

Policy title

PEO Communications and Media Relations Policy

Statement of principles

This policy is guided by PEO's principles of accountability, integrity and professionalism in our communications with stakeholders and the media.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to ensure PEO's messages and image are presented accurately, consistently and in accordance with the regulator's position on matters, where Council and/or PEO's executive leadership team have taken a position.

Application and Scope

This is the communications and media relations policy of Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO). It governs PEO's authorized representatives/spokespersons (the CEO/registrar as well as the president/chair or their designates) and communications staff in their dealings with:

- a) Representation and outreach; and
- b) Media requests, responses and interviews.

Definitions

Authorized Representatives: PEO's representatives who are authorized to speak on behalf of the regulator are the CEO/registrar and the president/chair or their designates.

Representation and Outreach: All communications delivered by PEO's authorized representatives to external and internal stakeholder groups, including speeches, presentations, letters, emails, social media posts, etc.

Policy Statement

Representation and Outreach

Authorized Representatives

The president/chair and the CEO/registrar are the authorized representatives for PEO. When the president is not the same person as the chair of Council, these individuals will consult with each other and with the CEO/registrar to determine who will be the official representative for a specific event/circumstance.

The CEO/registrar, or the staff member they designate, represents two areas: PEO's operations and the specific roles assigned to the registrar under the *Professional Engineers Act* and its regulations.

Where Council and/or PEO's executive leadership team have taken a position on a matter, those speaking on behalf of the organization will reflect that position in any public comments.

Authorized representatives are expected to coordinate with PEO communications staff to develop appropriate messaging and materials for presentations and outreach opportunities. If the

representative has developed messaging/materials on their own, they are strongly encouraged to provide these to communications staff in advance for review and approval.

Engineering Dimensions – President’s Message

The president may use the President’s Message in *Engineering Dimensions* magazine to communicate PEO news and Council activities. These messages will typically be drafted by PEO’s communications staff and reviewed by the president; if drafted by the president, messages will be reviewed/approved by PEO’s communications staff to ensure consistency with PEO positions. Communications staff may propose revisions to, or reject, any *Engineering Dimensions* submission—including the President’s Message—if the submission is inconsistent with PEO positions or any approved policies, for length or if it exposes the regulator to legal or reputational risk.

Media Relations:

The media is the pipeline to the public for information; PEO recognizes this and operates transparently, with integrity and in a timely manner in its dealings with journalists. This ensures PEO’s message is more likely to be communicated accurately and a reporter’s story to be balanced.

Authorized Spokespersons

The president/chair and the CEO/registrar are the spokespersons for PEO. When the president is not the same person as the chair of Council, these individuals will consult with each other and with the CEO/registrar to determine who will be the media spokesperson.

Contact with news media is managed and coordinated by PEO’s communications staff. Councillors contacted by media to provide comment on a matter pertaining to PEO must notify PEO’s communications staff of the request before responding.

Responses to media and public discussion of PEO matters should only be made through the authorized spokespersons.

Authorized spokespersons must provide the agreed PEO position on matters where Council and/or PEO’s executive leadership team have taken a position.

Communications staff may respond to media inquiries of a factual nature to provide approved background information but do not act as authorized spokespersons on substantive matters. Communications staff will assist and support those authorized to speak for the organization, as required.

Media Inquiries

The communications team is the primary contact for all media inquiries. Communications:

- Verifies a media query is from a legitimate media outlet;
- Follows up with journalist to verify their query and deadline and, where appropriate, requests media questions in writing;
- Provides background to reporters (following approval from leadership);
- Issues news releases as necessary;

- Maintains a media list of contacts and email addresses;
- Monitors all Ontario media for PEO-related stories and distributes clippings to the leadership group as appropriate;
- Liaises to arrange media interviews;
- Helps prepare authorized spokespersons for interviews;
- Briefs PEO leadership on media inquiries;
- Works with appropriate PEO staff to draft responses to media questions (to be approved by leadership); and
- Assists with training authorized spokespersons (or their designates) on dealing with the media.

Contacts

The manager, communications and media relations and/or the director, communications are the key media contacts.

PEO staff and councillors should forward media inquiries or opportunities to respond to media reports pertaining to PEO to the manager, communications and media relations and/or director, communications.

Outreach

In addition to responding to media inquiries, PEO also carries out, as appropriate, proactive media relations outreach. To ensure PEO's message is communicated, the communications team:

- Contacts key reporters or media outlets suggesting stories that may be of interest;
- Issues press releases as necessary;
- Writes, pitches and distributes articles to media outlets as appropriate; and
- Contacts reporters/editors when an error in fact has been made to ensure a correction or clarification is published.

Related Documents and Forms

Governance Manual

Social Media Policy

Councillor Code of Conduct

Monitoring and Review

Approved by: PEO Council

Approval date: June 20, 2025

Effective Date: June 20, 2025

Last Update: June 20, 2025