

*Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District*

**POLICY MANUAL**

Section	Administration
Policy Number	AG-1501-01
Policy Title	Communications Policy

**POLICY OBJECTIVES**

1. To define policies and procedure for effective, accessible and consistent communications.
2. To enhance appropriate internal communications among staff and trustees.
3. To facilitate proactive communications with other levels of government, non-government organizations and the public at large.
4. To ensure that the information provided by Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District is accurate.

**DEFINITIONS**

**“Administrator”** as established in the District’s “Officer Positions Establishment Bylaw No.185”

**“Chair”** the Chair or Acting Chair of the Board of Trustees Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.

**“District”** the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.

**“Internal communications”** relate to communications among staff and trustees.

**“External communications”** refer to communications that staff and trustees have with other levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the public at large.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees of the District, Trustees and Committee Members.

## **STATEMENT OF POLICY**

### **Internal Communications**

The Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District encourages positive and proactive communications within the organization.

Internal staff communication tools include regular staff and management meeting, ongoing electronic communications as well as written and verbal communications.

All staff and trustees will have access to appropriate level of technology in order to complete their work related responsibilities.

### **External Communications**

The Chair is the designated spokesperson for the District and the Board of Trustees. From time to time, the Chair may request another trustee, the Fire Chief or the Administrator, to speak on behalf of the District. In the event of an issue regarding specific technical background and knowledge, the Chair may appoint the Fire Chief or another staff spokesperson.

The Administrator is the authorized spokesperson on behalf of the District regarding matters affecting the administration of the District.

The Fire Chief is the authorized spokesperson on behalf of the District regarding operations.

Staff are authorized to speak regarding adopted policy and technical matters or matters related to their work program.

Staff and trustees will forward inquiries to the designated spokesperson(s) where appropriate.

There are various means to enhance communications and provide information to the public about the activities of the District as follows:

- a) Notice published in newspapers as part of a statutory requirement under the provisions of the Local Government Act, the District's Letters patent, or any other Government Statute, will not be subject to prior approval from the Board of Trustees.
- b) Staff are authorized to advertise routine operation and business information in print media (newspapers) and web based media;
- c) Staff are encouraged to use news releases to communicate recent activities, decisions, projects, and services. Staff are to submit a draft news release to the Chair, or to the Fire Chief if the subject matter is operational in nature, before publishing. If the news release includes a quotation from an individual trustee or member of staff, then approval must be obtained in advance from the trustee or staff member. News releases will be copied to staff, trustees and the media and the posted on the District's website.

The District will maintain a Fire Service website for public access to up-to-date user-friendly information such as District meetings, activities, decisions and resources.

The following publishing procedures apply to all District websites:

- a) A designated staff person will post routine information to the website by sending information direct to website administrator for publishing. For any non-routine information staff are to submit a draft to the Chair, or Fire Chief if the subject matter relates to operations, for approval and verification before sending the information to the website administrator for publishing;
- b) Staff are to indicate an expiry date or follow up date for all website publishing requests; and
- c) Information appearing on the District's website will not promote an identifiable individual or business over any other or individual or business. The only exceptions will be during the period of time after the close of nominations and voting day for elections to the Board of Trustees, brief background information on all nominated candidates including positions statements will be accepted and posted on the District's website for the information of electors and the general public. The District reserves the right to accept or reject material. If material is rejected, candidates will be notified and given an opportunity to revise their submission.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Market & Communications Committee of the Board of Trustees will be responsible for recommending communications policies and procedures for approval by the Board of Trustees of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District.

## **BOARD DISCRETION**

The provisions set out in this policy are subject to revision from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

“Use of Information Technology” Policy

## **APPROVALS**

Approval date:	2016-04-04	Approved by:	Board of Trustees
1. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
2. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
3. Amendment date:		Approved by:	