

CMC Committee Conference Call Minutes

Tuesday, October 17, 2017, 4:00-5:00 PM Eastern

Call-in: (646) 558-8656, access code 571 774 3008

Online: <https://zoom.us/j/5717743008>

Agenda:

1. Roll call
 - Voting members: Bev Durgan (Chair), Nancy Cox, Steve Bonnano, Fred Schlutt, Cynda Clary, Faith Peppers, Becky Walth, Gary Thompson
 - Non-voting members: Mary Wirth, Jenny Nuber, Rick Rhodes, David Leibovitz
2. Approve agenda for 10/17 call
 - **The agenda was unanimously approved.**
3. Approve minutes from 09/05 call
 - **Fred Schlutt introduced a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Cynda Clary, and passed unanimously.**
4. kglobal Q3 report (Jenny Nuber)
 - Significant time spent on the video campaign and call to action in Q3
 - Appendix A was an example of original content on hurricane impact relief
 - Original AgIsAmerica content intended to deepen communications with our communities and keep content timely/relevant.
 - A "Light CTA" to communicators was carried out by Jenny and Faith Peppers
 - Intended to gauge the kind of resources we have to tap into communicators over the upcoming year
 - Survey was released as a smaller CTA to test our network of communicators and drive engagement rates up for better response to a full-scale CTA.
 - Reached out to all communicators on Faith and Sarah's national list by email asking to respond to a short, 3-question survey (1-2 minutes to complete)
 - Email subject line: "Land-Grant University Research Areas"
 - Survey was open for one week
 - Just under half of the recipients opened the survey
 - 12 of 71 who opened the survey, completed the survey
 - How do we make sure the AgIsAmerica info is reaching the right audience? How do we activate that audience to respond properly?
 - Could we improve response rate by including Administrative Heads on the survey?

- How do we make sure people aren't deleting the emails before even engaging in the content?
- "Mini CTAs" are planned for a once a month release. The October mini CTA is underway.
 - CMC should receive better analytics on what's working/not working, what the right demographics are, what content people are most likely to engage with.
 - We need to find the right way to get the system to respond.
- **kglobal can provide monthly reports of performance for each mini CTA**
- **Faith Peppers will send a follow-up email to communicators about the light CTA survey.**
 - Did they see it? Did they respond?
 - Email will be open for 1 week.
- **Jenny Nuber will provide a list of who responded to the survey which will be circulated with the call minutes.**
- ECOP is questioning the return on investment for the CMC's efforts. How do we know how effective we are?
- Until this year, this campaign's goal was to grow and build community. This past July was our first opportunity to test strategy on engagement.
 - Jenny has never seen the first round of an engagement strategy work perfectly. We need to take this first opportunity to refine our strategy; we're young in this engagement effort.
- Perhaps Cornerstone can best answer questions on effectiveness/is this the right strategy/how do we know?
 - We need to remember that every person in the country is not part of our audience; we have a targeted audience.

5. Cornerstone report

- CTA results have informed us on what we should change on subsequent campaigns.
- If we do another video campaign, it needs to convey a greater sense of urgency.
- Hunt Shipman could not join the call but provided a report of what went on with the video campaign and response to the video campaign.
- What strategies might we as a committee develop to increase the engagement of university administrators, directors, etc?

6. CMC positioning

- A small work group (Bev Durgan, Faith Peppers, Gary Thompson and Rick Rhodes) charged by the BAA examined different models for the positioning of the CMC. This would change the models of reporting and organization to elevate the level of the committee within APLU.
- We treat the CMC as either an ad-hoc or standing committee of the BAA, but it is not – it is a standing committee of ESCOP.

- Some different models for positioning the CMC:
 - Keep as a standing committee of ESCOP
 - Make CMC ad-hoc committee of CLP
 - Make CMC a task force of BAC
 - Elevate CMC to a standing committee of the BAA (requires 2/3 vote of the membership)
- The work group shared with the BAA that they would have a report/recommendation on repositioning prior to APLU.
- If we recommend elevating the committee, ECOP is concerned that the BAA might assume their commitment to the CMC is a given.
- Gary Thompson is the ESCOP rep to the PBD and provides a direct link between groups. If ESCOP and ECOP decide on what message/direction to take, we could take that to the PBD.
- Chuck Hibberd will contact Rick Rhodes and Gary Thompson soon on this issue on behalf of ECOP.
- ECOP's timeframe to re-examine the ROI on their commitment to the CMC was slated to extend beyond APLU.
- Gary doesn't think this needs to be tied up with a vote by APLU. If we can all agree on the draft of the positioning paper, that can be brought up in the PBD's discussion.
- How far before the PBD meeting at APLU do we need to deliver this?
 - Probably could sneak it into the PBD meeting as 'other business'
 - **Rick and Gary will work on getting the positioning paper in front of the PBD at APLU**
 - **Will reach out to Eddie Gouge and Jay Akridge to give them a heads up on this for the PBD meeting.**

7. Adjourn

- Call adjourned at 5:00 PM Eastern.

Communicator Survey Memo

October 12, 2017

What We Did

On October 2, we sent an email to 71 land-grant university communicators asking them to fill out a five-minute survey. Survey questions prompted communicators to choose the top three research areas of their school's expertise.

These research areas emphasized the two BAA priority areas, water and healthy systems, and included options kglobal identified as recurring research from schools throughout the year.

This survey was meant to:

1. Understand which communicators at which schools were responsive to AgIsAmerica asks
2. Compile a list of top research areas across all land-grant universities to better tailor future daily content
3. Determine which land-grant university communicators were open to collaborating with AgIsAmerica on original content promoting their research and extension efforts

Results

As of October 11, 29 communicators (41%) have read the email and 12 people (17%) have clicked on the survey. 12 people have completed the survey.

Top research priorities included:

- Agricultural Economy
- Food safety
- Livestock
- Plant breeding



Survey Completions

- ChaNae Bradley, Fort Valley State University
- Graham Binder, University of Maryland
- Stacey Stearns, University of Connecticut
- Brian Meyer, Iowa State University
- Samara Sit, Cornell University
- Faith Peppers, University of Georgia
- Jenny Lavey, Montana State University
- Ruth Borger, University of Florida
- Frances Gould, Louisiana State University
- Gail Wells, Oregon State University
- Becky Koch, North Dakota State University
- Debbie Archer, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- Keith Owens, Oklahoma State University

Unsubscribes: rita_lavoie@uri.edu, rutledge@cals.arizona.edu, rcasler@ag.arizona.edu



Appendix I: Email Sent to Communicators



Land-Grant University Research Areas

Good afternoon,

As we begin preparing our activities and content for the new year, we would like to know what specific research areas your university specializes in to better align our content with your audiences.

We are asking each communicator to complete a very brief survey and submit top priority research areas from their department.

Please click [here](#) to participate in our short survey. Responses will be collected until next Tuesday, October 10.

Thank you in advance, and let us know if you have any questions!

-Terri at Ag Is America

You are receiving this email because you have signed up to receive updates from Agriculture is America. For any questions or comments, please email Terri Baumann at terri.baumann@kglobal.com

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Appendix II: Survey

1. Please pick **the top three research areas** within your school's expertise:
 - Agricultural economy
 - Climate-smart agriculture
 - Farm conservation
 - Farming
 - Food safety
 - Food security
 - Nutrition
 - Soil quality
 - Urban farming
 - Aquaculture
 - Biofuels
 - Disaster management
 - Water quality
 - Irrigation
 - Water conservation
 - Livestock
 - Healthy food systems
 - Farm-to-table/school
 - Food banks
 - Harvest
2. If your school's expertise was not listed, please list them below.
3. Within your expertise, do you have upcoming research and news coming out in those areas?
4. If yes, can we contact you to collaborate on original content for the Ag Is America platforms?

Personal Information: Name, Title, School, Email Address



Positioning the Communications and Marketing Committee

October 17, 2017

Working group: Bev Durgan, Faith Peppers, Gary Thompson and Rick Rhodes

The Charge:

The Policy Board of Directors (PBD) of the Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) commissioned a small working group to assess strategies to increase the effectiveness of the Communications and Marketing Committee. In that charge, the PBD asked the working group to consider alternative lines of reporting and models of organization of the CMC. The working group considered six organizational models. Herein, we make a recommendation on the preferred models.

Recommendation:

The working group recommends that the CMC be appointed immediately as an ad hoc committee of the BAA with a goal of establishing the CMC as a standing committee of the BAA within one year of its appointment as an ad hoc committee.

Further, we recommend that the BAA develop a funding mechanism to provide a budget for the CMC. Currently, the CMC has a budget of \$400,000 funded by an equal annual assessment (\$133,333) to the Administrative Heads (AHS), ECOP and ESCOP.

Background:

The communications and marketing project started as an ESCOP initiative dedicated to marketing and advocacy. This grew from a white paper, *Marketing the SAES – A Background Paper on Marketing the SAES* written by Dave MacKenzie, Executive Director – NERA, early in the 2000s. The marketing and advocacy initiative culminated in the establishment of an ESCOP standing committee (Communications and Marketing) and development of a communications and marketing strategy (2008.) In 2012, ECOP joined with ESCOP on the CMC with a goal to oversee and guide a coordinated and targeted educational effort to increase awareness of the Agricultural Experiment Stations and Cooperative Extension Services. In 2013 and 2014, the cost of the project was \$400,000 annually and was split equally between ECOP and ESCOP. Leadership of the committee was shared between the Experiment Station Section and the Cooperative Extension Section; the long-term outcome of the communications and marketing project was to seek increases in federal funding to competitive and capacity lines. In 2014, the administrative heads (AHS, collectively represented by Ian Maw) joined the effort. Again, the membership of the committee changed to reflect the supporting divisions and the annual operating budget was split evenly between AHS, ECOP, and ESCOP.

In 2015, the first Plan of Work (CMC, 2016 Plan of Work) was adopted. The plan included a statement that defined the CMC as the *policy-making body that oversees the development, implementation and effectiveness of the targeted educational efforts, including coordination with the APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly, kglobal and Cornerstone Government Affairs*. One of the goals

of the plan was the development of *ways to coordinate activities with the BAA and its committees including the Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC) and the Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP)*. A year later, the 2017 CMC Plan of Work, evolved to state explicitly that the communications and marketing plan (CMP) would focus on BAA initiatives. That included the “One Ask”, Water, Healthy Food Systems and Infrastructure.

While the CMC represents the interests of the sections (AHS, CES and ESS) and, therefore looks like a standing committee of BAA; in actuality, the CMC is a standing committee of ESCOP. The CMC has outgrown its current model of organization and now seeks a means to clearly and closely integrate activities with the oversight organization of AHS, ECOP and ESCOP: the BAA. Equally important, the CMC seeks greater activation of its constituent organizations and partners during calls for action. If effective coordination of the CMC with the BAA, BAC, CLP and institutional partners is to be successfully accomplished, then the reporting lines of the committee must be clearly established.

Once the reporting line is established, then the membership of the committee should be evaluated as a means to optimize the CMC's operating efficiency.

Models of organization:

Recommended Models

The CMC is appointed as a standing committee of the BAA

Advantages

- Opportunity for close coordination with the BAA.
- Elevates level of responsibility.
- Clear line of organizational oversight.
- Means to assist in unified messaging.

Disadvantages

- Requires 2/3 vote by the membership.

The CMC is appointed as an ad hoc committee (or task force) of the BAA

Advantages

- Quick fix.
- Opportunity for close coordination with the BAA.
- Elevates level of responsibility.
- Clear line of organizational oversight.
- Means to assist in unified messaging.

Disadvantages

- Requires appointing the committee on an annual basis, chance of high turnover rate of committee members.