

Executive Summary

A communications plan is an important part of CASA's daily operations. As a living document, it frames our media activities, including internal and external stakeholder communications, clarifies our priorities, target audiences, resources and staffing assignments. It is driven by our goals and outcomes, vision, mission, values and beliefs.

The CASA communications plan supports and contributes to CASA's core business functions and strategic directions. This CASA communications plan has also been designed to align with the goals and objectives contained within the communications committee's terms of reference.

A more detailed version of this plan, including the key result areas which identify objectives, opportunities, audiences and metrics, as well as specific strategies, activities, timing, action responsibilities and results, will be used in implementation of the CASA communications plan.

Guiding principles for communication

The CASA communications plan will be guided by the following principles:

1. Our communication efforts will concentrate first and foremost on supportive and active stakeholders and initiatives.
2. We will encourage informed dialogue between stakeholders and invite feedback wherever possible.
3. We acknowledge the diversity of opinions of our stakeholders and will customize communication to the extent needed.
4. We will use simple, easily understood language that promotes a common understanding of CASA, its goals and accomplishments.
5. We will support board members in their role as key communicators for CASA.
6. We will evaluate the effectiveness of our communications plans and ensure continuous improvement.
7. Communications related expenditures will be cost effective, focused on results and shared between CASA stakeholders.
8. We will offer support to stakeholders so they can effectively communicate about CASA as appropriate.

Communications goals

The overall communications goals of the plan are:

1. Increase and maintain stakeholder awareness, understanding, support for, engagement and commitment to the CASA process and vision.
2. Increase individual Albertans' awareness, understanding, support for, engagement and commitment to the CASA process and vision.
3. Move toward influencing individual Albertans' decisions and behaviours related to air quality in support of the CASA vision.

Communications Priorities for 2006

CASA communications utilizes an array of ongoing communications strategies, activities and tools, including the Communications Committee, Clean Air Bulletin, CASA websites, performance measure #5 and various publications. CASA communications will pursue the following priorities in 2007:

Communications Goals	Priorities for 2006
Goal 1: Stakeholder Support and Engagement	Increase the understanding of the CASA process.
	Increase the exchange of information between project teams.
Goal 2: Building External Awareness	Generate support for CASA from key decision-makers from government, industry and non-government sectors and the targeted audiences.
	Generate positive media coverage and awareness of CASA.
Goal 3: Influencing Albertans	Seek opportunities and develop initiatives to influence Albertans attitudes to clean air.
	Determine public perception of CASA and air quality in Alberta.

Target Audiences

Primary: Stakeholders

Secondary: Key decision makers and media

Tertiary: Albertans

Key Messages

- 1) CASA – addressing air quality issues effectively.
 - a) Recommending air quality management solutions by consensus.
 - b) Increased commitment and buy-in to innovative solutions.
 - c) Effective – over three-quarters of substantive recommendations are implemented.
- 2) CASA is an innovative partnership of government, industry and non-governmental organizations dedicated to improving air quality in Alberta.
- 3) CASA has a proven track record of success.
 - a) CASA has over a decade of leadership in addressing air quality issues that has been publicly and prominently recognized.

Evaluation

Progress towards implementation of the CASA communications plan is reported at each meeting of the Communications Committee.

CASA communications functions are continuously evaluated. The communications planning process incorporates tracking and evaluation to ensure that communications at CASA are effective and strategic. In addition, an annual audit of communications materials ensures currency and relevance.

CASA performance measure #5 directly measures the degree of recognition of CASA as well as evaluates two communications functions: website usage and news stories in the media.