

III. General

Section 18 – Risk Management

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18.1 Purpose

The Municipal Employees’ Pension Commission (the Commission) is responsible for managing the risks of the Plan. The purpose of this policy is to identify the Commission’s risk management philosophy, principles, roles and responsibilities, review process, and communication expectations.

18.2 Rationale

A focused, systematic, and integrated approach recognizes that all decisions involve management of risks. Whether in routine operations or for major initiatives involving significant resources, it is important that the risk management process be applied at all levels of operation.

The Risk Management Policy ensures that a regular documented process is in place for the management of the Plan’s foreseeable risks. Documenting the rationale for arriving at decisions strengthens accountability and demonstrates due diligence.

18.3 Policy

Risk Management Philosophy

The Commission is committed to creating and maintaining value for the stakeholders of the Plan. The Plan faces risks as the Commission fulfills this commitment. Therefore, the Commission is responsible for managing all foreseeable risks that could affect the operation of the pension plan and the Plan’s stakeholders. Through the risk management

process, the Commission identifies, measures, monitors, and manages these risks in a manner that is consistent with the Commission's governance model. The Commission's risk management process is to be guided by the following key values.

Accountability

We are accountable to the members and the stakeholders of the Municipal Employees' Pension Plan for our administration of the Plan. We operate in a transparent manner.

Professionalism

We strive for excellence in our administration of the Municipal Employees' Pension Plan by being diligent and making informed decisions.

Integrity

As trustees of the Municipal Employees' Pension Fund we hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity. We strive to act always with honesty and in a manner worthy of the trust our members have placed in us.

Fairness

We administer the Municipal Employees' Pension Plan in the best interests of all members of the Plan. We strive to ensure that our decisions are equitable for all plan members by adhering to decision making that is fair and open-minded. Our actions are courteous, considerate, and responsive.

Risk Management Principles

The Canadian Standards Association has adopted the risk management principles and guidelines of the International Organization of Standardization in a National Standard of Canada. The Commission recognizes the principles, recorded below, as documented in the CAN/CSA-ISO 31000-10 as those of industry best practice.

- Risk management creates value.

Risk management contributes to the demonstrable achievement of objectives and improvement of, for example, human health and safety, legal and regulatory compliance, public acceptance, environmental protection, financial performance, product quality, efficiency in operations, corporate governance, and reputation.

- Risk management is an integral part of organizational processes.

Risk management is part of the responsibilities of management and an integral part of the normal organizational processes as well as of all project and change management processes. Risk management is not a stand-alone activity which is separate from the main activities and processes of the organization.

- Risk management is part of decision making.

Risk management helps decision makers make informed choices. Risk management can help prioritize actions and distinguish among alternative courses of action. Ultimately, risk management can help with decisions on whether a risk is unacceptable and whether risk treatment will be adequate and effective.

- Risk management explicitly addresses uncertainty.

Risk management deals with those aspects of decision making that are uncertain, the nature of that uncertainty, and how it can be addressed.

- Risk management is systematic, structured, and timely.

A systematic, timely, and structured approach to risk management contributes to efficiency and consistent, comparable, and reliable results.

- Risk management is based on the best available information.

The inputs to the process of managing risk are based on information sources such as experience, feedback, observation, forecasts, and expert judgment. However, decision makers should be informed of and should take into account any limitations of the data or modeling used or the possibility of divergence among experts.

- Risk management is tailored.

Risk management is aligned with the organization's external and internal context, and risk profile.

- Risk management takes human and cultural factors into account.

The organization's risk management recognizes the capabilities, perceptions and intentions of external and internal people that can facilitate or hinder achievement of the organization's objectives.

- Risk management is transparent and inclusive.

Appropriate and timely involvement of stakeholders and, in particular, decision makers at all levels of the organization, ensures that risk management remains relevant and up-to-date. Involvement also allows stakeholders to be properly represented and to have their views taken into account in determining risk criteria.

- Risk management is dynamic, iterative, and responsive to change.

As internal and external events occur, context and knowledge change, monitoring and review take place, new risks emerge, some change, and others disappear. Therefore, an organization should ensure that risk management continually senses and responds to change.

- Risk management facilitates continual improvement and enhancement of the organization.

Organizations should develop and implement strategies to improve their risk management maturity alongside all other aspects of their organization.

Risk Management Process, Terms, and Definitions

The Commission has adopted the risk management process, terms, and definitions set out in CAN/CSA-ISO 31000-10. The Commission has made slight modifications to the risk management process to highlight the attention given to Risk Assessment, Risk Management, and Risk Communications within the process. A model of the Commission's risk management process is attached as Appendix A. A list of relevant terms and definitions is attached as Appendix B.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Commission as it applies to the risk management process is to set and approve the Commission's Risk Management Policy, monitor compliance with the approved policy, review and approve the annual Risk Management Plan, delegate the tasks of risk management to the Administrator, and oversee the risk management process.

As the Commission's Administrator, The Public Employees Benefits Agency's (PEBA) role as it applies to the risk management process, is to establish operating strategies, implement policies, provides resources to support the Commission, report on compliance, report on performance, and conduct the day-to-day administration of the risk management process.

Ensuring the significant components of the Risk Management Plan are documented is a primary responsibility of PEBA. The extent of documentation will depend on the magnitude and complexity of the risk issues involved, stakeholder expectations, and anticipated need to explain and reference the Risk Management Plan and demonstrate due diligence in the future.

Specific responsibilities of the Commission and PEBA are set out below.

The Commission is responsible for:

- Approving a risk management process;
- Approving the Commission's Risk Management Policy and monitoring compliance with the approved policy;
- Ensuring that significant risks are identified, assessed, and managed;
- Reviewing and approving the annual Risk Management Plan;
- Approving the Commission's risk tolerance levels;
- Providing leadership on risk management and assigning roles and responsibilities within the context of the Commissions' governance processes;
- Abiding by its Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest procedures;
- Ensuring that plan stakeholders have adequate access to appropriate risk management communications;
- Voting on risks; and
- Approving a risk register.

PEBA's Senior Management is responsible for:

- Articulating, and the tools and procedures needed to support the risk management process set out in Appendix A;
- Assigning management accountabilities and responsibilities at appropriate levels within the organization;
- Incorporating the Commission's risk management policy into the operational framework;
- Determining risk management performance indicators that align with the Plan's performance indicators;
- Ensuring alignment of risk management objectives with the objectives and strategies of the Plan and organization;
- Ensuring legal and regulatory compliance;
- Identifying, assessing, and communicating the Plan's significant risks and risk management strategies;
- Providing a supportive environment that encourages effective risk management, sensible risk taking, and learning opportunities;
- Ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated to risk management;
- Providing clear direction on risk tolerance levels;
- Explicitly understanding and managing the level of risk associated with operational policies, plans, and programs;
- Ensuring risk management is communicated to both internal and external stakeholders in such a manner that the risk information is consolidated where appropriate from a variety of sources within the organization taking into account its sensitivity;
- Abiding by its Conflict of Interest policy; and

- Ensuring that the framework for managing risk continues to remain appropriate.

Risk Management Commission Reporting

The Commission has in place three documents that apply to the risk management process. These are a Risk Management Review (RMR), a Risk Management Plan (RMP), and a Mid-Year Risk Management Dashboard.

Annually, the Commission will receive and approve a Risk Management Review. The RMR is developed and presented by PEBA and reports on the status of risk management strategies undertaken for each of the identified risks for the previous year.

Annually, the Commission will receive and approve a Risk Management Plan. The RMP is developed and presented by PEBA and provides the Commission with a listing of identified risks and their risk management strategies for the Plan for the upcoming years.

Annually, the Commission will receive a Mid-Year Risk Management Dashboard that will report on the risks and risk management strategies identified in the Risk Management Plan.

All three of these documents are developed by PEBA within the context of the Plan.

Communication

Risk management is communicated to both internal and external stakeholders. Communication should include processes to consolidate risk information where appropriate from a variety of sources within the organization taking into account its sensitivity.

Internal risk management communication and reporting ensures that:

- Key components of the risk management framework, and any subsequent modifications, are communicated appropriately;
- There is adequate internal reporting on the framework, its effectiveness, and the outcomes;
- Relevant information derived from the application of risk management is available at appropriate levels and times; and
- There are processes for consultation with internal stakeholders.

External risk management communication and reporting involve:

- Engaging appropriate external stakeholders and ensuring an effective exchange of information;

- External reporting to comply with legal, regulatory, and corporate governance requirements;
- Making legally required disclosures;
- Providing feedback and reporting on communication and consultations;
- Using communication to build confidence in the organization; and
- Communicating with stakeholders in the event of a crisis or contingency.

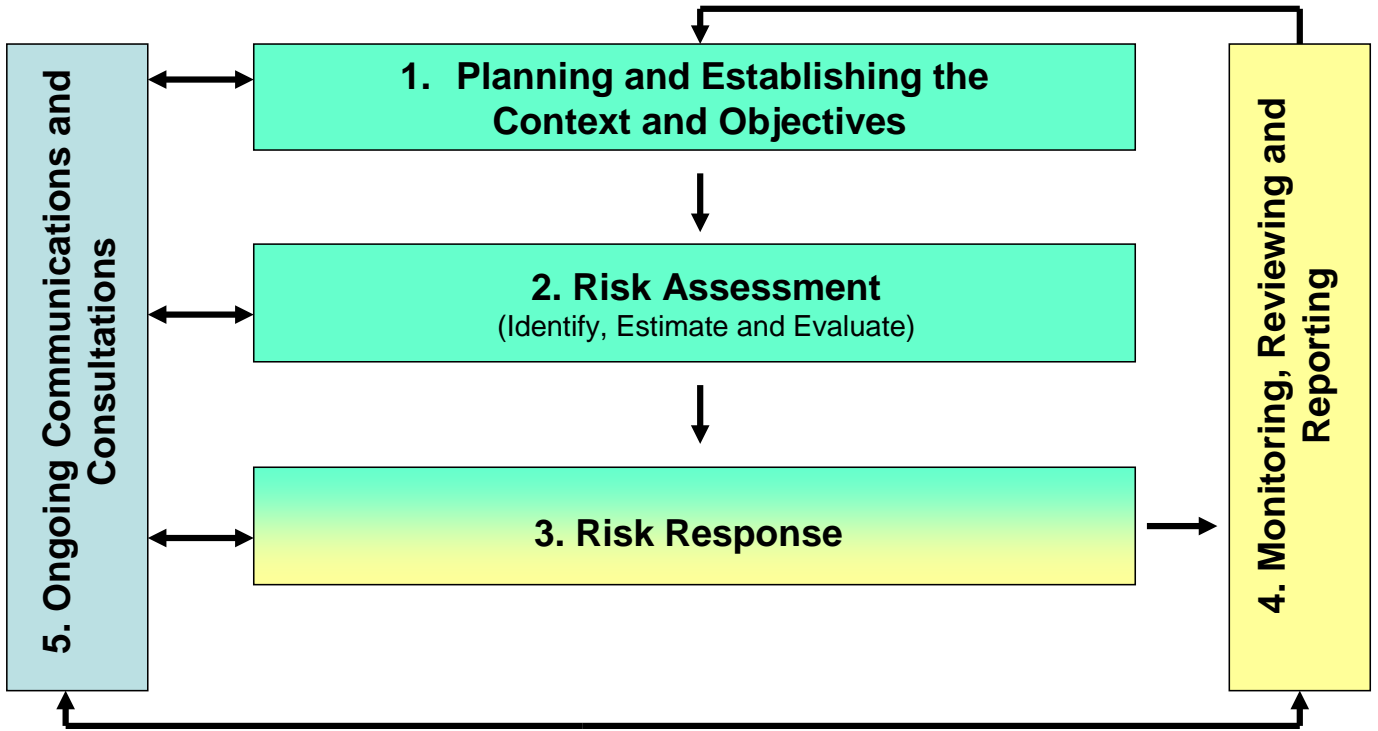
18.4 History

Approval date: May 17, 2013, January 15, 2010,
and November 17, 2017

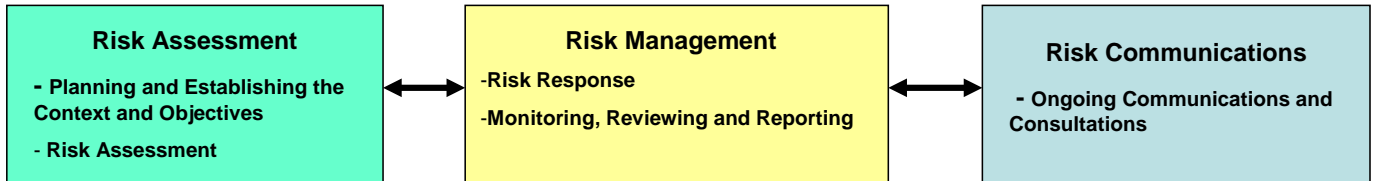
Last review: June 19, 2020

Next scheduled review: November 2021

APPENDIX A – Risk Management Process



3 Key Components of the 5-Step Process



APPENDIX B – Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of the Commission’s risk management program, the following terms and definitions apply (from the CAN/CSA-ISO 31000-10 standard):

Consequence (Impact) - outcome of an event affecting objectives

Control – measure (process or activity) that is modifying risk

Event - occurrence or change of a particular set of circumstances

Inherent Risk - risk prior to considering any risk treatment in place

Likelihood - chance of an event happening

Monitoring - continual checking, supervising, critically observing, or determining the status in order to identify change from the performance level required or expected

Residual Risk - risk remaining after risk treatment

Risk - effect of uncertainty on objectives

Risk Assessment - overall process of risk identification, risk analysis, and risk evaluation

Risk Attitude – organization’s approach to assess and eventually pursue, retain, take, or turn away from risk

Risk Criteria - terms of reference against which the significance of a risk is evaluated

Risk Identification - process of finding, recognizing, and describing risks

Risk Management - coordinated activities to direct and control an organization with regard to risk

Risk Management Framework - set of components that provide the foundations and organizational arrangements for designing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing, and continually improving risk management throughout the organization

Risk Management Plan - scheme within the risk management framework specifying the approach, the management components, and resources to be applied to the management of risk

Risk Owner - person or entity with the accountability and authority to manage a risk

Risk Profile - description of any set of risks

Risk Source - element which alone or in combination has the intrinsic potential to give rise to risk