

JECA Communications Plan

Version 1
05-06-2005

1 Introduction

This document describes the communications purposes and methods employed by the Joint Engineers Council of Alabama (JECA) and the entities with which it has interactions in the course of fulfilling its mission. **This document is a guide and not a policy. There may be occasions when deviation from this guide are beneficial and necessary.**

The principal entities involved in these interactions include:

- JECA Board of Directors
- JECA Staff
- JECA Member Society Representative
- JECA Member Society Board (aka Executive Committee)
- Alabama State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors
- Other Engineering Professional Societies (not members of JECA)
- ACECA
- JECA Hired Consultants
- Alabama State Legislature
- Local Governments
- Government Agencies

The activities described in this document include the following:

- Establish goals and programs for the year
- Schedule and promote annual legislative reception
- Analyze draft legislation
- Develop positions and recommendations
- Issue legislative alerts
- Membership recruitment

Each JECA Member Society Representative, after participating in the JECA Member Society Board review of inputs, will prepare the society’s inputs and transmit them to the JECA Staff.

Upon receipt of all available JECA Member Society inputs, the JECA Staff groups and consolidates these inputs for review by the JECA Board of Directors.

The JECA Board of Directors works with the JECA Staff to:

- evaluate inputs to determine the most important needs or issues for the engineering profession, consistent with the mission of JECA
- develop proposed goals and specific programs in response to the prioritized inputs
- communicate the proposed goals and programs to JECA Member Societies

3 Schedule and Promote Annual Legislative Reception

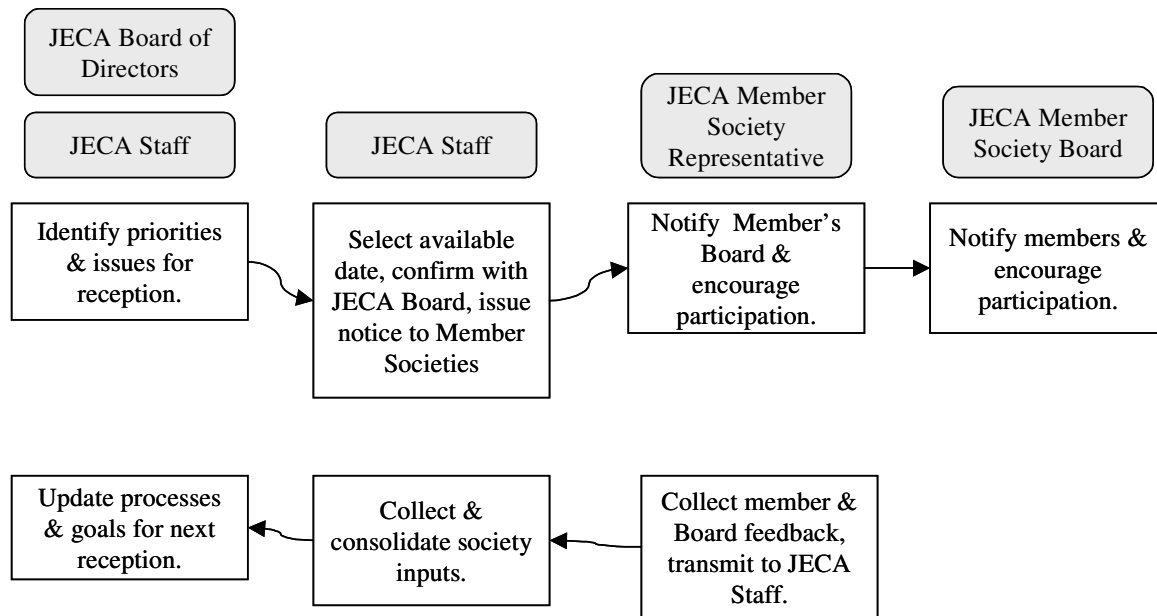


Figure 2 – Schedule and Promote Annual Legislative Reception

The process of scheduling and promoting this annual event is represented above. It begins with the JECA board and staff identifying priorities and issues for the upcoming reception. A major input to this step is the analysis of bills, introduced or anticipated, that may impact the engineering profession or the interests of public safety that fall within the scope of engineering practice.

The JECA staff will select an available date based on the schedule of local facilities that are suitable for the event. The date will be confirmed with the JECA board prior to reserving the

facilities. The JECA staff will then issue a notice of the reception date and location to the member societies.

The representative of each JECA member society should notify the board or executive committee of his or her member society, and encourage participation by the society’s members. It is important to have a good presence of engineers at the reception to converse with our state legislators to let them know of our interest in issues or proposed legislation that involves engineering expertise and responsibilities to the public.

Following the reception, the representatives of JECA member societies should collect feedback from their members who attended the reception, and forward this feedback to the JECA staff. In turn, the JECA staff should consolidate the member society feedback and present it to the JECA board as input for improving the event and for establishing goals for the next year’s event.

4 Analyze Draft Legislation

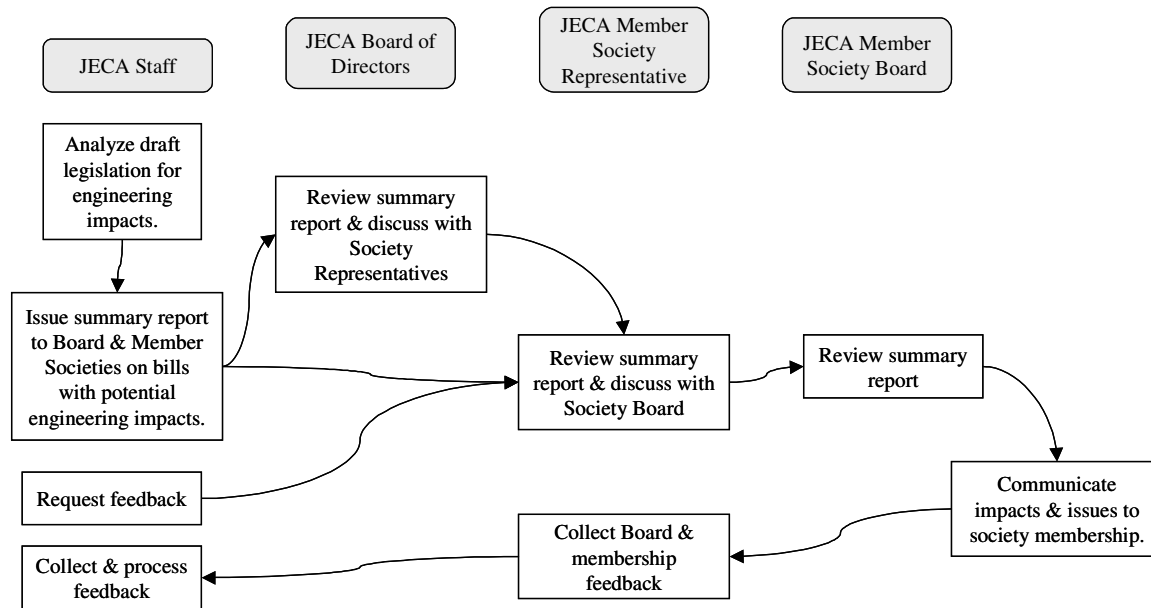


Figure 3 – Analyze Draft Legislation

This process, illustrated above, begins with the JECA staff reviewing sources of information about proposed legislation being introduced or expected during the current year’s legislative session. One major source of information is the Legislative Reference Service. As of this writing, JECA and ACECA share the cost of a subscription to this service, which provides the ability to search draft legislation by keywords and to obtain the text of draft legislation for closer examination of content. The JECA staff may also consult with the Alabama State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors for input about legislation of interest.

The JECA staff will periodically issue summary reports that highlight draft or proposed legislation that appears to be of interest to the engineering profession. These reports will be

made available to the JECA board members and member society representatives for their review and discussion. Distribution of reports is by email and web posting to the board members and member society representatives unless they have individually requested copies by postal mail or FAX.

The member society representatives should review the summaries and discuss them with their society boards or executive committee, to promote awareness of the legislation that is being tracked by JECA. The JECA board may also discuss the legislation summary with the member society representatives.

The member society board or executive committee should review the JECA legislative summary and communicate the impacts and issues to the society membership. The JECA member society representative should collect any feedback and questions from the member society’s board and other members of that society.

Feedback from each member society should be communicated to the JECA staff to enable any clarifications or answers to questions to be shared with all member societies.

5 Develop Positions and Recommendations

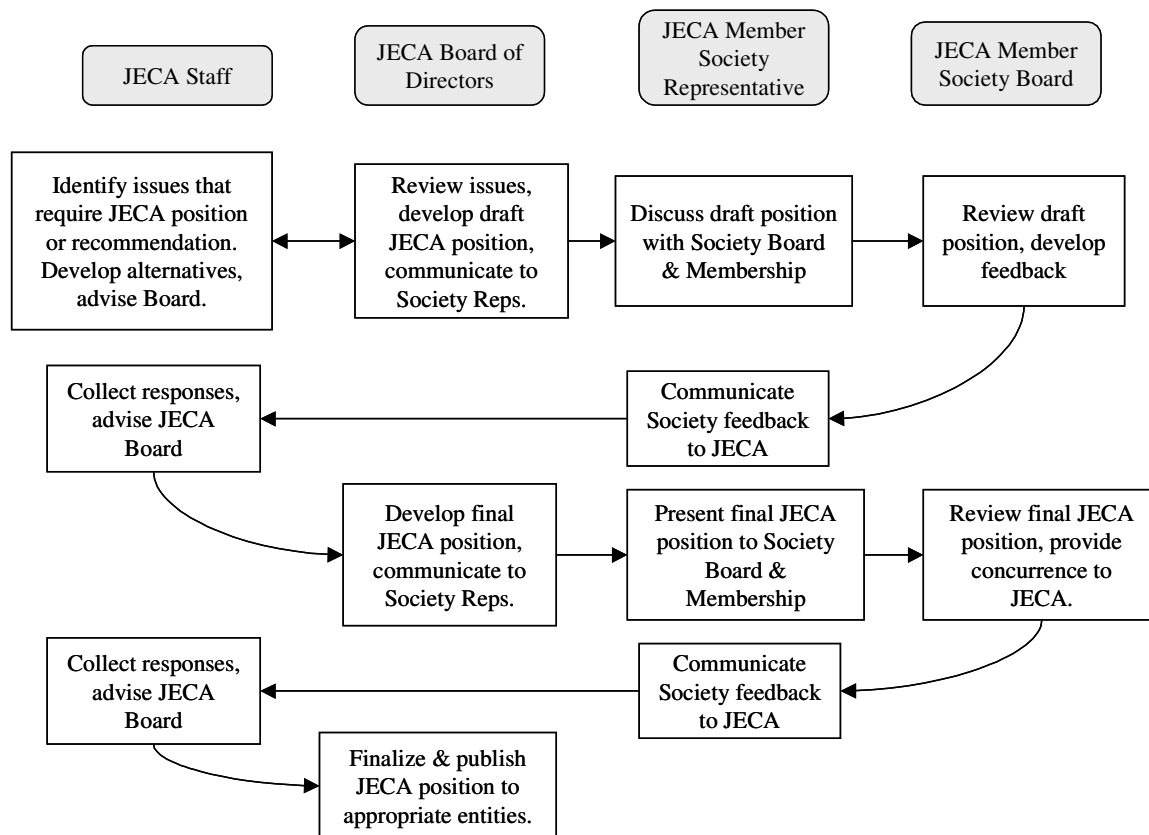


Figure 4 – Develop Positions and Recommendations

A key activity of JECA is to develop unified positions and recommendations to represent the engineering profession as a whole in the State of Alabama. A formal position or recommendation may be developed in response to events that impact the practice of engineering and responsibilities of engineers. Such events may or may not be associated with the introduction of legislation. If legislation is involved, a formal position either for or against a particular bill may be triggered because of significant impact. Figure 4 above illustrates the steps in such a process.

The initial identification of issues for this process may be made by the JECA staff or the JECA board, possibly with input from the Alabama State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. The JECA board, working with JECA staff, will develop a draft position or recommendation that is communicated with all JECA member society representatives. These representatives should, in turn, discuss the draft position or recommendation with their respective society boards and general membership, as appropriate. Feedback is collected and forwarded back to the JECA staff to compile with all other member society input. This feedback is essential to the development of a unified position that represents all of the societies that are members of JECA. In some cases, the JECA board may determine that an issue is of such significance that other engineering professional societies, not current members of JECA, should also be contacted for their opinions. This also represents an opportunity for recruiting them as members.

The JECA staff, working with the JECA board, will analyze all feedback, attempt to reconcile any differences, and develop a single unified position statement or recommendation that is communicated with all JECA member societies for their review and concurrence.

After all concurrence and additional feedback is collected and reconciled by the JECA board and staff, the position statement or recommendation is published in the appropriate forum. This may include a formal letter to such entities as state government officials, legislators, corporations, other professional societies, or the Alabama State Board of Licensure for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. Any formal position or recommendation should also be published on the JECA web site and emailed to all member societies and other engineering professional societies.

6 Issue Legislative Alerts

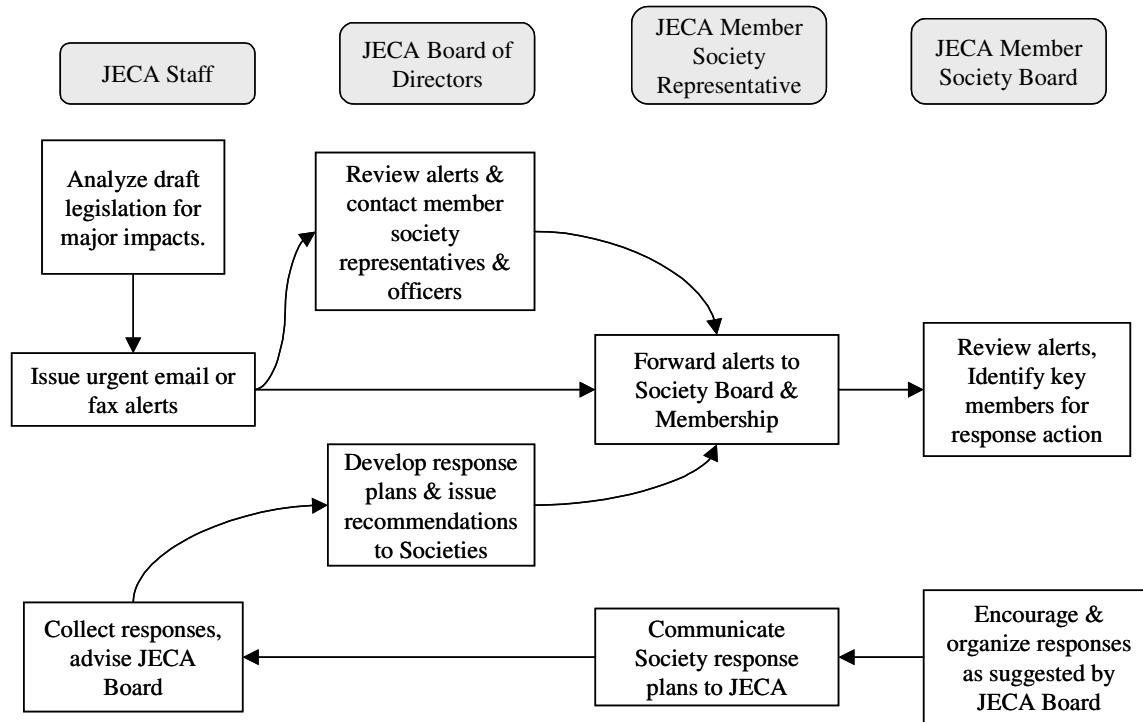


Figure 5 – Issue Legislative Alerts

The issuance of legislative alerts is used by JECA to communicate issues in a timely fashion about draft or proposed legislation that requires rapid response from the JECA member societies. The process is illustrated in Figure 5 above. This process may be used in conjunction with the previously described processes for analyzing legislation and developing positions or recommendations.

The JECA staff and board may determine through analysis of proposed legislation that a particular bill has potentially major impacts on the engineering profession and/or that rapid action is required to properly represent the public safety responsibilities of engineering activities. The JECA staff will communicate such issues by urgent email or fax to JECA board and member society representatives, including a brief explanation of the urgency of the matter.

The JECA member society representatives are urged to share the alert information with their societies as soon as possible, such as by forwarding the JECA staff’s email. Representatives should also identify key members of their societies who are best qualified to respond to an alert in whatever manner is necessary. Member society representatives should encourage and organize responses from their societies as suggested by the JECA board. Response plans should be forwarded to the JECA staff to aid the JECA board in developing the overall response plans for the engineering community. Such plans are, in turn, communicated to the member societies by

the most rapid means. Plans may also involve developing formal positions as described in an earlier section.

7 Membership recruitment

The JECA Staff and JECA Board of Directors review and update, if necessary, the materials that describe the goals and programs of JECA, as described in part 1 above. These include wording from the JECA By Laws and Articles of Incorporation as well as recent accomplishments.

The JECA Staff requests assistance from JECA Member Society Representatives in identifying contacts with other engineering professional societies that are potential new or returning (after a period of absence) member societies.

The JECA Staff prepares a letter for mailing to the president of each potential member society for signature by the current JECA President. The letter is sent, along with the updated materials that describe the goals and programs of JECA, as an invitation to membership in JECA.

After a short period of time, the JECA President or other representative of the JECA Board of Directors contacts the recipients of membership letters by phone to encourage their acceptance and to answer any questions.

The JECA President or Board Member may offer to meet with the engineering society that is invited to membership, to discuss in person the goals and programs of JECA.