PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS CANADA
GÉOMÈTRES PROFESSIONNELS DU CANADA

Report to Membership April 2018

New Year

2018 is off to a busy start as we continue our efforts to broaden the public's understanding of the professional surveyor's role as an agent, advisor, and advocate for the public's interest both on the home front, and on issues and policies of national and international scope. Below is a brief summary of some of our current efforts.

Building Public Awareness

Our Public Relations Committee has as its focus communication outreach to increase the publics' awareness of professional land surveyors and the important work that professional land surveyors do on behalf of the public.

Three key audiences have been identified, the public, the media and the various levels of government. All three groups require targeted messaging designed to best relate to them.

Virtually all our professional land surveying associations have identified the need for communications strategies and initiatives to "tell our story". A national effort is required, and PSC is leading the discussion towards a national strategy with professional land surveying leadership across the country at AGMs, communications workshops, and in leadership groups like the Presidents Forum. In recent years, improving public awareness of the role and contribution of land surveying professionals has been identified as a strategic action item by all the legislated professional land surveying associations in Canada. The Association of Ontario Land Surveyors has recently ranked "marketing" of the profession as their number one strategic priority. The report on the July 2017 marketing workshop hosted by the AOLS, attended by representatives from eight of the eleven Canadian professional land survey associations plus Professional Surveyors Canada, strongly endorses the formation of a national working group on public relations.

The discussion is an important one, but action is also required. PSC is leading the way by actively implementing communications strategies directed toward improving public awareness of the profession and raising the profile of professional land surveyors. Key elements of our communications strategy include the following:

- **Social Media Messaging**

Not too surprising that when people are looking for information today they go to the Internet! PSC executed two internet social media messaging campaigns in 2016 and 2017. Each was of 6-8 weeks duration and consisted of banner ads on internet news feeds and social media platforms such as Yahoo, Google and Facebook. The ads were directed toward home builders, home purchasers, and home renovators. The theme was "Know Where You Stand" and each ad provided a brief tag line on how professional land surveyors reduce risk for land owners, followed by a link to our PSC website for more information.

These two campaigns generated over 40,000 visits to the PSC website for more information, in just 12-16 weeks, at an average cost of about $1.35 a visit, clearly demonstrating the potential for effective public outreach through the use of social media tools.

A third social media campaign is in the planning stages for release in late spring 2018. To this end, the PSC public relations committee is currently reviewing our 2017 results, with a view toward expanding our audience, focusing our efforts on the most effective social media platforms, reducing the cost per visit, and expanding our active broadcast messaging on platforms such as Linkedin and Twitter.

- **PSC Website:**

We are continually updating our web site to make the content more current, more informative, and more resonant with the public. Key features have been added to build upon the messaging contained in our public relations campaigns, and to present comment and opinion from the land surveyor's perspective on government policy initiatives impacting real property rights such as the pending federal acts relating to underground infrastructure.

The purpose of our website is to inform visitors to really see and understand the impact professional surveyors have on our society and the need to involve them in decision making at the planning stages. In this respect, we are pleased to announce that our new News and Current Issues section has been launched. The idea is to bring current issues to the forefront and to highlight how surveyors can help solve these issues.

Recently there have been a number of articles concerning people who did not own what they thought they did when they purchased their properties, and these articles are featured in the "Why you need to consult a Professional Land Surveyor before buying a home". There is also a section explaining Title Insurance and how it does not replace a survey, but rather complements it.

The website is a work in progress and you can expect to see many changes and improvements as the year goes on.

- **Video & White Boards:**

Work has begun on the production of short story videos and white board presentations to imbed into our website and post on various social media platforms to further our messaging. Video and white board media allow more detailed story lines to be presented in a way that is both informative and entertaining. Our first white board scripts is currently in development on the topic "Why every home owner should consult a professional land surveyor when purchasing a property".

We will also be releasing a new round of advertising across the jurisdictions in various media outlets and will build upon what we have already done to promote the surveying profession. Last year's advertising campaign was seen by more than 4 million people and generated over 40 thousand visits to our website.

- **Media Kits:**

In the past year there have been numerous stories on national media concerning home buyers who have foregone the cost and time of a survey, only to discover encroachment issues with neighboring properties, or that the fence lines they saw when viewing the property do not define their actual property boundaries, or even that the house they thought they were buying is not on the parcel they purchased! Several recent cases of note can be viewed in our "Home Buyer Beware" section, under the "News & Links" drop down on the PSC home page.

A frequent feature of these stories is that the reporters covering the story turn to realtors or lawyers for comment or explanation, rather than to a professional land surveyor or a professional land surveying association.

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To address this communication gap PSC is developing a "media kit" that can be adapted by each professional land surveying association for distribution to key media outlets in their jurisdiction. The media kit initiative has two goals. Firstly, the development of material that explains to news organizations in each jurisdiction why they should contact professional land surveying associations for expertise on stories dealing with boundary and encroachment issues. Secondly, the development of tools and contact information for professional land surveying associations to facilitate a consistent approach to media management and provide public relations messaging that is consistent across the country.

Effective media management is a key element in effective public relations. The recognition of the role that professional land surveyors play in protecting the public that comes from reference in media stories involving boundary issues conveys a credibility that resonates broadly and offers national exposure for minimal cost.

Underground Infrastructure

PSC continues to work diligently to advocate for the inclusion of amendments to strengthen the hazard reduction and public protection provisions of federal bills S229 and C-69. We are advocating for the inclusion of provisions and regulations requiring the as built survey of all new underground installations, the registration of easements describing their location, and the implementation of mapping standards supporting open and publicly accessible mapping of all new underground infrastructure installations. We continue to dialogue with federal members of parliament, members of the senate, the Canadian Common Ground Alliance, and the utility industry on the critical importance of these measures to public safety and effective underground infrastructure management.

Working toward a Harmonized National Brand; P. Surv

The discussion towards establishing a harmonized national brand also continues in partnership and collaboration with our various professional land survey sister associations.

Discussions with the Saskatchewan Lands Surveyors association are advancing and a draft co-existence Agreement that would resolve any conflicts with the Saskatchewan act is in the final stages of review by our respective councils and lawyers. Once harmony with Saskatchewan is achieved, a final round of consultation will be required to ensure consensus prior to filing a copyright application. The copyright process is itself a long process, and we expect it will be another year yet before we obtain the P.Surv copyright designation for exclusive use of professional land surveyors.

Associated with the P.Surv initiative and the national brand, we have recently purchased the Psurv.com and Psurv.ca domains for PSC use.

PLIC

The PSC Professional Liability Insurance Committee (PLIC) held their bi-annual meeting in Ottawa March 4-5. The next bulletin on retirement is undergoing final review with May as the anticipated publication date. PLIC's insurance broker, Gallagher is presenting a seminar on Retirement and Sales of Business Insurance at the Alberta Land Surveyors' Association and the Association of Newfoundland Land Surveyors AGMs in April. Key discussions at the meeting included new insurance coverage extensions, performance of an adjuster, following up with insureds regarding their claims experience, scanning of surveyor files, and claims statistics. Currently there are 82 open claims. Claims are down from 42 reported claims in 2016 to 21 claims for 2017.

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As always, members of the PLIC are available to you for questions – Dave Gurnsey, Chair, Derek French, Director Liaison, members Derik DeWolfe, Kevin Swabey, Michael Kidston, and Ria van der Veen, Secretary, PLIC.

International Consultation & Collaboration

PSC representatives continue to pursue international consultation and collaboration by attending conferences where appropriate and economic to do so. Two recent examples.

- Michael Thompson attended the Gita Conference in Phoenix in March which was held in conjunction with the CGA Excavation Safety Conference. The topics were largely focused on underground mapping and new developments in the world regarding this. Of particular note is that France has made a presidential decree to survey all buried infrastructure.
  http://geospatial.blogs.com/geospatial/2018/03/french-national-initiative-to-map-all-urban-subsurface-critical-infrastructure-by-2019.html
  Recent studies show a positive cost benefit ratio for mapping underground infrastructure. A 2004 University of Toronto study states $3.41 of benefit for every $1.00 invested in mapping UI (study funded by Ontario Sewer and Watermain Contractors Association).

- Gabriel Arancibia and Daniel Roberge both attended the 19th Edition of the Land and Poverty Conference held at the World Bank headquarters in Washington DC also held in March. The theme for this conference was "*Land Governance in an Interconnected World*". At least twenty three percent (23 %) of the presentations were directly related to the survey profession and the majority of the topics involved GIS, mapping, data collection, boundaries, geospatial management system, land property issues, land registration, land restitution, land tenure, cadastre, surveying land ownership, etc. The full program and most of the presentations' material are available online.

Of additional note, PSC is also evaluating participation in FIG, and a possible MOU with the regulating body of the professional land surveyors of Spain, as part of international initiatives championed by PSC board member Gabriel Arancibia.

Housekeeping Notes

It is with sadness that we announce that Sonia Simoneau, our administrative assistant has left our staff for a new position in another firm. She will be missed. Our two remaining full time staff members, Ria and Helen, are both able and willing to take on some additional tasks to keep things running smoothly. In this light we have decided to not fill the administrative assistant position.

This in turn has meant that our office space needs are reduced by one full work station and as such we have successfully sublet half of our existing office space. Please note that we remain in the same location and our mailing address has not changed.

We continue to strive to serve our membership in the most cost effective and responsible way possible.

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Advertise With Professional Surveyors Canada

Last year PSC took over the production of the Horizon Newsletter and this has been quite successful. Past issues of Horizon are available on our website under the tag “Member’s Area”.

There are advertising spots on the newsletter to help raise revenue. Horizon is distributed to over 2500 readers. Advertising is accepted in French, English or bilingual formats. Should you know anyone who may be interested in marketing their products or services with PSC, please contact info@psc-gpc.ca for the ad specifications and pricing information.

All questions, queries and suggestions can be sent to info@psc-gpc.ca.

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