



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Municipal and Community Affairs	Manager, Public Affairs and Communications	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
21-17644	Yellowknife	Corporate Affairs/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Manager, Public Affairs and Communications leads the Department's public relations and communications strategies; this includes providing strategic advice to senior management, oversight of media relations and public engagement, and direction of communications materials (print, digital, multimedia) that promote MACA's goals. The Manager, Public Affairs and Communications, also plays a key role during emergency events, acting as the Emergency Management Organization (EMO) Information Officer in crisis situations (e.g. community floods, forest fires, evacuations) and ensures compliance with GNWT official language requirements.

SCOPE

MACA is responsible for fostering capable, accountable, and self-directed community governments that can deliver essential programs and services, respond to local needs, and promote community well-being. The Department also protects the interests of consumers and plays a lead role in supporting public safety and emergency management across the Northwest Territories. Its mandate spans diverse and often remote communities, many of which face infrastructure challenges, extreme weather conditions, short construction seasons, and transportation limitations.

MACA's regionalized delivery model, which operates across five geographic regions, requires communications approaches that reflect local priorities while aligning with GNWT-wide strategic objectives. The Department delivers highly visible programs—such as emergency response coordination, capital funding, drinking water compliance, recreation leadership, and elections administration—that require clear, responsive, and timely communication with a broad range of audiences, including residents, community governments, media, Indigenous governments, and political leaders.



The Manager plays a central leadership role in developing and implementing the Department's communications strategies and tools. These responsibilities involve managing departmental messaging, preparing content for political and executive leadership, and collaborating with senior managers across divisions and regions. The Manager is responsible for ensuring the public, staff, and stakeholders are well-informed, while also contributing to the development of policy and program materials that support service delivery.

The position is based in Yellowknife and reports to the Director, Corporate Affairs. The Manager must have a strong grasp of public sector operations, intergovernmental relationships, and the complexities of emergency and risk communications. As the Department's senior communications official, the Manager serves as a key liaison with Cabinet Communications, other GNWT departments, media representatives, and contractors.

During emergency events, the Manager may assume the role of Information Officer under the Incident Command System (ICS), coordinating urgent communications and acting as a spokesperson for the GNWT. This includes managing high-stakes public messaging, organizing press briefings, and ensuring that information is timely, complete, accurate, and accessible.

One of the Manager's direct reports may also assume the Information Officer role depending on the scope and nature of the emergency.

The Manager is also responsible for upholding GNWT policies on accessibility, inclusion, and official languages. This includes leading the implementation of MACA's French Language Operating Plan and ensuring communications products meet standards across formats and platforms. The role involves regular coordination with regional staff, central agencies, and political offices, and requires a proactive approach to identifying emerging issues and delivering solutions-oriented communications advice.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide strategic communications advice.

- Advise Senior Management on strategic communications approaches aligned with GNWT and departmental goals and objectives.
- Recommend and advise Senior Management on public affairs strategies, stakeholder engagement initiatives, and communications support for legislative, policy and program objectives.
- Represent MACA in interdepartmental and intergovernmental communications groups.
- Build collaborative relationships with key stakeholders to support departmental communication plans and strategies and to facilitate successful policy development and program delivery.



2. Manage the development and implementation of communications plans and strategies for the Department.

- Oversee the development and execution of communications plans that define objectives, tactics, target audiences, timelines, and evaluation methods.
- Ensure communications planning is embedded early in departmental policy, program, and legislative initiatives.
- Provide planning frameworks and tools to support regional and divisional communications work.
- Establish clear roles, responsibilities, and approval pathways to enable effective coordination of communications efforts.
- Conduct environmental scans and maintain situational awareness to anticipate and respond to emerging public issues.
- Support continuous improvement by embedding metrics and lessons learned into future planning.
- Lead evaluation of communications initiatives and revise strategies based on performance data, audience feedback, and organizational needs.

3. Manage the development and implementation of operational public affairs, media relations and issues management.

- Manage daily media inquiries and coordinate responses in collaboration with Cabinet Communications.
- Provide expert advice on media strategy, reputational risks, and appropriate communications channels.
- Develop and maintain a network of media contacts.
- Lead the drafting and approval of public-facing materials including news releases, media lines, speaking notes, and Q&As.
- Coordinate media events such as interviews, briefings, press conferences, and announcements.
- Prepare and support departmental spokespersons through coaching, briefing, and media training.
- Recommend and implement strategies for managing controversial or high-risk media coverage.
- Monitor media coverage and public sentiment to identify emerging reputational risks and opportunities.
- Ensure media relations activities are integrated into broader communications planning.

4. Assume the role of Information Officer on the Incident Management Team during major emergency events.

- Coordinate the implementation of the Emergency Communications Protocol.
- Assume the Information Officer role
- Support the Minister's involvement in emergency communications



- Undertake the communications requirements related to declaring a State of Emergency
- Act as the spokesperson for the GNWT related to emergency management.
- Participate in the Incident Management Teams formed to respond to territorial emergencies.
- Ensure emergency communications are coordinated, comprehensive and timely.
- Provide daily incident updates to departmental communications officers.
- Serve as the media point of contact for media events, manage media requests, and coordinate interviews and press conferences.
- Assist in the production and distribution of incident specific public alerts.
- Participate in After Action Reviews of emergency events and provide recommendations to update emergency communications plans and protocols.
- Act on call to support public safety information requirements during emergencies.
- Identify when communications demands exceed departmental capacity and recommend to the Incident Commander when to activate surge support through GNWT's Information Officer roster.

5. Manage the development and distribution of departmental public information, education and promotional materials and activities.

- Oversee the development and distribution of departmental public information, education, and promotional materials.
- Ensure all products are audience-appropriate, aligned with communications plans, and developed in accordance with GNWT policies, official language obligations, and visual identity standards.
- Manage the Department's website and social media presence, including content review and compliance monitoring.
- Support or coordinate special events, media engagements, and promotional campaigns.
- Provide expert advice and support for producing communications materials across all formats and platforms.

6. Manage the Department's Official Languages function

- Provide leadership on the implementation of MACA's French Language Operating Plan.
- Advise on compliance with the Official Languages Act and GNWT language policies.
- Coordinate translations for websites, publications, and communications tools.
- Act as liaison to the French-speaking public and related working groups.

7. Manage the Communications Unit and contribute to the achievement of departmental objectives.

- Manage staffing functions including recruitment, supervision, and performance management.
- Set clear expectations and provide ongoing coaching, feedback, and development opportunities.



- Ensure staff have the tools, information, and context needed to succeed.
- Contribute to divisional planning and budgeting; manage and monitor the unit's budget and contracts.
- Represent the Department on GNWT communications committees and working groups.
- Develop and advertise Requests for Proposals and award and manage contracts as necessary to retain contractors to undertake communications work for the department.
- Act as Director, Corporate Affairs as and when required.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual demands.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands

Mental Demands

This position is subject to high levels of mental demands on a cyclical basis (e.g. during Legislative Assembly Sessions) and during crises or emergency situations.

The incumbent may be required to be on standby frequently throughout high-risk periods (April-September including weekends) and must be available to respond to emergency management issues and response activities during periods of increased risk to communities. The incumbent may be required to work extended hours in a crisis support role.

The incumbent may be exposed to emotionally and/or politically charged situations when dealing with emergency response events and interacting with staff, media and residents who have been impacted by emergencies or disasters and have experienced personal loss.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of strategic communications, media relations, issues management, and public engagement.
- Understanding of MACA's mandate, GNWT operations, and the political, social, and cultural context of service delivery.
- Familiarity with emergency response systems, particularly the Incident Command System (ICS).



- Knowledge of content development across print, digital, audiovisual, and social media platforms.
- Proficiency in software for writing, editing, publishing, and online collaboration.
- Understanding of public education, awareness, and training approaches.
- Strategic and analytical thinking, including planning, problem-solving, and message framing.
- Writing and verbal communication skills with the ability to tailor messages to diverse audiences.
- Ability to lead, plan, and deliver concurrent projects and meet tight timelines.
- Skills in emergency and crisis communication to support public confidence and safety.
- Ability to lead and develop teams and foster strong stakeholder relationships.
- Sound judgment, tact, diplomacy, and political acuity in high-profile environments.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A university degree in communications with 3 years of relevant experience including 1 year in a supervisory role.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)

Level required for this Designated Position is:

ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

READING COMPREHENSION:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

WRITING SKILLS:

Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐

- ☒ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred