

ACO Bulletin

The Aboriginal Consultation Office: committed to improving transparency and demystifying consultation

September 2020

COVID -19 update

The Government of Alberta's first priority is public health and safety. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACO assesses a First Nation's, Metis Settlement's or credibly asserted Métis community's (CAMC) ability to carry out consultation case-by-case. Visit the Indigenous Consultation Contacts website for details:

<https://www.alberta.ca/indigenous-consultation-contacts.aspx>.

ACO updates

ACO Digital Service

The ACO continues to modernize Alberta's consultation process. The ACO Digital Service Beta Release, available online now at <https://uat-acods-dev-uat.os99.gov.ab.ca/>, is in testing with more than 30 users from Indigenous communities, industry proponents, and Alberta government staff.

Currently supporting Phase 2 development, the project team is planning some major releases in the near future. Phase 2 will include functionality for proponents and Alberta government staff to submit and manage consultation applications directly to the ACO through the Digital Service, which will lead to a more efficient, transparent and user-friendly experience.

To get involved in the development of the new system, contact ACODigitalService@gov.ab.ca or [Gabriel Potter](#).

ACO Continuous Improvement

The ACO is committed to continuous improvement by monitoring for relevant trends, pressure points or risks to support informed decisions that improve effectiveness and efficiency of the consultation process.



Earlier this year, the ACO won the Premier's Public Service Award for outstanding leadership in managing consultation timelines. We continue to watch for workload pressures and implement surge planning, as needed, to stay within target application processing timelines. The ACO continues to work with the Alberta Energy Regulator and provincial ministries to explore ways to further streamline the consultation process.

A Guide for First Nations, Metis Settlements and CAMCs

The goal is to clarify roles and responsibilities to improve and enhance the information available for Indigenous communities participating in Alberta's consultation process.

Go to your go-to

The regional Consultation Advisor (CA) continues to be your go-to source for navigating the Government of Alberta's consultation process more efficiently. Reach out early in your planning process to the CA assigned to the project's region!

<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/ir-aco-contacts-by-region.pdf>

Visit us online at <https://www.alberta.ca/indigenous-consultations-in-alberta.aspx>

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Level 1 and 2 ROC logs

Wondering how to complete your ROC log without a response from a First Nation, Metis Settlement or CAMC during the notification period?

Add an entry to say the notification period has passed with no received response. The file will be submitted to the ACO for an adequacy review.

Completing Level 1 and 2 ROC logs

The Record of Consultation (ROC) log is used to reflect and summarize the consultation efforts or communications for a proposed project. Project proponents must be sure the ROC log for each First Nation, Metis Settlement or CAMC contains a complete, detailed, accurate and chronological account of all consultation activities.

The 2019 Proponent Guide, effective January 2, 2020, outlines in Section 2.5 what the ACO's expectations are when completing the ROC log. The rollout of the 2019 Proponent Guide also came with a new ROC log template, made available online: <https://www.alberta.ca/indigenous-consultation-templates-and-forms.aspx>

The main change is that there is no longer a "Comments / Outcomes" column.

ACO staff have reviewed files that include the new ROC log template, so we can offer some tips and reminders based on real-life examples:

- The "Issue(s) or concern(s) expressed" column should only include issues or concerns brought up by First Nation, Metis Settlement or CAMC.

- The "Proponent's mitigation measures" column should only reflect mitigation or proposed mitigation measures brought forward by the proponent, First Nation, Metis Settlement or CAMC. Other information that may be important as well is better placed in the "Purpose and details of contact" column.
- Remember to delete the template text from the ROC log. This text can be replaced with "N/A" or "-", for example.
- Enter full names, first and last, of First Nations, Metis Settlements or CAMC representatives and proponent representatives. Clearly document who is involved in the correspondence or activity taking place during consultation. Please also make clear who is contacting whom, or who is performing the action. Please remember to include those who are cc'ed in emails.
- Summarize all correspondence or activities that took place between the proponent and First Nations, Metis Settlements or CAMC representatives. The ROC log is a tool to summarize the consultation that took place and highlights any issues or concerns and mitigation discussed. It is not a communication tool.

Following these steps reduces the chance of your files being sent back via More Information Requests. It will also ensure consistency for all parties when reviewing a ROC log.

