



Policy G-11

Chief-to-Board Communications

Purpose

1. Communications are essential to effective Governance, especially the communications the Board receives from its top employee and sole official link to the Service: the Chief of Police. The Board relies on information from the Chief of Police to make informed decisions that are relevant, timely, clear and compelling. The Board also supplements the information provided by the Chief of Police with independent advice when and where appropriate.
2. Characteristics of effective communications from the Chief to the Board are:
 - a. accuracy;
 - b. brevity;
 - c. relevance;
 - d. timeliness.; and
 - e. communication channels.

Standard Communication Channels

3. All information reported, and advice provided, to the Board shall be routed through the Board Secretary in written report format for placement on the Board portal and appropriate meeting/workshop agenda or correspondence folder, in accordance with the Procedural Bylaw. This includes any and all general and/or educational information. The **only exceptions** are:
 - a. information or advice that is relevant to the specific delegated authority of the Chair, CGO and/or Committee Chair; and
 - b. information or advice that is a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance.



Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance

4. A Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance is one that rapidly elevates the Board's operational, financial, reputational or other enterprise risk, and therefore calls for the Board's immediate attention and/or preparedness to take action prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting.
5. Examples of Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance include but are not limited to:
 - 5.1 major incidents resulting in mass casualties;
 - 5.2 incidents where the SIU has invoked its mandate in response to a death or life-threatening injuries;
 - 5.3 any incidents involving, directly or indirectly, senior police officers or civilian directors, board members or public figures that are likely to draw significant media attention;
 - 5.4 any incident that warrants a special press/media conference involving the Chief of Police.
6. The timely and accurate receipt of such information positions the Board to respond to public, OCPC/IG and/or media inquiries and demands, and helps to inform the Board's assessment of the Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance, as well as any Board decisions that follow from that assessment.

Notification Requirements for Matters of Immediate Strategic Significance

7. When a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance arises, the Chief or his/her designate shall notify the Board Chair and Board's CGO of the pertinent information by any electronic notification (e.g. email, phone or text) at the earliest possible time and provide updates as available and necessary.
8. Upon receipt of notification of a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance from the Chief or designate, the Chair or the CGO shall inform the other Board members of the incident and any updates received.
9. For clarification purposes, any and all information that does not constitute a Matter of Immediate Strategic Significance, or is not a matter specifically for the Chair, CGO or a Committee Chair, shall be provided to the Board Secretary for inclusion in the appropriate Board agenda for Board consideration/discussion. Any other form of information sharing to the Board, such as direct emailing, undermines the Board's governance processes, and is therefore contrary to this policy.



Inquiries from the Media

10. Any media requests received by the Police Service's Corporate Communications Office related to the Board mandate, policies or decisions shall be forwarded to the Board Media consultant.
11. Unless otherwise specified, the Chair is the official spokesperson for matters within the jurisdiction of the Board. In response to an inquiry regarding the Board Governance or Board Policies, the CGO may act as a spokesperson on behalf of the Board.
12. The Board spokesperson shall only comment on matters within the jurisdiction and mandate of the Board, and shall avoid speaking on matters within the legislated authority of the Chief of Police. Similarly, the Chief of Police shall refrain from commenting or speculating, officially or otherwise, on matters within the Board's domain. Prior to responding to media requests for interviews or comments, the Board spokesperson shall consult, as appropriate, with the Chief or his/her designate to ensure the appropriate coordination.
13. The CGO shall monitor various media outlets for emerging Matters of Strategic Significance which may generate media or public interest, and apprise the Board accordingly.

Legislative References:

G06- Board-Chief Relationship

Procedural Bylaw