Policy Title: **Communication Policy**		Policy Number:
Section:	Responsibility:	
Date issued: May 2014	Revisions: March 2015	Page:
Authorization:		Date of Last Review:

1. Purpose:

1.1 MARRT is committed to effective and efficient:
- dissemination and receipt of information
- communication within the organization, and;
- with the public, MARRT members, stakeholders, and the media.

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to MARRT in developing and implementing communication strategies. This policy applies to all Board Members, staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and students and encompasses:
- Purpose of communications
- Communication tools and mechanisms
- Liaison with the media

2. Principals:

2.1 Communication strategies will be used for the purpose of achieving MARRT's objectives.

2.2 Clear, consistent and equitable communication within the organization is essential for effective operations.

2.3 All communications are presented in the English language.

2.4 External communication, including with the media, aligns with the organization's strategic objectives.

3. Outcomes

3.1 Public Members, MARRT Members, and Stakeholders are informed of, and may be consulted on, activities and operations.

3.2 External communication increases awareness and understanding of issues relevant to MARRT, its members and the respiratory therapy profession.

3.3 Internal communication supports good knowledge management and operations within the organization.

4. Policy Details:

4.1 Purpose of Communications
MARRT communicates for several purposes, to:
- Increase awareness of the organization, its goals, its works, and its needs
- Enhance public understanding of the profession of respiratory therapy
- Share knowledge with stakeholders
- Share knowledge with members for effective organizational management

Communications are undertaken not for the sole purpose of information distribution and receipt, but to be used to assist and support the achievement of MARRT's strategic objectives.

4.2 Types of Communication

4.2.1 Outgoing Communication
Outgoing communication is information and knowledge that is initiated, developed and distributed by the organization for an external audience.

MARRT provides outgoing communications to the following audience:

- ➢ The general public
- ➢ Members and potential members
- ➢ Industry
- ➢ Other health care professionals
- ➢ Engaged and potential consultants
- ➢ Partner organizations for project, policy, client support and other activities
- ➢ Government departments and branches
- ➢ Research and academic institutes
- ➢ Media
- ➢ Associations and professional organizations

4.2.1.1 Mechanisms and Tools used for Outgoing Communication
A range of mechanisms and tools are used to distribute outgoing communication:

Website:
The website is a primary tool for distributing outgoing information to a broad audience. Information regarding MARRT's goals, governance, membership, activities, current projects and news items is maintained by the Secretary and Director at Large.

E Newsletter
The online newsletter is produced quarterly with a primary target audience of the MARRT membership. All Board members contribute and write articles for the newsletter.

Organizational Documents:
MARRT produces a number of organizational and project specific documents that provide information about its plans, achievements, and activities. Approved final documents such as annual reports, strategic plans, brochures, and project background and implementation plans may be provided to members, public, stakeholders, and academic institutions with current information about MARRT's activities, performance and plans. Organizational documents approved for outgoing communication are also to be distributed internally, to all Board members and staff.

Media Communication:
MARRT may produce or respond to media releases on behalf of the organization. Media releases may be developed to promote an event or project achievement, advocacy on behalf of the safety of the public, or to counter any negative media coverage relating to the respiratory therapy profession.

- MARRT may partner with other organizations in producing or responding to a media release.
- MARRT President or delegate holds the responsibility for liaison with the media.

Conference, Forum and Meeting Representation:
Board and staff members participate in conferences, forums, and advisory groups representing MARRT. It is important to be clear that representation is for the organization and not personal opinion.

Participation also allows for information gathering so that MARRT is better informed and better able to provide services for the protection of the public and advocacy for the profession.

Stakeholder Meetings:
MARRT Board members participate in regular meetings with relevant stakeholders to provide support, share information about current projects and issues and to gather feedback on performance.

Regular contact with stakeholders is part of MARRT's service delivery.

All Board members, committee members and staff are responsible for developing and maintaining effective relationships with stakeholders.

Branding and Professional Image:
All outgoing communications must carry the MARRT name and or logo, including letters, reports, project materials, emails and policy and advocacy submissions.

The MARRT name and logo are copyright protected and must not be used for communications that are not directly related to the organization.

4.2.2 Incoming Communication

Incoming communication is information and knowledge that is sought and/or received from an external source to the organization. Incoming communication supports MARRT in achieving its goal, strategic plan and provision of services to the public and membership.

MARRT receives communications from the following sources:

> ➢ The general public
> ➢ Members and potential members
> ➢ Industry
> ➢ Other health care professionals
> ➢ Engaged and potential consultants
> ➢ Partner organizations for project, policy, client support and other activities
> ➢ Government departments and branches
> ➢ Research and academic institutes
> ➢ Media
> ➢ Associations and professional organizations

4.2.2.1 Mechanisms and Tools used to Receive Incoming Communication

Any issues, concerns, or questions that arise outside of the MARRT boardroom are to be handled by using a range of mechanisms and tools explained below as the means of receiving incoming communication:

Email communications:
All email communication should be submitted to the MARRT office info@marrt.org. Email is checked on a daily basis and responded to in a timely manner by the MARRT Association Manager indicating that the communication has been received and notification of the impending action.

Telephone communications:
The MARRT phone number is a message service only. A voice message can be left, however, if urgent, communication via email is recommended. The message line is checked on a weekly basis.

Written Letters:
Letters received via Canada post and registered mail, are accepted through the MARRT office at 629 McDermot Avenue, Winnipeg Manitoba. This physical office location is not staffed on a regular basis. Mail received at the office is retrieved weekly on average. Once the correspondence has been retrieved from the MARRT office, it will be acknowledged as received and notification of the impending action provided.

4.2.3 Member and Stakeholder Consultation

It is recognized that members, clients and stakeholders play a role in assisting MARRT in achieving their strategic priorities and as such, periodic consultations may be undertaken.

Consultation may be informal or through formal means such as surveys, research, contracting consultants, etc. Members may also participate on the advisory committee group as a mechanism for providing input into activities of the organization.

4.2.4 Internal Communication

Internal communication is information and knowledge that is shared within the MARRT. Effective internal communication is essential for good organizational management. All Board, staff, volunteers and students are responsible for actively contributing to communication strategies and activities.

4.2.4.1 Mechanisms and Tools used for Internal Communication

A range of mechanisms and tools are used for internal communication:

Board Meetings

Board meetings support effective governance for the organization. Board meetings may also include time for staff, stakeholders, volunteers and contracted consultants to communicate with the Board on a range of project and operational issues for the organization.

Working Groups and Committee Meetings

Participants of working groups and committees meet to allow communication on specific projects or activity planning or to work on the business of the committee.

Email

The use of email is essential for effective communication amongst staff, board members, volunteers and students. These tools are a simple and effective way to share information about MARRT internal business/operations, projects, meetings, external sector news and activity. Email also provides a written record and may be considered formal documentation.

All staff, volunteers, and students are expected to use email.

Information is also shared internally through other communication mechanisms such as conference calls.

5. References/Resources:

http://www.sectorconnect.org.au/assets/pdf/resources/mgrnwk/Communications_Policy.pdf **(May 29, 2014)**