



Stewardship Ontario

Blue Box Transition Plan

**Calculating the Potential Cash Portion
of Newspaper InKind Obligation**

Consultation Report

December 2022



BLUE BOX TRANSITION PLAN NEWSPAPER INKIND CALCULATION CONSULTATION REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Under the Blue Box Program Plan, News Media Canada and Ontario Community Newspaper Association (NMC/OCNA) stewards contribute newspaper advertising linage to municipalities and First Nations in lieu of cash funding. Some of this obligation may need to be paid in cash if commodity prices reach a certain level, which is calculated based on a methodology outlined in the Blue Box Program Plan.

Some data inputs required to determine the cash portion that may apply to the in-kind obligation will not be available as participating communities transition to the new producer responsibility framework under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016. Proposed changes to the calculation methodology have been developed by the Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority (RPPRA) to enable it to determine the potential cash obligation using the remaining available data.

The proposed changes require amendments to the Blue Box Transition Plan. The amendments require Stewardship Ontario to consult on the proposed changes to the methodology for the 2024 and 2025 funding years.

2. STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

Stewardship Ontario posted information on the consultation on its website and engaged directly with the following stakeholders about the proposed change by email notices, a dedicated web page and webinars:

- News Media Canada and Ontario Community Newspaper Association (NMC/OCNA) stewards
- Municipalities not transitioning to the new regulatory framework in 2023.

Stakeholders were advised that feedback on the proposal was to be submitted via email by December 9, 2022.

2.1 Email Notifications

Email notifications were a primary channel for informing stakeholders about the proposed change to the InKind methodology. Email lists for stakeholders included contacts provided by Stewardship Ontario and RPPRA. RPPRA approved all email notifications.

All emails advised of pending webinars, referenced the available presentation file, pointed to more information on the Stewardship Ontario website and directed questions and feedback submissions to consultation@stewardshipontario.ca

Date sent	Stakeholder group	Subject and link	Number sent to	Open rate
November 14, 2022	Municipalities	Consultation on calculating the potential cash portion of newspaper in-kind obligation	296	38%
November 14, 2022	Newspaper Stewards	Consultation on calculating the potential cash portion of newspaper in-kind obligation	27	52%

Date sent	Stakeholder group	Subject and link	Number sent to	Open rate
November 28, 2022	Municipalities	Reminder: Consultation on calculating the potential cash portion of newspaper in-kind obligation	295	30%
November 28, 2022	Newspaper Stewards	Reminder: Consultation on calculating the potential cash portion of newspaper in-kind obligation	29	31%
December 5, 2022	All	Feedback on proposed change to newspaper In-Kind obligation due by December 9	314	29%

2.2 Website

Stewardship Ontario created a news item and dedicated page on its website for the InKind consultation:

[Consultation on Calculating the Potential Cash Portion of Newspaper InKind Obligation](#)

The website included background on the proposal, a link to the webinar [presentation file](#) and links for webinar registration. After the webinars, recordings of the events were posted on the web page.

2.3 Webinars

Separate webinars were held for Municipalities and Newspaper Stewards on November 30, 2022. Both events were co-hosted by Stewardship Ontario and RPRA, with speakers from both organizations. Both events lasted about 30 minutes. The below table provides summary data for both events.

	Register	Attend	Questions
Municipalities	40	22	5
Newspaper Stewards	14	9	6

3. CONSULTATION APPROACH

Stakeholders were invited to provide their thoughts and questions about the InKind proposal submissions during the webinars and/or by sending email to a dedicated address by December 9, 2022.

4. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Two stakeholders sent email to consultation@stewardshipontario.ca by the December 9 deadline:

- Township of Howick: Unsure if/how the change would affect a small township.
- City of Hamilton: Expressed support for the proposed revised methodology.

Questions and comments submitted in the webinars were responded to during the events.

The following were submitted by newspaper stewards:

- Are municipalities required to report ONP #6 and #8 or is that voluntary?
- Have you done calculations for three or more sample years (those in which cash portion was triggered and those in which it wasn't) using both methods so we can see if there is any difference in the end results? If not, will you?
- Follow up questions requested details about cost estimates.

The following were submitted by municipalities:

- If we have comingled recycling would this affect us?
- Why is it necessary to remove one grade of ONP?
- If we transition in mid-2024, will we receive the InKind contribution for the whole year, or will it be pro-rated?
- How would you define "insufficient data"? How many programs would be required to report newsprint revenue to allow a fulsome calculation?

5. NEXT STEPS

Stewardship Ontario agrees with the proposed changes to the Blue Box Windup Plan. Stewardship Ontario has advised stakeholders that RPRA will conduct its own consultations on the InKind methodology. Further Stewardship Ontario communications with stakeholders on this subject are to be determined.