

Ministry

Environment and Parks

**Describe: Basic Job Details**

**Position**

Position ID

Position Name

Priority Issues Coordinator

Requested Class

Program Services 3

Job Focus

Operations/Program

Supervisory Level

00 - No Supervision

Agency (ministry) code

Cost Centre

Program Code: (enter if required)

**Employee**

Employee Name (or Vacant)

**Organizational Structure**

Division, Branch/Unit

Regulatory Assurance Division, South Branch

Supervisor's Position ID

Supervisor's Position Name

Executive Director

Supervisor's Current Class

Executive Manager 1

**Design: Identify Job Duties and Value**

**Job Purpose and Organizational Context**

Why the job exists:

The Ministry of Environment and Parks is committed to supporting the key strategic initiatives and core business of government outlined in the Government of Alberta (GoA) Strategic Business Plan, promoting an integrated resource management system and innovative and responsible resource development. The Ministry's mission is to lead the achievement of desired environmental outcomes and sustainable development of natural resources for Albertans as proud stewards of air, land, water, and biodiversity.

Reporting to the Executive Director, the incumbent works directly with the Executive Director and the branch leadership team to manage critical and emerging issues from an issues management perspective. The PIC is the primary link to emerging issues and activities in the branch and ensures situational awareness and information sharing to staff within. This position researches and conducts environmental scanning of potential issues, provides analysis, and ongoing issues management support to ensure the effective delivery of programs and frameworks that fall within the department's mandate. This requires the individual to prepare briefings and recommendations for consideration, initiate and coordinate responses, and provide value-added information and strategic messaging in a timely manner.

This position also assists the Executive Director with quarterly and annual business planning and reporting for the branch, supports the Executive Director and senior leaders within the branch on special projects, and supports the Occupational Health and Safety Plan for the branch. Strong problem solving, writing and general communication skills are required, as well as the ability to capably manage multiple issues and projects at the same time.

The PIC acts as the primary branch contact for the Assistant Deputy Minister's (ADM) office and other divisional branches. The PIC works closely with other PICs, the Executive Director, as well as the ADMO Executive

Advisor and other ministries as required. The PIC works collaboratively with all provincial and regional staff to achieve the provincial objectives and initiatives.

## Responsibilities

Participation on the branch management team.

- Identify and prioritize risks, challenges, and issues and recommend strategies to support the branch and division in achieving successful outcomes.
- Share information gained from staff learnings and interaction across the Ministry and theGoA.
- Research trends and identify best practices; providing assessment of impact and application/implementation.
- Ensure the Executive Director and branch leadership team is kept informed about issues affecting their respective areas (for example e-scanning).

Prepare weekly branch situation reports, highlighting priority issues and information.

- Provide data for metrics and tracking systems related to PIC functions.
- Lead and support other projects as required by the Executive Director or branch leadership team.
- Attend meetings on behalf of the Executive Director and branch, as required.
- Represent the branch on appropriate departmental committees and attend branch management meetings.
- Provide cover-off support for other branch PICs.

Primary communication liaison for the branch (internal and external).

- Establish, implement, integrate, and monitor effective communication processes and information management systems to manage the flow of information and inquiries that are received, ensuring inquiries are routed appropriately, responses prepared, and issues addressed.

• Work collaboratively with the APS Communications and subject matter experts as the primary liaison within the branch to ensure accurate and consistent key messages for the media and speaking notes for the Minister are prepared.

Coordinate and develop strategic communications plans and associated communications products with respective program areas of the department.

- Collaborate with branch staff to support the coordination and integration of activities across program areas and branches and ensure the branch leadership team is informed of significant developments, emerging issues, or concerns in the day-to-day operations of the branch and division.
- Coordinate information from various staff members, other government departments, agencies, and stakeholders into an integrated and comprehensive response to queries.
- Work with the ADM's office to implement consistent and efficient processes to respond to all requests for information.

Support the branch in achieving the mandate and goals of the department.

- Provide input and recommendations relating to issues, opportunities, and challenges associated with branch operations.
- Coordinate in-house meetings for the Executive Director; work closely with the Executive Director and branch leadership team to determine key priorities and goals for the year.
- Lead the development and ongoing review of the branch operational plan and quarterly reporting updates.
- Provide regular communications on the progress and achievement of performance measures relative to operational/business planning goals and objectives.
- Participate in Ministry committees, teams, and working groups (e.g. approvals team meetings, weekly meetings with ADM's office and Priority Issue Coordinators) to promote thoroughness, strategic awareness, and consistency in management of issues.
- Review key branch documents and plans as required from a strategic issues management perspective.
- Review FOIP requests and identify potential issues related to the release of information prior to the Executive Director's sign-off.

Issues research and tracking.

- Remain current and informed as to Ministry issues, proactively recommend and provide an evaluation of issues and potential strategies to resolve issues.
- Track major branch initiatives to ensure timely progress; follow up on action items identified by the ADM to the Executive Director.
- Ensure briefing information is succinct, accurate, identifies potential risks and issues for the department and is delivered within timelines.

- Anticipate and identify emerging issues; manage and maintain communication/information on existing/legacy issues.
- Ensure that the Public Affairs Bureau is aware of potential issues that may be of interest to the media or may receive political attention (e.g. in session).
- Develop weekly situation reports for the branch highlighting priority issues.
- Prepare, analyze, and communicate action request metrics quarterly to branch leadership team; identify trends and/or opportunities for workload planning.

## Problem Solving

Typical problems solved:

The PIC is the branch issues management and communication lead on high priority, highly political, and public issues. These issues may include a variety of regulatory and supplementary programs. The PIC must use their knowledge and expertise in this regard to develop strategic and risk-based messaging. The position supports the government's commitment to open, responsive, effective communication with stakeholders, government members, and the general public. Through this effective communication the role enhances government relationships which have been built based on the values of honesty, fairness, professionalism and accountability. The position has authority to independently engage internal and external stakeholders as needed to manage issues and support the branch leadership team. Analytical and evaluative skills are required to assess issues and inquiries in order to determine their urgency, impact and influence, connecting to the appropriate program staff to ensure a coordinated and timely response. Strong collaboration and coordination skills are required to ensure that each of the internal and external parties impacted by a specific issue is linked into the solution. This position is key to building collaborative internal partnerships with program areas and developing approaches to ensure effective two-way communication and interaction. Considerable influence is also required to assist the ADM's office in promoting collaborative approaches to issues management. This position requires a high level of business and political astuteness to recognize issues that may have potential impact. This position applies an understanding of environmental issues, departmental policies/directives, regulatory processes and legislation, and provincial/branch priorities. The day-to-day activities of the PICs are dynamic and PICs must be strategic and adaptable in order to react to the most urgent and pressing issues that arise in the branch or in Alberta. GoA, department, and division business processes (e.g., AR process, stakeholder engagement protocols) guide the work of the PIC; within these processes there is freedom for the incumbent to determine how best to proceed. The PIC has the freedom to establish, implement, integrate, and monitor information management systems and administrative processes to ensure that all matters referred to the branch are appropriately managed and the team is kept up-to-date on new and emerging issues. Often time constraints do not permit cross-checking of briefing material before it goes to the ADM; the incumbent must be aware of the policies in appropriate areas to act as the final check on material. The PIC must be able to coordinate input and consult with branch staff to resolve issues that may have political involvement and sensitivity. The PIC may also be required to brief the ADM, DM, and/or the Minister in the absence of the Executive Director on priority issues. The incumbent independently assesses situations/issues, determines who needs to be involved/informed, and the impact to establish issue priority. Involvement and integration of the role into key business processes leads to a primarily self-directed role. Little or no direction is provided when goals are assigned. The support provided by this position has a significant impact on the effective operation of the branch and on public perception of the department.

Types of guidance available for problem solving:

The PIC is expected to be able to problem solve independently but guidance is easily available from the Executive Director, Senior Managers within the branch, and from the ADMO staff.

Direct or indirect impacts of decisions:

Decisions made by the PIC impact the timeliness and quality of information reaching the Assistant Deputy Minister's office and the public. Rapid and effective coordination of often complicated issues is often dependent on the PIC's ability to assess, assign, and synthesize information. This can directly and indirectly impact the effectiveness of the branch's ability to respond to public issues.

## Key Relationships

Major stakeholders and purpose of interactions:

The position will have ongoing and regular contact with a variety of staff and external stakeholders regarding implementation, maintenance, and enhancement of issues management programs/initiatives, as well as providing branch

staff with the tools and knowledge to enable effective communication and issues management.

Executive Director, management and staff: To provide information, training, advice, direction, and problem solving pertaining to current and emerging issues, initiatives, and activities in the branch, operational business plans and strategies, and development and distribution of branch communication materials.

Division and Ministry senior representatives (e.g. Assistant Deputy Minister and Executive Advisor): The PIC is the ADM's office's primary link to emerging issues and activities in the branch.

Ministry peers (other PICs): To share information, collaborate, and provide recommendations to issues management and communications to ensure divisional initiatives and priorities are being addressed in a consistent manner, where appropriate.

Ministry specialists, including department Executive Advisors, and ECU: To share and exchange information and collaborate on training/information sessions.

External government resources/specialists: To share and exchange information associated with often complex issues of mutual interest, issues dealing with the public, and constituency office inquiries.

External stakeholders: To gather/share information and knowledge, as well as discuss issues. Stakeholders include:

- Municipalities
- Towns and other NGOs
- Senior company officials
- Industry associates
- General public

### Required Education, Experience and Technical Competencies

Education Level	Focus/Major	2nd Major/Minor if applicable	Designation
Bachelor's Degree (4 year)	Arts	Science	

If other, specify:

Job-specific experience, technical competencies, certification and/or training:

This position requires a post-secondary degree in communications or a related field and a minimum of 2 years of directly related experience (equivalencies will be considered).

The position requires:

- Sound knowledge and understanding of:
  - proper English grammar and usage, as well as appropriate Canadian Press, plain language and Government of Alberta writing styles;
  - the Action Request Tracking System, SharePoint, and Microsoft Office;
  - government strategic business plan goals and policy direction as it relates to the Ministry and divisional mandates;
  - ministry and divisional business plan goals, strategic priorities, accountability processes, issues, programs, resources, policies, and legislation;
  - GoA and ministry internal administrative policies, processes, and practices;
  - performance measurement and reporting theories, methodologies, principles, and techniques; and
  - issues management methodologies, practices, and principles.
- Knowledge of interdependent GoA initiatives, programs, and services.
- Knowledge and understanding of the GoA's integrated resource management system and how it applies to the department.
- Understanding of environmental science.
- Knowledge of project management skills to ensure efficient and timely delivery of the branch's initiatives and programs.
- Creativity and in-depth research, writing, and editing skills, including knowledge of how language and tone impacts messaging. The ability to communicate in writing, with a wide variety of audiences, including government officials, business leaders, and general public.
- Awareness of, and sensitivity to, political issues.
- Knowledge of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation.

The position requires the following skills and abilities:

- Ability to build productive relationships within the branch, division, Ministry, GoA, and with all partners.
- Ability to lead a variety of initiatives/projects.
- Innovative and creative problem solving skills, as well as strategic thinking skills.
  - Ability to act independently to clarify and resolve issues and manage trends.
  - Ability to analyze complex issues and synthesize findings to identify actions and solutions.
  - Ability to make decisions and advise on appropriate actions to be taken with limited or no direction.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills. Strong command of the English language, both spoken and written.
- Change management and project management skills.
- Coaching and mentoring skills.
- Organizational skills to manage and coordinate a variety of projects and initiatives. Strong time management skills to prioritize and balance multiple demands and short timeframes.
- Exceptional attention to detail to ensure accuracy of issue response.
- Ability to remain self-motivated and resourceful, and the ability to work with minimal supervision.
- Familiarity with stakeholder groups and their issues.
- Conflict resolution skills.

### Behavioral Competencies

Competency	Level					Level Definition	Examples of how this level best represents the job
	A	B	C	D	E		
Systems Thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<b>Integrates broader context into planning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans for how current situation is affected by broader trends</li> <li>• Integrates issues, political environment and risks when considering possible actions</li> <li>• Supports organization vision and goals through strategy</li> <li>• Addresses behaviours that challenge progress</li> </ul>	The position has authority to independently engage internal and external stakeholders as needed to manage issues and support the branch leadership team. Analytical and evaluative skills are required to assess issues and inquiries in order to determine their urgency, impact and influence, connecting to the appropriate program staff to ensure a coordinated and timely response. Strong collaboration and coordination skills are required to ensure that each of the internal and external parties impacted by a specific issue is linked into the solution.
Agility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<b>Proactively incorporates change into processes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates opportunities for improvement</li> <li>• Is aware of and adapts to changing priorities</li> <li>• Remains objective under pressure and supports others to manage their emotions</li> </ul>	The issues that the PIC works on can often change rapidly in terms of priority or direction from Minister/Deputy Minister. The PIC must show agility to change course and achieve outcomes under these circumstances.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactively explains impact of change on roles, and integrates change in existing work</li> <li>• Readily adapts plans and practices</li> </ul>	
Drive for Results	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Works to remove barriers to outcomes, sticking to principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecasts and proactively addresses project challenges</li> <li>• Removes barriers to collaboration and achievement of outcomes</li> <li>• Upholds principles and confronts problems directly</li> <li>• Considers complex factors and aligns solutions with broader organization mission</li> </ul>	<p>The PIC is always under short timelines to deliver briefing notes, organize technical input and to respond to urgent issues from Minister's office.</p>
Develop Networks	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<p>Makes working with a wide range of parties an imperative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates impactful relationships with the right people</li> <li>• Ensures needs of varying groups are represented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goes beyond to meet stakeholder needs</li> <li>• Ensures all needs are heard and understood</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The PIC relies on subject matter experts to develop briefing materials and to respond to urgent information requests. Building and maintaining a strong network of relationships amongst branch subject matter experts is key.</p>