



COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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Date	Version

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear, modern framework for communications at the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD). This policy governs how the SLRD communicates with residents, partners, interest groups, rights-holders, media and staff to:

- Provide accurate, timely, accessible and relevant information across multiple channels;
- Support transparency, accountability and public trust;
- Be proactive and responsive;
- Ensure consistent and professional representation of the organization;
- Enable effective use of both traditional and digital communications channels;
- Support strategic priorities; and
- Ensure alignment with SLRD brand in all public-facing communications.

1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All SLRD communications will be guided by the following principles, as identified and prioritized by the Board:

- **Integrity:** Communications are truthful and aligned with Board-approved decisions.
- **Accuracy:** Information is factual, verified and complete.
- **Accountability:** Communications are conducted responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with applicable legislation, policies, and professional standards.
- **Trust:** Communications foster respectful dialogue and public confidence.
- **Transparency:** Information is shared proactively wherever possible.
- **Timeliness:** Information is shared as early as reasonably possible.
- **Consistency:** Messages are coordinated and aligned across channels.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Communications are accessible and considerate of diverse audiences.
- **Innovation:** The SLRD continues to explore ways to improve how it communicates by embracing new ideas, tools, technologies, and practices that enhance effectiveness, reach, and engagement in response to changing community needs, emerging trends and advances in accessibility and service delivery.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

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- All communications representing the SLRD externally or internally, across all channels and formats.
- The SLRD Board of Directors, including Alternate Directors acting in their official capacity or when using SLRD branding, platforms or resources; and
- All SLRD employees and contractors communicating on behalf of the SLRD.

Guidance for internal administrative procedures, templates, platform-specific practices, and operational details may be developed and updated by staff, consistent with this policy.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Board of Directors

- Establishes policy direction and approval.
- Authorizes official positions of the Regional District through resolutions.
- Speaks collectively through resolutions and official decisions.
- Individual Board Directors may communicate publicly, about issues discussed by the Board provided they:
 - Clearly distinguish personal views from Board decisions.
 - Do not misrepresent or undermine Board decisions or SLRD reputation.
 - Comply with the Board Code of Conduct and this policy.
 - Respect confidentiality requirements.
- Individual Board Directors must not act as official spokesperson with media without authorization from the Board Chair or designate.

4.2 Board Chair

- Is the primary spokesperson for Board decisions and Regional District positions.
- May authorize another Board Director to speak on behalf of the Board where appropriate.

4.4 Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

- Ensures implementation of this policy across the organization.
- Responsible for operational and administrative communications.
- Is the primary spokesperson on administrative and operational matters.
- May designate staff to speak on specific topics as subject matter experts.

4.5 Communications & Engagement Department

- Develops and maintains communications strategies, guidelines and procedures.

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- Leads corporate communications planning and execution.
- Coordinates official messaging across all channels.
- Manages SLRD digital platforms and social media presence.
- Provides communications advice, training and support to Board and staff.

5. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

5.1 Objectives

The SLRD is committed to clear, timely and respectful external communications. External communications aim to:

- Inform the public about SLRD decisions, services and initiatives.
- Promote awareness and understanding of regional governance.
- Support two-way dialogue where appropriate.
- Maintain a clear, consistent public narrative.

5.2 Public Communications

- The SLRD will take a proactive, coordinated approach to public communications.
- Information shared publicly must be factual, clear and consistent with Board decisions and organizational priorities.

5.3 Media Relations

- The SLRD will take a proactive, coordinated approach to media relations.
- Media enquiries are coordinated through the Communications and Engagement Department.
- Media releases reflect approved Board decisions or authorized operational information.
- During emergencies, communications follow established emergency communications protocols.

6. COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

The SLRD uses a multi-channel approach to reach diverse audiences, utilizing a mix of complementary communications channels.

6.1 Primary Communications Channels

The SLRD website is the primary communications channel and the authoritative source for SLRD information. Communications channels may include, but are not limited to:

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- SLRD website (primary authoritative source)
- Social Media
- Email software
- Public notice boards
- Public events
- Public meetings

Content types delivered through these channels may include, but are not limited to:

- Newsletters
- Media releases
- Public notices and advertising
- Board and Committee meeting agendas, minutes and reports

Channel selection will be determined by staff based on content type, audience, urgency, accessibility and effectiveness.

6.2 Social Media

Social media is an official communications channel used to support and amplify information published through primary channels.

a. Purpose of Social Media

Social media is used to:

- Share timely information and updates.
- Increase reach and awareness of SLRD content.
- Direct audiences to authoritative sources (e.g. SLRD website).
- Share, where appropriate, non-SLRD content, from official agencies, when relevant to SLRD residents.

b. Governance and Administration

- Official SLRD social media accounts are organizational assets and managed by staff under the direction of the CAO.
- Account creation, closure and platform selection are authorized by the CAO, in consultation with the Communications and Engagement Department.

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- Day-to-day administration and content planning is delegated to the Communications and Engagement department or approved departmental delegates.
- Content will comply with applicable legislation, including the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) and approved SLRD guidelines.

c. Content Standards

All social media content must:

- Align with SLRD values and Board-approved direction.
- Be accurate, respectful and professional.
- Avoid political advocacy and pre-judgement of matters before the Board.
- Where applicable, direct users to official sources for additional information.

d. Personal Use of Social Media (Board and Staff)

- Board Directors and staff are encouraged to share and amplify official SLRD content.
- Board Directors and staff are expected to use good judgement on personal social media accounts where their role may be inferred.
- When using personal social media channels, individuals must ensure confidential information is protected and that communications do not harm the reputation or integrity of the SLRD.
- Additional expectations may be outlined in Board Code of Conduct, Employee handbook and related administrative policies.

7. CRISIS & EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Crisis and emergency communications are coordinated through established emergency management structures. Messaging is centralized to ensure clarity, consistency and public safety. Social media may be used to amplify urgent information, alongside other channels.

8. BRAND ALIGNMENT

All public-facing communications that represent the SLRD must align with approved:

- Visual identity (logos, colours, typography).
- Tone and messaging standards.
- Accessibility requirements.

This applies to all public-facing communications produced by staff and/ or contractors working on behalf of the SLRD.

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Elected officials must not use SLRD branding or channels to promote individual positions. Elected officials must not use SLRD brand resources without direction of the Board.

Use of the SLRD logo or branding implies representation of the organization and must align with Board decisions and approved messaging. The Communications and Engagement Department will maintain brand guidelines and support alignment across departments and communications channels.

9. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The SLRD is committed to clear, timely and respectful internal communications. Internal communications aim to:

- Encourage information-sharing.
- Support organizational alignment and employee awareness.
- Ensure staff understand Board direction and organizational priorities.
- Promote respectful, transparent dialogue.

10. RECORDS, PRIVACY & COMPLIANCE

All communications must comply with:

- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA).
- Records retention and management requirements.
- Board Code of Conduct and employee policies.
- Applicable legislation and bylaws.

11. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES & DOCUMENTS

This policy is intended to align with and be supported by related policies, procedures and strategies, including:

- Board Code of Conduct
- Procedure Bylaw
- Truth & Reconciliation: In Practice – A Guide for Working in a Good Way
- First Nations protocol agreements and related documents
- Records Management practices
- Emergency Communications protocols
- Communications strategies, guidelines and toolkits (administrative)
- Brand Guide

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- Public Engagement Policy
- Engagement framework, guidelines and toolkits (administrative)
- Employee Handbook (administrative)
- Respectful Workplace Policy

12. REVIEW & IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains current and effective. Communications-related administrative procedures may be updated by staff without Board approval, provided they are consistent with this policy.

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