrastructure was a major topic in 2016, driven by the call for public input into two key federal acts; Bill S-233, the Underground Infrastructure Safety Enhancement Act (reintroduced to the Senate as Bill S-229 under the current session), and Bill C-46, the Pipeline Safety Act Regulations. PSC submitted position papers to Senate and the NEB on both bills, making several recommendations directed toward improving public safety, worker safety and protecting landowner property rights. Key recommendations include:

1. All new infrastructure should be surveyed and mapped by a professional surveyor at the time of installation. This is the only way to ensure that installations conform to design, eliminate encroachments, and a reliable, repeatable and relatable system can be created.
2. A common national standard for the mapping of all underground infrastructure surveys should be established and all surveys of underground infrastructure should be integrated into master map data sets which can be openly shared and accessed by anyone planning a ground disturbance.
3. All underground infrastructure placed on private lands should have an easement plan of the area affected, registered in the corresponding provincial registry, First Nation Land Registry or federal crown registry.
4. All new installations should conform to a minimum buried depth of cover of 1 metre except in the case of bedrock which should be no less than 0.6 of a meter.

Greater detail and supporting arguments are provided in the position papers which can be accessed on the PSC website. Throughout the last year PSC has been involved in extensive discussions on both bills with municipal representatives, utility agencies, the Canadian Common Ground Alliance (CCGA), and with representatives of Natural Resources Canada and other government agencies. As part of our outreach process, PSC is now a member of the CCGA. PSC will continue to advocate for the survey and mapping of underground infrastructure, and will take an active role in the development of common interchange standards for the survey and mapping of underground infrastructure in the interest of public safety, worker safety and the land owners right to know. Progress updates on this important advocacy issue will be highlighted in future quarterly reports. If you are interested in this topic please contact the office. A special thank you to all the members of the committee and private members across Canada that sent in examples of problems and improvement suggestions.

2017 Surveyors Conference Ottawa

If you have been living under a rock for the past while, you may not have heard about the joint meeting of the AOLS – OAGQ – ACLS. This is going to be a big fun event so if you haven't registered yet, here is the link: http://www.surveyors2017.ca/ . The program is available on the same site and registration is open. Fees increase from February 12, so act now. Air Canada has a seat sale in January as well, so no excuses! This shared initiative by these associations is a lot of work and showcases what can be done if we work together.

2017 Land Pro Conference

The 2017 LANDPRO conference is on Tuesday March 7, 2017 at the Paramount Conference Centre in Woodbridge, Ontario and the link to the registration is here http://www.landproconference.com. This one day conference program looks very informative and counts to many of the CPD point systems.

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2017 – It Is Your Future

Looking forward to 2017, PSC will build on our past successes and expand our advocacy on multiple fronts. Here are some of the things we will be working on, and we hope that you have some time to volunteer for an area of interest.

Advocacy for Professionals
Following up on the success of 2016, PSC will continue to create content and promote the use of professional surveyors and their special set of skills to the public, government and industry. It is a great message to bring and we look forward to enhancing the message so that more Canadians come to realize the exceptional value of the individual practitioners. We will be working with our marketing team to deliver messages that are plain spoken and easily understood by the public.

Advocacy for Underground Infrastructure Issues
Following up on 2016, the PSC board will be advocating for underground infrastructure mapping, and related standards. We have been, and will continue, to reach out to related groups such as GeoAlliance, universities, the CCGA etc. to collaborate on this important issue. Underground infrastructure mapping is a large topic and select projects are being considered to advance the causes and issues highlighted in our position paper.

The Message is Heard
Advocacy and promotion of member services only works if the target audiences actually absorb the message. Content creation and testing messaging takes significant time and resources but is worth every penny. Advertising our member's services and specific issues will be a big part of the dedicated human and financial resources in 2017. Working with an experienced marketing company has allowed us to be measurably more effective in both languages.

Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Working Group
Significant changes are coming to the registration and compliance standards for UAV operations. Transport Canada has posted new guidelines on its website and these are open for comment. We anticipate the roll out of the new guidelines and rules to take effect by late summer. SFOC applications are expected to drop significantly with the adoption of the new rules. If you haven't been paying attention to this issue, and you use or expect to use a UAV in your practice, take note now. PSC will monitor and try to advise the members as soon as new standards are adopted.

Horizon and Vendor Advertising
The Horizon newsletter that has been electronically distributed once a week will drop to once per month in 2017 as a trial. Advertising revenue from the Horizon and web page were not significant enough to continue the effort, so the contract with the provider was terminated. In 2017 we will be trying a few new approaches to see what works. Ad space in the non-primary web pages will be tested. If our own content pages from campaigns can be integrated to the website with advertising, this may be done to diversify revenue.

It's a Big Country - Touching Base Regionally
PSC board members were active across the country in 2016, and 2017 will be no different. It is important to let your representative know of issues that are important locally so that collaboration can be done to find solutions to common problems. On the other side of things, active participation regionally is key to communicate PSC activities to our members and to receive input regarding member concerns. The chair or regional representative will be at each provincial meeting and national meetings such as GeoAlliance, CCGA etc. Reporting for each will be in the subsequent quarterly report.

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PLIC
The Professional Liability Insurance Committee will continue to provide member resources regarding insurance and loss prevention. The committee will be working with the PSC board to enhance services in the coming year.

Communicating More Effectively
Our PSC web page has been substantially re-worked to make the information more relevant, accessible, and informative for the public. The website needed to be more consistent with the messaging coming from our public communication outreach campaigns. In the coming year more and more content will be added to allow for better understanding of the issues that you see in your practice every day. Look for more improvements including a member profile section and an interactive map registry of member firms.

Work is Rewarded
This is your association. We need your support and participation. The issues we are working to address are many, and of fundamental importance to maintaining the trust of professional land surveyors in the public's mind. Change happens whether a person or professional wants to participate or not. As professionals we must lead, or change will happen that will not benefit the public or the professional. We invite you to get involved at the board or committee level and lead the changes that are both necessary and inevitable.

If you would like to get involved with any of the initiatives that PSC is working on or have any feedback, please contact us at info@psc-gpc.ca.

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