

# Transportation Consultants Council 2011 Communication Plan

## Introduction

The ITE Transportation Consultant's Council Communication Plan is intended to guide the process of involvement of Council Membership and other key audiences within the Institute. The plan is being developed taking into account the proposed Council organization which would be an employee-based organization starting January 1, 2011 as the Council seeks to reorganize itself into an individual based member Council. The goals of this plan are to:

- Promote various activities that the Council has undertaken over the years and those that are being planned for the future.
- Share information concerning products and services available through the Council.
- Provide information on current activities of the Council's Executive Committee and encourage two-way communication between the Executive Committee and members.
- Share information with members and their employers on an expanded basis.

## Target Audiences

The Target audience of the proposed plan has been identified into two categories: *primary* and *secondary*. The classification into each of the two categories and the information they will receive is presented in the sections below;

### *Primary Audience:*

The *primary audiences* are expected to receive direct correspondence from the Council, and will include:

- Coordinating Council – Coordinating Council members will be provided an update on TCC activities three times a year in conjunction with regularly scheduled meetings and written reports. Communications will be directed through ITE Headquarters and the Coordinating Council Chair.
- TCC Executive Committee – Members of the Executive Committee will be briefed both prior to and during three meetings per year, in conjunction with Committee meetings to be held three times per year. Communications related to meeting agendas, support documents, follow-up notes and summaries will be provided for all three meetings. Additional mailings and phone conversations will be held on an as-needed basis by and between the Council Chair and Executive Committee members.
- TCC Members and Employers – Communication with members and their employers will be via an updated TCC website (which is currently in process) and by means of the TCC newsletter twice a year to include a summary of activities of the Council during the previous period. The Council will aim to encourage member participation in the activities of the Council as new projects and products are identified. The Council will also pursue the development of an interactive means of communications between members and their employers. Direct communication with the membership will generally take the form of notices or announcements of TCC initiatives or programs. Examples include the application process for scholarships, or the ability of member firms to “advertise” as Council members on ITE's website. As the role of the Council is expanded to include the development of training programs for the Consultant community or for the Institute as a whole, the form of this communication is expected to expand.

### *Secondary Audience*

The *secondary audience* will receive communication through actions of the Coordinating Council or ITE Headquarters and will include the International Board of Direction (IBD), and other agencies or organizations. These will include:

- International Board of Direction – The board will receive vital information through the Coordinating Council representative to the IBD.
- Districts and sections – Individual IBD Members serve as the conduit to District and Sections, which may also have local Consultant’s Councils as part of their District, Section and/or Chapter. The TCC will look to gain an understanding of these local structures through the IBD member and provide copies of the TCC newsletter to the local organizations and encourage adoption of programs, themes and working relationships with other employer based organizations at the local level.

### Messages

Messages that have been identified for TCC communications include:

- General information on the activities of the Council including new initiatives, awards, upcoming programs and activities, and articles consistent with an annual theme, if possible.
- Products (training programs) as they are developed.
- Coordination and Support of the Strategic Plan – TCC activities that are consistent with and in support of the goals and objectives of the ITE Strategic Plan.
- Feedback on needs, best practices and experiences.

### Media

TCC will continue to provide ongoing communication through:

- An electronically transmitted newsletter scheduled to be delivered twice a year.
- An updated website that would be more relevant to the proposed new structure of the TCC.
- An internal networking platform (aka LinkedIn or Facebook) –TCC will work with ITE to try and determine how this could be tailored to suit the Council’s needs. One idea is to have a section called “Consultant’s Corner” on the TCC website that would house articles and discussion items from the Executive Committee members. This aspect will be developed based on further discussion with ITE.

### Guidelines for Volunteer Interface

Volunteering is an increasingly precious resource which needs to be managed effectively. The following guidelines are provided for the Council to assist in developing and implementing innovative ways of mobilizing, organizing and managing volunteers. The Council needs to examine these guidelines from time to time.

### *Selection and Recruitment*

There are mainly two ways by which volunteer help could be available:

- An Executive Committee member solicits assistance from a volunteer for a specific on-going project need, or

- An individual from the general membership emails one of the Executive Committee members expressing interest in volunteering.

In both cases, the approval of the Council Chair is needed for the selection and recruitment of the volunteer. The Council will aim to use all available help and the goal would be to find a meaningful assignment to the volunteer.

### *Volunteer Management*

The council has identified leaders for specific projects. Either the Council Chair or the Executive Committee member leading a particular project (with permission from the Chair) could appoint the volunteer to a specific project or projects. The leaders may find the following guidelines useful for effective management of the assigned staff:

- Management and mobilization of volunteers must be professionally dealt with.
- Effective use of the volunteer's time must be deemed essential in keeping a volunteer involved with the Council. To this end, the person identifying the need for the volunteer will also be responsible for identifying a role for the volunteer on a specific project and follow up often as needed.
- The project leader must make every effort to make the best use of the enthusiasm, energy and commitment of volunteers.
- The project leader and the Council must value and recognize volunteer contribution.

If an individual is an active volunteer and expresses interest in helping the Council on a long-term basis, it is possible that that volunteer could be invited to join the Executive Council. This will be a decision that the project leader will bring forth to the Council Chair and will need approval from the Council Chair and Vice-Chair.

### *Compensation*

It is to be expected that:

- ITE or the TCC will not provide a fee or any form of compensation to the volunteers.
- The volunteer would not have the authority to make any financial decisions for the Council.

### *Additional Guidance*

Additional guidance that is important for the Executive Committee members to follow during volunteer interface includes:

- Activities for volunteers should be identified at all times keeping Council needs in the forefront.
- Assignments should be carefully evaluated and handed out.
- Expectations should be clearly stated up front along with goals and targets as appropriate.
- Training programs are arranged for volunteers if needed to ensure that the volunteer understands his/her position in the overall Council/organization.
- The Council must develop and maintain a Volunteers' database that would include telephone numbers, email and mailing addresses along with their skills/expertise.
- Volunteers are to be held accountable for the tasks they undertake and should perform their duty in a professional manner.
- The project leader and/or the Council Chair should obtain feedback and suggestions from a volunteer once he/she has accomplished their allocated task or does not wish to continue in their role,

- Finally, all Council members should be briefed about the role of volunteers, their importance and how to handle interface with volunteers.

#### Schedule

- Newsletter publication will be completed on a twice a year basis – early winter and early summer.
- The introduction of a Consultants Corner section and/or networking platform by ITE will be based on the schedule adopted by HQ.
- Course development will commence in 2011.

#### Activity Lead

- Newsletter Editor – Amir Rizavi (current). Need to identify deputy.
- Consultants Academy – Co-developers/chairs Hibbett Neel, Michael Sanderson and Amir Rizavi
- Website – Amir Rizavi (current). Need to identify deputy.