Progressive Aboriginal
RELATIONS

Canadian Council for
Aboriginal Business

PROGRESSIVE ABORIGINAL RELATIONS (PAR)

GUIDE

DEVELOPED IN ASSOCIATION WITH PERRY & ASSOCIATES, TORONTO

THE GUIDE

The Guide Consists of Three Sections

- **Section One: Introduction to the PAR Program**
- **Section Two: Moving Forward with PAR Committed Criteria**
- **Section Three: Moving Forward with PAR Certification Criteria**

The Purpose of the Guide

To give:

- An introduction to the Progressive Aboriginal Relations program (from CCAB).
- Guidance on how to get involved with the PAR program through to applying for CCAB recognition.
- An overview of PAR Criteria and selection tips (to help with implementation, there are two Criteria sets available).
- An overview of the PAR submission adjudication system.
- An appreciation of what outcomes can be expected from implementation of PAR Criteria.

The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB)

Since 1984, this national non-profit organization has adapted to the changing needs of stakeholders in Indigenous Business. The Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business (CCAB) is non-partisan and receives no core government funding — it is supported through corporate funding, program and event sponsorships, and membership dues. Here's what CCAB does:

- Helps facilitate sustainable relations between the Canadian business sector and First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people;
- Conducts relevant research that captures trends, best practices, and areas of opportunity for Indigenous people and business; and
- Works with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous businesses to encourage economic sustainability, training and skill development, and recognition of Indigenous business success.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **CCAB** - Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business
- **15-Point Indigenous Relations Questionnaire** - To help generate some productive dialogue on how a company is currently doing on Indigenous relations, and assist them in selecting the right PAR Criteria for their organization (PAR or PAR Certification Criteria).
- **PAR** - Progressive Aboriginal Relations
- **PAR Agreement** - Signed agreement between an applicant and CCAB covering conditions of involvement in the PAR program.
- **PAR Assessment Scoring Process** - The method used/recommended for scoring a submission.
- **PAR Certification Criteria** - A criteria designed for organizations at the Third Phase PAR Committed Criteria implementation level or above, to help grow and sustain their focus on positive Indigenous relations (with three levels of certification: Bronze, Silver and Gold).
- **PAR Certification Criteria Documentation & Targets Checklist** - Used as a checklist by an applicant to ensure required documentation and targets are provided with their submission.
- **PAR Certification Criteria Results & Trend Data Chart** - Used by an applicant to ensure required documentation results and trend data are included in their submission. Also used by a PAR Verifier as part of submission review.
- **PAR Committed Criteria** - A progressive (three-phase) Criteria, developed from questions selected from the full PAR Certification Criteria, to assist a company just starting out in PAR.
- **PAR Committed Criteria Documentation & Targets Checklist** - Used as a checklist by an applicant to ensure required documentation and targets are provided with their submission (each of the three phases of the PAR Committed Criteria).
- **PAR Drivers** - The four key foundational elements that permeate PAR Criteria (Leadership Actions, Indigenous Employment, Indigenous Business Development, and Indigenous Community Relationships).
- **PAR Journey** - Refers to a company moving through levels of PAR recognition/certification.
- **PAR Verifier** - A qualified individual who completes a verification exercise of a submission and submits a high-level report for CCAB and the PAR Jury, for their deliberations on recognition/certification.
- **PAR Working Group** - Internal cross-functional group/committee (people involved in Indigenous employment, business development, and community relationship matters), to give support to the PAR process and focus on planning and implementation of the company's Indigenous relations strategy.
- **Self-Assessment** - Completing an internal assessment of current state against PAR Criteria, with input from across the company (focus groups), and from the Indigenous community.
- **Site Visit Exercise** - One-day site visits are made to PAR Certification Criteria applicants (only), with the aim of verifying selected points from the submission noted by the PAR Verifier during the submission review.

SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE PAR PROGRAM

What is PAR?

Progressive Aboriginal RELATIONS

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

PAR is a recognition and certification program that confirms organizational performance on Indigenous relations and signals to the Indigenous community that these organizations are good business partners, good places to work, and are committed to prosperity for Indigenous communities.

The PAR logo provides a high level of assurance to communities because the designation is supported by an independent third-party verification. Since the program's introduction in 2001, many of Canada's lead-ing companies have achieved PAR certification at the bronze, silver or gold level. PAR consists of two sets of Criteria (Committed and Certification, both outlined in this Guide), designed specifically to assist companies that are at different levels of implementation to successfully move forward and sustain their focus on Indigenous relations, with good outcomes.

Key Subjects that Drive PAR Criteria

Four key Drivers are interwoven through the PAR Committed Criteria and as separate categories in the PAR Certification Criteria. These are:

Leadership Actions

Leadership Actions are defined as actions to reinforce an organizational focus on Indigenous relations by leaders of the organization. Such actions have an impact in achieving and sustaining good results in all PAR Drivers. These actions include setting and cascading a clear commitment and policy, iden-tification and communication of the Community of Interest, scheduling self-assessment exercises against PAR Criteria to review status, and the application of a structure to drive and help sustain the commitment to positive Indigenous relations across the organization

Employment

Employment is defined as the commitment of resources (time and money) to achieving equitable representation of Indigenous persons in the workplace. This involves recruiting and retaining Indigenous talent, supporting their career development and advancement, and promoting mobil-ity of Indigenous employees throughout employment sectors and levels. This Driver also includes supporting cross-cultural awareness and/or cultural sensitivity training, and providing training and support for existing or prospective Indigenous employees through specific programs or actions.

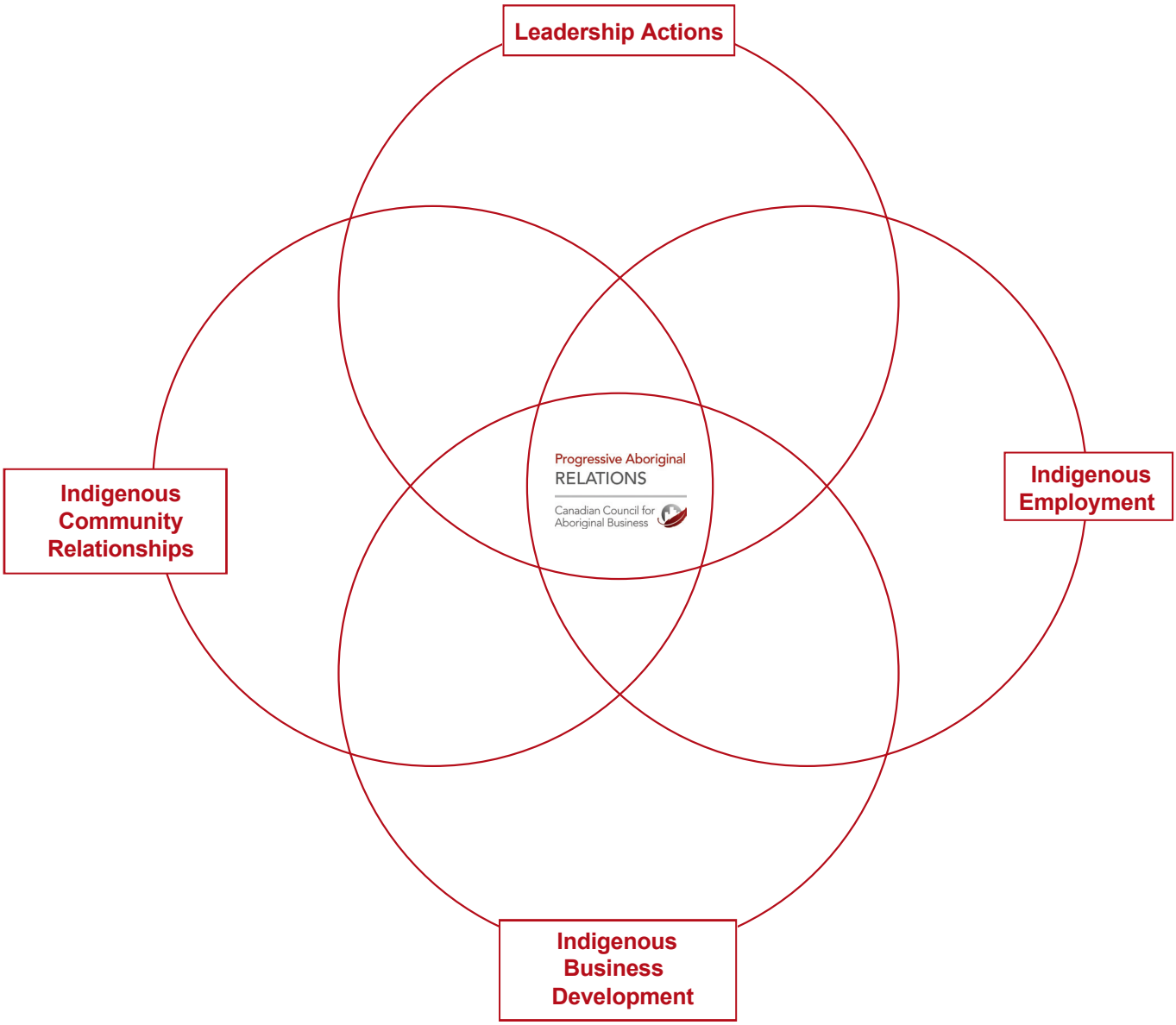
Business Development

Business development is defined as the commitment of resources (time and money) to the develop-ment of business relationships with Indigenous-owned businesses. These activities are sustained through mutual benefit. Capacity building and mentorship also directly relate to sustaining, enhan-cing or developing future business development.

Community Relationships

The Community Relationships Driver is broken out into two components: engagement and support. Engagement is defined as providing time and resources to develop and sustain positive and progressive relationships with Indigenous communities, groups and stakeholders. Engagement can

include communications, information sharing, involvement in events and activities, and partnerships. Support is defined as a commitment to develop positive and progressive relationships with Indigenous communities, groups and stakeholders by providing financial and/or in-kind support. These components work together to nurture and sustain positive and progressive relationships. Those companies that are viewed as part of the community have a far better chance of success in sustaining good relationships, versus those that go into the community to give an occasional presentation.



PAR JOURNEY DIAGRAM

PAR Gold Level Re-Certification Criteria

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Outcome – Sustained Results & Bronze/Silver/Gold PAR Certification

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PAR Drivers			
Leadership Actions	Employment	Business Development	Community Relationships

PAR Certification Criteria

Selected points from the PAR Certification Criteria form the PAR Committed Criteria. This gives an option to any company starting PAR to use a progressive criteria to start in the right direction with a manageable, phased process toward application of the full PAR Certification Criteria, and potential Bronze certification.

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Outcome – Solid foundation & potential Bronze certification

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Phase Three – Building good relations, target setting & progress review

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Phase Two – Focus on strategy & getting everyone involved

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Phase One – Getting started & getting organized

PAR Committed Criteria

SELECTING PAR CRITERIA

Once your company has decided to participate in PAR, you will need to select the desired PAR Criteria best suited to current state, either the PAR Committed Criteria or the PAR Certification Criteria; copies of PAR Criteria are available from CCAB.

PAR Committed Criteria

The PAR Committed Criteria is a progressive and phased process, developed from questions selected from the full PAR Certification Criteria, to assist a company just starting out in PAR. A company's involvement in PAR indicates its commitment to the continuous improvement of Indigenous relations, and intention to undergo external verification of its performance in the future. The PAR Committed Criteria is comprehensive but user friendly with three specific progressive phases, emphasizing self-assessment/gap analysis, and annual feedback to assist companies in setting a stable foundation for positive Indigenous relations, and for making a future submission for CCAB PAR Certification. Each phase of the PAR Committed Criteria should take no longer than one year to implement (all phases should be completed within three years). Following successful completion of Phase Three of the PAR Committed Criteria, a company submits a PAR submission at the PAR Certification Criteria level. (For additional comments covering PAR Committed Criteria expected outcomes, see "Commentary on PAR Committed Criteria" within Section 2 of the Guide).

PAR Certification Criteria

The PAR Certification Criteria was designed for organizations at the Third Phase PAR Committed Criteria implementation level or above, to help grow and sustain their focus on positive Indigenous relations. This level of participation offers companies the opportunity to provide the highest level of assurance to their stakeholders that they are invested in a strong commitment to Indigenous relations. Unlike the PAR Committed Criteria, which is a three-phase progressive format, the PAR Certification Criteria is one set of questions and is made up of four comprehensive sections covering each PAR Driver (Leadership Actions, Employment, Business Development and Community Relationships). In addition to the standard PAR submission review process, adjudication for PAR Certification Criteria includes a scheduled and detailed on-site verification exercise (on-site discussions with company personnel as well as interviews with external Indigenous stakeholders). These inputs combine to create a PAR Submission Review that is used by the PAR Jury to assist their deliberations in regards to award-ing the company PAR standing at the Bronze, Silver or Gold level. (For additional comments covering PAR Certification Criteria expected outcomes, see "Commentary on PAR Certification Criteria" within Section 3 of the Guide).

15-Point Indigenous Relations Questionnaire

In deciding on which Criteria best suits your company, it is suggested you, along with a few colleagues, complete The 15-Point Indigenous Relations Questionnaire. This will help generate some productive dialogue on how the company is currently doing on Indigenous relations, and help your team decide on the right PAR Criteria for the company. If you answered Yes to less than 12 questions, check out the PAR Committed Criteria, which will help you prepare for future application of the PAR Certification Criteria. If you answer Yes to 12 questions or more, then you may be ready to work now with the PAR Certification Criteria.

SECTION ONE

15-POINT INDIGENOUS RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

	Yes	No
1. Are we serious about supporting Indigenous relations, for example do we have an Indigenous Relations Policy in place, and does everyone understand it?		
2. Do we have a solid strategy on Indigenous relations, and are we all committed to it?		
3. Do we have an Indigenous Relations Committee that leads the charge on implementing our Indigenous relations strategy across the company?		
4. Do we have a good training module covering Indigenous culture, and has everyone gone through it?		
5. Have we done a gap-analysis against a comprehensive Indigenous relations criteria, helping us identify our current status (and opportunities for improvement)?		
6. Do we use a database to help us source Indigenous businesses as suppliers?		
7. Do we have good procedures in place to ensure that Indigenous suppliers have good access to our business?		
8. Do we transfer our knowledge and skills to the Indigenous community, for example by supporting and getting involved in programs such as core competency/readiness and leadership training?		
9. Do we mentor Indigenous business people, and support community training and education initiatives to help the development of Indigenous businesses?		
10. Do we have specific goals on increasing Indigenous employment, retention, spending on goods/services from Indigenous businesses, and on giving financial and/or in-kind support for Indigenous community events and programs?		
11. Do we have an Action Plan that identifies our actions, responsibilities and timelines for meeting any goals on Indigenous relations?		
12. Do we track our performance against our goals, using performance indicators and analysis with scheduled reviews?		
13. Do we encourage and support our employees to participate in Indigenous community cultural events and programs?		
14. Do we have an internal Indigenous employee support group, network or program?		
15. Do our leaders personally promote a positive philosophy on Indigenous relations and is the philosophy's importance reinforced throughout the company?		

1. Review Fees

For the current PAR fee structure, contact CCAB or refer to the website - ccab.com/par-learn-more.

2. Complete PAR Participation Agreement

Complete and sign a PAR Participation Agreement (available from CCAB) and submit it to CCAB along with the application fee. The PAR Verifier will invoice the company directly for their Submission Review fee (contact CCAB for Verifier fees/costs, or check the website - ccab.com).

The PAR Participation Agreement covers the terms and conditions for participation in the PAR program.

PAR Participation Agreement

Company agrees:

- To maintain its membership with the CCAB in good standing.
- To comply with all terms and conditions of PAR program participation, including terms and restrictions related to use of the PAR logos (PAR program, Committed, bronze, silver or gold) provided to the company by CCAB, and the use of PAR program documents, presentations and images.
- That participation in the PAR program at the Committed and Certified levels requires an additional annual fee to be paid to CCAB.
- To acknowledge that:
    - PAR Certification requires an independent external verification at the company's cost;
    - The assignment of a Certification level (bronze, silver or gold level) is a decision of an independent PAR Jury;
    - Written notification of a successful certification from CCAB is required prior to any claims of PAR certification or use of a PAR Certified logo.
- That certification at any level is effective upon the date of written notification from CCAB and for a term of three years. The company agrees to undergo verification in its recertification year within one month of the expiry of its PAR Certification, or to cease use of the PAR logos and any claims to PAR program participation.
- That information submitted through the PAR program may be combined with that of other reporting companies for the purpose of identifying trends and aggregate impact of PAR companies.
- To the best of its knowledge, the company is materially compliant with all laws and regulations applicable to its operations, including those related to any formal agreements (e.g., Impact Benefit Agreements) with the Indigenous community or businesses.

CCAB agrees:

- To maintain as confidential, all information submitted by committed or certifying companies, or shared with CCAB as part of a company's PAR actions or activities, unless otherwise approved by the company, and a secure written agreement to the same by CCAB staff.
- To support the company through the process of achieving Committed or Certified recognition.

- To promote the company's level of participation on the CCAB website and in other communications, as well as promote the program to stakeholder groups.

3. Establish PAR Working Group/Committee

It is recommended that the company establish an internal cross-functional PAR Working Group (for example, people from Human Resources, Procurement etc. - basically those who are involved in Indigenous employment, business development and community relationships), to give support to the PAR process, advise on relevant information needed and eventually prepare a submission. Medium to large-sized organizations often have an Indigenous Relations Senior Steering Committee (for example, members of the executive team) who work on strategy, and a PAR Working Group/Committee who focus on planning and implementation of the strategy. PAR Working Group members will need a good understanding of the intent of PAR Certification Criteria. (For added assistance, see "Commentary on PAR Committed Criteria" in this Section, which outlines outcomes a company can expect from implementation of the Criteria.)

4. Conduct Self-Assessment

To evaluate current state and work at highlighting and closing any gaps (and to check on readiness for making a PAR Committed submission), it is recommended the PAR Working Group or Committee should complete an initial internal assessment against the PAR Committed Criteria Phase One level (followed at later stages of implementation by levels two and three). The benefits of completing an assessment are that it gives direction and consensus on what needs to be done, helps improve communications on Indigenous relations, stimulates a sharing of approaches within the company, reinforces a focus on continuous improve-ment, and is (if ready to apply) a great tool for helping put together a PAR submission.

Recommended Six-Step Assessment Process

It is recommended that the company apply a process to self-assessment of PAR Criteria. The following six-step approach is one example of an approach that would be helpful:

1) **Set Up an Assessment Team** - Assessment team will consist of maximum four people, from different parts of the company. Their job is to communicate about the assessment, administer the process, and complete a report.

2) **Spread the Word** - The aim is to simplify the assessment and reduce surprises, reinforce that assessment is a learning exercise rather than a "pass/fail" activity, and minimize any potential resistance.

3) **Pre-Assessment Meeting (Team)** - The Assessment Team could complete the assessment discussions amongst themselves. It is suggested, however, that the best outcome will be to include wider input, and this will require the Team to create a plan/agenda for the assessment period, the aim being to put together a few cross-departmental focus group sessions.

4) **Assessment Period** - We recommend focus groups of no more than 90 minutes each, led by members of the Assessment Team and using PAR Certification Phase One Criteria as the basis for questions and discussion (same process to apply each year with implementation of other Phases).

5) **Post-Assessment Meeting** - The Assessment Team collates feedback/input and puts together a report covering the PAR Committed Criteria Phase under review.

6) **Planning for Further Action** - The strength of an assessment is in the comments and feedback of the Assessment Team; the final report reflects their consensus. The Assessment Team should

present their findings to company leadership, who should review the comments and draft an Action Plan for moving forward. It is helpful if the Team not only outlines strengths and any opportunities that need to be addressed (and any that need immediate action), but also any striking results and activity that makes the company unique in how it enhances Indigenous relations, and any positive activity that would make the company even better if it were more widespread.

PAR Assessment Scoring Process

To assist in scoring a submission, a user-friendly scoring process was developed and is available from CCAB. As well as outlining a scoring process, it also includes minimum scoring threshold information for recognition.

5. Prepare Submission

Contact CCAB for current submission deadline dates, or check the website -

ccab.com.

Intent to Apply

Following a successful progress review (or another assessment as a base), if the company is ready to make a submission, it should contact CCAB and declare this intention (Intent to Apply notifica-tion); a simple phone call or email is all that is needed. See "General Advice/ Comments" (below) covering some areas that need special consideration when putting together a submission:

General Advice/Comments

The following advice from PAR Verifiers should assist an applicant with submission development, as they cover some of the problem areas often noted with submissions. Comments cover what PAR Verifiers like to see in these particular areas; the topics listed cover the three Phases of the PAR Committed Criteria.

Community of Interest (in Phase One)

Provide a listing of Indigenous groups/communities that you were involved with or are currently involved with.

Indigenous Policy (in Phase One)

It benefits to provide a specific Indigenous Policy (not just suggesting that the policy is covered, for example, under a Diversity Policy statement or other policies).

Communications Plan (in Phase Two)

Provide an internal and external (notably internal) Communications strategy and plan on Indigenous relations (and on PAR implementation). This is a critical element and you should provide a solid overview of the strategy/plan (if you have a Plan, make sure to include it as an appendix). A Plan could include scheduled community meetings, calen-dar of events, common messages on Indigenous relations (and PAR) to be reinforced,

procedures for dealing with media (and media training), and scheduled departmental approaches to the community (to lower possible confusion). In most organizations, applying a positive approach to Indigenous relations (as reinforced by PAR Criteria) is as much about a culture shift as about process, and ensuring that, for example, a common message is communicated through all levels of the company is an important element in helping sustain a positive focus. The point is that communication needs to be well managed on PAR deployment; doing so will go a long way to ensuring success.

Self-Assessment (in Phases Two and Three)

Organizations that do a comprehensive self-assessment against PAR Criteria to assess its current state, and to help with submission development, tend to achieve positive outcomes. If your PAR Working Committee (or something similar) is completing an assessment, it works well if Committee members complete an assessment and discuss the outcome, then widen the exercise with a few focus groups with staff, Community of Interest representation and Indigenous suppliers.

Action Plans (in Phases Two and Three)

Provide an Action Plan or Plans for how the company will achieve its employment, business development and community relationships targets, covering such areas as accountability, improvement activity timelines, and other factors. The Action Plan can be free-standing or, for example, within community partner agreements; the point is that for good implemen-tation of required actions to meet goals, a plan must be in place and well communicated. It is helpful to have information on Action Plans in place for all areas within the scope of the submission (not just with projects, for example, but also including corporate, etc.).

Community Relationships (in Phases Two and Three)

There should be information on what the company has done (and is doing) in regards to building trusting relationships with the community. Some critical points will reflect respect for Indigenous culture and for what is important to the community, such as cultural practices and environmental issues, as well as evidence of the company's active engagement with the community. It is evident that those companies that are viewed as part of the commun-ity have a far better chance of success in sustaining good relationships, versus those that go into the community to give an occasional presentation.

Targets (in Phase Three)

Provide annual targets that are realistic (for example, based on data review of past perform-ance) and are measurable. We are not dictating targets to a company, but want to see that the company did establish realistic and current numerical targets that reflect an effort was made in this area, with measures and timelines. If targets are not met, a reasonable explana-tion is all that is required. It is acknowledged that there could be matters outside the control of the company, or a specific roadblock, that can have a negative impact on results. For clarification, targets for PAR are numerical; all others are classed as objectives.

Tracking (in Phase Three)

Provide a clear outline of the actual processes in place for tracking targets and progress, particularly covering the Employment, Business Development and Community Relationships Drivers. Examples include such processes as key indicators and scheduled reports used to monitor performance, also scheduled sessions for reviewing the data, and the procedures for any follow-up activity.

Employment Data Span (in Phase Three)

Provide the standard total overall employee count (Indigenous and non-Indigenous, plus overall retention and workforce composition) plus a breakdown of this data across the company (covering the scope of the submission), for example, a year-end employment report broken out by operating division.

Business Development Data (in Phase Three)

Provide a breakdown of Indigenous procurement data, a listing of Indigenous suppliers and amounts spent with each one, versus simply a grand total. In regards to using a database to source Indigenous suppliers, it is beneficial to expand on the actual use of the database, versus simply stating that a database is in place.

Business Development Information Sessions (in Phase Three)

There should be assurance that if information sessions on procurement are held with the community that they adequately outline the company's procedures and preferences to ensure any roadblocks on access are lowered, and to nurture effective working relationships.

Documentation and Data

The company needs to send an appendix to the submission with required documentation and data, as noted in the Criteria. A Documentation & Targets Checklist (see next page) has been provided covering each of the three phases of the PAR Committed Criteria, to assist an applicant in ensuring that required documentation and data is being provided. (The completed checklist should be attached to the submission.)

SECTION TWO

PAR COMMITTED CRITERIA - DOCUMENTATION & TARGETS CHECKLIST

Completing this Checklist will assist applicants in ensuring that requested documentation is being provided with their submission for each Phase of the PAR Committed Criteria.

PAR Committed - Phase One Criteria	Yes	No
Provide a copy of: • Leadership commitment statement		
• List of key Indigenous communities, groups (Community of Interest)		
• Dates (and attendance) of executive Indigenous cultural awareness training		
• Indigenous Relations Policy		

Completing this Checklist will assist applicants in ensuring that requested documentation is being provided with their submission for each Phase of the PAR Committed Criteria.

PAR Committed - Phase Two Criteria	Yes	No
Provide a copy of: • Formal Review Report, to measure and identify results from Phase One		
• Internal Assessment Report completed against Phase Two Criteria		
• Action Plan covering Phase Two Criteria		
• Communications Plan		

Continued on next page

PAR COMMITTED CRITERIA - DOCUMENTATION & TARGETS CHECKLIST (CONTINUED)

Progressive Aboriginal RELATIONS
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Completing this Checklist will assist applicants in ensuring that requested documentation is being provided with their submission for each Phase of the PAR Committed Criteria.

PAR Committed - Phase Three Criteria	Yes	No
Provide a copy of: • Formal Review Report completed to measure results from Phase Two		
• Internal Assessment Report against Phase Three Criteria		
• Action Plan covering Phase Two Criteria		
• A listing of targets covering:		
• Indigenous employment		
• Indigenous employee retention		
• Indigenous workplace composition (across all levels and divisions)		
• $ spent on goods and services from Indigenous-owned businesses		
• Increasing community engagement/financial and in-kind support		
• Phase Three Action Plan		
• Documentation on how the company tracks performance against targets		
• Data covering:		
• Current number of full-time Indigenous employees - also show as a percentage of overall employee count (broken out into key functions/operating divisions, across submission scope)		
• Current Indigenous employee retention rate compared to overall employee retention levels (broken out into key functions/operating divisions, across submission scope)		
• Current Indigenous employee workforce composition across the company, compared to overall employee numbers (broken out into key functions/operat-ing divisions, across submission scope)		
• $ spent on goods and services with Indigenous-owned businesses and as a percentage of the total procurement budget (listing of Indigenous suppliers and amounts spent with each one)		
• $ spent on financial and/or in-kind support provided by the company for community activities and events		
• Data showing levels of community engagement		
• Breakdown of dates and participants that have gone through employee Indigenous cultural awareness training, also content breakdown		
• Dates of community procurement information sessions to assist potential Indigenous suppliers/contractors dealing with or bidding to the company		

6. Select PAR Verifier

The role of a qualified PAR Verifier is to thoroughly review a PAR Committed Criteria submission and complete a high-level report (noting key strengths of the submission, some suggestions if applicable, and an executive summary) that is sent to the applicant by CCAB, which advises them of the outcome. In regards to confidentiality, all PAR Verifiers are qualified professionals and sign a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement that covers:

PAR Verifier Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

A) Definition of Confidential Information - Confidential information is defined as all information relating to the project, including any facts, data, ideas, processes and plans. It also includes all information relating to CCAB member companies and PAR reporting companies. In addition, all verbal information is considered confidential information at the time of disclosure. It also includes any information the PAR Verifier obtains through analysis or examinations of the project.

B) Disclosure of Confidential Information - The information disclosed by CCAB may be used by the PAR Verifier only for the purpose of working on the project. The PAR Verifier is not to use the disclosed information for the PAR Verifier's benefit or any other purpose. The PAR Verifier agrees not to disclose any confidential information that has been made known to them.

C) Acknowledgement - The PAR Verifier acknowledges that the information which will be made available is entrusted for the sole purpose of furthering the interests of CCAB and will not be used for any other purpose.

7. Pay Verifier Fees/Costs

The company pays the PAR Verifier directly. The PAR Verifier will invoice the company for the submission review fee (for fee schedule, contact CCAB or refer to the website - ccab.com).

QUICK REFERENCE DIAGRAM - SEVEN-STEP PAR COMMITTED CRITERIA SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. Review PAR fees

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2. Complete PAR Participation Agreement & submit to CCAB (with application fee)

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3. Establish PAR Working Group/Committee

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4. Complete internal assessment (against a Phase One of the PAR Committed Criteria) to evaluate current state and plan/ work at closing any gaps (PAR Working Group/Committee)

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5. Prepare a submission - after closing gaps (confirmed by review/assessment), put together a PAR Submission and submit it to CCAB (contact CCAB for current submission deadline dates)

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6. PAR Verifier submission review

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7. Pay PAR Verifier invoice covering the submission review fee (for fee schedule, contact CCAB)

SECTION TWO

COMMENTARY ON PAR COMMITTED CRITERIA

This commentary will help you appreciate the intent of the PAR Committed Criteria, and the outcomes a company can expect from using the Criteria as a road map for building a solid foundation for achieving positive Indigenous relations. The PAR Committed Criteria is comprehensive but user friendly, with three specific/separate progressive Phases to assist companies just starting out in PAR in building a solid foundation for positive Indigenous relations, leading toward the application in the future of the PAR Certification Criteria and Certification. Each Phase of the PAR Committed Criteria should take no longer than one year to implement (all phases should be completed within three years).

What is the Outcome from Phase One?

The outcome from meeting the intent of Phase One of the PAR Committed Criteria is that the company will have clearly identified its Community of Interest (key Indigenous communities/groups); and its leadership and senior line management team are committed to leading the charge on positive Indigenous relations, reinforced by a strong policy and a PAR Working Group/Committee operating structure, to help drive policy and strategy forward across the company.

What is the Outcome from Phase Two?

The outcome from meeting the intent of Phase Two of the PAR Committed Criteria is that the company has successfully completed a Phase Two assessment of current state (to assist planning), an effective communications strategy and plan have been introduced to manage internal/external communications on Indigenous relations (and progress on PAR), and the management team are reinforcing the commitment to Indigenous relations in a consistent manner across all levels of the company. Also, Indigenous community input has assisted the development of a PAR Action Plan, and development is under way to introduce top-class employee Indigenous cultural awareness training in all areas.

What is the Outcome from Phase Three? Where Should a Company Expect to Be At?

- The outcome from meeting the intent of Phase Three of the PAR Committed Criteria is that the company has successfully completed a Phase Three assessment of current state (to assist planning), building on the good foundation work from Phase Two.
- Targets have been set on Indigenous employment, retention and workplace composition, spending on goods and services provided by Indigenous-owned businesses, and on Indigenous community engagement and support.
- Targeting enabled the implementation of a Phase Three Action Plan that identified actions, responsibilities, performance indicators and timelines on implementation, complemented by a tracking and review methodology to review progress.
- Capacity-building training programs for Indigenous employees are evolving well, and a productive focus is in place on training and education, mentoring programs, internships and support for scholarships.
- Company leaders are actively engaged with the Indigenous community, driven by a proactive focus on building foundational relationships based on trust and reciprocity, and reinforced through active employee participation in cultural events, programs and celebrations.
- There is good feedback from employees in regards to the rollout of Indigenous cultural awareness training (developed earlier in Phase Two), complemented with the establishment of an internal Indigenous employee support network.

- A process-driven approach has been implemented on Indigenous business development, with the application of a supplier database (to assist sourcing), along with clear procurement processes and good access to company business for Indigenous companies.
- The company can provide current data covering the number of full-time Indigenous employees (also show as a percentage of overall employee count), retention rate compared to overall employee retention levels, workforce composition across the company (compared to overall employee numbers), amount spent on goods and services with Indigenous-owned businesses (and as a percentage of the total procurement budget), dollar amount of financial and/or in-kind support provided by the company for community activities and events, and data showing levels of community engagement.

MOVING FORWARD WITH PAR CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

1. Review Fees

For the current PAR fee structure, contact CCAB or refer to the website - ccab.com.

2. Complete PAR Participation Agreement

Complete and sign a PAR Participation Agreement (available from CCAB) and submit it to CCAB (along with the application fee). The PAR Verifier will invoice the company directly for their Submission Review fee (contact CCAB for Verifier fees/costs, or check the website - ccab.com).

The PAR Participation Agreement covers the terms and conditions for participation in the PAR program:

PAR Participation Agreement

Company agrees:

- To maintain its membership with the CCAB in good standing.
- To comply with all terms and conditions of PAR program participation, including terms and restrictions related to use of the PAR logos (PAR program, Committed, bronze, silver or gold) provided to the company by CCAB, and the use of PAR program documents, presentations and images.
- That participation in the PAR program at the Committed and Certified levels requires an additional annual fee to be paid to CCAB.
- To acknowledge that:
  - PAR certification requires an independent external verification at the company's cost;
  - The assignment of a certification level (bronze, silver or gold level) is a decision of an independent PAR Jury;
  - Written notification of a successful certification from CCAB is required prior to any claims of PAR certification or use of a PAR Certified logo.
- That certification at any level is effective upon the date of written notification from CCAB and for a term of three years. The company agrees to undergo verification in its recertification year within one month of the expiry of its PAR certification, or to cease use of the PAR logos and any claims to PAR program participation.
- That information submitted through the PAR program may be combined with that of other reporting companies for the purpose of identifying trends and aggregate impact of PAR companies.
- To the best of its knowledge, the company is materially compliant with all laws and regulations applicable to its operations, including those related to any formal agreements (e.g., Impact Bene-fit Agreements) with the Indigenous community or businesses.

CCAB agrees:

- To maintain as confidential, all information submitted by Committed or Certifying companies, or shared with CCAB as part of a company's PAR actions or activities, unless otherwise approved by the company, and to secure a written agreement to this effect signed by CCAB staff.
- To support the company through the process of achieving Committed or Certified recognition.

- To promote the company's level of participation on the CCAB website and in other communications, as well as promote the program to stakeholder groups.

3. Establish PAR Working Group/Committee

We recommend that the company establish an internal cross-functional PAR Working Group (for example, people from Human Resources, Procurement, etc. - basically those who are involved in Indigenous employment, business development and community relationship matters), to give support to the PAR process, advise on relevant information needed and eventually prepare a submission. Medium to large-sized organizations often have an Indigenous Relations Senior Steering Committee (for example, members of the executive team) that works on strategy, and a PAR Working Group/Committee that focuses on planning and implementation of the strategy. PAR Working Group members will need a good understanding of the intent of the PAR Certification Criteria (review actual Criteria plus, for added assistance, see "Commentary on PAR Certification Criteria" in this Section, which outlines outcomes a company can expect from implementation of the Criteria).

4. Conduct Self-Assessment

To evaluate current state and work at highlighting and closing any gaps (and to check on readiness for making a PAR submission), it is highly recommended the PAR Working Group or Committee should lead/complete an internal assessment against the PAR Certification Criteria. The benefit of completing an assessment is that it gives direction and consensus on what needs to be done, helps improve communica-tions on Indigenous relations, stimulates a sharing of approaches within the company, reinforces a focus on continuous improvement, and is (if ready to apply) a great tool for helping put together a PAR submission.

Recommended Six-Step Assessment Process

It is recommended that the company apply a process to self-assessment of PAR Criteria. The following six-step approach is one example of an approach that would be helpful:

1) **Set Up an Assessment Team** - Assessment team will consist of maximum four people, from different parts of the company. Their job is to communicate about the assessment, administer the process and complete a report.

2) **Spread the Word** - The aim is to demystify the assessment and reduce surprises, reinforce that assessment is a learning exercise rather than a "pass/fail" activity, and minimize any potential resistance.

3) **Pre-Assessment Meeting (Team)** - The Assessment Team could complete the assessment discussions amongst themselves. We highly recommend, however, that the best outcome will be to include wider input, and this will require the Team to create a plan/agenda for the assessment period, the aim being to put together a few cross-departmental focus group sessions.

4) **Assessment Period** - We recommend focus groups of no more than 90 minutes each, led by members of the Assessment Team and using PAR Certification Criteria as the basis for questions (prepared) and discussion.

5) **Post-Assessment Meeting** - The Assessment Team collates feedback/input and puts together a report covering the PAR Certification Criteria.

6) **Planning for Further Action** - The strength of an assessment is in the comments and feedback of the Assessment Team; the final report reflects their consensus. The Assessment Team should

present their findings to company leadership, who should review the comments and draft an Action Plan for moving forward. It is helpful if the Team not only outlines strengths and any opportunities that need to be addressed (and any that need immediate action), but also any striking results and activity that makes the company unique in how it enhances Indigenous relations, and any positive activity that would make the company even better if it were more widespread.

PAR Assessment Scoring Process

To assist in scoring a submission, a user-friendly scoring process was developed and is available from CCAB. As well as outlining a scoring process, it also includes minimum scoring threshold information for recognition.

5. Prepare Submission

Contact CCAB for current submission deadline dates, or check the website - ccab.com.

Following a successful progress review (or another assessment as a base), if the company believes it is ready to make a submission for PAR Certification Bronze, Silver or Gold, it should then contact CCAB and declare this intention (Intent to Apply notification); a simple phone call or email is all that is needed.

Certification Levels

The following outline/comments covers the three levels of PAR Certification (Bronze, Silver and Gold) and may assist dialogue on the Criteria. Also see the "General Advice/Comments" section below, which covers some areas that may need special consideration.

Bronze/Silver/Gold Certification Levels - PAR Certification Criteria

There are three levels of PAR certification: Bronze, Silver and Gold. If a company is considering making a submission for a level of certification (based on current state and maturity on Indigenous relations), it is helpful to appreciate the key intent of each level, and consider which level is currently being met. To assist discussion, the following outlines the key activities that PAR Verifiers expect to see implemented and covered in a submission. A good tool to assist evaluation is to complete an internal self-assessment against the Criteria.

Bronze Certification - Focus on Commitment and Action Plans

Leadership Actions

- The company has an Indigenous Relations Policy, and Indigenous relations are integrated into business planning.
- Board member/s are involved in Indigenous relations.
- Leadership and line managers have received Indigenous cultural awareness training and PAR Criteria training.

Employment

- Community input on employment issues.

- Targets set on Indigenous employment, retention and workforce composition.
- Action Plan in place to meet targets (responsibilities, actions, timelines, and methods to track performance).

Business Development

- Community input on business development.
- Targets set on Indigenous business development, notably growth of services and goods from Indigenous suppliers.
- Action Plan in place to meet targets (responsibilities, actions, timelines, and methods to track performance).

Community Relationships

- Community input on community relationships.
- Targets set on community engagement and funding.
- Action Plan in place to meet targets (responsibilities, actions, timelines, and methods to track performance).

Silver Certification - Focus on Implementation and Results In addition to meeting Criteria intent at the Bronze Level:

Leadership Actions

- PAR self-assessment completed and fully reviewed.
- A Communications Plan for Indigenous relations.
- Management cascade philosophy and commitment to Indigenous relations.
- Process for selection of priorities.
- Operating committee structure for PAR implementation (for example, PAR Committee).
- Leaders review effectiveness of Indigenous relations strategy.
- Community and stakeholder support for the company's efforts on all four PAR Drivers.

Employment

- Tracking employment, retention, workforce composition and training.
- Employee Indigenous cultural awareness training sessions held.
- Indigenous employee support group in place.
- Support for scholarships, mentoring, internships and training.
- Achieved positive results and trends in employment, retention and workplace composition, for the full submission reporting period (past three years), with data evidence.

Business Development

- Tracking Indigenous procurement.
- Access (and procedures) for Indigenous suppliers.

- Procurement information sessions held.
- The company supports training and education initiatives.
- Joint ventures, partnerships or other forms of business arrangements have been established with communities.
- The company has achieved positive results and trends in Indigenous business development, for the full submission reporting period (past three years), with data evidence.

Community Relationships

- Tracking community engagement and funding.
- Leaders and employees are engaged/participate with communities.
- National Indigenous Day is celebrated.
- Support and activity for knowledge transfer.
- Activities and successes are well communicated.
- The company supports Indigenous cultural activities and sponsorships.
- The company has achieved positive results and trends in community engagement and funding for the full submission reporting period (past three years), with data evidence.

Gold Certification - Role Model and Sustained Outcomes

In addition to meeting Criteria intent at the Bronze and Silver Levels

- High levels of appreciation within the company of the significance of positive Indigenous rela-tions to the organization.
- Indigenous relations policies, strategy and PAR Criteria intent fully ingrained within the company, at all levels.
- A role model company for positive Indigenous relations (an example to others), with a continuous improvement philosophy, and good results and trends across PAR Drivers (with data evidence).
- Excellence in PAR Drivers, mature processes and innovative enhancements over a number of years, across all departments (within submission scope).
- Exceptional support for the company from Indigenous communities/groups/stakeholders.

General Advice/Comments

The following advice from PAR Verifiers should assist an applicant with submission development as they cover some areas that need special consideration and, if absent, cause issues with a submission.

Community of Interest

Provide a listing of Indigenous groups/communities that you were involved with during the three-year reporting period (not simply stating "involvement" with First Nations, for example).

Indigenous Policy

It benefits to provide a specific Indigenous Policy (not just suggesting that the policy is covered, for example, under a Diversity Policy statement or other policies).

Communications Plan

Provide an internal and external (notably internal) Communications strategy and plan on Indigenous relations (and on PAR implementation). This is a critical element and you should provide a solid overview of the strategy/plan (If you have a Plan, make sure to include it as an appendix). A Plan could include scheduled community meetings, calendar of events, common messages on Indigenous relations (and PAR) to be reinforced, procedures for dealing with media (and media training), and scheduled departmental approaches to the community (to lower possible confusion). In most organizations applying, a positive approach on Indigenous relations (as reinforced by PAR Criteria) is as much about a culture shift as about process, and ensuring that, for example, a common message is communicated through all levels of the company is an important element in helping sustain a positive focus. The point is that communication needs to be well managed on PAR deployment; doing so will go a long way to ensuring success.

Self-Assessment (against PAR Certification Criteria)

Organizations that do a comprehensive self-assessment against PAR Criteria to assess current state, and to help with submission development, are more successful. If your PAR Working Committee (or something similar) is completing an assessment, our advice is that it works well if Committee members complete an assessment and discuss the outcome, then widen the exercise with a few focus groups with staff, Community of Interest representation and Indigenous suppliers.

Targets

Provide annual targets that are realistic (for example, based on data review of past performance) and measurable. We are not dictating targets to a company, but we do wish to see that the company did establish realistic and current numerical targets that reflect an effort was made in this area, with measures and timelines. If targets are not met, a reasonable explanation is all that is required. We realize that there could be matters outside the control of the company, or a specific roadblock, that can have a negative impact on results. For clarification, targets for PAR are numerical; all others are classed as objectives.

Action Plans

Provide an Action Plan or Plans for how the company will achieve its employment, business development and community relationships targets, covering such areas as accountability, improvement activity timelines, and other factors. The Action Plan can be free-standing or, for example, within community partner agreements; the point is that for good implemen-tation of required actions to meet goals, a Plan must be in place and well communicated. It will be helpful to have information on Action Plans in place for all areas within the scope of the submission (not just with projects, for example, but also including corporate, etc.).

Tracking

Provide a clear outline of the actual processes in place for tracking targets and progress, particularly covering the Employment, Business Development and Community Relationships Drivers. Examples include such processes as key indicators and scheduled reports used to monitor performance, also scheduled sessions for reviewing the data, and the procedures for any follow-up activity.

Employment Data Span

Provide the standard total overall employee count (Indigenous and non-Indigenous, plus over-all retention and workforce composition) plus a breakdown of this data across the company (across the scope of the submission), for example, a year-end employment report broken out by operating division.

Business Development Data

Provide a breakdown of Indigenous procurement data, a listing of Indigenous suppliers and amounts spent with each one, versus simply a grand total. In regards to using a database to source Indigenous suppliers, it is beneficial to expand on the actual use of the database, versus simply stating that a database is in place.

Business Development Information Sessions

There should be assurance that if information sessions on procurement are held with the community that they adequately outline the company's procedures and preferences to ensure any roadblocks on access are lowered, and to nurture effective working relationships.

Community Relationships

There should be information on what the company has done (and is doing) in regards to building trusting relationships with the community. Some critical points are how you show respect for Indigenous culture and for what's important to the community, such as cultural practices and environmental issues, as well as evidence of the company's active engagement with the community (not simply involved with an annual tournament, for example). It is clear that those companies that are viewed as part of the community have a far better chance of success in sustaining good relationships, versus those that go into the community to give an occasional presentation.

Results

Check the Results & Trend Data Chart below for a listing of expected outcomes; key data required covers results for three years, broken out per year for Indigenous employment, retention and workforce composition (broken out into key functions/operating divisions, across submission scope), and Indigenous business development (listing of Indigenous suppliers and amounts spent with each one).

Documentation and Data

The company needs to send an appendix to the submission with required documenta-tion and data, as noted in the Criteria. One checklist and one chart have been provided to assist an applicant in ensuring that required documentation and data is being provided (a Documentation & Targets Checklist and a separate Results & Trend Data Chart; see both below). The completed checklist and chart should be attached to the submission, and will help progress the submission through the adjudication process in a timely manner.

The applicant needs to provide supportive documentation and data in an appendix to their submission (as noted in the Criteria). Completing this Checklist will assist applicants in ensuring that requested documentation is being provided with their PAR Certification submission, and will also help to progress the submission through the adjudication process in a timely manner.

SECTION THREE

PAR CERTIFICATION CRITERIA - DOCUMENTATION & TARGETS CHECKLIST

Applicants need to provide results and trend data in an appendix to their PAR Certification submission (as noted in the Criteria). Completing this Checklist will assist applicants in ensuring that requested results and trend data is being provided, and also helps to progress the submission through the adjudication process in a timely manner.

PAR Driver - Leadership Actions		
Provide: • List of key Indigenous communities, groups (the Community of Interest)	Yes	No
• Leadership statement of commitment		
• Indigenous Relations Policy		
• Communications Plan		
• Internal PAR Assessment Report against all PAR Drivers		
• Information/documentation on how the company measures employee & community understanding of its commitment/policy on Indigenous relations		
• Information/documentation on how the company measures the effectiveness of its Indigenous relations strategy and implementation		
PAR Driver - Employment		
Provide: • Employment targets for:		
• Indigenous employment		
• Indigenous employee retention		
• Indigenous workforce composition		
• Indigenous Employment Action Plan		
• Information/documentation on how the company tracks performance against targets		

Continued on next page

PAR CERTIFICATION CRITERIA - DOCUMENTATION & TARGETS CHECKLIST (CONTINUED)

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PAR Driver - Business Development		
Provide: • Business Development targets for:	Yes	No
• goods purchased from Indigenous suppliers		
• contracting with Indigenous companies/service providers		
• Indigenous Business Development Action Plan		
• Information/documentation supporting how the company tracks performance against targets		
• Dates of any information sessions held on procurement		
• Policy covering preferential practices for Indigenous suppliers		
PAR Driver - Community Relationships		
Provide: • Community Relationships targets for:		
• community engagement		
• financial and/or in-kind support		
• Community Relationships Action Plan		
• Information/documentation supporting how the company tracks performance/ targets		
• Information/documentation on how the company tracks performance against targets		

SECTION THREE

PAR CERTIFICATION CRITERIA - RESULTS & TREND DATA CHART

Required

1. Indicate Yes or No on Data covering targets included.
2. Indicate Yes or No on Trend Data included (three years minimum broken out per year), and also indicate kind of overall trending as being either negative (-), stable (0) or positive (+).

Results - were targets met (over a three-year period) on:	Yes	No
• Indigenous employment		
• Indigenous employee retention		
• Indigenous workforce composition		
• Goods purchased from Indigenous suppliers		
• Contracting with Indigenous companies/service providers		
• Community engagement		
• Financial and/or in-kind community support		

Trends - (three years of results broken out per year)	Yes	No	-	0	+
• Number of full-time Indigenous employees, also shown as a percent-age of overall employee count (broken out into key functions/operating divisions, across submission scope)					
• Indigenous employee retention rate, compared to overall employee retention levels (broken out into key functions/operating divisions, across submission scope)					
• Indigenous employee workforce composition across the company, compared to overall employee numbers (broken out into key func-tions/operating divisions, across submission scope)					
• $ spent on goods/services with Indigenous businesses, and as a percentage of the total procurement budget (listing of Indigenous suppliers and amounts spent with each one)					
• Number of joint venture partners, Impact benefit agreements, Participation Agreements, or other formal arrangements with Indigenous communities					
• Levels and numbers of people engaged in community activities and events					
• Listing of financial and/or in-kind support provided to Indigenous communities, groups and stakeholders					

6. Select PAR Verifier

The company will receive information from CCAB about options for selecting a regional PAR Verifier and will confirm selection. The role of a qualified PAR Verifier is to thoroughly review a PAR submission, arrange with the company for a site visit to gain a better appreciation of selected elements of the submission, and submit

a high-level report to the PAR Jury to assist their deliberations (noting key strengths of the submission, some suggestions if applicable, and an executive summary). Following the Jury meeting, CCAB will advise the company of the outcome, as well as send a copy of the Verifier Report. In regards to confidentiality, all PAR Verifiers are qualified professionals and sign a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement that covers:

PAR Verifier Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement

A) Definition of Confidential Information - Confidential information is defined as all information relating to the project, including any facts, data, ideas, processes and plans. It also includes all information relating to CCAB member companies and PAR reporting companies. In addition, all verbal information is considered confidential information at the time of disclosure. It also includes any information the PAR Verifier obtains through analysis or examinations of the project.

B) Disclosure of Confidential Information - The information disclosed by CCAB may be used by the PAR Verifier only for the purpose of working on the project. The PAR Verifier is not to use the disclosed information for the PAR Verifier's benefit or any other purpose. The PAR Verifier agrees not to disclose any confidential information that has been made known to them.

C) Acknowledgement - The PAR Verifier acknowledges that the information which will be made available is entrusted for the sole purpose of furthering the interests of CCAB and will not be used for any other purpose.

7. Undergo Site Visit Exercise

Site visits are designed for completion in one day for most companies, or less for smaller companies. Visits are generally held at head offices, though they may take place where a company has operations. The aim of a site visit is to verify selected points from the submission, noted earlier by the PAR Verifier during their submission review. The company must assign an individual to liaise with the PAR Verifier, and develop and provide a draft agenda in consultation with the PAR Verifier, provide an organization chart, and arrange for office space for the PAR Verifier while on-site, as well as any additional information requested in advance by the PAR Verifier.

Example of a Site Visit Agenda

8:45 am - 9:00 am	Verifier arrival/greeting - office set up - receive any additional documentation.
9:00 am - 9:45 am	Meeting with President and representation from Executive leadership/Steering committee (provide names and positions). Advise room location.
9:45 am - 12:45 pm	Meeting with internal PAR Working Group/Committee (provide names and positions). Advise room location.
1:00 pm - 2:15 pm	Meeting with Indigenous employee focus group (representation from Employee Network if possible). Lunch provided for all. Advise room location.
2:30 pm - 3:45 pm	Interviews with four to five selected external community stakeholders. Each call lasts 15 to 20 minutes. Stakeholders should represent those involved with the company on business development and community engagement and funding. The PAR Verifier requires the names, contact information and connection with the company (e.g., Indigenous community, supplier, etc.).
3:45 pm - 4:00 pm	Wrap up/Close out meeting (brief). Advise room location.

Site Visit Meetings

The exercise is for the PAR Verifier to meet with four groups (all scheduled); the four meetings are outlined below.

A. Meeting with the Senior team (normally 45 minutes)
The objective of a meeting with the most senior leader or the leadership team of the company is to better understand the company's commitment and the relationship between PAR and the company's strategy.

B. Meeting with members of PAR Working Group/Committee (normally 3 hours)
The PAR Verifier will meet with the group/team noted in the PAR submission as having responsibility for implementation of PAR Criteria Drivers across the company (employment, business development, leadership actions and community relationships); this may also include a senior executive with accountability for Indigenous relations. The objective of the meeting is to verify (and clarify) key parts of the submission and to address any issues noted from submission review.

C. Meeting with Indigenous employees (normally 75 minutes)
The verification exercise requires an informal meeting with a focus group of Indigenous employees, preferably people who have worked for the company for more than one year (if timing works, this meeting could take place over lunch). The purpose of the meeting is to gain their perspective on certain relevant items within the submission. Members of the leadership team and the PAR Working Group/Committee, and any Indigenous person who is in leadership or on the PAR Committee, are not to attend this meeting.

D. Meeting/discussions with external stakeholders (75 minutes - normally 15- to 20-minute phone calls for each)
The company submits a list of potential community/partner interviewees to the PAR Verifier in advance of the site visit. From this list, the PAR Verifier (in conjunction with the applicant) selects four to five stakeholders for an interview. The company will schedule these interviews (15- to 20-minute phone calls or in-person interviews) to be held while on-site (normally in the afternoon of a visit). The objective is to gain further insight in regards to the company's engagement with the community, and the company's commitment to positive Indigenous relations, working from a set of relevant questions.

8. Pay Verifier Fees/Costs

The company pays the PAR Verifier directly. The PAR Verifier will invoice the company for the fee, travel costs and any related site visit expenses. Contact CCAB for further details.

9. Meet with PAR Jury

At the final stage of the PAR Certification process, the PAR Verifier acts as an advocate for the applicant, providing the PAR Jury with a final report, including a summary of findings. Jury members are held in high regard within the Indigenous business community; they meet to review and ensure that the PAR adjudication

system was comprehensive, effective and consistently applied, and to review submissions and Verifier reports and discuss matters directly with PAR Verifiers. This level of review and input assists their deliberations in reaching consensus on awarding certification to applicants. The final decision regarding PAR Certification Levels (Bronze, Silver or Gold) is advised by CCAB. CCAB will notify the company by telephone and email.

SECTION THREE

QUICK REFERENCE DIAGRAM - NINE-STEP PAR CERTIFICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS

1. Review PAR fees

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2. Complete PAR Participation Agreement & submit to CCAB (with application fee)

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3. Establish PAR Working Group/Committee

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4. Complete internal assessment (against a Phase One of the PAR Committed Criteria) to evaluate current state and plan/work at closing any gaps (PAR Working Group/Committee)

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5. Prepare a submission - after closing gaps (confirmed by review/ assessment), put together a PAR submission and submit it to CCAB. (contact CCAB for current submission deadline dates)

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6. Review CCAB information for selecting regional PAR Verifier & confirm selected Verifier. PAR Verifier reviews submission

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7. Site Visit Exercise by a PAR Verifier

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8. Pay PAR Verifier invoice covering the submission review fee, travel and any related expenses (for fee schedule, contact CCAB)

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9. Par Jury Meeting - Final decision on Bronze, Silver or Gold certification by the Jury - CCAB advises company of decision

COMMENTARY ON PAR CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

This commentary will help you appreciate the scope and intent of the PAR Certification Criteria, and also the outcome a company can expect from using the Criteria as its road map for achieving and sustaining positive Indigenous relations. The PAR Certification Criteria was designed for organizations at the Third Phase PAR Committed Criteria implementation level or above, to help grow and sustain their focus on positive Indigenous relations. The PAR Certification Criteria is made up of four comprehensive sections covering Leadership Actions, Employment, Business Development and Community Relationships (referred to as PAR Drivers).

What is the Outcome from the PAR Leadership Actions Driver?

Leadership Actions are defined as actions to reinforce an organizational focus on Indigenous relations by leaders of the organization. Such actions have an impact in achieving and sustaining good results in all PAR Drivers. These actions include setting and cascading a clear commitment and policy, identification and communication of the Community of Interest, scheduling self-assessment exercises against PAR Criteria to review status, and the application of a structure to drive and help sustain the commitment to positive Indigenous relations across the organization. The outcome from meeting the intent of the PAR Certification Leadership Actions Driver is that the company has clearly identified its Indigenous Community of Interest, that Indigenous relations are integrated into strategic plans and leadership, and that management is cascading and reinforcing positive Indigenous relations across all levels in a consistent manner. Commitment to Indigenous relations is driven through policy, assessment practices, key improvement priorities and the workings of formal internal cross-functional PAR Working Groups/Committees who lead the charge on implementa-tion and continuous improvement.

What is the Outcome from the PAR Employment Driver?

Employment is defined as the commitment of resources (time and money) to achieving equitable representation of Indigenous persons in the workplace. This involves recruiting and retaining Indigenous talent, supporting their career development and advancement, and promoting mobility of Indigenous employees throughout employment sectors and levels. This Driver also includes supporting cross-cultural awareness and/or cultural sensitivity training, and providing training and support for existing or prospective Indigenous employees through specific programs or actions. The outcome from meeting the intent of the PAR Certification Employment Driver is that the company has injected Indigenous community/stakeholder input into planning on three key elements
(Indigenous recruitment, retention and workforce composition), targets have been established, an Action Plan has been implemented, and the company tracks performance and progress on a scheduled basis. Leading-edge processes have been successfully implemented on the elements, plus an Indigenous employee support network/group has been implemented and is being well used. Employee satisfaction has been enhanced with a renewed focus on training, capacity building, and support being provided through internships, apprenticeships and scholar-ships. Data shows that the company has met employment targets and there are encouraging year-over-year successful trends over the past three years.

What is the Outcome from the PAR Business Development Driver?

Business development is defined as the commitment of resources (time and money) to the development of business relationships with Indigenous-owned businesses. These activities are sustained through mutual benefit. Capacity building and mentorship also directly relate to sustaining and enhancing business development. The outcome from meeting the intent of the PAR Certification Business Development Driver is that the company has ongoing constructive input from the Indigenous community to assist targets, an Action Plan has been deployed, and a

tracking process is used to monitor targets and progress. The company has leading-edge processes in place (for example, preferential policies/practices for Indigenous suppliers, a comprehensive database to assist sourcing suppliers and contractors, and well-understood procurement procedures applied across the organization). The company is mentoring and supporting Indigenous business people in innovative ways, and schedules/holds procurement information sessions in communities. Data shows that the company has met its targets on purchases and contracting with Indigenous businesses, and there are encouraging year-over-year positive trends over the past three years.

What is the Outcome from the PAR Community Relationships Driver?

The Community Relationships Driver is broken out into two components: engagement and support. Engagement is defined as providing time and resources to develop and sustain positive and progressive relationships with Indigenous communities, groups and stakeholders. Engagement can include communications, information sharing, involvement in events and activities, and partnerships. Support is defined as a commitment to develop positive and progressive relationships with the Indigenous communities, groups and stakeholders by providing financial and/or in-kind support. These components work together to nurture and sustain positive and progres-sive relationships. The outcome from meeting the intent of the Community Relationships Driver is that the company has ongoing constructive Indigenous community/stakeholder input to assist Community Relationships planning and annual targets, an Action Plan has been deployed, and a tracking process is used to monitor performance and progress. Management is well engaged with community leadership, and employees are participating in Indigenous cultural and commun-ity local and national events and celebrations. The company is giving financial and in-kind support for cultural initiatives, with positive feedback on impacts by the community. Data shows that the company has met its community engagement targets and is making positive impacts with its support for cultural programs/events, and there are encouraging year-over-year successful trends over the past three years.

Progressive Aboriginal
RELATIONS

Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business

For further questions on the PAR program, contact:

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