

## Why was ACCO created?

ACCO grew from a growing consensus among corporate leaders that taking action on climate change is a responsible business decision. “From market shifts to regulatory constraints, climate change poses real risks and opportunities that companies must begin planning for today, or risk losing ground to their more forward-thinking competitors. Prudent steps taken now to address climate change can improve a company’s competitive position relative to its peers and earn it a seat at the table to influence climate policy.” (“Getting Ahead of the Curve: Corporate Strategies”, Pew Center on Global Climate Change)

As corporations increasingly focus on addressing climate change, they have developed a need to identify professionals with clearly defined expertise in helping develop and maintain core climate change strategies. These strategies include providing interdisciplinary solutions to energy consumption and efficiency, use of natural resources, choice of supply chains, and product design and delivery. With climate change initiatives having already been adopted by local, state and regional authorities, and most observers predicting that national legislation will take place in the near future, corporations cannot put off developing strategies to manage risk and capitalize on opportunities in existing and future marketplaces.

Companies in all industries are already affected by heightened climate change awareness, including utilities, manufacturers, retailers, financial institutions, insurers, real estate developers, professional services and others – all must develop and maintain “corporate climate change strategies.” All face significant challenges and can seize competitive advantages with respect to non-regulated issues, and many will face financial penalties in the developing carbon-constrained economy.

By advancing the development of corporate climate change officers and creating a forum for the exchange and enhancement of best practices, industry standards and innovation, ACCO will enhance a corporation’s credibility and increase public understanding of the role companies are playing in response to climate change.

## Will ACCO take a policy position on climate change?

ACCO will not take any policy positions on climate change, but will provide educational opportunities for members and information to policymakers on how companies are responding to climate change challenges and opportunities (while also spotlighting members’ innovations).

## Why does a corporation need a climate change officer?

Climate change and related policies are increasingly creating risks across all aspects of the economy. A recent report published by the Pew Center on Global Climate Change identified impacts on energy prices, national income, health, and agriculture. As climate change alters the competitive landscape of all marketplaces, businesses will need to develop core business strategies to manage risk and capitalize on opportunities to ensure or develop strongholds.

As businesses begin to craft corporate strategies that address climate change, corporate climate change officers will increasingly play a crucial role in businesses by:

- Developing well-timed strategies to help prepare for eventual regulation and create flexibility for long-term strategic plans;
- Working with corporate leadership to establish an appropriate level of commitment;

- Directing efforts to influence policy development in order to position the business to gain credibility and exert a measure of control of the business' future environment/markets;
- Creating business opportunities and assessing risk by incorporating climate change into core business strategies;
- Assessing potential physical effects on corporate assets; and
- Identifying potential financial impacts due to limitations on a company's ability to emit greenhouse gases (GHGs).

### **What are examples of duties and responsibilities of a climate change officer?**

Climate change officers are responsible for developing, managing and helping implement a comprehensive corporate climate change strategy. Their duties may include:

- Conducting an emissions profile assessment by analyzing a company's GHG emissions profile throughout the value chain;
- Identifying whether and how the supply chain and users should be incorporated into the company's emissions profile;
- Developing systems for measuring, tracking and reporting direct and indirect GHG emissions;
- Developing a GHG monitoring system for measuring performance and progress against the company's climate change strategy and established benchmarks, as well as for monitoring energy efficiency measures;
- Producing annual climate change reports on the company's successes and failures in responding to climate change challenges and opportunities;
- Preparing and submitting reports to government agencies and external entities on risks and opportunities resulting from climate change and related policy impacts on company operations;
- Working with national, regional and local organizations and government agencies to assist in the preparation, monitoring and review of relevant strategic policies on climate change and sustainable energy issues, including the development of partnerships to enhance the company's working relationships with industry, environmental groups and government agencies;
- Promoting the use of sustainable and renewable sources of energy and reduction in GHG emissions internally, to vendors and customers of the company, and to the community in general;
- Developing and delivering effective training programs to executive leadership and middle management, and developing and sustaining effective working relationships with executive leadership and facilities and middle management;
- Working with public relations and marketing personnel to develop and publish a range of publicity materials and undertake press and publicity activities related to climate change and alternative/renewable energy;
- Maintaining an expertise and knowledge on climate change, energy efficiency and sustainability agenda by means of training, workshops and seminars;
- Coordinating the company's sustainability meetings and activities to reduce the company's environmental impact;
- Preparing guidance on climate change and energy matters as they impact the company's current and future operations;

- Work with leadership and middle management to ensure cultural change and progressive responsibility for each business unit reducing its carbon footprint; and
- Developing systems to assure compliance with existing and emerging GHG emissions control requirements.

### What are some examples of goals that ACCO will aim to achieve?

ACCO will endeavour to advance the professional knowledge, skills and experience of those dedicated to sustainable business practices, and to promote the development and implementation of sound climate change policies and procedures. Some examples of goals will include:

- Enhance credibility and understanding of critical role climate change officers play, while enabling companies to stay ahead of the curve in addressing challenges brought on by climate change and climate change policy;
- Advance standards of corporate greening efforts and professional climate change officers;
- Provide a resource for businesses and government seeking expertise in the fields of climate change and energy;
- Promote and enhance collegial and professional relationships among members of ACCO and its committees and between the ACCO and other professional organizations;
- Enhance public awareness of ACCO and the duties and needs of its members, and promote working relationships with other related professional, industry and government organizations;
- Develop a certification and re-certification program for practitioners on the basis of regulatory requirements, professional competence, study and experience; and
- Provide a platform of continuing professional education for its membership to maintain current and active expertise in the laws, rules, regulations, court decisions and best practices involving climate change and energy.

### Who should join ACCO?

Any individual with an active interest in developing and managing corporate climate change strategies and compliance with existing and impending policy at the municipal, state, regional, national and international levels, as well as companies and institutions that employ them, should join ACCO. Additional “affiliate” memberships will be made available to businesses, organizations, government and other institutions. The association will be open to both U.S. and international members.

### What are the benefits of joining ACCO?

- **ACCO's Certification Program** will acknowledge members' status, qualifications, expertise and credentials in conducting compliance duties, climate change strategy development, consulting, footprint and lifecycle evaluation, and other related services. The program will provide Certified ACCO Members with a powerful career advantage while providing their employers and clients the comfort of knowing that the member has met ACCO' high standards of knowledge, experience and testing.
- **ACCO's Education Programs** on climate change strategies, legislation and regulation, and best practices, including ACCO certification exam preparation.
- **ACCO's Annual Meeting and Trade Show** will provide the highest level of networking opportunities and professional development programs plus “get-to-know” social events.

- **ACCO's Job Bank** will be an online resource allowing employers to post job openings and members to post resumes. FREE resume listings will be provided for Certified and Professional Members.
- **ACCO's Web Site ([www.ACCO.org](http://www.ACCO.org))** will offer online access to ACCO and its expanding list of member benefit programs and services. A "members only" section for access to ACCO's membership directory will offer an easy way to exchange ideas, opinions and get questions answered.
- **ACCO's Consultant List** will connect organizations to professionals with expertise in areas related to corporate management of climate change issues.
- **ACCO's Carbon Trading Database** will help companies looking to participate in the Chicago, European and regional carbon markets identify prospective offsets, business partners, consultants, buyers and sellers.
- **ACCO's Bi-monthly Newsletter, [Climate Change Today](#)**, will be issued to keep members up-to-date on member benefits, education programs, special events, and the latest legislative and regulatory developments. Additionally, the newsletter will include: an educational column, a member profile, job listings, new member listings, and other valuable industry news.
- **ACCO's Publications Catalog** offers online discounts on book, journal and newsletter subscriptions, study programs, and compact discs on topics of interest to climate change officers.
- **ACCO's Speakers Bureau** will provide an online source of speakers for climate change conferences, customer or employee training seminars, and/or public sector events. Certified and Professional Members can post their bios and speaking topics for FREE.

### Why is certification for a climate change officer important?

Career opportunities for climate change officers are already plentiful in Europe and are increasing as heightened awareness in the United States is resulting in market demands and impending regulation. However, untrained and under-qualified personnel will not be able to help businesses address the extraordinarily wide-ranging and sophisticated issues related to developing and managing corporate climate change strategies. The "consumer" of the corporate climate change officer will become more vigilant and demanding as the legal responsibilities and government expectations continue to grow, become more complicated and carry significant penalties if not met. This is exacerbated by the media's ever increasing attention to climate change and energy issues. Certification of the climate change professional is designed to satisfy the concerns and requirements of employers, consumers and government.

### Who will set the standards for the *CCO* certification?

ACCO hopes to create its certification program in cooperation with a nationally recognized test development and administration company that is well acquainted with international standards in order to ensure that the standards applied will meet or exceed the requirements set forth by the NCCA. Together with a group of experts in a wide-range of climate change related issues, a thorough job analysis will be conducted to delineate and validate the primary domains, tasks, knowledge, and skills of the certified professional. ACCO will begin testing in the third quarter of 2009.

## **Will there be a continuing education requirement for the *CCO* certification?**

Due to the continuous changes in climate change policy worldwide, as well as the evolution of the climate change officer's role and function, the *CCO* certification will require that a minimum number of hours be spent in the form of receiving education and training from approved sources. ACCO will establish a committee to oversee this process.