

# Responses to Q/A

## PIBC Special Lunch & Learn on 'Strategic Assessment of Professional Governance' (February 12, 2026)

Number	Question	PIBC Response
1	<p>A previous consultant's report to PIBC council (Thomas Lutes) in August 2024 clearly stated that the PIBC does a very good job in self-regulation, taking the process of self-regulation seriously.</p> <p>Does the current consultant differentiate between PIBC's gold stars for self-regulation and other self-governing bodies?</p> <p>For clarity, is the current consultant painting the PIBC with the bad behaviour paint brush of other self-governing?</p>	<p>In 2023, the PIBC Board commissioned its legal counsel, Thom Lutes, to review the Professional Governance Act, and to provide initial analysis, including identifying areas for strategic consideration by the Board.</p> <p>The internal legal memo was presented to the Board in December 2023 and later distributed internally to PIBC committees in August 2024. The content of the memo has informed and helped ground the scope of work of Phase 1 of the Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project, and the key areas for strategic consideration raised have been covered as part of the Project. The initial legal analysis to the Board was internal and privileged, and the Board may consider and determine any public release of the contents.</p> <p>The Strategic Assessment Report does not make any determination about PIBC in relation to 'bad behaviour' of other professional associations. Conversely, the Strategic Assessment report alludes to PIBC's commitment to regulatory activities in a number of places. See for example the Analysis section starting on page 46 of the report. The webinar speakers also acknowledged the strength of PIBC's activities in the public interest as sufficiently strong that they may serve as a strength or weakness (possibly aligning with or countering the need for further regulatory oversight under the PGA).</p>

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2	<p>The Thomas Lutes report to PIBC council in August 2024 clearly noted that there will likely be a dramatic increase in costs for membership, based on other BC professions mandated to transition to the PGA model, meaning that small practitioners, often Indigenous, minority and women-led planning practices would not be able to afford to practice planning.</p> <p>The higher costs would be the highest in the administrative integration into the PGA model for a few years, according to the Thomas Lutes report, with continuing significantly higher ongoing costs.</p> <p>The Thomas Lutes report also noted a dramatic decrease in membership and volunteerism after the transition to the PGA model.</p> <p>Will the current consultant address these identified issues in their report?</p>	<p>See previous response with respect to the initial internal analysis completed by PIBC's legal counsel.</p> <p>The Strategic Assessment Report does review the many key strategic considerations with respect to potential regulation under the PGA, including issues related to possible operational changes (possible budgetary implications are covered). Please refer to the section on feedback from key informants, for example. Perceived operational challenges were also discussed in the nine focus groups. At this time, input on operational impacts of regulation must be extrapolated from other regulators who transitioned to regulation under the PGA. However, it is not yet known whether the operational dynamics will play out in a parallel way for PIBC. This would be a key consideration going forward should PIBC determine to proceed further with potential regulation under the PGA.</p>
3	<p>If this would only apply within BC - how would this change impact our relationship with CIP as a national body?</p>	<p>Please refer to the Strategic Assessment Report p. 26 for a discussion about "insurance implications".</p>
4	<p>If the Board is the decision-maker, what is the membership's ability to influence the decision, and by what mechanism? One-time vote?</p>	<p>While the specific process of decision-making and the potential role for the membership will be subject to discussion by the Board, the Board is committed to extensive engagement and input from members as it considers options, and prior to moving forward with any specific actions or direction. Members and other interested individuals are encouraged to review all the project information, review the webinar recording, and provide a response to the current engagement survey, which closes on February 28, 2026: <a href="https://cvent.me/dmMPkP">https://cvent.me/dmMPkP</a></p>

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5	How will potential regulation changes align to regulation of professions Planners work with, namely / i.e. Engineers?	<p>Generally, once a profession has been accepted and designated to transition to become regulated under the PGA, there will be a period of engagement and negotiation among the applicant profession, the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance, and the other current PGA regulators to determine the regulations, including scope of regulated practice and reserved practice. Input from key informant interviews indicates that several PGA regulators have successfully worked together to issue joint guidance on potentially intersecting areas of practice (e.g., the Engineers, the Foresters, and the Landscape Architects).</p> <p>For more information:  <a href="https://professionalgovernancebc.ca/questions-and-answers/">https://professionalgovernancebc.ca/questions-and-answers/</a></p>
6	How is regulation and governance of a given profession protected from radical changes in public government?	<p>This is difficult to predict. The public protection issues that led to the PGA still exist and may withstand political changes in government. In the broader regulatory world, we have seen examples of both scenarios - continuation of regulatory reform across changes in governments, as well as large-scale policy and strategic changes with a new government (e.g., Ontario health sector regulation ).</p> <p>The Professional Governance Act, enacted in 2018, was late amended in 2022:  <a href="https://professionalgovernancebc.ca/2023/06/02/professional-governance-update/">https://professionalgovernancebc.ca/2023/06/02/professional-governance-update/</a></p>

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7	I appreciate the consultant specifically naming the #MeToo movement as an example. I believe PIBC has not done a good job of addressing issues of sexual misconduct (in fact, when brought to members of the Professional Conduct Review Committee, several of us were told nothing would be done with the complaint).	Outside of the PGA discussion, PIBC's Professional Conduct Review Committee (PCRC) has a subcommittee reviewing and updating our current Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and disciplinary process. These types of circumstances are among the areas that need to be brought up to date. Process is midway, and once recommendations have been developed and gone to Committee and Board, will go to an AGM as updates to the PIBC Bylaws for members to vote on. There's been engagement opportunities along the way with more to come. Members are encouraged to reach out to the Committee to provide further input, suggestions or comments (E-Mail: <a href="mailto:complaints@pibc.bc.ca">complaints@pibc.bc.ca</a> ).
8	Any research for Yukon? PIBC also regulate planner in Yukon	Please refer to the Strategic Assessment Report p. 30 for a discussion about mobility and alignment with other provinces and territories. Additionally, this issue is addressed in the latter part of the webinar. It is certainly true that should PIBC seek designation under the PGA framework, BC legislated requirements would not apply to practitioners in Yukon. However, a number of models exist where the Yukon government sets requirements for Yukon practitioners to be registered with the BC or other regulator. The appropriate model would need to be negotiated.

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9	<p>What does the “increased government oversight mean” from the slide? How is PIBC advocacy impacted? What are the legislative guard rails in the PGA model against political interference in the work and expert knowledge of BC professional planners, as well as the PIBC itself?</p> <p>This is important as the majority of planning practitioners work in public practice, working for the public good, where advocacy and providing expert opinions are part of the job.</p> <p>From the Thomas Lutes PIBC report, advocacy is forbidden in the PGA model. It would require the PIBC to create a separate, new advocacy body, with only a small membership of 1600, compared to the Engineering PGA body, with a membership of 45, 000. It was indicated that the Engineers under the PGA model have started to create a separate advocacy body, but they have had significant problems in funding the separate advocacy body.</p>	<p>Government oversight under the PGA includes, among other things, specific annual reporting and audit requirements. Please refer to the Strategic Assessment Report p. 32 for a discussion about advocacy. Current regulators that have transitioned to the PGA chose various options for leadership of professional advocacy work.</p> <p>The OSPG has provided guidance about advocacy:  <a href="https://professionalgovernancebc.ca/advocacy/">https://professionalgovernancebc.ca/advocacy/</a></p> <p>A recent example of advocacy permissible under the PGA is the joint letter submitted by the six PGA regulators in response to Bill M216 Professional Reliance Act:  <a href="https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/20857/66-154-3259_Amanda-Oliveira_Submission.pdf">https://www.leg.bc.ca/committee-content/20857/66-154-3259_Amanda-Oliveira_Submission.pdf</a></p>
10	<p>Where is the Lutes Report posted because if it was so relevant, then why is this current exercise happening?</p>	<p>In 2023, the PIBC Board commissioned it's legal counsel, Thom Lutes, to review the Professional Governance Act, and to provide initial analysis, including identifying areas for strategic consideration by the Board.</p> <p>The internal legal memo was presented to the Board in December 2023 and later distributed internally to PIBC committees in August 2024. The content of the memo has informed and helped ground the scope of work of Phase 1 of the Professional Governance Research and Engagement Project, and the key areas for strategic consideration raised have been covered as part of the Project. The initial legal analysis to the Board was internal and privileged, and the Board may consider and determine any public release of the contents.</p>

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11	<p>The Thomas Lutes PIBC 2024 report was silent on how the PGA model would improve the handling of sexual misconduct.</p> <p>Can the current consultants comment on how the PGA model would improve the handling of sexual misconduct?</p> <p>Could the current consultants comment on whether there could be improvements in the current PIBC self-regulatory model?</p>	<p>Specific changes to PIBC's regulatory programs were outside the scope of the current engagement. These would need to be the subject of Board discussion as regulations and by-laws are created should the PIBC choose to seek designation and after designation is approved (in other words - quite a bit in the future). As discussed in the analysis section of the Strategic Assessment Report, the PIBC can also consider regulatory changes even under their current legislation (e.g., certification options). Unlike the new Health Professions and Occupations Act in BC, the issue of sexual misconduct is not specifically prescribed in the PGA. Policy and program changes related to the handling of sexual misconduct could be considered in the future by the PIBC Board.</p>
12	<p>I am curious how regulation aligns with pathways to membership for Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Keepers? More regulation doesn't always facilitate these types of directions.</p>	<p>The PGA sets out the following provisions in regards to traditional knowledge in relation to reserved practice (Section 54):</p> <p>Traditional knowledge</p> <p>55.1 (1) In this section, "Indigenous peoples" has the same meaning as in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.</p> <p>(2) Section 54 does not apply to a person exercising the rights of an Indigenous people, C13including the right to maintain, control, protect or develop any of the following with respect to the Indigenous people:</p> <p>(a) cultural heritage;  (b) traditional knowledge;  (c) traditional cultural expressions;  (d) manifestations of sciences, technologies or cultures.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/18047#section55">https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/18047#section55</a></p>

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13	<p>Can the consultants specifically point out where the PIBC has fallen short on public trust? Evidence of falling public trust in the PIBC?</p> <p>The big, documented issue for the PIBC, as well as for many other BC professions, including the AIBC, is public awareness and public relevancy.</p> <p>It would require a robust public engagement effort to increase the public visibility of the PIBC, that so far, has not been discussed at the PIBC and its membership.</p> <p>Going under the opaque PGA model would likely give the PIBC less visibility, with such deep integration with other professions.</p>	<p>Please refer to the Strategic Assessment Report p. 29 for a discussion about the perceived benefits of regulation under the PGA and the matter of public trust. According to the Key Informant Interviews, transitioning to regulation under the PGA led to a significant increase in public awareness of professional regulation.</p>
14	<p>Would the government request PIBC to enhance its governance scope, role, clarity, etc... for practice in many key areas, without or prior to forcing it under the PGA?</p>	<p>PIBC is currently incorporated under the Societies Act. PIBC's governance and activities are set out in its bylaws, as developed and approved by members. Unless the Societies Act is amended or PIBC is mandated to transition to the PGA, it is probably very unlikely that the Government of BC would delve into PIBC's bylaws or operations.</p>
15	<p>Has the evaluation so far addressed how the PGA will regulate planners having to enforce local government regulations that are set by Council which may conflict with best practices? An engineer can fall back on the CSA or MMCD as national standards but a planner is enforcing local regulations that could be difficult to adjudicate against others.</p>	<p>The Strategic Assessment report discusses practice standards at a strategic level but does not analyze specific scenarios - this would be a matter for future research and consideration if PIBC determined to move forward with potential regulation under the PGA.</p>

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16	<p>The Thomas Lutes report also noted clearly that the disciplinary process under the PGA would make it more like a legal court, with the likely need to engage in an expensive lawyer and would disallow quitting the PGA regulatory system, even if the threat of bankruptcy (professional and personal?) was looming for the member. The member would be forced to continue with disciplinary process.</p> <p>Additionally, there is a PGA mandatory “whistle blower” clause that compels all members to report other planners’ misconduct, with the penalty of hauling all members in front of the disciplinary board, with the potential of bankrupting any planner.</p> <p>There do not appear to be any legislated guard rails against abuse of the “Whistle blower” clause for personal business gain against a competitor, etc.</p> <p>Could the current consultants comment on the any legislated ‘whistle blower’ guard rails?</p>	<p>The PGA sets out the following:</p> <p>No reprisals</p> <p>103 A person must not evict, discharge, suspend, expel, intimidate, coerce, impose any pecuniary or other penalty on or otherwise retaliate against a registrant because that registrant</p> <p>(a) has reported a matter as described in section 58 [duty to report] with respect to a registrant or other persons,</p> <p>(b) complains or is named in a complaint under section 65 [complaints], or</p> <p>(c) gives evidence or otherwise assists in respect of a prosecution, a complaint or another proceeding under this Act.</p> <p><a href="https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/18047#section103">https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/18047#section103</a></p>
17	<p>Was Bill M216 - Professional Reliance Act, which likely was introduced during the later stages of this process, taken into consideration in the report?</p> <p>The bill highlights a major issue in that many planner's careers could instantly be made irrelevant by a simple member's bill that hands off decision making to PGA professions, and may highlight an additional need for planning to become a PGA profession.</p>	<p>The topic of Bill M216 (a new private members Bill introduced in the BC Legislature in the fall of 2025) was mentioned in one or two focus groups. Its implications are also considered in the BC Context section of The Strategic Assessment Report (starting on page 10) as well as in the latter portions of the webinar.</p> <p>The RPP Regulation Subcommittee was also the lead committee overseeing PIBC's responses to Bill M216 in the Fall of 2025.</p> <p>The potential implications of Bill M216 are being taken into consideration by the project steering committee.</p>

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18	How do you evolve through risk assessment? Climate adaptation, new building materials, electrification, and digital systems create new practice risks that regulators may not update quickly?	Every profession, whether regulated under the PGA or otherwise, should in good practice regularly monitor emerging trends, patterns, and innovation within the profession and in broader society with respect to the public interest, and actively engage with its members/registrants and other interest holders on these issues.
19	Going forward, having the report in advance might have made this presentation more useful so we had the information to review. I appreciate this presentation and I need time to digest to come up with questions. Will there be another opportunity for us to meet with the consultant to address questions?	<p>The PIBC Board received the Strategic Assessment Report at its meeting on January 30. Subsequently, final desktopping was undertaken and completed on February 11. The February 12 lunch and learn was envisioned to be the launching point for the release of the Report and of the next round of engagement by providing an opportunity for the consultants to convey how the Strategic Assessment Report fit into the broader project begun in Fall 2024 and upcoming Board considerations. The consultant presentation was intended to position professional governance in a national context and communicate key findings from the research and focus groups, and the strategic options.</p> <p>With this high level introduction, interest holders can then take the time to review the Strategic Assessment Report and Appendices, and to complete the engagement survey and provide further feedback by February 28, 2026.</p>
20	Has there been a broader conversation CIP/PTAs OUQ and the best interest of the planning profession, in Canada?	CIP convenes regular meetings of the Presidents and Executive Directors of CIP and all provincial and territorial institutes and associations to exchange information and knowledge, including updates and activates related to legislation or professional regulation. The other organizations are being kept informed of PIBC's work in this area, and PIBC is kept informed of other legislative or regulatory activities in other jurisdictions in Canada as well.