

Working Title Area Information Coordinator		Name	
Position Number	Reports to Position No., Class & Level	Division, Branch/Unit Forestry Division/	Ministry
			Agriculture and Forestry
Present Class		Requested Class	
Dept ID	Program Code	Project Code (if applicable)	

PURPOSE: Give a brief summary of the job, covering the main responsibilities, the framework within which the job has to operate and the main contribution to the organization (see Non-Management Job Description Writing Guide [Pages 7-8](#)).

Reporting to the Forest Area Manager, the Area Information Coordinator represents the Government of Alberta and is responsible for creating strategies, planning, designing, and facilitating outreach and education programs for the Forest Area. In Wildfire Management programs focused on fire prevention, reducing the human-caused wildfires, increasing knowledge of FireSmart initiatives, promoting mitigation and preparedness activities for communities and in Wildfire Operations, support public and stakeholder communications with updates on wildfires and other emergencies, while also promoting and supporting environmental stewardship in a coordinated approach to address public and stakeholder needs in their respective area to support Forest Management and Forest Health programs in the Forest Area.

During emergency and crisis events, communication to the public, stakeholders and response partners is one of the most significant actions that contribute to protecting Albertans and their communities. The Area Information Coordinator's primary focus is to not only respond and manage crisis communications during emergencies, but also create communication strategies and plans to promote and increase the awareness of emergency response preparedness and mitigation activities to prepare the public and communities in Alberta before emergency events occur.

The position will develop program content to meet client needs based on evaluations and needs assessments, and acting as a consultant to department staff, public, municipalities, industry, and the media in crisis and emergency management, including all aspects of the wildfire program and Forest Health programs. Responsibilities will include: supervision of wage employees and volunteers, planning and accountability for program budget, and providing leadership in emergency and crisis communications to Forest Area Managers, community leaders, stakeholders, and first response partners.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES: The purpose of the job can be broken down in different responsibilities and end results. Each end result shows what the job is accountable for, within what framework and what the added value is. Normally a job has 4-8 core end results. For each end result, approximately 3-6 activities should be described (see Writing Guide [Pages 9-10](#)).

1. Strategic planning and communications - Develop and deliver Division-wide initiatives that include wildfire, forest management, mountain pine beetle and forest health issues, youth programs, social media, school curriculum planning and delivery while influencing behaviour change in Albertans around emergency preparedness and mitigation. This includes:
 - Providing strategic direction to senior staff on effective and efficient communication strategies for emergency response, preparedness and mitigation.
 - Representing the department across the province to educate the public and key stakeholders on various topics; while continuing to build relationships in communities to support emergency response activities within an environmental stewardship context.
 - Through complex plans like community-based social marketing, they must create plans and strategies to guide their implementation to address behaviour change for intricate social issues.
 - After implementing these plans, the Area Information Coordinator is responsible for monitoring and performance management, making modifications as required.
2. Provide emergency and crisis communications leadership and direction on incidents and within communities under crisis.
 - This position provides advice and direction to senior managers in communications on scene of emergencies or within the department.
 - Immediate crisis communication management, coordination within the department, stakeholders and partners occurs in rapid but structured manner only due to the pre-planning, training and strategies set in place ahead of emergencies.
 - On incidents the position reports to the Incident Commander, which is a role often filled by a senior manager, the position will be required to manage and form complex relationships with the public, media, municipalities and other first responders within a dynamic stress filled environment.

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- The position is responsible for ensuring public and first responders are getting clear and concise communications that may affect their immediate safety and well-being. These positions are providing communications leadership in high stress, rapid pace environments, which are in high-risk potential situations for themselves and others, and with low tolerance for failures.
- 3. The Area Information Coordinator builds relationships, strategies and conducts planning with a structured tool set; often starting with needs assessments to determine the appropriate approach for each stakeholder group. Some of the strategic work requires:
 - Development of marketing programs and activities.
 - Managing and fostering partnerships with schools, communities, and industry stakeholders.
 - Delivering workshops, training, and presentations throughout the province.
 - Developing content for websites and social media campaigns.
- 4. Address the growing concerns over environmental issues by:
 - Increasing awareness, understanding and concern for wildfire-related topics within ecosystem mgmt.
 - Building communication plans and strategies to integrate and support landscape management planning initiatives like wildfire management plans (under the regional land use plans Increasing community involvement and engagement in stewardship efforts through the Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) initiatives
- 5. Manage program budget and plans with reportable performance measures and deliverables. The position is accountable for delivery of a yearly budget plan, contingency planning and ongoing financial mgmt.
 - Budget and contingency plans are submitted annually before November for execution in the following fiscal year. Fiscal management also includes reallocation plans and exercises for contingency funds.
 - Position is accountable to senior managers for program delivery with the budget, including the execution and reporting of CBSM initiatives under their CBSM plans.
 - Budget plans, deliverables and reporting must also align with the area senior manager's overall budget planning and delivery.
 - The position differs than other similar communications type positions due to the autonomy and higher level accountability required to manage the program and budget.
- 6. Responsible to lead provincial task teams on provincial behaviour change or crisis communication initiatives. The Area Information Coordinator, on a rotational basis, will also act as a provincial wildfire information officer, making themselves available 24/7 during wildfire season for immediate comment on behalf of the Alberta Government.
- 7. Train internal staff on techniques to change behaviours of Albertans as well as professional communication in and out of crisis events. Additionally the position is responsible to deliver a nationally recognized crisis communications course. They are responsible for setting direction of the course as well as strategizing, planning and carrying out all parts of the course.
- 8. Leading the planning, execution, and management of national-level corporate events like the FireSmart Community Series and the Wildland Fire Canada Conference as well as designing and organizing multi-jurisdictional mock disasters and exercises.

SCOPE: List specific information that illustrates the challenges, problem solving and creativity requirements and decision making capacity of the position. Also identify the internal or external areas the job impacts (see Writing Guide [Pages 11-12](#)).

The Area Information Coordinator has unique challenges in the position. The position is one of a team of outreach employees in an area, but their focus is on the activities around crisis communications in emergency management. This includes being the communications expert for complex programs like FireSmart, while also building strategies and plans to change and influence behaviours in human-caused wildfire reduction and environmental stewardship. This role is generally the only one in the region that is the lead contact for senior leaders in emergency and crisis communications. This requires the position to provide leadership and direction to many area staff and stakeholders (municipalities, industry, First Nations, etc.), while also building relationships before disasters occur in order to lead, guide or facilitate emergency preparedness and mitigation programs.

For example, in emergency/crisis situations there is intense conflict and emotional issues that need to be dealt with effectively and immediately with clients and stakeholders. This position must make immediate crisis-level decisions on communications strategies and provide recommendations that may affect high-impact, high-risk situations. They must speak on behalf of the Government of Alberta immediately, with no room or opportunity for error. These positions are granted the authority and autonomy to speak on behalf of the Government of Alberta during crises.

This position is not only responsible for building strategies and plans for engagement and communications, but the position differs than other similar communications type positions due to the autonomy and higher level accountability required to manage the program and budget.

The job requires the ability to communicate effectively with clients and stakeholders. Much of the contact is for the purpose of disseminating and obtaining information or assessing client needs. There is a need to influence behaviour. Strong HR skills are required to face Albertans emotional or intense conflict resolution. Clients can range from, the public to high-level decision-makers in multiple levels and strata of government and industry; for example, directors of emergency for municipalities, CAOs, Mayors, Fire Chiefs, MLAs,

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MPs, ministers, and industry CEOs. Industries, communities, schools (K-12), the public, and professionals involved in forestry-related businesses are also educated about how their environmental practices and choices impact the sustainability of the environment.

There is an expectation of this position to go beyond just educating Albertans about how wildfire and FireSmart affect them, but to actually change the behaviours of those Albertans to reduce the amount of human-caused wildfires and increase the amount of FireSmart being used in the province. Creating behaviour change is exponentially more complex than merely educating the public and takes both an increased knowledge and higher skill level to perform effectively.

Additionally, this position represents the department across the province to educate the public on various environmental topics and their impacts. While it does have accountability to deliver programs, it has equal responsibility to design them requiring considerable creativity and strong problem solving abilities.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES: Include information on required diplomas and degrees along with identifying the most important knowledge factors, including knowledge about practical procedures, administrative, technical or professional techniques, technical, scientific or program related processes, etc. Detail specific training if there is an occupational certification/registration requirement for the position. Specify the type of experience required for the position (see Writing Guide [Pages 12-14](#)).

A degree or diploma in journalism, communications or public relations or related education as well as six years of progressively responsible experience is required.

This position requires in-depth knowledge of the department, critical stakeholders, first response partners (e.g. municipalities, fire depts., etc.), and media while strategically connecting to public motivations during a crisis in order to meet high-pressure deadlines with accurate and effective messaging. A wide breath of knowledge of department (and GOA), our policies, emerging environmental issues and concepts are also required; this also enables development and design of materials and curriculum for Albertans. Additionally this position requires the position to form in-depth, long-term, complex relationships with stakeholders like municipalities, industry and First Nations, in order to manage communications around broad emergency-based issues and concepts with very short timelines during disaster events.

Additional skills required are:

- The ability to develop, implement and deliver high level engagement processes including: world cafes, focus groups, surveys, literature reviews, etc.
- Skills in planning multi-faceted behaviour change models while simultaneously implementing and reviewing projects already in place.
- Knowledge of strategic tools and relationships models needed to manage media in high pressure situations.
- Knowledge of key messaging – including the ability to take highly technical or complex issues and make them clear and concise to be accessible to a wide variety of stakeholders.

CONTACTS: Identify the main contacts the position communicates with and the purpose of the communication (See Writing Guide [Pages 14-15](#)).

Internal (GOA)

- Division/branch representatives – Collaborate to identify priorities, develop communication strategies and plans, execute strategies/plans and evaluate programs with performance measurement and fiscal responsibility.
- Other Government representatives – Work cooperatively with representatives from other GOA Ministries on to lead or support emergency-related communication initiatives as required. This position provides guidance and recommendations to cross-ministry communication teams to ensure consistent and integrated messaging is communicated with external audiences. Other Ministries include (but is not limited to): Culture; Health and Wellness; Transportation; Municipal Affairs; Service Alberta and the Public Affairs Bureau.

External

- Stakeholders, agencies, and partnerships – strategic relationships with a range of external stakeholder groups advance the department's goals and business activities. Key partners include (but are not limited to):
 - Municipalities, industry (forest, oil and gas, utility), First Nations/Metis communities
 - Local ENGO's and interest groups (particularly relating to prescribed fires)
 - First Response partners – Officer of the Fire Commissioner, Fire depts., RCMP, AEMA, ASERT
 - The Alberta Forest Products Association
 - Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre
 - Crimestoppers in partnership with Television media
 - Partners in Protection
 - Let's Go Outdoors