

# INTENTIONS PAPER



ENGINEERS &  
GEOLOGICISTS  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

## **Development of Engineers and Geoscientists BC's Organizational Climate Change Strategy: Proposed Climate Actions**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- INTRODUCTION ..... 3**
- BACKGROUND..... 3**
- PURPOSE ..... 4**
- PROPOSED INITIATIVES AT-A-GLANCE ..... 4**
- PROPOSED INITIATIVES FOR ENGAGEMENT ..... 4**
- CLIMATE CHANGE INFORMATION PORTAL REDESIGN ..... 4**
- SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE)..... 4**
- NEW RESPONSIBLE PRACTICE PROGRAM (RPP) FOR REGISTRANT FIRMS ..... 5**
- OTHER POTENTIAL INITIATIVES ..... 7**
- OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEEDBACK..... 7**
- APPENDIX A: EXISTING PROGRAMS..... 8**
- THE EXISTING CLIMATE CHANGE INFORMATION PORTAL..... 8**
- THE EXISTING CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) PROGRAM ..... 8**
- THE EXISTING PPMP PROGRAM..... 8**

# INTENTIONS PAPER

## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

Engineers and Geoscientists BC is responsible for overseeing the practice of professional engineering and geoscience in the province of British Columbia pursuant to the *Professional Governance Act (PGA)*. The *PGA* establishes key responsibilities for Engineers and Geoscientists BC, including to:

- Establish, monitor and enforce standards of professional ethics amongst registrants; and
- Promote and enhance the ability of its registrants to respond and adapt to changes in practice environments, advances in technology and other emerging issues.

These responsibilities support Engineers and Geoscientists BC's statutory duty to serve and protect the public interest as it relates to the practice of professional engineering and geoscience.

As the effects of climate change continue to be a growing concern and carry major potential ramifications to public health and the environment, Engineers and Geoscientists BC has taken a leadership role in establishing, monitoring, and enforcing standards of practice, conduct, and competence pertaining to climate change in order to meet its responsibilities under the *PGA*.

In addition to requirements stemming from the *PGA*, Engineers and Geoscientists BC is also motivated by feedback received from registrants at its 2024 Annual Conference. At the conference, when asked what topics Engineers and Geoscientists BC should further engage on, surveyed registrants selected "Climate Change and Sustainability" as the top response.

Engineers and Geoscientists BC presently offers climate change and sustainability-related support to registrants by hosting continuing education sessions, providing dedicated staff support, developing professional practice guidelines that provide guidance for specific areas of practice, and establishing an advisory group focused on climate change and sustainability.

Through its [2022-2027 Strategic Plan](#), Engineers and Geoscientists BC has also committed to developing a strategy detailing actions the regulatory body can take to address climate change.

To deliver on its preexisting commitments and responsibilities, Engineers and Geoscientists BC is now developing an Organizational Climate Change Strategy (OCCS) that will outline both internally and externally- focussed actions for the regulatory body to undertake. By highlighting specific and climate-focussed initiatives, the OCCS will build on previous work undertaken by Engineers and Geoscientists BC in development of its [Climate Change Action Plan](#), which laid out the regulatory body's climate goals and broad areas of potential action.

Through the OCCS, Engineers and Geoscientists BC intends to further enhance the ability of registrants to respond to climate change in their professional practice through guidance for registrants to better enable meaningful consideration of climate change in professional practice. The regulatory body will also lead by example by adopting internal actions intended to improve its own operations.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this intentions paper is to provide an overview of three registrant focussed initiatives that Engineers and Geoscientists BC is proposing to implement. The document will provide context on how each initiative was derived, how it aligns with other organizational priorities, and what feedback has been received to date. Note that there are many other initiatives outside of the ones discussed in this paper that will be included in the OCCS. The initiatives in this paper were selected due to their external focus and the expected value of registrant feedback in shaping them.

This document is intended for registrants (both individuals and firms) of Engineers and Geoscientists BC to help inform them of proposed changes to existing programs and services. A survey will be available from April 3 to 17, 2025 to collect feedback from registrants on these initiatives. Alternatively, registrants can provide their written feedback to [sustainability@egbc.ca](mailto:sustainability@egbc.ca) until April 17.

## PROPOSED INITIATIVES AT-A-GLANCE

Three proposed initiatives form the core topics for engagement and are the focus of this document:

- **Climate Change Information Portal Redesign:** Redesign and expand the Climate Change Information Portal.
- **Sustainability-Related Continuing Education (CE):** Provide more avenues to account for climate and sustainability related Continuing Education (CE) sessions.
- **New Responsible Practice Program (RPP) for Registrant Firms:** Create a new voluntary program for registrant firms that asks them to provide documentation in their Professional Practice Management Plan (PPMP) to demonstrate how they are addressing social responsibility issues, including addressing and responding to climate change.

## PROPOSED INITIATIVES FOR ENGAGEMENT

### CLIMATE CHANGE INFORMATION PORTAL REDESIGN

Engineers and Geoscientists BC is exploring a redesign and expansion of the [Climate Change Information Portal](#). This could include a reorganization of the existing portal by industry/sector, and the addition of content on trans-sectoral considerations (e.g., leadership, communication, equity, diversity and inclusion [EDI] and Reconciliation). The new design would allow registrants to more easily access relevant information, and enable staff to easily add information as it becomes available. It would also be able to host an expanded set of tools, information and resources.

Appendix A contains additional information on the existing state of the Climate Change Information Portal.

### SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE)

Engineers and Geoscientists BC proposes to respond to demand from registrants (identified through multiple engagement avenues), to expand the climate change and sustainability-related CE sessions available to registrants. Both free and paid session offerings may be expanded.

The regulatory body proposes to include a Regulatory Learning Module topic related to climate change and/or sustainability every four (4) years, and aims to develop climate change and sustainability related CE session content that matches the needs of registrants from various sectors and practice areas. This could include establishing CE sessions to mirror the redesigned Climate Change Information Portal.

Examples of relevant content to form the basis of new climate change related sessions may include:

- Basics of climate change
- Case studies and lessons learnt from various sectors/areas of practice
- Climate vulnerability and risk assessments
- How to apply Engineers and Geoscientists BC's Professional Practice Guidelines – Sustainability
- How to integrate Indigenous knowledges and perspectives into climate considerations
- How to design and implement low-carbon and climate-resilient solutions that are equitable and inclusive
- Climate change adaptation and decarbonization strategies relevant to different sectors/areas of practice
- Nature-based solutions
- Life-cycle analysis
- Building the business case for low-carbon, climate-resilient solutions
- New low-carbon and adaptive technologies, tools and practices
- Climate change communication strategies
- Environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) best practices
- Regulatory updates (including codes and standards)
- Climate change impacts on various sectors

Appendix A contains additional information on the existing state of the Continuing Education Program.

## NEW RESPONSIBLE PRACTICE PROGRAM (RPP) FOR REGISTRANT FIRMS

The purpose of the proposed Responsible Practice Program is to implement action #10 of Engineers and Geoscientists BC's Climate Change Action Plan (i.e., *provide firm registrants with guidance and/or training on adapting to climate change and/or reducing greenhouse gas emissions*) while advancing the Social Responsibility imperative outlined in its Strategic Plan. The program is proposed to build on the existing mandatory Regulation of Firms Program as a voluntary "add-on" rather than imposing additional requirements. It seeks to position Engineers and Geoscientists BC to positively influence the practice of engineering and geoscience in support of climate action, sustainability, EDI and Truth and Reconciliation—the four components of its Social Responsibility imperative.

Registrant firms opting-in to the voluntary program would provide more details in their PPMP submissions about policies and procedures they have in place for these four social responsibility components. Examples of additional documents a registrant firm could submit to demonstrate their social responsibility initiatives may include:

- Organizational carbon footprint/GHG inventory
- GHG emissions metrics and targets, and measures implemented to reduce them
- Any climate related strategy, action plan, policies, etc.

- Organizational initiatives or documents where EDI considerations are being incorporated
- Organizational initiatives or documents where Truth and Reconciliation considerations are being incorporated
- Any public reporting on sustainability (e.g., corporate ESG reporting)
- Any policies or procedures that demonstrate how the registrant firm has incorporated sustainable solutions into their operations (i.e. in projects, designs, recruitment, procurement, business practices, employment practices, engagement process, etc.)
- Any programs or training available to individual registrants working at the registrant firm, to keep them updated with sustainable best practices
- Actual and potential impacts of climate-related risks and opportunities on the registrant firm's operations and strategy, how the risks are identified, assessed and managed (including metrics and targets)
- How the registrant firm's board oversees climate-related risks and opportunities and what are the management role(s) relative to climate change and sustainability

The program intends to also build upon the *Professional Practice Guidelines – Sustainability*, which cover the three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social. The Guidelines also address key sustainability issues like climate change, Truth and Reconciliation, and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

Several measures have been proposed to support and/or recognize registrant firms that opt in to this program, with the goal of ensuring the program is a value-add for participating registrant firms. These may be expanded in the future in order to promote broader uptake from firms. These measures could include:

#### **Engineers and Geoscientists BC Support**

- Communicating and explaining early on what the benefits of the program are for registrant firms.
- Providing updated PPMP templates and updating the Permit to Practice Manual and Permit to Practice training.
- Creating a Program Working Group with registrant firm volunteers to help steer the program's structure and implementation.
- Having subject matter experts as contract support staff to help registrant firms prepare the information/documents submitted under the voluntary program.
- Providing volunteer registrant firms with access to resources, tools and training to improve their climate action, sustainability, EDI and Truth and Reconciliation efforts.

#### **Recognition**

- Highlighting initiatives developed by registrant firms that adopted sustainability into their projects or operations by highlighting them in social media or *Innovation Magazine* articles. This would demonstrate to others in the same sector or industry what strategies or policies can be developed to promote sustainability / social responsibility.
- Creating a sustainability / social responsibility certification for registrant firms.
- Creating knowledge-sharing and networking opportunities for registrant firms to promote and enhance sustainability.

Engineers and Geoscientists BC may also use information and data collected through the program to build new resources for registrant firms.

More information on the existing PPMP program is available in Appendix A.

## OTHER POTENTIAL INITIATIVES

Other potential initiatives were identified and evaluated by Engineers and Geoscientists BC during a subsequent Gap Analysis, including:

- **GHG and climate risk training for registrant firms:** Develop training and resources for registrant firms to help them reduce their GHG emissions and manage climate change-related risks. This supports the proposed Responsible Practice Program by providing registrant firms with additional resources to help document their plans to meet GHG emission targets.
- **Sustainability email subscription:** Create a new opt-in email subscription for individual registrants who want to receive content related to new climate change and sustainability events and resources from the Climate Change Information Portal. This supports the sustainability-related CE requirements by notifying registrants of new and relevant content that may be useful in satisfying those requirements.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR FEEDBACK

To assist Engineers and Geoscientists BC in supporting Registrants in responding to climate change, the regulatory body is seeking feedback on the proposed initiatives in the paper. A survey will be distributed to gather feedback on this paper to enable registrants to express their support, concerns, and suggestions. All registrants are encouraged to take the time to complete the survey and share their valuable insights. The survey will open in April 2025 and responses will be accepted for two (2) weeks. Alternatively, registrants can provide their written feedback to [sustainability@egbc.ca](mailto:sustainability@egbc.ca) until April 17. Feedback gathered through the engagement process will be compiled into a “What We Heard” report and will help inform the development of the OCCS document and registrant-facing regulatory programs and initiatives.

## APPENDIX A: EXISTING PROGRAMS

### THE EXISTING CLIMATE CHANGE INFORMATION PORTAL

The Climate Change Information Portal was first launched in 2015 to provide registrants with a collection of quality resources pertaining to the intersection of climate change mitigation and adaptation and professional practice in engineering and geoscience. It is referenced in professional practice guidelines.

Information contained in the portal today are generally in the form of links to PDFs or external resources. The content of the portal represents only a subset of all available information (mostly pertaining to the building sector) and is not organized in a user-friendly way that allows users from various sectors to identify information relevant to them.

In previous engagement, registrants were found to be either unaware of the portal and/or not using it.

### THE EXISTING CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) PROGRAM

In order to maintain registration, all registrants are required to complete and document their fulfillment of annual educational requirements. The requirements are intended to ensure that registrants maintain competency in their area of practice. Specifically, registrants must:

- Spend at least one hour learning about an ethical topic of the registrant's choice
- Complete the yearly Regulatory Learning Module which is available in the Knowledge Centre
- Create a CE plan
- Maintain at least 60 CE Hours of learning activities in every three-year rolling period
- Submit a CE Declaration within the Annual Reporting System

Some climate change- or sustainability-related CE is already being provided. Indeed, the mandatory Regulatory Learning Module for FY2023/2024 focussed on the Organization's regulatory role and registrant's obligations to consider climate change and sustainability in their professional practice. Despite this, less than 7% of both live and recorded CE sessions pertain to similar topics. Even fewer of these are free. In addition, the current offering of climate change- and sustainability-related CE sessions is relatively random, non-cohesive, or not relevant to a large portion of registrants.

### THE EXISTING PPMP PROGRAM

Registrant firms are required to create and file a Professional Practice Management Plan (PPMP) which indicates how the registrant firm meets ethical, quality management, and continuing education (CE) requirements (i.e., the three pillars of the Regulation of Firms Program).

At minimum, the PPMP must contain:

- A code of conduct that identifies how the registrant firm will ensure compliance with Engineers and Geoscientists BC's [Code of Ethics](#);
- Policies and procedures meeting the quality management requirements in Engineers and Geoscientists BC's Bylaws;
- Policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the CE requirements;
- The organizational structure of the registrant firm;
- The names of the registrant firm's Responsible Officer and Responsible Registrant(s);



- The registrant firm's area(s) of practice;
- The Responsible Registrant(s) designated to each area of practice at the registrant firm; and
- A policy regarding the use of the Permit to Practice Number by individuals employed by or under contract with the registrant firm.