

Canadian Research Insights Council

Momentum Builds for the Canadian Research Insights Council, the New Industry Association for Market and Survey Research Agencies

—Interim Board announces organization’s name;
takes concrete steps to formalize; supports key programs—

TORONTO, October 15, 2018—Momentum continues to build for the Canadian Research Insights Council (“CRIC”), the new industry association established to represent market and survey research agencies and industry partners.

Since its inaugural meeting on August 30, members of the Interim Board have taken a number of steps to formalize the association. The new name is meant to recognize both traditional and emerging research methodologies, as well as the constantly evolving industry landscape.

The decision to launch CRIC follows the demise of MRIA in July, which left a major void in the industry. The Interim Board is aiming to hold its first open board meeting in Q1 of 2019.

Standards: In a significant move, the Interim Board voted in September to endorse the standards of ESOMAR, the global market and survey research association whose reach extends to 130 countries. This continues the approach the Canadian industry had taken through MRIA in that ESOMAR standards had already been the basis of industry standards in Canada. CRIC will take care to include appropriate specific provisions to address national issues whether in the area of privacy, disclosure around political polling, or emerging concerns related to the use of data sources other than surveys.

“Canada has always had close ties to ESOMAR, having actively taken part in developing their global standards,” stated Barry Watson, CRIC’s Interim Board co-chair, and President and CEO of Environics Research. “This decision aligns us with the global market and opens doors beyond Canada and onto the world scene.”

The relationship with ESOMAR was further cemented at the ESOMAR World Congress — which just wrapped up in Berlin, Germany — where Watson met with ESOMAR executives to discuss how the two organizations could collaborate.

CMRP: In another significant decision, the Interim Board took important measures to ensure the continuation of the Certified Marketing Research Professional (CMRP) designation. The CRIC Board voted to support an initiative spearheaded by Robert Wong, a Fellow of MRIA and retired Program Coordinator of the Georgian College’s post-graduate Research Analyst Program (RAP) and Principal of RMCG Inc. Mr. Wong was heavily involved in the development and implementation of the certification program at MRIA and is currently consulting with research professionals who have earned their CMRP as he explores options to continue a Canadian certification. Details will follow as Mr. Wong’s work progresses.

The question of the CMRP designation was also discussed with ESOMAR executives at the Berlin Congress, who indicated their enthusiasm to endorse and promote a renewed CMRP program. The ESOMAR ‘stamp of approval’ will give a significant advantage to Canadian practitioners, as it will mean international recognition of the CMRP designation.

Survey Registration: Also significant, the Interim Board has taken steps to ensure the continuation of the Survey Registration System, which was left in limbo and inoperable with MRIA's demise. The system allows members of the public to verify the legitimacy of research projects, and to lay complaints. While the future of the system is currently in the hands of the bankruptcy trustees, CRIC has made arrangements to continue to finance the system's operations until such time as the bankruptcy proceedings come to a close. The Interim Board also committed to finding a more permanent solution and is exploring options.

Governance: The Interim Board is aiming to open up the association to the Canadian marketplace early in the new year, with a formal, open board meeting in the first quarter of 2019. To meet this target, a number of steps have been taken regarding CRIC's structure. Jim Pealow of AMCES has been retained to guide the board on key governance decisions, such as bylaws and incorporation. Mr. Pealow was the expert counsel involved with the merger of the then-three Canadian market and survey research industry associations that led to the creation of MRIA in 2004.

Once incorporated and formalized, CRIC's membership will be opened up to the broader industry. Details will follow shortly regarding the membership process. As was announced earlier, members must commit to adhering to world-leading industry standards (now confirmed as ESOMAR), and must undergo an audit process as part of the membership application process. Interim Board members have all committed to undergo the audit process.

The interim board will remain in place until the association is formally established. Until that time, board members will be doing outreach to research agencies in the Canadian marketplace; support options for individual practitioners; and find solutions for initiatives such as the Survey Registration System and the CRMP designation.

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