

SME Committee

Terms of Reference DRAFT v1 (date: 11 Jan 2011)

Reports to:	The national Board of Directors
Contact:	Anne Argyris Director
Chair:	TBC
Meetings:	Three to six times per year and on an as needed basis, at the call of the Chair.
Composition:	The Committee is composed of representatives of local chambers and SME businesses with specialized knowledge and experience in SME affairs and issues. This includes both member companies and other organizations knowledgeable about SME affairs. Members will be representatives of broad small business sector interests, including services, natural resources, high tech, manufacturing industries, etc.
Mission Statement:	To promote an improved environment in Canada for SME businesses by raising the issues of SMEs among influential policy makers in the government and general public. The SME challenge offers an opportunity for the Chamber to further contribute in a meaningful way to the further advancement of small business entrepreneurship in Canada. Providing a stronger, unified voice for SME members has made the formation of this coalition necessary so that SMEs may more readily be heard and recognized. The SME Committee is about engaging and energizing SMEs to come together.
Basic Mandate:	To establish within the Chamber a permanent group of experts on small business in order to position ourselves to identify, monitor, promote awareness and provide input on SME matters of interest to our members and the Board of Directors, on a timely basis. This may include conducting surveys on skills, trade and finance and other key issues, providing support to other National Committees, chambers and boards of trade.

Key functions include:

1. Providing input to the Canadian government on SME matters from the Canadian business community perspective and being a voice of SME issues in Canada.
2. Analyzing and reporting on national policies and legislation affecting small business. Monitoring SME issues and action / progress accomplished.
3. Identifying the main issues, concerns and needs of Canadian SMEs that require action; addressing and resolving the common issues and concerns; advocating for changes that facilitate a fairer business environment to ensure business certainty and for increased emphasis on small business in Canada.
4. Educating the public and government stakeholders about key issues that confront SMEs, including skills, trade and finance. Undertaking an educational campaign for policy makers and the general public on SME requirements
5. Promoting and encouraging SME initiatives for long-term benefit of Canadians; promoting effective and efficient fiscal and economic policy measures to improve the business climate and create necessary conditions that will enhance competitiveness of SMEs
6. Conducting studies/surveys and preparing policy statements and submissions, where appropriate, for consideration by the general membership and the Chamber Board. Proposing resolutions to submit to the AGM as well as reviewing resolutions submitted on SME issues.
7. Liaising with member associations, SME organizations, CFIB, RCC, the Hotel Association and appropriate international committees. The Committee will also liaise with other National Policy Committees such as Economic Policy, Taxation as well as member chambers of commerce and boards of trade.

Definition: SMEs are defined as companies with less than 500 employees and annual sales of \$30,000 - \$5 million.

Micro 1-10 employees

Small 10-100

Medium 101-500 employees

Structure: The organization will be known as the SME Committee and will be an independent coalition with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce acting as the Secretariat. (TBC)

Issues of concern: SMEs aim to grow, save money and remain competitive and productive. Key issues of concern include:

- Taxes: tax relief; lower corporate tax rate
- EI premiums: lower increases
- Federal stimulus spending

- US: improving border efficiency, exemption from Buy American
- Legislation: intro of C32; defeat of C300, C311, C386
- Government programs: e.g. SME Innovation Commercialization Program, Clean Energy Fund, Green Infrastructure Fund
- Bureaucracy and red tape
- Skilled labour

SME Committee

Participants (TBC)

2011-2012

Chair (Possibly a past Chair)

Vice-Chair

Members