



President's Special Report – July 2020 Update

As we approach the full implementation of the *Professional Governance Act* (“PGA”) currently set for November 16th, 2020, and given the recent first ever virtual provincial AGM BCIA Council would like to provide all Registrants with a brief update on these matters.

PGA and the definition of regulated practice

BCIA's PGA Working Group has recently proposed to the provincial government a definition of “regulated practice” which includes proposed exemptions and reserved titles as a basis for the Schedules to the PGA that will replace the current *Agrologists Act*. The full proposal has been posted to the [Registrants section](#) of the BCIA website should you wish to review it. (You will need to log in as a registrant to view.) Any questions or comments you may have, including but not limited to your opinions as to whether the definitions cover all of the current activities practiced by BCIA Registrants, should be provided to BCIA as soon as possible but no later than July 24th, 2020. Please note that the current proposal is NOT our proposal for practice rights that will be granted to our profession under the PGA but rather is the foundation on which practice rights will be built.

Specifically the definition of regulated practice outlined in the current proposal should be viewed as a new definition of the profession of agrology as practiced within the province of British Columbia. That definition is the culmination of the tremendous work of the PGA Working Group with a special shout out to the research and editing skills of Keith Duhaime PAg.

Moving forward the next few weeks will be filled with numerous meetings with the other four natural resource sector Regulators and with the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance (“OSPG”) itself. One purpose of these meetings is to identify with the other Regulators practices that may be matters of joint jurisdiction that will need to be confirmed as part of the clarification of practice rights. These meetings may result in some amendments to the proposed definitions.

In early August the OSPG intends to post the proposed definitions of the 5 Regulators in some form of on-line public consultation process however we are not aware of the full details of that process as of yet. After that process is complete the OSPG will commence drafting of the Schedules to the PGA that will repeal the respective Acts as of November 16th, 2020.



Commencing this week BCIA staff and the Working Group will start work on proposed definitions for “reserved practice”. This definition will be the specification of activities which will be exclusively reserved for BCIA Registrants and thus can be viewed as the main part of our proposed practice rights for the profession. This process will also include clarification of those practices which the respective Regulators agree are joint jurisdiction between two or more of the 5 Regulators. By necessity this work will include an intense review and probable restructuring of the current 38 areas of practice governed by BCIA. Although not specifically required by the November 16th deadline it is our hope that these definitions can be completed by early fall.

With respect to the implementation and enforcement of practice rights based on our definition of restricted practices it is our understanding that the government will provide a grace period during which non-Registrant practitioners of agrology services may come into compliance with practice rights provisions. Again by necessity, this aspect will probably also include certain legacy provisions for those individuals who cannot meet the requirements for Registrant eligibility but have been employed in an agrology position. Specifics of the grace period and legacy provisions have not yet been determined.

These matters are moving quickly and thus require tremendous commitment from our volunteers and staff. We will keep our Registrants advised of any significant developments but as always feel free to contact the BCIA or the Registrant Councillor from your respective regional electoral district.

2020 Provincial AGM and upcoming Branch AGMs

June 11, 2020 saw the first ever on-line virtual annual general meeting in the history of BCIA. Although mandated by compliance to the current COVID-19 restrictions Council has been discussing the use of on-line formats for the past few years. Although we experienced some hardware challenges and software capacity issues the attendance of in excess of 500 people is indicative of the popularity of this format.

Prior to the AGM Council determined that, due to the COVID-19 restrictions attendance at the on-line AGM would qualify as attendance for purposes of PD hours and the articling Registrants' mandatory attendance. This did cause some confusion during the AGM as resolutions were



submitted that requested the same relief as had already been agreed upon. In addition to a resolution to ratify the new Bylaws there were 3 resolutions considered during the AGM as follows:

1. Resolution 2(a) - Confirmed on-line attendance at a BCIA AGM including the 2020 AGM by an Articling Agrologist or Articling Technologist in Agrology shall be recognized as attendance required to attain PAg or RTAg status. **CARRIED.** (274 votes for, 21 against and 7 abstentions)
2. Resolution 2(b) - Confirmed attendance by a Registrant at an AGM, either personally or virtually, shall qualify for the respective number of professional development hours as determined by BCIA. **CARRIED.** (329 votes for, 10 against and 3 abstentions)
3. Resolution 2(c) - BCIA shall offer virtual options at in-person AGMs specifically including, but not limited to, on-line voting by Registrants in good standing. **Discussion tabled for further research as to costs and feasibility.**

From its review of the AGM including the survey results submitted by attendees at the AGM Council has made the following decisions:

- Moving forward all provincial Annual General Meetings of BCIA will be separated from any conference component and will be held virtually within the timelines outlined in the respective legislation. Confirmed on-line attendance at an AGM will qualify for the prescribed number of professional development hours for each Registrant attendee and will fulfill the mandatory attendance requirement for Articling Registrants.
- Until further notice all Branch AGMs will be held on-line and will be administered by the BCIA office. Confirmed attendance will qualify for the prescribed number of professional development hours and will fulfill the mandatory attendance requirement for Articling Registrants.
- Branches should continue to present in-person PD events in accordance with the provincial Covid 19 guidelines.
- BCIA will present in-person conference events concentrating on continuing education and professional development to be held once Covid 19 restrictions have been relaxed. Council is still considering whether there should be a mandatory in-person attendance at a minimum of one of these conferences moving forward.
- Planning for the 2021 conference that was set for Kelowna has been postponed to 2022 due to the unknown nature of the time frame respecting Covid-19 restrictions.
- Planning for a 2021 provincial in-person conference, to be hosted by the Victoria & the Islands Branch has been tabled pending further developments respecting COVID-19 restrictions



In the course of the AGM numerous questions were asked respecting a variety of topics. Those questions and the answers provided at the AGM are posted in the Registrants section under [Budgets, Audited Statements, AGM....](#) Please feel free to contact BCIA staff if you have additional questions.

Vice President Election

In accordance with the new Bylaws and in compliance with the PGA, Council at its first meeting after the AGM elected Jessica Morgan PAg (Okanagan Branch) as the new Vice President of BCIA. Jess will move into her two year term as President commencing at the end of the 2021 AGM. She has been very active on Council during the past few years especially in her work with the Credentials Committee. Council and BCIA staff look forward to her continued insight especially given the exciting times ahead with the advent of practice rights.

The BCIA staff and your Registrant Councillors are always available to address your comments and questions. Please feel free to contact us through at comments@email.bcia.com.

Yours Truly

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jane Kerner", with a large, looping flourish at the end.

Jane Kerner, P.Ag.
BCIA President