



'Towing In The Right Direction - 2019 A Year In Reflection'

CEO, Provincial Towing Association of Ontario



Stephen Ashworth

Dear Members,

I am very pleased to provide you with an overview and reflection of what we accomplished together in 2019.

Thank you for your support of PTAO and I wish you the very best in the New Year.

Overview & Reflection

2018-2019 was a pivotal year for the PTAO (Provincial Towing Association of Ontario) rebuilding the trust, profile and confidence of all of its stakeholders. While there is much more to accomplish and a bright future ahead for PTAO, without a doubt it is important to take inventory and celebrate the goals achieved throughout the year that makes PTAO the leading and largest Towing Association in Ontario since 1998.

Beginning in 2018, a bold step was taken by the Board and Board Executive to change leadership and the trajectory of PTAO. This included closing down the office in Bracebridge, eliminating the Executive Director position and staff support, and the Board assuming more responsibility in the daily operations of PTAO.

In December 2018, a plan was developed to map out goals and leadership that would be necessary to achieve the milestones envisioned by the Board and Board Executive. After posting a position for a CEO, screening applications and interviewing candidates, a CEO was hired in March 2019. This important milestone showcased the leadership of the newly formed Board of PTAO and the ability to mobilize resources and to execute against goals established.

Working closely with the PTAO Board, we were able to collectively optimize and channel the passion of the Board and Members who understood what needed to be done in the towing industry in Ontario.

So what does that shopping list look like to make a better and more effective not-for-profit member organization? Well here's just a sample of to provide some insight;

- **Establishing more effective board meetings & governance with greater structure, discipline and listening to industry and members**
- **Review of financials and effective controls and setting achievable revenue goals and profit margins**
- **Engaging and communicating with consumer member inquiries and complaints (new web form with established feedback cycle timelines)**
- **Developing a 'Preferred Vendor Program' and engagement for Tow Show for added value add for Members**
- **Rebranding of PTAO logo and organization website to give a fresh look and feel to the organization while providing a tracking tool to geographically locate towering members**
- **Conducted a detailed review of Old By-laws and proposal of new By-laws to enable a more effective and transparent reporting structure and Board representation**
- **Proposed the introduction of 'Public Interest Directors' and successfully endorsed by members at AGM to achieve greater external representation on the PTAO Board of Directors**
- **Overall support of Board and Board Executive through discussions, schedule meetings and activities**

- Continued on-going meetings with Ministry of Transportation/CAA and discussions to create a centralized PTAO licencing model and what better understand what is trending in the towing industry
- Recommended and developed inaugural Panel Discussion of Stakeholders
- Obtained 100% member endorsement of all by-laws presented and enabling new appointment of Public Interest Directors at AGM
- Mapped out a detailed Tow Show Planning schedule, with an effective division of labour to help run the show and engage attendees and volunteers
- Provide support at Municipal/Town Hall meetings for towers with a PTAO presence and spokesperson
- Creating that 'buzz' for vendors and attendance resulting in the most profitable Tow Show in history
- Development of Benevolent Fund and Activation Process for those fatality injured in the line of duty
- Developed a Director Orientation Package to assist new and existing Directors in effective governance
- Strategic and Planning Support for 2020 to build on the successes of 2019

This is just a short list that recognizes the importance and power of members, Board and management using their collective knowledge to create a synergy that causes positive change in an organization!

Strategic Planning 2020

The momentum of 2019 must now continue with mapping out of the strategic goals and timelines for 2020. The ability to keep major projects on task, membership informed of PTAO initiatives and planning the next Tow Show are only a few of the important areas of focus that must be detailed in the 2020 Strategic Plan.

A fundamental change in dividing up tasks to committee leads, will need to be established and key in meeting the next level of goals of PTAO and truly profiling the association as the leader in the Towing Industry.

Leveraging the Towing Task Force findings and developing a white paper for the next Tow Show – 2020 will enable PTAO to 'own' the towing industry space as the 'go-to-source' and setting the standard in the towing industry.

In closing, I wish to thank all the Board Directors and Members for the opportunity to support the PTAO as their CEO in 2019. Collectively, we have only just begun this important journey to elevate the standards of practice and position ourselves as the leading authority and association in the towing industry.

Now that's 'Towing in The Right Direction' when Members, external stakeholders, volunteers and Board Directors are truly engaged to elevate consumer protection and standards in the Towing Industry!

Wishing you all the best for the Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

Sincerely,



Stephen Ashworth
CEO, PTAO