Australian Computer Society
Constitutional Reform Working Group (CRWG)
Report Back to Members re the Round 1 Consultation

Annex 2:   The Allocation of All Input into Tag-Files

The second step was to create a file for each of the 38 Tags.

Into each Tag-File was loaded all content, from all channels, that has been associated with that particular Tag, whether by the original poster, a later poster, or the Forum Manager.

Many segments within the sources carried multiple Tags.

As a result, each of those segments appears in multiple of the 38 Tag-Files.

Including these duplications, a total of 2200 text-segments needed to be considered, which extend over 450 pp. of text.

In each of the Tag-Files, the sequence in which the channels appear is as follows
- The Online Forum Submissions up to 1 November
- The 26 Submissions received by 31 October
- The 9 Event-Notes for events run by Branch and national organs up to 31 October
- The 15 Meeting-Notes for all of the video-meetings run by CRWG
- The Online Forum Submissions for 2-12 November
- The 4 Submissions received 1-12 November
- The 2 Event-Notes for events run by Branches 1-12 November

<u>Overview (1)</u>

Governance, Roles & Responsibilities (JD label)

helenmchugh@...

Oct 30   #306

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Should Chairs sit on the MC is there a <mark>conflict of interest</mark>

Can we get some outside directors for the MC

Branches must have <mark>the Roles & Responsibilities</mark> for the BEC and Branch Staff

~~We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery~~ Duplicated

<u>Where should ACS spend its money? (13)</u>

Member benefit (JD label)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 4   #32   Edited Oct 30

It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will <mark>serve members</mark> and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about <mark>communication or the lack of it</mark> - but the need to show <mark>a clear member benefit in financial expenditure</mark> can perhaps be somewhere in the constitution?

4 people liked this

Roger Clarke

Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it (JD label)

Oct 4   #33   Edited Oct 30

On Mon, Oct 4, 2021 at 03:20 PM, Jacqueline Hartnett wrote:

> ... It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it ...

I imagine most members would be pleased that the Society delegates the majority of the strategic and policy decisions to the governing committee, and happy that the governing committee <mark>delegates</mark> the ongoing operational decisions and actions to employees. I certainly am.

But I have a problem with the ideas that (a) no <mark>decisions</mark> at all can be made <mark>at regional level</mark>, and (b) <mark>no discretionary funds</mark> are available at regional level.

Suppose a thousand-dollar decision is needed, to take advantage of an interesting ICT person who's in the district for a short time, and who's prepared to offer a seminar / workshop / demo / site-visit to local members. It costs money to get a venue, some basic catering and a user-pays wet bar.

Even now, following admin changes made over the last few years, <mark>Branch Committees have no capacity</mark> to make any such decision.

The Branch Committee has to go cap in hand to the Branch Manager, who is an employee of ACS, beholden to the CEO, not the members. The Branch Manager may or may not negotiate funding from Head Office. Despite its small size, the organisation's bureaucracy grinds slowly. By that time, the opportunity's gone. And everyone in the region quickly learns that it's pointless asking ACS if they could host an event, even at all, but especially at short notice.

Effective organisations recognise as a basic principle a thing called 'subsidiarity': Delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made. Regions vary in the their needs. Regions need decision-making powers, and discretionary budgets.

4 people liked this

Jo Dalvean

Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it (JD label)

Oct 6   #49

Not just begging - the situations where the funds are available but the means to access it to spend it are challenging, and in these cases Branches hand dollars back.

2 people liked this

UI

Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it (JD label)

Oct 11   #75

agreed. more delegation and better financial resourcing for branches is needed.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall

Governance, roles & Responsibilities (JD label)

Oct 11   #79

BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that and MC is not allowed to deny branch expenditure or disapprove a budget. The current approach adopted by the MC/CEO appears to be in contradiction to this understanding. The BECs are there to forward the aims of the society, the branch managers are there to help them do that.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Governance, roles & Responsibilities (JD label)

Oct 12   #93   Edited Oct 30

Well said bob.

Michael Driver

Oct 16   #121

Hi Roger,

I have posted a similar response elsewhere.

Branches cannot exist (?) on membership revenue, so how do we enable the branches/chapters to function effectively on membership revenue while the business needs to seek alternate business revenue to progress. (i.e. we need to generate more revenue to offset Government changes).

1 person liked this

David Abulafia

Member benefit (JD label) – outlier topic

Oct 17   #123   Edited Oct 30

If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members comming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you

<mark>started charging $20 per meeting</mark> in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.

Ali Shariat
Member benefit (JD label) – outlier topic
Oct 17   #124

In my time at ACS, Stats showed that <mark>80% of people who attened the NSW functions where the same group of people</mark>. It is important to encourage diversity and <mark>maintain membership through engagement</mark>. If there is no engagement, membership is like a sieve.

Rod Dilnutt
Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it (JD label)
Oct 17   #126

As the conduit to members Branches need more <mark>flexible access to funds</mark>. In Vic we were routinely told 'no budget' as member service ideas arose, then after the close of FY2020/21 we were informed that a $120K 'surplus', created to cover the 6-month member fee payment pause, was accounted back to consolidated funds. So many questions - did Branch have access to these funds? who knew about this in FY21? <mark>why weren't these funds available</mark> to support member servicing? <mark>Why was BEC told 'no budget?</mark> I assume similar scenarios in other Branches?

Ali Shariat
Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it (JD label)
Oct 17   #127

Obviously, this is not only indicating the <mark>failure of management committee to communicate global decision</mark> but also failure to understand the marketplace. ICT staff were in the best position to continue working during the pandemic. There is a high skill shortage of ICT. While a nice gesture, <mark>money could have been used</mark> better.

Rebecca.waters@...
Member benefit (JD label)
Oct 29   #285

I feel that having a revenue stream to allow <mark>for member benefits at branch level</mark> is fine. <mark>Not every service we do has to turn a profit</mark>. If we are there to serve members, and we do this by using a revenue stream (like skills assessment), then I think that's okay personally.

Robert Estherby
Governance, roles & Responsibilities (JD label)
Oct 30   #295

Are we potentially putting the cart before the horse here. <mark>In the new structure will branches exist?</mark>

I think the key point is this. The ACS needs to make a strategic decisions about an appropriate level of funding of 'local events' and a subsidiarity principle that <mark>allows for those local decisions to be made.</mark>

As a general answer to this question, I think they ACS should spend more of its money on being a 'good-citizen'. Working with other interested parties to help discuss policy and work with other societies, interest groups etc. to bring about high quality events (ones with the best discussions, ideas, instruction - not the best location or catering). In addition we should be clear as a society about the 'gaps' we fill in the market and make these our 'tent pole' events.

So if i was to distil this to principles.

> The ACS should fund targeted, high quality activities that benefit the profession or Australian Society, rather than members specifically.

> The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.
> The ACS should <mark>delegate decisions</mark> to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made.

I would also suggest as a principle

> The ACS where sensible should partner with other organizations in line with its objectives to increase value to our members and the wider public.

To whose benefit ?? #P08   #Q10

Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #398
Member benefit (JD label)

Robert said "I think there should be more spending, but it needs to be directed not just at member benefits, but at the growth of the society and to the public benefit too.'_._,

But what about buying a book on Menzies or being a member of WEF or attending meetings in Davos?

Not appropriate use of member's funds imho.

Tag Consolidation
#Business-Lines – 2 Topics – 7 Posts + 3 Other Messages +2 +0
The ACS's Commercial Business Lines (s.5 of Consltn Doc #1)
As at Sun 31 Oct 2021, to 16:30 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p.4

Appropriate Business-Lines, and not Loss-Making   (3)

z6957315@...

Oct 10   #69

There are some forms of business activity that are natural for a professional society. Ongoing education programs are fundamental to the needs of professionals and the employers, and there is no reason why ACS should not compete with commercial providers. Where tertiary educational institutions fail to prepare their graduates to be work-ready, training for transition into the workplace can be a useful further offering. Another areas is indexes to ICT expertise and bodies of knowledge, and guidance to professionals on career pathways.

But there are many other areas that a professional society has to avoid. It must not compete with its own members, by itself performing consultancy or contracting within the ICT field. It must avoid commercial activities that conflict with its obligations to serve the public interest. The ACS has no role to play in the conduct of innovation, although it can stimulate innovation by others. And whereas industry associations can prioritise the interests of profit-making companies over the interests of consumers, professional societies cannot.

A professional society must also ensure that it doesn't operate business-lines that fail to deliver a surplus. The gains made from successful business-lines must be invested in the ACS's key functions, not in loss-making business ventures.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 15   #103

While the need to attract revenue is obvious, commercial undertakings such as ACS Labs does not seem congruent with ACS member objectives. If the aim is to support fledgling ICT endeavor then other ways of sponsorship could be found. Running a real estate business like this does little to create sustainable revenue and carries unwelcome risk. If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio.

devindra.weerasooriya@...

Oct 24   #192

If they are to be maintained ACS-Labs should provide some pathways for Members. See my comments with #Industry-Associations.

Catalyst   (4)

Fellow Enthusiast

Oct 8   #64

Encouraging innovation is relevant - along with encouraging research, education, professional development. But actually engaging in running businesses like incubators is NOT a society role. That is best left to universities, business organisations or government that can share their resources and capitalise on the interaction with start-up innovators.   Noting that most start-ups fail - one has to see that overall the investment and interaction is worthwhile.

Running incubators at a profit is the exception - and offers little prestige.

Tom Worthington

Oct 10 #68

On 8/10/21 2:49 pm, Fellow Enthusiast wrote:

> Encouraging innovation is relevant - along with encouraging research, education, professional development. ...

I don't have a problem with ACS running an incubator to help advance computing in Australia, where they aren't being provided by others, or in partnership with government, academia and industry.

Canberra has a good example, with the Canberra Innovation Network (CBRIN), supported by the ACT Government, several universities, and businesses. There would be room for professional bodies as well.

Traditionally, incubators are in old offices, factories, and warehouses. CBRIN is in an old government office. https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/2015/04/designing-innovation-course-part-3.html#cbb

River City Labs in Brisbane, which ACS now operates, is in an old department store: https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/search/label/River%20City%20Labs

z6957315@...

Oct 10 #70

Tom Worthington wrote:

> I don't have a problem with ACS running an incubator to help advance computing in Australia ...

How much do members want to pay to provide space, training and networking opportunities? This is not a business-line. It doesn't, and never could, generate a surplus. Instead it eats up a lot of the surplus generated by other business-lines.

Running an incubator represents a donation to the people who benefit from the few start-ups that are successful. That's maybe 5% of the people who attempt to innovate, plus a lot of well-heeled investors. Subsidising investors is the government's business, not something a professional society should be doing.

> River City Labs in Brisbane, which ACS now operates, is in an old department store:

The ACS Labs in Sydney and Melbourne are in extremely high-rental space, not an old department store.

2 people liked this

Tom Worthington

Oct 14 #97

On 10/10/21 8:36 am, z6957315@UNSWalumni.com wrote:

> How much do members want to pay to provide space, training and networking opportunities? ...

Yes, I would want an incubator to be revenue neutral, or positive. It could be used to fill up otherwise unusable office space, or use space donated by a government agency, or corporation.

This is one reason why start-up centers are often in old buildings. Space-cubed in Perth had one in an old bank, with a very quiet meeting room in the strongroom: https://blog.tomw.net.au/search?q=spacecubed

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   **1 October 2021**

Q8

Commercial activities are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they **must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS**, ...   **[BL]**

It would be nonsense to suggest the ACS should not support innovation. The issue is how should this be done. To answer the question posed, **I don't think support of ACS River City Labs is a key function of the ACS. The sort of support we offer and how much are the key questions**.   **[BL]**

... For example, I think the following offer on their website is completely inappropriate- *River City Labs Residents will have* <u>*free ACS membership*</u> *which entitles members to significant savings in insurance for business, as well as other additional benefits as follows.* It <u>makes a complete mockery of any claim to professionalism on the part of the ACS</u>.   **[Q04]**

I don't think there should be a blanket ban on the Society getting associated with, as opposed to <u>participating in or operating, commercial activities so long as they are clearly separated from the Society and do not become the *raison détre* for the Society's existence, nor expose the Society to reputational damage or monetary loss</u>.   **[BL]**

_____

Keep this open channel going!!! #Business-Lines   #P00   #P08   #Q07

helenmchugh@... Nov 1   #390

This <u>open channel</u> is AMAZING!!!! So much heard passion and collaboration

THIS MUST KEEP GOING

Well done CRWG Team

Re: Catalyst #Business-Lines   #Q08

helenmchugh@... Nov 2   #392

Tom it would appear that the members have little say...but the Branches 'privileged' ?!?! <u>to have a Lab in their space – they have no choice</u>

Migration Skills Assessment   (4)

Rimas Skeivys

Oct 30   #288

[Rev] Migration Skills Assessment could be split into a separate company with shares owned by the ACS branches.

[EXC] ACS branches would appoint the governing body that would decide on standards, appointment of CEO, and funding of ACS branches and the national ACS office.

This arrangement may need the approval of the Department of Home Affairs.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby

Oct 30   #310

[EXC] This is quite an interesting idea

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@...

Oct 30   #312

[EXC] Absolutely

This is almost a conflict of interest

Thinking members are members where they are customers and sadly not knowing that they are members of he ACS while they are consumers paying lots of $$$s for their assessment.

Conversion to full member is ~5% #that's_not_ok

Paul Bailes

18:38   #340

[EXC] And how would ACS benefit from this?

How does ACS benefit from the current arrangements?

Role of Branches (28)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 3   #29

[BR] [BEC] [BC] Surely this must be an important discussion point. Some have suggested that life would be much simpler if there were no Branch Executive Committees(BECs), just a pool of people that operational staff can ask advice from when required. Others want BECs have a command and control role.

This discus should not be constrained by worries about personal liability for actions undertaken by volunteers. There are ways to protect from that. This discussion is about the vision for how you want things to be, the next phase will look at the trade offs that may be needed to enshrine such a vision in the constitution

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 5   #36

[Ch] Jacky, i would also like to add the roles of chapters as they are critically important for regional reach.

3 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 16   #119   Edited Oct 30

hi Jacky,

[Ch] [BC] I agree that the Jurisdictions are a vital part of the ACS. As Beau mentioned, QLD and possibly others have healthy chapters as QLD is a geographically large state. To ensure that we reach out to the current and future members, these voices need to be heard through branch and regional input.

Under the current arrangement, which I was party to in Congress in 2019, the inability of these regional chapters to hold a bank account, albeit in the ACS name, limits there focus.

[BR] [Ch] For clarity, there has to be a clear understanding of what is membership funds that may be used in supporting the state/local members and what is business derived funds that the Branch / State / Chapter can utilise or apply for.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17   #125

Hi Mike

[BR] [Ch] I agree with branch and chapters, however creating separate bank accounts is not an answer. A good accounting system with allow everyone to have a budget and clarity on the expenditure.

2 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 18   #131   Edited Oct 30

Hi Ali,

It has been too long between chats, my fault.

[BR] [Ch] I didn't mean to suggest or imply separate bank accounts rather the ability of incidental expenses without a volunteer being out of pocket for an expense.

1 person liked this

UI

Oct 22   #170

[BR] [Ch] BECs/branches/chapters should continue and ACS should function similar to State/Federal governments. Branches should have more autonomy with their finances and greater independence in deciding what works for their circumstances.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 22   #181   Edited Oct 30

[BR] [Ch] I agree.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 23   #186

[MVC] [BC] Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS and therefore have level of autonomy to service their member base. This must be enshrined in the Constitution AND Enforced in practice. This is actually in the current rules but snubbed (R12.3. [BR] Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations).

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@...

Oct 26   #207

[BEC] It would also be great to have Objective and Key Results to measure how effective the advice from BECs are.

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 27   #218

[BR] [Ch] [MVC] 100% agree Rod. each branch and for that matter chapter is different and we need to be make sure we are able to be flexible to support each in the way that members feel empowered and engaged. some of the best events and most engaged members (especially in QLD) are located regionally. we need to give them a voice and support what is needed in each region

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 28   #242

[BR] To add a different dimension to this debate I, as VicBEC elected member, was privy to a presentation for the CEO and (less so) President sharing ACS progress in June.   It was a useful overview however, I was disturbed by the perhaps unintentional bias in reference to Branches which included terminology like 'subsidising' branches and 'loss leader'.

[MVC] As posted above, Branches are the conduit for the member vice and are integral to a cohesive professional organisation. Therefore reference to branches, and by implication, members in these terms seems to be reflective of an attitude that is counter member voice. Copy of my, as yet unanswered letter to CEO follows below.

My concerns have been exacerbated in recent weeks by participation in the Strategy refresh (Dovetail) project and a member segmentation project. Both of these projects are driven by staff using a framework from which to formulate ACS strategy though 2025 that presents the key areas for ACS more or less as the current business lines i.e. Skills Assessment, ACS Labs.... My understanding of marketing strategy 101 is that it starts with the 'customer need',i.e. ACS members. Both projects purport to be Member first'. Hmmm..

<< end of rant>>

Letter to CEO June 2021

Dear Rupert

Many thanks for sharing ACS progress with the BEC, Victoria on Wednesday last. It is heartening to see early signs of leadership transparency on ACS matters.

If I may, there are two observations I would like to make.

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches. Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member- centric professional society. To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle.

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services. Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidies' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos.

In making these comments I point out that language use is central to the politically correct' debates we are having over workplace health, and safety. In our recent ACS training the recognition of 'indirect inference' as a factor in bullying was an emphasis and our awareness of micro-aggression is heightened - language is important.

The fundamental existential question here is ' Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society. Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values?

Rupert, I offer these observations in good faith and trust they make a positive contribution as ACS looks to the future.

Happy to speak anytime.

1 person liked this

Peter

Oct 28 #245

[BR] [MEM] Thank you Rod for sharing this episode. The more I think about this phrasing of 'loss-leader' the more concerned I become.

Is there a fundamental weakness in the current combined ACS enterprise so that it will always return to seeing members as a 'loss-leader'? If so I would rather we divest or disband than become a trojan horse commercial enterprise masquerading behind a professional society. I would rather we were a financially smaller but successful professional society focused on its members, their standards and public good, than a larger commercially focused enterprise that forgot what it was. As a smaller more focused association we may not need to worry abut a CLG structure at all.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #248   Edited Oct 30

[MEM] I agree with Peter.

Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.

The ACS is a not for profit organisation, and should not even think of commercial activities.

A smaller more focus financially stable society is what should exist.

During my involvement in converting my synagogue from an association to CLG, the ACNC told us they were encouraging all NFP incorporated associationd to becoming CLG.

devindra.weerasooriya@...

Oct 28 #249

I do not hold any elected positions within the Branch/National structure. But I have learnt from those that do hold such positions about a recent heightened emphasis about politically correct' debates over workplace health, and safety, within Executive deliberations; as pointed by Rod Dilnutt.

If so, I do believe that many participants of this thread, and the whole CRWG-Conversation, would agree that referring to activities at a Branch-level focused on the Professional Excellence of Members in a derogatory manner is equally or more inimical to their sensitivities and more generally their perception of what ACS should be.

To put it more bluntly, for the ACS to advertise as having a "Mission of Professional Excellence" and regard the process towards achieving that as Loss-leading and Non-viable; must cease right-away and be declared as out-of-order throughout the ACS. All activity threads, such as the CRWG and the New-Strategy must be refocused towards achieving the Mission of Professional Excellence, in a viable manner.

When ACS really demonstrates itself as a "MUST-HAVE" service for Professional-Excellence in ICT, I'm certain that it will have no difficulty in rekindling the interest of ICT-Professionals, that is falling-away away, at present.

David Abulafia

Oct 28   #250   Edited Oct 30

Yes definitely.

All forms of political correctness should shot down immediately.

Political correctness is the cancer of our society inside and outside of the ACS.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28   #252   Edited Oct 30

Grrrr. What sort of dopey platform is this - my reply to a comment well above here is not linked to the comment and instead appears out of context at the end!

Well, referring to Rod Dilnut comment #186...

[BEC] Agree, but as part of the review, we must review the role of the BEC and get it right. One obvious change is that the BEC will no longer be the entity which disenfranchises members from voting for the board (MC) by appointing its delegates to Council - the members will be able ot vote directly. **[BC]** I think that the key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone

Oct 28   #255

Relying to Mark's comments #252

[BEC] Could we also extend the Branch Executive Committee memberd to having input and be empowered and encouraged to also provide advice and experience into the strategic opportunities for the ACS, and ICT driven and enabled developments that are occurring both locally in the jurisdiction but also nationally?

Ann Moffatt

Oct 28   #259   Edited Oct 30

Well said dev.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28   #269

[BEC] That would seem to be a perfectly sensible thing to do Chris Radbone.

tony.errington@...

Oct 29   #282

[MEM] I fully agree with Rod Dilnutt (#186) and Chris Radbone (#255). I also agree with the various comments regarding the need to eliminate any comments such as 'loss-leading' and 'non-viable' when talking about supporting our members. Members are at the very core of the ACS and must remain so and be recognised as such by the hierarchy (both elected and employed).

[MVC] [BC] As Rod says, branches are a key link in the chain from a member to the ACS, they are the only parts of the organisation that understand what their local members want and need. Their role should be enshrined in the future constitution, clearly spelling out the relationship between the elected members of the Branch BEC and the salaried Branch (or State) Manager

[BR] And while branches should have a budget which is approved at MC level, and they should perform to that, the creation of that budget should be a joint exercise and not simply imposed from above. Branches also need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focussed, without needing to go through an extended process of approval that takes unreasonable time and resources.

David Abulafia

Oct 29   #286   Edited Oct 30

[MEM] [BR] [MVC] I agree with Tony

Nick Tate

Oct 31   18:37   #339

[BR] [Ch] [BEC] [BC] In my view, branches (and chapters) are essential elements for a future ACS. Local governance (such as BECs and Chapter Committees) allow the branch to focus on issues and events in their own state or territory and to engage more effectively with their state/territory Government, than is possible nationally. To be able to do that, there will need to be some level of budget provision for the BECs and Chapter Committees to initiate projects and activities, without undue oversight from a national committee or national office; this of course must be limited to an agreed budget. Any contracts that a branch wishes to enter into will need to go through a process to ensure that it does not have unintended effects on the ACS as a whole. To implement these projects or activities will require access to staff resources and this can also be manged via an appropriate budget process.

In this round, we are trying to tease out principles and I suggest that the principle around branches is the desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

Nick as a member not as CRWG Co-convenor

Dr. Paul O'Brien

Oct 31   #345

[BR] [Ch] [BEC] [BC] I agree with Nick.

A Federal model with fairly autonomous branches has a lot of advantages, particularly the ability for Branches to work closely with State and Territory governments, other professional associations and industry associations.

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31   #347

[BR] [Ch] [BC] I agree with Mike and Beau...We must be able to operate quickly with all the checks and balances supporting initiatives not closing them down...sadly the perceived "No Culture"

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31   #348

[BR] [Ch] [BC] Double like.

Initiatives at the moment go no where @beau @chris we did the Branch listening taskforce and then where di it go ...

I am currently working up an understanding with ACS staff on that NO Culture eg where are the Access cards for the Branches who are "lucky?!?!" to have a hub as their office..and in Lockdown..

Robert Estherby

Oct 31 #353

On Sun, Oct 31, 2021 at 06:37 PM, Nick Tate wrote:

[BR] [BC] > desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

I agree that if we continue with a federated model with branches, they also should have clear objectives that support the whole society, and prevent branches from pulling away in multiple directions. We should be looking to encourage collaboration and initiative rather than unaccountable

Rupert.Grayston@... 1 Nov 09:01 #374

[BR] [MEM] In this conversation thread 'Role of Branches', I seem to have been portrayed as saying in an internal ACS meeting conversation that membership is a loss-leader for ACS. Actually I'm pretty sure that I said that it can't be viewed as a loss-leader, to illustrate a point that ACS does not necessarily have a sustainable model for member service delivery. I know that was an internal discussion to share financial information whereas this is a member forum on constitutional principles but I detected some misplaced outrage and thought I should clarify that point.

Peter 11:04 #377

[BR] [MEM] Thank you for the clarification Rupert. Then it sounds like we had a burst of violent agreement [:-)] around not wanting the ACS Membership to be, or to be seen to be or treated as, a loss-leader in a larger organisation. My apologies for my part in the 'misunderstanding'.

Local ACS branches in control   (2)

[BC] [BR] Rimas Skeivys   Oct 28   #243

Local ACS branches set up as separate organizations

Local ACS members elect the local ACS governing body

National ACS set up with each branch having shares in the national ACS

The local ACS branches thus elect and control the national ACS governing body

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #372

[BC] [BR] To be honest, I think that is a move back to what we had in the 80's - my understanding was that there were problems with that and that might be hard to unwind now.

Exemplar Peer Organisation   (5)

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #263   Edited Oct 30

[ExP] I was asked about exemplar constitutions for a Company Limited by Guarantee. Well, how about we go one step further and look at a contemporary organisation that is not just a Company Limited by Guarantee, but is also gleefully eating the ACS breakfast, lunch and dinner in the health space.

Every person involved in this debate shoudl look outward a bit more.

Start with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

They've even got a website that puts the ACS to shame!

Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) It's accessible in just 2 clicks from their landing page.

Their website puts the ACS to shame.

And don't forget to check out the credentials of their CEO!

Ann Moffatt Oct 29   #276   Edited Oct 30

Thanx mark,

I agree. The ACS website is a disgrace for an enterprise that holds itself up to represent the profession.

Lets spend some of our large bag of money on getting a decent website rather than sending execs to WEF meetings.

Roger Clarke Oct 29   #278

[ExP] Mark Toomey wrote:

> Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

> Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au)

...

Thanks Mark.

But I can only detect one provision that's other than mainstream.

For example, re member-numbers to call a General Meeting, cl.15(2)(b) merely refers to Corps Act s.249F (5%).

And there are no occurrences in the document of 'transparency' or 'consultation', or member 'approval', 'ratification' or 'endorsement'.

The exception is:

28. Direct Votes

(a) The Board will determine from time to time if Voting Members are entitled to vote by a Direct Vote on a matter or a resolution ...

But that empowers the Board, not the members, and the members can't force the provision to be invoked.

So in what way does the AIHD Constitution "assure the members of better control"?

BTW, I fully agree with your remarks about the web-site problem   (:-(}

David Abulafia Oct 29   #280   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with Ann

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #343

Roger, all.

First, apologies for the delay in replying. I have no power, no phone and no internet due to the storms on Thursday and Friday morning. Unlikely to have anything until Monday at best, unless I drive to somewhere that the phone can connect. Who knows when this little contribution will be sent.

[ExP] So you seem terribly worried that a clg based governing body can run riot. I guess that's fair, as the current model allowed MC to run riot. In fact, MC has been ignoring members for years, and has been totally unaccountable.

In the AIDH model, which is quite unremarkable and very consistent with the model I used for the digital leadership institute, the board is accountable to members normally through the election process, in which all financial members vote according to their individual preference. Directors who do not have the interests of members foremost will lose their seats.

The second form of accountability is the special general meeting, which can be called by members, regardless of whether the board wants it to not. The constitution defines the exact rules for special general meetings, such as how many members are required to call the meeting. Special General Meetings are generally used to address major concerns with board behaviour.

But the above is a somewhat nuclear approach. Smart companies have highly developed methods of addressing and solving problems. Many use a quality management system aligned to ISO 9000. It beggars belief that the ACS does not have an ISO 9000 QMS, but then again, given the raft of failure over the years, it should be no real surprise.

OH, if anyone feels that I have missed something, just remember that I assess on hard evidence, not on bluster. The ACS may have something it calls a QMS, but there is no evidence of any such thing that actually works.

Because of the storm related issues, this is probably my last contribution to this stage of the process. I look forward to contributing in the next stages too.

Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice   (11)

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #105

[BR] [BEC] R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained AND enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. **[MVC]** The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #193

[BC] [BR] The degeneration of the role of the branches is not at all aligned with Member interests. The state/territory branch should be the mechanism thet addresses the requirements of the state based membership.

The objectives of Principles #3 and #10 must be truly manifest at a branch-level.

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@... Oct 26   #206

[BC] [BR] [MVC] Agree. Additionally, if BEC should act as a conduit of their members. Then, there should be equal representation of members of all ages, across industries for each state.

1 person liked this

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #284

[BC] [BR] [MVC] I agree Jia.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #300

[BC] [BR] [MVC] Controversially, I disagree.

The branches are not providing governance value. Under a company limited by guarantee, this would be further weakened as the constitution will place the authority with the board.

In my opinion, the ACS's precocial and academic factionalism have not been serving the interests of the society and we have been less effective as a result.

I think we need to take forward the principles of engagement and consultation. I also think we need to have some form of local engagement for developing activities - but let's use this as an opportunity to reimagine a new structure that potentially creates communities of interest, rather than local communities.

1 person liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #301

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 04:40 PM, Robert Estherby wrote:

> *take forward the principles of engagement and consultation.* ...

> ... communities of interest, rather than local communities.

How do you see this working, Robert?

Are you aware of any way in which ACS has been supporting communications among dispersed members?

During the fracas of late 2019, it was impossible for members who were opposed to the motion being put to the AGM to communicate their arguments to other members.

Then, when the CRWG was setting up this Online Forum, the ACS was unable to provide infrastructure to support it.

So CRWG used an appropriate, commercially-available service, outside the acs.org.au domain, to deliver it.

One approach whereby ACS could support dispersed communities of interest would be to provide infrastructure, establish a Participation Guide / Code of Conduct such as the one we set up at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/CRWG-CodeofConduct.pdf , and enable any organiser to create a community and publicise its existence and purpose to the membership as a whole.

But I've not seen any concrete proposals of such an idea.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #303

@roger ... not sure how to tag...Roger, Robert is an amazing champion of the ACS... almost a recent founder of Young IT...but a very clear thinker....ex ACSNSW BC member

and this is a KEY to ACS TRUST and COLLABORATION

knowing what that looks like seems to be a point of confusion!!!!

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #305

That is a good question.

And no, the ACS 'as a corporate entity' never really embraced the creation of 'digital communities'. We had quite an effective one via Facebook for interstate Young IT at one time, but it was always 'under the radar.

I think your idea is a good one, re: setting up the environment - but I think what is needed is to have people form a core group and build those communities. We have a lot of discussion around having specialisation recognition but we could start with providing an online community of practice around that online or even deliver online discussions and AMA's on that build a live community.

Within those communities, you could then provide input and expertise for a range of different topics. The trick though is to build the community and that does take time.

[MVC] But if we are honest. The active number of NSW members who attended branch meetings voted etc was less than 1000, from memory much less. We are kidding ourselves if we think that the branches are representative of the full society.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #307

[BR] We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #314

I feel you are right Helen, I just don't know how they will work in the new structure.

I feel like we might have an opportunity to re-think how it all works if we go back to a principles-based approach and I think we should be open to that in the process.

I feeling as we enter the next phase of the pandemic, is that the society has the opportunity to do build a richer digital experience; and we probably shouldn't do it on "ACS tech" use third-party to tech to experiment.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #316

But to take it back to the main point.

[MVC] The suggestion is that the BEC's act as a conduit - but I just don't see how that will work.

[BEC] If we have a new board, the legal authority will be in that one entity and state BEC's will not maintain their governance role.

Board members will I understand, will be bound by the Corporations Act, so they will be making the best decisions for the society, regardless of sectional interests (as I understand it).

So it brings me back to this point, regardless of if we have branches or not - the constitution needs to embody the ideas of engagement and consultation so that there is trust and collaboration within the Society.

<div align="center">————————————</div>

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Q11 Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

[Ch] [MVC] As a member of ACS who has lived regionally for the last 20 years, I'd be inclined to refer to the Branches as City Branches rather than State Branches. We've been very light on any kind of events during COVID, and prior to that everything is very city centric. Recent changes in worker behaviour find people much more spread out and needing access to networking and education literally all over the country. The current constitution of branch responsibility, reporting and electoral make-up seems unnecessarily complicated and riddled with needless duplication whilst increasingly delivering less and less of member value - particularly outside Sydney.   **[Ch]**

Technology breaks down geography - so it seems almost anachronistic for a this Society to purposely organise itself by location.

[BR] Perhaps a better constitution would be to **have Branches that are organised amongst area of interest (Specialist Branches), led by recognised experts in the fields and supported by dedicated administrative staff funded by the ACS**. These Specialist Branches would have national reach, deep and specific engagement with their members and representation at higher levels of the ACS.   **[P04]**

<div align="center">————————————</div>

Why Company Limited by Guarantee   (44)

 jp@... Oct 6   #40

To me, one critical issue has been skimmed over: the proposed restructure to be a company limited by guarantee.

So far I have not seen a rationale for why this is being considered, then or now with the consultation process.

It is central to the reason why I voted no at the fateful General Meeting.

Why is it necessary to move to a company limited by guarantee?

Jack Burton Oct 6   #41

I agree with Justin.

The only attempt at a rationale I've seen this time around (in the IA article, the President is quoted as saying "state government association registrars seek to avoid regulating large organisations") appears to be very flimsy indeed. I'm sure the President is correct in his comment, but there is nothing to connect that remark with any sort of compelling case for ACS changing our form of incorporation.

The first time around the stated justification was even weaker (some may argue even misleading), as it appeared to be based solely on associations legislation from jurisdictions other than the one we're actually incorporated in.

Having said that, everything (including a potential change to form of incorporation) should be on the table for this process.

But a change to legal structure is not a matter to take lightly -- to make it worth considering, there would need to be a *genuine* and *compelling* case for change, grounded firmly in the needs of the Society (which, by definition, means the needs of its professional Members) ... and I haven't seen anything even vaguely resembling such a justification yet.

That should not dissuade us from participating in this process at all though -- the questions being asked are good ones to ask and all of the issues raised could be addressed by suitable amendments to the Society's Rules, National Regulations and/or Guidelines for Membership, just as most (but not quite all, due to the nature of a public company) could be addressed by careful drafting of a constitution & set of by-laws for a company limited by guarantee.

But Justin is right -- the elephant in the room is that the mooted restructure as a CLBG appears to have been treated as a fait accompli, without any compelling justification being offered.

As computing professionals, we should automatically recognise that as a failure of requirements engineering and seek to correct it, either by discovering & clearly articulating a compelling justification or (more likely, as after two years one does not yet appear to have emerged) by noting the absence of any compelling justification and therefore abandon the mooted change to legal form of incorporation, instead turning our attention to addressing the substantive matters raised in the issues paper within our existing legal structure.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall Oct 11   #80

As elephants go this is the biggie. I have not read any compelling arguments on the need to stop being an association and start being a company. It is axiomatic that a company structure will reinforce the primacy of central management.

I understand that the ACT is NOT suggesting we need to stop being an association.

Finally, if the issue is the running of enterprises such as RCL the solution is to get rid of them as they lose money.

1 person liked this

paul.campbell@... Oct 15 #109 Edited Oct 31

I originally supported the move to a CLG but after further research and as a consequence of events over the previous 2 years I have changed my view.

I now see no compelling reason to move to a CLG and think such a move will significantly reduce oversight of Board and management decisions.

I will explain my reasoning below, however in summary I believe we have to argue that the premise for moving to a CLG is flawed and so withdraw our support.

Instead we should recommend that the support of members be again put to a vote once a new constitution is adopted and had time for its operational impacts to be accessed.

I was originally told that the ACS had grown to a size that no longer complied with the requirements of the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991

As such, the ACS was compelled to change it's legal structure to a CLG.

I have now researched this premise and can't find any guidance in the Act or from Access Canberra on explicit limitations for associations being incorporated in the ACT.

The only clause that I could identify in the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991 on the subject is - 83 Cancellation where continued incorporation inappropriate.

This clause states

(1) If the registrar-general is satisfied that the continued incorporation of an association under this Act would be inappropriate or inconvenient because of the registrar-general's assessment of—

(a) the scale or nature of the activities of the association; or

(b) the value or nature of the property of the association; or

(c) the extent or nature of the association's dealings with persons

who are not members or applicants for membership of the association;

the registrar-general may—

(d) serve a notice on the association; and

(e) give public notice in relation to the association.

Note

Public notice means notice on an ACT government website or in a daily newspaper circulating in the ACT (see Legislation Act, dict, pt 1).

Note this clause does not state that incorporation is automatically removed. Instead it states that the registrar-general MAY serve notice…….

If notice occurred the ACS would have the opportunity to argue its case for ongoing incorporation or negotiate a reasonable time frame to transition to a CLG.

I would argue that a reasonable timeframe, given the need to prepare governance documentation, seek member feedback and have a vote at an AGM would be at least 2 years.

So in my view there is no pressure on the ACS to transition to a CLG as soon as possible.

Instead I would argue that we should adopt a new constitution and evaluate its operational impacts on ACS governance and management before we revisit the need to transition.

There are two major governance issues with incorporation as a CLG.

First the Corporations ACT 2001 explicitly gives the company Board absolute powers.

The Act explicitly refers to an event where any person or body that acts in the role of a director, or the directors of a company commonly act according to their instructions, may be deemed to be 'shadow director' and consequently have the same legal responsibilities as a registered director.

The consequences for breaching these duties are also the same.
https://openlegal.com.au/what-is-a-shadow-director/

So the only oversight recognised in the Act is exercised by members of the company who can remove directors at a General Meeting.

This leads to the second major governance issue - Who will be members of the company?

Members of a CLG have the right to access a financial report and director's report and have access to the company's register of members, constitution and meeting minutes.

The company is obligated to hold meetings of members, keep records of member's resolutions and meetings and make available their financial and director's report.

https://openlegal.com.au/what-is-a-company-limited-by-guarantee/

Because company members take on financial liability if the company becomes insolvent, (Note this liability is very small, typically $10) the Corporations Act requires potential members to agree in writing to becoming a member.

It was initially agued that all ACS members should become members of the CLG.

However despite my repeated requests it was never explained to me how this written permission would be obtained.

The only mechanism I can identify beyond writing to every member is to incorporate an explicit statement in membership forms that state by becoming a member of the ACS or renewing your membership, you agree to become a member of the company and accept the responsibilities and liability that this company membership entails.

I have not had legal advice on this approach or any alternative so at this stage it remains conjecture.

Even if it legally feasible to have every member of the ACS become a company member, I would argue that this will lead to poor governance oversight.

Instead I would recommend that company members are chosen on a senate model where a set number of representatives from each branch are elected to be members of the company.

This approach has several advantages.

It reduces the size of the company member register from thousands to potentially less than 50, making decision making and administration simpler.

It ensures that people put into the position of making important oversight decisions are passionate, informed, engaged and elected by their BEC or local ACS members.

It ensures that oversight reflects the views of all branches equally.

Under this senate model, the rights of ACS members are recognised through the CLG constitution and by-laws. Society members impact on the decision of company members through their election of their state representatives.

bobcole@... Oct 15   #110

I agree that there has not been any case made to support the move to a CLG. It is, as stated above, a clear step towards taking ACS towards a managerial / entrepreneurial model and way from the ACS' key/only role as an association of industry professionals which does not dabble directly in the industry itself, but interacts with it at arms length for the benefit of members, the industry and the community as a whole. This is how the the ACS was first set up and envisioned and should be restored.

P Argy Oct 15   #111

The ACT Associations Incorporation Act, like its counterparts in other jurisdictions, was intended to provide perpetual succession so that tennis clubs and hobby associations could own property and rent premises and the like. It was never intended as the mode of operation of a national enterprise with an annual turnover exceeding $50m.

As I understand it the ACT Registrar has intimated that he is minded to invoke s. 83 against the ACS unless we voluntarily undertake the exercise that is contemplated by s. 82. When that is done all members of the ACS will automatically become members of the company limited by guarantee.

[Subsequent requests for evidence of that intimation have not delivered anything.]

As others have noted, it is true that the corporate form requires management to be vested in a Board of Directors upon whom the obligations of the Corporations Act rest. However, that does not mean that Branches and other organs of the ACS cease to have any influence. Under a properly designed new Constitution, the internal governance arrangements of the ACS can be established in any way desired. For example, the Board could continue to be appointed by Congress and Congress members could continue to be appointed by Branches. Whatever other aspects of the ACS governance are sought to be retained, that can be accommodated under the Constitution.

So for me, arguing about whether to incorporate as a CLG is a bit of a red herring. What is required is a robust debate about what governance structure we want to have and then to embody that in a new constitution that complies with the Corporations Act requirements for a CLG. By the way, under the existing Associations Incorporation Act Management Committee is the Committee in whom is vested complete management responsibility for the ACS. In that respect the legislative model does not differ between our current form and a CLG.

1 person liked this

jp@... Oct 15   #112

Thank you, Philip, this is the first post I have seen that attempts to address my concern.

This thread is most certainly not a red herring, but an important issue that until now has been obfuscated by the Committee.

The legislation Philip refers to, for everybody's benefit, can be viewed here: https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/View/a/1991-46/current/html/1991-46.html

Note that section 82 suggests a special resolution must be reached and I think that refers to the invalid vote the other year. Also note that section 83 is silent on how the Register-General will make their assessment. The Act itself also does not define the 'scale' by which the Register-General can make the determination. While the Corporations Act (2001) makes such definitions, the Act you refer to does not. It does, however, have specific requirements for auditors when turnover reaches a certain threshold.

I appreciate you making an attempt to help clear this up. Your point regarding governance arrangements being similar for either form does not establish a case for a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Act you refer to, and whatever the Register-General may have intimated comes close I admit. I will be very interested if you or somebody else can get us to the next level on this.

rcousins@... Oct 15   #113

Totally agree

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15   #115

Paul is absolutely correct.

I have had some experience with a Company limited by guarantee recently and I have to say that I was amazed at the lack of Board accountability and transparency. Under the Corporations Act, a Company limited by guarantee that is not also a registered charity:

•   is only required to meet once a year - the AGM

•   only has to table a very brief financial summary at the AGM, with no details of transactions during the year required.

•   members do not have the right to access Board meeting minutes

Board members do not have to face re-election once appointed. They hold their position until they resign, die or are removed by a general meeting

On the other hand, Incorporated Associations in Queensland have quite strict rules regarding frequency of Management Committee meetings, financial reporting, election and tenure of office bearers, distribution of minutes etc.

David Abulafia Oct 15 #116   Edited Oct 31

The synagogue I am a member and board member and is a company limited by guarantee. We have elections every year where there are more candidates than positions we hold a election for those positions. Our constitution say a president can only be a president for more than six years unless the members approve of an extension.

The ACNC has strict laws also.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15 #118

David, that is excellent. You appear to have strong governance and transparency through your constitution. If ACS moves to a company limited by guarantee we need to ensure that our constitution has provisions like those in your synagogue's constitution. Our new constitution seems to be what we should be focussing on whether we go to a company limited by guarantee or Incorporated association regime.

Ann Moffatt Oct 19 #140   Edited Oct 31

Thanx Paul,

Great research.

David Abulafia Oct 19 #146

Hi Ann,

Glad to see you are still around. I have not seen your name mentioned at the ACS for a very long time. Since we had ACS meetings at the masonic centre.

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #151   Edited Oct 31

Wow David that's so long ago. I'm now retired and living in qld.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #163

What Phil Argy says: We are required by law to move to a more rigorous structure. We are multi-State, and have too much money. Either we change to one that is compliant with the law or we lose the right to choose. CLBG is the easiest, simplest, cheapest and least restrictive choice for us.

UI Oct 22 #169   Edited Oct 22

I believe we previously engaged lawyers for advice on this, Clayton Utz, and were advised to transition to CLG. We've outgrown the Inc. by a quantum leap. Thankfully ACS isn't Incorporated in NSW as there's a $2million limit if i'm not mistaken. The Inc. laws aren't designed for multi-state and multi million dollar organisations.

Roger as Member Oct 22 #172

Clayton Utz gave ACS a great deal of advice. As a result of some of it, the Society made multiple, serious errors which resulted in a lost court-case and a huge waste of money and time.

There are various ways in which an organisation can be incorporated. It would help a great deal if there were a national Associations Incorporation Act, which would provide greater flexibility to reflect the many different kinds of not-for-profit organisations. But there isn't.

There's been a tendency to default to the Corporation Limited by Guarantee (CLG) form. One reason is that it suits lawyers, and another that it suits people who want to centralise power. But it's

a highly inflexible form, adapted only very slightly from the main, for-profit variant, the Corporation Limited by Shares.

In short, depending on what members want ACS to be, and whether members want to have any say at all in what it becomes and what it does in the future, a CLG might be just right; or it might be absolutely terrible, and the death knell for the professional society.

P Argy Oct 22 #174

The assumption that a CLG constrains what we can do compared to what we can do under the Associations Incorporation Act is misconceived. The concept of the legal responsibility for managing the organisation being vested in a core group of people is the same under both regimes, so the proposal to move to a CLG per se is not really an issue. The critical issue under both regimes is what is in the organisation's Constitution. So what we should be debating is what should go into the new Constitution. For that purpose you could take the view that there should be the bare minimum difference between the current and the new Constitution, or you could say let's take the opportunity to re-engineer the whole ACS for the 21st Century.

So what I'd like to see is a debate on what we want the ACS to be and how it should be governed, and then what should go into the new Constitution to implement those agreed elements.

Jack Burton Oct 22 #175

On Thu, 2021-10-21 at 21:35 -0700, P Argy wrote:

> The assumption that a CLG constrains what we can do compared to what we can do under the Associations Incorporation Act is misconceived. The concept of the legal responsibility for managing the organisation being vested in a core group of people is the same under both regimes, so the proposal to move to a CLG per se is not really an issue. The critical issue under both regimes is what is in the organisation's Constitution.

Indeed, in principle I quite agree, other than your second sentence -- but perhaps you can prove me wrong on that...

Could you explain to me then how it would be possible enshrine in the Constitution of a company limited by guarantee the kinds of *mandatory* delegations of authority (mostly from MC to the BECs) that are enshrined in the ACS Rules and National Regulations?

[for the purposes of the question at hand we can ignore the fact that several successive management committees have, quite improperly, assumed that they are above the law and simply purported to countermand those mandatory delegations ... that is indeed a problem of its own, but its solution will no doubt stem from discussions around the need for measures to hold future MCs directly accountability to the professional membership rather than from discussions around form of incorporation]

Some of us believe that those mandatory delegations were written into our governing documents with good reason (for which there is a need in 2021 just as great -- if not more so -- than there was when they were first drafted) and therefore should ideally be strengthened, or at worst retained as-is, but certainly not abandoned nor weakened in any way.

1 person liked this

rcousins@... Oct 22 #176

Spot on Phil

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #182   Edited Oct 31

Well; said Phillip

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 22 #183

Very well said Philip.

It is CRITICAL that the Constitution of a CLG is very well thought out. Without a very clear and designed Constitution, CLGs can seriously reduce the power of members. The default rules for CLGs without a Constitution put most of the decision-making power in the hands of the Board members and do not require transparency of decision e.g. members do not have the right to access Board minutes, only one general meeting is required every year - the AGM, the minimum required annual financial report is basically a summary with no details etc.

1 person liked this

P Argy Oct 23   #184   Edited Oct 23

I'm not sure what you mean by not agreeing with my second sentence, Jack. If you're wanting to know what provision of the ACT Associations Incorporation Act provides for legal responsibility to be vested in the Management Committee, it's section 60(2):

"The committee of an incorporated association has the management of the association".

The equivalent provision in the Corporations Act, in case that's what you didn't agree with, is s. 198A(1):

"The business of a company is to be managed by or under the direction of the directors".

The Constitution can have in it anything we like that is not prohibited by the Corporations Act. In fact even s. 198A may be replaced by a different provision as it's a replaceable rule!

I really urge people to discuss what they want the ACS to look like and stop debating WHETHER to convert to a CLG. It can't be an issue if the Constitution reflects what members want the ACS to look like!

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 23   #185

Agreed.

Our focus should be on the new Constitution regardless of whether we go with a CLG or incorporated Assn

Mark Toomey Oct 27   #230

Like many pieces of legislation, the legal framework defining the way NFP organisations were governed became quite a mess. Each state was different, while many organisations were shifting to a national and branch focus. There were many legal problems, and a lack of consistent legislated controls. From this mess, the ACNC was born, and the notion that a NFP should become a CLG became solidified.

Thousands of local, state and national organisations now operate as companies limited by guarantee. It's called progress. And, it's better.

Instead of resisting the change and looking for disadvantage, we should be embracing the change, and looking for the benefits. There are many.

One clear benefit is that under the CLG model, we will eliminate the totally disfunctional, unrepresentative and gerrymandered model of governance under which the ACS has struggled to advance for as long as I have known it - more than 40 years. That alone will allow it to attract digital professionals who have until now considered the ACS irrelevant to their careers.

If in doubt, look at the major professional organisations in Australia. How many of them are not ACNC registered and governed as CLGs?

It is interesting to look at www.acnc.gov.au and search for entities that are "Incorporated". At the large end, the list is dominated by state based religious, educational and community service organisations. In the first 100, there are no professional organisations.

I will be very pleased to see the ACS move into the 21st century in many ways, including updating its legal structure to one that assures the members of better control.

Roger Clarke Oct 27   #231

G'day Mark

> Thousands of local, state and national organisations now operate as companies limited by guarantee [CLGs]. It's called progress. And, it's better. ...

> I will be very pleased to see the ACS move into the 21st century in many ways, including updating its legal structure to one that assures the members of better control.

It would be valuable if you could clarify how a CLG "assures the members of better control".

As far as we've been able to work out, the key features of a CLG are:

- a relatively brief constitutional document that places very few constraints on what the Board can do
- an all-powerful Board
- delegation by the Board of most of its powers to a then all-powerful CEO
- no direct say by members in anything the CEO and Board do
- no meaningful way to remove the Board or the CEO
- a vote in elections of Directors, but without much influence by members on who the Board arranges to be on the ballot-paper

If there are exemplars of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of better control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them.

Thanks! ... Roger (as a member of the CRWG, and as a member of ACS)

P Argy Oct 27   #236

The key feature of a CLG is that it has no shareholders and that the liability of directors under the Corporations Act is much greater than under the Associations Incorporation Act. Apart from that, we can have whatever we like in the Constitution, including replication of the existing ACS Rules and Regs if we wanted a minimalist change. So it's simply wrong to suggest that the attributes you've listed come with a CLG form - they don't! That's why I've made numerous attempts in this thread to re-direct the conversation to what we want in the new Constitution. The issue of WHETHER to be a CLG should be a no-brainer - it has zero adverse consequences so this thread is essentially a red herring!

1 person liked this

jp@... Oct 27   #237

Dear Philip,

Any company may be registered with replaceable rules (as updated in the Corporations Act 2001 from time to time) or a constitution. A fundamental problem I have with the CLBG is the lack of shareholders. For an institution that has amassed a $50 million warchest (probably more), an alternative to this route would be to return that capital to its members. Granted it is unlikely to occur, but nobody on this forum has even considered that possibility, and, if they did, it would render the proposed move to a CLBG moot.

The red herring characterisation is not fair. A constitution would remain a consideration for a new company or if it was to remain an incorporated entity. Mark (who I respect, as I have done his 'Dancing with the Elephant' course) also misses the mark here. An incorporated entity may also have "whatever we like in our constitution." Thus, you and the committee have not yet made a case for CLBG or any other type of form. To suggest otherwise is obfuscating the issue.

One disadvantage I can think of is that a CLBG would be scrutinised by ASIC. Do we want that? What are the implications? Nobody is discussing this.

I'm sorry, but it is not a no-brainer, unless we were to skip over these important concerns. If you wash them away as "red herring" material, you're further disenfranchising the members who have a genuine concern. The status of incorporation or company has absolutely no impact on the constitution discussion. Red herring? Please stop.

Somebody, please give a cogent argument here.

P Argy Oct 27 #238

Please go back to my comments earlier in the thread, Justin. The starting point is that the Registrar under the ACT legislation has intimated that we are likely to become the subject of an order to transition to a CLG. So this exercise is simply pre-empting that so that it happens in an orderly way instead of by regulatory imperative. The incremental costs of complying with the Corporations Act vs the Associations Incorporation Act are largely irrelevant because the main compliance costs now are under the ACNC regime.

You don't need shareholders if you have a Constitution which reflects the extent to which you want your desired stakeholders to choose the directors and how frequently. So to take a bizarre example, if we were concerned about a Board being too unaccountable you could make sure their mode of appointment, continued tenure, etc were dependant on ongoing support from your cohort of stakeholders whether they be branches or professional members or any other cohort you care to describe. And you could make provision for the Board to be elected/re-elected weekly, monthly or annually by Congress or by a full plebiscite. If a CLG can accommodate all that what is the problem with it - its form factor dictates almost nothing of material concern once it's all boiled down.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #240   Edited Oct 31

If the ACS is not a professional body, it really has no real purpose, or need for members.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #241   Edited Oct 31

I agree with this, particularly from the experience I had with being on the board of our synagogue when the synagogue move from an incorporated association to a CLG, we only had minor changes to our constitution to allow for the transition. ACNC suggested to us to we should convert so we did. We were one of the first houses of worship associations to move over, so they gave us a lot of free help

jp@... Oct 28 #244

Thanks, Philip.

Yep, and what did you make of my response to your earlier comments in which I showed the Registrar's intimation could be without base?

The problem is that the CLBG appears to be a fait accompli without compelling reason, since the constitution and governance arrangements you describe apply to both forms.

This consultation forum is ostensibly about a new constitution that is required for a CLBG. But a new constitution could also be adopted by the existing entity.

Best, Justin

paul.campbell@... Oct 28 #246

G'day Phil

I have asked members of the Management Committee, Congress and the CEO if any are aware of a direction from the ACT Registrar for Incorporated Associations that the ACS should must/should transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee.

No one has sighted such a document.

What correspondence are you referring to?

Jack Burton Oct 28 #247

On Wed, 2021-10-27 at 18:42 -0700, paul.campbell@cogentia.com.au wrote:

> I have asked members of the Management Committee, Congress and the CEO if any are aware of a direction from the ACT Registrar for Incorporated Associations that the ACS should must/should transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee.

> No one has sighted such a document.

> What correspondence are you referring to?

Good question Paul.

I think it also needs to be asked, <u>assuming such a document does exist, why is this discussion (two years down the track) the first time we are hearing about it?</u>

<u>If such a direction was foreshadowed by the registrar, why was that not front & centre in the "yes" case presented for the 2019 motion?</u> After all, the incredibly weak, mostly spurious non-arguments presented in 2019 for the restructure surely could not have warranted more space than such a missive from the Registrar...

And, perhaps most importantly, <u>when do we the members get to see that letter from the Registrar, so we can decide for ourselves how much weight to attribute to it?</u>

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #251

Roger, and all.

Allow me to address your points one at a time, and then add some additional information:

> It would be valuable if you could clarify how a CLG "assures the members of better control".

> As far as we've been able to work out, the key features of a CLG are:

> •   a relatively brief constitutional document that places very few constraints on what the Board can do

The constitutional document can be as brief or as extensive and detailed as you like. However, law firms generally recommend keeping them brief, because changing them involves regulatory process. Many constitutions specify creation of a set of replaceable rules, which can be amended according to controls in the constitution, such as by majority vote of all members.

Getting the constitution right is important, but explaining it is even more important. Our industry has a lot of armchair lawyers who shoot their advice from the hip. When I created the Digital Leadership Institute, I engaged with the experts to get its constitution right.

> •   an all-powerful Board

This is a misconception. <u>The powers of the board are as broad or narrow as the constitution allows,</u> and as such, again I say that getting the constitution right is critically important.

[<u>This overlooks the 'shadow director' provisions, which are argued by the ACS CEO's governance consultant to dictate that directors' powers must not be constrained by the members.</u>]

The power of the board is limited by the will of the members, and of course, the law. If the members do not like the board's behaviour, they can call special general meetings to address problems. <u>The percentage of members required to call a special general meeting is defined in law, but, I think, can be overridden in the constitution to a lower, but not higher percentage</u>.

[INSERT CLARIFICATION HERE]

> •   delegation by the Board of most of its powers to a then all-powerful CEO

My first comment here is to ask how this is different to what we have had.

But, more seriously, <u>it is the role of boards to determine what powers they delegate to the CEO and what powers they retain</u>. The extent of delegation often relaxes after a CEO has been in the seat for some time and has gained trust – but this is by no means a requirement.

Further, boards often establish specialised committees, and delegate some of their powers to the committees. There are many ways to structure delegations, and nobody should feel that power is being ceded in any absolute way.

As will be seen in some of my further notes, the CLG model actually provides greater protection against rogue boards and CEOs. Might a reasonable person suggest that the IA model did not adequately protect the ACS from the apparent folly of its own MC (which is by any other name, a board) and then CEO?

> •   no direct say by members in anything the CEO and Board do

Entirely incorrect. The constitution can be written to require member engagement, and there are many ways in which this can be set up.

[DETAILS NEEDED (and requested).]

> •   no meaningful way to remove the Board or the CEO

This is incorrect. There is a requirement at law that the members can call a special general meeting, which can remove the board or some members of the board, and which can give the board clear instructions, such as to remove the CEO.

[AS ABOVE, NO <u>EFFECTIVE</u> WAY TO DO SO.]

> •   a vote in elections of Directors, but without much influence by members on who the Board arranges to be on the ballot-paper

Boards do not normally arrange nominations for election via ballot. <u>Constitutions must contain details of how the board is elected, and commonly this is by appointment of a returning officer who calls for nominations and conducts an election – completely independently of the board</u>. Some constitutions also allow the board to appoint additional directors, where special skills are needed, such as may occur during a merger. The law requires, and constitutions generally reaffirm that such appointments are for the no longer than until the next board election.

> If there are exemplars of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of better control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them.

I am sure that there are many, and I could write the challenge in the inverse: If there are examples of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of reduced control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them.

But I feel that a better approach is to draw from the wealth of guidance available online. These are just a few items that come up from a search for variants of "incorporated associations vs limited by guarantee".

Incorporated association or company limited by guarantee? (ACT) (nfplaw.org.au)

Incorporated association or company limited by guarantee? (Vic) (nfplaw.org.au)

Some points made in these papers:

<u>An IA that is registered as a RAB must comply with certain sections of the Corporations Act as well as the Associations Incorporation Reform Act</u>.

[https://asic.gov.au/for-business/registering-a-company/steps-to-register-a-company/registrable-australian-bodies/]

Conducting business overseas: If your group wants to pursue its purposes by carrying on its business overseas, you will need to get legal advice about the requirements under the laws of the country in which you want to operate. Using Australia as an example, any overseas (foreign) company that wants to 'carry on business' (conduct activities) in any part of Australia must register with ASIC under the Corporations Act. Many other countries will have similar requirements, even if your group is operating as a not-for-profit. Generally, a CLG structure will be a more readily understood and recognised legal structure in other countries, compared with other structures such as an IA.

This might be relevant if the ACS looks to engage digital specialists in, for example, Fiji, or the Solomon Islands, or Papua New Guinea, or establish chapters for Australians working overseas.

56-Associations-vs-Company-Limited-by-Guarantee.pdf (murfett.com.au)

Making the switch – Part 1: pros and cons of a Company Limited by Guarantee | Mullins Lawyers Advisors Partners

Content found in this paper:

Some of the benefits of a CLG compared to an Association are outlined below.

1.   The board of directors of a CLG can appoint additional directors, which can help to fill skills gaps on the board. By contrast, all committee members in an Association must be elected at a general meeting of the members.

2.   Changes to the CLG constitution take effect immediately upon a special resolution being passed to effect the change, as opposed to changes to an Association's constitution which must first be approved by and registered with the Office of Fair Trading.

3.   Once a CLG is registered, it can operate anywhere in Australia. Associations on the other hand, cannot operate outside of Queensland unless they either set up another Association in the other States where they intend to operate, or register as an "Australian Registered Body" under the Corporations Act, in which case the Association must comply with obligations under both the IA Act and the Corporations Act.

4.   Members of a CLG have greater rights that are protected by law, including the right to appoint a proxy to vote at meetings, which is not mandatory under the AI Act. Five percent of members of a CLG can also call a general meeting; this is not mandatory under the AI Act but there is often a similar right for members to call general meetings set out in an Association's constitution.

5.   As noted below, CLGs are traditionally subject to more onerous laws in relation to management and governance. On the one hand this may be seen as a disadvantage, but on the other hand, these more onerous requirements should not only result in improved governance and accountability within CLGs, but also a perception amongst third parties (e.g. banks, landlords, authorities and other stakeholders) that CLGs are more credible organisations.

6.   Under new changes to the AI Act, management committee members will be required to disclose any remuneration paid to them, their family, or senior staff. By comparison, while the directors of CLGs must disclose conflicts of interest, they are not specifically required to disclose their salary or the salaries of other staff.

POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS – WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE MAKING THE SWITCH

Traditionally, one of the big points of difference between a CLG and an Association has been that the directors of a CLG have owed more onerous duties towards their organisation and its members compared to committee members of an Association. In particular, although directors of a CLG and committee members of an Association both owe duties to act in good faith in the interests of their organisation, to act for a proper purpose and to give proper consideration to their decisions, the statutory duty for directors to avoid insolvent trading has always been unique to CLGs.

This is set to change from 30 June 2021, when the AI Act will be amended so that an Association's committee members can be fined up to $8,007 if the Association engages in insolvent trading while the committee members have reasonable grounds to expect that the association is insolvent, or would become insolvent by incurring a debt.

Other potential disadvantages of a CLG compared to an Association are:

•   as above, more onerous requirements in terms of administration and regulatory compliance;

•   unlike Associations, CLGs do not have the same ability to amalgamate with other companies or Associations – though the amalgamation provisions in the AI Act are not used very often anyway; greater audit and reporting requirements – but not so much greater as to be prohibitive; and

•   higher annual fees ($1,267 for a CLG versus $57.60 for an Association).

Is A Non Profit Company Limited By Guarantee The Right Legal Structure? (mgisq.com.au)

Content found in this paper:

Which Option is Correct for Your Organisation

Generally speaking, if your NFP is only operating in one State and is not deemed to be a large (*) not-for-profit, then an IA model may be an appropriate structure for your organisation.

N.B.(*) 'Large' in this sense is generally accepted to follow the tiered classifications under the ACNC Act 2012– e.g revenue greater than $1M.

However, if your NFP is operating in multiple States across Australia, and/or your organisation is of a larger size, the CLG model may be a more appropriate structure for your organisation.

Other benefits of considering a move to a CLG include:

1.   Removal of dual reporting – a CLG legislated under the ACNC would only need to report to the ACNC once per annum, not to 2 separate regulators (as under an IA model);

2.   Ability to attract independent directors to your Board may be easier in a CLG rather than attracting Committee Members to an IA. The advantages include a greater certainty of legal obligations and the ability for a company to indemnify its officers;

3.   CLGs are arguably a more readily understood and accepted commercial legal structure than IAs. Consequently, it may be easier for a CLG to raise finance from creditors or receive funding from government or philanthropic trusts than IAs.

paul.campbell@... Oct 28 #262 Edited Oct 31

The statements that the constitution of a company limited by guarantee may contain any clause the organisation wishes is, in part, misleading.

Adding clauses to a constitution does not make them lawful or imply they are compliant with legislation.

A constitution is a contract between the company and each member, the company and each director, the company and the company secretary, and a member and each other member. (see 140 (1) of the Corporations Act 2001).

Essentially a constitution is an agreement between parties creating mutual obligations mediated by the courts.

In the case of any proposed constitution for the ACS as a company limited by guarantee, this means that members would have to prosecute their grievance in either the Local or District court of NSW.

Taking court action is an expensive process that must be funded privately by the plaintiffs, whereas the ACS Board can call on ACS funds to defend itself.

The high cost of bringing this court action would be a deterrent for any ACS member or group of members to uphold any perceived grievance or accusation of misconduct.

Although a company limited by guarantee is administered under the Corporations ACT 2001, ASIC cannot be relied on to take action on behalf of members over any perceived breach of the ACS company constitution.

ASIC explicitly states in its Information Sheets 153 and 186 that it does not generally get involved in disputes about the running of companies. In other words, unless there is a broader public interest, ASIC will not take an interest in disputes between company members and their board.

See https://asic.gov.au/about-asic/contact-us/how-to-complain/how-asic-deals-with-reports-of-misconduct/

and https://asic.gov.au/about-asic/contact-us/how-to-complain/disputes-about-access-to-company-information/

Referring back to the premise that a new constitution can contain anything the ACS wishes and by extension can emulate our current constitution, the Corporations Act 2001 has more stringent requirements that the ACT Incorporated Association 1991 legislation.

Specifically it explicitly restricts board oversight.

The Corporations Act creates a breach, as determined by a court, if a person or group acts as a 'shadow director' in that they perform the functions of a director and/or actively influence or instruct the board of directors.

Under a company limited by guarantee, constituting a body, similar to the current ACS Congress to provide independent oversight on ACS board governance and direction is problematic; a board may delegate authority but cannot abrogate it.

So a company's constitution may include provision for board advisory bodies but the board has no legal obligation to accept their advice or direction and the persons giving that direction may in fact be determined by a court to be a 'shadow director'.

Mark Toomey Oct 28 #266

All of what Paul says may be true, but it misses one profoundly important point: The constitution must be approved by members to be adopted. This means that the members must inspect it before it is adopted, and begs the expectation that members must not contribute to the constitution, and ensure that the constitution is drafted by people with appropriate expertise.

So how about we shift the tone of this discussion, as Phil Argy and others have asked, from finding ways to undermine the idea of a new constitution, and instead find ways to ensure that a new constitution is bulletproof.

Remember, the current constitution and rules of the ACS got us into the previous catastrophe, where the ACS was being lambasted across the nation for its governance failure and incompetence. Right now, the ACS is not qualified to lecture on the topic - it needs to learn.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28   #268

I agree Phil.

The Constitution is the key thing we should focus on, not CLG or IA.

CLGs do not have shareholders but do have members and the members can have as much power as members of an IA PROVIDED the Constitution specifies clear rights for members. The default rules for CLGs, or public companies in general are VERY much in favour of the Board.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28   #271

Well said, Philip.

It is true that a CLG cannot distribute dividends to members BUT if the CLG, with the agreement of members, wishes to donate its excess assets to another, CLG, non-CLG company or IA I understand that they can do that. The Constitution of that Company or IA could have a provision that all members of ACS automatically become members (or shareholders) of the other company (I believe)

David Abulafia Oct 28   #272   Edited Oct 31

Why would the ACS what to giving dividends to its members?

That what a PTY company is for.

paul.campbell@... Oct 29   #277   Edited Oct 31

I fully support the need to reform the ACS constitution as stated in my original post.

In that post I advocated a two step approach - first reform the constitution and confirm that it is fit for purpose and then consider the transition to a CLG. My position has not changed.

My argument against moving to a CLG immediately remains, I do not believe the ACS's governance is mature enough to rely solely on a board of directors to look after the interests of all members across all branches.

I offer two pieces of evidence in support of my position.

First, Management Committee approved the process that led to the successful legal challenge by Clarke.

Second, since that court case, Congress, rather than the Management Committee, has instigated all reform processes, including the Constitutional Reform Working Group that established this forum.

Mark raises the issue of 'members' approving the new constitution.

ACS members will indeed vote to accept a new constitution before transition to a CLG.

On transition to a CLG the question arises who will be the members of the CLG as required under the Corporations Act 2001?

There are four obvious options.

First, all existing ACS members become members of the CLG.

Second, <u>members of the Professional Division become members of the CLG</u>.

Third, <u>all ACS members vote for their preferred candidates to become members of the CLG</u>

Fourth, <u>the ACS sets up an electoral college to allow ACS members to select their representatives to be members of the CLG</u>.

Section 84 of the ACT Incorporated Association Act 1991 allows for all exisiting members of an existing Incorporated Association to be listed as subscribers (members at registration) for the CLG that the IA is transitioning to.

However this provision does not negate the requirement under 5H Registration of body as company on basis of State or Territory law of the Corporations ACT 2001 that states in part

 '(j) for a company limited by guarantee — the proposed amount of the guarantee that each member agrees to in writing.'

https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021C00274

<u>Written confirmation is required by the legislation because each member of the CLG takes on the personal liability of a financial guarantee in the event of the company becoming insolvent</u>. Note that the limit of this guarantee is small, typically between $10- $100.

Nevertheless, as a requirement under the Corporations ACT, <u>I interpret this provision to mean that the ACS must seek written confirmation from all members the ACS proposes as members of a new CLG</u>.

When I first raised this issue during the original process to move to a CLG, I was told by MC members that the ACS lawyers would have a way to circumvent this. However, I have subsequently enquired on many occasions on how this would be handled and no-one on MC or ACS management has said that they have been told how it will be accomplished.

The corollary of successfully obtaining written confirmation that an existing ACS member agrees to be a member of the CLG, is <u>how to handle ACS members who choose not to agree or even respond</u>.

<u>Legally these ACS members cannot become members of the CLG so the ACS then has to either manage these members as a separate ACS entity or cancel their membership</u>.

Until legal advice is obtained that demonstrates a way forward, I do not see how options 1 or 2 are realistic.

The third option is workable but given the very small number of ACS members who vote at AGMs, lends itself to manipulation by parochial or vested interests.

So I think the fourth option gives the best outcome.

I support a senate model where local members vote for their branch committees who then nominate their representatives to become members of the CLG.

To support this model, any new constitution would recognise and strongly protect the rights and privileges of ACS members.

The constitution would also enshrine branch representation (BECs) that were voted by ACS members along the lines of existing processes.

This process gives ultimate authority to ACS members, yields a very much smaller and manageable register of CLG members and ensures that these CLG members are drawn from committed and engaged ACS members and equally representative of all state ACS branches.

I raise this membership issue now to support <u>my contention that we should concentrate on getting the new constitution fit for purpose including how it would deal with membership on transition to a CLG and once we are comfortable that we have achieved this, ask for a new mandate from ACS members based on a thorough explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed transition to a CLG</u>.

Jack Burton Oct 29   #279

On Thu, 2021-10-28 at 01:16 -0700, Mark Toomey wrote:

> Remember, the current constitution and rules of the ACS got us into the previous catastrophe, where the ACS was being lambasted across the nation for its governance failure and incompetence. Right now, the ACS is not qualified to lecture on the topic - it needs to learn.

What makes you think that the ACS' current Rules & National Regulations were responsible for that?

On my reading of the Federal Court decision it seemed pretty clear that <u>the causes of that catastrophe were the improper actions of certain individuals (which were *contrary* to the Rules & NRs), not our governing documents themselves</u>. If I'm mistaken, please point me to what I missed in that judgement.

I'm the first to agree that our Rules & NRs *do* need substantial change (in ways almost completely opposite to those embodied in the ill-fated 2019 proposal), but I fail to see the logic of the throw-the-baby-out-with-the-bathwater approach. <u>The only thing even vaguely approaching a compelling case for change in form of incorporation (cf. a series of Rule & NR changes) is Philip's remark about the Registrar's request -- but I don't think it could possibly be reasonable to expect members to attach much if any weight to that unless & until we can actually see for ourselves what was written in that letter</u>.

If we take your example of the 2019 disaster, would having a CLbG structure in place already really have made things any better and if so how? Or would it have exacerbated the situation? Or would it have made no difference whatsoever?

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 29   #281

On Fri, Oct 29, 2021 at 11:17 AM, <paul.campbell@...> wrote:

>I raise this membership issue now to support my contention that we should concentrate on getting the new constitution fit for purpose including how it would deal with membership on transition to a CLG and once we are comfortable that we have achieved this, ask for a new mandate from ACS members based on a thorough explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed transition to a CLG.

Having seen the various views expressed here I too support this view of Paul Campbell. My view-point here is Management of Risk. By proceeding in this manner. One would be able to <u>partition the risks into 2 phases; of</u>

•   <u>New Constitution creation and adoption; followed by amendments (we should be open to having a few of amendments, post adoption)</u>
•   <u>Move to a CLG structure</u>

It is my understanding, gained within this thread, that the activity 1 can be accomplished within an IA structure. The significant advantage with this approach is that when Activity 2 is commenced ACS will have a constitution with far fewer barnacles to use a current terminology. Aspects that are specific to Activity-2 can then be differed to that stage.

If the above plan is shown to the ACT-Regulator I'm certain s/he will agree to give more time, seeing that ACS has a road-map and is making progress.

The above can be considered to be in the traditions of Agile-Program-Management as well, which at the highest levels is about decomposing a Monolith, where viable, and better Managing the Risk in the decomposed projects.

David Abulafia Oct 29   #287   Edited Oct 31

I like and agree with Devindra.

Financial benefits in front of the MC who are supportive of the CLG (4)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #308

We need to understand what 'perceived' benefits are in front of mind of some current MC

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #344

OK.. One final input.

Let's consider the long established maxim of starting with the end in mind.

Too much of these conversations are focused on the past, and the pain of the past three years.

We need to move ahead again.

Consider a clean sheet approach. Let's define a new, 21st century organisation that represents and supports digital professionals. When that vision is agreed, let's develop the transition plan.

Isn't that what we would advise our customers to do in respect of new IT systems?

And by the way, when I say a 21st century organization, I do mean one that exemplifies what we preach: professional excellence in effective development and use of digital technology.

Peter Oct 31   #351

This opens the door on discussion of a 21st century organisation for a distanced and remote network of professional individuals with varied interests within the broad ICT field. An organisation with the aim of building and promoting professional behaviours and delivery of professional standard products in our fields, and influencing Australian society to make the most of the opportunities in using ICT. This would include promoting careers in the field and mentoring, etc.

So ….. would we seriously consider a shift to a structure closer to a 'holacracy'. For example a situation where all ACS information / data (discussions, minutes, …) are required to be accessible to all members for review and discussion all the time. In this world-view maybe MC, BEC, chapters, SIGs are versions of teams with accompanying information held online and with task tracking visible to all. Or would we stop somewhere short of that? What form of electronic voting scheme would we support for decision making? I would assume we could operate location independent for most formal meetings through the use of videoconferencing and online information access. Less formal gatherings for presentations, etc could also be shared nationally.

How would we expand, discuss, and in turn refine a model for this?

Peter Oct 31   #362

Or are we too busy fixing the past to step into a new future and a new model? How many of us could see a different picture of the ACS rather than just refine today? How often have you seen this happen in most system refresh/replacement exercises? How many users who could not see beyond the glitches in today's process?

We seem to be having a lot of discussion on minor things like number of directors, committee structures, and funding models rather than discussing a new vision and method of operation.

is there a time for that level of discussion?

Branch Differences #CLG   (1)

helenmchugh@... Oct 31   #346

We need to ensure we understand the different demographic of the Branches. NSW is large and a base for the Head offices similarly Melbourne but Tassie is Universities?!? and NT is industrial all ICT Professionals.

I think equal rep at a board is very important.

Overview   (1)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #306

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Should Chairs sit on the MC is there a conflict of interest

Can we get some outside directors for the MC

Branches must have the Roles & Responsibilities for the BEC and Branch Staff

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

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3.   Justin Pierce – jp@justinpierce.com.au   **Sun 3/10/2021 9:41 PM**
<u>You have not made the case for why a company limited by guarantee is necessary</u>. Everything else on the consultation is reasonable, but this important aspect has been sidestepped. There appears to be no compelling reason why a company limited by guarantee is needed, except perhaps to justify the expenditure to consultants the year before last.

All else is justifed nicely and appears you want consultation on it, but the company structure is a fait accompli. What is the rationale? What were the pros and cons discussed? Please justify this decision.   **[CLG]**

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5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   **16ᵗʰ October 2021**
•   With respect to the change to a company limited by guarantee, I would support the move if it delivers on the above changes / restructures. Without an overhaul of the organisational structure, it seems little will be any different at the other end of the change. **[CLG]**

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14ᵗʰ October 2021
Bob, Paul and Beau expressed the view that <u>the case for moving to a CLG had not been adequately made</u>. It was generally accepted that <u>the rules are outdated and must change but that this did not necessarily equate to the need for a change to a CLG</u>. **[P11]   [CLG]**

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11
Q9: Business-Lines
   Damien: **There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing. This resulted in a lot of departures of disillusioned now ex-members, and pushback from remaining members, who perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in values**. **[P00]   [P01]**

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11
P7, P8, P9, P10: Delegations, Accountability & Transparency, Member Involvemt, Branches
   Stephen: <u>Surprised to hear doubts expressed about the possibility of CLG member controls. Surely a constitution can be drafted that maintains the Society's mission re public goods</u>

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11
Q: **[CLG]**
   Susan: <u>No clarity has been provided about a compelling reason for conversion to a CLG. It's essential that members be provided with the choices</u>, and the pros and cons.

The constitutional questions must not be jammed into a CLG framework until and unless the membership is satisfied that, for good reasons, that form is to be used.

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q11: Richard: Re Branches and BECs, ACS must avoid falling back into BEC fiefdoms and conflicts of interest. In any case, <u>Branch autonomy is unworkable in a CLG</u>.

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q: Is a CLG necessary in order to limit the liability of each member? The lawyer for another organisation he's involved with said that was the case. [No. That's not necessary.]

———————————

Financial benefits in front of the MC who are supportive of the CLG #Directors   #CLG

karl Nov 3   #420

Mark,

I am against in BPM and change management of automatically assuming the best way to move is to jettison the current systems and start from scratch. Sometimes maybe.

But, the existing systems contains assets that can be re-used. Some people, some processes, some software.

Also domain knowledge.

This is a really serious issue.

Of course, where do we want to go?

Well, part of that lies in understanding the past.

Let me be personal.

I was appointed to the Chair of the ACS National Software Industry Committee (which actually didn't exist), in 1974. I was 31.

The ACS of that allowed me to do what I did, and, while there were politics, it was also fun. And I did a lot.

Right now, I'd find it hard to ask a your person to take on such a role. They would be buried in obstructions.

So, what was it about the ACS in 1974 that might be useful in 2022?

The same applies to any new systems.

My favourite camera shop website has been changed. It's not as easy to use as it was.

This was done, I was told, because they wanted to introduced afterpay.

I am extremely doubtful that such a drastic change was necessary to add what is a check-out feature.

Mark Toomey Nov 4   #425

Karl,

Nothing in my post suggests throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Absolutely: "Sometimes maybe. But, the existing systems contains assets that can be re-used. Some people, some processes, some software". But it is poor practice to start a vision for the future with the current state. The vision defines the end state. The current state, while we think we know it, is potentially even harder to get clear. But both must be known before we can embark on the journey, where we keep what is good, jettison what is bad, improve what has potential, and add what is missing. Such a journey demands visionary leadership over an extended period. It will take 5 years to transform the ACS into what we need.

David Abulafia Nov 4   #431

What my Mark said a 100% correct, you need to know where you are coming from and work out where you want to end up, to design a meaningful journey to the destination, and hopefully not end up in court like last time

Ann Moffatt Nov 5   #435

Hi mark,

We have many visionaries amongst our ACS members. We will be able to come up with an appropriate vision.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

Incorporation or CLG

One of the first matters I would suggest that needs to be addressed and put to bed is the question of the legal framework within which the ACS is to operate.

For quite a while now it has been obvious to me that the ACS was on borrowed time as a society incorporated in the ACT, for a number of reasons that I won't go into here (that are covered in the forum), and it is only a matter of time before the ACT Registrar forces a move to a CLG structure. Knowing bureaucracy as I do there will be no warning until a determination has been made and issued.

My view is that it is better to make this change under our own terms and timing rather than have it forced on us.

There are two key governance aspects in my mind that are being confused.

Firstly, there is the question of the legal governance framework within which the ACS would operate. In essence this is the skeleton of the body, i.e., the structural stuff! A lot of the compliance obligations are mandated so there is little discretion.

Secondly, and staying with my body analogy, it is the working level arrangements that put the brain and flesh onto the skeleton, i.e., the behavioural and cultural stuff! Examples are how the organisation is structured, member representation, branches, and authority levels. Much of this is contained in the ACS rules and regulations and business planning documents. My understanding is that the ACS is free to control and shape its destiny in whatever legal framework it operates.

My recommendation is the CLG framework.

It needs to be said that a 'perfect' structure and constitution does not exist and even if it did, it would not stop non-compliant behaviour - checks and balances must be in place.

[#P08]   [#P09]

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

I agree with [Ashley Goldsworthy]. *It is fundamental that the ACS continue to be a professional society governed by its members, and not a commercial organization. If a company limited by guarantee is the best option based on legal advice, this should not diminish this fundamental imperative*.

How many #Directors should there be?   (8)

z8300046@... Oct 2   #13

I reckon 9's the right number.

z8300046@... Oct 2   #14

[Another participant replies] That's too precise. Make it in the range 7 to 11.

1 person liked this

z8300046@... Oct 2   #15

 [And someone else chimes in] Hold on. We're supposed to be discussing Principles, not Features or Clauses.

I think what we're saying is that:

[#DR] 1. We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory

2. We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge

DAF Oct 2   #18

[#DR] I am not sure about this exact number - but what skills? Who selects them?

UI Oct 2   #22

[#DR] [BRD] this is the first round of consultation and we're not focusing on the actual text of the constitution, rather on the principles that will later be distilled down. the principle is that as a limited company, representatives (perhaps elected in some manner) in a committee (we can call it a board) are required for governance and these representatives (we can call them directors). the directors will be responsible for all legal matters with the ACS (amongst other functions) and have "their necks on the line" so to speak.

we can discuss how the board members are chosen, under what criteria, to fulfil what functions, etc.

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 3   #24

[BRD] This is cart before the horse. Of more interest to me is the idea that there should be one board to run any commercial dealings of ACS (with directors with experience of such) and perhaps another to run the services side with an overarching board to oversee that both are operating in the interest of members.

Roger as Member Oct 3   #25   Edited Oct 6

Note that there are additional hashtags for some of these Topics:

#P05   Open Nomination Processes for Board Positions

#P06   A Dual-Electorate Mechanism to Ensure Balance among Interests

#Q13 Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #360

[#DR] 1. We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory

2. We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge

[DEL] Additionally, I think we need to avoid having a process that allocated directors to various states; if the best directors are all from Darwin so be it.

Nomination for the Board   (20)

DAF Oct 2   #19

[DEL] [SEL] I like the option of any member being eligible to stand for the board - but how do we get to understand them? In my experience with company boards, the recommendation of the nominations committee (often a subset of the board) is always followed. So unless known-to/liked-by the existing board -> No chance!

2 people liked this

Nick Tate Oct 3   #26

[DEL] With a bias towards openness, any member in the professional division should be able to stand for the board

2 people liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #38

[DEL] I support openness to all members in the professional division.

[SK] But a nominee needs to demonstrate to the voters that the nominee 'has got what it takes' to get enough votes to be elected.

Voters should be lookIng for energy and ideas, but also for demonstrated experience on Boards of Not-For Profits, and demonstrated commitment to the Society. We're likely to be better served by people who have cut their teeth on the Boards of smaller organisations.

The incumbent Directors can reasonably provide information about the desirable expertise of new Directors, but they have to be very careful to inform the voters in an even-handed manner, rather than indulging in direct bias for or against specific nominees.

3 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #128

[DEL] [SEL] Totally agree, if there's any mention of a nomination committee I will not be supporting any constitutional change. Any financial member must be eligible to be elected to the board of directors. Let the members choose. This, and the terrible process that was put in place, is why I opposed the last attempt to change to ACS to a company limited by guarantee. It is up to the organisation to support and provide any necessary PD for new directors. I have seen the totally abhorrent misuse/abuse of a nomination committee process by a state level sporting organisation in my state.

Candidates spell out their experience, views, etc, and members vote.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #129

[SK] Roger, demonstrated experience on boards/executive of other not-for-profits may be a plus but I wouldn't want this to be mandatory - as you say, commitment to the ACS and involvement/leadership in ACS events; with enthusiasm (and the the time to commit to the role) are key attributes. Candidates spell out what they can bring to the ACS board, with their relevant experience, and then the members decide who gets elected. [SEL] We certainly do NOT want only

candidates who have been vetted by the existing board via a nomination committee! **[DTr]** Once elected the organisation should provide/facilitate necessary training for all directors.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 19   #133

[DEL] [SK] agree with the point roger **[DTr]** but I would also like to see the ACS develop the future leaders through a program where even if the nominee doesn't have the demonstrated experience on Boards that they are supported to gain the experience - I would have thought this was one of the reasons for BEC and chapters (i.e. to gain the experience with older hands helping). The other point you make is that every elected needs to have the commitment to be actively engaged is also very important

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 19   #142   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with the below idea

David Abulafia Oct 19   #143   Edited Oct 30

[GOV] If the ACS is not a company limited by guarantee, does that mean all the members of the ACS personally financially responsible for all debts in the case of bankruptcy.

Roger Clarke Oct 19   #144

[GOV] One of the key features of *any* kind of incorporation is limitation of the liability of members.

There's usually a theoretical limit, such as $10 per member. I've never heard of it being called on (because it would cost too much to collect it).

I'm a member of a number of associations and companies limited by guarantee, and I lose zero sleep about my liabilities (:-)}

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19   #145

Hi Aubrey

[GOV] No, Companies limited by guarantee have a fixed maximum liability for members..typically about $10. Members and office bearers of Incorporated Associations are not liable for debts of the Association if it becomes insolvent and most associations have office bearers insurance to cover the office bearers for negligence etc.

apkriedemann@... Oct 25   #198

[SEL] HI Roger, the most important principal for a "Member Representative Organisation" is that all members can nominate for any position and state their claim, the next part is that it is up to other members to evaluate the claim and pass judgement by way of a fully transparent / auditable / equitable ballot. This is so that those who can oppose an existing make up of a board can challenge. Also those how nominate must be able to canvass the vote just like in our general elections. They must have access to communicate to members at the very least via email and forums/groups and invite those to make contact.   That way members can seek to get to know a nominee and they have a chance to meet members one-on-one.

1 person liked this

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #258

[SEL] How many of us realise that it is impossible for an ordinary professional member to nominate for MC, which is the current board. To nominate, a member must first satisfy onerous conditions of

service on BEC or MC and , if I remember correctly, must be nominated by their branch. These requirements have starved the ACS of new blood and new ideas for many years.

I did attempt to model the governance structure once, and gave up. When individuals gain the right to vote on who goes on MC by being in a role that is appointed by the MC, all semblance of proper representation of member interests is lost.

How many individuals have been appointed to the ACS Chair role multiple times?

David Abulafia Oct 28 #261   Edited Oct 30

[SEL] I would assume you need to work up to being on the MC. I would assume you would start as an active member of a BEC get experience to learn about running of the ACS, before you can be usefulon the MC. The members should be able to vote the people onto the MC.

Mark Toomey Oct 28 #267

[SEL] Should is the problem, David. Members have no say. Members elect BEC. BEC appoints representatives to Congress, Congress elects MC. The voice of members is drowned by a self-serving elite.

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 28 #273   Edited Oct 30

[SEL] So are state's BECs like the electoral college in the USA so large states do not overpower the smaller states?

Is the congress like the members of the board of management, and the MC consists of the president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary?

Roger Clarke Oct 30 #294

[SEL] Roughly but not quite, David. Expanding a little on what Mark Toomey said:

• Branch Members elect a BEC of about 6-15 people

   BEC has modest theoretical power within that Branch. But the previous CEO centralised all power in the hands of the Branch Manager, so the BECs mostly have no discretionary funds and can make very few decisions. (It does vary quite a bit between Branches, however)

• Each BEC appoints 2 Branch Congress Reps (BCRs) to Congress

They have to be Professional Division members (MACS and above). They don't have to be on BEC at the time, but usually are.

Commonly, the BCRs are the Branch Chair and another office-bearer. But it's a decision by each BEC, taken at worst once every 2-years. Sometimes temporary appointments are made, to ensure someone can represent the Branch at a particular meeting

• Congress elects 9 of the Management Committee (MC) positions:

- 5 office-bearers

- 4 'National Congress Reps' (NCRs)

- the Immediate Past President and CEO are ex officio members, making up 11 MC members

The 5 Office-Bearer positions are subject to eligibility Rules that keep the potential candidates down to 25-40 at any given time (out of 10,000 Professional Division members), and for the President there are only maybe 5-10 eligible each time.

In practical terms, NSW and Vic each get an NCR, and 2 others are elected by Congress from among the remaining 14 Branch Congress Reps. In practice, the 3rd and 4th are almost always from Branches other than NSW and Vic.

Some of the complexities appear to many observers (including me) to be designed-in mechanisms to entrench an elite, or, perhaps better expressed, slow down each person's progression, giving

time for them to be inducted / embedded / indoctrinated, before they get too far inside the small tent.

Some of the complexities were, however, designed with every good intent!

There's a strong bias in the Congress membership towards other than NSW and Vic. They get only 4/16 BCRs, and people voted in by BECs have 16/26 votes on Congress. Currently, only 1 of the office-bearers, plus 3 others are from NSW or Vic, so those Branches have only 8/26 Congress members = 31%, compared with a bit over 50% of Prof'l Division members.

There *is* no good or natural way to avoid the rest of the country feeling as if it's dominated by Sydney and Melbourne, but that formula was a real (if convoluted) endeavour to achieve it.

P.S. It takes quite a while of grappling with the Rules, and preferably a few Congress meetings, to get to grips with the above, and what it means for the management of the Society.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #304

A very confusing structure.

Do you are saying the BEC is a toothless pussy cat.

Tom Worthington Oct 31   #326

On 28/10/21 6:54 pm, David Abulafia wrote:

[SEL] > I would assume you need to work up to being on the MC ...

Yes, I served my apprenticeship on the Canberra BEC before aspiring to a national role. Getting on the BEC was not hard, and being on it was not onerous.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #352

[SEL] Yes, the part of the 2019 reorg. of ACS that really made my hair stand on end was the proposal for a Nomination Committee for the Board ("Management Committee" as currently known), that (as I recall) could have included the CEO(!)

OTOH, the current system is not good enough. Too often (once being too often) we see people whose professional record is predominantly internally focussed (ie as an ACS committee person, somewhat in the vein of a career politician) rising to MC , [SK] rather than someone who has achieved as an actual ICT professional and who wants to share their capabilities and experience with ACS.

IMHO the best solution (to preventing "career politicians") is to short-circuit the path between the (professional) membership at large and the MC. Don't give Boards, Congress or BECs any capability to veto fresh blood – direct elections instead! (OK, maybe reserve some positions – President, Treasurer, VPs perhaps – to people with MC or maybe BEC experience).

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #359

[SEL] I would agree with you Paul.

I think that direct elections and term limits are important to ensure that we have fresh ideas and eager directors.

Additionally, direct elections and a simple governance process will enable greater member participation and engagement in the governance of the society.

Any qualifications for a Director?   (29)

Nick Tate Oct 3   #27   Edited Oct 31

[SEL] Any professional member should be able to stand. Trying to determine relevant experience will be too hard.

Jo Dalvean Oct 4 #34

[SEL] Good evening Nick. I would also like to see any professional member be eligible.

2 people liked this

Nick Tate <n.tate@...> Oct 5 #35   Edited Oct 31

Thanks, Jo. ... Best Regards ... Nick

jp@... Oct 6 #39

[SK] Before any vote is conducted, candidates can detail their qualifications in much the same way that they do now.

3 people liked this

Peter Oct 12 #88

[SEL] Any member should be eligible, yes. How to deal with any future necessary qualification for appropriate governance? [DTr] Should any necessary training be made available (online, at own pace?) if they are successful? or will they be required to have the qualification before standing?

2 people liked this

Jo Dalvean Oct 12 #92

[DTr] Peter, I would hope that the ACS supports volunteer Elected Members by providing opportunities to gain training and certifications suitable for Board membership. It may also assist risk and governance requirements to ensure that relevant training for Elected Members is up to date.

2 people liked this

Tom Worthington Oct 13 #94   Edited Oct 31

On 12/10/21 3:43 pm, Peter wrote:

[SEL] > Any member should be eligible, yes. How to deal with any future necessary qualification for appropriate governance? ...

The only legal requirement I could see to be a director of an Australian company is to be at least 18 years old.

http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/ca2001172/s1.5.5.html

[DTr] > Should any necessary training be made available (online, at own pace?) if they are successful? ...

Yes good idea.

Michael Driver Oct 16 #122

[DEL] Hi Nick, I agree that the professional Members should stand. I fear that not enough professional members stand or commit in the current arrangement.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #164

[DEL] I would like to see properly qualified company directors appointed to the board. i.e. those who are GAICD or equivalent.

[DTr] Professional Members interested in becoming Board Members should undertake training whilst they are BEC or Congress Members, or members of any of the advisory boards or subcommittees. There should be a funding avenue made available to interested parties if they cannot afford to purchase their own training. From a diversity and inclusion perspective this would enable a wider candidate pool.

[DRm] Board Directors should be paid.

If your only qualifier is that candidates are professional members - then you are putting a multi-million dollar company at great risk from underqualified governance. When we become a company limited by guarantee, Board members have a very real fiduciary duty and this should not be a popularity contest, nor a longevity reward. **[DEL]** Appoint properly qualified directors and pay them to do the job properly. If you do not pay them, you reduce the applicant pool to the most privileged within the society. Those that can afford to give their time and resources without it impacting other aspects of their lives. You restrict diversity on the board, and you create more risk for the organisation.

[BRD] Also - they should not all be Professional Members of this organisation. You should have 1 or 2 independent directors to provide an outside perspective.

7 Directors in total. 5 ACS Professional Members with GAICD and 2 Independants

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 21   #165

Hi Michelle

I am sure you have the best interests of the ACS when making your contribution but I strongly disagree with most of your proposals:

I would like to see properly qualified company directors appointed to the board. i.e. those who are GAICD or equivalent.

[DTr] I don't disagree that Board members should undertake appropriate training if they are not already members of the Institute of Company Directors or similar, and that ACS should fund their training.

[DRm] Board Directors should be paid.

I disagree STRONGLY. Professionals have a duty to give back to their profession and being Board members is one way that they can do that. However, I also agree that members who are in a financial situation that makes it difficult for them to commit the time to being a Board member should be eligible for an ex-gratia payment.

If your only qualifier is that candidates are professional members - then you are putting a multi-million dollar company at great risk from underqualified governance.

[GOV] [BRD] This is NOT a multi-million dollar company. We are a Professional Association that, through good governance by "professional members", many of whom have had very successful senior management roles in the private and public sectors, is performing well financially. We should be focussed on developing professionalism in our members and assisting educational institutions to educate the ICT professionals of the future.

When we become a company limited by guarantee, Board members have a very real fiduciary duty.

As does the Management Committee of Incorporated Associations in most States.

Also - they should not all be Professional Members of this organisation. You should have 1 or 2 independent directors to provide an outside perspective.

I don't disagree with this, but they should have a VERY good understanding of the role of Professional Associations e.g. members of the AMA, EA, CPAs, ICA etc

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 21   #166

[DTr] [DRm] [GOV] [BRD] I agree with Paul

Rod Dilnutt Oct 22   #167

Hi Michelle

I do not accept that

[DEL] 1. There should be a hurdle qualification for Board members - ACS members should have the right to represent themselves and, as professionals, are qualified through MACS/CP and our Code of Conduct. Additional governance training should be available from ACS.

[DRm] 2. Board members should be paid - This would encourage motivations and behaviours incongruent with ACS as a Professional Association

[GOV] 2. ACS is a multi-million company - implying that this is a commercial business venture - it is NOT.

1 person liked this

UI Oct 22   #168

[BRD] [DEL] Typically, in most limited companies, there is at least 1 director who's invited to sit in an observer/advisor capacity. The skills and experience required for governance, risk, legal, finance, compliance are on a whole different level. the need for proper induction + training to be a board member is paramount. Some members may already have such skills and experience as they are either in C-Level positions, eg. CIO, CTO or business owners. We have to acknowledge that while we're good at IT, we may not be good at being a director. It would be myopic to elect members into board positions who have zero skills and experience in running a board, let alone a multi million dollar company; it would end in disaster.

[DRm] Also, typically, board members are remunerated for their time and service. Otherwise the positions would be jeopardised as members would not give priority and time to devote to the position over their own job (which puts food on the table). This also attracts the people with necessary talent and skill. Running a big organisation is very different to running a server farm. Also, being an NFP, it's different to running a for profit enterprise. Eg. CPA & Engineers Australia, both being professional associations, remunerates their board members. Again, terribly myopic if there is no remuneration.

[GOV] a multi million dollar company doesn't automatically imply that it's a commercial enterprise. Don't know why people here have such misconceptions, perhaps it's a lack of knowledge and ignorance on company structure and governance. Eg. Anglicare is a multi million dollar company, it's a NFP & registered charity. They commercial ventures, eg. their retirement villages, to generate income to support the organisation's activities and goals. Engineers Australia is also a multi million dollar company.

Michelle Sandford <msandford@...> Oct 22   #173

Hi Paul,

Looking at your answers I would have to disagree with your statement that you strongly disagree with me on most of my points.

[DRm] I think there is only one that you strongly disagree with me on, and your solution requires people who are less privileged to put their hand up and ask for money - which will put off all diverse candidates and may cause the ones that ask for money to be discriminated against in their application. If Board Members are paid (I'm not saying on the same level as a commercial board, but a fee that compensates the time they contribute), individual board members have the right to decline that payment if they feel they do not need it. I have seen that happen on several boards.

[GOV] It is an organisation that is worth more than $30M, and that does require good governance. The Membership organisation itself does not make money, that is the part of the organisation that we spend money on - and I agree with you - that is where we want to invest the funds that have been earnt through other sources.

[BRD] I am happy for the Congress and BECs, and the Advisory Boards to have a focus on members and advocacy, and also the right teams within the employed staff of the ACS. But the role of the Board for a company with more than 30M on its books is to ensure it keeps a healthy financial outlook so that members can be supported in the many years ahead.

Where you put this in the hands of volunteers - you put the members at risk - when a volunteer has to choose between the work they are paid to do, and something they do out of the goodness of their heart, they prioritise on what they must, not what they want to - and members suffer, and organisations fail. I would like to see ACS set-up to serve and protect members for another 50

years, and I do not believe you do this by luck. It requires careful governance in the hands of qualified professionals. Many of our Professionals are both qualified and experienced in this, and so I do not doubt they can do it. But the current choices are limited to those that have the time and the money, and sacrifice little to sit at the table. I do not think they are the best candidates our organisation has to offer. And I think that is what we need or we will surely fail.

David Abulafia Oct 22 #177   Edited Oct 31

[DRm] I am on the board of management of a NFP CLG of 12 board members, we are not paid. My brother has as president, treasurer, and member of many not for profit organisations and never got paid.

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #178   Edited Oct 31

[DTr] [DRm] [GOV] [BRD] Agree with Paul.

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #179   Edited Oct 31

I agree with your sentiment, Michelle but not your conclusion.

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #180   Edited Oct 31

[DEL] I agree with rod.

Aubrey Oct 26 #201

On Fri, Oct 22, 2021 at 08:14 AM, UI wrote:

> It would be myopic to elect members into board positions who have zero skills and experience in running a board, let alone a multi million dollar company;

[SEL] Who is suggesting that members with zero skills in anything will be elected to the board? If ordinary professional members cannot nominate then the organisation loses all pretence at being a member serving organisation. There needs to be requirements (in addition to financial membership status), such as requiring the candidate to be nominated by, say, 10 other members. and have to submit a statement laying out their qualifications, experience, and aims if elected, etc. Then the members vote accordingly. I seem to have more confidence in the common sense of members than you do. (Though I do concede that voters in political elections often make very strange choices!) The last thing the ACS needs is a board whose members belong to the professional board members club and do nothing else except attend board meetings!

Aubrey Oct 26 #202

On Fri, Oct 22, 2021 at 08:14 AM, UI wrote:

> Running a big organisation is very different to running a server farm

[BRD] Other than they're usually called data centres these days, I see this artificial distinction as the key problem in this discussion. There really isn't much difference in the underlying processes (and therefore skills) required to manage any complex system, whether it is tek, or people, or, as is most often the case, both.

Also I would argue that a board doesn't "run" (nor manage) an organisation - the staff do that - what a board does, in accordance with the best interests of the members (as the member express them) is develop and provide direction, policy guidelines, and LEADERSHIP. I am probably mistaken, but I don't recall seeing the "L" word mentioned by anyone yet.

I want to see members who nominate for election to the board state how they will lead the organisation, and contribute to leadership role that the ASC can take.

Ann Moffatt Oct 27 #215   Edited Oct 31

[SEL] [BRD] I agree Aubrey.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #228   Edited Oct 31

[BRD] I agree

David Abulafia Oct 27   #229   Edited Oct 31

[SEL] I agree

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #253

Replying to Rod Dilnutt (spelling correct this time) #167...

> Hi Michelle

> I do not accept that

> 1. There should be a hurdle qualification for Board members - ACS members should have the right to represent themselves and, as professionals, are qualified through MACS/CP and our Code of Conduct. Additional governance training should be available from ACS.

[DRm] Yes, paid up members should be eligible - but not guest members.

[DEL] Being qualified as CP does not in any way provide credibility as a company director.   I hold a GAICD qualification, and can safely declare that CP is as far from GAICD as possible. Many NFP organisations put new directors through the AICD training because they want their directors to understand the job. Being a CP in systems design is irrelevant to directing the company.

> 2. Board members should be paid - This would encourage motivations and behaviours incongruent with ACS as a Professional Association

[DRm] There are degrees of payment, and we must recognise that being a director of a substantial organisation can involve a heavy workload. Because some members are well paid and wealthy does not mean that all members enjoy the same. At the least, board expenses must be paid.

> 2. ACS is a multi-million company - implying that this is a commercial business venture - it is NOT.

[GOV] According to the law, the ACS IS a company, and according to he financial statements, it has several million in assets,several million in income and several million in outgoings. It is, unquestionably, a multi-million dollar company, and we need to get over resisting that notion. Being a multi-million dollar company gives us great opportunity, but that comes with great responsibility. Discharging that responsibility, while siezing that opportunity, requires considerable experience and skill.

If it didn't, we'd think it fine for a high school PC jock to be advising the CEO of a major Australian business on digital transformation!

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 28   #257

Thanks again Mark - replying to #253

[GOV] Having been fortunate to be able to be considered by my peers, and with an MBA and Australian Institute of Company Directors training and experience, in stepping up on the ACS Management Commiittee in February this year, I reiterate Mark's comments on the size and scale and breath of the ACS activities, notably an operation with $48m turnover is a company. [DRm] Whilst my firm position is not to pay Board Members, in.line with our Professional Member driven and owned operation, I am very clear there is considerable skill and expertise in running an operation of the size and complexity, and nationwide reach of the ACS.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #309

[BRD] From a principles point of view:

- Any professional member should be eligible to stand
- There should be at least 1 independent director
- The ACS should seek to have 50:50 gender representation on the board

- The ACS should seek to encourage younger members to the board (Under 40).
- The ACS should have an absolute limit of 8 years as a board member (extension to 12 if you run as president) - non-consecutive.
- The ACS board should have the power to create sub committees (Risk/Audit, Policy etc.) which include non-elected ex officio members

David Abulafia Oct 30 #315   Edited Oct 31

[BRD] Are you there enough full quality female member in the ACS to match up with male members, or do we take any female member irrespective of quantity.

Again there should be equal opportunity for men and women to be nominated, but you cannot guarantee equal outcome.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #317   Edited Oct 31

Hi David,

[BRD] At this stage we are talking principles; and if ASX boards are looking for 50:50 representation, I think this should be our goal.

I am confident, given we have had several female Management Committee members, BEC chair's and Presidents we will have no trouble with having an appropriate quantity of quality female candidates.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #349

[DRm] One of the "issues" I had as VP was ACS's inconsistency about which members got paid versus] who worked for free.

ACS employed (still employs?) members as tutors for its own education product, for remuneration as I understood. (As I recall I was not successful in getting the details from management – another failure on my account.)

But ACS expects members to work for free on accreditation panels for ICT degrees. In view that ACS surely derives much of its standing from being the accreditor of professional qualifications in the ICT space (even if these qualifications can routinely be waived for MACS), the fact that ACS isn't prepared to remunerate the key individuals in the process is remarkable.

This is not to say we want pay for MC members, but ay least to say that the inconsistencies in ACS's approach to remunerating members for work done need to be fixed.

Exemplar Peer Organisation (5)

Mark Toomey Oct 28 #263   Edited Oct 30

I was asked about exemplar constitutions for a Company Limited by Guarantee. Well, how about we go one step further and look at a contemporary organisation that is not just a Company Limited by Guarantee, but is also gleefully eating the ACS breakfast, lunch and dinner in the health space.

Every person involved in this debate shoudl look outward a bit more.

Start with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

They've even got a website that puts the ACS to shame!

Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) It's accessible in just 2 clicks from their landing page.

Their website puts the ACS to shame.

And don't forget to check out the credentials of their CEO!

Ann Moffatt Oct 29 #276   Edited Oct 30

Thanx mark,

I agree. The ACS website is a disgrace for an enterprise that holds itself up to represent the profession.

Lets spend some of our large bag of money on getting a decent website rather than sending execs to WEF meetings.

Roger Clarke Oct 29   #278

Mark Toomey wrote:

> Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

> Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) ...

Thanks Mark.

But I can only detect one provision that's other than mainstream.

For example, re member-numbers to call a General Meeting, cl.15(2)(b) merely refers to Corps Act s.249F (5%).

And there are no occurrences in the document of 'transparency' or 'consultation', or member 'approval', 'ratification' or 'endorsement'.

The exception is:

28. Direct Votes

(a) The Board will determine from time to time if Voting Members are entitled to vote by a Direct Vote on a matter or a resolution ...

But that empowers the Board, not the members, and the members can't force the provision to be invoked.

So in what way does the AIHD Constitution "assure the members of better control"?

BTW, I fully agree with your remarks about the web-site problem   (:-(}

David Abulafia Oct 29   #280   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with Ann

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #343

Roger, all.

First, apologies for the delay in replying. I have no power, no phone and no internet due to the storms on Thursday and Friday morning. Unlikely to have anything until Monday at best, unless I drive to somewhere that the phone can connect. Who knows when this little contribution will be sent.

So you seem terribly worried that a clg based governing body can run riot. I guess that's fair, as the current model allowed MC to run riot. In fact, MC has been ignoring members for years, and has been totally unaccountable.

In the AIDH model, which is quite unremarkable and very consistent with the model I used for the digital leadership institute, the board is accountable to members normally through the election process, in which all financial members vote according to their individual preference. Directors who do not have the interests of members foremost will lose their seats.

The second form of accountability is the special general meeting, which can be called by members, regardless of whether the board wants it to not. The constitution defines the exact rules for special general meetings, such as how many members are required to call the meeting. Special General Meetings are generally used to address major concerns with board behaviour.

But the above is a somewhat nuclear approach. Smart companies have highly developed methods of addressing and solving problems. Many use a quality management system aligned to ISO 9000. It beggars belief that the ACS does not have an ISO 9000 QMS, but then again, given the raft of failure over the years, it should be no real surprise.

OH, if anyone feels that I have missed something, just remember that I assess on hard evidence, not on bluster. The ACS may have something it calls a QMS, but there is no evidence of any such thing that actually works.

Because of the storm related issues, this is probably my last contribution to this stage of the process. I look forward to contributing in the next stages too.

Migration Skills Assessment (4)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 30   #288

Migration Skills Assessment could be split into a separate company with shares owned by the ACS branches.

ACS branches would appoint the governing body that would decide on standards, appointment of CEO, and funding of ACS branches and the national ACS office.

This arrangement may need the approval of the Department of Home Affairs.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #310

This is quite an interesting idea

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #312

Absolutely

This is almost a conflict of interest

Thinking members are members where they are customers and sadly not knowing that they are members of he ACS while they are consumers paying lots of $$$s for their assessment.

Conversion to full member is ~5% #that's_not_ok

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #340

And how would ACS benefit from this?

How does ACS benefit from the current arrangements?

Skills in ACS Staff (3)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #313

With the GREATEST respect

Staff are 'controlling' the management of our profession with limited understanding of our skills.

So so sadly the thinking it is a 'product' to be sold...there IS A MIDDLE GROUND

Business acumen would suggest that we need to be able to pay for our services and make money...maybe!!!

David Abulafia Oct 31   #325

If members pay for services why should members paid a membership fee

Robert Estherby Oct 31 #331

I'm in great sympathy with your point Helen.

I don't know if it is a constitutional issue though. I think it goes much more to the culture of the organisation; which should be actively monitored by the board.

As a principle, I think the constitution should require all members of the board (including the CEO) to abide by a code of conduct (in addition to the Code of Ethics)

Financial benefits in front of the MC who are supportive of the CLG   (4)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #308

[GOV] We need to understand what 'perceived' benefits are in front of mind of some current MC

Mark Toomey Oct 31 #344

[GOV] OK.. One final input.

Let's consider the long established maxim of starting with the end in mind.

Top much of these conversations are focused on the past, and the pain of the past three years.

We need to move ahead again.

Consider a clean sheet approach. Let's define a new, 21st century organisation that represents and supports digital professionals. When that vision is agreed, let's develop the transition plan.

Isn't that what we would advise our customers to do in respect of new IT systems?

And by the way, when I say a 21st century organization, I do mean one that exemplifies what we preach: professional excellence in effective development and use of digital technology.

Peter Oct 31 #351

[GOV] This opens the door on discussion of a 21st century organisation for a distanced and remote network of professional individuals with varied interests within the broad ICT field. An organisation with the aim of building and promoting professional behaviours and delivery of professional standard products in our fields, and influencing Australian society to make the most of the opportunities in using ICT. This would include promoting careers in the field and mentoring, etc.

So ….. would we seriously consider a shift to a structure closer to a 'holacracy'. For example a situation where all ACS information/data (discussions, minutes, …) are required to be accessible to all members for review and discussion all the time. In this world-view maybe MC, BEC, chapters, SIGs are versions of teams with accompanying information held online and with task tracking visible to all. Or would we stop somewhere short of that? What form of electronic voting scheme would we support for decision making? I would assume we could operate location independent for most formal meetings through the use of videoconferencing and online information access. Less formal gatherings for presentations, etc could also be shared nationally.

How would we expand, discuss, and in turn refine a model for this?

Peter Oct 31 #362

[GOV] Or are we too busy fixing the past to step into a new future and a new model? How many of us could see a different picture of the ACS rather than just refine today? How often have you seen this happen in most system refresh/replacement exercises? How many users who could not see beyond the glitches in today's process?

We seem to be having a lot of discussion on minor things like number of directors, committee structures, and funding models rather than discussing a new vision and method of operation.

is there a time for that level of discussion?

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5.   **Rimas Skeivys MACS Snr** **– rimas@ugovern.com.au**   **Wed 13/10/2021 3:52 AM**

[BRD] 1.   <u>Governing body</u> to consist of chair and and an even number of members, with the chair having the casting vote.   **[Dir]**

3.   **Governing body appoints a full time <u>company secretary</u> reporting to the chair**.   **[Dir]**

4.   **<u>Chief executive officer</u>** is appointed by the governing body and **IS NOT a member of the govering body**.   **[Dir]**

8.   **Helen Vorrath FACS ***   **– hvorrath@livenet.com.au**   **Sun 24/10/2021 12:10 PM**

[BRD] I've been a CEO of a non-profit, and on the Board/Management Committee of another half a dozen. I also facilitate Strategic Planning sessions for NFPs. I've therefore spent a lot of time thinking about constitutions and organisation.

If there's one thing I'm absolutely convinced about, it is that **all Board/Management positions should have a tenure limit of between 3 and 5 years. No exceptions**.   **[Dir]**

And **I don't think that having an "immediate past president" position is always helpful to the new President. It can be a constraint on new ideas.**   **[Dir]**

Happy to provide my reasons if you're interested.

* except that I refused to keep paying my membership under the previous management, so I'm lapsed

9.   **Michael Scott**   **– michael.scott@ths.tas.gov.au**   **Fri 29/10/2021 5:30 AM**

[GOV] As a current Director of a Medical Research Foundation, I have recently been involved with a complete rewrite of the Constitution for the associated not-for-profit public trustee company.
The biggest takeaway from that process was that (under the new Constitution) <u>some Directors are elected and other Directors are directly appointed by the Board of Directors</u>.   **[Dir]**
The old Constitution did not have the flexibility to get a Board with the right <u>experience/skills mix</u> (and hence was dysfunctional).   **[Dir]**
The ACS should have this flexibility in order to get a high performing Board of Directors.

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5.   **Dr Tim Turner, FACS, GAIC**   **12 October 2021**

[BRD] It may be <u>worth considering structuring the Board of the Society along the lines of (say) 5 individuals elected from professional membership and 4 **non-executive directors appointed by the Board from anywhere (members or not)**</u>. That would allow the board **to reinforce its skill matrix** and access experienced board members to support the members who might not have as much experience as is desired.   **[Dir]**

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1.   **Ashley Goldsworthy**   **1 October 2021**

[BRD] <u>The suggestion that 'supporting business lines could have the advantage of providing for a Board with business expertise is not only irrelevant but is a worrying window into the thinking of the CRWG</u>. ... **[Dir]**

... There is and has been many members of the ACS with substantial business experience. People like Brian Finn, former Chairman of IBM Australia; Alan Coulter a former president of ACS and a senior executive in Telstra and the CEO of a broking firm, spring to mind. I myself was the CEO of Australia's largest construction firm, a bank, an insurance company, and the owner and operator of several vocational training companies. Suggesting we have to go outside the Society is unnecessary, and a bit of a red herring.

As a Fellow of CPA Australia, I am well aware that their constitution provides that the Board consists of a maximum of 10 independent non-executive Directors but must have at least two external Directors (who are neither members nor employees). Arguments from example are not necessarily relevant or persuasive, and I still disagree with the need for non-member directors. I recognise differing views on this aspect.

All members of the board of Engineers Australia are professional engineers. Similarly, the Boards of Australian Medical Association are all medicos.

3. Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

[SEL]... Members can provide feedback on what services they enjoy and would like to see more of but not how those services should be delivered. Imagine trying to tell Facebook what their internal policies should be, simply because you have a Facebook profile? Imagine telling YouTube how to run their business because you made a video once? From an ownership perspective, imagine telling Woolworths how to set internal policies because you bought a parcel of 10 shares on the ASX? Just because members are the customers (and owners) of ACS, doesn't mean they can tell ACS how to do its job. **The most involvement that members should have, as with other organisations, is to <u>vote for which director they want to fill a vacancy</u>**. Bizarrely, whether ACS members should be able to vote directly for directors, instead of the old boy's club voting for themselves from amongst Congress in a massive conflict of interest, doesn't form part of the questions in this survey.   **[P11] [Dir]**

5. Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Feedback: I understand that there needs to be effective delegation of power to the board / management committee / CEO / MD. I do however confess to <u>feeling particularly disenfranchised over the last 5 years</u>. Sitting with this discomfort has given me the opportunity to reflect and provide the following suggestions to remedy this for the professional members:

- I see the **dual electorate mechanism / branch structures / company limited by guarantee / delegation of powers as being intrinsically linked**.   **[P11]**
- I want to see less complication at the organisational structure level and **more direct accountability** and with that clearer delegation of power from the membership.   **[P08]**
- I want to suggest that we dissolve the local branch elections, and we <u>vote directly for the board / committee at a national level</u>.   **[Dir]**

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2. Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

[GOV] Paul pointed out that the current fad in Governance is for <u>"lean" constitutions</u>, with most things able to be changed by the board. This <u>has both obvious efficiencies and obvious downsides</u>. This would imply the need for <u>a high level of trust in any future board</u>, and this <u>may not be possible</u>. **[P08] [Dir]**

[SEL] Bob felt that <u>the pool of eligible candidates for President was too constrained by the current rules</u> and that <u>the eligibility rules for President should be changed as soon as possible</u>.   **[P11] [Dir]**

7. Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

  [SUR] Sarah-Louise: A strong advocacy organisation like the Pharmacy Guild puts some surplus into <u>a fighting fund, specified in the Constitution, which requires member approval to expend</u>.
  The idea could be implemented in the ACS context [although the purposes would be different]
  Peter: **Allocation has to be based on the Objects. It's impractical to go to the members for each decision, but the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that**

guidance should be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes. [P08] [P11]

For this to work, however, electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club. [P11] [Dir]

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National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q: Members' Votes

[SEL] The current arrangements are at best peculiar, at worst bizarre: All members can do is elect members of a Branch Committee. That acts as an electoral college for 2 representatives who attend occasional Congress meetings, where they seldom get to vote anyway, other than acting annually as an electoral college for the 10 eventually-elected members who do get to vote. The Congress comprises the 16 Branch representatives, plus previous Branch representatives who have been elected to, and still hold, about 10 further positions.

The three layers represent a huge buffer between the members and the governing committee. [P11] [Dir]

[GOV] The constitution needs to provide members with direct votes for both governing committee members and Branch committee members.

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination as a Director [P05] [P06]

[DEL] Alex: Should Directors have short terms, in order to achieve better control by members?

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q16: Directors

[SEL] Susan: Diversity of candidates, and of Directors? (On gender, race, etc. lines). How can this be achieved? Some allocated roles?

Erica: Diversity in gender is important, and it's noteworthy that ZA has done it better.

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q13: Directors

[GOV] Karl: Primacy of elected officials in decision-making, with staff for support and execution
[Dir]

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination of Directors

[BRD] John: To address the imbalance in Branch sizes, ACS needs to retain some parallelism with the Australian federal solution [i.e. some Directors by universal suffrage, some with a bias in the vote-value to benefit smaller Branches.]

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination as an ACS Director / the Board generally

[#DR] Siobhan: 6-9 Board members, c.5 elected by members, and the remainder [in some sense] independent Directors appointed by the Board based on gaps in the Board expertise matrix.

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Industry associations (1)

DAF Oct 2   #20

[IA] I see a question about industry associations - but it is hard to answer without understanding why ACS got involved in the first place?? I am an outsider to this topic - Be nice to understand the rationale?

Industry associations   (17)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #63   Edited Oct 30

[MO] Frankly - a professional society and ACS should host members not organisations.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 12   #87

[Eng] ACS should be engaged and have a relationship to other industry associations. We do not live in a bubble and need to be a trusted voice.

1 person liked this

z6957315@... Oct 13   #95   Edited Oct 13

On Tue, Oct 12, 2021 at 10:17 AM, <Beau.tydd@...> wrote:

> relationship to other industry associations

[MO] [Eng] I agree with both 'people not organisations as members', and 'ACS having engagement and relationships to industry associations'. An effective society and economy needs both kinds of organisations. The question for me is how that can be achieved.

Historically, there have been times and issues when professional societies and industry associations were in lock-step and even arm-in-arm; and times and issues when their views have been very different, and even diametrically opposed.

[IA] So I see the need for sufficient distance, and sufficient closeness; and I have difficulty seeing how either can exist within the other. Nor can I see how both could co-exist within a combined entity.

Maybe share a common services company; maybe be co-located on adjacent floors, in smaller cities even in the same premises. But any closer than that compromises the freedom of action of both organisations.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #102

[MO] ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (Organisation) body and membership must meet professional standards.   ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain unless congruent with member principles. ACS should not be acquiring industry associations and should divest those that compromise the member ethos.

[DIA] The ACS entity portfolio needs review as ADMA and ACS Labs/RCL and maybe others that we are unsure of, do not align well in a NFP or with the professional member. The $1mill+ loss by

ADMA in 2019/20 is a further distraction away from the member focus. Further, ADMA members are very different to ACS professional members.

3 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15 #106

[MO] [DIA] I agree with Rod.

We are a professional association that represents ICT professionals and sets standards that those claiming to be ICT professionals should meet.

[Eng] We are NOT an industry association. That said, of course we should have an open and cooperative relationship with ICT industry associations so that we are well informed but we should not be driven by them.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18 #130

[DIA] Yes, I can't see how the ACS can have both professional individuals and other organisations as members. There are a plethora of industry associations out there serving particular organisations/employers, etc., they really have no place within the ACS.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 20 #148

[AIA] [Con] In principle I agree with Rod, Paul and Aubrey. However, having made the acquisitions and formed the relationships; a way needs to be found to maintain that Arms-Length relationship. I see this as a central matter of governance within the new Constitution.

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #152   Edited Oct 30

[DIA] Why have ANY relationship with the entities we bought. I think they should be sold asap.

Paul Bailes Oct 20 #153   Edited Oct 30

[DIA] With respect, I don't follow Devidra's logic: having mistakenly acquired business(es) considered to be inimical to ACS's mission and identity, why should ACS be constrained to retain such (a) millstone(s)?

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 20 #154

[DIA] if they are not part of ACS core business why keep them

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #155   Edited Oct 30

[DIA] I totally agree David.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #156   Edited Oct 30

[DIA] I fully agree Paul.

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 20 #157

[DIA] I also agree with Paul B.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #162

[AIA] We can be a parent company with other associations and companies running under our umbrella. Some of them, like the Labs, might want to run in a For Profit manner, others focus on Members [Ben]. But it would be a shame to let associations disintegrate because they don't have someone to work with, or claim affiliation to. We took some in that would have dissolved over the past year or so. It's good to be able to keep them going under their own name, but with shared benefits for our members.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 23 #191

[Ben] I hear what most of you are saying; i.e. that they should be divested. If I were asked to vote for these acquisitions, in the first place, would've had similar thoughts. But that's not where we are now; and I'd like to see whether these entities can benefit members, in an ICT sense.

I see the following; if I were to take a positive view of 2 Business-Lines.

Significant amount of Data-Science in organisations is oriented towards Marketing of Products/Services to Customers based upon their behaviour. From that point of view there is some possibility of enhancing Member-skills in Data-Science if they are exposed a-priori what they may be required to deliver, via ADMA.

The innovative activities of ACS-Labs could be designed as a skills upgrade opportunity for Members, to engage in their innovative activities.

For the fruition of both of these it is necessary to advertise the possibilities and assess and generate some interest among Members. It is a given that they will be competitive and Members will need to have a background/interest to benefit, With the ACS-Labs there would be some confidentiality criteria as well.

I have seen nothing like this, advertised by the ACS, at all. In fact the advertising by ACS of these acquisitions was much lower-key, when compared to it's favoured themes such as Reimaginations, Skill-shortages etc,

The possible ways in which these Business-lines can assist Member upskilling should be carefully set-out and agreed with the respective boards/managements before any decision to proceed these within the ACS umbrella.

Mark Toomey Oct 28 #270

[Con] The Australian Institute of Digital Health has a brilliant model for engaging with organisations in a membership context.

See my recent post on exemplars.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #296

[AIA] The current purchases aside, I think our constitution/structure should have the capacity to address this issue. It may be appropriate for the Society in the future to amalgamate with an industry association and require them to adhere to values.

[Con] As a principle, I think we should have the capability to do this and look to successful integration in other societies constitutions.

What is the Business Proposal / Strategy / Master Plan for the ACS, or whatever else it should be called? (2)

Mark Toomey Oct 31 #365

I'm back from the dark world of no electricity (I have a generator for that) and no Internet - the phone service came back 3 hours ago, and I have been catching up ever since.

[SP] In 2012, in the final session of the Company Director's Conference, I learned that members present thought only 10% of those present were competent to lead a digital era company, AND they all thought the number needed ot be 90%. My first tentative conversations with ACS stalwarts of the time revealed a total lack of interest - "We are about technology, not business" was the essence of the responses I received.

So I set out to create an organisation that would fill that gap. It took six years to get the Digital Leadership into flight in Victoria, but the workload was too much for volunteers, I was ill and unable to continue in the essential galvanising leadership role, and then COVID came along to maximise the failure.

During the six years, with various people who shared the vision, we developed numerous iterations of a Master Plan, which brought together all the essential elements of what we set out to build. It spoke in plain English and pictures of how we intended to operate as a national organisation in the digital era, progressively expanding internationally. It explored memberships and qualifications, events and services, relationships with industry and academia, and so on.

We need a Master Plan for the ACS. One that provides the total reset that, through the conversations on this site, has become clearly essential. Preparing a Master Plan fits the stages of work required fro the CRWG, and will provide a framework in which ACS members can comprehensively debate and settle on the future vision for every currently conceivable aspect of the organisation.

I'm now going to attempt the amazing feat of putting the now defunct Digital Leadership Institute Master Plan up as a file which can be accessed by those involved in this debate. I suspect that I will have ot come back after doing so to provide the relevant link.

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #367

As expected...

[SP] The DLI Master Plan is now at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/DLI%20Master%20Plan%20V20170404.pdf.

I do hope that it is useful.

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1.   **Ashley Goldsworthy**   **1 October 2021**

<u>Q6</u>

[IA] The ACS as a professional association should <u>not be an industry association</u>, the two are completely different concepts. **The ACS may well <u>work with industry associations</u>, and <u>even participate in such associations as a distinct entity</u>. <u>However, it cannot become one</u>**. This removes any potential conflict.

<u>The ACS should not be acquiring industry associations</u>. That was one of the critical mistakes of the ACS in 2019. It is very clear the management at that time was pursuing a very different purpose, and one that conflicted with and bastardised the core identity of the ACS. The desire to make money is not a valid reason for the ACS to spend member funds, if so why not buy a bank? **<u>Divest of what we bought</u>**. That will undoubtedly rankle those with commercial aspirations chasing the dollars. Don't get me wrong- dollars are necessary; it's just how you get them that is important. **[DIA]**

It is not just about managing risk. It is about the core reason for the existence of the ACS. The problem with such suggestions as operating subsidiaries is the **<u>impossibility of separating their activities from the purpose of the ACS</u>**, assuming they would have to have some level of independence. The parent entity always carries responsibility. The best way to avoid tensions is not to create them in the first place. **[IA]**

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5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- **[PS]** ACS needs to be a professional society if we want to continue to be the premier body that represents the ICT community, promoting ethics and dialogue around technology with government and industry from a national perspective.
- An industry association could be an activity of the ACS **[Q06] [IA]**

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National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] Alan: cf. an industry society? Only if an industry society is a society of professionals.

Adrian: Believes very strongly that the focus is that of a professional society
[IA] But <u>the focus has been blurred over the last decade with the boundary edged towards an industry association</u>.

This has been associated with the growth in funds from sources other than membership fees from a small contribution, to 50-50, to the point where membership fees are 6% of revenue.

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Tag Consolidation
#Key-Functions – 3 Topics – 14 Posts + 6 Other Messages   +18   +0
The ACS's Key Functions (s.4 of Consltn Doc #1)
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 7-11

What is ACS?   (9)

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #224

IMHO the question "Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?" is somewhat loaded, in that I am not quite confident that ACS is a "professional society".

Our Principal Object "to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources" is "professional" to the extent that the "resources" might be human resources, but IMHO unfortunately not necessarily exclusively. E.g. our Secondary Objects include "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters" which might as well be found in the Objects of AIIA (or ADMA!).

In other words, I fear that ACS risks being less of a force for the maintenance and improvement of the performance of individual ICT professionals, and more of a platform to lobby Goverments for whatever the leadership/management sees from time to time as worth pursuing (under the guise of "support for the formulation of effective policies ...").

Accordingly, I would urge that we suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature, i.e. strike out:

- from Secondary Objects
  - support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters;
- from Purposes
  - (8)   The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decisionmakers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, and related matters

(If anyone wanted to hobnob with Government "community leaders and decision-makers", let them find a platform other than ACS.)

David Abulafia Oct 27   #234   Edited Oct 30

Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club
David Abulafia

David Abulafia Oct 27   #235   Edited Oct 30

The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites.

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #293

Paul wrote:

> ... strike out <support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters>

During video discussion sessions, it's been argued that, central though 'information {and communications} technologies' are to the Society's scope, it has for many years also recognised the importance of the application of ICT, management of ICT, and implications of ICT, and its use for alignment with organisational and social purposes, transformational capabilities, and disruptive potential. (That leads to arguments by quite a few members that we need to encompass specialisations that are not highly technical – but making clear what those specialists are and are not specialised in).

Are you really intending that ACS should not recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy?

As test-cases, consider the risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc.?

(For clarity, I have a lot of sympathy with the proposition that there are many forms of advocacy / lobbying that are emphatically not within a professional society's scope, such as seeking advantages for business enterprises along the lines of tax breaks and de-regulation).

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #319

David Abulafia is correct in both his comments on this topic. The ICT sector in Australia needs a professional body, and the ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage. Furthermore, Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector.

Because of the nature of the industry we are in, it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #336

Not necessarily "a" professional body – the Health Sector is served by multiple professions and professional bodies. (See mine just now re "Breadth of ACS interest #Q02 #Q05 #Q12 #SIGs")

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #337

Good point, thanks Roger for raising this.

My concern is for ACs not to become distracted from what I see as its distinctive role, as developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals.

Very sincere congrats to you for your great work resisting the Australia Card but how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

I would like to see the warnings about misuse of ICT in X to come from the Australian X Society/Institute/whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS.

Even then, I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything "topical", as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus. Consider for example: https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (and despite being in the name of "ACS Senior Members", the 12/5/2020 email from ACS " Seeking your support - COVID-19" enlisting signatories to the foregoing makes it clear to me that this was owned by ACS). Congrats again to you for providing another view (and to ACS/IA for publishing it), but again how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #354

Hi Paul,

I have to admit, that when I first saw your post I was in vehement disagreement; however, I recognise your point that the ACS needs to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus.

That aside, I do think that as a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.

When I look at the current voices in these debates, I see that the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest.

I also acknowledge that we have not done well at this to date.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #363

Most gracious, thanks Rob!

We need to protect ACS from being "hijacked" by voices that, as you say, might be "self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest", or even just plain wrong.

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards (3)

Adrian Porteous Oct 23 #190

The Consultation document suggests a cluster of Professional Standards: (as follows)

> including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies

The current ACS Objects include 2.4:

> To define and promote the maintenance of standards of knowledge of information and communications technology for members.

In my view, the proposed Mission gives less priority to the development and promulgation of technical standards (Purpose 1: The establishment and maintenance of high professional standards)

The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals.

Purpose 1 could be amended to include this role, or another specific Purpose defined (I realise that we are not at the drafting stage yet!)

kenjprice@... Oct 26 #210

It appears the interpretation of "standards" has focussed on standards of knowledge and professionalism for members, but overlooked the equally important role of developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #311

I think that the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving its public image.

What is the Business Proposal / Strategy / Master Plan for the ACS, or whatever else it should be called? (2)

Mark Toomey Oct 31 #365

I'm back from the dark world of no electricity (I have a generator for that) and no Internet - the phone service came back 3 hours ago, and I have been catching up ever since.

In 2012, in the final session of the Company Director's Conference, I learned that members present thought only 10% of those present were competent to lead a digital era company, AND they all thought the number needed to be 90%. My first tentative conversations with ACS stalwarts of the

time revealed a total lack of interest - "We are about technology, not business" was the essence of the responses I received.

So I set out to create an organisation that would fill that gap. It took six years to get the Digital Leadership into flight in Victoria, but the workload was too much for volunteers, I was ill and unable to continue in the essential galvanising leadership role, and then COVID came along to maximise the failure.

During the six years, with various people who shared the vision, we developed numerous iterations of a Master Plan, which brought together all the essential elements of what we set out to build. It spoke in plain English and pictures of how we intended to operate as a national organisation in the digital era, progressively expanding internationally. It explored memberships and qualifications, events and services, relationships with industry and academia, and so on.

We need a Master Plan for the ACS. One that provides the total reset that, through the conversations on this site, has become clearly essential. <u>Preparing a Master Plan fits the stages of work required for the CRWG, and will provide a framework in which ACS members can comprehensively debate and settle on the future vision for every currently conceivable aspect of the organisation</u>.

I'm now going to attempt the amazing feat of putting the now defunct Digital Leadership Institute Master Plan up as a file which can be accessed by those involved in this debate. I suspect that I will have to come back after doing so to provide the relevant link.

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #367

As expected...

The DLI Master Plan is now at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/DLI%20Master%20Plan%20V20170404.pdf.

I do hope that it is useful.

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4.   Anonymous –   Tue 5/10/2021 7:24 AM

ACS Assessment Process

In my honest opinion, the ACS is a farce. The CRWG seems to fantasize itself with philosophical questions when the practical applications of the society are the real issue. Have you ever had the chance to go through an ACS assessment? It's one of the most inhumane things I've ever had to go through. Try it for yourself.

The provided checklist won't cut it and you have to scrutinize every line of the in-depth document, missing a single line causes an immediate $500 lost.

Enquiries on assessments are either "we won't know until you apply" or "read the guide". And even the result email won't cover all the points and you might still fail on the second attempt.

The assessment portal is pure shame on one that calls itself the ACS. Upload interactions regularly fail, hidden limitations on number of uploads and don't forget the inability to delete existing documents. While that may be a business decision, it makes organizing a pain when you can't even rename an uploaded document. Come up with a more elegant solution, a student could do better.

And the assessment process doesn't even call up the work experience companies and any bozo could pass it as long as he follows the guidelines. Honestly if we were investigated for the legalities of that, I swear we'd be in trouble.

All this is coming from someone who was awarded an ACS internship. The assessment process is a sham and goes against the integrity and mission of the ACS. Whereas everything else never applies to regular devs. Go out and survey any single IT or development agency. The developers neither care nor know about the ACS, but some of us despise it.

All I'm asking is for the ACS to bring some value to our community, as opposed to preventing others from joining, what with all the corporate bullshit and cruel assessments.   **[Q07] [KF]**

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021

It would be nonsense to suggest the ACS should not support innovation. The issue is how should this be done. To answer the question posed, **I don't think support of ACS River City Labs is a key function of the ACS. The sort of support we offer and how much are the key questions**.   **[BL]**

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9) If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

ACS labs division should be run as a profit-making business. Some capital investment may be required to achieve this. but as the question does not distinguish between operating surplus and capital surplus it is unclear whether ACS understands the difference.

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q8:   Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9)

Yes.

The ACS vision statement was written 50 years ago by our forebears and still holds true today.

 "For Australia to be a world leader in technology talent that fosters innovation and creates new forms of value."

[Earliest occurrence appears to be in the Media Release for the purchase of RCL, 7 Sep 2018: https://www.acs.org.au/insightsandpublications/media-releases/ACSRCL.html]

ACS has never, in its entire 50-year history ever conducted any activity whereby it could credibly claim to be achieving the "fosters innovation" segment of the vision statement. ACS Labs allows ACS, for the first time ever, to claim that it is actually fulfilling its vision.

As well, support for founders is crucial. Most technology founders live below the poverty line and work long hours to bring their dream to life. ACS has a role in supporting the next Canva or Atlassian and I don't know why ACS wouldn't want to support these dreamers.

Maintaining and expanding ACS Labs is crucial to ACS achieving its vision.

a.   If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

A reasonable amount of support is required. As well as being a benefactor and supporting the ICT industry, Australian economy and struggling founders, ACS could potentially make a lot of money from investing a stake in start-ups in return for its support.

_____

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3: Mission and Purpose

Rimas: 'advance [ICT] technology and practice for the benefit of the community'.
Value-generation, for members, for employers, for the community.
What the organisation should and should not be doing,
i.e. key functions, plus business-lines for the generation of surplus to use for key functions.
Strategy derives from the above. Then add oversight.

Q8:   Innovation

Elizabeth: **Even if a contribution to innovation is within ACS's key functions, direct grants are far more appropriate than space-rental**. It comes with a rationale and transparency.

Q14: Membership Involvement in Key Policies

Rod: Matters of importance must have member voice.   **[P08]**
Line up with mission, purposes and key functions, and the more important among those must go to the members [for 'approval' / 'ratification' / 'endorsement']

_____

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes #Key-Functions #P01 #Q03 #Q07

Ann Moffatt Nov 2 #396

We used to have acs representatives on most of the iso standards cttees. When did that stop?

Rod Dilnutt Nov 3 #402

Absolutely agree ACS should represent on standards committees. My understanding from a former ACS delegate from ACS to Standards committees, that there was no support with expectation they would pay their own way to attend meetings. This gets expensive especially when O/S travel is involved, not to mention the time commitment from day job. I am not advocating this should be a paid gig but reimbursement of expense seems appropriate.

Perhaps someone could clarify ?

kenjprice@... Nov 3 #403

ACS appears to still have at least some current representation on

- the various IFIP Technical Committees.
  https://www.acs.org.au/governance/ifip-working-group.html
- the Standards Australia IT and Management groups
  https://www.acs.org.au/governance/standards-australia-working-group.html

This would seem to be an important part of a national computing society.

It would be disturbing if this were to stop.

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3 #404

I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses. I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies.

I was the ACS representative to Standards Australia committee IT-030 on "Governance and management of ICT" from 2007 to 2015 and was reimbursed under the old policy (not sure of the current policy).

I remain as an expert on Standards Australia subcommittee IT-030-01.

Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted. A related database of ACS representatives was trialled, but not put into production (some ACS representatives were not ACS members). Work on an ACS Standards Policy (for both professional and technical standards) was discussed but not implemented.

David Abulafia Nov 3 #405

From reading this group, it sound like the ACS has open a hornets nest, particular after I read the past federal court judgement against the ACS. Even though I have been a member for 40+ years, I did not realise the ACS had such huge turnover. I am surprised the ACS is allowed to be a NFP.

It certainly does not spend money on good Web site design. Most event booking sites have a feature to add the event to your calendar, but the ACS does not have this feature, and does not want one. The ACS does not lack the money to hire a web designer to implement this feature, it just lack the desire.

This looks like it is just going to be and another proverbal hit the fan event.

karl Nov 3 #407

Rimas wrote:

> Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted.

Can you make that available to us?

We probably need to establish a repository of material.

It is in my view inappropriate for Staff to represent ACS formally in these things.

Denis Street FACS HLM Nov 3   #408

Hi Karl,

This is news to me. I agree that it is inappropriate for ACS staff to represent the ACS on these technical committees.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4   #423

Re-from rod:-

> Absolutely agree ACS should represent on standards committees. My understanding from a former ACS delegate from ACS to Standards committees, that there was no support with expectation they would pay their own way to attend meetings. This gets expensive especially when O/S travel is involved, not to mention the time commitment from day job. I am not advocating this should be a paid gig but reimbursement of expense seems appropriate.
> Perhaps someone could clarify ?

I represented the ACS on the ISO osi standards (tc6, I think. It was the open systems 7-layer model. I specialised in level 7, the applications level) cttee and the Australian standards for the same standard from about 1976 to 1984 when the basic reference model was published.

It involved about 2-3 hours a week reading and responding to papers on the subject. I was never paid for this work and didn't expect to be paid. I had represented the BCS on that committee for the lower levels of the standard, then just the first 3 layers, from about 1968 till I left uk in 1974. I had represented the BCS on Cobol standards cttees prior to my involvement in communications. I wasn't paid for that either.

If there were costs of going to a meeting interstate my company paid and I fitted the visit in with work for my company.

I don't think standards reps should be paid but if their companies won't fund travel, I think the acs could be asked to cover that.

I was pleased to contribute as, to quote bacon, "I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto."

Its been my 'motto' throughout my working life.

I got tremendous benefit from being on those cttees. I was working with experts in their fields from all over the world. Watching and contributing to the development of those standards meant that I really understood what the standard entailed. I was also asked by many companies to explain the standard.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4   #424

Rimas said

> "I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses. I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies."

Ouch. I didn't know that was happening. That's just silly. What else did our silly MCs decide?

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #428

I've been looking at my email archive for my period as VP Academic from Jan 2013 to Oct 2016.

As I was given to understand, the move to make the CEO the ACS Councillor on SA was because it was a corporate not technical role.

However, re the various technical committees etc.

- generally speaking, ACS members (not staff) continued to be our reps. on these
- in 2015 I had MC confirm that we would support approx. 10 of these at approx. $1.5K each (travel expenses) per annum – admittedly not much, but the specific value proposition to ACS was (and remains – see below) hard to capture.

Managing the connection with SA was (unexpectedly) difficult:

- not easy to discover who was representing ACS
- not easy to discover what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input
- not clear what ACS expectations were of ACS reps.

The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is what is ACS's position? Consider for example an ACS rep. on a group working on system requirements. I might take the position that a clear requirements documents should be the prerequisite to any procurement (development, purchase etc.), that agile development/codesign should be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Doubtless others in ACS would disagree. So how do we arrive at "the ACS position", for SA or for anything. (In the specific case of SA, the solution would have to involve ACS reps. reporting back to ACS on matters coming up at SA, and ACS giving guidance back to our reps.)

I am definitely NOT objecting to ACS engaging with SA, nor objecting to ACS supporting same. But unless ACS develops a reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters for input to SA, then I would find it hard to justify increased ACS investment in same.

Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.) How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Paul Bailes Nov 4 #429

To paraphrase my other on this just before …

The problem is how to integrate these representations actually into the life of ACS and its membership?

Maybe couple each with a SIG? But there still needs to be a link to/from the Society's central leadership in such matters e.g. the Technical Board (as things have been since Oct 2016)

David Abulafia Nov 4 #430

The CovidSafe was a very expensive disaster, some one may a lot of money for a garbage app. If the CovidSafe app was an example of ACS professional standards, then ACS professional standards are very poor

Jack Burton Nov 4 #432   [#P00] [#P03] [#P07] [#P11]

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief (and none of the signatories could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.

Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P07]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

•   reduction of Boards
•   2019 constitutional reform
•   COVIDSafe endorsement
•   <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

karl Nov 4   #434

I took one look at the idea of Covidsafe and, delved back into my semi-conscious, my UG (diploma) was from RMIT in Communications Eng. (.Radio and Electronics and some telephony).

It takes about 30 secs to realise that the idea that you could accurately determine the distance between two mobile phones by measuring their BT signal strength.

Just think about the various scenarios. Two people with their phones in their back pockets facing each other. Two people separated by glass. Some one with a phone in a brief case.

There was even easily available research showing that it didn't work.

But, the obsession was with the privacy issues. Important and sexy, but, irrelevant if the concept doesn't work.

However, it may have been useful in super-spreader events. And, a security agency could leave a phone taped to a wall and track who was the vicinity.

The problem is NOT the range or the fact that the phones can detect each other, the problem is ... How far apart are they?

ACS spoke with two voices, the gungho major announcement, and, a technical brief which was more realistic.

But, this raises a possible policy issue for ACS: Should government IT projects go through a technical feasibility and quality appraisal by a statutory body before adoption?

Tag Consolidation
#Mission-Purposes – 8 Topics – 55 Posts + 3 Other Messages
The ACS's Mission and Purposes (s.2 of Consultn Doc #1)
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 15-21

2.   Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards

13 RESPONDERS 19 RESONSES

ETH 1

CBOK 2

TEC 5

SA 11

NOT staff 7

DEV 2

FAIL 5

WEB 1

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National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q14: Membership Involvement in Key Policies

 CORE Rod: Matters of importance must have member voice.   **[P08]**
 Line up with mission, purposes and key functions, and the more important among those must go to the members [for 'approval' / 'ratification' / 'endorsement']

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01   #Q03
      #Q07

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David Abulafia Nov 3   #405

WEB From reading this group, it sound like the ACS has open a hornets nest, particular after I read the past federal court judgement against the ACS. Even though I have been a member for 40+ years, I did not realise the ACS had such huge turnover. I am surprised the ACS is allowed to be a NFP. It certainly does not spend money on good Web site design. Most event booking sites have a feature to add the event to your calendar, but the ACS does not have this feature, and does not want one. The ACS does not lack the money to hire a web designer to implement this feature, it just lack the desire.

This looks like it is just going to be and another proverbal hit the fan event.

karl Nov 3   #407

Rimas wrote:

> Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted.

Can you make that available to us?

We probably need to establish a repository of material.

<u>SA NOT It is in my view inappropriate for Staff to represent ACS formally in these things</u>.

Denis Street FACS HLM Nov 3   #408

Hi Karl,

SA NOT This is news to me. <u>I agree that it is inappropriate for ACS staff to represent the ACS on these technical committees</u>.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4   #423

Re-from rod:-

SA> Absolutely agree ACS should represent on standards committees. My understanding from a former ACS delegate from ACS to Standards committees, that there was no support with expectation they would pay their own way to attend meetings. This gets expensive especially when O/S travel is involved, not to mention the time commitment from day job. I am not advocating this should be a paid gig but reimbursement of expense seems appropriate.
> Perhaps someone could clarify ?

I represented the ACS on the ISO osi standards (tc6, I think. It was the open systems 7-layer model. I specialised in level 7, the applications level) cttee and the Australian standards for the same standard from about 1976 to 1984 when the basic reference model was published.

It involved about 2-3 hours a week reading and responding to papers on the subject. I was never paid for this work and didn't expect to be paid. I had represented the BCS on that committee for the lower levels of the standard, then just the first 3 layers, from about 1968 till I left uk in 1974. I had represented the BCS on Cobol standards cttees prior to my involvement in communications. I wasn't paid for that either.

If there were costs of going to a meeting interstate my company paid and I fitted the visit in with work for my company.

I don't think standards reps should be paid but if their companies won't fund travel, I think the acs could be asked to cover that.

I was pleased to contribute as, to quote bacon, "I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto."

Its been my 'motto' throughout my working life.

I got tremendous benefit from being on those cttees. I was working with experts in their fields from all over the world. Watching and contributing to the development of those standards meant that I really understood what the standard entailed. I was also asked by many companies to explain the standard.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4   #424

Rimas said

> "I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses<u>. I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies</u>."

NOT Ouch. I didn't know that was happening. <u>That's just silly</u>. What else did our silly MCs decide?

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #428

I've been looking at my email archive for my period as VP Academic from Jan 2013 to Oct 2016.

NOT As I was given to understand, <u>the move to make the CEO the ACS Councillor on SA was because it was a corporate not technical role</u>.

However, <u>re the various technical committees</u> etc.

- <u>generally speaking, ACS members (not staff) continued to be our reps. on these</u>
- <u>in 2015 I had MC confirm that we would support approx. 10 of these at approx. $1.5K each (travel expenses) per annum</u> – admittedly not much, but the specific value proposition to ACS was (and remains – see below) hard to capture.

Managing the connection with SA was (unexpectedly) difficult:

- not easy to discover who was representing ACS
- not easy to discover what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input
- <u>not clear what ACS expectations were of ACS reps</u>.

<u>Q The overarching problem as I see it</u>, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, <u>is what is ACS's position?</u> Consider for example an ACS rep. on a group working on system requirements. I might take the position that a clear requirements documents should be the prerequisite to any procurement (development, purchase etc.), that agile development/codesign should be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Doubtless others in ACS would disagree. So how do we arrive at "the ACS position", for SA or for anything. (In the specific case of SA, the solution would have to involve ACS reps. reporting back to ACS on matters coming up at SA, and ACS giving guidance back to our reps.)

SA TECHI am definitely NOT objecting to ACS engaging with SA, nor objecting to ACS supporting same. But <u>unless ACS develops a reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters for input to SA, then I would find it hard to justify increased ACS investment in same</u>.

FAIL Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. <u>I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe</u> https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.) <u>How do we stop this from happening?</u> Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #429

To paraphrase my other on this just before …

<u>Q The problem is how to integrate these representations actually into the life of ACS and its membership?</u>

Maybe couple each with a SIG? But there still needs to be a link to/from the Society's central leadership in such matters e.g. the Technical Board (as things have been since Oct 2016)

David Abulafia Nov 4   #430

FAIL The CovidSafe was a very expensive disaster, some one may a lot of money for a garbage app. <u>If the CovidSafe app was an example of ACS professional standards, then ACS professional standards are very poor</u>

Jack Burton Nov 4   #432   [#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#P11]

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

FAIL > Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. <u>That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief</u> (and none of the signatories could have audited it,

because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because <u>we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible</u>.

<u>Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff)</u>.

NOTIf we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

<u>If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time</u> (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

FAILI am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

<u>The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016</u>.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to <u>this regressive step</u>, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but <u>very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership</u>, for example: **[#P00] [#P02] [#P07] [#P11] [#Q14]**

- reduction of Boards
- 2019 constitutional reform
- COVIDSafe endorsement
- <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

karl Nov 4   #434

FAILI took one look at the idea of Covidsafe and, delved back into my semi-conscious, my UG (diploma) was from RMIT in Communications Eng. (.Radio and Electronics and some telephony).

It takes about 30 secs to realise that the idea that you could accurately determine the distance between two mobile phones by measuring their BT signal strength.

Just think about the various scenarios. Two people with their phones in their back pockets facing each other. Two people separated by glass. Some one with a phone in a brief case.

There was even easily available research showing that it didn't work.

But, the obsession was with the privacy issues. Important and sexy, but, irrelevant if the concept doesn't work.

However, it may have been useful in super-spreader events. And, a security agency could leave a phone taped to a wall and track who was the vicinity.

The problem is NOT the range or the fact that the phones can detect each other, the problem is ... How far apart are they?

ACS spoke with two voices, the gungho major announcement, and, a technical brief which was more realistic.

Q But, this raises a possible policy issue for ACS: Should government IT projects go through a technical feasibility and quality appraisal by a statutory body before adoption?

3.   Does 'ICT' still encapsulate what ACS is about?   (16)

Tag – Mission and Purpose

YIT – yes to IT 4 + 2

YICT – yes to ICT 4 + 1

SUG – a suggestion 2 CBOK +1 and ACS and partner

DISC – discussion no suggestions 3

CHNG – needs to be changed but no suggestion 8

Q... – possible quote

15 people

Extra: <u>The ACS should be involved in the ethical and society issues of using IT, just because it can be done, should it be done.</u>

z6957315@... Oct 6   #47

DISC: NO SUGWe went through this back when computing alone was not enough; so we used 'IT' to also cover data and information systems.

Then communications became so heavily intertwined with computing and data that 'ICT' became the over-arching term.

But there are quite a few fields that are clamouring for attention, e.g.

actuators (means of having a direct impact on the world), and the broader areas of robotics, drones, mechatronics

data analysis / data science (or is that really 'just statistics'?)

AI, in the broad sense (incl. pattern-matching, natural language understanding, rule-based expert systems)

AI in the very narrow interpretation of machine learning (AI/ML), which of course intersects with data analysis

Should ACS be encompassing these fields? (And hence establishing pathways to professional membership for them)

If so, is 'ICT' a sufficient term to make sure we know they're within scope, and that other people know it too?

CHNG

ConM Oct 11   #77

YIT: is the term "ICT" even relevant in modern society? seems the modern spin is simply "IT" nowadays

+ 2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall Oct 11   #78

There is a lot of noise about this subject. Let's start with the concept of a professional society.Q <u>That is the society is made up of members who are involved in the practice of the profession. I.e those people that do more than just use the artifacts produced by said professionals</u>. This means that a knowledge worker is unlikely to qualify nor is a superuser of Excel.

QThe Society is should not be a computer club.

SUG CBOKThe body of knowledge of the ACS (if current) would provide a tool to differentiate the activities that would be relevant. The code of ethics and standards are equally important.

CBOK1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 11   #81

The Communications of ICT is even more relevant today than before; for two reasons from my perspective.

Given the increasing desire/confidence to use distributed systems it is a necessity that communications be delivered with the least amount of latency and the with viable scalability and resilience.

The communications between the nodes of the distributed system must be secure.

YICT I'd note that Security is a domain that the Current incarnation of ACS has shown considerable interest. I would like to see this complemented by a much more complete treatment of "Communications" in general.

YICT +1 person liked this

Tom Worthington Oct 12   #85   Edited Oct 30

On 11/10/21 9:07 am, concerned.member@acs.org.au wrote:

> is the term "ICT" even relevant in modern society? seems the modern spin is simply "IT" nowadays

YIT Even "IT" is a bit dated, being overtaken by "digital". But I can remember when we were arguing over EDP versus ADP. ;-)

CHNG Ours is not the only profession with this problem of names and roles.

In 2017 I was awarded a Master of Education (Distance Education). This year a paid a small amount for a new certificate which added "Open" & "Digital".
https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/2021/03/i-am-now-master-of-education-in-open.html

Beau.tydd@... Oct 12   #86

CHNG good point Tom and one being discussed in other discussions groups. The term Digital is hard to define and everyone has a view (which is not necessarily a bad thing). but we need to be forward thinking and leaders. we need to pick a name "IT, Tech, Digital, etc" and make it stick.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #100

YICT ICT is fine – there will always be blurring of scope regardless of what term is used. Digital can mean anything and, terms like AI / Robotics may be too specific, current hotspots and may lose meaning as the Industry evolves and Gartner hype invents more terms.

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #134   Edited Oct 30

YIT I prefer IT. There is so much we can do with that. Make IT good for you. Etc.

David Kong Oct 23   #187   Edited Oct 30

Yes The term 'ICT' do cater for future evolution of all 3 aspects (Information, Communication and Technology)

YICTSince the ACS is about the body of knowledge covering those 3 aspects, there is no need to change term.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 23   #188   Edited Oct 30

On Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 05:15 PM, <z6957315@...> wrote:

> We went through this back when computing alone was not enough; so we used 'IT' to also cover data and information systems.

> Then communications became so heavily intertwined with computing and data that 'ICT' became the over-arching term.

But there are quite a few fields that are clamouring for attention, e.g.

> - actuators (means of having a direct impact on the world), and the broader areas of robotics, drones, mechatronics

> - data analysis / data science (or is that really 'just statistics'?)

> AI, in the broad sense (incl. pattern-matching, natural language understanding, rule-based expert systems)

> AI in the very narrow interpretation of machine learning (AI/ML), which of course intersects with data analysis

> Should ACS be encompassing these fields? (And hence establishing pathways to professional membership for them)

> If so, is 'ICT' a sufficient term to make sure we know they're within scope, and that other people know it too?

NICT This is a very good question the we need to address, on whether or not the term or acronym ICT covers the range of computing related activities that the ACS is currently or in the future dealing and influencing.

My two-bobs worth is supporting coniseration of a broader scope for the ACS, drawing on a recently published Gartner article on the forthcoming wave of hyper-automation.

SUG Gartner are emphasising the importance of IT organisations doing a much better job of partnering with professionals outside of IT to automate business processes and data integration.

CHNG Gartner is defining this hyper-automation as "a business-driven, disciplined approach, and you can read / see more more detail within the following article, https://flip.it/JFIHHn

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #283

On Sat, Oct 23, 2021 at 09:32 AM, David Kong wrote:

> Communication and Technology

I tend to agree that ICT is sufficient. In some ways I prefer digital, but I also don't think it's too important. I think the terms are still widely enough used. Change the byline underneath to explain it further. ICT is encompassing.

YICT

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 31   #328

I would like to share a story about one of my early relatives who you will probably know, who curiously had the job title of a 'Computer', while working for the Royal Observatory in Greenwich.

From a person being called a Computer, it reflects a useful lesson on the change in terminology used to describe technology and use of the word Computer, compared with Telecommunications, ICT and digital technology terms that have evolved.

Due to his skills, expertise and reputation based on being a Computer in the 1850's, my relative was head hunted and recruited from England to come to Australia for a specialised role where he settled in Adelaide. From his job at the time as the South Australian Chief Observer and Superintendent of Telegraph, Charles Todd had been responsible for connecting a Telegraph from Adelaide to Port Augusta in 1965, enabling a connection with Victoria (reference: https://www.southaustralianhistory.com.au/overland.htm) and he and his team commenced work on the Overland Telegraph in September 1870. It connected with the undersea cable from Indonesia in 1872, connecting Australia to the UK.

I find Todd's story of being a Computer in the 1850's grounding, but also reflects the change in technology noting that the Overland Telegraph enabled communication from overseas from the 1870s until the beginning of world war II in 1935, repurposed to telephone traffic until the Overland Telegraph line was replaced with microwave telecommunication technology in the 1980s. The Overland Telegraph pioneered and enabled communication speeds not seen as possible, when compared to a mailed letter taking 2 to 3 months to get to go from Australia to UK by ship, with a wait of 4 to 5 months for a response.

As an aside in terms of naming, as part of building the ICT infrastructure through the Overland telegraph, one of Todd's team William Whitfield Mills named Alice Springs in honour of Todd's wife Alice.

CHNG

Robert Estherby Oct 31 #329

ICT is no longer broad-enough to remain in the objectives.

As previously said, startups, Data Science, and AI are just some of the area's that do not identify under this banner.

To 'lay-people' and other 'Technologist', they differentiate their work from IT and ICT. To them, that is the boring stuff that happens in Corporate IT.

I would strongly advise us to wrestle with this term - it is outdated today - in 50 years it will be archaic as referring to humans as 'Computers'.

If you think I'm wrong, watch anyone under the age of 35's face when you drop the term into the conversation and given the demographics of the industry they are who we need to be engaging.

DISC

Jack Burton Oct 31 #332

On Sat, 2021-10-30 at 16:15 -0700, Robert Estherby wrote:

> ICT is no longer broad-enough to remain in the objectives.

As previously said, startups, Data Science, and AI are just some of the area's that do not identify under this banner.

Why should "startups" in general (as opposed to, say "ICT startups") come under the ACS' bailiwick? We are not an institute of entrepreneurship and in my view we should not aim to be so in any way (except insofar as where there are elements of entrepreneurship that may be unique to those nascent organisations operating in the field of computing, it may make sense for us to provide PD for our members in those *specific* areas on intersection between the two fields).

Likewise "data science" is in my view quite clearly *not* something which should sit wholly within ACS' purview. IAPA themselves (the only one of the recent additions to ACS' stable that could conceivably be described as a professional society) did some work early on (long before the first of the acquisitions that led to their being subsumed by ACS) in attempting to define the profession of data science / analytics. Their conclusion was that it was a fusion of *multiple* professions, of which computing was only one (alongside e.g. statistics, operations research, psychometrics, etc. etc.).

AI on the other hand is most definitely a field of computing and as such I'd agree that it should remain with ACS' scope. It would be nice of course if ACS could get past the current popular fallacy that AI is somehow synonymous with ML (which is merely one of several sub-fields of AI), but I digress.

To 'lay-people' and other 'Technologist', they differentiate their work from IT and ICT. To them, that is the boring stuff that happens in Corporate IT.

"Technologist" is probably the least precise of all the terms we've experimented with over the years. To some people a "technologist" is a captain of industry, bringing technology (of any form -- not just ICT) to the masses and ideally making a pretty packet along the way. To others a "technologist" is merely a tradesman, a technician subordinate to the professionals in his field. And of course to yet others "technologist" could mean anything in between those two extremes.

CHNG I would strongly advise us to wrestle with this term - it is outdated today - in 50 years it will be archaic as referring to humans as 'Computers'.

If you think I'm wrong, watch anyone under the age of 35's face when you drop the term into the conversation and given the demographics of the industry they are who we need to be engaging.

To be frank, I think we need to move in the other direction. A lot of the arguments about what does or does not constitute a professional in our field (and about what the standards for entry to various grades should be) probably stem from the adoption of "IT" / "ICT" as our moniker ... especially given that in broader use those terms seem to apply more to the mere use of technology, whereas "computing" still has a clearer connection to its design, implementation, analysis & maintenance.

SUG I suggest that the acronym "ACS" is still the most appropriate one for us to use, but with one small change: the "C" should probably stand for "computing" rather than "computer".

It is also of course important to remember (and publicly to emphasise) that the "S" stands for "Society", although that has more relevance to the discussion about what a professional society should be than to this thread...

CHNG

David Abulafia Oct 31   #333

Q The computer and IT industry needs a professional society, and not just a user group.

You have creators and the users of Information Technology (IT).

The users can be separated into the implementors and the actual users of technology.

Every facet of our life and our society involves the use of computers and IT, so the ACS has a far more broad reach than any other professional society. These other professionals societies should be looking at the ACS for profession and ethical advice on the use of Computers and IT in their professions.

The ACS should be the professional body of the creators and the implementors of IT environments, mainly software side, since the cabling and engineering has the engineering society.

YIT : In fact it should just be IT and not ICT because the Communication is both part of the Information and part of the Technology.

The ACS should be involved in the ethical and society issues of using IT, just because it can be done, should it be done.

 Paul Bailes Oct 31   #335

Not necessarily "a" society – the Health Industry is served by multiple professions and professional bodies.

4. Professional Society and Public Good, (16 12 Responders)

DISC 2

RETR 7

SUG 6

SAFETY 1

PUB 5

YOUTH 1

FAIL 1

CORE 1

Peter Oct 12   #89

DISC How could/should the ACS contribute to broader society for a Public Good? Q Will the ACS be seen as a self-serving, self-promoting interest group, or will it have a broader "service" role to contribute? Will the ACS provide information and assistance to society beyond lobbying on policy to governments similar to other industry associations? As individuals/members we spend a lot of our professional careers helping to solve business or research needs with technological advances and solutions. Should the ACS spend time making similar contributions to societal issues? Has the ACS made a difference during the pandemic so far? Could it? Is there a role for ACS members as volunteers or is this a career/network building group? Can the ACS support both aspects?

RETR : While retiree's are mentioned in the consultation document as potential members, I've seen little consideration previously of that pathway and the possible value to the ACS and broader society. Is there an implicit assumption that Professional equates to knowledgeable AND EARNING? Should this be continued? Those who were previously qualified practitioners and members seem to fall off a cliff at retirement unless you were famous/active enough to become a Fellow. There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles; for example to promote early interest in computing during primary and secondary education or to help span the various digital divides?

The use of CPD as THE way of recognising continuing development may also be a bit financially self-serving for the ACS (a possible over-emphasis). Should this be a discrete business line? It may be seen as competing with commercial training organisations.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #136   Edited Oct 30

RETR Hi Peter,

I am a 'retiree' but still working with my local community to help with IT issues.

I'm a fellow of the BCS in addition to the ACS.

The BCS has a scheme whereby members who 'retire' can buy a continuing membership for a sum then go on involvement in all BCS activities. I've suggested this several times to ACS people but no-one seems interested in taking the suggestion up.

A scheme such as this has the advantage of keeping people within the ACS and raising a smallish revenue for the society.

frada.burstein@... Oct 19   #138

RETR Hi Ann,

As recent retiree myself, I totally agree with you. We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities. I am a member of the Accreditation Board and vey happy to be actively involved in that group, or take any other useful responsibility as required.

Having a special rate for membership was greatly appreciated. It was not mentioned in the ACS website - but it should be offered to anybody who is prepared to stay active and connected.

Thanks for your suggestion,

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19 #139

RETR I agree, Frada.

I have remained active in the ACS since retiring. Mentoring less experienced members and contributing our considerable knowledge of and experience in ACS (I have been a member since 1978   ) is worthwhile and rewarding.

There is a concessional membership for retired members that has a reduced membership fee:

RETR Retired: You are a Retired member if you have been a financial full fee paying member of the ACS continuously for 2 years and have retired from all regular employment. This is a permanent concession. Should you return to paid work you must notify the ACS in writing so that your retired membership status can be changed. Normal benefits and services apply.

Peter Oct 20 #150

Thanks Paul, Yes, the retired concession will be useful now that I'm aware of it.

RETR SUG DISC I've been volunteer mentoring girls with robotics in high school to improve STEM awareness and hopefully open up ICT careers for them and balance the diversity a bit better. But this is not through anything that the ACS is part of, I just got into a discussion with a teacher one day. I guess it's the lack of discussion/promotion/awareness in this area, amongst others, from the ACS that I am noticing. I think these sort of gaps need raising as part of the discussion for our new constitution and strategies (professionalism and public good). That way the group can have a more open discussion about its purpose, and members can make choices.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 21 #159

RETR YOUTH Hi Peter Well done on your volunteering here. This is exactly the sort of thing that ACS should be supporting from a broad base. This would build positive outcomes and a recognition of ACS among young people that will fuel engagement with ACS and promote life-long awareness/belonging as a professional member.   I believe some membership category for K-12 students is appropriate - maybe 'cadet member' at no cost. At the moment 'student' is the only option for those >16.

Ann Moffatt Oct 21 #161   Edited Oct 30

I agree rob,

There are so many bright young people under 16 who are vvv competent.

kenjprice@... Oct 26 #211

RET The role of retired members in mentoring and outreach is one way the ACS can contribute to public good. However there are other ways that I feel should be considered.

PUB The ACS should, as a national professional body, have a positive public presence.

An example - I asked a couple of random friends about what they thought the ACS might do for them. A couple mentioned the abundant phone scams where text and voice messages appear to come from someone's mobile phone number, and contacting the number confirms it's either inactive or some random number. Their question was "how can scammers impersonate a phone number, and how is ACS involved in getting this loophole fixed?"

I could find no answer on ACS website other than some general involvement in technical standards development.

Q But to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.

PUB It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.

1 person liked this

Peter Oct 27   #213

SUG Very true, phone and SMS scams are an area where the ACS could make public good offerings. I could also see the ACS possibly involving itself in topics like e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Maybe these sort of topics could be objectives for the labs if we keep them.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #225   Edited Oct 30

I agree with these comments

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #226

I don't

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #256

Can I suggest another angle for public good?

SUG PUB FAIL We see government constantly failing with IT. What is the cost to date of CovidSafe, and the benefit? How many so=called IT projects has the Victorian Auditor General called out this year? The ACS should be standing up and screaming about the waste and cost top the community, and pushing government to get it right.

But of course, these problems are all problems of governance, and the ACS as it stands now knows absolutely nothing about governance.

How many of you know that the ACS was a significant contributor to the development of ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation? How many of you are surprised that the ACS does not make use of, and certainly does not conform to that standard? Q How can the ACS credibly criticise government, when it can't get its own governance and use of IT right?

To contribute to the public good in a significant way, the ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right.

David Abulafia Oct 28   #274   Edited Oct 30

Mark what you say is so true. It sounds like ACS belongs to the do as I say and not as I do group. QThe ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #342

Bravo Mark.

PUB ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).

FWIW I co-authored (with others including Nick Tate) a proposal for a "Discipline of Software Engineering Forensics Analysis" (http://www.scitepress.org/Papers/2014/49700/49700.pdf). Again ideally, ACS would be a good partner, indeed host, for the realisation of same. If the current exercise results in an ACS that could be entrusted with this mission, I will be happy to re-engage.

SUG PUB YES I **agree** with the focus on the benefit to society and the suggested Mission and Purpose statements **with the exception of (7). Benefits to the public are critical but not the reference to benefits to members.**

Great care is needed with the wording of (7) as there is a big difference between 'the benefits of being a member' and the 'delivery of benefits to members', certainly at a constitutional level. **A NFP cannot give benefits to its members**, especially if members are on the governing body'. **Regulatory authorities have a problem with this**. I have had first-hand experience with this and the need to restructure a NFP to accommodate this aspect, causing lots of angst.

CORE I have just been looking at the ACS' entry in the ACNC Charity Register and **there is no mention of the objects of the ACS in the governing documents**. I have also just been looking at the current set of ACS Rules and **there is no mention of the purpose or objects of the ACS in those Rules. These objects should be embedded in the top level governing document**, ie, the rules, as the governing framework for everything else that follows. This is fundamental – how did that happen? Looking further afield I noticed that statement of objects is a standalone document with no reference to the source or authority for the objects.

This must be corrected and the Mission and Purpose of the ACS must be firmly embedded in the governing constitutional document.

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

SAFETY SUGThe mission statement needs to be altered to read as follows:-
"**to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology** ~~resources~~ **ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia**".

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:
- advancement of professional excellence in ICT;
- furthering ICT study, science and application;
- promotion, development and monitoring of competence in the practice of ICT;
- definition and promotion of the maintenance of standards of knowledge in ICT;
- support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters, **aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia** ;
- extension of the knowledge and understanding of ICT; and
- promotion of the code of ethics
- promoting gender balance and social diversity
- **ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**

There seems to be some confusion between the "Secondary Objects" and the "Purposes"

I would add to Purpose (8) so that it reads..
(8) The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decision makers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, promotion of Australian owned creation of ICT products and services, and related matters.
In doing so, recognizing that ICT is a maturing are of human activity with standards of practice and competencies.
Of particular importance are security, safety and the user experience. See KR 204 and KR205

I would also add to Purpose (8)..
ACS must ensure its interactions with its members create "good experiences". The interaction with the members goes beyond the "value proposition".

SUG Q Also emphasising the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals will play in shaping the future of the country and need for a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology is always used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels

1. 5. "Do we want to be called engineers?   (16 repsonses 9 responders)

UNPACK   1
ID   6
HIST   1
LEAD   1
PG   3
NO   4
YES (s part)   2

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 30   #290

UNPACK Thank you Adrian for collating the temporal listing of Australian Computer Society website statements, and drawing attention to the poor or complete lack of definition from 2017 onwards.

Q It is clear there is a combination of serious issues here that need to be addressed as a matter of importance. This includes the range of ICT Professions that the Society is seeking to engage and support, whether the scope of membership categories aligns to contemporary and arguably growing ICT enabled or driven areas needing skilled professional and expertise.

Areas like Blockchain, Cyber Security, Data Analytics and AI/ Machine Learning for example, all rely on underpinning and effective ICT.

LEAD In reflection, I believe that what caused the 2017 website change to no longer clearly convey the profession on our website and also adopting a non descript 'ACS' logo that people had/have difficulty identifying with,, was played out in the 2019 Federal Court judgement, reflecting poor and inappropriate leadership.

Importantly as reflected in many comments posted in these Group posts, the essential need to urgently address the poor leadership and resultant behaviours, culture and practices is and has been a key and essential priority focus for both the current voluntary elected leadership, but also the committed and renewed paid staff.

Whilst it can be argued strongly that the leadership under Ian Oppermann and others in leadership positions within the Society, have been focused on proactively addressing the serious concerns raised from the Federal Court judgement and importantly on behalf of members, what led to this occuring.

ID Q The problem of a lack of clear identity for the Society is one such outcome from decisions made and the approaches taken from leadership now departed. The hard work is being done to rebuild trust of the members and wider stakeholders. This is based on respect and while there is a lot to be done, I am pleased there is healing occurs across the ACS, as we work together to ensure the culture, practices (policies, technology platforms, behaviours, expectations, member engagement) is focused on meeting member's needs and the wider communities expectations for ICT Professionals.

Therefore, as indicated in Paul Bailes comments, we need to work together, with the Society having come to terms with overlapping organisations interests in ICT,. As quoted by a previous ACS President Brenda Aynsley, who often expressed the importance for the "ACS to partner for success".

Rimas Skeivys Oct 27   #219   Edited Oct 30

ID On the professions website ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals".

Are we happy with this?

If not, what should we be called?

Adrian Porteous Oct 27 #220   Edited Oct 30

Hi Rimas

Good pick up!

ID HIST We seem to be a bit conflicted with our identity.

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS is all about. There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'. In fact, there is no clue to this being even a Professional Society. If the visitor persists, they might try to find some form of 'About' tab; there isn't one. They might notice that the most significant tab, largest and centred, is 'Migration Skills Assessment'.

This shyness was not always the case; we have in previous years been very upfront and clear about our role on the ACS home page:

1996

The ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields. Established in 1966, the ACS has over 15,000 members and on a per capita basis is one of the largest computer societies in the world.

1998

The ACS as the recognised association for IT professionals has become the public voice of the IT professional and the guardian of professional ethics and standards. The Society has a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of IT.

2000

the society for information technology professionals

2003

ACS Advancing IT Professionals

2009 through 2012

ICT Professionals Shaping Our Future

2015

Inspiring Success (comment: Huh?)

2017 through current day

nothing!

Why the change? Was this a considered decision of Management Committee? Does it reflect that membership accounts for only 7% of revenue and other 'Business Lines' dominate?

The ACS' Rules (2010), Regulations (2011) and Core Body of Knowledge (2019) are quite explicit on the ACS being a society for 'ICT Professionals'. Our casual website visitor would need some curiosity and persistence delving to the 'Governance' tab at the bottom of the page to find these documents, and to know what they were looking for in the first place.

A question that has not been asked in the current process (at least that I can find) is:

QUERY 'Should the Constitutional Reform Process start with the current ACS foundational documents (Objects, Rules and Regulations) ?'

If the answer is "Yes", we are reforming the society based on its current foundations.

If the answer is "No", maybe we should be explicit in acknowledging that we are creating a 'new' society.

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #221   Edited Oct 30

ID NO There's a great deal of ICT professional activity that objectively merits the "engineering" distinction (and to which practitioners of same should at least aspire). Some of this activity is recognised as such by the established Engineering profession (i.e. EA). To cut a long story short, the technical diversity in "ICT" means that ACS is going to have to come to terms with the organisations with which its interests overlap (as partners not rivals).

But …

PG I fear from this discussion that many of us would accept as "ICT professional" (or whatever) as including activity that is hard to recognise as "engineering" – happy to be persuaded otherwise.

Also, I I fear from this discussion that at least some would like ACS to include, as professional members, individuals whose background stretches the distinction between "profession" and "trade". Again to cut a long story short, ACS would be a strange "professional association" to include as members individuals without a degree-level qualification in the field (as characterised by the association's BOK etc.)

David Abulafia Oct 27 #222   Edited Oct 30

ID Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live and have effects on all professional services. So the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects. From design to implement.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #223   Edited Oct 30

Some very good points here

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #227

I agree with "Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live [sic] and have effects on all professional services" but the "the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects" looks like a non sequitur to me. Why "does" or even "should"? Apologies if I am jumping to conclusions – are you suggesting that "trade" members should be MACS rather than AACS?

ID PG hope to have more to say about the challenge to ACS that arises from the breadth of its interests, but for now may I share may fears that if ACS embraces sub-degree-qualified individuals as (professional grade) members, then our "professional" standing is threatened. (E.g. the Law Society does not seem to allow paralegals as members; and let's not get started about the exclusiveness of the various medical professional bodies).

David Abulafia Oct 27 #232   Edited Oct 30

PGNon degree people should not be professional grades, but non degree technician should be involved somehow with ACS.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #233   Edited Oct 30

Normally the board hired professional people to look after the day to day operations and legal requirements and the board provides direction, only the treasury really needs accounting skills to make sure the finance employees are not trying to con any one.

Ann Moffatt Oct 28 #254   Edited Oct 30

MNOS I think we should go back to the 1996 version. Including being honest about the number of members we have. Its about 14/15000.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #265

I agree, Paul B.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #275   Edited Oct 30

WEB The ACS web site can always not very good. The ACS should be embrass by its web site and facility's the web site offers. If the ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields, then the ACS should has the most modern, the best IT facilities, with the most amazing web site, BUT it does not.

The ACS web site should a combination of 1996 and 1998 right on the front landing page.

The ACS need to starts with foundation documents and go back to grass roots. The only reason the ACS makes money is to cover costs of the support of it members.

What is the business product lines the ACS offers to have such a hugh turnover.

Tom Worthington Oct 30   #289

On 27/10/21 11:13 am, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> On the professions website ... ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals". Are we happy with this? ...

NO No, I am not comfortable being called an engineer, as I have not been admitted into that profession, and real engineers may get upset. I teach engineers, but I teach them computer stuff, as I am a computer professional.

Ali Shariat Oct 30   #291

Hi Tom

YES I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. I learned to do microchip chip design programming and solving mechanical and chemical problems using electronic concepts. There should be no discredit to include the title of Engineering in computers.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #338

110% agree Ali!

YES Indeed, what aspects of development (analysis, design, implementation, maintenance) of computer-based information systems (broad term, including embedded systems etc. etc. etc.) wouldn't we want developed to the same "engineering" standards as roads & bridges, the electricity generation and supply network, etc.

EA's acceptance of "Software" and "Computer" as "Engineering" qualifiers (alongside "Civil", "Electrical" etc.) back in the 1980s-90s remains an under-exploited asset to the professionalisation of ICT.

Tom Worthington 08:46   #373

NO On 30/10/21 10:10 am, Ali Shariat wrote:

> I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. ...

Ali, many of us span multiple disciplines: you computing and engineering, me computing and education. I don't think ACS can claim to cover professional areas.

Tag Consolidation
#Nature – 4 Topics – 22 Posts + 0 Other Messages   +0   +0
The ACS's Nature (s.1 of Consltn Doc #1)
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – NIL

ACS is a Professional Society   (1)

z6957315@... Oct 2   #17

Yes, the Consultation Document prettymuch says it. ACS is a professional society, and needs to stay that way.

1 person liked this

Professional Society and Public Good,   (14)

Peter Oct 12   #89

How could/should the ACS contribute to broader society for a Public Good? Will the ACS be seen as a self-serving, self-promoting interest group, or will it have a broader "service" role to contribute? Will the ACS provide information and assistance to society beyond lobbying on policy to governments similar to other industry associations? As individuals/members we spend a lot of our professional careers helping to solve business or research needs with technological advances and solutions. Should the ACS spend time making similar contributions to societal issues? Has the ACS made a difference during the pandemic so far? Could it? Is there a role for ACS members as volunteers or is this a career/network building group? Can the ACS support both aspects?

While retiree's are mentioned in the consultation document as potential members, I've seen little consideration previously of that pathway and the possible value to the ACS and broader society. Is there an implicit assumption that Professional equates to knowledgeable AND EARNING? Should this be continued? Those who were previously qualified practitioners and members seem to fall off a cliff at retirement unless you were famous/active enough to become a Fellow. There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles; for example to promote early interest in computing during primary and secondary education or to help span the various digital divides?

The use of CPD as THE way of recognising continuing development may also be a bit financially self-serving for the ACS (a possible over-emphasis). Should this be a discrete business line? It may be seen as competing with commercial training organisations.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #136   Edited Oct 30

Hi Peter,

I am a 'retiree' but still working with my local community to help with IT issues.

I'm a fellow of the BCS in addition to the ACS.

The BCS has a scheme whereby members who 'retire' can buy a continuing membership for a sum then go on involvement in all BCS activities. I've suggested this several times to ACS people but no-one seems interested in taking the suggestion up.

A scheme such as this has the advantage of keeping people within the ACS and raising a smallish revenue for the society.

frada.burstein@... Oct 19   #138

Hi Ann,

As recent retiree myself, I totally agree with you. We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities. I am a member of the Accreditation Board and vey happy to be actively involved in that group, or take any other useful responsibility as required.

Having a special rate for membership was greatly appreciated. It was not mentioned in the ACS website - but it should be offered to anybody who is prepared to stay active and connected.

Thanks for your suggestion,

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19   #139

I agree, Frada.

I have remained active in the ACS since retiring. Mentoring less experienced members and contributing our considerable knowledge of and experience in ACS (I have been a member since 1978   ) is worthwhile and rewarding.

There is a concessional membership for retired members that has a reduced membership fee:

Retired: You are a Retired member if you have been a financial full fee paying member of the ACS continuously for 2 years and have retired from all regular employment. This is a permanent concession. Should you return to paid work you must notify the ACS in writing so that your retired membership status can be changed. Normal benefits and services apply.

Peter Oct 20   #150

Thanks Paul, Yes, the retired concession will be useful now that I'm aware of it.

I've been volunteer mentoring girls with robotics in high school to improve STEM awareness and hopefully open up ICT careers for them and balance the diversity a bit better. But this is not through anything that the ACS is part of, I just got into a discussion with a teacher one day. I guess it's the lack of discussion/promotion/awareness in this area, amongst others, from the ACS that I am noticing. I think these sort of gaps need raising as part of the discussion for our new constitution and strategies (professionalism and public good). That way the group can have a more open discussion about its purpose, and members can make choices.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 21   #159

Hi Peter Well done on your volunteering here. This is exactly the sort of thing that ACS should be supporting from a broad base. This would build positive outcomes and a recognition of ACS among young people that will fuel engagement with ACS and promote life-long awareness/belonging as a professional member.   I believe some membership category for K-12 students is appropriate - maybe 'cadet member' at no cost. At the moment 'student' is the only option for those >16.

Ann Moffatt Oct 21   #161   Edited Oct 30

I agree rob,

There are so many bright young people under 16 who are vvv competent.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #211

The role of retired members in mentoring and outreach is one way the ACS can contribute to public good. However there are other ways that I feel should be considered.

The ACS should, as a national professional body, have a positive public presence.

An example - I asked a couple of random friends about what they thought the ACS might do for them. A couple mentioned the abundant phone scams where text and voice messages appear to come from someone's mobile phone number, and contacting the number confirms it's either inactive or some random number. Their question was "how can scammers impersonate a phone number, and how is ACS involved in getting this loophole fixed?"

I could find no answer on ACS website other than some general involvement in technical standards development.

But to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.

It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.

1 person liked this

Peter Oct 27   #213

Very true, phone and SMS scams are an area where the ACS could make public good offerings. I could also see the ACS possibly involving itself in topics like e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Maybe these sort of topics could be objectives for the labs if we keep them.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #225   Edited Oct 30

I agree with these comments

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #226

I don't

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #256

Can I suggest another angle for public good?

We see government constantly failing with IT. What is the cost to date of CovidSafe, and the benefit? How many so=called IT projects has the Victorian Auditor General called out this year? The ACS should be standing up and screaming about the waste and cost top the community, and pushing government to get it right.

But of course, these problems are all problems of governance, and the ACS as it stands now knows absolutely nothing about governance.

How many of you know that the ACS was a significant contributor to the development of ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation? How many of you are surprised that the ACS does not make use of, and certainly does not conform to that standard? How can the ACS credibly criticise government, when it can't get its own governance and use of IT right?

To contribute to the public good in a significant way, the ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right.

David Abulafia Oct 28   #274   Edited Oct 30

Mark what you say is so true. It sounds like ACS belongs to the do as I say and not as I do group.

The ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #342

Bravo Mark.

ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).

FWIW I co-authored (with others including Nick Tate) a proposal for a "Discipline of Software Engineering Forensics Analysis" (http://www.scitepress.org/Papers/2014/49700/49700.pdf). Again ideally, ACS would be a good partner, indeed host, for the realisation of same. If the current exercise results in an ACS that could be entrusted with this mission, I will be happy to re-engage.

Exemplar Peer Organisation (5)

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #263   Edited Oct 30

I was asked about exemplar constitutions for a Company Limited by Guarantee. Well, how about we go one step further and look at a contemporary organisation that is not just a Company Limited by Guarantee, but is also gleefully eating the ACS breakfast, lunch and dinner in the health space.

Every person involved in this debate shoudl look outward a bit more.

Start with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

They've even got a website that puts the ACS to shame!

Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) It's accessible in just 2 clicks from their landing page.

Their website puts the ACS to shame.

And don't forget to check out the credentials of their CEO!

Ann Moffatt Oct 29   #276   Edited Oct 30

Thanx mark,

I agree. The ACS website is a disgrace for an enterprise that holds itself up to represent the profession.

Lets spend some of our large bag of money on getting a decent website rather than sending execs to WEF meetings.

Roger Clarke Oct 29   #278

Mark Toomey wrote:

> Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

> Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) ...

Thanks Mark.

But I can only detect one provision that's other than mainstream.

For example, re member-numbers to call a General Meeting, cl.15(2)(b) merely refers to Corps Act s.249F (5%).

And there are no occurrences in the document of 'transparency' or 'consultation', or member 'approval', 'ratification' or 'endorsement'.

The exception is:

28. Direct Votes

(a) The Board will determine from time to time if Voting Members are entitled to vote by a Direct Vote on a matter or a resolution ...

But that empowers the Board, not the members, and the members can't force the provision to be invoked.

So in what way does the AIHD Constitution "assure the members of better control"?

BTW, I fully agree with your remarks about the web-site problem   (:-(}

David Abulafia Oct 29   #280   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with Ann

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #343

Roger, all.

First, apologies for the delay in replying. I have no power, no phone and no internet due to the storms on Thursday and Friday morning. Unlikely to have anything until Monday at best, unless I drive to somewhere that the phone can connect. Who knows when this little contribution will be sent.

So you seem terribly worried that a clg based governing body can run riot. I guess that's fair, as the current model allowed MC to run riot. In fact, MC has been ignoring members for years, and has been totally unaccountable.

In the AIDH model, which is quite unremarkable and very consistent with the model I used for the digital leadership institute, the board is accountable to members normally through the election process, in which all financial members vote according to their individual preference. Directors who do not have the interests of members foremost will lose their seats.

The second form of accountability is the special general meeting, which can be called by members, regardless of whether the board wants it to not. The constitution defines the exact rules for special general meetings, such as how many members are required to call the meeting. Special General Meetings are generally used to address major concerns with board behaviour.

But the above is a somewhat nuclear approach. Smart companies have highly developed methods of addressing and solving problems. Many use a quality management system aligned to ISO 9000. It beggars belief that the ACS does not have an ISO 9000 QMS, but then again, given the raft of failure over the years, it should be no real surprise.

OH, if anyone feels that I have missed something, just remember that I assess on hard evidence, not on bluster. The ACS may have something it calls a QMS, but there is no evidence of any such thing that actually works.

Because of the storm related issues, this is probably my last contribution to this stage of the process. I look forward to contributing in the next stages too.

What is the Business Proposal / Strategy / Master Plan for the ACS, or whatever else it should be called? (2)

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #365

I'm back from the dark world of no electricity (I have a generator for that) and no Internet - the phone service came back 3 hours ago, and I have been catching up ever since.

In 2012, in the final session of the Company Director's Conference, I learned that members present thought only 10% of those present were competent to lead a digital era company, AND they all thought the number needed ot be 90%. My first tentative conversations with ACS stalwarts of the time revealed a total lack of interest - "We are about technology, not business" was the essence of the responses I received.

So I set out to create an organisation that would fill that gap. It took six years to get the Digital Leadership into flight in Victoria, but the workload was too much for volunteers, I was ill and unable to continue in the essential galvanising leadership role, and then COVID came along to maximise the failure.

During the six years, with various people who shared the vision, we developed numerous iterations of a Master Plan, which brought together all the essential elements of what we set out to build. It spoke in plain English and pictures of how we intended to operate as a national organisation in the digital era, progressively expanding internationally. It explored memberships and qualifications, events and services, relationships with industry and academia, and so on.

We need a Master Plan for the ACS. One that provides the total reset that, through the conversations on this site, has become clearly essential. Preparing a Master Plan fits the stages of work required fro the CRWG, and will provide a framework in which ACS members can comprehensively debate and settle on the future vision for every currently conceivable aspect of the organisation.

I'm now going to attempt the amazing feat of putting the now defunct Digital Leadership Institute Master Plan up as a file which can be accessed by those involved in this debate. I suspect that I will have ot come back after doing so to provide the relevant link.

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #367

As expected...

The DLI Master Plan is now at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/DLI%20Master%20Plan%20V20170404.pdf.

I do hope that it is useful.

Tag Consolidation
#P00 – 7 Topics – 97 Posts + 3 Other Messages   +7   +8
Principle 0 - Centrality of the Professional Membership
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p. 20-22

Industry associations   (17)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #63   Edited Oct 30

Frankly - a professional society and ACS should host members not organisations.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 12   #87

ACS should be engaged and have a relationship to other industry associations. We do not live in a bubble and need to be a trusted voice.

1 person liked this

z6957315@... Oct 13   #95   Edited Oct 13

On Tue, Oct 12, 2021 at 10:17 AM, <Beau.tydd@...> wrote:

> relationship to other industry associations

I agree with both 'people not organisations as members', and 'ACS having engagement and relationships to industry associations'. An effective society and economy needs both kinds of organisations. The question for me is how that can be achieved.

Historically, there have been times and issues when professional societies and industry associations were in lock-step and even arm-in-arm; and times and issues when their views have been very different, and even diametrically opposed.

So I see the need for sufficient distance, and sufficient closeness; and I have difficulty seeing how either can exist within the other. Nor can I see how both could co-exist within a combined entity.

Maybe share a common services company; maybe be co-located on adjacent floors, in smaller cities even in the same premises. But any closer than that compromises the freedom of action of both organisations.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #102

ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (Organisation) body and membership must meet professional standards.   ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain unless congruent with member principles. ACS should not be acquiring industry associations and should divest those that compromise the member ethos.

The ACS entity portfolio needs review as ADMA and ACS Labs/RCL and maybe others that we are unsure of, do not align well in a NFP or with the professional member. The $1mill+ loss by ADMA in 2019/20 is a further distraction away from the member focus. Further, ADMA members are very different to ACS professional members.

3 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15   #106

I agree with Rod.

We are a professional association that represents ICT professionals and sets standards that those claiming to be ICT professionals should meet.

We are NOT an industry association. That said, of course we should have an open and cooperative relationship with ICT industry associations so that we are well informed but we should not be driven by them.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18 #130

Yes, I can't see how the ACS can have both professional individuals and other organisations as members. There are a plethora of industry associations out there serving particular organisations/employers, etc., they really have no place within the ACS.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 20 #148

In principle I agree with Rod, Paul and Aubrey. However, having made the acquisitions and formed the relationships; a way needs to be found to maintain that Arms-Length relationship. I see this as a central matter of governance within the new Constitution.

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #152   Edited Oct 30

Why have ANY relationship with the entities we bought. I think they should be sold asap.

Paul Bailes Oct 20 #153   Edited Oct 30

With respect, I don't follow Devidra's logic: having mistakenly acquired business(es) considered to be inimical to ACS's mission and identity, why should ACS be constrained to retain such (a) millstone(s)?

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 20 #154

if they are not part of ACS core business why keep them

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #155   Edited Oct 30

I totally agree David.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #156   Edited Oct 30

I fully agree Paul.

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 20 #157

I also agree with Paul B.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #162

We can be a parent company with other associations and companies running under our umbrella. Some of them, like the Labs, might want to run in a For Profit manner, others focus on Members. But it would be a shame to let associations disintegrate because they don't have someone to work with, or claim affiliation to. We took some in that would have dissolved over the past year or so. It's good to be able to keep them going under their own name, but with shared benefits for our members.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 23   #191

I hear what most of you are saying; i.e. that they should be divested. If I were asked to vote for these acquisitions, in the first place, would've had similar thoughts. But that's not where we are now; and I'd like to see whether these entities can benefit members, in an ICT sense.

I see the following; if I were to take a positive view of 2 Business-Lines.

Significant amount of Data-Science in organisations is oriented towards Marketing of Products/Services to Customers based upon their behaviour. From that point of view there is some possibility of enhancing Member-skills in Data-Science if they are exposed a-priori what they may be required to deliver, via ADMA.

The innovative activities of ACS-Labs could be designed as a skills upgrade opportunity for Members, to engage in their innovative activities.

For the fruition of both of these it is necessary to advertise the possibilities and assess and generate some interest among Members. It is a given that they will be competitive and Members will need to have a background/interest to benefit, With the ACS-Labs there would be some confidentiality criteria as well.

I have seen nothing like this, advertised by the ACS, at all. In fact the advertising by ACS of these acquisitions was much lower-key, when compared to it's favoured themes such as Reimaginations, Skill-shortages etc,

The possible ways in which these Business-lines can assist Member upskilling should be carefully set-out and agreed with the respective boards/managements before any decision to proceed these within the ACS umbrella.

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #270

The Australian Institute of Digital Health has a brilliant model for engaging with organisations in a membership context.

See my recent post on exemplars.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #296

The current purchases aside, I think our constitution/structure should have the capacity to address this issue. It may be appropriate for the Society in the future to amalgamate with an industry association and require them to adhere to values.

As a principle, I think we should have the capability to do this and look to successful integration in other societies constitutions.

Distinguish Professional from Supportive Levels of Membership (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 3   #23   Edited Oct 30

We should make it clear to all whom ACS has verified as being a member of the ICT profession at a professional level and who is just an interested and supportive member.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 19   #135

agree Jacky. the "professional level" criteria does open up a few other discussions. for example how should people working in emerging tech be classified (i.e. roles that do not qualify for professional status for example someone working on blockchain development may not have any qualifications and have limited years of experience but are still a professional in the industry)

Ul Oct 22   #171

we should have more tiers of membership and some of them should have criteria allowing for different ICT professions/specialities, bearing in mind that members can have multiple disciplines. We should also acknowledge that some members are C-Level executives and business owners which puts them in a different category again.

Adrian Porteous Oct 23   #189

We already have four grades of membership: Associate, Member, Senior Member and Fellow. The last three comprise the Professional Division. What would more accomplish?

Recognising specialisms is a worthy objective, however these are specialisms within a professional society, and not attributes of organisational heirarchy. A C-Level Exec may have one of more ICT professional specialisms, or have none (similarly a hospital CEO may also be a doctor and be a member of the AMA and/or Specialist College - may be just as worthy if not medically qualified, but then not eligible for membership of AMA or College).

Ann Moffatt Oct 25   #196   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Adrian but would also like to see a 'grade' for pc techs.

The BCS has RITTECH. https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/

To quote the BCS website it is to:-

"Show that you're a competent, trusted digital professional by validating your technical skills and appearing on the public RITTech register.

So many small businesses rely on PCs these days yet there is no 'qualification' to show competency. Most PC techs are not qualified and this lack of a 'standard' is very detrimental to keeping small business running.

Adrian Porteous Oct 25   #197   Edited Oct 30

Thanks Ann.

I agree with your additional grade suggestion. Not only for PC techs, but the whole gamut of hardware service and support.

1 person liked this

Aubrey Oct 26   #200

On Mon, Oct 25, 2021 at 07:01 AM, Ann Moffatt wrote:

> Most PC techs are not qualified

Not sure where you get that idea from Ann? I would say that as many PC techs are qualified as are other roles in IT. There are many TAFE qualifications in this field plus industry certifications such as CompTIA and Microsoft, Linux, etc. At least one university here in WA incorporates PC hardware and software units in their computer systems degree. There was a second university here some years ago offering similar but the units were canned because they were too popular and too "vocational" - needless to say there are many desktop support technicians with degrees - so is an IT professional defined by their qualifications and training, or just the role they are performing at the time .. or both?

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26   #204

A 'Cadet' grade (or similar) should be considered to encourage young people in K-12, but particularly 10, 11, 12, when they are commencing study related to our body of knowledge. This cohort will become the next generation of professionals and I believe ACS has a role to nurture their interests. It would be open to any student studying ICT oriented studies and be an active ACS program. No fees are proposed and would also engage secondary level ICT teachers and provide a pathway to the profession. Current R&R restrict membership to >16.

2 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 26   #205

This is a great idea, Rod.

We need to make ICT more attractive to 10,11 & 12 students and teachers.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #208

The suggestion of a membership grade aimed at year 10/11/12 students is interesting. However we'd need to ascertain exactly what ACS can do for them, and in what way this membership might nurture their interests. Past successes include special interest groups in areas like robotics, and hosting of competitions. ACS resources like the Women in ICT videos were valuable in exposing students to possible career paths, and we could do more in getting students, their parents and the wider community aware of the scope and opportunities in IT careers.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #214   Edited Oct 30

Hi Aubrey,

I'm well aware of the TAFE offerings as I was on the board of nsw TAFE and chair of the north Sydney institute. I am aware of the Microsoft and other vendor training offerings. However, I stand by my comment that most IT techs offering services for pc support are autodidacts and totally without formal training, esp here in rural australia. The usual tack is that after charging $50 an hour for several hours the most common advice to their customer is "go to Harvey Norman and buy a new computer'.

The BCS has tapped into this need. I think the ACS should too.

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #292

A further term that's been suggested in other threads as being applicable as a Member-category is 'Practitioner'.

This could be defined in various ways, but one argument is that a person may meet the threshold for MACS, but have never demonstrated that they've achieved the requirements of CP.

Should ACS permit people to become MACS without CP, calling them a Practitioner, but not (yet) a (Certified) Professional?

It would be entirely reasonable for MACS (with or without CP) to be voting members.

Whereas future joiners at the AACS level would not be voting members.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #297

As a principle within the discussion of the constitution i think;

that we need to have professional members grades and associates grades.

the majority of roles on the board should be restricted to professional members, as should voting rights.

Professional members must have either recognised skills and relevant experience or be a pioneer of good standing in an emerging area. All must adhere to the code of ethics.

Associate members may have an interest, relevant experience, be an untrained manager working the ICT industry or be a student.

Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice (11)

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #105

R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained AND enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #193

The degeneration of the role of the branches is not at all aligned with Member interests. The state/territory branch should be the mechanism thet addresses the requirements of the state based membership.

The objectives of Principles #3 and #10 must be truly manifest at a branch-level.

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@... Oct 26   #206

Agree. Additionally, if BEC should act as a conduit of their members. Then, there should be equal representation of members of all ages, across industries for each state.

1 person liked this

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #284

I agree Jia.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #300

Controversially, I disagree.

The branches are not providing governance value. Under a company limited by guarantee, this would be further weakened as the constitution will place the authority with the board.

In my opinion, the ACS's precocial and academic factionalism have not been serving the interests of the society and we have been less effective as a result.

I think we need to take forward the principles of engagement and consultation. I also think we need to have some form of local engagement for developing activities - but let's use this as an opportunity to reimagine a new structure that potentially creates communities of interest, rather than local communities.

1 person liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #301

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 04:40 PM, Robert Estherby wrote:

> *take forward the principles of engagement and consultation.* ...

> ... communities of interest, rather than local communities.

How do you see this working, Robert?

Are you aware of any way in which ACS has been supporting communications among dispersed members?

During the fracas of late 2019, it was impossible for members who were opposed to the motion being put to the AGM to communicate their arguments to other members.

Then, when the CRWG was setting up this Online Forum, the ACS was unable to provide infrastructure to support it.

So CRWG used an appropriate, commercially-available service, outside the acs.org.au domain, to deliver it.

ne approach whereby ACS could support dispersed communities of interest would be to provide infrastructure, establish a Participation Guide / Code of Conduct such as the one we set up at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/CRWG-CodeofConduct.pdf , and enable any organiser to create a community and publicise its existence and purpose to the membership as a whole.

But I've not seen any concrete proposals of such an idea.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #303

@roger ... not sure how to tag...Roger, Robert is an amazing champion of the ACS... almost a recent founder of Young IT...but a very clear thinker....ex ACSNSW BC member

and this is a KEY to ACS TRUST and COLLABORATION

knowing what that looks like seems to be a point of confusion!!!!

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #305

That is a good question.

And no, the ACS 'as a corporate entity' never really embraced the creation of 'digital communities'. We had quite an effective one via Facebook for interstate Young IT at one time, but it was always 'under the radar.

I think your idea is a good one, re: setting up the environment - but I think what is needed is to have people form a core group and build those communities. We have a lot of discussion around having specialisation recognition but we could start with providing an online community of practice around that online or even deliver online discussions and AMA's on that build a live community.

Within those communities, you could then provide input and expertise for a range of different topics. The trick though is to build the community and that does take time.

But if we are honest. The active number of NSW members who attended branch meetings voted etc was less than 1000, from memory much less. We are kidding ourselves if we think that the branches are representative of the full society.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #307

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #314

I feel you are right Helen, I just don't know how they will work in the new structure.

I feel like we might have an opportunity to re-think how it all works if we go back to a principles-based approach and I think we should be open to that in the process.

I feeling as we enter the next phase of the pandemic, is that the society has the opportunity to do build a richer digital experience; and we probably shouldn't do it on "ACS tech" use third-party to tech to experiment.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #316

But to take it back to the main point.

The suggestion is that the BEC's act as a conduit - but I just don't see how that will work.

If we have a new board, the legal authority will be in that one entity and state BEC's will not maintain their governance role.

Board members will I understand, will be bound by the Corporations Act, so they will be making the best decisions for the society, regardless of sectional interests (as I understand it).

So it brings me back to this point, regardless of if we have branches or not - the constitution needs to embody the ideas of engagement and consultation so that there is trust and collaboration within the Society.

Member Involvement in Key Policies (10)

z6957315@... Oct 5   #37

It's normal for a Constitution to only contain a relatively small, core proportion of what makes an organisation tick.

One common pattern is for a Company Board to have absolute power over all of the other documents that are important to members. Things like the membership levels and the requirements to achieve and sustain levels. And things like the Code of Ethics.

How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?

3 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #298

Some aspects of this will be protected as the objectives are within the constitution.

I think as a principle the constitution should require consultation and membership ratification of key areas such as

Governance

Membership

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #318

The key issue with a constitution is that it needs to cover all the key points, but must not end up being a Victorian novel that no-one looks at. If we accept Philip Argy's view expressed in Q08 (and I have a lot of respect for Philip), then the constitution is the way to make a CLG work for us. So it must cover governance (including electing and removing directors), membership, branches and chapters, the ACS objectives and major activities, membership grades etc. However, the actual drafting of the constitution is a matter for later stages of this project.

P Argy Oct 30   #320

My suggestion is to take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't. For those that we don't, what do we want to replace them with? That will at least give us a set of drafting instructions for the lawyers. When they come back with a draft Constitution we can then discuss how faithfully they have imp[lamented what we wanted, but separating the drafting from the higher level discussion is important.

For those who haven't actually read the ACS existing Constitutional documents, they are attached. If they're not the latest versions they're close enough for the exercise I'm suggesting!

ACS National Regulations as at Apr 2011.pdf

ACS-Rules-Nov-2010.pdf

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #321

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 07:58 PM, P Argy wrote:

> ... take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't ...

That's a poor substitute for requirements analysis, Philip.

Congress and CRWG expressly avoided such narrow scope.

First understand what members' conception of the Society is in current and foreseeable-future circumstances. Then imagine features that will provide the scope to deliver on that conception. Only then consider what we currently have, what needs to be retained, and how to transition gracefully from one to the other.

If anyone actually wants them at this early stage, the authoritative versions are at https://www.acs.org.au/governance/rules-and-regulations.html

P Argy Oct 30   #322

I was not suggesting that's ALL we do, but it does ensure that the basics are covered and assists people to identify topics for further discussion.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #323

Great ideato create a base to start from

David Abulafia Oct 31   #324

I think Phillip's approach would be a good basis for a requirement analyst

Dr. Paul O'Brien <paulobrien56@...> Oct 31   #327

Philip
I agree 100%

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #330

I disagree strongly with this.

The current constitution and rules, while appropriate for the time, are no longer appropriate for today or the future.

Aside from that, we have a process that Nick and Roger have thoughtfully developed and we should trust them to lead us through this process.

Professional Society and Public Good, (14)

Peter Oct 12   #89

How could/should the ACS contribute to broader society for a Public Good? Will the ACS be seen as a self-serving, self-promoting interest group, or will it have a broader "service" role to contribute? Will the ACS provide information and assistance to society beyond lobbying on policy to governments similar to other industry associations? As individuals/members we spend a lot of our professional careers helping to solve business or research needs with technological advances and solutions. Should the ACS spend time making similar contributions to societal issues? Has the ACS made a difference during the pandemic so far? Could it? Is there a role for ACS members as volunteers or is this a career/network building group? Can the ACS support both aspects?

While retiree's are mentioned in the consultation document as potential members, I've seen little consideration previously of that pathway and the possible value to the ACS and broader society. Is there an implicit assumption that Professional equates to knowledgeable AND EARNING? Should this be continued? Those who were previously qualified practitioners and members seem to fall off a cliff at retirement unless you were famous/active enough to become a Fellow. There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles; for example to promote early interest in computing during primary and secondary education or to help span the various digital divides?

The use of CPD as THE way of recognising continuing development may also be a bit financially self-serving for the ACS (a possible over-emphasis). Should this be a discrete business line? It may be seen as competing with commercial training organisations.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19 #136   Edited Oct 30

Hi Peter,

I am a 'retiree' but still working with my local community to help with IT issues.

I'm a fellow of the BCS in addition to the ACS.

The BCS has a scheme whereby members who 'retire' can buy a continuing membership for a sum then go on involvement in all BCS activities. I've suggested this several times to ACS people but no-one seems interested in taking the suggestion up.

A scheme such as this has the advantage of keeping people within the ACS and raising a smallish revenue for the society.

frada.burstein@... Oct 19 #138

Hi Ann,

As recent retiree myself, I totally agree with you. We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities. I am a member of the Accreditation Board and vey happy to be actively involved in that group, or take any other useful responsibility as required.

Having a special rate for membership was greatly appreciated. It was not mentioned in the ACS website - but it should be offered to anybody who is prepared to stay active and connected.

Thanks for your suggestion,

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19 #139

I agree, Frada.

I have remained active in the ACS since retiring. Mentoring less experienced members and contributing our considerable knowledge of and experience in ACS (I have been a member since 1978   ) is wort   hwhile and rewarding.

There is a concessional membership for retired members that has a reduced membership fee:

Retired: You are a Retired member if you have been a financial full fee paying member of the ACS continuously for 2 years and have retired from all regular employment. This is a permanent concession. Should you return to paid work you must notify the ACS in writing so that your retired membership status can be changed. Normal benefits and services apply.

Peter Oct 20 #150

Thanks Paul, Yes, the retired concession will be useful now that I'm aware of it.

I've been volunteer mentoring girls with robotics in high school to improve STEM awareness and hopefully open up ICT careers for them and balance the diversity a bit better. But this is not through anything that the ACS is part of, I just got into a discussion with a teacher one day. I guess it's the lack of discussion/promotion/awareness in this area, amongst others, from the ACS that I am noticing. I think these sort of gaps need raising as part of the discussion for our new constitution and strategies (professionalism and public good). That way the group can have a more open discussion about its purpose, and members can make choices.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 21 #159

Hi Peter Well done on your volunteering here. This is exactly the sort of thing that ACS should be supporting from a broad base. This would build positive outcomes and a recognition of ACS among

young people that will fuel engagement with ACS and promote life-long awareness/belonging as a professional member.   I believe some membership category for K-12 students is appropriate - maybe 'cadet member' at no cost. At the moment 'student' is the only option for those >16.

Ann Moffatt Oct 21   #161   Edited Oct 30

I agree rob,

There are so many bright young people under 16 who are vvv competent.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #211

The role of retired members in mentoring and outreach is one way the ACS can contribute to public good. However there are other ways that I feel should be considered.

The ACS should, as a national professional body, have a positive public presence.

An example - I asked a couple of random friends about what they thought the ACS might do for them. A couple mentioned the abundant phone scams where text and voice messages appear to come from someone's mobile phone number, and contacting the number confirms it's either inactive or some random number. Their question was "how can scammers impersonate a phone number, and how is ACS involved in getting this loophole fixed?"

I could find no answer on ACS website other than some general involvement in technical standards development.

But to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.

It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.

1 person liked this

Peter Oct 27   #213

Very true, phone and SMS scams are an area where the ACS could make public good offerings. I could also see the ACS possibly involving itself in topics like e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Maybe these sort of topics could be objectives for the labs if we keep them.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #225   Edited Oct 30

I agree with these comments

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #226

I don't

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #256

Can I suggest another angle for public good?

We see government constantly failing with IT. What is the cost to date of CovidSafe, and the benefit? How many so=called IT projects has the Victorian Auditor General called out this year? The ACS should be standing up and screaming about the waste and cost top the community, and pushing government to get it right.

But of course, these problems are all problems of governance, and the ACS as it stands now knows absolutely nothing about governance.

How many of you know that the ACS was a significant contributor to the development of ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation? How many of you are surprised that the ACS does not make use of, and certainly does not conform to that standard? How can the ACS credibly criticise government, when it can't get its own governance and use of IT right?

To contribute to the public good in a significant way, the ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #274   Edited Oct 30

Mark what you say is so true. It sounds like ACS belongs to the do as I say and not as I do group.

The ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #342

Bravo Mark.

ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).

FWIW I co-authored (with others including Nick Tate) a proposal for a "Discipline of Software Engineering Forensics Analysis" (http://www.scitepress.org/Papers/2014/49700/49700.pdf). Again ideally, ACS would be a good partner, indeed host, for the realisation of same. If the current exercise results in an ACS that could be entrusted with this mission, I will be happy to re-engage.

Transparency (5)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8 #65   Edited Oct 30

Management is not respecting the importance or value of Member needs / wants unless the board/management shares their plans and seeks and embraces feedback from members.

Such transparency and consultation process would not be popular with a commercial business that may wish to negotiate price or time sensitive deals - but really - is price or time sensitive deals a relevant limitation on a professional society?

We do not have an environment like politics where the management can assume a "mandate" from a clearly articulated position before election.

UI Oct 11 #73

i believe greater transparency is required. ACS is supposed to be by members, for members. the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable. It currently looks like a public service where there's too much bureaucracy and members aren't able to access the services they actually require.

ACS should be run like a union. by members, for members. our members are the number 1 priority. all decisions made should be done so with the primacy of members in mind.

I acknowledge there are commercial decisions to be made, and business decisions must benefit members, financially or otherwise. Eg. profits used to fund member services, keep membership fees low, etc.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #299

I agree regarding the transparency, but I don't think that the Society is entirely for the membership. The membership is not representative of the broader industry make-up.

If society is to remain relevant and useful, we need to accept that it is not there for the benefit of members, but for the benefit of Australian Society.

That said, we should be more accountable. There should be more visibility of Board Meetings. Board Meetings should be observable by members (with in-camera exceptions as appropriate).

The board should run regular internal audit processes to ensure management is accountable.

So if we take this back to the principles:

- The board should have a bias towards transparency and openness.
- The board should regularly seek member input on topics for debate
- The board should articulate why specific discussions are in-camera.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #302

If the ACS is not there for the member, why should members paid memship fees, for nothing in return, or is the membership fee a donation to a society that looks after IT in Australia

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #369

Hi David,

Members will always have something in return, but as a member we all sign up to the Code of Ethics.

The first clause is "The Primacy of the Public Interest: You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests".

Whether we like it or not the ACS is a sectional interest, and as members, we under our code, and constitution are bound to put ourselves second.

Should the ACS make sure it has a good membership proposition? Yes.

Is the ACS for the benefit of members? No (well not in its current form or under our current constitution)

Role of Branches (26)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 3   #29

Surely this must be an important discussion point. Some have suggested that life would be much simpler if there were no Branch Executive Committees(BECs), just a pool of people that operational staff can ask advice from when required. Others want BECs have a command and control role.

This discus should not be constrained by worries about personal liability for actions undertaken by volunteers. There are ways to protect from that. This discussion is about the vision for how you want things to be, the next phase will look at the trade offs that may be needed to enshrine such a vision in the constitution

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 5   #36

Jacky, i would also like to add the roles of chapters as they are critically important for regional reach.

3 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 16   #119   Edited Oct 30

hi Jacky,

I agree that the Jurisdictions are a vital part of the ACS. As Beau mentioned, QLD and possibly others have healthy chapters as QLD is a geographically large state. To ensure that we reach out to the current and future members, these voices need to be heard through branch and regional input.

Under the current arrangement, which I was party to in Congress in 2019, the inability of these regional chapters to hold a bank account, albeit in the ACS name, limits there focus.

For clarity, there has to be a clear understanding of what is membership funds that may be used in supporting the state/local members and what is business derived funds that the Branch / State / Chapter can utilise or apply for.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17   #125

Hi Mike

I agree with branch and chapters, however creating separate bank accounts is not an answer. A good accounting system with allow everyone to have a budget and clarity on the expenditure.

2 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 18   #131   Edited Oct 30

Hi Ali,

It has been too long between chats, my fault.

I didn't mean to suggest or imply separate bank accounts rather the ability of incidental expenses without a volunteer being out of pocket for an expense.

1 person liked this

UI

Oct 22   #170

BECs/branches/chapters should continue and ACS should function similar to State/Federal governments. Branches should have more autonomy with their finances and greater independence in deciding what works for their circumstances.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 22   #181   Edited Oct 30

I agree.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 23   #186

Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS and therefore have level of autonomy to service their member base. This must be enshrined in the Constitution AND Enforced in practice. This is actually in the current rules but snubbed (R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations).

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@...

Oct 26   #207

It would also be great to have Objective and Key Results to measure how effective the advice from BECs are.

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 27 #218

100% agree Rod. each branch and for that matter chapter is different and we need to be make sure we are able to be flexible to support each in the way that members feel empowered and engaged. some of the best events and most engaged members (especially in QLD) are located regionally. we need to give them a voice and support what is needed in each region

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 28 #242

To add a different dimension to this debate I, as VicBEC elected member, was privy to a presentation for the CEO and (less so) President sharing ACS progress in June.   It was a useful overview however, I was disturbed by the perhaps unintentional bias in reference to Branches which included terminology like 'subsidising' branches and 'loss leader'.

As posted above, Branches are the conduit for the member vice and are integral to a cohesive professional organisation. Therefore reference to branches, and by implication, members in these terms seems to be reflective of an attitude that is counter member voice. Copy of my, as yet unanswered letter to CEO follows below.

My concerns have been exacerbated in recent weeks by participation in the Strategy refresh (Dovetail) project and a member segmentation project. Both of these projects are driven by staff using a framework from which to formulate ACS strategy though 2025 that presents the key areas for ACS more or less as the current business lines i.e. Skills Assessment, ACS Labs.... My understanding of marketing strategy 101 is that it starts with the 'customer need',i.e. ACS members. Both projects purport to be Member first'. Hmmm..

<< end of rant>>

Letter to CEO June 2021

Dear Rupert

Many thanks for sharing ACS progress with the BEC, Victoria on Wednesday last. It is heartening to see early signs of leadership transparency on ACS matters.

If I may, there are two observations I would like to make.

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches. Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member- centric professional society. To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle.

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services. Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidies' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos.

In making these comments I point out that language use is central to the politically correct' debates we are having over workplace health, and safety. In our recent ACS training the recognition of 'indirect inference' as a factor in bullying was an emphasis and our awareness of micro-aggression is heightened - language is important.

The fundamental existential question here is ' Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society. Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values?

Rupert, I offer these observations in good faith and trust they make a positive contribution as ACS looks to the future.

Happy to speak anytime.

1 person liked this

Peter

Oct 28 #245

Thank you Rod for sharing this episode. The more I think about this phrasing of 'loss-leader' the more concerned I become.

Is there a fundamental weakness in the current combined ACS enterprise so that it will always return to seeing members as a 'loss-leader'? If so I would rather we divest or disband than become a trojan horse commercial enterprise masquerading behind a professional society. I would rather we were a financially smaller but successful professional society focused on its members, their standards and public good, than a larger commercially focused enterprise that forgot what it was. As a smaller more focused association we may not need to worry abut a CLG structure at all.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #248   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Peter.

Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.

The ACS is a not for profit organisation, and should not even think of commercial activities.

A smaller more focus financially stable society is what should exist.

During my involvement in converting my synagogue from an association to CLG, the ACNC told us they were encouraging all NFP incorporated associationd to becoming CLG.

devindra.weerasooriya@...

Oct 28 #249

I do not hold any elected positions within the Branch/National structure. But I have learnt from those that do hold such positions about a recent heightened emphasis about politically correct' debates over workplace health, and safety, within Executive deliberations; as pointed by Rod Dilnutt.

If so, I do believe that many participants of this thread, and the whole CRWG-Conversation, would agree that referring to activities at a Branch-level focused on the Professional Excellence of Members in a derogatory manner is equally or more inimical to their sensitivities and more generally their perception of what ACS should be.

To put it more bluntly, for the ACS to advertise as having a "Mission of Professional Excellence" and regard the process towards achieving that as Loss-leading and Non-viable; must cease right-away and be declared as out-of-order throughout the ACS. All activity threads, such as the CRWG and the New-Strategy must be refocused towards achieving the Mission of Professional Excellence, in a viable manner.

When ACS really demonstrates itself as a "MUST-HAVE" service for Professional-Excellence in ICT, I'm certain that it will have no difficulty in rekindling the interest of ICT-Professionals, that is falling-away away, at present.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #250   Edited Oct 30

Yes definitely.

All forms of political correctness should shot down immediately.

Political correctness is the cancer of our society inside and outside of the ACS.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28 #252   Edited Oct 30

Grrrr. What sort of dopey platform is this - my reply to a comment well above here is not linked to the comment and instead appears out of context at the end!

Well, referring to Rod Dilnut comment #186...

Agree, but as part of the review, we must review the role of the BEC and get it right. One obvious change is that the BEC will no longer be the entity which disenfranchises members from voting for the board (MC) by appointing its delegates to Council - the members will be able ot vote directly. I think that the key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone

Oct 28 #255

Relying to Mark's comments #252

Could we also extend the Branch Executive Committee memberd to having input and be empowered and encouraged to also provide advice and experience into the strategic opportunities for the ACS, and ICT driven and enabled developments that are occurring both locally in the jurisdiction but also nationally?

Ann Moffatt

Oct 28 #259   Edited Oct 30

Well said dev.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28 #269

That would seem to be a perfectly sensible thing to do Chris Radbone.

tony.errington@...

Oct 29 #282

I fully agree with Rod Dilnutt (#186) and Chris Radbone (#255). I also agree with the various comments regarding the need to eliminate any comments such as 'loss-leading' and 'non-viable' when talking about supporting our members. Members are at the very core of the ACS and must remain so and be recognised as such by the hierarchy (both elected and employed).

As Rod says, branches are a key link in the chain from a member to the ACS, they are the only parts of the organisation that understand what their local members want and need. Their role should be enshrined in the future constitution, clearly spelling out the relationship between the elected members of the Branch BEC and the salaried Branch (or State) Manager

And while branches should have a budget which is approved at MC level, and they should perform to that, the creation of that budget should be a joint exercise and not simply imposed from above. Branches also need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focussed, without needing to go through an extended process of approval that takes unreasonable time and resources.

David Abulafia

Oct 29 #286   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Tony

Nick Tate

Oct 31 18:37 #339

In my view, branches (and chapters) are essential elements for a future ACS. Local governance (such as BECs and Chapter Committees) allow the branch to focus on issues and events in their own state or territory and to engage more effectively with their state/territory Government, than is

possible nationally. To be able to do that, there will need to be some level of budget provision for the BECs and Chapter Committees to initiate projects and activities, without undue oversight from a national committee or national office; this of course must be limited to an agreed budget. Any contracts that a branch wishes to enter into will need to go through a process to ensure that it does not have unintended effects on the ACS as a whole. To implement these projects or activities will require access to staff resources and this can also be manged via an appropriate budget process.

In this round, we are trying to tease out principles and I suggest that the principle around branches is the desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

Nick as a member not as CRWG Co-convenor

Dr. Paul O'Brien

Oct 31   #345

I agree with Nick.

A Federal model with fairly autonomous branches has a lot of advantages, particularly the ability for Branches to work closely with State and Territory governments, other professional associations and industry associations.

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31   #347

I agree with Mike and Beau...We must be able to operate quickly with all the checks and balances supporting initiatives not closing them down...sadly the perceived "No Culture"

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31   #348

Double like.

Initiatives at the moment go no where @beau @chris we did the Branch listening taskforce and then where di it go ...

I am currently working up an understanding with ACS staff on that NO Culture eg where are the Access cards for the Branches who are "lucky?!?!" to have a hub as their office..and in Lockdown..

Robert Estherby

Oct 31   #353

On Sun, Oct 31, 2021 at 06:37 PM, Nick Tate wrote:

> desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

I agree that if we continue with a federated model with branches, they also should have clear objectives that support the whole society, and prevent branches from pulling away in multiple directions. We should be looking to encourage collaboration and initiative rather than unaccountable

Rupert.Grayston@...

Nov 1 09:01   #374

In this conversation thread 'Role of Branches', I seem to have been portrayed as saying in an internal ACS meeting conversation that membership is a loss-leader for ACS. Actually I'm pretty sure that I said that it can't be viewed as a loss-leader, to illustrate a point that ACS does not necessarily have a sustainable model for member service delivery. I know that was an internal discussion to share financial information whereas this is a member forum on constitutional principles but I detected some misplaced outrage and thought I should clarify that point.

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2.   Rod Dilnutt   **16 Jun 2021**

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches. Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member-centric professional society. **To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle**. **[P00]**

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4.   Richard Cordes   **15 October 2021**

For the purposes of my response, I define **a principle as a guideline for behaviour**. **[P00]**

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business-Lines

Damien: **There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing. This resulted in a lot of departures of disillusioned now ex-members, and pushback from remaining members, who perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in values**. **[P00] [P01]**

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Keep this open channel going!!! #Business-Lines   #P00   #P08   #Q07

helenmchugh@... Nov 1   #390

This open channel is AMAZING!!!! So much heard passion and collaboration

THIS MUST KEEP GOING

Well done CRWG Team

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01 #Q03   #Q07

Jack Burton Nov 4   #432   **[#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#P11]**

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief (and none of the signatories could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.

Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P07]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

- reduction of Boards
- 2019 constitutional reform
- COVIDSafe endorsement
- \<add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #410

My (somewhat lengthy) suggestion is: ...

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read: ...

- **ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**   **[#P00]   [#P09]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Karl: Concerned about the relationship between staff and elected officials
and the function of staff to support elected officials   **[#P00]**
Similarly staff should not represent the Society, and staff should not be on Boards

Karl: **The Society has lost its skills at delegation to elected officials, with Boards and Committees tied down in red tape**   **[#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#Q11]**

Rod: **Vital importance of safeguards existing to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity.** The incorporation form is less vital than that issue
                    [#Dir]   [#P00]   [#P02]   [#P08]   [#P11]   [#Q14]

Charlynn: Must be for the members and agreed among the members, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical.   **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P08]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**
Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed
Students don't feel the ACS is there for them – and that's the Society's future!

Susan: Focus on members, because so much has changed

John: The vital thing for the Society is that it be of and for its members   **[#P00]**

The organisation needs to be kept simple. The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus

Jo: Angst in Vic and in NSW Branch about the impact of the strategy project on the constitutional work. May need to delay the strategy work to enable the constitutional work to run effectively

Member-centricity is critical. There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity   **[#P00]   [#P02]**

We're no longer a principles-driven organisation, and delegation and freedoms

Karl: This process has been an invaluable opening up of engagement with members

Susan: The shared experience in a meeting like this was an effective mechanism for engagement   **[#P00]   [#P08]**

Re the Elected and Appointed Official and other Volunteer experience

It should be a constitutional requirement that ACS ensure that Elected officials and other volunteers are supported by staff and also that they are not confronted with decision making structures that make action extremely difficult.

To ensure that this is achieved, ACS should operate in a delegation system that assigns appropriate action and financial capabilities to the Elected Officials and Appointed Officials and other volunteers.

[#P00]   [#P07]

What is ACS?   (9)

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #224

IMHO the question "Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?" is somewhat loaded, in that I am not quite confident that ACS is a "professional society".

Our Principal Object "to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources" is "professional" to the extent that the "resources" might be human resources, but IMHO unfortunately not necessarily exclusively. E.g. our Secondary Objects include "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters" which might as well be found in the Objects of AIIA (or ADMA!).

In other words, I fear that ACS risks being less of a force for the maintenance and improvement of the performance of individual ICT professionals, and more of a platform to lobby Goverments for whatever the leadership/management sees from time to time as worth pursuing (under the guise of "support for the formulation of effective policies ...").

Accordingly, I would urge that we **suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature**, i.e. strike out:

- from Secondary Objects
  - support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters;
- from Purposes
  - (8) The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decisionmakers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, and related matters (If anyone wanted to hobnob with Government "community leaders and decision-makers", let them find a platform other than ACS.)

David Abulafia Oct 27   #234   Edited Oct 30

Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club
David Abulafia

David Abulafia Oct 27   #235   Edited Oct 30

The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites.

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #293

Paul wrote:

> ... strike out <support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters>

During video discussion sessions, it's been argued that, central though 'information {and communications} technologies' are to the Society's scope, it has for many years also recognised the importance of the application of ICT, management of ICT, and implications of ICT, and its use for alignment with organisational and social purposes, transformational capabilities, and disruptive potential. (That leads to arguments by quite a few members that we need to encompass specialisations that are not highly technical – but making clear what those specialists are and are not specialised in).

Are you really intending that ACS should not <u>recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy</u>?

As test-cases, consider the risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc.?

(For clarity, I have a lot of sympathy with the proposition that there are many forms of advocacy / lobbying that are emphatically not within a professional society's scope, such as seeking advantages for business enterprises along the lines of tax breaks and de-regulation).

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #319

David Abulafia is correct in both his comments on this topic. The ICT sector in Australia needs a professional body, and the ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage. Furthermore, Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector.

Because of the nature of the industry we are in, it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #336

Not necessarily "a" professional body – the Health Sector is served by multiple professions and professional bodies. (See mine just now re "Breadth of ACS interest #Q02 #Q05 #Q12 #SIGs")

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #337

Good point, thanks Roger for raising this.

My concern is for ACs not to become distracted from what I see as <u>its distinctive role</u>, as <u>developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals</u>.

Very sincere congrats to you for your great work resisting the Australia Card but how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

<u>I would like to see the warnings about misuse of ICT in X to come from the Australian X Society/Institute/whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS</u>.

Even then, I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything "topical", as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position <u>reflects the professional consensus</u>. Consider for example: https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (and despite being in the name of "ACS Senior Members", the 12/5/2020 email from ACS " Seeking your support - COVID-19" enlisting signatories to the foregoing makes it clear to me that this was owned by ACS). Congrats again to you for providing another view (and to ACS/IA for publishing it), but again how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #354

Hi Paul,

I have to admit, that when I first saw your post I was in vehement disagreement; however, I recognise your point that the ACS needs to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus.

That aside, I do think that <u>as a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate</u>.

When I look at the current voices in these debates, I see that the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest.

I also acknowledge that we have not done well at this to date.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #363

Most gracious, thanks Rob!

We need to protect ACS from being "hijacked" by voices that, as you say, might be "self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest", or even just plain wrong.

Centrality also of 'for the Public Good'   (2)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #55

This principle is included to make sure that any new constitution enshrines that the point of ACS activities are always in the public good and member interests. The rest should follow from this central principle.

2 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #355

I agree, but given our Code of Ethics has the primacy of the public interest, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest.

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards   (3)

Adrian Porteous Oct 23   #190

The Consultation document suggests a cluster of Professional Standards: (as follows)

> including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies

The current ACS Objects include 2.4:

> To define and promote the maintenance of standards of knowledge of information and communications technology for members.

In my view, the proposed Mission gives less priority to the development and promulgation of technical standards (Purpose 1: The establishment and maintenance of high professional standards)

The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals.

Purpose 1 could be amended to include this role, or another specific Purpose defined (I realise that we are not at the drafting stage yet!)

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #210

It appears the interpretation of "standards" has focussed on standards of knowledge and professionalism for members, but overlooked the equally important role of developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #311

I think that the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving it's public image.

Industry associations   (17)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #63   Edited Oct 30

Frankly - a professional society and ACS should host members not organisations.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 12   #87

ACS should be engaged and have a relationship to other industry associations. We do not live in a bubble and need to be a trusted voice.

1 person liked this

z6957315@... Oct 13   #95   Edited Oct 13

On Tue, Oct 12, 2021 at 10:17 AM, <Beau.tydd@...> wrote:

> relationship to other industry associations

I agree with both 'people not organisations as members', and 'ACS having engagement and relationships to industry associations'. An effective society and economy needs both kinds of organisations. The question for me is how that can be achieved.

Historically, there have been times and issues when professional societies and industry associations were in lock-step and even arm-in-arm; and times and issues when their views have been very different, and even diametrically opposed.

So I see the need for sufficient distance, and sufficient closeness; and I have difficulty seeing how either can exist within the other. Nor can I see how both could co-exist within a combined entity.

Maybe share a common services company; maybe be co-located on adjacent floors, in smaller cities even in the same premises. But any closer than that compromises the freedom of action of both organisations.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #102

ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (Organisation) body and membership must meet professional standards.   ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain unless congruent with member principles. ACS should not be acquiring industry associations and should divest those that compromise the member ethos.

The ACS entity portfolio needs review as ADMA and ACS Labs/RCL and maybe others that we are unsure of, do not align well in a NFP or with the professional member. The $1mill+ loss by ADMA in 2019/20 is a further distraction away from the member focus. Further, ADMA members are very different to ACS professional members.

3 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15   #106

I agree with Rod.

We are a professional association that represents ICT professionals and sets standards that those claiming to be ICT professionals should meet.

We are NOT an industry association. That said, of course we should have an open and cooperative relationship with ICT industry associations so that we are well informed but we should not be driven by them.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18 #130

Yes, I can't see how the ACS can have both professional individuals and other organisations as members. There are a plethora of industry associations out there serving particular organisations / employers, etc., they really have no place within the ACS.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 20 #148

In principle I agree with Rod, Paul and Aubrey. However, having made the acquisitions and formed the relationships; a way needs to be found to maintain that Arms-Length relationship. I see this as a central matter of governance within the new Constitution.

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #152   Edited Oct 30

Why have ANY relationship with the entities we bought. I think they should be sold asap.

Paul Bailes Oct 20 #153   Edited Oct 30

With respect, I don't follow Devidra's logic: having mistakenly acquired business(es) considered to be inimical to ACS's mission and identity, why should ACS be constrained to retain such (a) millstone(s)?

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 20 #154

if they are not part of ACS core business why keep them

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #155   Edited Oct 30

I totally agree David.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #156   Edited Oct 30

I fully agree Paul.

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 20 #157

I also agree with Paul B.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #162

We can be a parent company with other associations and companies running under our umbrella. Some of them, like the Labs, might want to run in a For Profit manner, others focus on Members. But it would be a shame to let associations disintegrate because they don't have someone to work with, or claim affiliation to. We took some in that would have dissolved over the past year or so. It's good to be able to keep them going under their own name, but with shared benefits for our members.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 23 #191

I hear what most of you are saying; i.e. that they should be divested. If I were asked to vote for these acquisitions, in the first place, would've had similar thoughts. But that's not where we are now; and I'd like to see whether these entities can benefit members, in an ICT sense.

I see the following; if I were to take a positive view of 2 Business-Lines.

Significant amount of Data-Science in organisations is oriented towards Marketing of Products / Services to Customers based upon their behaviour. From that point of view there is some possibility of enhancing Member-skills in Data-Science if they are exposed a-priori what they may be required to deliver, via ADMA.

The innovative activities of ACS-Labs could be designed as a skills upgrade opportunity for Members, to engage in their innovative activities.

For the fruition of both of these it is necessary to advertise the possibilities and assess and generate some interest among Members. It is a given that they will be competitive and Members will need to have a background/interest to benefit, With the ACS-Labs there would be some confidentiality criteria as well.

I have seen nothing like this, advertised by the ACS, at all. In fact the advertising by ACS of these acquisitions was much lower-key, when compared to it's favoured themes such as Reimaginations, Skill-shortages etc,

The possible ways in which these Business-lines can assist Member upskilling should be carefully set-out and agreed with the respective boards/managements before any decision to proceed these within the ACS umbrella.

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #270

The Australian Institute of Digital Health has a brilliant model for engaging with organisations in a membership context.

See my recent post on exemplars.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #296

The current purchases aside, I think our constitution/structure should have the capacity to address this issue. It may be appropriate for the Society in the future to amalgamate with an industry association and require them to adhere to values.

As a principle, I think we should have the capability to do this and look to successful integration in other societies constitutions.

Appropriate Business-Lines, and not Loss-Making   (3)

z6957315@... Oct 10   #69

There are some forms of business activity that are natural for a professional society. Ongoing education programs are fundamental to the needs of professionals and the employers, and there is no reason why ACS should not compete with commercial providers. Where tertiary educational institutions fail to prepare their graduates to be work-ready, training for transition into the workplace can be a useful further offering. Another areas is indexes to ICT expertise and bodies of knowledge, and guidance to professionals on career pathways.

But there are many other areas that a professional society has to avoid. It must not compete with its own members, by itself performing consultancy or contracting within the ICT field. It must avoid commercial activities that conflict with its obligations to serve the public interest. The ACS has no role to play in the conduct of innovation, although it can stimulate innovation by others. And whereas industry associations can prioritise the interests of profit-making companies over the interests of consumers, professional societies cannot.

A professional society must also ensure that it doesn't operate business-lines that fail to deliver a surplus. The gains made from successful business-lines must be invested in the ACS's key functions, not in loss-making business ventures.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15 #103

While the need to attract revenue is obvious, commercial undertakings such as ACS Labs does not seem congruent with ACS member objectives. If the aim is to support fledgling ICT endeavor then other ways of sponsorship could be found. Running a real estate business like this does little to create sustainable revenue and carries unwelcome risk. If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24 #192

If they are to be maintained ACS-Labs should provide some pathways for Members. See my comments with #Industry-Associations.

1 person liked this

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2.   Susan Beetson – s.beetson@uq.edu.au   **Thu 30/09/2021 5:50 AM**

I would like to know what the ACS as an organisation is doing about a implementing Reconciliation Action Plan. Also, what accreditation or capabilities the ACS requires of its members to understand about working with 'other' peoples, and their Knowledges and Information. For too long approaches to developing technologies have occurred by middle class white males and females who possess a hidden bias that is reflected in the algorithms and development techniques, which is damaging to Aboriginal peoples in Australia.

https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/   **[P01]**

―――――――――――

1.   Jeff Mitchell   **1 June 2019**

The future, member focused, ACS structure should:
- promote a shared vision to shape our future
- create relevancy by broadening the reach of our thought leadership into social and public roles   **[P01]**

―――――――――――

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   **5 October 2021**

Q9: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

A business-line that is ICT-related in any way should be considered consistent with ACS' values. The way to ensure its consistency with values is simply to check whether the business-line is ICT-related in any way.   **[P01]**

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

Zero.

Internal policies are best set by the CEO and the Board. Members are in effect the 'customers' of ACS. ...   **[P01]**

―――――――――――

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q9: Business-Lines

    Damien: **There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing. This resulted in**

a lot of departures of disillusioned now ex-members, and pushback from remaining members, who perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in values. **[P00]** **[P01]**

───── 132 ─────

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01 #Q03   #Q07

kenjprice@... Nov 3   #403

ACS appears to still have at least some current <u>representation on</u>

- <u>the various IFIP Technical Committees</u>.
  https://www.acs.org.au/governance/ifip-working-group.html
- <u>the Standards Australia IT and Management groups</u>
  https://www.acs.org.au/governance/standards-australia-working-group.html

This would seem to be <u>an important part of a national computing society</u>.

It would be disturbing if this were to stop.

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #404

I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses. I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies.

I was the ACS representative to Standards Australia committee IT-030 on "Governance and management of ICT" from 2007 to 2015 and was reimbursed under the old policy (not sure of the current policy).

I remain as an expert on Standards Australia subcommittee IT-030-01.

Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted. A related database of ACS representatives was trialled, but not put into production (some ACS representatives were not ACS members). Work on an ACS Standards Policy (for both professional and technical standards) was discussed but not implemented.

karl Nov 3   #407

Rimas wrote:

> Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted.

Can you make that available to us?

We probably need to establish a repository of material.

It is in my view inappropriate for Staff to represent ACS formally in these things.

Denis Street FACS HLM Nov 3   #408

Hi Karl,

This is news to me. I agree that it is inappropriate for ACS staff to represent the ACS on these technical committees.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4   #423

Re-from rod:-

> Absolutely agree ACS should represent on standards committees. My understanding from a former ACS delegate from ACS to Standards committees, that there was no support with expectation they would pay their own way to attend meetings. This gets expensive especially when O/S travel is involved, not to mention the time commitment from day job. I am not advocating this should be a paid gig but reimbursement of expense seems appropriate.
> Perhaps someone could clarify ?

I represented the ACS on the ISO osi standards (tc6, I think. It was the open systems 7-layer model. I specialised in level 7, the applications level) cttee and the Australian standards for the same standard from about 1976 to 1984 when the basic reference model was published.

It involved about 2-3 hours a week reading and responding to papers on the subject. I was never paid for this work and didn't expect to be paid. I had represented the BCS on that committee for the lower levels of the standard, then just the first 3 layers, from about 1968 till I left uk in 1974. I had represented the BCS on Cobol standards cttees prior to my involvement in communications. I wasn't paid for that either.

If there were costs of going to a meeting interstate my company paid and I fitted the visit in with work for my company.

I don't think standards reps should be paid but if their companies won't fund travel, I think the acs could be asked to cover that.

I was pleased to contribute as, to quote bacon, "I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto."

Its been my 'motto' throughout my working life.

I got tremendous benefit from being on those cttees. I was working with experts in their fields from all over the world. Watching and contributing to the development of those standards meant that I really understood what the standard entailed. I was also asked by many companies to explain the standard.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4   #424

Rimas said

> "I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses. I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies."

Ouch. I didn't know that was happening. That's just silly. What else did our silly MCs decide?

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #428

I've been looking at my email archive for my period as VP Academic from Jan 2013 to Oct 2016.

As I was given to understand, the move to make the CEO the ACS Councillor on SA was because it was a corporate not technical role.

However, re the various technical committees etc.

• generally speaking, ACS members (not staff) continued to be our reps. on these
• in 2015 I had MC confirm that we would support approx. 10 of these at approx. $1.5K each (travel expenses) per annum – admittedly not much, but the specific value proposition to ACS was (and remains – see below) hard to capture.

Managing the connection with SA was (unexpectedly) difficult:

• not easy to discover who was representing ACS
• not easy to discover what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input
• not clear what ACS expectations were of ACS reps.

The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, **is what is ACS's position?** Consider for example an ACS rep. on a group working on system requirements. I might take the position that a clear requirements documents should be the prerequisite to any procurement (development, purchase etc.), that agile development/codesign should be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Doubtless others in ACS would disagree. So **how do we arrive at "the ACS position", for SA or for anything**. (In the specific case of SA, the solution would have to involve ACS reps. reporting back to ACS on matters coming up at SA, and ACS giving guidance back to our reps.)

I am definitely NOT objecting to ACS engaging with SA, nor objecting to ACS supporting same. But unless ACS develops a reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters for input to SA, then I would find it hard to justify increased ACS investment in same.

Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. **I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html** (please let's not

pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.) **How do we stop this from happening?** Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #429

To paraphrase my other on this just before …

The problem is how to integrate these representations actually into the life of ACS and its membership?

Maybe couple each with a SIG? But there still needs to be a link to/from the Society's central leadership in such matters e.g. the Technical Board (as things have been since Oct 2016)

David Abulafia Nov 4   #430

The CovidSafe was a very expensive disaster, some one may a lot of money for a garbage app. If the CovidSafe app was an example of ACS professional standards, then ACS professional standards are very poor

Jack Burton Nov 4   #432   [#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#P11]

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief (and none of the signatories could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only **three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad** that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.
Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), **each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards** (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

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As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but **very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership**, for example: [#P00]   [#P02]   [#P07]   [#P11]   [#Q14]

- reduction of Boards
- 2019 constitutional reform
- COVIDSafe endorsement
- <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Care Needed with Commercial Activities   (1)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #54

This principle seems to relate to the commercial activities that ACS chooses to involve itself in. It is one of those clauses that could be used to protect activists of any persuasion against pursuing an agenda that does not align with that of the ACS to which members see themselves as belonging to.

1 person liked this

Appropriate Business-Lines, and not Loss-Making   (3)

z6957315@... Oct 10   #69

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devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #192

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1 person liked this

Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership   (4)

Adrian Porteous Oct 25 #199   Edited Oct 30

The Consultation document raises the fundamental question of whether the ACS continues to be a professional society (Q1). Nowhere in any of the subsequent discussion is that disputed. I think this is good!

Appendix A of the consultation document (Key Functions of a Professional Society) states well the required functions we should expect of the ACS, namely around technical, ethical and professional standards, criteria for membership, skills assessment and accreditation, professional development, member benefits, public outreach and public policy development.

The most recent Annual Report (2020) informs us we have 48,025 members. It also provides membership revenue of $3.323m for the year. The reported membership is significantly larger than my understanding of our current national professional membership. From various BEC, Council (pre Congress) and MC roles over the last 20 years, my understanding is that the current total number of Student, Associate and Professional Members is closer to 12,000 members. The ACS's Annual Report does not provide any breakdown of membership, however a figure of 12,000 members is roughly consistent with our reported membership income.

Given we accept the ACS is a professional society, I think any business activity we engage should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed.

Investments in Innovation Labs in three cities and acquisition of a set of data marketing and analytics associations do not immediately appear to me aligned with membership value. The annual report is a bit opaque on full detail of the investments, but lists cash outlay of $2.6m for data and analytics association investments and $799,527 in the preceding year for River City Labs. These are substantial investments for a professional society of our size; it is not clear to me how they provide member value, or even whether they make a positive financial contribution to the ACS.

Fifteen years ago we ran the ACS with higher membership revenue ($3.550m - we had a greater number of professional members), significantly lower revenue from migration assessment activities and a smaller contribution from education services. We provided members with regular forum and professional development activities. The ACS had a range of award winning publications over the years: Australian Computer Journal, Journal of Research and Practice in Information Technology, and later Information Age (I don't intend to spark debate on our current IA offering!). We provided specialist member skills to Australian and International Standards bodies and engaged in lobbying activities at state and federal levels. Local and national events were held to recognise leaders in the profession.

Revenue has increased nearly eightfold since 2005 (then $6.141m), professional membership has declined, but I don't see any increase in member benefits.

I would like to see as part of the review process on the constitution a commitment to resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with either the current ACS Objects, or as they are reformulated into a new Mission statement.

In drafting a new constitution, I suggest a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership', be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus on the key purpose of the Society.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26 #203   Edited Oct 30

Fully agree, Well put Adrian.

Ann Moffatt Oct 27 #216   Edited Oct 30

I agree Adrian,

v well put.

BUT I WOULD like to see comments about our current 'publications'.

I cringe every time I hear that information age is 'the flagship publication of the ACS'. IMHO it should be canned now.

rcousins@... Oct 27 #239

From a background of the structure of several not too dissimilar bodies, might I suggest that each state is analogous to a group of stakeholders and a structure can be made such that each state can appoint (and remove) a board member. This could be extended to have the board add a couple of highly respected long-term professionals as well as have that full board then select the chairman.

The role of a board is to set policy, hire/fire the CEO, etc so there are clear roles between management and policy with equally clear paths as to how people get (and lose) those positions.

The rules for appointment (with term limitations) and revocation by the state need to be clearly laid out in the constitution.

I question the CLG reasoning and have seen many structures of how the above can be achieved within a company.

But to me the first step is to determine what sort of animal the ACS is!

It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it can not be all things to all people.

As a starting point it would not hurt to review how the AICD is structured.

1 person liked this

ACS Standards Threshold Requirements and Users of ICT (6)

swainy@... Oct 12 #91

ACS standards for the various levels of membership remain a critical component. Our increasingly digital society has made even the average person a User of ICT. As such it should still be a requirement to assess relevant ICT education, training, and experience necessary to work as a competent ICT professional to ICT industry standards. ACS Membership level should to reviewed for appropriate capabilities. This is important so employers of ICT professionals can assess the levels of capability as assessed by the ACS.

1 person liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15 #101

There seems to be an embedded assumption that 'Professionals' are 'members'. This definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.

Agree that a threshold is required. The associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional. This should be referenced to the Body of Knowledge.

The current R & R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as Secondary students should also be recognized, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member, cadet ?'

Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

Further, all members of ACS Governing bodies should be Professional Members.

2 people liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #137

An area of competence that we should acknowledge is people with just PC tech competence. The BCS has a grade RITTECH. https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/

Most small businesses only use PCs. In my experience, esp in regional australia, many people offering support services to business have no qualifications at all. Many of them offer only a very poor service. ACS should ensure there is an accreditation route for these people.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #212

I would be very concerned if there are instances of granting "membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation".

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #217

Hear hear ken!!!!!

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28   #264

I agree

Centrality also of 'for the Public Good'   (2)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #55

This principle is included to make sure that any new constitution enshrines that the point of ACS activities are always in the public good and member interests. The rest should follow from this central principle.

2 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #355

I agree, but given our Code of Ethics has the primacy of the public interest, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest.

Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values (2)

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #42

There are a couple of elements to this:

(1)   Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?

(2)   If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?

(3)   How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?

(4)   How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?

(5)   What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?

The alternative is of course to trust a chain of unknown future Directors with prettymuch absolute power to make the decisions about the criteria they apply when they consider new business-lines.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #368

> (1) Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?

> (2) If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?

I think the constitution should allow for an AGM to agree on an initial set of operating criteria and to update as required.

> (3) How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?

I think this is why Board Minutes should be 'public' to members.

> (4) How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?

I think it would be appropriate for a business case (appropriately presented) to be shared with members or at a minimum branches for review.

> (5) What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?

Members should be able to call a general meeting and pass a 'disallowance motion that binds the board.

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01   #Q03   #Q07

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

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The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

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- reduction of Boards
- 2019 constitutional reform
- COVIDSafe endorsement
- <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #410

My (somewhat lengthy) suggestion is..

"to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources **ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and production of the technology in Australia**".   **[#P02]**

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

...

- support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters, **aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia**;   **[#P02]**

...

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Rod: **Vital importance of safeguards existing to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity.** The incorporation form is less vital than that issue
                    [#Dir] [#P00] [#P02] [#P08] [#P11] [#Q14]

Charlynn: Must be for the members and agreed among the members, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical. **[#P00] [#P02] [#P08] [#P11] [#Q14]**
Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed
Students don't feel the ACS is there for them – and that's the Society's future!

Susan: Focus on members, because so much has changed

John: The vital thing for the Society is that it be of and for its members   **[#P00]**

The organisation needs to be kept simple. The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus

Jo: Member-centricity is critical. There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity   **[#P00]   [#P02]**

We're no longer a principles-driven organisation, and delegation and freedoms

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised?

- **Public Policy** – including public statements, submissions and publications in relation to ICT and information infrastructure resources, their applications, and their implications. **Particular attention will be paid to the quality of public facing systems, their security in the widest sense and their social and economic impact.**
    [#MP]   [#P02]

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Q3:   Mission and Purposes
Bevin: There's nothing misleading in there.
Matthew: For CPD, we need 30 hours of new online content p.a.
Holly: There are many webinars, available live and on replay, and a large library.
Michael: That's been improved a lot in the last few years.

Also emphasising the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals will play in shaping the future of the country and need for a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology is always used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels

ACS's Role in Addressing the Big Problems

The other thing on reflection that ACS should endeavour to capture in its constitution as a professional society is a **commitment to playing our part as a profession to solving big problems facing humanity such climate change, sustainability and mental health etc and making the world a better place for the next generation**
    [#MP]   [#P02]   [#Q07]

Devolved Responsibility for Branches (5)

Nick Tate Oct 7 #58

If branches are to operate effectively, there must be some devolved responsibility which will need to include some level of access to funds

2 people liked this

Ul Oct 11 #74   Edited Oct 14

i think this is part of a broader problem where BEC members, although elected to represent their respective state/territory, do not really have any recognition by ACS in responsibility, role or function. The BEC should be empowered to act on behalf of the ACS as a whole, and require the autonomy and decision making to run their branch directly. Eg. We lack the ability to contact our local members directly, which is a ridiculous position to be in.

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12 #83

Could not agree more with @Nick.

I think that Draft Principles 3, 6 and 10 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 appear to be in the correct direction.

The complete dis-empowerment of Branches was a major reason for the Constitutional Debacle of 2019.

Roger Clarke Oct 13 #96

Reposted for Ann Moffatt, to get it into the same Thread:

I agree.

mathew_eames@... Oct 14 #98

Branches know their local community the best, agility to respond to local needs really give the branch the best chance to support and grow its backyard….

1 person liked this

Where should ACS spend its money? (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 4 #32   Edited Oct 30

It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it - but the need to show a clear member benefit in financial expenditure can perhaps be somewhere in the constitution?

1 person liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 4 #33   Edited Oct 30

On Mon, Oct 4, 2021 at 03:20 PM, Jacqueline Hartnett wrote:

> ... It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it ...

I imagine most members would be pleased that the Society delegates the majority of the strategic and policy decisions to the governing committee, and happy that the governing committee delegates the ongoing operational decisions and actions to employees. I certainly am.

But I have a problem with the ideas that (a) no decisions at all can be made at regional level, and (b) no discretionary funds are available at regional level.

Suppose a thousand-dollar decision is needed, to take advantage of an interesting ICT person who's in the district for a short time, and who's prepared to offer a seminar / workshop / demo / site-visit to local members. It costs money to get a venue, some basic catering and a user-pays wet bar.

Even now, following admin changes made over the last few years, Branch Committees have no capacity to make any such decision.

The Branch Committee has to go cap in hand to the Branch Manager, who is an employee of ACS, beholden to the CEO, not the members. The Branch Manager may or may not negotiate funding from Head Office. Despite its small size, the organisation's bureaucracy grinds slowly. By that time, the opportunity's gone. And everyone in the region quickly learns that it's pointless asking ACS if they could host an event, even at all, but especially at short notice.

Effective organisations recognise as a basic principle a thing called 'subsidiarity': Delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made. Regions vary in the their needs. Regions need decision-making powers, and discretionary budgets.

4 people liked this

Jo Dalvean Oct 6 #49

Not just begging - the situations where the funds are available but the means to access it to spend it are challenging, and in these cases Branches hand dollars back.

2 people liked this

Ul Oct 11 #75

agreed. more delegation and better financial resourcing for branches is needed.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall Oct 11 #79

BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that and MC is not allowed to deny branch expenditure or disapprove a budget. The current approach adopted by the MC/CEO appears to be in contradiction to this understanding. The BECs are there to forward the aims of the society, the branch managers are there to help them do that.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 12 #93   Edited Oct 30

Well said bob.

Michael Driver Oct 16 #121

Hi Roger,

I have posted a similar response elsewhere.

Branches cannot exist (?) on membership revenue, so how do we enable the branches/chapters to function effectively on membership revenue while the business needs to seek alternate business revenue to progress. (i.e. we need to generate more revenue to offset Government changes).

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 17   #123   Edited Oct 30

If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members comming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you started charging $20 per meeting in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.

Ali Shariat Oct 17   #124

In my time at ACS, Stats showed that 80% of people who attened the NSW functions where the same group of people. It is important to encourage diversity and maintain membership through engagement. If there is no engagement, membership is like a sieve.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 17   #126

As the conduit to members Branches need more flexible access to funds. In Vic we were routinely told 'no budget' as member service ideas arose, then after the close of FY2020/21 we were informed that a $120K 'surplus', created to cover the 6-month member fee payment pause, was accounted back to consolidated funds. So many questions - did Branch have access to these funds? who knew about this in FY21? why weren't these funds available to support member servicing? Why was BEC told 'no budget? I assume similar scenarios in other Branches?

Ali Shariat Oct 17   #127

Obviously, this is not only indicating the failure of management committee to communicate global decision but also failure to understand the marketplace. ICT staff were in the best position to continue working during the pandemic. There is a high skill shortage of ICT. While a nice gesture, money could have been used better.

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #285

I feel that having a revenue stream to allow for member benefits at branch level is fine. Not every service we do has to turn a profit. If we are there to serve members, and we do this by using a revenue stream (like skills assessment), then I think that's okay personally.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #295

Are we potentially putting the cart before the horse here. In the new structure will branches exist?

I think the key point is this. The ACS needs to make a strategic decisions about an appropriate level of funding of 'local events' and a subsidiarity principle that allows for those local decisions to be made.

As a general answer to this question, I think they ACS should spend more of its money on being a 'good-citizen'. Working with other interested parties to help discuss policy and work with other societies, interest groups etc. to bring about high quality events (ones with the best discussions, ideas, instruction - not the best location or catering). In addition we should be clear as a society about the 'gaps' we fill in the market and make these our 'tent pole' events.

So if i was to distil this to principles.

- The ACS should fund targeted, high quality activities that benefit the profession or Australian Society, rather than members specifically.

- The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.

-The ACS should delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made.

I would also suggest as a principle

- The ACS where sensible should partner with other organizations in line with its objectives to increase value to our members and the wider public.

Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice (11)

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #105

R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained AND enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #193

The degeneration of the role of the branches is not at all aligned with Member interests. The state/territory branch should be the mechanism thet addresses the requirements of the state based membership.

The objectives of Principles #3 and #10 must be truly manifest at a branch-level.

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@... Oct 26   #206

Agree. Additionally, if BEC should act as a conduit of their members. Then, there should be equal representation of members of all ages, across industries for each state.

1 person liked this

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #284

I agree Jia.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #300

Controversially, I disagree.

The branches are not providing governance value. Under a company limited by guarantee, this would be further weakened as the constitution will place the authority with the board.

In my opinion, the ACS's precocial and academic factionalism have not been serving the interests of the society and we have been less effective as a result.

I think we need to take forward the principles of engagement and consultation. I also think we need to have some form of local engagement for developing activities - but let's use this as an opportunity to reimagine a new structure that potentially creates communities of interest, rather than local communities.

1 person liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #301

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 04:40 PM, Robert Estherby wrote:

> *take forward the principles of engagement and consultation.* ...

> ... communities of interest, rather than local communities.

How do you see this working, Robert?

Are you aware of any way in which ACS has been supporting communications among dispersed members?

During the fracas of late 2019, it was impossible for members who were opposed to the motion being put to the AGM to communicate their arguments to other members.

Then, when the CRWG was setting up this Online Forum, the ACS was unable to provide infrastructure to support it.

So CRWG used an appropriate, commercially-available service, outside the acs.org.au domain, to deliver it.

ne approach whereby ACS could support dispersed communities of interest would be to provide infrastructure, establish a Participation Guide / Code of Conduct such as the one we set up at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/CRWG-CodeofConduct.pdf , and enable any organiser to create a community and publicise its existence and purpose to the membership as a whole.

But I've not seen any concrete proposals of such an idea.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #303

@roger ... not sure how to tag...Roger, Robert is an amazing champion of the ACS... almost a recent founder of Young IT...but a very clear thinker....ex ACSNSW BC member

and this is a KEY to ACS TRUST and COLLABORATION

knowing what that looks like seems to be a point of confusion!!!!

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #305

That is a good question.

And no, the ACS 'as a corporate entity' never really embraced the creation of 'digital communities'. We had quite an effective one via Facebook for interstate Young IT at one time, but it was always 'under the radar.

I think your idea is a good one, re: setting up the environment - but I think what is needed is to have people form a core group and build those communities. We have a lot of discussion around having specialisation recognition but we could start with providing an online community of practice around that online or even deliver online discussions and AMA's on that build a live community.

Within those communities, you could then provide input and expertise for a range of different topics. The trick though is to build the community and that does take time.

But if we are honest. The active number of NSW members who attended branch meetings voted etc was less than 1000, from memory much less. We are kidding ourselves if we think that the branches are representative of the full society.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #307

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #314

I feel you are right Helen, I just don't know how they will work in the new structure.

I feel like we might have an opportunity to re-think how it all works if we go back to a principles-based approach and I think we should be open to that in the process.

I feeling as we enter the next phase of the pandemic, is that the society has the opportunity to do build a richer digital experience; and we probably shouldn't do it on "ACS tech" use third-party to tech to experiment.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #316

But to take it back to the main point.

The suggestion is that the BEC's act as a conduit - but I just don't see how that will work.

If we have a new board, the legal authority will be in that one entity and state BEC's will not maintain their governance role.

Board members will I understand, will be bound by the Corporations Act, so they will be making the best decisions for the society, regardless of sectional interests (as I understand it).

So it brings me back to this point, regardless of if we have branches or not - the constitution needs to embody the ideas of engagement and consultation so that there is trust and collaboration within the Society.

Exemplar Peer Organisation   (5)

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #263   Edited Oct 30

I was asked about exemplar constitutions for a Company Limited by Guarantee. Well, how about we go one step further and look at a contemporary organisation that is not just a Company Limited by Guarantee, but is also gleefully eating the ACS breakfast, lunch and dinner in the health space.

Every person involved in this debate shoudl look outward a bit more.

Start with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

They've even got a website that puts the ACS to shame!

Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) It's accessible in just 2 clicks from their landing page.

Their website puts the ACS to shame.

And don't forget to check out the credentials of their CEO!

Ann Moffatt Oct 29   #276   Edited Oct 30

Thanx mark,

I agree. The ACS website is a disgrace for an enterprise that holds itself up to represent the profession.

Lets spend some of our large bag of money on getting a decent website rather than sending execs to WEF meetings.

Roger Clarke Oct 29   #278

Mark Toomey wrote:

> Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

> Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) ...

Thanks Mark.

But I can only detect one provision that's other than mainstream.

For example, re member-numbers to call a General Meeting, cl.15(2)(b) merely refers to Corps Act s.249F (5%).

And there are no occurrences in the document of 'transparency' or 'consultation', or member 'approval', 'ratification' or 'endorsement'.

The exception is:

28. Direct Votes

(a) The Board will determine from time to time if Voting Members are entitled to vote by a Direct Vote on a matter or a resolution ...

But that empowers the Board, not the members, and the members can't force the provision to be invoked.

So in what way does the AIHD Constitution "assure the members of better control"?

BTW, I fully agree with your remarks about the web-site problem   (:-(}

David Abulafia Oct 29   #280   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with Ann

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #343

Roger, all.

First, apologies for the delay in replying. I have no power, no phone and no internet due to the storms on Thursday and Friday morning. Unlikely to have anything until Monday at best, unless I drive to somewhere that the phone can connect. Who knows when this little contribution will be sent.

So you seem terribly worried that a clg based governing body can run riot. I guess that's fair, as the current model allowed MC to run riot. In fact, MC has been ignoring members for years, and has been totally unaccountable.

In the AIDH model, which is quite unremarkable and very consistent with the model I used for the digital leadership institute, the board is accountable to members normally through the election process, in which all financial members vote according to their individual preference. Directors who do not have the interests of members foremost will lose their seats.

The second form of accountability is the special general meeting, which can be called by members, regardless of whether the board wants it to not. The constitution defines the exact rules for special general meetings, such as how many members are required to call the meeting. Special General Meetings are generally used to address major concerns with board behaviour.

But the above is a somewhat nuclear approach. Smart companies have highly developed methods of addressing and solving problems. Many use a quality management system aligned to ISO 9000. It beggars belief that the ACS does not have an ISO 9000 QMS, but then again, given the raft of failure over the years, it should be no real surprise.

OH, if anyone feels that I have missed something, just remember that I assess on hard evidence, not on bluster. The ACS may have something it calls a QMS, but there is no evidence of any such thing that actually works.

Because of the storm related issues, this is probably my last contribution to this stage of the process. I look forward to contributing in the next stages too.

Role of Branches (26)

Jacqueline Hartnett
Oct 3 #29

Surely this must be an important discussion point. Some have suggested that life would be much simpler if there were no Branch Executive Committees(BECs), just a pool of people that operational staff can ask advice from when required. Others want BECs have a command and control role.

This discus should not be constrained by worries about personal liability for actions undertaken by volunteers. There are ways to protect from that. This discussion is about the vision for how you want things to be, the next phase will look at the trade offs that may be needed to enshrine such a vision in the constitution

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 5 #36

Jacky, i would also like to add the roles of chapters as they are critically important for regional reach.

3 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 16 #119   Edited Oct 30

hi Jacky,

I agree that the Jurisdictions are a vital part of the ACS. As Beau mentioned, QLD and possibly others have healthy chapters as QLD is a geographically large state. To ensure that we reach out to the current and future members, these voices need to be heard through branch and regional input.

Under the current arrangement, which I was party to in Congress in 2019, the inability of these regional chapters to hold a bank account, albeit in the ACS name, limits there focus.

For clarity, there has to be a clear understanding of what is membership funds that may be used in supporting the state/local members and what is business derived funds that the Branch / State / Chapter can utilise or apply for.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17 #125

Hi Mike

I agree with branch and chapters, however creating separate bank accounts is not an answer. A good accounting system with allow everyone to have a budget and clarity on the expenditure.

2 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 18 #131   Edited Oct 30

Hi Ali,

It has been too long between chats, my fault.

I didn't mean to suggest or imply separate bank accounts rather the ability of incidental expenses without a volunteer being out of pocket for an expense.

1 person liked this

UI

Oct 22 #170

BECs/branches/chapters should continue and ACS should function similar to State/Federal governments. Branches should have more autonomy with their finances and greater independence in deciding what works for their circumstances.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 22 #181   Edited Oct 30

I agree.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 23   #186

Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS and therefore have level of autonomy to service their member base. This must be enshrined in the Constitution AND Enforced in practice. This is actually in the current rules but snubbed (R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations).

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@...

Oct 26   #207

It would also be great to have Objective and Key Results to measure how effective the advice from BECs are.

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 27   #218

100% agree Rod. each branch and for that matter chapter is different and we need to be make sure we are able to be flexible to support each in the way that members feel empowered and engaged. some of the best events and most engaged members (especially in QLD) are located regionally. we need to give them a voice and support what is needed in each region

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 28   #242

To add a different dimension to this debate I, as VicBEC elected member, was privy to a presentation for the CEO and (less so) President sharing ACS progress in June.   It was a useful overview however, I was disturbed by the perhaps unintentional bias in reference to Branches which included terminology like 'subsidising' branches and 'loss leader'.

As posted above, Branches are the conduit for the member vice and are integral to a cohesive professional organisation. Therefore reference to branches, and by implication, members in these terms seems to be reflective of an attitude that is counter member voice. Copy of my, as yet unanswered letter to CEO follows below.

My concerns have been exacerbated in recent weeks by participation in the Strategy refresh (Dovetail) project and a member segmentation project. Both of these projects are driven by staff using a framework from which to formulate ACS strategy though 2025 that presents the key areas for ACS more or less as the current business lines i.e. Skills Assessment, ACS Labs.... My understanding of marketing strategy 101 is that it starts with the 'customer need',i.e. ACS members. Both projects purport to be Member first'. Hmmm..

<< end of rant>>

Letter to CEO June 2021

Dear Rupert

Many thanks for sharing ACS progress with the BEC, Victoria on Wednesday last. It is heartening to see early signs of leadership transparency on ACS matters.

If I may, there are two observations I would like to make.

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches. Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member- centric professional society. To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle.

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services. Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidies' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos.

In making these comments I point out that language use is central to the politically correct' debates we are having over workplace health, and safety. In our recent ACS training the recognition of 'indirect inference' as a factor in bullying was an emphasis and our awareness of micro-aggression is heightened - language is important.

The fundamental existential question here is ' Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society. Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values?

Rupert, I offer these observations in good faith and trust they make a positive contribution as ACS looks to the future.

Happy to speak anytime.

1 person liked this

Peter

Oct 28   #245

Thank you Rod for sharing this episode. The more I think about this phrasing of 'loss-leader' the more concerned I become.

Is there a fundamental weakness in the current combined ACS enterprise so that it will always return to seeing members as a 'loss-leader'? If so I would rather we divest or disband than become a trojan horse commercial enterprise masquerading behind a professional society. I would rather we were a financially smaller but successful professional society focused on its members, their standards and public good, than a larger commercially focused enterprise that forgot what it was. As a smaller more focused association we may not need to worry abut a CLG structure at all.

David Abulafia

Oct 28   #248   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Peter.

Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.

The ACS is a not for profit organisation, and should not even think of commercial activities.

A smaller more focus financially stable society is what should exist.

During my involvement in converting my synagogue from an association to CLG, the ACNC told us they were encouraging all NFP incorporated associationd to becoming CLG.

devindra.weerasooriya@...

Oct 28   #249

I do not hold any elected positions within the Branch/National structure. But I have learnt from those that do hold such positions about a recent heightened emphasis about politically correct' debates over workplace health, and safety, within Executive deliberations; as pointed by Rod Dilnutt.

If so, I do believe that many participants of this thread, and the whole CRWG-Conversation, would agree that referring to activities at a Branch-level focused on the Professional Excellence of Members in a derogatory manner is equally or more inimical to their sensitivities and more generally their perception of what ACS should be.

To put it more bluntly, for the ACS to advertise as having a "Mission of Professional Excellence" and regard the process towards achieving that as Loss-leading and Non-viable; must cease right-away and be declared as out-of-order throughout the ACS. All activity threads, such as the CRWG

and the New-Strategy must be refocused towards achieving the Mission of Professional Excellence, in a viable manner.

When ACS really demonstrates itself as a "MUST-HAVE" service for Professional-Excellence in ICT, I'm certain that it will have no difficulty in rekindling the interest of ICT-Professionals, that is falling-away away, at present.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #250   Edited Oct 30

Yes definitely.

All forms of political correctness should shot down immediately.

Political correctness is the cancer of our society inside and outside of the ACS.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28 #252   Edited Oct 30

Grrrr. What sort of dopey platform is this - my reply to a comment well above here is not linked to the comment and instead appears out of context at the end!

Well, referring to Rod Dilnut comment #186...

Agree, but as part of the review, we must review the role of the BEC and get it right. One obvious change is that the BEC will no longer be the entity which disenfranchises members from voting for the board (MC) by appointing its delegates to Council - the members will be able ot vote directly. I think that the key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone

Oct 28 #255

Relying to Mark's comments #252

Could we also extend the Branch Executive Committee memberd to having input and be empowered and encouraged to also provide advice and experience into the strategic opportunities for the ACS, and ICT driven and enabled developments that are occurring both locally in the jurisdiction but also nationally?

Ann Moffatt

Oct 28 #259   Edited Oct 30

Well said dev.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28 #269

That would seem to be a perfectly sensible thing to do Chris Radbone.

tony.errington@...

Oct 29 #282

I fully agree with Rod Dilnutt (#186) and Chris Radbone (#255). I also agree with the various comments regarding the need to eliminate any comments such as 'loss-leading' and 'non-viable' when talking about supporting our members. Members are at the very core of the ACS and must remain so and be recognised as such by the hierarchy (both elected and employed).

As Rod says, branches are a key link in the chain from a member to the ACS, they are the only parts of the organisation that understand what their local members want and need. Their role should be enshrined in the future constitution, clearly spelling out the relationship between the elected members of the Branch BEC and the salaried Branch (or State) Manager

And while branches should have a budget which is approved at MC level, and they should perform to that, the creation of that budget should be a joint exercise and not simply imposed from above. Branches also need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focussed, without needing to go through an extended process of approval that takes unreasonable time and resources.

David Abulafia

Oct 29   #286   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Tony

Nick Tate

Oct 31   18:37   #339

In my view, branches (and chapters) are essential elements for a future ACS. Local governance (such as BECs and Chapter Committees) allow the branch to focus on issues and events in their own state or territory and to engage more effectively with their state/territory Government, than is possible nationally. To be able to do that, there will need to be some level of budget provision for the BECs and Chapter Committees to initiate projects and activities, without undue oversight from a national committee or national office; this of course must be limited to an agreed budget. Any contracts that a branch wishes to enter into will need to go through a process to ensure that it does not have unintended effects on the ACS as a whole. To implement these projects or activities will require access to staff resources and this can also be manged via an appropriate budget process.

In this round, we are trying to tease out principles and I suggest that the principle around branches is the desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

Nick as a member not as CRWG Co-convenor

Dr. Paul O'Brien

Oct 31   #345

I agree with Nick.

A Federal model with fairly autonomous branches has a lot of advantages, particularly the ability for Branches to work closely with State and Territory governments, other professional associations and industry associations.

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31   #347

I agree with Mike and Beau...We must be able to operate quickly with all the checks and balances supporting initiatives not closing them down...sadly the perceived "No Culture"

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31   #348

Double like.

Initiatives at the moment go no where @beau @chris we did the Branch listening taskforce and then where di it go ...

I am currently working up an understanding with ACS staff on that NO Culture eg where are the Access cards for the Branches who are "lucky?!?!" to have a hub as their office..and in Lockdown..

Robert Estherby

Oct 31   #353

On Sun, Oct 31, 2021 at 06:37 PM, Nick Tate wrote:

> desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

I agree that if we continue with a federated model with branches, they also should have clear objectives that support the whole society, and prevent branches from pulling away in multiple directions. We should be looking to encourage collaboration and initiative rather than unaccountable

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4.   Richard Cordes   15 October 2021

6 Branch Centred Execution, and Nationally Supported

<u>Branches determine how best to execute the ACS core business processes, in the context of ACS vision, mission, and values, and with the support of national</u>. **[P03]   [P10]**

•   Promotes simultaneous loose-tight properties.

•   Doing so supports autonomy, agility, entrepreneurship, and being close to the customer.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Feedback: I understand that there needs to be effective delegation of power to the board / management committee / CEO / MD. I do however confess to <u>feeling particularly disenfranchised over the last 5 years</u>. Sitting with this discomfort has given me the opportunity to reflect and provide the following suggestions to remedy this for the professional members:

•   I see the **dual electorate mechanism / branch structures / company limited by guarantee / delegation of powers as being intrinsically linked**. **[P11]**

•   I want to see less complication at the organisational structure level and **more direct accountability** and with that clearer delegation of power from the membership. **[P08]**

•   I want to suggest that we dissolve the local branch elections, and we <u>vote directly for the board / committee at a national level</u>. **[Dir]**

•   I choose to trust my fellow like minded members to make appropriate decisions in choosing an appropriate board / management committee directly at a national level.

•   Part of my feeling of disenfranchisement is that my voice does not directly count at a national leadership level. Sure, we go through the motions in voting in local committees at branch level and we empower them to vote in appropriate national leaders (or vote out) at congress.

•   **Branches** would then collapse back to being **event delivery teams run locally**, but not needing to be elected. **[P03]**

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q11 Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area?

This question produced the most debate and discussion of the session.

There was wide support for the view **that there should be sufficient autonomy for the branches so that they are in control of their own destiny**. **[P03]   [Q11]**

Bob expressed the view that **a professional society needs to support and be supported by local professionals, who in turn need the branch and chapter structure for support**. This view was again widely supported across the BEC. **[P03]   [Q11]**

Q11. Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

- Having grown from a federated model of relatively autonomous states there has been no emphasis on the common issues. IT is now central to many things and potentially **we should delegate things to different states to enable them to deal with things in their own state legislative context. But we also need to emphasise that there are commonalities that we don't currently recognize**.   **[P03]**

- Yes, branches should be able to deal with things specific to their state but there needs to be co-ordination of national input and involvement.

———————————

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01 #Q03   #Q07

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #428

I've been looking at my email archive for my period as VP Academic from Jan 2013 to Oct 2016.

As I was given to understand, the move to make the CEO the ACS Councillor on SA was because it was a corporate not technical role.

However, re the various technical committees etc.

- generally speaking, ACS members (not staff) continued to be our reps. on these
- in 2015 I had MC confirm that we would support approx. 10 of these at approx. $1.5K each (travel expenses) per annum – admittedly not much, but the specific value proposition to ACS was (and remains – see below) hard to capture.

Managing the connection with SA was (unexpectedly) difficult:

- not easy to discover who was representing ACS
- not easy to discover what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input
- not clear what ACS expectations were of ACS reps.

The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is what is ACS's position? Consider for example an ACS rep. on a group working on system requirements. I might take the position that a clear requirements documents should be the prerequisite to any procurement (development, purchase etc.), that agile development/codesign should be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Doubtless others in ACS would disagree. So how do we arrive at "the ACS position", for SA or for anything. (In the specific case of SA, the solution would have to involve ACS reps. reporting back to ACS on matters coming up at SA, and ACS giving guidance back to our reps.)

I am definitely NOT objecting to ACS engaging with SA, nor objecting to ACS supporting same. But unless ACS develops a reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters for input to SA, then I would find it hard to justify increased ACS investment in same.

Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.) How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #429

To paraphrase my other on this just before …

The problem is how to integrate these representations actually into the life of ACS and its membership?

Maybe couple each with a SIG? But there still needs to be a link to/from the Society's central leadership in such matters e.g. the Technical Board (as things have been since Oct 2016)

Jack Burton Nov 4   #432   **[#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#P11]**

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a

thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief (and none of the signatories could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.

Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00] [#P02] [#P07] [#P11] [#Q14]**

•   reduction of Boards
•   2019 constitutional reform
•   COVIDSafe endorsement
•   <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Re: Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03 #P06 #P10 #Q11

karl Nov 3 #411

Branches (as do other elements of ACS) need have a "delegation" which is sufficient for autonomous operation.

The needs to include budgetary autonomy with normal rules of authority.

Again, the past systems worked very well (even though there were stuff-ups).

I am on the VIC BEC and we cannot move without national authority. We seem to be tied up by the national Strategy and Budget.

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3 #413

When I was on the VIC BEC, a sensible person in National ACS advised not seeking permission, as the default answer was NO.

karl Nov 3 #418

Yes, I guess we have all faced this at different times.

The line "its better to ask for forgiveness than permission" is attributed to Grace M. Hopper.

But, from a Governance point of view it carries enormous risk and exposure.

Far better to give people appropriate delegations.

SIGs as an example Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03 #P06 #P10 #Q11

karl Nov 3 #412

I have attached **the list of SIGs that were active in 2016. The total across all states was about 65**.

Some were social, some meeting non-ICT needs, however, they reflected members' needs.
It is something we should be proud of.

And, **we need to have this again!**

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3 #414

In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation.

It was never re-instated.

Roger Clarke Nov 3 #415

On 3/11/21 5:41 pm, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation. It was never re-instated.

I can see NatReg 8.15.7:

> Management Committee or the Branch Executive Committee may dissolve any chapter, sub-committee or branch special interest group acting under any delegation function on an affirmative vote by a 2/3 majority or any time without having to provide reasons.

On the face of it, a Branch Manager does not have the legal authority to take any such action.

On the face of it, neither does the CEO, so any delegation to the Branch Manager could not have come from the CEO.

Did anyone ask the Vic Branch Manager for evidence of authority?

Why not ask the current BEC to reform the SIG under NatReg 18.5.1?

These aren't hypothetical questions.

What appears to have happened in 2016, in at least Victoria, was in apparent breach of the Rules of the Society.

We can't 'roll back time' (images of US battleship).

But BECs can exercise the powers that they have at their disposal.

David Abulafia Nov 4 #422

How many SIGS are still active in 2021?

<div align="center">

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

</div>

Karl: Concerned about the relationship between staff and elected officials
and the function of staff to support elected officials   **[#P00]**
Similarly staff should not represent the Society, and staff should not be on Boards

Karl: **The Society has lost its skills at delegation to elected officials, with Boards and Committees tied down in red tape**   **[#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#Q11]**

Q11: Branches

Susan: Constitutionally, **we have to be national and local**. Ability to operate both physically and virtually. **Matrixed arrangements are inherent. We need better collaboration and sharing**. Inclusion is one example where **connections** are lacking. It's hierarchical and it's not at all **collaborative**. We need collaboration at the core of the Constitution

Jo: Did it work better when there was **direct Branch involvement in each national Committee**? Would it work better now than the current non-Branch-based approach?

<div align="center">

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

</div>

Leveraging the expertise of ACS Committees, boards and members

While ACS has Boards Committees and Task Forces etc. that deal with specific issues, these are encouraged to offer opinions on any matters they consider relevant to the ACS and the IT community in Australia.

ACS should form task forces for situations where a rapid response is required. These should draw from all resources including committees

It should be a constitutional requirement that ACS ensure that Elected officials and other volunteers are supported by staff and also that they are not confronted with decision making structures that make action extremely difficult.

To ensure that this is achieved, ACS should operate in a delegation system that assigns appropriate action and financial capabilities to the Elected Officials and Appointed Officials and other volunteers.

Recognise managerial achievements   (1)

cindy.chung@... Oct 8   #59

Professional bodies have qualifying criteria that admits the member to the category relevant to the depth of their knowledge and experience.

Management plays an influential role. Due to the low barrier of entry to work in the tech field, there may be a variety of experiences behind someone working in management. They may rely on their team or organisational support to perform their function effectively, or otherwise, They may have worked their way and sought a range of experience including technical experience. The title may be shared across a sample of people but they may perform functions to a varying degree of mastery.

A lot of people work very hard to get their credentials, industry certifications etc. People may become managers without these as requirements. Whatever the decision is, the decision needs to be be fair in recognising and respecting the member's efforts in their achievements.

1 person liked this

Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core   (3)

Nick Tate Oct 6   #46

ICT now encompasses a number of different specialties. For example, Cybersecurity, AI, Data Science, to name but a few. There seems to be some merit in considering how to embrace these specialties whist also retaining a focus on core ICT knowledge.

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12   #84   Edited Oct 12

I'd suggest that the speciality domains be Data-Science. AI and Robotics, espousing added values of

Prescriptive/Predictive insights - Data-Science

Learning and functioning in a a domain with minimal guidance - AI

Advanced automation - Robotics (the Software Components of Robots are the focus. Robots also contain extensive hardware componentry)

Cyber-security is protecting Data-at -Rest and Data-in-Motion from web-based attacks. It could be argued that Cyber-security is a part of the broad Information and Communication domains. But the elevation of the area to a separate domain may be warranted, given the current National/International relevance of this domain.

The mater is dealt with in #Q02 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1. However, I do have reservations about the Principle-4 dealing with Hubs of specialisation. The reason for that is because ACS, as it stands, doers not adequately address the above specialisations to any depth at all. On the contrary there is much time/space devoted to Leadership-topics, Diversity and un-restrained Marketing of Trends.

Hence ACS should re-focus on it's core message on ICT and some broad specialisations, such as Data-Science, AI and Robotics. One can have a series of horizontals such as Programming,

Testing, Systems-Configuration, Business-Analysis, Architecture, ICT-Management etc. (this is not exhaustive). ACS has a bit to do to get it's house in order.

What is necessary is an unrestrained commitment to delivering value for it's membership and the broader ICT-ecosystem. The branches must shoulder the brunt of this re-imagined intent; with the centre being responsible for Policy and Standards, where appropriate. As such an exhaustive working-over of #Q02 of the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 is mandatory during the CRWG deliberations.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #356

I think that we need to be pragmatic with this. Many of these area's have their own associations etc.

I think that the constitution should allow the ACS to partner with other relevant associations to develop joint memberships - rather than try and duplicate communities of interest.

Do we want to be called "engineering professionals"?   (15)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 27   #219   Edited Oct 30

On the professions website ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals".

Are we happy with this?

If not, what should we be called?

Adrian Porteous Oct 27   #220   Edited Oct 30

Hi Rimas

Good pick up!

We seem to be a bit conflicted with our identity.

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS is all about. There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'. In fact, there is no clue to this being even a Professional Society. If the visitor persists, they might try to find some form of 'About' tab; there isn't one. They might notice that the most significant tab, largest and centred, is 'Migration Skills Assessment'.

This shyness was not always the case; we have in previous years been very upfront and clear about our role on the ACS home page:

1996

The ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields. Established in 1966, the ACS has over 15,000 members and on a per capita basis is one of the largest computer societies in the world.

1998

The ACS as the recognised association for IT professionals has become the public voice of the IT professional and the guardian of professional ethics and standards. The Society has a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of IT.

2000

the society for information technology professionals

2003

ACS Advancing IT Professionals

2009 through 2012

ICT Professionals Shaping Our Future

2015

Inspiring Success (comment: Huh?)

2017 through current day

nothing!

Why the change? Was this a considered decision of Management Committee? Does it reflect that membership accounts for only 7% of revenue and other 'Business Lines' dominate?

The ACS' Rules (2010), Regulations (2011) and Core Body of Knowledge (2019) are quite explicit on the ACS being a society for 'ICT Professionals'. Our casual website visitor would need some curiosity and persistence delving to the 'Governance' tab at the bottom of the page to find these documents, and to know what they were looking for in the first place.

A question that has not been asked in the current process (at least that I can find) is:

 'Should the Constitutional Reform Process start with the current ACS foundational documents (Objects, Rules and Regulations) ?'

If the answer is "Yes", we are reforming the society based on its current foundations.

If the answer is "No", maybe we should be explicit in acknowledging that we are creating a 'new' society.

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #221   Edited Oct 30

There's a great deal of ICT professional activity that objectively merits the "engineering" distinction (and to which practitioners of same should at least aspire). Some of this activity is recognised as such by the established Engineering profession (i.e. EA). To cut a long story short, the technical diversity in "ICT" means that ACS is going to have to come to terms with the organisations with which its interests overlap (as partners not rivals).

But …

I fear from this discussion that many of us would accept as "ICT professional" (or whatever) as including activity that is hard to recognise as "engineering" – happy to be persuaded otherwise.

Also, I I fear from this discussion that at least some would like ACS to include, as professional members, individuals whose background stretches the distinction between "profession" and "trade". Again to cut a long story short, ACS would be a strange "professional association" to include as members individuals without a degree-level qualification in the field (as characterised by the association's BOK etc.)

David Abulafia Oct 27   #222   Edited Oct 30

Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live and have effects on all professional services. So the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects. From design to implement.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #223   Edited Oct 30

Some very good points here

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #227

I agree with "Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live [sic] and have effects on all professional services" but the "the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects" looks like a non sequitur to me. Why "does" or even "should"? Apologies if I am jumping to conclusions – are you suggesting that "trade" members should be MACS rather than AACS?

I hope to have more to say about the challenge to ACS that arises from the breadth of its interests, but for now may I share may fears that if ACS embraces sub-degree-qualified individuals as (professional grade) members, then our "professional" standing is threatened. (E.g. the Law Society does not seem to allow paralegals as members; and let's not get started about the exclusiveness of the various medical professional bodies).

David Abulafia Oct 27   #232   Edited Oct 30

Non degree people should not be professional grades, but non degree technician should be involved somehow with ACS.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #233   Edited Oct 30

Normally the board hired professional people to look after the day to day operations and legal requirements and the board provides direction, only the treasury really needs accounting skills to make sure the finance employees are not trying to con any one.

Ann Moffatt Oct 28 #254   Edited Oct 30

I think we should go back to the 1996 version. Including being honest about the number of members we have. Its about 14/15000.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #265

I agree, Paul B.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #275   Edited Oct 30

The ACS web site can always not very good. The ACS should be embrass by its web site and facility's the web site offers. If the ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields, then the ACS should has the most modern, the best IT facilities, with the most amazing web site, BUT it does not.

The ACS web site should a combination of 1996 and 1998 right on the front landing page.

The ACS need to starts with foundation documents and go back to grass roots. The only reason the ACS makes money is to cover costs of the support of it members.

What is the business product lines the ACS offers to have such a hugh turnover.

Tom Worthington Oct 30 #289

On 27/10/21 11:13 am, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> On the professions website ... ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals". Are we happy with this? ...

No, I am not comfortable being called an engineer, as I have not been admitted into that profession, and real engineers may get upset. I teach engineers, but I teach them computer stuff, as I am a computer professional.

Ali Shariat Oct 30 #291

Hi Tom

I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. I learned to do microchip chip design programming and solving mechanical and chemical problems using electronic concepts. There should be no discredit to include the title of Engineering in computers.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #338

110% agree Ali!

Indeed, what aspects of development (analysis, design, implementation, maintenance) of computer-based information systems (broad term, including embedded systems etc. etc. etc.) wouldn't we want developed to the same "engineering" standards as roads & bridges, the electricity generation and supply network, etc.

EA's acceptance of "Software" and "Computer" as "Engineering" qualifiers (alongside "Civil", "Electrical" etc.) back in the 1980s-90s remains an under-exploited asset to the professionalisation of ICT.

Tom Worthington 08:46 #373

On 30/10/21 10:10 am, Ali Shariat wrote:

> I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. ...

Ali, many of us span multiple disciplines: you computing and engineering, me computing and education. I don't think ACS can claim to cover professional areas.

Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines   (10)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 6   #52

We recognise that many people use ICT in their work. The tricky question is about defining the line between a skilled user and someone who understands the concepts being used to drive the product that they are using - by this I mean having some idea of the possible fallibility of the product and likelihood of underlying assumptions not being as the user might want. Perhaps this is not necessary?

No one person can have this understanding across all that comprises ICT these days. We must then recognise specialised disciplines and the interest groups that serve them. We accept that other professions have specialised disciplines and we must too.

UI Oct 10   #71

i think one of the issues why we've struggled is that ICT is as wide as the field of healthcare.

to draw an analogy: in healthcare you have specialists, primary care providers, allied health providers, health informatics, etc. within each main category there are various professional bodies related to the discipline, eg. dermatology, hematology, renal, psychiatry, physiotherapy, pharmacy, psychology, etc.

In ICT, we also have a dizzying array of categories like health informatics, big data, programming, sys admin, db admin, etc. however, we don't have professional bodies for each of those disciplines.

If ACS wishes to be the representative professional body across all ICT disciplines, the organisation will need to be a lot more agile than it currently is. Perhaps some ICT disciplines should be governed with greater ethics, regulations and CPD as they are in key positions that can potentially cause loss of life. Eg. db admin of a large hospital. ICT is prevalent across all industries and the ACS should be holding its members to high standards, as expected of someone who could be holding the keys to the kingdom (passwords, full admin privileges, complete access)

1 person liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #114

One option is to consider linking eligibility to the Body of knowledge/SFIA and developing hurdle criteria. I recognise that the BoK needs updating and this could be a valuable debate leading to clarity.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #194   Edited Oct 30

Totally agree with the comments of @Jacqueline Hartnett. ACS is not adequately distinguishing between a skilled user and someone who understands the concepts being used to drive the product.

The events of ACS in general sense do not cater adequately to people who understand the concepts being used to drive the product. Addressing this anomaly is a pre-requisite to fixing the falling numbers of ACS-Professional-Memberships.

David Abulafia Oct 25   #195

I would agree with this

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #260

We need to be careful here, or we will end up with something silly like excluding programmers who work in higher level languages, because underneath it is a compiler.

There is an extraordinary array of people who use IT to produce valuable products, while having no knowledge at all of the lower levels of the machines they wield. They are legitimate Digital Professionals just as the people developing software for the ATO are Digital Professionals. The ACS has utterly failed to recognise the opportunity in embracing these people, and has stood by and watched while The Health the Australian Institute of Digital Health has eaten its lunch in the health space.

This from the AIDH website: The Australasian Institute of Digital Health was launched on 24 February 2020 following a member and Fellow vote to merge the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA) and the Australasian College of Health Informatics (ACHI). Members and Fellows of the two organisations are Australia's leaders and emerging leaders in health informatics and digital health.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #350

IMHO ACS cannot expect (and cannot be expected by us) to "own" every professional activity in the country connected with ICT ("computers and stuff", if you will).

People outside ACS will keep having their own ideas.

Further, an interest that crosses traditional professional boundaries (such as AIDH) is going to stretch the definition of "ICT professional" to an extent that risks rendering it meaningless.

HOWEVER … ACS should move to

- develop an understanding with AIDH (and similar groups)
- do what can be done to support ICT professionals working in Digital Health

 In extremis, 2. might (perish the thought) conceivably entail reminding others in AIDH that just as ICT professionals do not claim "Health" domain expertise, neither should Health professionals claim to know how Digital Health ICT should be built.

More generally, ACS might push back against non-ICT professionals thinking they know how to manage ICT projects?

Christopher (Chris) Radbone 10:00   #375

As a member of AIDH, the peak member driven digital health and health informatics organisation in Australasia,

Given the reference to AIDH in several posts, I felt there are some important learnings and insights that the AIDH offers the ACS.

Coincidently at the time the illfated and poorly run ACS constitutional change process was occurring, the AIDH we went through a well run, engaging, transparent and 'respectful' process where members we well engaged and the process to adopt a CLG went remarkably smoothly.

The relatively recent AIDH constitutional reform was an organisational governance change from it's fore runner the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA).

I felt it was important to share the story of AIDH and it's origin and connection to the ACS. One of my colleagues Dr Peter DeFante mentioned in the past couple of weeks the link between HISA and the ACS.

I would greatly appreciate any members recollection and clarification on the following, c/- Chris.radbone@...

I know Tom Worthington, Graeme Philipson and other members will recall Glen Heinrich, who became a member of the ACS in 1969, and as a member of CPA Australia, he was the ACS National Treasurer for well over a decade. I 'believe' but would greatly appreciate clarification, whether through, Glen's work at the South Australian Health Commission (fore runner to SA Health Department) he and 'others... (any names please let me know?) collaborated as ACS Professionals running an ACS Special Interest Group (SIG) on Health IT.

This ACS SIG lead to the establishment of HISA and therefore it's origins through the ACS to what the AIDH has become today.

In putting this out to my learned ACS colleagues, I am keen to be able to confirm, capture and record the early history, in order to acknowledge and appreciate where we are today, ...

 "If I have seen further," Isaac Newton wrote in a 1675 letter to fellow scientist Robert Hooke, "it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.".

Paul Bailes 13:41   #386

Very interesting Chris.

ACS should be able to count its "grandparenthood" of AIDH (via ex-SIG HISA) as a definite win.

The fact that AIDH is independent of ACS should not be regarded as a disaster, however:

Generally speaking, while ACS should be able to recognise professional specialisations within ICT in a more substantial way than "mere" SIGs, 100% inclusion of every coming-together of ICT professionals within the corporate framework of ACS can't be expected. (We should however reach out to these and do our best to ensure that we have compatible understandings of what it means to be that kind of ICT professional. For example, ACS should be on the same page as EA regarding what it takes to be a "Software Engineer".)

In the specific case of AIDH, it seems that its membership includes people who are recognisably ICT professionals, but also many who don't: see https://digitalhealth.org.au/communities-of-practice/institute-fellows/. IMHO it would be wrong for ACS to define "ICT professional" in such a way as to include the membership of AIDH. Rather, AIDH is one of those organisations (like EA – see above) with overlapping interests with ACS with which we need to maintain contact (and where possible, consistency).

David Abulafia 15:16   #388

I agree, the ACS should reach out to related societies

Managers and users of ICT as professional members of ACS   (8)

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #43

Some CIOs are intentionally appointed from outside the ICT professions. It might require some years of experience before they reach a threshold appropriate to professional membership of the ACS. On the other hand, direct reports to CIOs commonly have, and certainly need to develop, specialised   managerial expertise, and to become and remain familiar with the nature of a range of technologies and associated dialects. If ACS isn't the appropriate home for that particular form of ICT professionalism, what professional society is?

z6957315@... Oct 6   #44

Users are a different kind of question.

A first test is whether, say, an astrophysicist or a (digital) chemistry researcher should be able to achieve professional membership of the ACS without, say, a major in an ICT discipline. Surely (given the deep data and processing challenges they address), there should be a threshold-point at which ACS should be able to welcome them into the ICT professional fold?

How about cartographers (probably working in teams with GIS specialists)? statisticians in what we're now calling the data analytics / data science space? epidemiologists using complex modelling techniques? the graphics and process specialists in the games industry (working in teams with ICT professionals)?

ICT hasn't just been spawning lots of new specialisations internally. Even more than in the past, there are a lot of boundary-riders working astraddle two complex fields, and at least some of them would like to signify their dual expertise, and rub shoulders with colleagues on both sides of the boundary.

Tom Worthington replied on Oct 7 #53:

On 6/10/21 4:09 pm, Roger Clarke wrote:

> ... direct reports to CIOs ... remain familiar with the nature of a range of technologies and associated dialects. If ACS isn't the appropriate home for that ...

I spent a few years writing IT policy for a CIO. But I still felt part of the computing profession.

Fellow Enthusiast posted on Oct 8   #62

I like the old style of a hierarchy - full professional members / associates / affiliates.

There is room is such a structure for many staff in as ICT business as well as "nearby" activities such as biotechnic, GIS, or emerging fields.

Robert Estherby posted on Oct 31   #357:

I think in principle the constitution should accommodate Managers and Users as members; however - without an understanding of a 'core-body of knowledge and adherence to the ethical principles I think that they should remain associates.

At a practical level, there may be ways for managers or users to demonstrate an understanding of a core body of knowledge developed via experience.

However, I have had a couple of managers of ICT functions that are 'professional managers' but have no understanding of the technology they manage. As such I do not think it would be appropriate for the ACS to give them standing as ICT professionals.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #358

Could we have a Provisional Professional :P. Like your provisional licence.

Jack Burton 1 Nov 13:02   #383

On Sun, 2021-10-31 at 18:42 -0700, Roger Clarke wrote:

> However, I have had a couple of managers of ICT functions that are 'professional managers' but have no understanding of the technology they manage. As such I do not think it would be appropriate for the ACS to give them standing as ICT professionals.

Couldn't agree more Roger.

Could anyone imagine a large corporation appointing as its CFO someone with no professional background in accounting & finance? Of course not.

Could anyone imagine that same hypothetical large corporation appointing as its Chief General Counsel someone who had no professional background in the law? Again, no of course not.

So why is it somehow okay for that same hypothetical large corporation to appoint as its CIO someone with no professional background in computing & information systems?

If anything, ACS should be *pushing back* against that alarming trend, not going out of our way to accommodate it (and thereby becoming complicit in it).
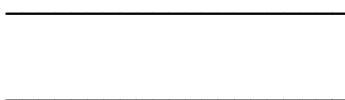
Paul Bailes 13:18   #385

Agreed, Roger then Jack!

To put it another way, perhaps ...

It would be much more ACS's business …

to criticise the appointment of an unqualified CIO (I would expect somewhat more acceptable if it were in the public sector)

rather than …

to encourage citizens to sign up for the COVIDSafe app

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5.   Dr Tim Turner, FACS, GAIC   12 October 2021

I think the idea of the ACS (as a professional society) being able to 'spawn' subsidiary commercial organisations that are operated by a separate board (possibly with some common board members) is critical to allow the ACS to continue to operate its money-making ventures without compromising the professional society's ongoing operations. The various ideas suggested about being consistent with the society's principles and surpluses/dividends being directed to support key functions are exactly appropriate.   **[P04]**

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q6 Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

From my observation, the ACS "acquisition" of seemingly unrelated loss-making industry associations without any kind of consultation or reference to existing membership is where things really started to go wrong.

The settings around conflict of interest would be dependent on how important it is for existing members for the professional recognition and lobbying aims of the Society are. I'd say that aligning with industry associations when there is a mutual benefit is a sound strategy (subject to formal agreement and regular review), but when that benefit is realised or times have moved on, that alignment must be relinquished. The Society must remain free from industry influence as far as practical otherwise its creditability when representing its members to government is more readily called into question.

I think the formation of **"Technical Societies" for specialised areas could be a valuable initiative**, and could be a good membership draw-card, **but the type of support would have to be carefully managed**. Support with venues for meetings, promotion internally to the broader membership, break-out sessions at national congress and so forth all seem sensible.   **[P04]**

Q11 Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

As a member of ACS who has lived regionally for the last 20 years, I'd be inclined to refer to the Branches as City Branches rather than State Branches. We've been very light on any kind of events during COVID, and prior to that everything is very city centric. Recent changes in worker behaviour find people much more spread out and needing access to networking and education literally all over the country. The current constitution of branch responsibility, reporting and electoral make-up seems unnecessarily complicated and riddled with needless duplication whilst increasingly delivering less and less of member value - particularly outside Sydney.   **[Ch]**

Technology breaks down geography - so it seems almost anachronistic for a this Society to purposely organise itself by location.

Perhaps a better constitution would be to **have Branches that are organised amongst area of interest (Specialist Branches), led by recognised experts in the fields and supported by dedicated administrative staff funded by the ACS**. These Specialist Branches would have national reach, deep and specific engagement with their members and representation at higher levels of the ACS.   **[P04]**

_____

1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021

The issue of Technical Societies is an interesting one. As I understand it, Engineers Australia has the following - Australian Cost Engineering; Sustainable Engineering Society; the Society for Building Services Engineers; Australian Geomechanics Society; Australian Shotcrete Society; Australian Tunnelling Society. These societies serve many functions related to the establishment and maintenance of engineering qualifications. My understanding, and I may be wrong, is that these societies were established by individuals in the various fields and were not instigated by Engineers Australia, and hence they are self-driven.   **[P04]**

Engineers also has colleges which represent easily defined sub-divisions of engineering such as electrical, chemical, civil, etc.

ACS needs a structure which will attract those working in diverse areas of ICT. It could well replicate, as appropriate, the structures used in IFIP- Technical Committees (TCs) and Working Groups (WGs). The TCs and WGs are- ...

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q6:   Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

This question is ambiguous because, like overlapping circles in a Venn diagram, these two alternatives could be the same thing. The 'risk managed way' could be an alternative 'organisational structure'.

Anyway, what I think this question is asking is whether ACS should support industry associations or stay away. I strongly believe ACS should support industry associations but not publicly, as they are quite different in their objectives and value-sets. Reasons to support are 1. potential for additional revenue + membership and 2. broadly supporting ICT across Australia is in ACS' interests.

This could be accomplished with **an "Association as a Service" engine, that ACS could spin off in a subsidiary company**. Corporate services (i.e. legal, finance, marketing, IT, HR) could be packaged up and these services sold in an Association-aaS business model. Therefore, ACS remains arm's length from being publicly associated with the front-end 'business' of industry associations but still makes money from supporting their back-end functions.   **[P04]**

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1.   KI Discussion Session aSCSa Wed 13 Oct 2021 18:00 UT+11

aSCSa wants to retain the positive elements of the relationship, and improve the situation, and not go backwards as the result of any negative impacts arising from a change in the ACS's form or constitution.

[P04] [SIGs] [Q12]

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

•   The Constitution of **acquired** industry **groups (like IAPA) should align with ACS's**   **[P04]**

- The ACS is broad umbrella and should represent the entire australian ICT community. Not everything fits in a single bundle, so the ACS had to represent the different IT flavours – Cyber, Data Science, AI etc

———————————————

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q7:   Key Functions

Graeme: **ACS took a wrong turn when SIGs were effectively abolished**. The (Pods?) idea didn't fly. <u>Lockdown has enabled access to events in other Branches, which has been a great bonding mechanism across borders</u>. Hybrid events have worked. **Professional networking and content at events is the key driver**.   **[P04]   [SIGs]**

———————————————

Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines #P04   #Q12   #Q05

Dr. Paul O'Brien Nov 2   #393

I agree 100% with Paul B.

ACS needs to <u>maintain close contact with Professional and Industry organisations with which we have overlapping interests</u> whether or not their members satisfy ACS requirements for Professional membership.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Nov 2   #401

On Thu, Oct 28, 2021 at 06:17 PM, Mark Toomey wrote:

> There is an extraordinary array of <u>people who use IT to produce valuable products, while having no knowledge at all of the lower levels of the machines they wield</u>.

I'm aligned with abstractions and Use of Components; and that is likely to be an increasing trend. Data-Scientists rely on Data-Engineers to run their simulations at Scale. The former may not know how an available set of resources could be best adapted for a simulation task. It is quite possible also that both functions are performed by the same individual.

This does not at all mean that the Data-Scientist is NOT-ICT; so long s/he can Create / Modify / Differentiate-between Models. However a distinction should be drawn between that example and trends such as

- Low-code or No-code
- Change-management without Business/Systems Analysis or High-Level Design
- People involved simply in Product/Concept Marketing

and there are many others of a comparable nature. <u>ICT people with these specialisations should ne requested to gather more substantive ICT-specialisation before before accreditation as a Professional</u>.

karl Nov 3   #419

The issue of domain specific ICT and for that matter SE is extremely important.

Areas like Health informatics now must have a great BOK which would form the basis of a Degree, if that has not already been done.

But it goes beyond that.

There are now either actual or developable BOK's in a wide range of domains such as banking, health, finance, booking systems, stock control, logistics, aeronautics and on we go.

ICT has lagged behind conventional engineering in that regard.

No-one would trust a civil engineer with 10 years of road design experience to design a wide-bodied passenger jet.

I can go on at length on this.

<u>Right now, we teach either Comp Sci or Information Systems. And, any specialisation is extremely limited.</u>

We could say that the education is application domain agnostic

<u>That might have been good enough 30 years ago, but, it cannot be justified today!</u>

<u>The problem is that the creation of a BOK suitable for teaching and presentation of standards of practice requires a large effort by professionals and academics already the relative field.</u>

The former are too busy and the latter need highly novel results that will attract ARC grants and create publications in top journals.

A radical idea for ACS would be to push for a large applied research organisation dedicated to the process of capturing and codifying and validating existing domain practices.

Happy to discuss this more

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

I have no basis on which to comment on this question, in addition to earlier comments that I have already made. **Any arrangement should be with a kindred association, professional (non-trade) in nature, be consistent with ACS ethics, and have no suggestion of membership, other than for individual members of that association who might meet normal ACS membership requirements.**

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

The capability can be included, but assessed and managed in line with Code of Ethics and Mission and Purposes.

Special Interest Groups and specialist associations can be included, for example.

Nomination for the Board   (20)

WHO – who may stand as a director

QUAL – what qualifications and experience do they need (relates to third sub topic)

DIR – role of current directors and a nomination committee (Limited and No nomination committee)

TRN – need for training

CUR – current method – pro and con

MECH - mechamism

Information

Liability of members in a CLG

DAF Oct 2   #19

  WHO:*any member being eligible to stand for the board* - but how do we get to understand them? DIR In my experience with company boards, the recommendation of the nominations committee (often a subset of the board) is always followed. So unless known-to/liked-by the existing board -> No chance!

2 people liked this

Nick Tate Oct 3   #26

With a bias towards openness, WHO *any member in the professional division should be able to stand for the board*

2 people liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #38

I support WHO:*openness to all members in the professional division*.

QUAL:*But a nominee needs to demonstrate to the voters that the nominee 'has got what it takes'* to get enough votes to be elected.

Voters should be looklng for energy and ideas, but also for demonstrated experience on Boards of Not-For Profits, and demonstrated commitment to the Society. We're likely to be better served by people who have cut their teeth on the Boards of smaller organisations.

The DIR: *incumbent Directors can reasonably provide information* about the desirable expertise of new Directors, but they have to be very careful to inform the voters in an even-handed manner, rather than indulging in direct bias for or against specific nominees.

3 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #128

Totally agree, if there's any mention of DIR *a nomination committee* I will not be supporting any constitutional change. WHO: *Any financial member must be eligible to be elected to the board of directors. Let the members choose*. This, and the terrible process that was put in place, is why I opposed the last attempt to change to ACS to a company limited by guarantee. TRN: It is up to the organisation to support and provide any necessary PD for new directors. I have seen the totally abhorrent misuse/abuse of a nomination committee process by a state level sporting organisation in my state.

Candidates spell out their experience, views, etc, and members vote.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #129

Roger, QUAL: demonstrated experience on boards/executive of other not-for-profits may be a plus but I wouldn't want this to be mandatory - as you say, commitment to the ACS and involvement/leadership in ACS events; with enthusiasm (and the the time to commit to the role) are key attributes. Candidates spell out what they can bring to the ACS board, with their relevant experience, and then the members decide who gets elected. DIR We certainly do NOT want only candidates who have been vetted by the existing board via a nomination committee! Once elected the organisation should provide/facilitate necessary training for all directors.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 19   #133

agree with the point roger but I would also like to see the TRN ACS develop the future leaders through a program where even if the nominee doesn't have the demonstrated experience on Boards that they are supported to gain the experience - I would have thought this was one of the reasons for BEC and chapters (i.e. to gain the experience with older hands helping). The other point you make is that every elected needs to have the commitment to be actively engaged is also very important

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 19   #142   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with the below idea

David Abulafia Oct 19   #143   Edited Oct 30

If the ACS is not a company limited by guarantee, does that mean all the members of the ACS personally financially responsible for all debts in the case of bankruptcy.

Roger Clarke Oct 19   #144

One of the key features of *any* kind of incorporation is limitation of the liability of members.

There's usually a theoretical limit, such as $10 per member. I've never heard of it being called on (because it would cost too much to collect it).

I'm a member of a number of associations and companies limited by guarantee, and I lose zero sleep about my liabilities (:-)}

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19   #145

Hi Aubrey

No, Companies limited by guarantee have a fixed maximum liability for members..typically about $10. Members and office bearers of Incorporated Associations are not liable for debts of the Association if it becomes insolvent and most associations have office bearers insurance to cover the office bearers for negligence etc.

apkriedemann@... Oct 25   #198

HI Roger, the most important principal for a "Member Representative Organisation" is that all members WHO: *can nominate for any position and state their claim, the next part is that it is up to other members to evaluate the claim and pass judgement by way of a fully transparent / auditable / equitable ballo*t. This is so that those who can oppose an existing make up of a board can challenge. Also those how nominate must be able to canvass the vote just like in our general

elections. They must have access to communicate to members at the very least via email and forums/groups and invite those to make contact.   That way members can seek to get to know a nominee and they have a chance to meet members one-on-one.

1 person liked this

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #258

How many of us realise that it is impossible for an ordinary professional member to nominate for MC, which is the current board. ==CURTo nominate, a member must first satisfy onerous conditions of service on BEC or MC and , if I remember correctly, must be nominated by their branch. These requirements have starved the ACS of new blood and new ideas for many years.==

I did attempt to model the governance structure once, and gave up. When individuals gain the right to vote on who goes on MC by being in a role that is appointed by the MC, all semblance of proper representation of member interests is lost.

How many individuals have been appointed to the ACS Chair role multiple times?

David Abulafia Oct 28 #261   Edited Oct 30

I would assume you need to work up to being on the MC. I would assume you would start as an active member of a BEC get experience to learn about running of the ACS, before you can be usefulon the MC. WHO; *The members should be able to vote the people onto the MC.*

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #267

==CUR: Should is the problem, David. Members have no say.== Members elect BEC. BEC appoints representatives to Congress, Congress elects MC. The voice of members is drowned by a self-serving elite.

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 28   #273   Edited Oct 30

So areCUR ==state's BECs like the electoral college in the USA so large states do not overpower the smaller states?==

Is the congress like the members of the board of management, and the MC consists of the president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary?

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #294

Roughly but not quite, David. Expanding a little on what Mark Toomey said:

• Branch Members elect a BEC of about 6-15 people

   BEC has modest theoretical power within that Branch. But the previous CEO centralised all power in the hands of the Branch Manager, so the BECs mostly have no discretionary funds and can make very few decisions. (It does vary quite a bit between Branches, however)

• Each BEC appoints 2 Branch Congress Reps (BCRs) to Congress

They have to be Professional Division members (MACS and above). They don't have to be on BEC at the time, but usually are.

Commonly, the BCRs are the Branch Chair and another office-bearer. But it's a decision by each BEC, taken at worst once every 2-years. Sometimes temporary appointments are made, to ensure someone can represent the Branch at a particular meeting

• Congress elects 9 of the Management Committee (MC) positions:

- 5 office-bearers

- 4 'National Congress Reps' (NCRs)

- the Immediate Past President and CEO are ex officio members, making up 11 MC members

The 5 Office-Bearer positions are subject to eligibility Rules that keep the potential candidates down to 25-40 at any given time (out of 10,000 Professional Division members), and for the President there are only maybe 5-10 eligible each time.

In practical terms, NSW and Vic each get an NCR, and 2 others are elected by Congress from among the remaining 14 Branch Congress Reps. In practice, the 3rd and 4th are almost always from Branches other than NSW and Vic.

Some of the complexities appear to many observers (including me) to be designed-in mechanisms to entrench an elite, or, perhaps better expressed, slow down each person's progression, giving time for them to be inducted / embedded / indoctrinated, before they get too far inside the small tent.

Some of the complexities were, however, designed with every good intent!

CUR:There's a strong bias in the Congress membership towards other than NSW and Vic. They get only 4/16 BCRs, and people voted in by BECs have 16/26 votes on Congress. Currently, only 1 of the office-bearers, plus 3 others are from NSW or Vic, so those Branches have only 8/26 Congress members = 31%, compared with a bit over 50% of Prof'l Division members.

There *is* no good or natural way to avoid the rest of the country feeling as if it's dominated by Sydney and Melbourne, but that formula was a real (if convoluted) endeavour to achieve it.

P.S. It takes quite a while of grappling with the Rules, and preferably a few Congress meetings, to get to grips with the above, and what it means for the management of the Society.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #304

A very confusing structure.

Do you are saying the BEC is a toothless pussy cat.

Tom Worthington Oct 31   #326

On 28/10/21 6:54 pm, David Abulafia wrote:

> I would assume you need to work up to being on the MC ...

Yes, I served my apprenticeship on the Canberra BEC before aspiring to a national role. Getting on the BEC was not hard, and being on it was not onerous.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #352

Yes, the part of the 2019 reorg. of ACS that really made my hair stand on end was the proposal for DIRa Nomination Committee for the Board ("Management Committee" as currently known), that (as I recall) could have included the CEO(!)

CUR:OTOH, the current system is not good enough. Too often (once being too often) we see people whose professional record is predominantly internally focussed (ie as an ACS committee person, somewhat in the vein of a career politician) rising to MC , rather than someone who has achieved as an actual ICT professional and who wants to share their capabilities and experience with ACS.

IMHO the best solution (to preventing "career politicians") is to short-circuit the path between the (professional) membership at large and the MC. Don't give Boards, Congress or BECs any capability to veto fresh blood – WHO ;*direct elections instead! (OK, maybe reserve some positions – President, Treasurer, VPs perhaps – to people with MC or maybe BEC experience).*

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #359

I would agree with you Paul.

I think that METH HOW : *direct elections* and term limits are important to ensure that we have fresh ideas and eager directors.

Additionally, *direct elections and a simple governance process will enable greater member participation and engagement in the governance of the society.*

Tag Consolidation
#P06 – 3 Topics – 17 Posts + 1 Other Message   +7   +0
Principle 6 - A Dual-Electorate Mechanism to Ensure Balance among Interests
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 5-6

Devolved Responsibility for Branches   (5)

Nick Tate Oct 7   #58

If branches are to operate effectively, there must be some <u>devolved responsibility which will need to include some level of access to funds</u>

2 people liked this

UI Oct 11   #74   Edited Oct 14

i think this is part of a broader problem where BEC members, although elected to represent their respective state/territory, do not really have any recognition by ACS in responsibility, role or function. The BEC should be empowered to act on behalf of the ACS as a whole, and require the autonomy and decision making to run their branch directly. Eg. We lack the ability to contact our local members directly, which is a ridiculous position to be in.

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12   #83

Could not agree more with @Nick.

I think that Draft Principles 3, 6 and 10 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 appear to be in the correct direction.

<u>The complete dis-empowerment of Branches was a major reason for the Constitutional Debacle of 2019</u>.

Ann Moffatt Oct 13   #96

I agree.

mathew_eames@... Oct 14   #98

Branches know their local community the best, agility to respond to local needs really give the branch the best chance to support and grow its backyard….

1 person liked this

How many #Directors should there be?   (8)

z8300046@... Oct 2   #13
I reckon 9's the right number.

z8300046@... Oct 2   #14
[Another participant replies] That's too precise. Make it in the range 7 to 11.

1 person liked this

z8300046@... Oct 2   #15

[And someone else chimes in] Hold on. We're supposed to be discussing Principles, not Features or Clauses.

I think what we're saying is that:

1. We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory

2. We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge

DAF Oct 2   #18

I am not sure about this exact number - but what skills? Who selects them?

UI Oct 2   #22

this is the first round of consultation and we're not focusing on the actual text of the constitution, rather on the principles that will later be distilled down. the principle is that as a limited company, representatives (perhaps elected in some manner) in a committee (we can call it a board) are required for governance and these representatives (we can call them directors). the directors will be responsible for all legal matters with the ACS (amongst other functions) and have "their necks on the line" so to speak.

we can discuss how the board members are chosen, under what criteria, to fulfil what functions, etc.

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 3   #24

This is cart before the horse. Of more interest to me is the idea that there should be one board to run any commercial dealings of ACS (with directors with experience of such) and perhaps another to run the services side with an overarching board to oversee that both are operating in the interest of members.

Roger as Member Oct 3   #25   Edited Oct 6

Note that there are additional hashtags for some of these Topics:

#P05   Open Nomination Processes for Board Positions

#P06   A Dual-Electorate Mechanism to Ensure Balance among Interests

#Q13 Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #360

1. We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory

2. We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge

Additionally, <u>I think we need to avoid having a process that allocated directors to various states; if the best directors are all from Darwin so be it</u>.

Dual-Electorate Mechanism (Hybrid) to Ensure Balance when electing ... (4)

paul.campbell@... Oct 3   #28   Edited Oct 6

In the 2019 ACS Special General Meeting, a motion was passed by one vote to change the legal structure of the ACS to a Company Limited by Guarantee and to accept a new constitution. This vote was subsequently nullified in the Federal Court of NSW.

This motion was the most important issue to be raised at an AGM since the ACS chose to adopt its current constitution and management structure in 2007.

It is telling that only 747 members voted for the constitutional change in 2019. This number is less than 10% of the members who were eligible to vote.

This low vote reflects on the lack of engagement of most ACS members.

The low vote also demonstrates that a very small number of ACS members can influence key decisions that dictate the future of the ACS.

Remember that while 747 people voted in 2019, only 561 votes were needed to adopt a motion requiring 75% of votes in favour. So **vested interests, whether state based or mobilised by issues or personalities can have an inordinate impact on the future of the ACS**.

Currently the ACS embraces a 'senate' model to elect its Board. Eligible ACS members vote for their state BEC which in turn elects its Congress representatives. Congress then acts as an electoral college and elects both the Board and Committee Chairs. This process gives all eligible ACS members a right to vote and nominate for their regional BEC.

Under the proposed 2019 constitution all eligible members **vote directly in Board elections**. This change removes the 'senate' model that gives states with smaller membership bases the same voting power as enjoyed by NSW and Victoria. In its place would have been a process where **the states with the highest membership numbers have an advantage and NSW where the ACS national office is situated is in a unique position in being able to most easily organise members to attend any general meeting in person**.

Under current ACS policy it is not possible for state branches or Board candidates to gain access to ACS member contact details in order to solicit or arrange voting proxies.

In the absence of a fair means to organise voting proxies, a small number of local members in NSW or even ACS staff with their associate member status, could exert a decisive influence on Board elections by voting in person at General Meetings held in the ACS national office.

The alternative hybrid voting model is a fairer scheme and more closely aligns with the current electoral college status enjoyed by Congress.

Under a hybrid model half of the ACS company board would be elected by members eligible to vote and the other half elected by an electoral college comprising equal number of representatives from each state branch.

This hybrid model more closely aligns with the current national governance model where all states have equal voting rights regardless of their membership base.

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #61

Your suggestion of a hybrid model seems to have merit - addressing the risk of smaller states being and feeling lost.

Are there arguments against this?

UI Oct 11   #72

I don't believe the alternative hybrid model is fair as this still opens half the company board to being elected by the sheer number of members in a state. the current senate model is fairer as smaller states and territories can participate equally.

Given the historical low number of votes at ANY election, i believe grassroots campaigns to educate existing members, and an induction for new members, should be conducted to educate them about the structure of ACS management, voting, etc.

Greater transparency and communication to members is required as many do not know who their elected members are, nor their functions. Also, the majority of members do not know who the ACS employees are, nor their roles, which is also a concern.

Perhaps we need to make voting compulsory.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #361

I think the key is simplicity - the senate model obscures the process and reduces likely hood that members will engage.

Personally, I am for direct elections - but despite being from Sydney, I do understand the concerns of smaller states.

I personally would prefer a principle, that reserved a number of seats to say (25%) to be for members outside NSW and VIC and left the rest open for free nomination.

I also believe that there should be a principle that Staff should not be able [to vote?] in either AGMs or Board Elections. There is a clear conflict of interest and as we saw can be used to bolster proxies.

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination as a Director **[P05]   [P06]**

Damien: Supports the Senate model, doesn't want large-State dominance of member input.

Alex: Also supports the Senate model.

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Re: Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03 #P06 #P10 #Q11

karl Nov 3 #411

Branches (as do other elements of ACS) need have a "delegation" which is sufficient for autonomous operation.

The needs to include budgetary autonomy with normal rules of authority.

Again, the past systems worked very well (even though there were stuff-ups).

I am on the VIC BEC and we cannot move without national authority. We seem to be tied up by the national Strategy and Budget.

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3 #413

When I was on the VIC BEC, a sensible person in National ACS advised not seeking permission, as the default answer was NO.

karl Nov 3 #418

Yes, I guess we have all faced this at different times.

The line "its better to ask for forgiveness than permission" is attributed to Grace M. Hopper.

But, from a Governance point of view it carries enormous risk and exposure.

Far better to give people appropriate delegations.

SIGs as an example Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03 #P06 #P10 #Q11

karl Nov 3 #412

I have attached the list of SIGs that were active in 2016. The total across all states was about 65.

Some were social, some meeting non-ICT needs, however, they reflected members' needs.
It is something we should be proud of.

And, we need to have this again!

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3 #414

In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation.
It was never re-instated.

Roger Clarke Nov 3 #415

On 3/11/21 5:41 pm, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation. It was never re-instated.

I can see NatReg 8.15.7:

> Management Committee or the Branch Executive Committee may dissolve any chapter, sub-committee or branch special interest group acting under any delegation function on an affirmative vote by a 2/3 majority or any time without having to provide reasons.

On the face of it, a Branch Manager does not have the legal authority to take any such action.

On the face of it, neither does the CEO, so any delegation to the Branch Manager could not have come from the CEO.

Did anyone ask the Vic Branch Manager for evidence of authority?

Why not ask the current BEC to reform the SIG under NatReg 18.5.1?

These aren't hypothetical questions.

What appears to have happened in 2016, in at least Victoria, was in apparent breach of the Rules of the Society.

We can't 'roll back time' (images of US battleship).

But BECs can exercise the powers that they have at their disposal.

David Abulafia Nov 4   #422

How many SIGS are still active in 2021?

Accountability and Transparency (3)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 6 #50

I think this hash tag needs a comma somewhere! However, Accountability and transparency are major issues that need to be addressed in any new constitution. The tricky question is how does a constitution ensure that the governing body does not steer ACS in directions with which members are uncomfortable. The answer I have so far, is to change the members of the governing body if such happens. Alas this is post fact. Is there a desire to look for a mechanism that requires consultation before such large changes are decided upon?

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12 #82

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I'm happy with the direction taken by the draft principles 7. 8, 9 & 10 in the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 and expect to see a refined formulation, going forward.

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- Board Meetings should be open to any professional member subject to agreement to appropriate confidentially provisions and in-camera sessions.

- Board minutes (with appropriate redactions) should be available to the membership

- AGM's should be interactive, online and out of business hours to allow for Members to effectively engage.

Balance Needed between Board Power and Member Power (2)

Nick Tate Oct 6 #48

There is a balance to be considered between what level of decentralisation of authority is encompassed within a constitutional document and what should be delegated by the Governing body.

Robert Estherby Oct 31 #366

I think that elsewhere there appears to be a consensus that branches should have

- Responsibility to lead interactions with State Government and Organisations

- Responsibility to direct local activities and programs

- Spend a delegated budget

- Direct local staff (within limits)

I think that additionally, branches authority to:

- Make recommendations on the expansion of programs beyond their state to the board
- Provide input on policy decisions
- Place items on board agenda, table documents and have standing to address the board on any topic with notice.

but also have responsibilities to meet agreed objectives.

Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values   (2)

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #42

There are a couple of elements to this:

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———————————————

Jack Burton Nov 4   #432   [#P00] [#P03] [#P07] [#P11]

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief (and none of the signatories could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.

Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00] [#P02] [#P07] [#P11] [#Q14]**

- reduction of Boards
- 2019 constitutional reform
- COVIDSafe endorsement
- <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Re: Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03   #P06   #P10   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #411

Branches (as do other elements of ACS) need have a "delegation" which is sufficient for autonomous operation.

The needs to include budgetary autonomy with normal rules of authority.

Again, the past systems worked very well (even though there were stuff-ups).

I am on the VIC BEC and we cannot move without national authority. We seem to be tied up by the national Strategy and Budget.

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #413

When I was on the VIC BEC, a sensible person in National ACS advised not seeking permission, as the default answer was NO.

karl Nov 3   #418

Yes, I guess we have all faced this at different times.

The line "its better to ask for forgiveness than permission" is attributed to Grace M. Hopper.

But, from a Governance point of view it carries enormous risk and exposure.

Far better to give people appropriate delegations.

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Karl: **The Society has lost its skills at delegation to elected officials, with Boards and Committees tied down in red tape**   [#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#Q11]

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

The Elected and Appointed Official and other Volunteer experience

It should be a constitutional requirement that ACS ensure that Elected officials and other volunteers are supported by staff and also that they are not confronted with decision making structures that make action extremely difficult.

To ensure that this is achieved, ACS should operate in a delegation system that assigns appropriate action and financial capabilities to the Elected Officials and Appointed Officials and other volunteers.   **[#P00]   [#P07]**

Member Involvement in Key Policies (10)

z6957315@... Oct 5   #37

It's normal for a Constitution to only contain a relatively small, core proportion of what makes an organisation tick.

One common pattern is for a Company Board to have absolute power over all of the other documents that are important to members. Things like the membership levels and the requirements to achieve and sustain levels. And things like the Code of Ethics.

How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?

3 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #298

Some aspects of this will be protected as the objectives are within the constitution.

I think as a principle the constitution should require consultation and membership ratification of key areas such as

Governance

Membership

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #318

The key issue with a constitution is that it needs to cover all the key points, but must not end up being a Victorian novel that no-one looks at. If we accept Philip Argy's view expressed in Q08 (and I have a lot of respect for Philip), then the constitution is the way to make a CLG work for us. So it must cover governance (including electing and removing directors), membership, branches and chapters, the ACS objectives and major activities, membership grades etc. However, the actual drafting of the constitution is a matter for later stages of this project.

P Argy Oct 30   #320

My suggestion is to take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't. For those that we don't, what do we want to replace them with? That will at least give us a set of drafting instructions for the lawyers. When they come back with a draft Constitution we can then discuss how faithfully they have imp[lamented what we wanted, but separating the drafting from the higher level discussion is important.

For those who haven't actually read the ACS existing Constitutional documents, they are attached. If they're not the latest versions they're close enough for the exercise I'm suggesting!

ACS National Regulations as at Apr 2011.pdf

ACS-Rules-Nov-2010.pdf

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #321

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 07:58 PM, P Argy wrote:

> ... take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't ...

That's a poor substitute for requirements analysis, Philip.

Congress and CRWG expressly avoided such narrow scope.

First understand what members' conception of the Society is in current and foreseeable-future circumstances. Then imagine features that will provide the scope to deliver on that conception. Only then consider what we currently have, what needs to be retained, and how to transition gracefully from one to the other.

If anyone actually wants them at this early stage, the authoritative versions are at https://www.acs.org.au/governance/rules-and-regulations.html

P Argy Oct 30   #322

I was not suggesting that's ALL we do, but it does ensure that the basics are covered and assists people to identify topics for further discussion.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #323

Great ideato create a base to start from

David Abulafia Oct 31   #324

I think Phillip's approach would be a good basis for a requirement analyst

Dr. Paul O'Brien <paulobrien56@...> Oct 31   #327

Philip
I agree 100%

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #330

I disagree strongly with this.

The current constitution and rules, while appropriate for the time, are no longer appropriate for today or the future.

Aside from that, we have a process that Nick and Roger have thoughtfully developed and we should trust them to lead us through this process.

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Transparency (5)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8 #65   Edited Oct 30

Management is not respecting the importance or value of Member needs / wants unless the board/management shares their plans and seeks and embraces feedback from members.

Such transparency and consultation process would not be popular with a commercial business that may wish to negotiate price or time sensitive deals - but really - is price or time sensitive deals a relevant limitation on a professional society?

We do not have an environment like politics where the management can assume a "mandate" from a clearly articulated position before election.

UI Oct 11   #73

i believe greater transparency is required. ACS is supposed to be by members, for members. the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable. It currently looks like a public service where there's too much bureaucracy and members aren't able to access the services they actually require.

ACS should be run like a union. by members, for members. our members are the number 1 priority. all decisions made should be done so with the primacy of members in mind.

I acknowledge there are commercial decisions to be made, and business decisions must benefit members, financially or otherwise. Eg. profits used to fund member services, keep membership fees low, etc.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #299

I agree regarding the transparency, but I don't think that the Society is entirely for the membership. The membership is not representative of the broader industry make-up.

If the society is to remain relevant and useful, we need to accept that it is not there for the benefit of members, but for the benefit of Australian Society.

That said, we should be more accountable. There should be more visibility of Board Meetings. Board Meetings should be observable by members (with in-camera exceptions as appropriate).

The board should run regular internal audit processes to ensure management is accountable.

So if we take this back to the principles:

-   The board should have a bias towards transparency and openness.
-   The board should regularly seek member input on topics for debate
-   The board should articulate why specific discussions are in-camera.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #302

If the ACS is not there for the member, why should members paid memship fees, for nothing in return, or is the membership fee a donation to a society that looks after IT in Australia

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #369

Hi David,

Members will always have something in return, but as a member we all sign up to the Code of Ethics.

The first clause is "The Primacy of the Public Interest: You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests".

Whether we like it or not the ACS is a sectional interest, and as members, we under our code, and constitution are bound to put ourselves second.

Should the ACS make sure it has a good membership proposition? Yes.

Is the ACS for the benefit of members? No (well not in its current form or under our current constitution)

To whose benefit ??   (7)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #66

I read that ACS is a $50m business. Wow.

Lots of income - and clearly lots of spending. But the balance sheet does not look to be accumulating lots of wealth??

Where does the money go? The published accounts are not expansive.

Do we really need (what is allegedly) the most expensive office space in Australia?

But how is that a benefit to members (and society).

I read that prominent member Ashley Goldworthy asked a series of questions about activities and expenses but has been refused answers.

That culture needs to change!

2 people liked this

bill@... Oct 8   #67

> That culture needs to change!

Yes.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #104

Surplus should be invested back into providing member benefit. All activity should be tested through business case with delegated sign-off extended to BEC.

1 person liked this

frada.burstein@... Oct 19   #141

I totally agree with this proposal. There should be NO surplus generated for a sole reason of a profit. All funds received through the ACS business or other activities should be spent to benefit the ACS community and spent to support ICT for public good initiatives. For example, as discussed at the forum, the Lab should be funded to be made available for some R&D activities for small businesses who can't afford such an infrastructure otherwise. Or some fellowships and grants can be offered to the community organisations on a transparent and competitive basis.

David Abulafia Oct 20   #147

I agree Frada

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 20   #149

I agree with Frada and David

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #370

To play devil's advocate; It is prudent to have a cash flow buffer up to a point.

I think there should be more spending, but it needs to be directed not just at member benefits, but at the growth of the society and to the public benefit too.

Board Powers and Member Controls   (1)

Ashley Maher 13:43   #387

On the one hand, the Board needs to be able to make strategic and policy decisions, pass them to the CEO for implementation, and ensure effective, efficient and adaptable operation of the Society.

On the other, the members need a basis whereby they can trust the Board and CEO to be acting in accordance with the values, mission and purposes of the Society.

For the members to have that trust, a series of layers of regulation are needed:

(1) members need enough visibility of what the Board and CEO are doing

(2) with major new initiatives, members need visibility in advance of decisions, and meaningful opportunities to provide input (the 'bring the members along on the journey with you' dictum)

(3) where member concern exists, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of concern', and communicate it to the Board and CEO

(4) where that concern is serious, and responses by the Board and CEO do not dissipate the concern, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of serious concern', and communicate it to the Board and CEO, but also to all other BECs, and the membership

(5) where the matter is so serious that trust by the members in the directions the Society is taking is being undermined, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of no confidence', and communicate it to the Board and CEO, and to all other BECs, and the membership

(6) if any two BECs pass a materially identical 'motion of no confidence', the Constitution needs to provide that a General Meeting is automatically called at which the motion must be put and debated

As with all regulatory arrangements, the purpose is to avoid the need for 'nuclear option' (6) to ever be implemented.

The warning signs turning into thunderclouds is intended to be sufficient to communicate to the Board and CEO that a serious problem exists, such that consultative processes are implemented to address them.

At each step of seriousness a defined response from the Board and-or CEO would be the result. For example a report to all members explaining why an action causing concern is in fact in the wider interest of members.

A similar series of escalating motions could be oversight for the associated State Manager.

Too often organisations have the fail safe of members being able to call a special general meeting if there are sufficient members who are not happy. But this often tends to be a MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) option. The purpose of the above is to build in relief valves to ensure nobody reaches the MAD option.

_____

7.   Martin Lack FACS - martin.lack@mlaa.com.au   Wed 20/10/2021 10:30 AM

Up until October 2019, I was able to analyse ACS' membership each month across all membership categories. For example, since March 2013, voting membership had halved; Associate membership had fallen by 40%; whilst Fellows had basically maintained numbers, the number of MACS had fallen by 70%. Clearly the Executive hated this mathematical analysis and stopped publishing data each month. Very sad because I gave insight into where they should focus effort especially knowing an ACS/Deloitte report showed there were 200,000 ICT workers in Australia compared to just 45,000 in the ACS including 25,000 Overseas Skills Prep so net 20,000 just 10%.

ACS clearly needs to provide this data to members so we can help it grow substantially - five time say. We need to encourage PROFESSIONAL membership not these casual Associates and OSP's. we need to show value to employees so they prefer to hire ACS Professionals. Win-win for members, business/government, Australia.

At a very detailed level, some tedious questions:

- What categories of people are in the Associate grade? How many are there in each category? (+/- 100 would be fine).
- How many of each category have the right to vote after allowing for those who are disallowed to vote: e.g. Overseas Branch members, students, etc?
- How many of each category pay what level of the fee schedule at https://www.acs.org.au/join-acs.html ?
- How many of each category have a gratis membership, granted because they are members of staff, or part of a start-up tenancy?

Knowing this will help focus discussions on A PROFESSIONAL ICT ASSOCIATION in Australia. We don't have one. :(**[P08] [Q04] [PS]**

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3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

Centrality of Professional membership - Consultation - Yes; Detailed involvement - No   **[P08]**

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Is the ACS working with government to expertly shape legislation that will affect IT professionals and consumers?
As a professional member, I'd have no idea.   [P08]

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

There must be an opportunity for regular review amongst interested members, and **ongoing communication with the membership about significant decisions being made**. We are, after all, a Society of Information Professionals so we should surely be able to get this right??!   **[P08]**

––––––––––––––––––––

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Feedback: I understand that there needs to be effective delegation of power to the board / management committee / CEO / MD. I do however confess to feeling particularly disenfranchised over the last 5 years. Sitting with this discomfort has given me the opportunity to reflect and provide the following suggestions to remedy this for the professional members:

- I see the **dual electorate mechanism / branch structures / company limited by guarantee / delegation of powers as being intrinsically linked**.   **[P11]**
- I want to see less complication at the organisational structure level and **more direct accountability** and with that clearer delegation of power from the membership.   **[P08]**
...
- Part of my feeling of disenfranchisement is that my voice does not directly count at a national leadership level. Sure, we go through the motions in voting in local committees at branch level and we empower them to vote in appropriate national leaders (or vote out) at congress.
...
- This whole **electoral college** type of system feels far too complicated, and **has helped isolate the membership from exerting direct power** at what has been quite a tumultuous time for our society.   **[P11]**
- One professional member, one vote.
- **I want to be able to directly vote out a board** that has lost the confidence of the membership, which is not something that I can do currently. I would also add that I think the events of the last 5 years would not have smouldered on for so long, if the professional

membership were directly enfranchised, then **there would be <u>less opportunity for a self-reinforcing clique to exist</u>**.   **[P11]**

- I want professional members wherever they are, to be able to <u>attend annual general meetings preferably online</u>.

- I want annual reports and financial statements to be reviewed and approved by the professional members.

- I want professional members to be able to propose <u>motions of no confidence</u> in AGM's that pass with a majority vote or maybe two thirds vote (I don't recall what the corporations act says about the topic).

- **I want <u>the financial revenue and expenditure by separate ACS business line to be published annually (preferably through annual report) to professional members</u>**. ...
    [P08]

    ... I think this is quite important as there's a real risk of conflicts of interest here. I was recently retold again that "the ACS puts more money into membership than it collects from members", which on the surface could be mistook for benevolent charity, however it raises some concerns to me that <u>there are other sources of revenue that the ACS views as being more lucrative, or potentially more important than members</u>. <u>I'll make a wild assumption here</u>, that the source of that phantom revenue is not ACS Labs, nor the real estate that they sit in, and more likely the skills assessment fees charged to visa applicants.

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Beau expressed the view that undertaking this **consultation by members and for members was very important**. This was <u>contrasted with the approach to consultation on the strategic plan, which was felt to be more consultant led</u>.   **[P08]   [P09]   [Q14]**

Paul pointed out that the current fad in Governance is for <u>"lean" constitutions</u>, with most things able to be changed by the board. This <u>has both obvious efficiencies and obvious downsides</u>. This would imply the need for <u>a high level of trust in any future board</u>, and this <u>may not be possible</u>. **[P08] [Dir]**

4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

- It is not necessary or useful for members to have a say on every strategic target, however, <u>there should be something in the Constitution that its business is in line with the Society's values</u>. We have to give the organisation's Directors sufficient latitude, but they should not to things that are inconsistent with the values members signed up for.   **[P08]**

- **We can't go to the members for everything but <u>there should be something in the strategy which should be taken to members around how such decisions are made</u>**

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations? Or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

- <u>Is it there to generate income or just cover running costs</u> so as not to become a financial drain on the ACS?

- This is a philosophical decision about the ACS. It the ACS an entity that represents the Australian ICT community under this umbrella or it is that that ACS is leading a family of industry associations as well as itself that represents the ICT community. This was not the aim when the ACS was set up, but **this is the situation we have found ourselves in, given decisions were made that members were not aware of**. In the future we might have more of these satellite entities - is that what the ACS want so to be?   **[P08]**

7.   Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Sarah-Louise: A strong advocacy organisation like the Pharmacy Guild puts some surplus into a fighting fund, specified in the Constitution, which requires member approval to expend. The idea could be implemented in the ACS context [although the purposes would be different]

Peter: **Allocation has to be based on the Objects. It's impractical to go to the members for each decision, but the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that guidance should be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes.**   **[P08]   [P11]**

For this to work, however, electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club.   [P11]   [Dir]

Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions.   [Q09]

[Break-even is adequate for Functions that are relevant but not Key Functions.]

———————————

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q14: Creation and amendment of Key Policies

Alex: Too big for all members to be heard on all issues, so has to be a representative democracy, but **must** also **feature consultative arrangements**.   **[P08]**
A voice through representatives needs to be enshrined in some way.
[Does convenient online voting change that?]

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q6:   industry associations

Sam: Perplexed when he read about the acquisition [of ADMA] in Information Age – the only place he'd heard about it.   **[P08]**

Devin: The acquisition was something of a debacle. Due diligence did not occur. Nothing was heard in advance by members, as, at the least, it should have been.   **[P08]**

P7, P8, P9, P10:   Delegations, Accountability & Transparency, Member Involvemt, Branches

Sam: More accountability to members is crucial. 15 years a member, but **the last 5 years has felt particularly disenfranchised. Controls are needed to better align people at the top with the rank-and-file**.   **[P08]   [P11]**

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q14:   Member involvement in key policies

David: **The 2019 corporatisation proposal seriously concerned many members because of the apparent intent to dilute, even remove, member influence on policy, esp. re membership.   [P08]**
The CRWG process is important to ensure the new constitution includes the ability of members to influence these matters well beyond just voting for Board-members.

Susan: The ACS's governance structure looks like a management structure. It's not a consultative membership framework, but a managerialist framework. **At the minimum, proposals must be communicated and explained to the membership, as the first step in accountability.**   **[P08]**

Behavioural norms need to be embedded within the process, and responsible and sustainable change must be achieved within the ACS. But some initiatives, such as countermeasures against discrimination, may not be achieved by popular vote.

Dennis: The accountability component of governance has been a serious shortfall. **It's necessary to identify the categories of initiative that need to go the members first, e.g. definitions of membership grades is one. Member [AGM?] approval is essential.**

Susan: However, what degree of power do members need to have?
[AGM / 75%? Online vote / 50%? Do members Approve? Ratify? Endorse?]

There's tension between representational and direct democracy approaches.

[Under the present Rules, ACS is 3-layered / buffered representational: Members elect BECs; BECs elect Congress Representatves; Congress Reps are 16 of 26+ votes on the electoral college for the Management Committee; at most a couple of score people are qualified to nominate for the 4 office-bearer roles, only 16 people for other 4 elected MC positions, and very few indeed for the Presidency.]

Anthony: Note the difference between members' capacity to make a Determination by means of a Referendum cf. give Strong Advice by means of a Plebiscite. **A possible approach is to require that members must be informed, and their views must be sought.   [P08]**

Susan: **And then care is needed as to what the topics are that fall within that scope.**

Dennis: **That's the hard choice about which things are delegated to the Board, versus informed in advance, versus hard-consultative-with-plebiscite, versus determinative-with-member-vote/referendum.**

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business Lines

Jeff M: **There needs to be a transparent and distinct operational and structural separation between the professional and commercial activities of the society [P08]**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q6-7:   Industry Associations, Key Functions

Rod: **No convincing evidence has been provided of benefits in having industry associations within ACS.**

The secrecy surrounding the acquisition was the inverse of the required transparency to members before the fact. And we're paying > $1m p.a. for the privilege - !?   **[P08]**
ADMA Members do not equate to ACS professional members.

Q14: Membership Involvement in Key Policies

Elizabeth: A balancing act is needed between direct democracy [binding referenda or non-binding plebiscites] and ungovernability.

Elizabeth: A key issue is which documents are the ones that members most need to be strongly influenced by members rather than delegated to an all-powerful governing committee.

Rod: Matters of importance must have member voice. **[P08]**
Line up with mission, purposes and key functions, and the more important among those must go to the members [for 'approval' / 'ratification' / 'endorsement']

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation / Labs / Incubators   [Also Q14 Membership Involvement in Key Policies]

Graeme: **Members' reaction when this was announced was "What the hell's going on?". Suddenly there they were, a *fait accompli*.** He didn't ever see a detailed explanation why.   **[P08]**
Are there any (successful) overseas models, or any known instances of a professional society doing this. Not dogmatically opposed, but members want to know about it in advance, and why. If it were a channel for (adequate) government funding, that could make a difference?

Q: ACS Electoral Structure

Mark: <u>Tried to use the Rules to draw the complex structure of representational democracy, and it's so illogical that it didn't prove possible. It needs a massive overhaul, and a great deal more transparency to the membership</u>.   **[P11]   [P08]**

———————————————

Keep this open channel going!!! #Business-Lines   #P00   #P08   #Q07

helenmchugh@... Nov 1   #390

This open channel is AMAZING!!!! So much heard passion and collaboration

THIS MUST KEEP GOING

Well done CRWG Team

To whose benefit ?? #P08   #Q10

Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #398

Robert said "I think there should be more spending, but it needs to be directed not just at member benefits, but at the growth of the society and to the public benefit too.'_._,

But what about buying a book on Menzies or being a member of WEF or attending meetings in Davos?

Not appropriate use of member's funds imho.

Ann Moffatt Nov 10   #437

Hi Paul

Re:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe
https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)
> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

I was in hospital when that doc came out so missed it.

Certainly the acs didn't speak for me.

As this abomination has cost australia well in excess of $10 million and imho would never work. Esp as apple and google produced their own version for free I wonder what the acs thinks now?

Much egg on face.

<div align="center">

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

</div>

Rod: **Vital importance of safeguards existing to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity.** The incorporation form is less vital than that issue

<div align="center">

[#Dir]   [#P00]   [#P02]   [#P08]   [#P11]   [#Q14]

</div>

Charlynn: Must be for the members and agreed among the members, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical.   **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P08]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**
Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed
Students don't feel the ACS is there for them – and that's the Society's future!

Susan: Focus on members, because so much has changed

John: The vital thing for the Society is that it be of and for its members   **[#P00]**

The organisation needs to be kept simple. The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus

Karl: This process has been an invaluable opening up of engagement with members

Susan: The shared experience in a meeting like this was an effective mechanism for engagement   **[#P00]   [#P08]**

Q8: **Innovations / <u>ACS Labs</u> / RCL**

Matthew: <u>It would be nice if we knew what they did in there.</u>
<u>How about a monthly newsletter?</u>
Do they run start-up weekends – 2-1/2 day events?
Bevin: **<u>Do they generate new members? Do they generate revenue for us?</u>**
<u>Is the space provided in return for equity?</u>
Ann: The ACS Lab is out-of-reach even for Gold Coast Chapter.   **[#Chapters]**
Is it supporting innovation in education?
Holly: RCL runs Start-up programs, esp. 'River Pitch' annually, and casual use of the [Branch? ACS Labs?] facilities by ACS members is available.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

There are two key governance aspects in my mind that are being confused.

Firstly, there is the question of the legal governance framework within which the ACS would operate. In essence this is the skeleton of the body, i.e., the structural stuff! A lot of the compliance obligations are mandated so there is little discretion.

Secondly, and staying with my body analogy, <u>it is the working level arrangements that put the brain and flesh onto the skeleton, i.e., the behavioural and cultural stuff! Examples are how the organisation is structured, member representation, branches, and authority levels</u>.
Much of this is contained in the ACS rules and regulations and business planning documents. My understanding is that the ACS is free to control and shape its destiny in whatever legal framework it operates.

My recommendation is the CLG framework.

It needs to be said that <u>a 'perfect' structure and constitution does not exist and even if it did, it would not stop non-compliant behaviour - checks and balances must be in place</u>.
[#P08]   [#P09]

Devolved Responsibility for Branches   (5)

Nick Tate Oct 7   #58

If branches are to operate effectively, there must be some devolved responsibility which will need to include some level of access to funds

2 people liked this

Ul Oct 11   #74   Edited Oct 14

i think this is part of a broader problem where BEC members, although elected to represent their respective state/territory, do not really have any recognition by ACS in responsibility, role or function. The BEC should be empowered to act on behalf of the ACS as a whole, and require the autonomy and decision making to run their branch directly. Eg. We lack the ability to contact our local members directly, which is a ridiculous position to be in.

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12   #83

Could not agree more with @Nick.

I think that Draft Principles 3, 6 and 10 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 appear to be in the correct direction.

The complete dis-empowerment of Branches was a major reason for the Constitutional Debacle of 2019.

Roger Clarke Oct 13   #96

Reposted for Ann Moffatt, to get it into the same Thread:

I agree.

mathew_eames@... Oct 14   #98

Branches know their local community the best, agility to respond to local needs really give the branch the best chance to support and grow its backyard….

1 person liked this

Purposes and Outcomes   (3)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 21   #158   Edited Oct 31

Purpose of the ACS

There should be ONE purpose for the ACS.

The use of terms such as mission, objects, vision, multiple purposes etc. distract from the understanding of what ACS stands for.

My view is that the ACS should be a professional organisation of its members, with the following statement:

"The purpose of the Australian Computer Society is to advance the science, practice and application of computer, information and communications technologies for the benefit of members and the Australian community".

The above purpose is a modified version of the one used by Engineers Australia.

The word "computer" should be in the purpose, otherwise we should consider changing the name of the Australian COMPUTER Society.

Desired Outcomes of the ACS

Outcomes can be defined as the result of things working "just right".

This means that both ACS members and the Australian community can confirm that the ACS is meeting its purpose.

Outcomes must be clear, concise and measurable.

The test should be: is the ACS delivering these outcomes, or not?

The following draft ACS outcomes should be discussed and changed to ensure there is a common understanding and direction.

Once the outcomes have been agreed, the path dependency to achieving them can be determined.

Following this, value generation strategies can be developed to achieve the desired outcomes.

Draft outcomes for the ACS (not in any order):

The fulfillment of the purpose of ACS is endorsed by over 75% of ACS members

Branches of the ACS exist, and are elected by members on that branch's register

Branches of the ACS manage activities to the satisfaction of more than 50% of that branch's members

Branches of the ACS appoint the governing body of the ACS

The ACS is a trusted advisor to local, state and national governments

2 people liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 21   #160

Very well put, rimas.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #209

I tend to agree.

Of course, the next layer has to unpack these terms.

For example, 'advancing the practice of communications technologies' might be seen by some to include improving the design and installation of phone cabling connectors. Is that in scope? 'Advancing the application of computer technologies' might be seen as marketing within the computer retail sector - is that in scope? And so on.

 I agree that multiple terms like mission, objectives, vision etc can obscure the underlying purpose but at the same time we need to clarify our interpretation of terms, especially when the wider public might interpret them differently to those within the society.

Where should ACS spend its money? (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 4   #32   Edited Oct 30

It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it - but the need to show a clear member benefit in financial expenditure can perhaps be somewhere in the constitution?

4 people liked this

Roger Clarke

Oct 4 #33   Edited Oct 30

On Mon, Oct 4, 2021 at 03:20 PM, Jacqueline Hartnett wrote:

> ... It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it ...

I imagine most members would be pleased that the Society delegates the majority of the strategic and policy decisions to the governing committee, and happy that the governing committee delegates the ongoing operational decisions and actions to employees. I certainly am.

But I have a problem with the ideas that (a) no decisions at all can be made at regional level, and (b) no discretionary funds are available at regional level.

Suppose a thousand-dollar decision is needed, to take advantage of an interesting ICT person who's in the district for a short time, and who's prepared to offer a seminar / workshop / demo / site-visit to local members. It costs money to get a venue, some basic catering and a user-pays wet bar.

Even now, following admin changes made over the last few years, Branch Committees have no capacity to make any such decision.

The Branch Committee has to go cap in hand to the Branch Manager, who is an employee of ACS, beholden to the CEO, not the members. The Branch Manager may or may not negotiate funding from Head Office. Despite its small size, the organisation's bureaucracy grinds slowly. By that time, the opportunity's gone. And everyone in the region quickly learns that it's pointless asking ACS if they could host an event, even at all, but especially at short notice.

Effective organisations recognise as a basic principle a thing called 'subsidiarity': Delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made. Regions vary in the their needs. Regions need decision-making powers, and discretionary budgets.

4 people liked this

Jo Dalvean

Oct 6 #49

Not just begging - the situations where the funds are available but the means to access it to spend it are challenging, and in these cases Branches hand dollars back.

2 people liked this

Ul

Oct 11 #75

agreed. more delegation and better financial resourcing for branches is needed.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall

Oct 11 #79

BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that and MC is not allowed to deny branch expenditure or disapprove a budget. The current approach adopted by the MC/CEO appears to be in contradiction to this understanding. The BECs are there to forward the aims of the society, the branch managers are there to help them do that.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 12 #93   Edited Oct 30

Well said bob.

Michael Driver

Oct 16   #121

Hi Roger,

I have posted a similar response elsewhere.

Branches cannot exist (?) on membership revenue, so how do we enable the branches/chapters to function effectively on membership revenue while the business needs to seek alternate business revenue to progress. (i.e. we need to generate more revenue to offset Government changes).

1 person liked this

David Abulafia

Oct 17   #123   Edited Oct 30

If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members comming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you started charging $20 per meeting in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17   #124

In my time at ACS, Stats showed that 80% of people who attened the NSW functions where the same group of people. It is important to encourage diversity and maintain membership through engagement. If there is no engagement, membership is like a sieve.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 17   #126

As the conduit to members Branches need more flexible access to funds. In Vic we were routinely told 'no budget' as member service ideas arose, then after the close of FY2020/21 we were informed that a $120K 'surplus', created to cover the 6-month member fee payment pause, was accounted back to consolidated funds. So many questions - did Branch have access to these funds? who knew about this in FY21? why weren't these funds available to support member servicing? Why was BEC told 'no budget? I assume similar scenarios in other Branches?

Ali Shariat

Oct 17   #127

Obviously, this is not only indicating the failure of management committee to communicate global decision but also failure to understand the marketplace. ICT staff were in the best position to continue working during the pandemic. There is a high skill shortage of ICT. While a nice gesture, money could have been used better.

Rebecca.waters@...

Oct 29   #285

I feel that having a revenue stream to allow for member benefits at branch level is fine. Not every service we do has to turn a profit. If we are there to serve members, and we do this by using a revenue stream (like skills assessment), then I think that's okay personally.

Robert Estherby

Oct 30   #295

Are we potentially putting the cart before the horse here. In the new structure will branches exist?

I think the key point is this. The ACS needs to make a strategic decisions about an appropriate level of funding of 'local events' and a subsidiarity principle that allows for those local decisions to be made.

As a general answer to this question, I think they ACS should spend more of its money on being a 'good-citizen'. Working with other interested parties to help discuss policy and work with other societies, interest groups etc. to bring about high quality events (ones with the best discussions, ideas, instruction - not the best location or catering). In addition we should be clear as a society about the 'gaps' we fill in the market and make these our 'tent pole' events.

So if i was to distil this to principles.

> The ACS should fund targeted, high quality activities that benefit the profession or Australian Society, rather than members specifically.

> The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.

> The ACS should delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made.

I would also suggest as a principle

> The ACS where sensible should partner with other organizations in line with its objectives to increase value to our members and the wider public.

Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice   (11)

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #105

R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained AND enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #193

The degeneration of the role of the branches is not at all aligned with Member interests. The state/territory branch should be the mechanism thet addresses the requirements of the state based membership.

The objectives of Principles #3 and #10 must be truly manifest at a branch-level.

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@... Oct 26   #206

Agree. Additionally, if BEC should act as a conduit of their members. Then, there should be equal representation of members of all ages, across industries for each state.

1 person liked this

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #284

I agree Jia.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #300

Controversially, I disagree.

The branches are not providing governance value. Under a company limited by guarantee, this would be further weakened as the constitution will place the authority with the board.

In my opinion, the ACS's precocial and academic factionalism have not been serving the interests of the society and we have been less effective as a result.

I think we need to take forward the principles of engagement and consultation. I also think we need to have some form of local engagement for developing activities - but let's use this as an opportunity to reimagine a new structure that potentially creates communities of interest, rather than local communities.

1 person liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #301

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 04:40 PM, Robert Estherby wrote:

> *take forward the principles of engagement and consultation.* ...

> ... communities of interest, rather than local communities.

How do you see this working, Robert?

Are you aware of any way in which ACS has been supporting communications among dispersed members?

During the fracas of late 2019, it was impossible for members who were opposed to the motion being put to the AGM to communicate their arguments to other members.

Then, when the CRWG was setting up this Online Forum, the ACS was unable to provide infrastructure to support it.

So CRWG used an appropriate, commercially-available service, outside the acs.org.au domain, to deliver it.

One approach whereby ACS could support dispersed communities of interest would be to provide infrastructure, establish a Participation Guide / Code of Conduct such as the one we set up at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/CRWG-CodeofConduct.pdf , and enable any organiser to create a community and publicise its existence and purpose to the membership as a whole.

But I've not seen any concrete proposals of such an idea.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #303

@roger ... not sure how to tag...Roger, Robert is an amazing champion of the ACS... almost a recent founder of Young IT...but a very clear thinker....ex ACSNSW BC member

and this is a KEY to ACS TRUST and COLLABORATION

knowing what that looks like seems to be a point of confusion!!!!

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #305

That is a good question.

And no, the ACS 'as a corporate entity' never really embraced the creation of 'digital communities'. We had quite an effective one via Facebook for interstate Young IT at one time, but it was always 'under the radar.

I think your idea is a good one, re: setting up the environment - but I think what is needed is to have people form a core group and build those communities. We have a lot of discussion around having specialisation recognition but we could start with providing an online community of practice around that online or even deliver online discussions and AMA's on that build a live community.

Within those communities, you could then provide input and expertise for a range of different topics. The trick though is to build the community and that does take time.

But if we are honest. The active number of NSW members who attended branch meetings voted etc was less than 1000, from memory much less. We are kidding ourselves if we think that the branches are representative of the full society.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #307

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #314

I feel you are right Helen, I just don't know how they will work in the new structure.

I feel like we might have an opportunity to re-think how it all works if we go back to a principles-based approach and I think we should be open to that in the process.

I feeling as we enter the next phase of the pandemic, is that the society has the opportunity to do build a richer digital experience; and we probably shouldn't do it on "ACS tech" use third-party to tech to experiment.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #316

But to take it back to the main point.

The suggestion is that the BEC's act as a conduit - but I just don't see how that will work.

If we have a new board, the legal authority will be in that one entity and state BEC's will not maintain their governance role.

Board members will I understand, will be bound by the Corporations Act, so they will be making the best decisions for the society, regardless of sectional interests (as I understand it).

So it brings me back to this point, regardless of if we have branches or not - the constitution needs to embody the ideas of engagement and consultation so that there is trust and collaboration within the Society.

Accountability and Transparency   (3)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 6   #50

I think this hash tag needs a comma somewhere! However, Accountability and transparency are major issues that need to be addressed in any new constitution. The tricky question is how does a constitution ensure that the governing body does not steer ACS in directions with which members are uncomfortable. The answer I have so far, is to change the members of the governing body if such happens. Alas this is post fact. Is there a desire to look for a mechanism that requires consultation before such large changes are decided upon?

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12   #82

Accountability and Transparency are major reasons for the Constitutional debacle in 2019. Both are cornerstone principles in all its forms

I'm happy with the direction taken by the draft principles 7. 8, 9 & 10 in the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 and expect to see a refined formulation, going forward.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #364

I think that principle 8 needs to be strengthened.

I think that there should be a 'bias towards transparency' embedded in the constitution

Examples might include

- Board Meetings should be open to any professional member subject to agreement to appropriate confidentially provisions and in-camera sessions.

- Board minutes (with appropriate redactions) should be available to the membership
- AGM's should be interactive, online and out of business hours to allow for Members to effectively engage.

Local ACS branches in control   (2)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 28   #243

Local ACS branches in control:

• Local ACS branches set up as separate organizations
• Local ACS members elect the local ACS governing body
• National ACS set up with each branch having shares in the national ACS
• The local ACS branches thus elect and control the national ACS governing body

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #372

To be honest, I think that is a move back to what we had in the 80's - my understanding was that there were problems with that and that might be hard to unwind now.

Role of Branches (28)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 3   #29

Surely this must be an important discussion point. Some have suggested that life would be much simpler if there were no Branch Executive Committees(BECs), just a pool of people that operational staff can ask advice from when required. Others want BECs have a command and control role.

This discus should not be constrained by worries about personal liability for actions undertaken by volunteers. There are ways to protect from that. This discussion is about the vision for how you want things to be, the next phase will look at the trade offs that may be needed to enshrine such a vision in the constitution

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 5   #36

Jacky, i would also like to add the roles of chapters as they are critically important for regional reach.

3 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 16   #119   Edited Oct 30

hi Jacky,

I agree that the Jurisdictions are a vital part of the ACS. As Beau mentioned, QLD and possibly others have healthy chapters as QLD is a geographically large state. To ensure that we reach out to the current and future members, these voices need to be heard through branch and regional input.

Under the current arrangement, which I was party to in Congress in 2019, the inability of these regional chapters to hold a bank account, albeit in the ACS name, limits there focus.

For clarity, there has to be a clear understanding of what is membership funds that may be used in supporting the state/local members and what is business derived funds that the Branch / State / Chapter can utilise or apply for.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17 #125

Hi Mike

I agree with branch and chapters, however creating separate bank accounts is not an answer. A good accounting system with allow everyone to have a budget and clarity on the expenditure.

2 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 18 #131 Edited Oct 30

Hi Ali,

It has been too long between chats, my fault.

I didn't mean to suggest or imply separate bank accounts rather the ability of incidental expenses without a volunteer being out of pocket for an expense.

1 person liked this

UI

Oct 22 #170

BECs/branches/chapters should continue and ACS should function similar to State/Federal governments. Branches should have more autonomy with their finances and greater independence in deciding what works for their circumstances.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 22 #181 Edited Oct 30

I agree.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 23 #186

Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS and therefore have level of autonomy to service their member base. This must be enshrined in the Constitution AND Enforced in practice. This is actually in the current rules but snubbed (R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations).

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@...

Oct 26 #207

It would also be great to have Objective and Key Results to measure how effective the advice from BECs are.

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 27 #218

100% agree Rod. each branch and for that matter chapter is different and we need to be make sure we are able to be flexible to support each in the way that members feel empowered and engaged. some of the best events and most engaged members (especially in QLD) are located regionally. we need to give them a voice and support what is needed in each region

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 28 #242

To add a different dimension to this debate I, as VicBEC elected member, was privy to a presentation for the CEO and (less so) President sharing ACS progress in June. It was a useful overview however, I was disturbed by the perhaps unintentional bias in reference to Branches which included terminology like 'subsidising' branches and 'loss leader'.

As posted above, Branches are the conduit for the member vice and are integral to a cohesive professional organisation. Therefore reference to branches, and by implication, members in these terms seems to be reflective of an attitude that is counter member voice. Copy of my, as yet unanswered letter to CEO follows below.

My concerns have been exacerbated in recent weeks by participation in the Strategy refresh (Dovetail) project and a member segmentation project. Both of these projects are driven by staff using a framework from which to formulate ACS strategy though 2025 that presents the key areas for ACS more or less as the current business lines i.e. Skills Assessment, ACS Labs.... My understanding of marketing strategy 101 is that it starts with the 'customer need',i.e. ACS members. Both projects purport to be Member first'. Hmmm..

<< end of rant>>

Letter to CEO June 2021

Dear Rupert

Many thanks for sharing ACS progress with the BEC, Victoria on Wednesday last. It is heartening to see early signs of leadership transparency on ACS matters.

If I may, there are two observations I would like to make.

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches. Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member- centric professional society. To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle.

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services. Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidies' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos.

In making these comments I point out that language use is central to the politically correct' debates we are having over workplace health, and safety. In our recent ACS training the recognition of 'indirect inference' as a factor in bullying was an emphasis and our awareness of micro-aggression is heightened - language is important.

The fundamental existential question here is ' Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society. Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values?

Rupert, I offer these observations in good faith and trust they make a positive contribution as ACS looks to the future.

Happy to speak anytime.

1 person liked this

Peter

Oct 28 #245

Thank you Rod for sharing this episode. The more I think about this phrasing of 'loss-leader' the more concerned I become.

Is there a fundamental weakness in the current combined ACS enterprise so that it will always return to seeing members as a 'loss-leader'? If so I would rather we divest or disband than become a trojan horse commercial enterprise masquerading behind a professional society. I would rather we were a financially smaller but successful professional society focused on its members, their standards and public good, than a larger commercially focused enterprise that forgot what it was. As a smaller more focused association we may not need to worry abut a CLG structure at all.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #248   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Peter.

Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.

The ACS is a not for profit organisation, and should not even think of commercial activities.

A smaller more focus financially stable society is what should exist.

During my involvement in converting my synagogue from an association to CLG, the ACNC told us they were encouraging all NFP incorporated associationd to becoming CLG.

devindra.weerasooriya@...

Oct 28 #249

I do not hold any elected positions within the Branch/National structure. But I have learnt from those that do hold such positions about a recent heightened emphasis about politically correct' debates over workplace health, and safety, within Executive deliberations; as pointed by Rod Dilnutt.

If so, I do believe that many participants of this thread, and the whole CRWG-Conversation, would agree that referring to activities at a Branch-level focused on the Professional Excellence of Members in a derogatory manner is equally or more inimical to their sensitivities and more generally their perception of what ACS should be.

To put it more bluntly, for the ACS to advertise as having a "Mission of Professional Excellence" and regard the process towards achieving that as Loss-leading and Non-viable; must cease right-away and be declared as out-of-order throughout the ACS. All activity threads, such as the CRWG and the New-Strategy must be refocused towards achieving the Mission of Professional Excellence, in a viable manner.

When ACS really demonstrates itself as a "MUST-HAVE" service for Professional-Excellence in ICT, I'm certain that it will have no difficulty in rekindling the interest of ICT-Professionals, that is falling-away away, at present.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #250   Edited Oct 30

Yes definitely.

All forms of political correctness should shot down immediately.

Political correctness is the cancer of our society inside and outside of the ACS.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28   #252   Edited Oct 30

Grrrr. What sort of dopey platform is this - my reply to a comment well above here is not linked to the comment and instead appears out of context at the end!

Well, referring to Rod Dilnut comment #186...

Agree, but as part of the review, we must review the role of the BEC and get it right. One obvious change is that the BEC will no longer be the entity which disenfranchises members from voting for the board (MC) by appointing its delegates to Council - the members will be able ot vote directly. I think that the key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone

Oct 28   #255

Relying to Mark's comments #252

Could we also extend the Branch Executive Committee memberd to having input and be empowered and encouraged to also provide advice and experience into the strategic opportunities for the ACS, and ICT driven and enabled developments that are occurring both locally in the jurisdiction but also nationally?

Ann Moffatt

Oct 28   #259   Edited Oct 30

Well said dev.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28   #269

That would seem to be a perfectly sensible thing to do Chris Radbone.

tony.errington@...

Oct 29   #282

I fully agree with Rod Dilnutt (#186) and Chris Radbone (#255). I also agree with the various comments regarding the need to eliminate any comments such as 'loss-leading' and 'non-viable' when talking about supporting our members. Members are at the very core of the ACS and must remain so and be recognised as such by the hierarchy (both elected and employed).

As Rod says, branches are a key link in the chain from a member to the ACS, they are the only parts of the organisation that understand what their local members want and need. Their role should be enshrined in the future constitution, clearly spelling out the relationship between the elected members of the Branch BEC and the salaried Branch (or State) Manager

And while branches should have a budget which is approved at MC level, and they should perform to that, the creation of that budget should be a joint exercise and not simply imposed from above. Branches also need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focussed, without needing to go through an extended process of approval that takes unreasonable time and resources.

David Abulafia

Oct 29   #286   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Tony

Nick Tate

Oct 31 18:37 #339

In my view, branches (and chapters) are essential elements for a future ACS. Local governance (such as BECs and Chapter Committees) allow the branch to focus on issues and events in their own state or territory and to engage more effectively with their state/territory Government, than is possible nationally. To be able to do that, there will need to be some level of budget provision for the BECs and Chapter Committees to initiate projects and activities, without undue oversight from a national committee or national office; this of course must be limited to an agreed budget. Any contracts that a branch wishes to enter into will need to go through a process to ensure that it does not have unintended effects on the ACS as a whole. To implement these projects or activities will require access to staff resources and this can also be manged via an appropriate budget process.

In this round, we are trying to tease out principles and I suggest that the principle around branches is the desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

Nick as a member not as CRWG Co-convenor

Dr. Paul O'Brien

Oct 31 #345

I agree with Nick.

A Federal model with fairly autonomous branches has a lot of advantages, particularly the ability for Branches to work closely with State and Territory governments, other professional associations and industry associations.

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31 #347

I agree with Mike and Beau...We must be able to operate quickly with all the checks and balances supporting initiatives not closing them down...sadly the perceived "No Culture"

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31 #348

Double like.

Initiatives at the moment go no where @beau @chris we did the Branch listening taskforce and then where di it go ...

I am currently working up an understanding with ACS staff on that NO Culture eg where are the Access cards for the Branches who are "lucky?!?!" to have a hub as their office..and in Lockdown..

Robert Estherby

Oct 31 #353

On Sun, Oct 31, 2021 at 06:37 PM, Nick Tate wrote:

> desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

I agree that if we continue with a federated model with branches, they also should have clear objectives that support the whole society, and prevent branches from pulling away in multiple directions. We should be looking to encourage collaboration and initiative rather than unaccountable

Rupert.Grayston@... 1 Nov 09:01 #374

In this conversation thread 'Role of Branches', I seem to have been portrayed as saying in an internal ACS meeting conversation that membership is a loss-leader for ACS. Actually I'm pretty sure that I said that it can't be viewed as a loss-leader, to illustrate a point that ACS does not

necessarily have a sustainable model for member service delivery. I know that was an internal discussion to share financial information whereas this is a member forum on constitutional principles but I detected some misplaced outrage and thought I should clarify that point.

Peter 11:04 #377

Thank you for the clarification Rupert. Then it sounds like we had a burst of violent agreement [:-)] around not wanting the ACS Membership to be, or to be seen to be or treated as, a loss-leader in a larger organisation. My apologies for my part in the 'misunderstanding'.

Community and Student Engagement (1)

zac_isaac@... 1 Nov 11:32 #378

As an emerging professional, I have found it invaluable to feel welcomed, included, and supported by the QLD branch (Gold Coast chapter). That strong sense of community has been appealing to me, especially, knowing how approachable everyone is. This makes me want to contribute and give back to the community that has helped me and as I progress in my career the contribution that I will be able to make back to the ACS will become more significant. I'm sure others in a similar position will share this notion, the key aspect of this is that the desire to give back is intrinsic. Thus, by further supporting young emerging professionals/students, we are in turn investing in the human resources future of the ACS. Tying this back to principles, in my opinion, we maintain a strong emphasis on community, which is increasingly sought after in our current environment.

Can matrix management be made to work for Branches?   (3)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 6 #51

It is a communication challenge to let the operational side and volunteer side of ACS work in concert and especially at the Branch level. Who has not been to a meeting with say X and found that another ACS person has chatted to them at some event or other and covered much of the same ground as you went to a meeting to discuss? This is made worse when you wanted some specific terms attached to a promise of funds and then find these funds have been more or less promised anyway. Governance over money is fraught.

Michael Driver Oct 16   #120

During my career I have worked in and led several teams both national / state and local where matrix management is involved.

As long as the delegations and authorities are properly defined, approved and published, there shouldn't be an issue.

2 people liked this

helenmchugh@... 12:17 #379

Agree with both. Yes matrix management definitely can work. I have worked in large Fed Gov Service delivery agencies and small agencies where matrix management has been used successfully. It is often what makes the difference in success.

It is based on Trust, Collaboration, Communication

BUT it also needs well defined and understood and albeit agreed frameworks. Roles & Responsibilities

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1. Jeff Mitchell   1 June 2019

The future, member focused, ACS structure should:

• **foster grass roots agility, innovation and value-added activities at a branch level**. **[P10] [Q11]**

4. Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q11 – Yes Absolutely and subject to R12.3. <u>Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee</u> constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained and enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. **The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic**. **[P10]**

5. Dr Tim Turner, FACS, GAIC   12 October 2021

Following on from that, I wonder if the constitution should stipulate a management committee (unfortunate name given ACS history, but it's apt for my point) comprising the senior staff (CEO, CFO, Chief Membership Officer), Branch Managers, and Branch Chairs, as the mechanism of operating the national body accounting for local activities. I realise that means ~20 members – so not really a working committee! – but I think a structure like that would **allow branches to work in synchrony with the national strategies but adapting to local conditions**, which would be made known to national in that committee. Anyway, something like that. **[P10]**

_____

4. Richard Cordes   15 October 2021

6 Branch Centred Execution, and Nationally Supported

<u>Branches determine how best to execute the ACS core business processes, in the context of ACS vision, mission, and values, and with the support of national</u>. **[P03]   [P10]**

•   Promotes simultaneous loose-tight properties.

•   Doing so supports autonomy, agility, entrepreneurship, and being close to the customer.

11 Branch Executive Committee Candidates

Members have sufficient opportunity to attend sessions where <u>candidates 'pitch' their vision/ideas/reasons for wanting to being elected to the BEC, followed by Q&A</u>. **[P10]**

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q10: Principles for allocation of surplus

Damien: <u>Branches should always be involved, and the constitution should enable / enshrine that principle.</u>   **[Q11] [P09] [P10]**

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q10: Surplus allocation

Jan: A WA concern has been **a loss of quality in social networking and professional networking events**.

Jeff P: Echo **the criticality of social and professional networking**   **[P10]**

Richard M: A switch to cheaper and less convenient venue reduced attendances. **[P10]**

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Re: Can matrix management be made to work for Branches? #P10   #Q11

helenmchugh@... Nov 1   #389

And Jacqui referring to the comms issue. How many good initiatives have gone to a point and been 'lost'!!

Good Management suggests that <u>keeping good records including member and/or staff suggestions and then workshoping / proposing the initiative HAS to be the way forward</u>. And then look for where or if it fits.

But park them on a list, not lost in the perceived "No Culture"

Re: Local ACS branches in control #P10   #Q11   #Chapters

Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #399

Robert said "To be honest, I think that is a move back to what we had in the 80's - my understanding was that there were problems with that and that might be hard to unwind now."

I was chair of nsw branch in the 1980s. I never saw any probs with the constitution we had then.

karl Nov 3   #409

I agree with Ann. There were no real problems.

<u>In the minds of a series of centralists, of course the Branches were a nuisance, limiting their desire to set goals which were not really enunciated or even sensible.</u>

The Branches, especially the in QLD, WA and SA, had great <u>relationships with [State] Govts</u>. They were also extremely nimble and could respond very rapidly when needed.

Their decision chain was short and this gave them great <u>responsiveness</u>.

They also had <u>budgetary independence</u>. This <u>was not without its problems</u>, BTW.

They also ran <u>a lot of SIG's</u>.

Importantly, they could respond to local State conditions and politics as appropriate.

At the National Council, they ensured that <u>a wide diversity of views was represented and influenced policy and decisions making</u>.

Under the old constitutions, (and I was at Council from 1984 to 2006) <u>I never saw an activist President prevented from achieving their objectives except those who used up vast energy and resources trying to reorganise ACS to limit branches</u>.

Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #410

My (somewhat lengthy) suggestion is..

"to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources **ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and production of the technology in Australia**".

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

- advancement of professional excellence in ICT;
- furthering ICT study, science and application;
- promotion, development and monitoring of competence in the practice of ICT;
- definition and promotion of the maintenance of standards of knowledge in ICT;
- support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters, **aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia**;

- extension of the knowledge and understanding of ICT; and
- promotion of the code of ethics
- <u>promoting gender balance and social diversity</u>
- **<u>ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation</u>**   **[#P00]   [#P09]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

There seems to be some confusion between the "Secondary Objects" and the "Purposes"

I would add to Purpose (8) so that it reads..

(8) **The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decision makers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, promotion of Australian owned creation of ICT products and services, and related matters**.

In doing so, recognizing that ICT is a maturing area of human activity with standards of practice and competencies.

Of particular importance are security, safety and the user experience.

I would also add to Purpose (8)..

<u>ACS must ensure its interactions with its members create "good experiences". The interaction with the members goes beyond the "value proposition".</u>

Re: Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03   #P06   #P10   #Q11
karl Nov 3   #411

<u>Branches (as do other elements of ACS) need have a "delegation" which is sufficient for autonomous operation</u>.

The needs <u>to include budgetary autonomy with normal rules of authority</u>.

Again, the past systems worked very well (even though there were stuff-ups).

<u>I am on the VIC BEC and we cannot move without national authority. We seem to be tied up by the national Strategy and Budget.</u>

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #413

When I was on the VIC BEC, a sensible person in National ACS advised not seeking permission, as the default answer was NO.

karl Nov 3   #418

Yes, I guess we have all faced this at different times.

The line "its better to ask for forgiveness than permission" is attributed to Grace M. Hopper.

But, from a Governance point of view it carries enormous risk and exposure.

Far better to give people appropriate delegations.

SIGs as an example Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03   #P06   #P10   #Q11
karl Nov 3   #412

I have attached **the list of SIGs that were active in 2016. The total across all states was about 65**.

Some were social, some meeting non-ICT needs, however, they reflected members' needs.
It is something we should be proud of.

And, **we need to have this again!**

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3 #414

In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation.

It was never re-instated.

Roger Clarke Nov 3 #415

On 3/11/21 5:41 pm, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation. It was never re-instated.

I can see NatReg 8.15.7:

> Management Committee or the Branch Executive Committee may dissolve any chapter, sub-committee or branch special interest group acting under any delegation function on an affirmative vote by a 2/3 majority or any time without having to provide reasons.

On the face of it, a Branch Manager does not have the legal authority to take any such action.

On the face of it, neither does the CEO, so any delegation to the Branch Manager could not have come from the CEO.

Did anyone ask the Vic Branch Manager for evidence of authority?

Why not ask the current BEC to reform the SIG under NatReg 18.5.1?

These aren't hypothetical questions.

What appears to have happened in 2016, in at least Victoria, was in apparent breach of the Rules of the Society.

We can't 'roll back time' (images of US battleship).

But BECs can exercise the powers that they have at their disposal.

David Abulafia Nov 4 #422

How many SIGS are still active in 2021?

<div align="center">

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

</div>

Karl: The Society should not be sucked into the mantra that States are not relevant. They've been crucial during the COVID era; they have functions to perform

Karl: Branches need much more autonomy

Jo: Agreed, but at a strategic level, not the amount of the rental

Jo: **Local presence** is important, and Branch structures already exist. Evacuation of CBDs in Melbourne and Sydney were location-specific. **On-the-ground knowledge of circumstances** has to be reflected in Society actions and

Susan: Constitutionally, **we have to be national and local**. Ability to operate both physically and virtually. **Matrixed arrangements are inherent. We need better collaboration and sharing**. Inclusion is one example where **connections** are lacking. It's hierarchical and it's not at all **collaborative**. We need collaboration at the core of the Constitution

Jo: Did it work better when there was **direct Branch involvement in each national Committee**? Would it work better now than the current non-Branch-based approach?

Susan: Election-based appointments alone are limiting. Election-Plus can work better [i.e. based on the expertise matrix, some appointees to complement those available]

Queensland Chapters Event – Thu 11 Nov 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10

Bevin: **Branches should continue their primary role.**
   If they were removed, the Society would be dominated by the larger cities, and there
   would be nothing for remote members.   **[#Chapters]**
   Matthew: Agreed, and **the States should share more of their events**
   Holly: Events are recorded, and available
   Matthew: How do members know what's going into the archive?
   Holly: Fortnightly eNews.
   Michael: **Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs**
   Chapters recently, plus with face-to-face events, has been critical.
   Bevin: **Chapters should have enough independence, including some funds control**
   where they've built a reserve. Townsville's $10,400 pot was confiscated to national
   Matthew: Supports Bevin's comment.   **[#Chapters]**
   Ann: **Definitely responsibility for activities must be with Chapters.**
   Holly: 110% agreed Branches and Chapters should have that ability.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

Yes. Branches are the focal point for member activity and should be resourced
appropriately. Branches are also a key training ground for members to gain experience with ACS
governance and also be encouraged to nominate for a position in national governance.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)

The importance of networking and mentoring could be more emphasised (at least in this branch)

... centrally provided events such as Education Across the Nation and International speakers should
be continued.

Q11: Branches

Although ACS Branches should be responsible for activities in their area, centrally provided events
such as Education Across the Nation and International speakers should be continued.

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)

Maintenance of an effective state Branch Structure– Most service delivery and interaction
will be with a local Branch. These must have autonomy over budget and activities that allow
differing local needs to be met. At the same time, members should be guaranteed a
minimum level of uniform service.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs Chapters recently,
plus with face-to-face events, has been critical. Working closely with State Branches has
been critical to the success of local chapters, the support in-kind and financial that the
Downs and South West Chapter has received from ACS via its Queensland Branch Executive
has been outstanding and the stronger we can make our grassroot activities, events and
membership the stronger we will be as a professional society ACS   **[#Ch]**

Ovewview (1)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #306

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Should Chairs sit on the MC is there a conflict of interest

Can we get some outside directors for the MC

Branches must have the Roles & Responsibilities for the BEC and Branch Staff

Skills in ACS Staff   (3)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #313

With the GREATEST respect

Staff are 'controlling' the management of our profession with limited understanding of our skills.

So so sadly the thinking it is a 'product' to be sold...there IS A MIDDLE GROUND

Business acumen would suggest that we need to be able to pay for our services and make money...maybe!!!

David Abulafia Oct 31   #325

If members pay for services why should members paid a membership fee

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #331

I'm in great sympathy with your point Helen.

I don't know if it is a constitutional issue though. I think it goes much more to the culture of the organisation; which should be actively monitored by the board.

As a principle, I think the constitution should require all members of the board (including the CEO) to abide by a code of conduct (in addition to the Code of Ethics)

Migration Skills Assessment   (5)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 30   #288

Migration Skills Assessment could be split into a separate company with shares owned by the ACS branches.

ACS branches would appoint the governing body that would decide on standards, appointment of CEO, and funding of ACS branches and the national ACS office.

This arrangement may need the approval of the Department of Home Affairs.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #310

This is quite an interesting idea

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #312

Absolutely

This is almost a conflict of interest

Thinking members are members where they are customers and sadly not knowing that they are members of he ACS while they are consumers paying lots of $$$s for their assessment.

Conversion to full member is ~5% #that's_not_ok

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #340

And how would ACS benefit from this?

How does ACS benefit from the current arrangements?

Rimas Skeivys 1 Nov 10:59 #376

I understand that most of National ACS's income is from migration skills assessment.

This can lead to a conflict of interest between making money and looking after ACS member interests.

Branch involvement in migration skills assessment could be advantageous to all ACS members and the Australian community.

ACS Governance recommendations from 2010 (not implemented) (1)

Rimas Skeivys 1 Nov 13:05 #384

In 2010, the Victorian Branch of the ACS reviewed ACS Governance.

I have attached the file for information.

Note that Appendix A has a detailed chart of how ACS elections and appointments worked in 2010 - I don't think anything has changed since then.

Board Powers and Member Controls (1)

Ashley Maher 13:43 #387

On the one hand, the Board needs to be able to make strategic and policy decisions, pass them to the CEO for implementation, and ensure effective, efficient and adaptable operation of the Society.

On the other, the members need a basis whereby they can trust the Board and CEO to be acting in accordance with the values, mission and purposes of the Society.

For the members to have that trust, a series of layers of regulation are needed:

(1) members need enough visibility of what the Board and CEO are doing

(2) with major new initiatives, members need visibility in advance of decisions, and meaningful opportunities to provide input (the 'bring the members along on the journey with you' dictum)

(3) where member concern exists, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of concern', and communicate it to the Board and CEO

(4) where that concern is serious, and responses by the Board and CEO do not dissipate the concern, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of serious

concern', and communicate it to the Board and CEO, but also to all other BECs, and the membership

(5) where the matter is so serious that trust by the members in the directions the Society is taking is being undermined, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of no confidence', and communicate it to the Board and CEO, and to all other BECs, and the membership

(6) if any two BECs pass a materially identical 'motion of no confidence', the Constitution needs to provide that a General Meeting is automatically called at which the motion must be put and debated

As with all regulatory arrangements, the purpose is to avoid the need for 'nuclear option' (6) to ever be implemented.

The warning signs turning into thunderclouds is intended to be sufficient to communicate to the Board and CEO that a serious problem exists, such that consultative processes are implemented to address them.

At each step of seriousness a define response from the Board and-or CEO would be the result. For example a report to all members explaining why an action causing concern is in fact in the wider interest of members.

A similar series of escalating motions could be oversight for the associated State Manager.

Too often organisations have the fail safe of members being able to call a special general meeting if there are sufficient members who are not happy. But this often tends to be a MAD (Mutually Assured destruction) option. The purpose of the above is to build in relief valves to ensure nobody reaches the MAD option.

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3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

No, **professional ACS members should not be able to nominate as an ACS Director**. Caveat: **unless they can supply relevant board director qualifications to ACS**.

...

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

Zero.

Internal policies are best set by the CEO and the Board. Members are in effect the 'customers' of ACS. ...   **[P01]**

... Members can provide feedback on what services they enjoy and would like to see more of but not how those services should be delivered. Imagine trying to tell Facebook what their internal policies should be, simply because you have a Facebook profile? Imagine telling YouTube how to run their business because you made a video once? From an ownership perspective, imagine telling Woolworths how to set internal policies because you bought a parcel of 10 shares on the ASX? Just because members are the customers (and owners) of ACS, doesn't mean they can tell ACS how to do its job. **The most involvement that members should have, as with other organisations, is to vote for which director they want to fill a vacancy**. Bizarrely, whether ACS members should be able to vote directly for directors, instead of the old boy's club voting for themselves from amongst Congress in a massive conflict of interest, doesn't form part of the questions in this survey.   **[P11] [Dir]**

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Feedback: I understand that there needs to be effective delegation of power to the board / management committee / CEO / MD. I do however confess to <u>feeling particularly disenfranchised over the last 5 years</u>. Sitting with this discomfort has given me the opportunity to reflect and provide the following suggestions to remedy this for the professional members:

- I see the **dual electorate mechanism / branch structures / company limited by guarantee / delegation of powers as being intrinsically linked**. **[P11]**

- I want to see less complication at the organisational structure level and **more direct accountability** and with that clearer delegation of power from the membership. **[P08]**

- I want to suggest that we dissolve the local branch elections, and we <u>vote directly for the board / committee at a national level</u>. **[Dir]**

- I choose to trust my fellow like minded members to make appropriate decisions in choosing an appropriate board / management committee directly at a national level.

- Part of my feeling of disenfranchisement is that my voice does not directly count at a national leadership level. Sure, we go through the motions in voting in local committees at branch level and we empower them to vote in appropriate national leaders (or vote out) at congress.

- **Branches** would then collapse back to being **event delivery teams run locally**, but not needing to be elected. **[P03]**

- This whole **electoral college** type of system feels far too complicated, and **has helped isolate the membership from exerting direct power** at what has been quite a tumultuous time for our society. **[P11]**

- One professional member, one vote.

- **I want to be able to directly vote out a board** that has lost the confidence of the membership, which is not something that I can do currently. I would also add that I think the events of the last 5 years would not have smouldered on for so long, if the professional membership were directly enfranchised, then **there would be <u>less opportunity for a self-reinforcing clique to exist</u>**. **[P11]**

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Bob, Paul and Beau expressed the view that <u>the case for moving to a CLG had not been adequately made</u>. It was generally accepted that <u>the rules are outdated and must change</u> but that this did not necessarily equate to the need for a change to a CLG. **[P11]   [CLG]**

Bob felt that <u>the pool of eligible candidates for President was too constrained by the current rules</u> and that <u>the eligibility rules for President should be changed as soon as possible</u>. **[P11]   [Dir]**

7.   Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Sarah-Louise: A strong advocacy organisation like the Pharmacy Guild puts some surplus into <u>a fighting fund, specified in the Constitution, which requires member approval to expend</u>. The idea could be implemented in the ACS context [although the purposes would be different]

Peter: **Allocation has to be based on the Objects. It's impractical to go to the members for each decision, but the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that guidance should be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes.** **[P08]   [P11]**

For this to work, however, electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club.   [P11]   [Dir]

Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions.   [Q09]

[Break-even is adequate for Functions that are relevant but not Key Functions.]

_____

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

P7, P8, P9, P10:   Delegations, Accountability & Transparency, Member Involvemt, Branches

Sam: More accountability to members is crucial. 15 years a member, but **the last 5 years has felt particularly disenfranchised. Controls are needed to better align people at the top with the rank-and-file**.   **[P08]   [P11]**

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q: Members' Votes

The current arrangements are at best peculiar, at worst bizarre: All members can do is elect members of a Branch Committee. That acts as an electoral college for 2 representatives who attend occasional Congress meetings, where they seldom get to vote anyway, other than acting annually as an electoral college for the 10 eventually-elected members who do get to vote. The Congress comprises the 16 Branch representatives, plus previous Branch representatives who have been elected to, and still hold, about 10 further positions.

The three layers represent a huge buffer between the members and the governing committee.   **[P11]   [Dir]**

The constitution needs to provide members with direct votes for both governing committee members and Branch committee members.

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q: ACS Electoral Structure

Mark: Tried to use the Rule to draw the complex structure of representational democracy, and it's so illogical that it didn't prive possible. It needs a massive overhaul, and a great deal more transparency to the membership.   **[P11]   [P08]**

———————————

Migration Skills Assessment #P11 #Directors #Chapters

Ann Moffatt Nov 2 #394

Its not just skills assessment but there is a 'rumour' that those seeking migration are 'encouraged' to take acs fee paying courses that they are told will 'help' with migration.

Is this where some of the revenue comes from.

Paul Bailes Nov 2 #400

IMHO ACS is inherently conflicted as a "guarantor" of the quality of ICT education programs on the one hand, and a supplier of same on the other.

Back "in my day" there was an internal QA process for ACS education programs (no evidence to suggest there currently isn't), but honestly I'd prefer there to be no connection in ACS at all between our QA activities and the education (or "training" if you insist) activities subject to our QA.

I would include in the "QA" rubric anything like assessing (positively or negatively) the resulting skills of individuals who've undertaken our education/training programs.

You might say "but that will lead to loss of revenue" (e.g. assuming Ann's "rumour" turns out to be substantiated).

My response would be to ask "how has such revenue been applied to the benefit of members?" i.e. can we (the members) actually do without it?

I was unable to tell from the Financial Report (emailed with the AGM papers) where the $$$ (I guess the $41,665,920 from "Professional standards income" in 2019-20 includes what's being discussed below) were applied … can anyone help me?

David Abulafia Nov 4 #421   [#Q07]

The ACS should be encouraging, the creation of local talent and only going to overseas immigrant at very last resort.

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes #Key-Functions #P01 #Q03 #Q07

Jack Burton Nov 4 #432   [#P00] [#P03] [#P07] [#P11]

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief (and none of the signatories could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.

Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P07]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

- reduction of Boards
- 2019 constitutional reform
- COVIDSafe endorsement
- \<add your own here\>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #410

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

...

- **ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**   **[#P00]   [#P09]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

Skilled ICT Labour Suuply Re: Migration Skills Assessment #P11   #Directors   #Chapters

karl Nov 3   #416

Paul Bailes, I agree.

Actually, I'd prefer that we talked about The Supply of skilled ICT staff for Australia

I have explained that I was "at Council" when John Hughes (now deceased) presented the details of the current arrangements.

We have a serious COI on several fronts with skills assessment.

1.   We have a large income stream from immigration skills assessment.
2.   To keep this income stream up we need two things:-
   2.1   Govt to keep ACS as the assessor,
   2.2   Large numbers skilled immigrants are needed due to shortage of trained and experienced people already here.

Threat to 2.1 if ACS critcises Govt to much, this may be withdrawn

Threat A to 2.2. Govt may decide to enhance retraining and profession-translation training to fill gaps

Threat B to 2.2. Govt may decide to ensure that more local secondary students train for ICT

Threat C to 2.2 Govt may use security clearance issues to block immigration.

Threat D to 2.2 ACS accreditation of educational programs may lift standards so that over time, the shortage is met by non-immigrants

As Paul Bailes says, we also have a basic COI of the "active poacher appointed as gamekeeper" style.

We assess people who have passed programs we assessed in the first place.

In some jurisdictions, there are separate licensing exams to test eligibility to practice.

It could be that we need to get out of this line of business and licence our IKP to an independent body

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Rod: **Vital importance of safeguards existing to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity.** The incorporation form is less vital than that issue

        [#Dir]   [#P00]   [#P02]   [#P08]   [#P11]   [#Q14]

Charlynn: Must be for the members and agreed among the members, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical.   **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P08]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**
Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed
Students don't feel the ACS is there for them – and that's the Society's future!

Susan: Focus on members, because so much has changed

John: The vital thing for the Society is that it be of and for its members   **[#P00]**

The organisation needs to be kept simple. The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus

Jo: Member-centricity is critical. There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity   **[#P00]   [#P02]**

We're no longer a principles-driven organisation, and delegation and freedoms

Karl: This process has been an invaluable opening up of engagement with members

Susan: The shared experience in a meeting like this was an effective mechanism for engagement   **[#P00]   [#P08]**

Constitutions and all that

I do have a concern with the way that the word constitution is being used in the consultation papers. What I mean is that <u>many of the matters in the consultation papers have little to do with a constitution, and are more to do with business matters related to how the members want to shape and operate the ACS – many of these you would not want to lock into a constitutional document.</u>

When I think of a constitution I think of <u>a very high-level document that outlines the purpose of the organisation and how it is governed, with provision for the governing body/bodies to have authority to carry out a variety of activities within the stated purposes of the organisation. Many items in a constitution are mandated by regulatory authorities. There can then be supporting documents that cover many of the business matters addressed by many of the questions in the papers.</u>

I realize that I am jumping ahead of the process but I think that clarity is necessary to ease the path forward – being the ageing pedantic engineer that I am!

Q3: Mission and Purposes

I have just been looking at the ACS' entry in the ACNC Charity Register and **there is no mention of the objects of the ACS in the governing documents**. I have also just been looking at the current set of ACS Rules and **there is no mention of the purpose or objects of the ACS in those Rules. These objects should be embedded in the top level governing document**, ie, the rules, as the governing framework for everything else that follows. This is fundamental – how did that happen? Looking further afield I noticed that statement of objects is a standalone document with no reference to the source or authority for the objects.

This must be corrected and the Mission and Purpose of the ACS must be firmly embedded in the governing constitutional document.

Incorporation or CLG

<u>There are two key governance aspects in my mind that are being confused.</u>

<u>Firstly, there is the question of the legal governance framework within which the ACS would operate. In essence this is the skeleton of the body, i.e., the structural stuff! A lot of the compliance obligations are mandated so there is little discretion.</u>

Secondly, and staying with my body analogy, it is the working level arrangements that put the brain and flesh onto the skeleton, i.e., the behavioural and cultural stuff! Examples are how the organisation is structured, member representation, branches, and authority levels. Much of this is contained in the ACS rules and regulations and business planning documents. My understanding is that the ACS is free to control and shape its destiny in whatever legal framework it operates.

My recommendation is the CLG framework.

It needs to be said that a 'perfect' structure and constitution does not exist and even if it did, it would not stop non-compliant behaviour - checks and balances must be in place.
[#P08]   [#P09]

Tag Consolidation
#P12 – 1 Topics – 1 Posts + 0 Other Messages +0 +1
Principle 12 - Legal Compliance
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On this page after the sole Forum posting

Use the law wisely to achieve member wishes   (1)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #57

There does not seem much to discuss here. I would suggest that in the law there seem to be many ways to achieve an outcome and we should not let legal complexity stand in the way of this.

———————————

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

Incorporation or CLG

... there is the question of the legal governance framework within which the ACS would operate. In essence this is the skeleton of the body, i.e., the structural stuff! A lot of the compliance obligations are mandated so there is little discretion.

...

It needs to be said that a 'perfect' structure and constitution does not exist and even if it did, it would not stop non-compliant behaviour - checks and balances must be in place.
[#P08]   [#P09]

ACS is a Professional Society   (1)

z6957315@... Oct 2   #17

Yes, the Consultation Document prettymuch says it. ACS is a professional society, and needs to stay that way.

1 person liked this

Distinguish Professional from Supportive Levels of Membership (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 3   #23   Edited Oct 30

We should make it clear to all whom ACS has verified as being a member of the ICT profession at a professional level and who is just an interested and supportive member.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 19   #135

agree Jacky. the "professional level" criteria does open up a few other discussions. for example how should people working in emerging tech be classified (i.e. roles that do not qualify for professional status for example someone working on blockchain development may not have any qualifications and have limited years of experience but are still a professional in the industry)

UI Oct 22   #171

we should have more tiers of membership and some of them should have criteria allowing for different ICT professions/specialities, bearing in mind that members can have multiple disciplines. We should also acknowledge that some members are C-Level executives and business owners which puts them in a different category again.

Adrian Porteous Oct 23   #189

We already have four grades of membership: Associate, Member, Senior Member and Fellow. The last three comprise the Professional Division. What would more accomplish?

Recognising specialisms is a worthy objective, however these are specialisms within a professional society, and not attributes of organisational heirarchy. A C-Level Exec may have one of more ICT professional specialisms, or have none (similarly a hospital CEO may also be a doctor and be a member of the AMA and/or Specialist College - may be just as worthy if not medically qualified, but then not eligible for membership of AMA or College).

Ann Moffatt Oct 25   #196   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Adrian but would also like to see a 'grade' for pc techs.

The BCS has RITTECH. https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/

To quote the BCS website it is to:-

"Show that you're a competent, trusted digital professional by validating your technical skills and appearing on the public RITTech register.

So many small businesses rely on PCs these days yet there is no 'qualification' to show competency. Most PC techs are not qualified and this lack of a 'standard' is very detrimental to keeping small business running.

Adrian Porteous Oct 25   #197   Edited Oct 30

Thanks Ann.

I agree with your additional grade suggestion. Not only for PC techs, but the whole gamut of hardware service and support.

1 person liked this

Aubrey Oct 26   #200

On Mon, Oct 25, 2021 at 07:01 AM, Ann Moffatt wrote:

> Most PC techs are not qualified

Not sure where you get that idea from Ann? I would say that as many PC techs are qualified as are other roles in IT. There are many TAFE qualifications in this field plus industry certifications such as CompTIA and Microsoft, Linux, etc. At least one university here in WA incorporates PC hardware and software units in their computer systems degree. There was a second university here some years ago offering similar but the units were canned because they were too popular and too "vocational" - needless to say there are many desktop support technicians with degrees - so is an IT professional defined by their qualifications and training, or just the role they are performing at the time .. or both?

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26   #204

A 'Cadet' grade (or similar) should be considered to encourage young people in K-12, but particularly 10, 11, 12, when they are commencing study related to our body of knowledge. This cohort will become the next generation of professionals and I believe ACS has a role to nurture their interests. It would be open to any student studying ICT oriented studies and be an active ACS program. No fees are proposed and would also engage secondary level ICT teachers and provide a pathway to the profession. Current R&R restrict membership to >16.

2 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 26   #205

This is a great idea, Rod.

We need to make ICT more attractive to 10,11 & 12 students and teachers.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #208

The suggestion of a membership grade aimed at year 10/11/12 students is interesting. However we'd need to ascertain exactly what ACS can do for them, and in what way this membership might nurture their interests. Past successes include special interest groups in areas like robotics, and hosting of competitions. ACS resources like the Women in ICT videos were valuable in exposing students to possible career paths, and we could do more in getting students, their parents and the wider community aware of the scope and opportunities in IT careers.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #214   Edited Oct 30

Hi Aubrey,

I'm well aware of the TAFE offerings as I was on the board of nsw TAFE and chair of the north Sydney institute. I am aware of the Microsoft and other vendor training offerings. However, I stand

by my comment that most IT techs offering services for pc support are autodidacts and totally without formal training, esp here in rural australia. The usual tack is that after charging $50 an hour for several hours the most common advice to their customer is "go to Harvey Norman and buy a new computer'.

The BCS has tapped into this need. I think the ACS should too.

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #292

A further term that's been suggested in other threads as being applicable as a Member-category is 'Practitioner'.

This could be defined in various ways, but one argument is that a person may meet the threshold for MACS, but have never demonstrated that they've achieved the requirements of CP.

Should ACS permit people to become MACS without CP, calling them a Practitioner, but not (yet) a (Certified) Professional?

It would be entirely reasonable for MACS (with or without CP) to be voting members.

Whereas future joiners at the AACS level would not be voting members.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #297

As a principle within the discussion of the constitution i think;

that we need to have professional members grades and associates grades.

the majority of roles on the board should be restricted to professional members, as should voting rights.

Professional members must have either recognised skills and relevant experience or be a pioneer of good standing in an emerging area. All must adhere to the code of ethics.

Associate members may have an interest, relevant experience, be an untrained manager working the ICT industry or be a student.

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7.   Martin Lack FACS - martin.lack@mlaa.com.au   **Wed 20/10/2021 10:30 AM**

Up until October 2019, I was able to analyse ACS' membership each month across all membership categories. For example, since March 2013, voting membership had halved; Associate membership had fallen by 40%; whilst Fellows had basically maintained numbers, the number of MACS had fallen by 70%. Clearly the Executive hated this mathematical analysis and stopped publishing data each month. Very sad because I gave insight into where they should focus effort especially knowing an ACS/Deloitte report showed there were 200,000 ICT workers in Australia compared to just 45,000 in the ACS including 25,000 Overseas Skills Prep so net 20,000 just 10%.

ACS clearly needs to provide this data to members so we can help it grow substantially - five time say. We need to encourage PROFESSIONAL membership not these casual Associates and OSP's. we need to show value to employees so they prefer to hire ACS Professionals. Win-win for members, business/government, Australia.

At a very detailed level, some tedious questions:
- What categories of people are in the Associate grade? How many are there in each category? (+/- 100 would be fine).
- How many of each category have the right to vote after allowing for those who are disallowed to vote: e.g. Overseas Branch members, students, etc?
- How many of each category pay what level of the fee schedule at https://www.acs.org.au/join-acs.html ?
- How many of each category have a gratis membership, granted because they are members of staff, or part of a start-up tenancy?

Knowing this will help focus discussions on A PROFESSIONAL ICT ASSOCIATION in Australia. We don't have one. :(**[P08] [Q04] [PS]**

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5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

Feedback: I am unclear what the point of someone with no real interest in becoming a professional has joining a professional society. The ACS is a professional society and as such **joining as an associate should be the starting point of a journey which leads to meeting professional membership requirements**. We all individually and collectively strive to uphold the values of professionalism, and while associates do not yet meet all of the requirements of professionals, whether that be core body of knowledge, experience, or code of ethics, we need to encourage them along that way, whether that be by providing a pathway for them, or some other appropriate mechanism.

Catering for other membership classes that are outside that scope risks diverting attention and focus away from the society's core mission.

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4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q5. Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

•   If we define things so the majority of their role involves IT in some way or the technical expertise in their current role is in IT in some way, we need to include them. If we try to be all things to all people, we are no longer a professional society, if this is the decision.

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? ...

•   Historically it was more difficult to be an ACS member. **Over time that has become broader to represent the ICT community. We should keep that broad view**. ICT covers more that IT – we don't want to go back to the prescriptive membership model.

•   Can we remain a professional society if we allow broad membership? There should be criteria to become a member, but the ICT definition should be broad enough to encompass the ICT industry in Australia. If people have in interest but are not professional, they should still have the option to participate in the Society's activities.

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National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q6: industry associations

Sam: Perplexed when he read about the acquisition [of ADMA] in Information Age – the only place he'd heard about it.   **[P08]**

If it were a source of funds for other purposes, and were separated into an ACS Enterprises activity, maybe? But not if it's unprofitable or diverts attention.

Stephen: **Industry associations are incompatible with a professional society** – there is no grey area **[PS]**

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q6: Industry Associations

David: Industry associations are very different from a professional society.
The functions need to be separated – and then work together as and when appropriate.

Q1:   Professional Society

Philip: What else would we want it to be? What else could it be?

Margaret: <u>It would be good to know the options, and the pros and cons of each.</u>
<u>But, in general, no other form that's been mentioned appears to be suitable other than a</u>
<u>professional society.</u>

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Q1:   Professional Society

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Q1: A professional society is an organisation that comprises and is governed by members of a particular profession with a well defined vision and mission

Q3: Mission and Purposes
Also emphasising the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals will play in shaping the future of the country and need for a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology is always used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels

ACS's Role in Addressing the Big Problems

The other thing on reflection that ACS should endeavour to capture in its constitution as a professional society is a **commitment to playing our part as a profession to solving big problems facing humanity such climate change, sustainability and mental health etc and making the world a better place for the next generation**

Tag Consolidation
#Q01 — 4 Topics — 28 Posts + 20 Other Messages
Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 13:30 UT+11

What is ACS?   (9)

Paul Bailes

Oct 27   #224

[PS] IMHO the question "Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?" is somewhat loaded, in that I am not quite confident that ACS is a "professional society".

[OBJ] Our Principal Object "to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources" is "professional" to the extent that the "resources" might be human resources, but IMHO unfortunately not necessarily exclusively. E.g. our Secondary Objects include "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters" which might as well be found in the Objects of AIIA (or ADMA!).

In other words, I fear that ACS risks being less of a force for the maintenance and improvement of the performance of individual ICT professionals, and more of a platform to lobby Goverments for whatever the leadership/management sees from time to time as worth pursuing (under the guise of "support for the formulation of effective policies ...").

[OBJ] Accordingly, I would urge that we suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature, i.e. strike out:

* from Secondary Objects

~~support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters;~~

* from Purposes

~~(8) The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decisionmakers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, and related matters~~

(If anyone wanted to hobnob with Government "community leaders and decision-makers", let them find a platform other than ACS.)

David Abulafia

Oct 27   #234   Edited Oct 30

[PS] Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club

David Abulafia

Oct 27   #235   Edited Oct 30

[ACT] The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites.

Roger Clarke

Oct 30   #293

Paul wrote:

> ... strike out <~~support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters~~>

[OBJ] During video discussion sessions, it's been argued that, central though 'information {and communications} technologies' are to the Society's scope, it has for many years also recognised the importance of the application of ICT, management of ICT, and implications of ICT, and its use for alignment with organisational and social purposes, transformational capabilities, and disruptive

potential. **[SP]** (That leads to arguments by quite a few members that we need to encompass specialisations that are not highly technical – but making clear what those specialists are and are not specialised in).

Are you really intending that ACS should not recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy?

As test-cases, consider the risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc.?

(For clarity, I have a lot of sympathy with the proposition that there are many forms of advocacy / lobbying that are emphatically not within a professional society's scope, such as seeking advantages for business enterprises along the lines of tax breaks and de-regulation).

tony.errington@...

Oct 30   #319

[PS] David Abulafia is correct in both his comments on this topic. The ICT sector in Australia needs a professional body, and the ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage. Furthermore, Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector.

[SP] Because of the nature of the industry we are in, it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #336

[PS] Not necessarily "a" professional body – the Health Sector is served by multiple professions and professional bodies. (See mine just now re "Breadth of ACS interest #Q02 #Q05 #Q12 #SIGs")

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #337

Good point, thanks Roger for raising this.

[OBJ] My concern is for ACs not to become distracted from what I see as its distinctive role, as developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals.

Very sincere congrats to you for your great work resisting the Australia Card but how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

I would like to see the warnings about misuse of ICT in X to come from the Australian X Society/Institute/whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS.

[POL] Even then, I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything "topical", as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus. Consider for example: https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (and despite being in the name of "ACS Senior Members", the 12/5/2020 email from ACS " Seeking your support - COVID-19" enlisting signatories to the foregoing makes it clear to me that this was owned by ACS). Congrats again to you for providing another view (and to ACS/IA for publishing it), but again how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #354

Hi Paul,

[POL] I have to admit, that when I first saw your post I was in vehement disagreement; however, I recognise your point that the ACS needs to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus.

That aside, I do think that as a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.

When I look at the current voices in these debates, I see that the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest.

I also acknowledge that we have not done well at this to date.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #363

Most gracious, thanks Rob!

[POL] We need to protect ACS from being "hijacked" by voices that, as you say, might be "self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest", or even just plain wrong.

Professional Society and Public Good   (14)

Peter

Oct 12   #89

[PG] How could/should the ACS contribute to broader society for a Public Good? Will the ACS be seen as a self-serving, self-promoting interest group, or will it have a broader "service" role to contribute? Will the ACS provide information and assistance to society beyond lobbying on policy to governments similar to other industry associations? As individuals/members we spend a lot of our professional careers helping to solve business or research needs with technological advances and solutions. Should the ACS spend time making similar contributions to societal issues? Has the ACS made a difference during the pandemic so far? Could it? Is there a role for ACS members as volunteers or is this a career/network building group? Can the ACS support both aspects?

While retiree's are mentioned in the consultation document as potential members, I've seen little consideration previously of that pathway and the possible value to the ACS and broader society. Is there an implicit assumption that Professional equates to knowledgeable AND EARNING? Should this be continued? Those who were previously qualified practitioners and members seem to fall off a cliff at retirement unless you were famous/active enough to become a Fellow. There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles; for example to promote early interest in computing during primary and secondary education or to help span the various digital divides?

[MA] The use of CPD as THE way of recognising continuing development may also be a bit financially self-serving for the ACS (a possible over-emphasis). Should this be a discrete business line? It may be seen as competing with commercial training organisations.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 19   #136   Edited Oct 30

[PG] I am a 'retiree' but still working with my local community to help with IT issues.

I'm a fellow of the BCS in addition to the ACS.

The BCS has a scheme whereby members who 'retire' can buy a continuing membership for a sum then go on involvement in all BCS activities. I've suggested this several times to ACS people but no-one seems interested in taking the suggestion up.

A scheme such as this has the advantage of keeping people within the ACS and raising a smallish revenue for the society.

frada.burstein@...

Oct 19   #138

Hi Ann,

[PG] As recent retiree myself, I totally agree with you. We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities. I am a member of the Accreditation Board and vey happy to be actively involved in that group, or take any other useful responsibility as required.

Having a special rate for membership was greatly appreciated. It was not mentioned in the ACS website - but it should be offered to anybody who is prepared to stay active and connected.

Frada Burstein (Adjunct Professor, Monash FIT)

Dr. Paul OBrien

Oct 19   #139

[PG] I agree, Frada.

I have remained active in the ACS since retiring. Mentoring less experienced members and contributing our considerable knowledge of and experience in ACS (I have been a member since 1978   ) is worthwhile and rewarding.

There is a concessional membership for retired members that has a reduced membership fee:

[MA] Retired: You are a Retired member if you have been a financial full fee paying member of the ACS continuously for 2 years and have retired from all regular employment. This is a permanent concession. Should you return to paid work you must notify the ACS in writing so that your retired membership status can be changed. Normal benefits and services apply.

Peter

Oct 20   #150

Thanks Paul, Yes, the retired concession will be useful now that I'm aware of it.

[PG] I've been volunteer mentoring girls with robotics in high school to improve STEM awareness and hopefully open up ICT careers for them and balance the diversity a bit better. But this is not through anything that the ACS is part of, I just got into a discussion with a teacher one day. I guess it's the lack of discussion/promotion/awareness in this area, amongst others, from the ACS that I am noticing. I think these sort of gaps need raising as part of the discussion for our new constitution and strategies (professionalism and public good). That way the group can have a more open discussion about its purpose, and members can make choices.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 21   #159

[PG] [MA] Hi Peter Well done on your volunteering here. This is exactly the sort of thing that ACS should be supporting from a broad base. This would build positive outcomes and a recognition of ACS among young people that will fuel engagement with ACS and promote life-long awareness/belonging as a professional member.   I believe some membership category for K-12 students is appropriate - maybe 'cadet member' at no cost. At the moment 'student' is the only option for those >16.

Ann Moffatt

Oct 21   #161   Edited Oct 30

I agree rob,

[MA] There are so many bright young people under 16 who are vvv competent.

kenjprice@...

Oct 26   #211

[PG] The role of retired members in mentoring and outreach is one way the ACS can contribute to public good. However there are other ways that I feel should be considered.

The ACS should, as a national professional body, have a positive public presence.

An example - I asked a couple of random friends about what they thought the ACS might do for them. A couple mentioned the abundant phone scams where text and voice messages appear to come from someone's mobile phone number, and contacting the number confirms it's either inactive or some random number. Their question was "how can scammers impersonate a phone number, and how is ACS involved in getting this loophole fixed?"

I could find no answer on ACS website other than some general involvement in technical standards development.

But to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.

It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.

1 person liked this

Peter

Oct 27   #213

[PG] Very true, phone and SMS scams are an area where the ACS could make public good offerings. I could also see the ACS possibly involving itself in topics like e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Maybe these sort of topics could be objectives for the labs if we keep them.

David Abulafia

Oct 27   #225   Edited Oct 30

[PG] I agree with these comments

Paul Bailes

Oct 27   #226

[PG] I don't

Mark Toomey

Oct 28   #256

[PG] Can I suggest another angle for public good?

We see government constantly failing with IT. What is the cost to date of CovidSafe, and the benefit? How many so=called IT projects has the Victorian Auditor General called out this year? The ACS should be standing up and screaming about the waste and cost top the community, and pushing government to get it right.

[GOV] But of course, these problems are all problems of governance, and the ACS as it stands now knows absolutely nothing about governance.

How many of you know that the ACS was a significant contributor to the development of ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation? How many of you are surprised that the ACS does not make use of, and certainly does not conform to that standard? How can the ACS credibly criticise government, when it can't get its own governance and use of IT right?

To contribute to the public good in a significant way, the ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right.

David Abulafia

Oct 28   #274   Edited Oct 30

[GOV] Mark what you say is so true. It sounds like ACS belongs to the do as I say and not as I do group.

The ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #342

Bravo Mark.

[PG] [POL] ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).

FWIW I co-authored (with others including Nick Tate) a proposal for a "Discipline of Software Engineering Forensics Analysis" (http://www.scitepress.org/Papers/2014/49700/49700.pdf). Again ideally, ACS would be a good partner, indeed host, for the realisation of same. If the current exercise results in an ACS that could be entrusted with this mission, I will be happy to re-engage.

Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership   (4)

Adrian Porteous

Oct 25   #199   Edited Oct 30

[PS] The Consultation document raises the fundamental question of whether the ACS continues to be a professional society (Q1). Nowhere in any of the subsequent discussion is that disputed. I think this is good!

[ACT] Appendix A of the consultation document (Key Functions of a Professional Society) states well the required functions we should expect of the ACS, namely around technical, ethical and professional standards, criteria for membership, skills assessment and accreditation, professional development, member benefits, public outreach and public policy development.

[MA] The most recent Annual Report (2020) informs us we have 48,025 members. It also provides membership revenue of $3.323m for the year. The reported membership is significantly larger than my understanding of our current national professional membership. From various BEC, Council (pre Congress) and MC roles over the last 20 years, my understanding is that the current total number of Student, Associate and Professional Members is closer to 12,000 members. The ACS's Annual Report does not provide any breakdown of membership, however a figure of 12,000 members is roughly consistent with our reported membership income.

[ACT] Given we accept the ACS is a professional society, I think any business activity we engage should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed.

[MA] Investments in Innovation Labs in three cities and acquisition of a set of data marketing and analytics associations do not immediately appear to me aligned with membership value. The annual report is a bit opaque on full detail of the investments, but lists cash outlay of $2.6m for data and analytics association investments and $799,527 in the preceding year for River City Labs. These are substantial investments for a professional society of our size; it is not clear to me how they provide member value, or even whether they make a positive financial contribution to the ACS.

[ACT] Fifteen years ago we ran the ACS with higher membership revenue ($3.550m -we had a greater number of professional members), significantly lower revenue from migration assessment activities and a smaller contribution from education services. We provided members with regular forum and professional development activities. The ACS had a range of award winning publications over the years: Australian Computer Journal, Journal of Research and Practice in Information Technology, and later Information Age (I don't intend to spark debate on our current IA offering!). We provided specialist member skills to Australian and International Standards bodies and engaged in lobbying activities at state and federal levels. Local and national events were held to recognise leaders in the profession.

[MA] Revenue has increased nearly eightfold since 2005 (then $6.141m), professional membership has declined, but I don't see any increase in member benefits.

I would like to see as part of the review process on the constitution a commitment to resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with either the current ACS Objects, or as they are reformulated into a new Mission statement.

[MA] In drafting a new constitution, I suggest a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership', be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus with the key purpose of the Society.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 26   #203   Edited Oct 30

[PS] [ACT] [MA] Fully agree, Well put Adrian.

Ann Moffatt

Oct 27   #216   Edited Oct 30

[PS] [ACT] [MA] I agree Adrian,

v well put.

BUT I WOULD like to see comments about our current 'publications'.

I cringe every time I hear that information age is 'the flagship publication of the ACS'. IMHO it should be canned now.

rcousins@...

Oct 27   #239

[GOV] From a background of the structure of several not too dissimilar bodies, might I suggest that each state is analogous to a group of stakeholders and a structure can be made such that each state can appoint (and remove) a board member. This could be extended to have the board add a couple of highly respected long-term professionals as well as have that full board then select the chairman.

The role of a board is to set policy, hire/fire the CEO, etc so there are clear roles between management and policy with equally clear paths as to how people get (and lose) those positions.

The rules for appointment (with term limitations) and revocation by the state need to be clearly laid out in the constitution.

I question the CLG reasoning and have seen many structures of how the above can be achieved within a company.

But to me the first step is to determine what sort of animal the ACS is!

[PS] It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it can not be all things to all people.

As a starting point it would not hurt to review how the AICD is structured.

ACS is a Professional Society   (1)

z6957315@...

Oct 2   #17

[PS] Yes, the Consultation Document prettymuch says it. ACS is a professional society, and needs to stay that way.

1 person liked this

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3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

Q1 [PS] The ACS should continue to be a professional society

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q1 - **[PS]** Absolutely. See comment below Q4/Q5 on Professional member grades.

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q1 Should the ACS Continue to be a Professional Society?

[PS] Yes. If the ACS isn't in the best position to be the pre-eminent representative of IT professionals in Australia … who else is?

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021

Q1   **[PS]** It is fundamental that the ACS continue to be a professional society governed by its members, and <u>not a commercial organization</u>. **[GOV]** If a company limited by guarantee (<u>CLG</u>) is the best option based on legal advice, this <u>should not diminish this fundamental imperative</u>.

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q1: **[PS]** Should the ACS continue to be a professional society? (Consultation Document, p.1)
YES

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

[MO] [ACT] <u>It is ridiculous to suggest that members should get involved in the operations of running the business of ACS</u>. The <u>business strategy and priorities of ACS are completely operational</u>, and members should have no involvement in the development of these. These are business matters and are best left to paid staff employed by the ACS. As well, there are two sets of values – the values prescribed by ACS that ICT professionals who are members should apply when working in their ICT jobs, and the internal values that paid staff should abide by when performing their job in ACS. Either set of values does not have a place in the Constitution. **The paid staff should run ACS as a business** and continue to provide membership benefits to the satisfaction of members. **[Q01]**

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Q1: Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

[PS] Feedback: Yes, I believe the ACS should continue to be a professional society as defined by the Australian Council of Professionals.

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q1 – Should ACS continue to be a professional society

[PS] Unanimous agreement that the ACS <u>is currently a professional society and should remain so</u>.

3.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- **[PS]** ACS should continue to be a professional society providing guidance and support, professional networking and opportunities to continually upskill
- **[MA]** The majority of graduates do not go one to become professional members of the Society. This has been the case for some time. Something needs to change about how the society operates if this is to change in the future.
- **[PS]** Many long-standing members prize the professional society, however, <u>the fixation on the professional society may be preventing the ACS's ability to be dynamic and move forward</u>.
- This is a very important question as discussion in other conversations such as the 5-year strategy development, indicate there are a variety of views on what a professional society is and what a professional society implies. It is important to get this clear and impacts mission and vision. <u>Is this a professional society for ICT professionals/practitioners or the broader range of people involved in IT in any way? Is the focus on professionals or driving growth and higher membership?</u>

4. Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- **[PS]** The <u>alternative</u> to Professional Society might be <u>a transition to quasi-professional society like ACM with no real barriers to entry, more a society of interested parties</u>.

5. Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- **[PS]** ACS needs to be a professional society if we want to continue to be the premier body that represents the ICT community, promoting ethics and dialogue around technology with government and industry from a national perspective.
- **[ACT]** An industry association could be an activity of the ACS **[Q06] [IA]**

6. Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] Mike: Yes. Compare with Eng Aust, CPA Aust. Qualifications and standards to differentiate professionals from cowboys, plus ethical factors

[PS] Justin: Yes. Involves monitoring, disciplinary processes, de-accreditation, indemnity.
<u>Managing risk for the IT-using organisation and for the public.</u>
<u>Crucial to influencing government and business.</u>

[MA] Vetting and acknowledging non university obtained credentials enables membership for an experience-base equivalent to formal entry qualifications.

[PS] Ray: Being a professional body is crucial. It <u>enables ACS to be of influence to society, government and industry</u>. The constitution will have to carefully specify how people can be come accredited members of our profession.

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National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1: All: **[PS]** Yes, <u>it's a professional society</u> [i.e. has a broad responsibility to the community]
Tom: A <u>business-like</u> professional society, showing <u>efficiency</u> in answering members' problems; **[MA]** and **it needs to find ways to appeal to more than old white guys like me, younger people with a diversity of backgrounds**. There are tensions between service-provision and professionalism ... between members wanting services and wanting to serve
Tom: See the ACS-backed book on ICT ethics, from an almost $1m research project: https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/series/practical-ethics-public-policy/professionalism-information-and-communication
Amy: To discuss this, members need to understand the <u>other options</u> [Industry association, semi-commercial and fully commercial services organisation, coop, union, political party, ...]

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] Jeff M: Yes we should remain a professional society

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] Elizabeth: Yes (although the devil's in the details).

[PS] Rod: That's the contract – to look after my professional interests.
The professional society has **a distinct and critical role to play, cf. an industry association, a union group, a commercial enterprise**.

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] Graeme: Yes. But would like to see great <u>activism to look after members' interests</u>, e.g. project managers in engineering earn much more than those in IS/ICT

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] David: Yes, without a doubt

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q1: [PS] ACS is and must of course remain as a professional society, for the members.

National Discussion Session #12 Wed 20 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[GOV] Ali: Does the turnover mean we have to change? [No, not necessarily, although the requirement for effective governance is much greater with a larger organisation.]

Reminded us of the history of strong Branches and lack of a Head Office as such.
Branches retained substantial power and funds for many years, with 'Sydney Office' doing some national functions. That was later converted to a 'National Office' ...
[... and centralisation has been taken a long way further over the last 5 years or so.]
[<u>No-one has argued against strong national functions; but many have expressed concern about the absence of BEC powers and resources, and the intended death of 'local'.</u>]

Ashley: We're no longer a village society, so institutionalisation was necessary. But legal requirements [registration, certification] have not emerged in ICT areas (such as cybersecurity), so <u>professional societies are vital to fill that gap</u>

Ali: <u>Needs a focus on how you help people to deliver benefits from technology</u>.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1: Professional Society

[PS] Alan: cf. an industry society? Only if an industry society is a society of professionals.

Adrian: Believes very strongly that the focus is that of a professional society
But <u>the focus has been blurred over the last decade with the boundary edged towards an industry association</u>.

This has been associated with the growth in funds from sources other than membership fees from a small contribution, to 50-50, to the point where membership fees are 6% of revenue.

Associate members are not taking pathways to professional membership.

[PPP] **The PPP program has been a significant factor in the dilution, because its focus is on industry service, and the emphasis on recruitment of individual professionals has fallen badly away.**

Tom: Yes to a professional society.

National Discussion Session #14 Fri 22 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1:   Professional Society

[PS] Philip: What else would we want it to be? What else could it be?

[PS] Margaret: <u>It would be good to know the options, and the pros and cons of each.</u>
<u>But, in general, no other form that's been mentioned appears to be suitable other than a</u>
<u>professional society.</u>

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q1:   Professional Society

[MA] Philip: As a senior executive in a consultancy firm, hiring good people, he seldom saw
any who bothered with ACS membership. <u>There's an issue attracting people to join</u>.

[Don: The focus is on ethics and quality, but there's no external, regulatory requirement.
Given the rapidity of change, that has been appropriate; and it may stay that way.]

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q1:   Professional Society

[PS] Alison: Needs to continue as a professional society, but <u>younger people have</u>
<u>discomfort about where it fits in relation to other associations</u>, e.g. WITT

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Tag Consolidation
#Q02 – 4 Topics – 36 Posts + 39 Other Messages   +0   +5
Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Include examples?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p.17

Does 'ICT' still encapsulate what ACS is about?   (16)

z6957315@... Oct 6   #47

We went through this back when computing alone was not enough; so we used 'IT' to also cover data and information systems.

Then communications became so heavily intertwined with computing and data that 'ICT' became the over-arching term.

But there are quite a few fields that are clamouring for attention, e.g.

- actuators (means of having a direct impact on the world), and the broader areas of robotics, drones, mechatronics
- data analysis / data science (or is that really 'just statistics'?)
- AI, in the broad sense (incl. pattern-matching, natural language understanding, rule-based expert systems)
- AI in the very narrow interpretation of machine learning (AI/ML), which of course intersects with data analysis

Should ACS be encompassing these fields? (And hence establishing pathways to professional membership for them)

If so, is 'ICT' a sufficient term to make sure we know they're within scope, and that other people know it too?

ConM Oct 11   #77

is the term "ICT" even relevant in modern society? seems the modern spin is simply "IT" nowadays

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall Oct 11   #78

There is a lot of noise about this subject. Let's start with the concept of a professional society. That is the society is made up of members who are involved in the practice of the profession. I.e those people that do more than just use the artifacts produced by said professionals. This means that a knowledge worker is unlikely to qualify nor is a superuser of Excel.

The Society is should not be a computer club.

The body of knowledge of the ACS (if current) would provide a tool to differentiate the activities that would be relevant. The code of ethics and standards are equally important.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 11   #81

The Communications of ICT is even more relevant today than before; for two reasons from my perspective.

Given the increasing desire/confidence to use distributed systems it is a necessity that communications be delivered with the least amount of latency and the with viable scalability and resilience.

The communications between the nodes of the distributed system must be secure.

I'd note that Security is a domain that the Current incarnation of ACS has shown considerable interest. I would like to see this complemented by a much more complete treatment of "Communications" in general.

1 person liked this

Tom Worthington Oct 12 #85   Edited Oct 30

On 11/10/21 9:07 am, concerned.member@acs.org.au wrote:

> is the term "ICT" even relevant in modern society? seems the modern spin is simply "IT" nowadays

Even "IT" is a bit dated, being overtaken by "digital". But I can remember when we were arguing over EDP versus ADP. ;-)

Ours is not the only profession with this problem of names and roles.

In 2017 I was awarded a Master of Education (Distance Education). This year a paid a small amount for a new certificate which added "Open" & "Digital". https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/2021/03/i-am-now-master-of-education-in-open.html

Beau.tydd@... Oct 12 #86

good point Tom and one being discussed in other discussions groups. The term Digital is hard to define and everyone has a view (which is not necessarily a bad thing). but we need to be forward thinking and leaders. we need to pick a name "IT, Tech, Digital, etc" and make it stick.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15 #100

ICT is fine – there will always be blurring of scope regardless of what term is used. Digital can mean anything and, terms like AI / Robotics may be too specific, current hotspots and may lose meaning as the Industry evolves and Gartner hype invents more terms.

Ann Moffatt Oct 19 #134   Edited Oct 30

I prefer IT. There is so much we can do with that. Make IT good for you. Etc.

David Kong Oct 23 #187   Edited Oct 30

Yes The term 'ICT' do cater for future evolution of all 3 aspects (Information, Communication and Technology)

Since the ACS is about the body of knowledge covering those 3 aspects, there is no need to change term.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 23 #188   Edited Oct 30

On Wed, Oct 6, 2021 at 05:15 PM, <z6957315@...> wrote:

> We went through this back when computing alone was not enough; so we used 'IT' to also cover data and information systems.

> Then communications became so heavily intertwined with computing and data that 'ICT' became the over-arching term.

But there are quite a few fields that are clamouring for attention, e.g.

> - actuators (means of having a direct impact on the world), and the broader areas of robotics, drones, mechatronics

> - data analysis / data science (or is that really 'just statistics'?)

> - AI, in the broad sense (incl. pattern-matching, natural language understanding, rule-based expert systems)

> - AI in the very narrow interpretation of machine learning (AI/ML), which of course intersects with data analysis

> Should ACS be encompassing these fields? (And hence establishing pathways to professional membership for them)

> If so, is 'ICT' a sufficient term to make sure we know they're within scope, and that other people know it too?

This is a very good question the we need to address, on whether or not the term or acronym ICT covers the range of computing related activities that the ACS is currently or in the future dealing and influencing.

My two-bobs worth is supporting consideration of a broader scope for the ACS, drawing on a recently published Gartner article on the forthcoming wave of hyper-automation.

Gartner are emphasising the importance of IT organisations doing a much better job of partnering with professionals outside of IT to automate business processes and data integration.

Gartner is defining this hyper-automation as "a business-driven, disciplined approach, and you can read / see more more detail within the following article, https://flip.it/JFIHHn

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #283

On Sat, Oct 23, 2021 at 09:32 AM, David Kong wrote:

> Communication and Technology

I tend to agree that ICT is sufficient. In some ways I prefer digital, but I also don't think it's too important. I think the terms are still widely enough used. Change the byline underneath to explain it further. ICT is encompassing.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 31   #328

I would like to share a story about one of my early relatives who you will probably know, who curiously had the job title of a 'Computer', while working for the Royal Observatory in Greenwich.

From a person being called a Computer, it reflects a useful lesson on the change in terminology used to describe technology and use of the word Computer, compared with Telecommunications, ICT and digital technology terms that have evolved.

Due to his skills, expertise and reputation based on being a Computer in the 1850's, my relative was head hunted and recruited from England to come to Australia for a specialised role where he settled in Adelaide. From his job at the time as the South Australian Chief Observer and Superintendent of Telegraph, Charles Todd had been responsible for connecting a Telegraph from Adelaide to Port Augusta in 1965, enabling a connection with Victoria (reference: https://www.southaustralianhistory.com.au/overland.htm) and he and his team commenced work on the Overland Telegraph in September 1870. It connected with the undersea cable from Indonesia in 1872, connecting Australia to the UK.

I find Todd's story of being a Computer in the 1850's grounding, but also reflects the change in technology noting that the Overland Telegraph enabled communication from overseas from the 1870s until the beginning of world war II in 1935, repurposed to telephone traffic until the Overland Telegraph line was replaced with microwave telecommunication technology in the 1980s. The Overland Telegraph pioneered and enabled communication speeds not seen as possible, when compared to a mailed letter taking 2 to 3 months to get to go from Australia to UK by ship, with a wait of 4 to 5 months for a response.

As an aside in terms of naming, as part of building the ICT infrastructure through the Overland telegraph, one of Todd's team William Whitfield Mills named Alice Springs in honour of Todd's wife Alice.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #329

ICT is no longer broad-enough to remain in the objectives.

As previously said, startups, Data Science, and AI are just some of the area's that do not identify under this banner.

To 'lay-people' and other 'Technologist', they differentiate their work from IT and ICT. To them, that is the boring stuff that happens in Corporate IT.

I would strongly advise us to wrestle with this term - it is outdated today - in 50 years it will be archaic as referring to humans as 'Computers'.

If you think I'm wrong, watch anyone under the age of 35's face when you drop the term into the conversation and given the demographics of the industry they are who we need to be engaging.

Jack Burton Oct 31   #332

On Sat, 2021-10-30 at 16:15 -0700, Robert Estherby wrote:

> ICT is no longer broad-enough to remain in the objectives.

> As previously said, startups, Data Science, and AI are just some of the area's that do not identify under this banner.

Why should "startups" in general (as opposed to, say "ICT startups") come under the ACS' bailiwick? We are not an institute of entrepreneurship and in my view we should not aim to be so in any way (except insofar as where there are elements of entrepreneurship that may be unique to those nascent organisations operating in the field of computing, it may make sense for us to provide PD for our members in those *specific* areas on intersection between the two fields).

Likewise "data science" is in my view quite clearly *not* something which should sit wholly within ACS' purview. IAPA themselves (the only one of the recent additions to ACS' stable that could conceivably be described as a professional society) did some work early on (long before the first of the acquisitions that led to their being subsumed by ACS) in attempting to define the profession of data science / analytics. Their conclusion was that it was a fusion of *multiple* professions, of which computing was only one (alongside e.g. statistics, operations research, psychometrics, etc. etc.).

AI on the other hand is most definitely a field of computing and as such I'd agree that it should remain with ACS' scope. It would be nice of course if ACS could get past the current popular fallacy that AI is somehow synonymous with ML (which is merely one of several sub-fields of AI), but I digress.

> To 'lay-people' and other 'Technologist', they differentiate their work from IT and ICT. To them, that is the boring stuff that happens in Corporate IT.

"Technologist" is probably the least precise of all the terms we've experimented with over the years. To some people a "technologist" is a captain of industry, bringing technology (of any form -- not just ICT) to the masses and ideally making a pretty packet along the way. To others a "technologist" is merely a tradesman, a technician subordinate to the professionals in his field. And of course to yet others "technologist" could mean anything in between those two extremes.

> I would strongly advise us to wrestle with this term - it is outdated today - in 50 years it will be archaic as referring to humans as 'Computers'.

> If you think I'm wrong, watch anyone under the age of 35's face when you drop the term into the conversation and given the demographics of the industry they are who we need to be engaging.

To be frank, I think we need to move in the other direction. A lot of the arguments about what does or does not constitute a professional in our field (and about what the standards for entry to various grades should be) probably stem from the adoption of "IT" / "ICT" as our moniker ... especially given that in broader use those terms seem to apply more to the mere use of technology, whereas "computing" still has a clearer connection to its design, implementation, analysis & maintenance.

I suggest that the acronym "ACS" is still the most appropriate one for us to use, but with one small change: the "C" should probably stand for "computing" rather than "computer".

It is also of course important to remember (and publicly to emphasise) that the "S" stands for "Society", although that has more relevance to the discussion about what a professional society should be than to this thread...

David Abulafia Oct 31   #333

The computer and IT industry needs a professional society, and not just a user group.

You have creators and the users of Information Technology (IT).

The users can be separated into the implementors and the actual users of technology.

Every facet of our life and our society involves the use of computers and IT, so the ACS has a far more broad reach than any other professional society. These other professionals societies should be looking at the ACS for profession and ethical advice on the use of Computers and IT in their professions.

The ACS should be the professional body of the creators and the implementors of IT environments, mainly software side, since the cabling and engineering has the engineering society.

In fact it should just be IT and not ICT because the Communication is both part of the Information and part of the Technology.

The ACS should be involved in the ethical and society issues of using IT, just because it can be done, should it be done.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #335

Not necessarily "a" society – the Health Industry is served by multiple professions and professional bodies.

Breadth of ACS interest   (2)

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #334

 [There's been a lot of traffic in the last few days while I've been preoccupied with domestic chores etc so apologies if the below insufficiently acknowledges or otherwise takes into account the insights shared recently ...]

IMHO a standing challenge to the effectiveness of ACS is the breadth of concerns it faces (both potentially and actually). That is:

• 　　ACS sees itself as covering the complete ICT (see note 1 below) technical spectrum

• 　　many of us (not illegitimately) see ACS as embracing non-technical aspects of ICT

I see the specific challenges from the above as including

• 　　apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

• 　　great breadth of interest exceeds ACS capacity to operate competently

• 　　great breadth of interest risks competition/conflict with other organisations in the same space(s)

By way of analogy, compare the ICT sector with the Health sector and how it addresses these issues (even if unconsciously):

• 　　Whereas some people seem (erroneously) to think in terms of "the" ICT profession, noone thinks in terms of a single "Health profession". Rather, the health sector is served primarily by a range of professions (and trades); and secondarily (for want of a better word) by other professions (e.g. not but limited to ICT)

• 　　"Health professions" include: medical, nursing, plus distinctive therapies each with their own professional bodies

• 　　Within individual "health professions" there are a range of organisations catering for special interests. E.g. the AMA aims to represent the entire medical profession, but independent Colleges cater to specialist interests (noting that nowadays, a GP is a "specialist" also)

• 　　There are also groups (such as AIDH) that seem to address special interests across the range of professions that are both (using my classification above) primarily and secondarily engaged with the Health sector

In recognition of the above, ACS needs to:

• 　　realise that it is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. In particular, the presence in the ICT sector (primarily or secondarily) of other organisations with Objects, Goals etc. congruent

with ACS's is not inherently a bad thing and ACS should strive to work collaboratively with such "compatible" organisations

- provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary

- reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - organisationally (e.g. by "Colleges" as with Engineers Australia)

- reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - also by diversity in its marks of professional recognition such as specialisations of CP and variations to the BOK (see note 2)

In particular, SIGs might possibly be part of the solution, e.g.

- as seeds of structures within ACS reflecting new specialisations

- as designations of ACS collaboration with compatible organisations

May I close by making clear my anxiety that lack of useful distinctive focus (or foci) by ACS detracts significantly from the usefulness of ACS and its products. For example:

- We've all made great efforts to develop ourselves in one or more specialised areas of ICT, but generally speaking appearances seem as if that's not important to ACS; rather ACS looks as if it's more important to treat the ICT sector as a monolith that ACS can own (for whatever purpose of its own - i.e. ACS risks looking as if it's an end in itself)

- ACS's continuing readiness to offer MACS to people without an ACS-accredited degree (even with IMHO insufficiently-specialised BOK supporting same ... see above) gives me the impression that we are kind of a national "computer club" rather than a serious professional body (can you imagine the AMA or the Law Society offering membership to non-MBBS or non-LlB but with lots of "experience"!?)

- I became unable to identify anything distinctive about the ACJ (and then JRPIT) that would encourage me to publish in it, to read it, or to encourage colleagues and students to do so. (I don't think the editors' heroic efforts with special issues etc. were able to overcome this inherent structural problem with the Journal.)

It's fair to say that at some stage(s) in the past all the things I've identified as issues now needing fixing were features rather than bugs. But no longer.

Notes

1. "ICT" or whatever term usefull stands for the universe connected with computers/digital/etc ...

2. Body Of Knowledge

Jack Burton Oct 31   #341

On Sat, 2021-10-30 at 23:52 -0700, Paul Bailes wrote:

> I see the specific challenges from the above as including

> •   apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

Agreed and I'd add that the very same lack of focus (on computing, as our core constituency) diminishes ACS appeal to *generalists* in the Australian computing profession too.

Let us not forget that a true generalist will be interested in the latest developments in many (perhaps even all) fields within his profession ... which is a completely different proposition to "we're not a specialist society, so everything has to be abstracted away to management, or otherwise pitched a level that everyone can understand" -- which unfortunately (viewed from the outside) appears to have been one of the principles guiding the ACS selection of PD in recent years.

To a certain extent, the same should be true of actual specialists.

For example, if my specialty is infosec, I'm going to want to hear (in technical detail, not marketing-speak) about the latest developments in processor design (even though my job will never involve designing microprocessors), because that may help me to identify new classes of vulnerabilities at ring 0 and/or better advise clients on the infosec aspects of architecture selection in future.

Likewise, if my specialty is writing software for engineering applications that are heavy on numerical analysis, I'm going to want to hear about the latest developments in compiler design (even though my job will never involve writing compilers), simply so that I can figure out how best to take advantage of those developments when designing my own algorithms.

Even when, unlike in those examples, there is no direct link to other fields of computing, as computing professionals we often have a general professional *interest* in what is going on in the other fields of computing.

I see nothing wrong with ACS being a general computing society (and yes the SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields, as should independent societies where the numbers are sufficient to support them and/or where new fields are a fusion of multiple professions), so long as that generality extends only to the boundaries of what is unique to our profession, what characterises it *as* our profession.

My focus above has been on PD, but the same ideas apply to a certain extent in terms of eligibility for membership.

My gut feeling is that over the last decade and a bit we have become far too broad in our "focus" and the removal of most of the former membership grades probably had a lot to do with that.

Yes, people in other professions have a genuine professional interest in computing which ACS *should* be able to serve too. But an accountant, manager, lawyer or any other professional who works *with* ICT (but does not work *on* it) should be able to join ACS as an Affiliate (or perhaps Companion -- I forget which was which now) and thereby gain general membership benefits (e.g. no extra fee to attend ACS events) but *not* post-nominals (the fact that we currently hand out AACS to anyone who's willing to pay the fee makes us a bit of laughing stock as far as professional societies go) and definitely *not* voting right either.

After all, it is impossible to claim with any degree of credibility to represent the Australian computing profession when such a large proportion of our voting members have never worked in the computing profession at all.

Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core (3)

Nick Tate Oct 6   #46

ICT now encompasses a number of different specialties. For example, Cybersecurity, AI, Data Science, to name but a few. There seems to be some merit in considering how to embrace these specialties whist also retaining a focus on core ICT knowledge.

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12   #84   Edited Oct 12

I'd suggest that the speciality domains be Data-Science. AI and Robotics, espousing added values of Prescriptive/Predictive insights - Data-Science

Learning and functioning in a a domain with minimal guidance - AI

Advanced automation - Robotics (the Software Components of Robots are the focus. Robots also contain extensive hardware componentry)

Cyber-security is protecting Data-at -Rest and Data-in-Motion from web-based attacks. It could be argued that Cyber-security is a part of the broad Information and Communication domains. But the elevation of the area to a separate domain may be warranted, given the current National/International relevance of this domain.

The matter is dealt with in #Q02 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1. However, I do have reservations about the Principle 4 dealing with Hubs of specialisation. The reason for that is because ACS, as it stands, doers not adequately address the above specialisations to any depth at all. On the contrary there is much time/space devoted to Leadership-topics, Diversity and un-restrained Marketing of Trends.

Hence ACS should re-focus on its core message on ICT and some broad specialisations, such as Data-Science, AI and Robotics. One can have a series of horizontals such as Programming, Testing, Systems-Configuration, Business-Analysis, Architecture, ICT-Management etc. (this is not exhaustive). ACS has a bit to do to get it's house in order.

What is necessary is an unrestrained commitment to delivering value for its membership and the broader ICT-ecosystem. The branches must shoulder the brunt of this re-imagined intent; with the centre being responsible for Policy and Standards, where appropriate. As such an exhaustive working-over of #Q02 of the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 is mandatory during the CRWG deliberations.

Robert Estherby Oct 31 #356

I think that we need to be pragmatic with this. Many of these area's have their own associations etc.

I think that the constitution should allow the ACS to partner with other relevant associations to develop joint memberships - rather than try and duplicate communities of interest.

Do we want to be called "engineering professionals"? (15)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 27 #219   Edited Oct 30

On the professions website ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals".

Are we happy with this?

If not, what should we be called?

Adrian Porteous Oct 27 #220   Edited Oct 30

Hi Rimas

Good pick up!

We seem to be a bit conflicted with our identity.

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS is all about. There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'. In fact, there is no clue to this being even a Professional Society. If the visitor persists, they might try to find some form of 'About' tab; there isn't one. They might notice that the most significant tab, largest and centred, is 'Migration Skills Assessment'.

This shyness was not always the case; we have in previous years been very upfront and clear about our role on the ACS home page:

1996

The ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in **the computing and information technology fields**. Established in 1966, the ACS has over 15,000 members and on a per capita basis is one of the largest computer societies in the world.

1998

The ACS as the recognised association for **IT professionals** has become the public voice of the IT professional and the guardian of professional ethics and standards. The Society has a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of IT.

2000

the society for **information technology professionals**

2003

ACS Advancing **IT Professionals**

2009 through 2012

ICT Professionals Shaping Our Future

2015

Inspiring Success (comment: Huh?)

2017 through current day

nothing!

Why the change? Was this a considered decision of Management Committee? Does it reflect that membership accounts for only 7% of revenue and other 'Business Lines' dominate?

The ACS' Rules (2010), Regulations (2011) and Core Body of Knowledge (2019) are quite explicit on the ACS being a society for 'ICT Professionals'. Our casual website visitor would need some curiosity and persistence delving to the 'Governance' tab at the bottom of the page to find these documents, and to know what they were looking for in the first place.

A question that has not been asked in the current process (at least that I can find) is:

 'Should the Constitutional Reform Process start with the current ACS foundational documents (Objects, Rules and Regulations) ?'

If the answer is "Yes", we are reforming the society based on its current foundations.

If the answer is "No", maybe we should be explicit in acknowledging that we are creating a 'new' society.

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #221   Edited Oct 30

There's a great deal of ICT professional activity that objectively merits the "engineering" distinction (and to which practitioners of same should at least aspire). Some of this activity is recognised as such by the established Engineering profession (i.e. EA). To cut a long story short, the technical diversity in "ICT" means that ACS is going to have to come to terms with the organisations with which its interests overlap (as partners not rivals).

But …

I fear from this discussion that many of us would accept as "ICT professional" (or whatever) as including activity that is hard to recognise as "engineering" – happy to be persuaded otherwise.

Also, I fear from this discussion that at least some would like ACS to include, as professional members, individuals whose background stretches the distinction between "profession" and "trade". Again to cut a long story short, ACS would be a strange "professional association" to include as members individuals without a degree-level qualification in the field (as characterised by the association's BOK etc.)

David Abulafia Oct 27 #222   Edited Oct 30

Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live and have effects on all professional services. So the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects. From design to implement.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #223   Edited Oct 30

Some very good points here

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #227

I agree with "Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live [sic] and have effects on all professional services" but the "the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects" looks like a non sequitur to me. Why "does" or even "should"? Apologies if I am jumping to conclusions – are you suggesting that "trade" members should be MACS rather than AACS?

I hope to have more to say about the challenge to ACS that arises from the breadth of its interests, but for now may I share may fears that if ACS embraces sub-degree-qualified individuals as (professional grade) members, then our "professional" standing is threatened. (E.g. the Law Society does not seem to allow paralegals as members; and let's not get started about the exclusiveness of the various medical professional bodies).

David Abulafia Oct 27 #232   Edited Oct 30

Non degree people should not be professional grades, but non degree technician should be involved somehow with ACS.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #233   Edited Oct 30

Normally the board hired professional people to look after the day to day operations and legal requirements and the board provides direction, only the treasury really needs accounting skills to make sure the finance employees are not trying to con any one.

Ann Moffatt Oct 28 #254   Edited Oct 30

I think we should go back to the 1996 version. Including being honest about the number of members we have. Its about 14/15000.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #265

I agree, Paul B.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #275   Edited Oct 30

The ACS web site can always not very good. The ACS should be embarrassed by its web site and facilities the web site offers. If the ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields, then the ACS should has the most modern, the best IT facilities, with the most amazing web site, BUT it does not.

The ACS web site should a combination of 1996 and 1998 right on the front landing page.

The ACS need to starts with foundation documents and go back to grass roots. The only reason the ACS makes money is to cover costs of the support of it members.

What is the business product lines the ACS offers to have such a hugh turnover.

Tom Worthington Oct 30 #289

On 27/10/21 11:13 am, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> On the professions website ... ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals". Are we happy with this? ...

No, I am not comfortable being called an engineer, as I have not been admitted into that profession, and real engineers may get upset. I teach engineers, but I teach them computer stuff, as I am a computer professional.

Ali Shariat Oct 30 #291

Hi Tom

I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. I learned to do microchip chip design programming and solving mechanical and chemical problems using electronic concepts. There should be no discredit to include the title of Engineering in computers.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #338

110% agree Ali!

Indeed, what aspects of development (analysis, design, implementation, maintenance) of computer-based information systems (broad term, including embedded systems etc. etc. etc.) wouldn't we want developed to the same "engineering" standards as roads & bridges, the electricity generation and supply network, etc.

EA's acceptance of "Software" and "Computer" as "Engineering" qualifiers (alongside "Civil", "Electrical" etc.) back in the 1980s-90s remains an under-exploited asset to the professionalisation of ICT.

Tom Worthington 08:46 #373

On 30/10/21 10:10 am, Ali Shariat wrote:

> I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. ...

Ali, many of us span multiple disciplines: you computing and engineering, me computing and education. I don't think ACS can claim to cover professional areas.

———————————————

9.   **Michael Scott   – michael.scott@ths.tas.gov.au   Fri 29/10/2021 5:30 AM**

The Australian Computer Society (ACS) name has had its day in my opinion.
I think it should be renamed/rebranded as IT Australia / InfoTech Australia / Information Technology Australia.
This would mean that the letters after my name would change from MACS to MITA.
I have pondered on this matter for many years, and I will be shocked if anyone came up with a better name/brand/abbreviation.
Logically, the ACS should sort out its future branding before doing a new Constitution.
In my view, **ICT is wrong in so many ways**.
My definition: **IT = Computer Technology + Communications Technology**
Whenever I hear ICT, that to me is like hearing "Motor Vehicles and Toyotas".
Obviously someone at Telecom/Telstra insisted that the word Communications be included; hence we ended up with ICT which is just horrible branding!
I never have and never will describe myself as an ICT Professional.
The general public have no idea what ICT stands for (to them, you could have said XYZ and they would be just as confused).
I think most people know what IT means/covers (even if they cannot tell you what it is an abbreviation for).   **[Q02]**

———————————————

3.   **Brian Finn   30 September 2021**

Q2 I see no compelling reason to change the Mission and Purposes

4.   **Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021**

Q2 - ICT is fine – there will always be blurring of scope regardless of what term is used. Digital can mean anything and, terms like AI / Robotics may be too specific, current hotspots and may lose meaning as the Industry evolves.

6.   **Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021**

Q2 Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

Whatever it's called, it has to be readily understood.

I think it's time for the word "Communications" to go - it's well and truly implied and I can't see how a case could be made to keep it.

Lawyer. Accountant. Architect. Teacher. Doctor. Engineer. Valuer. Vet. Pharmacist. Psychologist. Surveyor.

We need to be able to distill ourselves down to a single word (OK, three tops) that everyone understands represents our profession at a high level.

I'm going with **Information Technology Professional** because it seems like that's a catch-all that's difficult to argue with.

(As an aside, should we think about being the Australian Society of Information Technology Professionals??)

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021

Q2   Whatever term is used it should be widely understood in the community generally. ICT is widely used throughout the world as an acronym for Information and Communication Technologies, as a set of technologies developed to manage and transmit information.

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q2: Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? (p.2)

YES to both parts of this question

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q2:   Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? (p.2)

Yes.

ICT isn't great but I don't know what is better. Technology seems to be popular, as does digital, but they're not perfect. Data is terrible.

What follows is some clumsy attempt to change the Objects of the ACS, under the guise of a question about the term 'ICT'. Q2 does not mention Objects at all, so how did commentary about Objects find its way into the preamble?

I'll address this subterfuge anyway. Putting on my MBA hat, the proposed use of the word 'Mission' is wrong. Vision and mission are very specifically defined when used within an organisation. Generally, vision is externally-focussed and mission is internally-focussed. That is, vision is why the organisation exists to make the world a better place, and mission is how the organisation will achieve it.

 "The Mission of the Society is to advance the science, practice and application of information and communications technology (ICT) for the benefit of society."

This proposed wording sounds more like a vision statement, as it is externally-focussed on the benefit to society, so 'Mission' is incorrectly used in this proposed statement. The Purposes sound more like the mission of the organisation, as they describe how the ACS will achieve its vision. Therefore, I recommend you change the titles Mission/Purposes to Vision/Mission.

However, the main criticism I have with this Mission wording is that it is not an accurate characterisation of the purpose of ACS at all. The ACS does not exist to advance ICT; the ACS exists to support its members, who work in ICT. Secondary to that, ACS should advance ICT, advance Australia as a leading ICT-enabled nation, support ICT in government, business and education sectors, and support ICT use within the general public.

The proposed new wording is missing two clauses from the current Objects:

- To promote the formulation of effective policies on information and communications technology and related matters.   [See (8)]
- To extend the knowledge and understanding of information and communications technology in the community.   [See (6)]

These clauses should not be extinguished because ACS has a duty to support the broad development of ICT in Australia. As an organisation with the resources to profoundly make a difference in Australia, it is incumbent on ACS to wield this power wisely.

The introduction of the word high into object 1: "(1) The establishment and maintenance of <u>high</u> professional standards" seems designed to ensure that only a university professor can become a member of ACS. ACS cannot reverse its recent progress towards inclusion by refocussing to serve only the interests of highly-qualified academics as its members. ACS must be inclusive of all who work in ICT, not just reactionaries who wish to sit around in circles and sermonise about their latest research.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

<u>**Q2**</u>: Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

Feedback: That's challenging as I don't have a better simple umbrella label that might still be relevant in a couple of decades than "ICT". I would suggest we **stay away from using current buzz words that may not last a 10 or 20 year horizon**. At that next level down, there are technologies that all need to be included, like hardware, software, networking, data, analytics, etc, but I don't have a better label to offer than "ICT".

_____

2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q2 – Is ICT still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope?

Some discussion on this but <u>no suggested alternatives</u> to ICT.

3.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

- At a high level it appears suitable, however, consider whether there is anything in the specialism areas e.g. Cyber security that might fall outside ICT.
- ICT covers it but <u>consider more emphasis on how ICT is used</u> as a lot of ICT decision-making occurs by lawyer, accountants, company directors. Decisions should be made by ICT professionals.
- 'ICT' is appropriate but discussions in other forums indicate that there are diverse views of what ICT is and it is important that it is clear.

4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

- It is a good question - 'ICT' is problematic but it is not clear what should replace it. It puts people off who don't see themselves as 'IT'.
- The scope of what ACS covers is broad and continually evolving (unlike other professions). ICT seems like the bests fit at the moment but not the ideal fit for the future.
- Technologies will evolve over time, any attempt to define/qualify what we mean by ICT is likely to need constant changing/updating. Do we need an overarching term that is relevant to today and the future?
- <u>Is there a separate question about actual scope of the audience we are looking at?</u>
  In the early days it was easy to define who was in the IT industry but now industries overlap and utilize IT, requiring specialists. Who is ACS including in 'ICT'?

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

- ICT is how the commonwealth and state governments refer to it. It is a term that is understood and has currency. <u>Other terms like 'Digital' seem to be fashionable but would be short-lived until the next trendy/marketing change</u>.
- Is ICT only about communications and technology? There are lots of people in the digital world all <u>using computers and technology</u>.
- Historically it was more difficult to be an ACS member. <u>Over time that has become broader to represent the ICT community. We should keep that broad view</u>. ICT covers more that IT – we don't want to go back to the prescriptive membership model.
- Can we remain a professional society if we allow broad membership? There should be criteria to become a member, but <u>the ICT definition should be broad enough to encompass the ICT industry in Australia</u>. If people have in interest but are not professional, they should still have the option to participate in the Society's activities.

6. Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q2: 'ICT'

David: Has sought a suitable, up-to-date name for his 35 (bank) staff.
(CBA was 'Enterprise Services', is now 'Technology' – ?!). **'ICT' still works well enough.**

Ray<u>: 'ICT' is too business-aligned</u>, doesn't cover sci / tech / academe.
Need a name that shows how we fit into the entire economy

Michael: Dislikes ICT and <u>prefers 'IT'.</u>
'IT Australia' seems to be a good name.

Alan: What does the public see us as? Distill it down to be publicly understandable.

Tristan: **SFIA's scope is greater than 'ICT', adding in a penumbra of business skills**

Justin: the reality is that there is a big divide in the training and expertise of IT specialists and Business systems specialists and they do and understand different things. We have to determine our boundaries and what we really represent.

Jacky: <u>Data's made a comeback</u>, not as 'data processing', but <u>as 'data mining/analytics'</u>

Alan: The word 'society' is a problem – sounds secretive and old-fashioned / like a guild

Chris: **The word 'computer' is a problem. The name should refer to the role not the artefact, e.g. technologist not a particular technology**

7. Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q2: 'ICT'

Peter: Yes, but <u>data needs to be included</u>.

Kristina: Seconded. ICT is not enough:
'Enablement of society through appropriate use of technology'

Peter: <u>ICT is a meaningful term to us, but not to others.</u>
OTOH, people think they understand 'digital', so perhaps project that instead / as well?

Amy: <u>As definitions start shifting to include terms such as digital, data science and the likes, we also need to be aware to not remove and alienate historically existing ICT categories such as information management, networking (hardware) in our redefining</u>.

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National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q2: All: <u>Yes, 'ICT' is still good enough</u>.

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q2: Both: **There's no better term available than 'ICT'**

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'

Devin: Needs to be resolved promptly in a principled manner. Maybe <u>cybersecurity</u> is already within-scope, but we <u>need AI, Robotics and Data Analytics</u> defined in as well.
[Would it help to append '<u>and related technologies</u>'?]

General agreement that '<u>digital' is too vague and maybe ephemeral</u>.

Stephen: re 'Computer Society', don't get caught with any term or definition <10 years old

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'

David: <u>The term is [currently] good, but the rate of change is such that there can be no guarantee it will remain good. So the wording needs to be generic, e.g. "inclusive of ..."</u>

Susan: Intensely dislike the retention of ICT as the, or at least the sole, focus.
ACS professionals are concerned with much more than technology, including its integration into organisations, and organisational change. We want to retain our original coverage of the underlying technology, but we must keep pace with changing cohorts, and their participation in collaborative teams with multiple expertise.

Dennis: Agreed to both of those sets of comments. The scope needs to be
'ICT and its use for the benefit of society as a whole'.

Q4-5:   Associate grade, managers, users, thresholds   **[Q2]**

Susan: **The breadth of the profession has shifted a long way, as reflected in the SFIA framework**. ACS needs to allow a broad church, but not undermine the professionalism

Erica: Supported Susan. Wasn't aware of the CP barrier to moving Assoc to Member. Membership must be valued, hurdles matter, standards must be set and maintained, and must be visible to everyone; but <u>newer areas, e.g. data mining, must be drawn in</u>

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'

Rimas: Noteworthy that 'ICT' doesn't have '<u>computer</u>' in it, but the name does.
[Historical (and successful) attempt to gradually enlarge scope over time.]

Jan: **SFIA's a good framework (ICT + surrounds). Where do we include / leverage it?**

Karl: Expressed [unarticulated] reservations about SFIA.

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'

Elizabeth: The bigger question is: do we have the <u>flexibility to grow the scope, as change occurs</u>. We should review the scope every 5 years, or 10 years, and adjust when needed.

Rod: **Fine for now. There's a risk of following hype-cycles.**
By all means give examples [cf. 'inclusive of ...'.]
As anchor-points consider reference to the Body of Knowledge, SFIA.

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'

Graeme: Yes, fine. <u>He would be mortified if non-descriptive, fashion terms like 'digital', 'tech' or 'high tech' were used</u>

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'

Michelle: That argument has gone around for years. Note the UK government's adoption of 'Digital, Data and Technology Profession' (DDAT) [cf. SFIA]

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/digital-data-and-technology-profession-capability-framework

John: It's a challenge that technology is increasingly pervasive / embedded / [unnoticed]

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q2:   Richard: 'ICT' is mentioned 31 times in the Consultation Document, but is not defined.
It needs to be defined, and examples are not enough.
This is a brand issue. There's a need to perpetuate the link.
However, no specific proposal was provided, other than to include 'digital' in some context.
The need is not for extension to use, application and implications.
The need is for greater clarity about what information and communications technology means.

National Discussion Session #12 Wed 20 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'
Ashley: **An abstract phrase can sustain relevance, so avoid being too technology-specific.** Avoid excluding technologies we don't even know of yet.
Ali: Agreed. ICT does cover it, in a broad way.

National Discussion Session #14 Fri 22 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'
Margaret: **It's a well-known phrase, and more inclusive than the many other, ephemeral phrases that wouldn't pass the test of time.**

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'
Mark: The 'C' in ACS is a big problem. The scope definition needs to be something like
'The application of digital technologies in all fields of human endeavour'.
There's a lack of focus on ICT as an enabler of corporate activity, adopting the 'business capability' approach, encompassing people/process/structure/technology.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q2:   'ICT'
Richard: Still quite relevant, because it has the necessary breadth

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Q2: 'ICT'

    Matthew: <u>ICT isn't well-known by a lot of people. It needs more promotion and explanation</u>.
    Bevin: Avoid long lists, 'ICT' will do.
    Michael: The more important question is maintenance of the body of knowledge.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

Yes, it is <u>a well understood and suitable descriptor for the ACS field of professional endeavour and suitable for a high-level formal statement of purpose</u>. Any need for a more detailed description can be covered in lower-level business strategy and planning documents. <u>At the constitutional level it is a futile exercise to try and describe ICT in greater detail. Technologies change frequently</u> over time, but at the professional level of the industry I would suggest that despite the different technologies there are many common professional elements that are relevant to the ACS.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

<u>'ICT' is suitable for today, but could have appending considered 'including, but not limited to aspects as data analytics, AI and robotics'.</u>

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

<u>Whatever term is used it should be widely understood in the community generally</u>. ICT is widely used throughout the world as an acronym for Information and Communication Technologies, as a set of technologies developed to manage and transmit information.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Information Communications and Technology (ICT) is well defined term but making that the general public understand this term and what it means and also **maintaining the currency and relevance of the ACS CBOK is critical**

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Tag Consolidation
#Q03 – 5 Topics – 32 Posts + 25 Other Messages   +22   +5
Dated or improvable terms and expressions in Mission and Purpose?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp.12-17

Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   (3)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 21   #158   Edited Oct 31

Purpose of the ACS

There should be ONE purpose for the ACS.

The use of terms such as mission, objects, vision, multiple purposes etc. distract from the understanding of what ACS stands for.

My view is that the ACS should be a professional organisation of its members, with the following statement:

"The purpose of the Australian Computer Society is to advance the science, practice and application of computer, information and communications technologies for the benefit of members and the Australian community".

The above purpose is a modified version of the one used by Engineers Australia.

The word "computer" should be in the purpose, otherwise we should consider changing the name of the Australian COMPUTER Society.

Desired Outcomes of the ACS

Outcomes can be defined as the result of things working "just right".

This means that both ACS members and the Australian community can confirm that the ACS is meeting its purpose.

Outcomes must be clear, concise and measurable.

The test should be: is the ACS delivering these outcomes, or not?

The following draft ACS outcomes should be discussed and changed to ensure there is a common understanding and direction.

Once the outcomes have been agreed, the path dependency to achieving them can be determined.

Following this, value generation strategies can be developed to achieve the desired outcomes.

Draft outcomes for the ACS (not in any order):

The fulfillment of the purpose of ACS is endorsed by over 75% of ACS members

Branches of the ACS exist, and are elected by members on that branch's register

Branches of the ACS manage activities to the satisfaction of more than 50% of that branch's members

Branches of the ACS appoint the governing body of the ACS

The ACS is a trusted advisor to local, state and national governments

2 people liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 21   #160

Very well put, rimas.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #209

I tend to agree.

Of course, the next layer has to unpack these terms.

For example, 'advancing the practice of communications technologies' might be seen by some to include improving the design and installation of phone cabling connectors. Is that in scope? 'Advancing the application of computer technologies' might be seen as marketing within the computer retail sector - is that in scope? And so on.

I agree that multiple terms like mission, objectives, vision etc can obscure the underlying purpose but at the same time we need to clarify our interpretation of terms, especially when the wider public might interpret them differently to those within the society.

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards (3)

Adrian Porteous Oct 23   #190

The Consultation document suggests a cluster of Professional Standards: (as follows)

> including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies

The current ACS Objects include 2.4:

> To define and promote the maintenance of standards of knowledge of information and communications technology for members.

In my view, the proposed Mission gives less priority to the development and promulgation of technical standards (Purpose 1: The establishment and maintenance of high professional standards)

The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals.

Purpose 1 could be amended to include this role, or another specific Purpose defined (I realise that we are not at the drafting stage yet!)

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #210

It appears the interpretation of "standards" has focussed on standards of knowledge and professionalism for members, but overlooked the equally important role of developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #311

I think that the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving it's public image.

Centrality also of 'for the Public Good'   (2)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #55

This principle is included to make sure that any new constitution enshrines that the point of ACS activities are always in the public good and member interests. The rest should follow from this central principle.

2 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #355

I agree, but given our Code of Ethics, has the primacy of the public interest, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest.

What is ACS? (9)

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #224

IMHO the question "Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?" is somewhat loaded, in that I am not quite confident that ACS is a "professional society".

Our Principal Object "to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources" is "professional" to the extent that the "resources" might be human resources, but IMHO unfortunately not necessarily exclusively. E.g. our Secondary Objects include "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters" which might as well be found in the Objects of AIIA (or ADMA!).

In other words, I fear that ACS risks being less of a force for the maintenance and improvement of the performance of individual ICT professionals, and more of a platform to lobby Goverments for whatever the leadership/management sees from time to time as worth pursuing (under the guise of "support for the formulation of effective policies ...").

Accordingly, I would urge that we suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature, i.e. strike out:

* from Secondary Objects

• support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters;

* from Purposes

(8) The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decisionmakers

in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and

implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, and related matters

(If anyone wanted to hobnob with Government "community leaders and decision-makers", let them find a platform other than ACS.)

David Abulafia Oct 27 #234   Edited Oct 30

Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club

David Abulafia

David Abulafia Oct 27 #235   Edited Oct 30

The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites.

Roger Clarke Oct 30 #293

Paul wrote:

> ... strike out <support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters>

During video discussion sessions, it's been argued that, central though 'information {and communications} technologies' are to the Society's scope, it has for many years also recognised the importance of the application of ICT, management of ICT, and implications of ICT, and its use for alignment with organisational and social purposes, transformational capabilities, and disruptive potential. (That leads to arguments by quite a few members that we need to encompass specialisations that are not highly technical – but making clear what those specialists are and are not specialised in).

Are you really intending that ACS should not recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy?

As test-cases, consider the risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the

impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc.?

(For clarity, I have a lot of sympathy with the proposition that there are many forms of advocacy / lobbying that are emphatically not within a professional society's scope, such as seeking advantages for business enterprises along the lines of tax breaks and de-regulation).

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #319

David Abulafia is correct in both his comments on this topic. The ICT sector in Australia needs a professional body, and the ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage. Furthermore, Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector.

Because of the nature of the industry we are in, it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #336

Not necessarily "a" professional body – the Health Sector is served by multiple professions and professional bodies. (See mine just now re "Breadth of ACS interest #Q02 #Q05 #Q12 #SIGs")

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #337

Good point, thanks Roger for raising this.

My concern is for ACs not to become distracted from what I see as its distinctive role, as developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals.

Very sincere congrats to you for your great work resisting the Australia Card but how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

I would like to see the warnings about misuse of ICT in X to come from the Australian X Society/Institute/whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS.

Even then, I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything "topical", as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus. Consider for example: https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (and despite being in the name of "ACS Senior Members", the 12/5/2020 email from ACS " Seeking your support - COVID-19" enlisting signatories to the foregoing makes it clear to me that this was owned by ACS). Congrats again to you for providing another view (and to ACS/IA for publishing it), but again how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #354

Hi Paul,

I have to admit, that when I first saw your post I was in vehement disagreement; however, I recognise your point that the ACS needs to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus.

That aside, I do think that as a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.

When I look at the current voices in these debates, I see that the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest.

I also acknowledge that we have not done well at this to date.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #363

Most gracious, thanks Rob!

We need to protect ACS from being "hijacked" by voices that, as you say, might be "self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest", or even just plain wrong.

Do we want to be called "engineering professionals"?   (15)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 27   #219   Edited Oct 30

On the professions website ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals".

Are we happy with this?

If not, what should we be called?

Adrian Porteous Oct 27   #220   Edited Oct 30

Hi Rimas

Good pick up!

We seem to be a bit conflicted with our identity.

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS is all about. There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'. In fact, there is no clue to this being even a Professional Society. If the visitor persists, they might try to find some form of 'About' tab; there isn't one. They might notice that the most significant tab, largest and centred, is 'Migration Skills Assessment'.

This shyness was not always the case; we have in previous years been very upfront and clear about our role on the ACS home page:

1996

The ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields. Established in 1966, the ACS has over 15,000 members and on a per capita basis is one of the largest computer societies in the world.

1998

The ACS as the recognised association for IT professionals has become the public voice of the IT professional and the guardian of professional ethics and standards. The Society has a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of IT.

2000

the society for information technology professionals

2003

ACS Advancing IT Professionals

2009 through 2012

ICT Professionals Shaping Our Future

2015

Inspiring Success (comment: Huh?)

2017 through current day

nothing!

Why the change? Was this a considered decision of Management Committee? Does it reflect that membership accounts for only 7% of revenue and other 'Business Lines' dominate?

The ACS' Rules (2010), Regulations (2011) and Core Body of Knowledge (2019) are quite explicit on the ACS being a society for 'ICT Professionals'. Our casual website visitor would need some curiosity and persistence delving to the 'Governance' tab at the bottom of the page to find these documents, and to know what they were looking for in the first place.

A question that has not been asked in the current process (at least that I can find) is:

 'Should the Constitutional Reform Process start with the current ACS foundational documents (Objects, Rules and Regulations) ?'

If the answer is "Yes", we are reforming the society based on its current foundations.

If the answer is "No", maybe we should be explicit in acknowledging that we are creating a 'new' society.

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #221 Edited Oct 30

There's a great deal of ICT professional activity that objectively merits the "engineering" distinction (and to which practitioners of same should at least aspire). Some of this activity is recognised as such by the established Engineering profession (i.e. EA). To cut a long story short, the technical diversity in "ICT" means that ACS is going to have to come to terms with the organisations with which its interests overlap (as partners not rivals).

But …

I fear from this discussion that many of us would accept as "ICT professional" (or whatever) as including activity that is hard to recognise as "engineering" – happy to be persuaded otherwise.

Also, I I fear from this discussion that at least some would like ACS to include, as professional members, individuals whose background stretches the distinction between "profession" and "trade". Again to cut a long story short, ACS would be a strange "professional association" to include as members individuals without a degree-level qualification in the field (as characterised by the association's BOK etc.)

David Abulafia Oct 27 #222 Edited Oct 30

Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live and have effects on all professional services. So the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects. From design to implement.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #223 Edited Oct 30

Some very good points here

Paul Bailes Oct 27 #227

I agree with "Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live [sic] and have effects on all professional services" but the "the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects" looks like a non sequitur to me. Why "does" or even "should"? Apologies if I am jumping to conclusions – are you suggesting that "trade" members should be MACS rather than AACS?

I hope to have more to say about the challenge to ACS that arises from the breadth of its interests, but for now may I share may fears that if ACS embraces sub-degree-qualified individuals as (professional grade) members, then our "professional" standing is threatened. (E.g. the Law Society does not seem to allow paralegals as members; and let's not get started about the exclusiveness of the various medical professional bodies).

David Abulafia Oct 27 #232 Edited Oct 30

Non degree people should not be professional grades, but non degree technician should be involved somehow with ACS.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #233 Edited Oct 30

Normally the board hired professional people to look after the day to day operations and legal requirements and the board provides direction, only the treasury really needs accounting skills to make sure the finance employees are not trying to con any one.

Ann Moffatt Oct 28　#254　　Edited Oct 30

I think we should go back to the 1996 version. Including being honest about the number of members we have. Its about 14/15000.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28　#265

I agree, Paul B.

David Abulafia Oct 28　#275　　Edited Oct 30

The ACS web site can always not very good. The ACS should be embrass by its web site and facility's the web site offers. If the ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields, then the ACS should has the most modern, the best IT facilities, with the most amazing web site, BUT it does not.

The ACS web site should a combination of 1996 and 1998 right on the front landing page.

The ACS need to starts with foundation documents and go back to grass roots. The only reason the ACS makes money is to cover costs of the support of it members.

What is the business product lines the ACS offers to have such a hugh turnover.

Tom Worthington Oct 30　#289

On 27/10/21 11:13 am, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> On the professions website ... ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals". Are we happy with this? ...

No, I am not comfortable being called an engineer, as I have not been admitted into that profession, and real engineers may get upset. I teach engineers, but I teach them computer stuff, as I am a computer professional.

Ali Shariat Oct 30　#291

Hi Tom

I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. I learned to do microchip chip design programming and solving mechanical and chemical problems using electronic concepts. There should be no discredit to include the title of Engineering in computers.

Paul Bailes Oct 31　#338

110% agree Ali!

Indeed, what aspects of development (analysis, design, implementation, maintenance) of computer-based information systems (broad term, including embedded systems etc. etc. etc.) wouldn't we want developed to the same "engineering" standards as roads & bridges, the electricity generation and supply network, etc.

EA's acceptance of "Software" and "Computer" as "Engineering" qualifiers (alongside "Civil", "Electrical" etc.) back in the 1980s-90s remains an under-exploited asset to the professionalisation of ICT.

Tom Worthington 08:46　#373

On 30/10/21 10:10 am, Ali Shariat wrote:

> I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. ...

Ali, many of us span multiple disciplines: you computing and engineering, me computing and education. I don't think ACS can claim to cover professional areas.

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3.   Brian Finn   **30 September 2021**

<u>Q3</u> The re-phrasing as suggested seem fine to me

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   **4 October 2021**

<u>Q3</u> - I like the <u>emphasis on 'member'</u>, in this statement. Definition of the member grades MACS, FACS to ensure voting is restricted to professional members.

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q3 Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

I think the Mission should explicitly note the best interests of its membership. If there's no <u>benefit to members (professional standing, development support, recognition, peering, etc)</u> then is it a Professional Society at all?

Q10 How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

Notwithstanding that the ACS shouldn't really have surplus beyond what is necessary to keep the Society viable, **surpluses must be reinvested into the Society for the benefit of members**. Such investment may include <u>events and initiatives to improve education and professional standing</u>, <u>lobbying efforts to improve the IT business environment</u>, <u>grants and scholarships</u> to help support diversity and access in IT.   **[Q03]**

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   **1 October 2021**

<u>Q3</u> The statement of the Mission in the document is appropriate.

<u>**Q8**</u> **Commercial activities** are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they **must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS**, ...   **[BL]**

... but this reason alone is not enough. It is too broad and opens the door to almost anything, as we have seen. I am not in favour of double negatives and therefore 'not inconsistent' needs to be replaced by the **positive requirement 'to be consistent' with the Objects of the Society**. **[Q03]**

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   **2 October 2021**

<u>Q3</u>: Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered? (p.2)

Look ok, the main need is to <u>be as broad as possible so that future activities are not constitutionally impaired</u>. nobody pays much attention to M and P until it stops something.

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   **5 October 2021**

<u>Q3</u>:   Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered? (p.2)

There is no mention of geographic scope, as the ACS currently exists to <u>serve ICT professionals in Australia</u>. This necessary because, for example, ACS will never look to expand and acquire members in Britain, competing with the BCS. We need to be clear in our focus, so that resources are properly allocated. Looking to the future however, it is reasonable to imagine that the ACS might expand to serve regional interests, so perhaps the word Australasian could be inserted instead.

**5.	Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au	16th October 2021**

Q3: Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

Feedback: I would like to suggest that the proposed Mission and Purposes be rephrased to <u>include a specific reference to the jurisdiction</u> in which we are expecting these purposes to be carried out. This could be handled by adding a place to the Mission statement such as:

*The Mission of the Society is to advance the science, practice and application of information and communications technology (ICT) **in Australia** for the benefit of society.*

While I understand the Australian focus of the Australian Computer Society may be implicitly assumed in whatever we do, I feel <u>the Davos trips probably warrant some reframing to ensure that focus remains squarely on our locality</u>.

_____

**2.	Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021**

Q3 – Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated?

Paul explained the possible implications for ACS's charitable status if there was any substantial change to the objects. Feedback from all participants that <u>charitable status should be maintained</u>.

**5.	Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021**

Q3. Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

•	As discussed, <u>the ACS mission should be to represent the ICT professionals in Australia</u>.

•	Tension originated because **<u>the driver for the commercial arm of ACS activities came into conflict with the general mission and purpose</u>**. **[Q07]**

**6.	Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021**

**Q3/Q7:	Mission, Purposes, Key Functions**

Alan:	What's the value offered to the member?

Justin: Everything flows from this – if the mission and purpose are correct then the rest follows.

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National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q3:	Mission and Purpose

Dennis:	<u>Avoid the term 'Mission', due to its negative connotations for indigenous people</u>

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3:	Mission and Purpose

Rimas:	<u>'advance [ICT] technology and practice for the benefit of the community'</u>.
<u>Value-generation</u>, for members, for employers, for the community.
What the organisation should and should not be doing,
i.e. key functions, plus business-lines for the generation of surplus to use for key functions.
Strategy derives from the above. Then add oversight.

Karl:	Professionalism, maintenance of standards, but not just for the technology and the discipline, also <u>for positive impact on the community</u>

Karl:	For engineers, a key member benefit has been <u>eligibility for jobs</u>.
[Many attempts to achieve that by ACS, with CP/CT one move in that direction.]

Karl: Not only member-value, but also <u>member-experience in dealing with the ACS</u>, should be worth boasting about. Too much social distance, secure buildings, are a barrier to that.

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q3:   Mission and Purpose

Rod: No problem with them as proposed in the Consultation Document.
However, there have been issues in relation to their interpretation or application.

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q3, Q7:   Mission and Purposes, Key Functions

Frank: Wants to see <u>a strong political lobby group representing people in the industry</u>, and one different from AIIA

Frank, Michelle: It's desirable to achieve requirements of professionalism as a condition of employment in [at least some] ICT roles

John: I joined ACS because of the professionalism and the link from academe to industry. So standards definition is essential.
Accreditation mechanisms for courses and institutions are essential.
In both cases, <u>independence from both governments and suppliers</u> is key.

John: **I was very disappointed that ACS dropped its engagement with education, and its engagement with educational institutions**

Michelle: Need to sustain the <u>scope for entry without [relevant] university degrees</u>, and even in appropriate circumstances without any university degree at all

National Discussion Session #14 Fri 22 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Anthony: ACS's standards and certification work has been used as a framework for the professional employees' award

Margaret: Expressed disappointment about the failure of ACS to achieve any government regulation or control over the profession, in comparison with engineers and trade organisations

Philip: **National SIGs, or coordination among Branch SIGs, has considerable potential**

Margaret: In the Consultation Document, Appendix 1 (p.9), I would like to see the
<u>Professional Standards function separated out into 2 functions</u>:
(1) ICT Technical Standards and Bodies of Knowledge;
(2) Standards for membership, accreditation of courses, educational providers etc.

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Mark: For many years, ACS was irrelevant to the technical work he and his staff were performing, because it was too academic. That changed once <u>standards development</u> became a meaningful part of ACS's contributions. <u>But the focus is narrow and the outlook is backwards not forwards</u> (see Q2). This fails to attract business leaders, even CIOs.

Mark: **The heavyweights need to be engaged, but ACS lacks the conduits to them. Where are the events for CXOs, and for Board Directors**?
ACS has to position itself for relevance to them.

David: In addition to applications, **social impacts of ICT must be addressed**.

Mark: **Agreed! Focus is needed on ICT's impacts on production, on work, and on income distribution** as work becomes less readily available as a conduit for personal income.

Nick: [So it needs more emphasis on public policy and thought leadership?]

Mark: **The demise of the Ec, Legal and Social implications Committee is unsurprising. The policy work doesn't engage the community. Use online virtual fora to do that.**

David: The web-site is a serious embarrassment. One example of poor service is the absence of single-click entry from bookings into individuals' own calendars. Another is the rejection by IT Services of requests for improvements. Another is the bureaucratisation inherent in needing support tickets for the simplest of tasks like changing a distribution-list.

David: ACS should be a leader in applying ICT for effectiveness, efficiency, and agility.

Mark: ACS should also be a leader in applying the ISO 37000 governance Standard, but ACS has long since dropped the ball on Australian-led ICT governance initiatives.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Richard: Vision ('what we want to become') and Mission (why we exist') belong in constitution

Richard: Code of Ethics is missing in action (i.e. action by the ACS and as a practical guide to ACS members), esp. diversity and inclusion, customer at centre, integrity of action

Andrew: (Younger than others present). Looking for lobbying governments re benefits for society and members

Alison: The most crucial function is events, esp. educational, which is what ACS is there for

Andrew: Achieve registration requirements to do certain work, esp. cybersecurity

Andrew: Take more advantage of members' effort and expertise.
Committees are barely visible, except when ads are published for new members

Andrew: Absence of information and clarity about the value-proposition for ACS membership

Alison: There needs to be greater primacy of standards and ethics

—————————————

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01 #Q03   #Q07

Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #396

We used to have acs representatives on most of the iso standards cttees. When did that stop?

Rod Dilnutt Nov 3   #402

Absolutely agree ACS should represent on standards committees. My understanding from a former ACS delegate from ACS to Standards committees, that there was no support with expectation they would pay their own way to attend meetings. This gets expensive especially when O/S travel is involved, not to mention the time commitment from day job. I am not advocating this should be a paid gig but reimbursement of expense seems appropriate.

Perhaps someone could clarify ?

kenjprice@... Nov 3   #403

ACS appears to still have at least some current representation on

*   the various IFIP Technical Committees.
    https://www.acs.org.au/governance/ifip-working-group.html
*   the Standards Australia IT and Management groups
    https://www.acs.org.au/governance/standards-australia-working-group.html

This would seem to be an important part of a national computing society.

It would be disturbing if this were to stop.

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #404

I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses. I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies.

I was the ACS representative to Standards Australia committee IT-030 on "Governance and management of ICT" from 2007 to 2015 and was reimbursed under the old policy (not sure of the current policy).

I remain as an expert on Standards Australia subcommittee IT-030-01.

Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted. A related database of ACS representatives was trialled, but not put into production (some ACS representatives were not ACS members). Work on an ACS Standards Policy (for both professional and technical standards) was discussed but not implemented.

David Abulafia Nov 3   #405

From reading this group, it sound like the ACS has open a hornets nest, particular after I read the past federal court judgement against the ACS. Even though I have been a member for 40+ years, I did not realise the ACS had such huge turnover. I am surprised the ACS is allowed to be a NFP. It certainly does not spend money on good Web site design. Most event booking sites have a feature to add the event to your calendar, but the ACS does not have this feature, and does not want one. The ACS does not lack the money to hire a web designer to implement this feature, it just lack the desire.

This looks like it is just going to be and another proverbal hit the fan event.

karl Nov 3   #407

Rimas wrote:

> Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed a standards representation handbook that was not adopted.

Can you make that available to us?

We probably need to establish a repository of material.

<u>It is in my view inappropriate for Staff to represent ACS formally in these things</u>.

Denis Street FACS HLM Nov 3 #408

Hi Karl,

This is news to me. <u>I agree that it is inappropriate for ACS staff to represent the ACS on these technical committees</u>.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4 #423

Re-from rod:-

> Absolutely agree ACS should represent on standards committees. My understanding from a former ACS delegate from ACS to Standards committees, that there was no support with expectation they would pay their own way to attend meetings. This gets expensive especially when O/S travel is involved, not to mention the time commitment from day job. I am not advocating this should be a paid gig but reimbursement of expense seems appropriate.
> Perhaps someone could clarify ?

I represented the ACS on the ISO osi standards (tc6, I think. It was the open systems 7-layer model. I specialised in level 7, the applications level) cttee and the Australian standards for the same standard from about 1976 to 1984 when the basic reference model was published.

It involved about 2-3 hours a week reading and responding to papers on the subject. I was never paid for this work and didn't expect to be paid. I had represented the BCS on that committee for the lower levels of the standard, then just the first 3 layers, from about 1968 till I left uk in 1974. I had represented the BCS on Cobol standards cttees prior to my involvement in communications. I wasn't paid for that either.

If there were costs of going to a meeting interstate my company paid and I fitted the visit in with work for my company.

I don't think standards reps should be paid but if their companies won't fund travel, I think the acs could be asked to cover that.

I was pleased to contribute as, to quote bacon, "I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto."

Its been my 'motto' throughout my working life.

I got tremendous benefit from being on those cttees. I was working with experts in their fields from all over the world. Watching and contributing to the development of those standards meant that I really understood what the standard entailed. I was also asked by many companies to explain the standard.

Ann Moffatt Nov 4 #424

Rimas said

> "I was the ACS councillor representative to Standards Australia from 2010 to 2013 and was reimbursed for travel expenses. <u>I was replaced by the then CEO as Management Committee had decided that ACS staff would represent ACS at Standards Australia and other bodies</u>."

Ouch. I didn't know that was happening. <u>That's just silly</u>. What else did our silly MCs decide?

Paul Bailes Nov 4 #428

I've been looking at my email archive for my period as VP Academic from Jan 2013 to Oct 2016.

As I was given to understand, the move to make the CEO the ACS Councillor on SA was because it was a corporate not technical role.

However, re the various technical committees etc.

• generally speaking, ACS members (not staff) continued to be our reps. on these
• in 2015 I had MC confirm that we would support approx. 10 of these at approx. $1.5K each (travel expenses) per annum – admittedly not much, but the specific value proposition to ACS was (and remains – see below) hard to capture.

Managing the connection with SA was (unexpectedly) difficult:

• not easy to discover who was representing ACS
• not easy to discover what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input
• not clear what ACS expectations were of ACS reps.

The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is what is ACS's position? Consider for example an ACS rep. on a group working on system requirements. I might take the position that a clear requirements documents should be the prerequisite to any procurement (development, purchase etc.), that agile development/codesign should be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Doubtless others in ACS would disagree. So how do we arrive at "the ACS position", for SA or for anything. (In the specific case of SA, the solution would have to involve ACS reps. reporting back to ACS on matters coming up at SA, and ACS giving guidance back to our reps.)

I am definitely NOT objecting to ACS engaging with SA, nor objecting to ACS supporting same. But unless ACS develops a reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters for input to SA, then I would find it hard to justify increased ACS investment in same.

Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.) How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #429

To paraphrase my other on this just before …

The problem is how to integrate these representations actually into the life of ACS and its membership?

Maybe couple each with a SIG? But there still needs to be a link to/from the Society's central leadership in such matters e.g. the Technical Board (as things have been since Oct 2016)

David Abulafia Nov 4   #430

The CovidSafe was a very expensive disaster, some one may a lot of money for a garbage app. If the CovidSafe app was an example of ACS professional standards, then ACS professional standards are very poor

Jack Burton Nov 4   #432   **[#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#P11]**

On Thu, 2021-11-04 at 06:23 +0000, Paul Bailes wrote:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like **COVIDSafe** https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)

Couldn't agree more re that terrible display. **That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief** (and none of the signatories

could have audited it, because the Commonwealth only released the code for the client side, so the biggest question "what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered with any accuracy).

> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

Yes, right now that's totally impractical ... mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible.

Time was when we had eleven boards (CS, CS&SE, IS, Telecomms, PS, PD, M'ship, EIP, CA, YIT & ACSW), each of which had a much more focussed scope and many of which were actual working boards (i.e. we actually got things done, were not just mere advisers to staff).

If we can **restore such a situation** (not necessarily the exact same portfolio of 11 as times have changed since then, but ideally a situation **where the *breadth* of each board's ambit is as narrow as what we had back then *and* the boards have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas)**, then I don't see a problem with questions like that getting referred back to boards ...

... so long as the boards are actually *representative* of the membership of course. The other problem we have with boards today is that calls for nominations go out, but there's never any information about *who* will actually choose between the nominees (and it would seem rather futile to nominate for a role where **candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion**).

If each board has at least say 9 members (1 from each branch, plus the Director) and there are about a dozen focussed, working boards (and if we can actually trust them because they're constituted transparently), then it should be relatively easy for any ACS member to get in touch with *one* member of the relevant board at just about any time (and that board member should be able to raise the issue with the board, resolve it and report back expeditiously).

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00] [#P02] [#P07] [#P11] [#Q14]**

•   reduction of Boards
•   2019 constitutional reform
•   COVIDSafe endorsement
•   <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

karl Nov 4   #434

I took one look at the idea of Covidsafe and, delved back into my semi-conscious, my UG (diploma) was from RMIT in Communications Eng. (.Radio and Electronics and some telephony).

It takes about 30 secs to realise that the idea that you could accurately determine the distance between two mobile phones by measuring their BT signal strength.

Just think about the various scenarios. Two people with their phones in their back pockets facing each other. Two people separated by glass. Some one with a phone in a brief case.

There was even easily available research showing that it didn't work.

But, the obsession was with the privacy issues. Important and sexy, but, irrelevant if the concept doesn't work.

However, it may have been useful in super-spreader events. And, a security agency could leave a phone taped to a wall and track who was the vicinity.

The problem is NOT the range or the fact that the phones can detect each other, the problem is ... How far apart are they?

ACS spoke with two voices, the gungho major announcement, and, a technical brief which was more realistic.

But, this raises <u>a possible policy issue for ACS: Should government IT projects go through a technical feasibility and quality appraisal by a statutory body before adoption?</u>

<u>Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11</u>

karl Nov 3   #410

My (somewhat lengthy) suggestion is..

"to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources **ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and production of the technology in Australia**".

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

- advancement of professional excellence in ICT;
- furthering ICT study, science and application;
- promotion, development and monitoring of competence in the practice of ICT;
- definition and promotion of the maintenance of standards of knowledge in ICT;
- support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters, **aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia**;
- extension of the knowledge and understanding of ICT; and
- promotion of the code of ethics
- <u>promoting gender balance and social diversity</u>
- **<u>ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation</u>**   <u>[#P00]   [#P09]   [#P11]   [#Q14]</u>

There seems to be some confusion between the "Secondary Objects" and the "Purposes"

I would add to Purpose (8) so that it reads..

(8) **The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decision makers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, promotion of Australian owned creation of ICT products and services, and related matters.**

In doing so, recognizing that ICT is a maturing area of human activity with standards of practice and competencies.

Of particular importance are security, safety and the user experience.

I would also add to Purpose (8)..

<u>ACS must ensure its interactions with its members create "good experiences". The interaction with the members goes beyond the "value proposition".</u>

Bevin: There's nothing misleading in there.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

I **agree** with the focus on the benefit to society and the suggested Mission and Purpose statements **with the exception of (7). Benefits to the public are critical but not the reference to benefits to members.**

Great care is needed with the wording of (7) as there is a big difference between 'the benefits of being a member' and the 'delivery of benefits to members', certainly at a constitutional level. **A NFP cannot give benefits to its members**, especially if members are on the governing body'. **Regulatory authorities have a problem with this**. I have had first-hand experience with this and the need to restructure a NFP to accommodate this aspect, causing lots of angst.

This might seem mundane but I would expect the constitution to also have a general and broad statement in the Purposes section to allow the ACS 'To do all such things as may appear to be incidental to or conducive to the attainment of any of the above purposes'. This broad statement allows the ACS to carry out activities that are consistent with the previous statements of Mission and Purpose that would be described and detailed in lower-level planning documents.

I have just been looking at the ACS' entry in the ACNC Charity Register and **there is no mention of the objects of the ACS in the governing documents**. I have also just been looking at the current set of ACS Rules and **there is no mention of the purpose or objects of the ACS in those Rules. These objects should be embedded in the top level governing document**, ie, the rules, as the governing framework for everything else that follows. This is fundamental – how did that happen? Looking further afield I noticed that statement of objects is a standalone document with no reference to the source or authority for the objects.

This must be corrected and the Mission and Purpose of the ACS must be firmly embedded in the governing constitutional document.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

Generally, they look good (not misleading or dated). However, is it appropriate to include the recognition of First Nations, and Diversity and Inclusion in this section?

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Also emphasising the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals will play in shaping the future of the country, and the need for a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology must always be used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels.

Tag Consolidation
#Q04 – 4 Topics – 38 Posts + 45 + 8 Other Messages
Threshold requirements for Associate grade, pathways, support?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 14-15

DIFF	27
PATH	25
THRESH	19
VOTE	9
YOUNG	6
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Pathways Matter   (4)

Nick Tate Oct 6   #45

At the moment, the associate grade covers a huge range of people from students to those who could become professional members if they went through a certification process. Establishing PATH pathways for those who would satisfy the criteria for professional membership could make a lot of sense.

1 person liked this

Ul Oct 11   #76

agreed.

DIFF rather than lumping everyone together in the associate grade, we should differentiate them further. Eg. Student, Graduate, Associate.

PATH pathway to CT & CP to be adjusted accordingly. Not everyone is tertiary educated, so we will need to have grading that's appropriate for their circumstances. Eg. CERT Cert IV IT Networking with MS certs in O365 & Azure and 3 years of experience

mathew_eames@... Oct 14   #99

PATH Pathways are I believe the area ACS should focus on the most, Q guide the professional development of those who want to come into the industry and guide them throughout. This I believe is the most important deliverable for the ACS

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #108

DIFF Definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.

THRESH Agree that a threshold is required. The associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners –

ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.

YOUNG The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as Secondary students should also be recognized, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member / cadet?'

LABS Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

ACS Standards Threshold Requirements and Users of ICT   (6)

swainy@... Oct 12   #91

THRESH ACS standards for the various levels of membership remain a critical component. Our increasingly digital society has made even the average person a User of ICT. As such it should still be a requirement to assess relevant ICT education, training, and experience necessary to work as a competent ICT professional to ICT industry standards. ACS Membership level should to reviewed for appropriate capabilities. This is important so employers of ICT professionals can assess the levels of capability as assessed by the ACS.

1 person liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #101

DIFF There seems to be an embedded assumption that 'Professionals' are 'members'. This definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.

THRESH Agree that a threshold is required. The associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional. This should be referenced to the Body of Knowledge.

YOUNG The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as Secondary students should also be recognized, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member, cadet ?'

LABS Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

GOV Further, all members of ACS Governing bodies should be Professional Members.

2 people liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #137

CERT An area of competence that we should acknowledge is people with just PC tech competence. The BCS has a grade RITTECH. https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/

Q Most small businesses only use PCs. In my experience, esp in regional australia, many people offering support services to business have no qualifications at all. Many of them offer only a very poor service. ACS should ensure there is an accreditation route for these people.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #212

LABS + 3I would be very concerned if there are instances of granting "membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation".

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #217

Hear hear ken!!!!!

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #264

I agree

Distinguish Professional from Supportive Levels of Membership (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 3 #23   Edited Oct 30

DIFF We should make it clear to all whom ACS has verified as being a member of the ICT profession at a professional level and who is just an interested and supportive member.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 19 #135

DIFF agree Jacky. the "professional level" criteria does open up a few other discussions. for example how should people working in emerging tech be classified (i.e. roles that do not qualify for professional status for example someone working on blockchain development may not have any qualifications and have limited years of experience but are still a professional in the industry)

UI Oct 22 #171

DIFF Most small businesses only use PCs. In my experience, esp in regional australia, many people offering support services to business have no qualifications at all. Many of them offer only a very poor service. ACS should ensure there is an accreditation route for these people.

Adrian Porteous Oct 23 #189

OK We already have four grades of membership: Associate, Member, Senior Member and Fellow. The last three comprise the Professional Division. What would more accomplish?

Recognising specialisms is a worthy objective, however these are specialisms within a professional society, and not attributes of organisational heirarchy. A C-Level Exec may have one of more ICT professional specialisms, or have none (similarly a hospital CEO may also be a doctor and be a member of the AMA and/or Specialist College - may be just as worthy if not medically qualified, but then not eligible for membership of AMA or College).

Ann Moffatt Oct 25 #196   Edited Oct 30

CERT I agree with Adrian but would also like to see a 'grade' for pc techs.

The BCS has RITTECH. https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/

To quote the BCS website it is to:-

"Show that you're a competent, trusted digital professional by validating your technical skills and appearing on the public RITTech register.

So many small businesses rely on PCs these days yet there is no 'qualification' to show competency. Most PC techs are not qualified and this lack of a 'standard' is very detrimental to keeping small business running.

Adrian Porteous Oct 25 #197   Edited Oct 30

Thanks Ann.

CERT I agree with your additional grade suggestion. Not only for PC techs, but the whole gamut of hardware service and support.

1 person liked this

Aubrey Oct 26   #200

On Mon, Oct 25, 2021 at 07:01 AM, Ann Moffatt wrote:

> Most PC techs are not qualified

CERT Not sure where you get that idea from Ann? I would say that as many PC techs are qualified as are other roles in IT. There are many TAFE qualifications in this field plus industry certifications such as CompTIA and Microsoft, Linux, etc. At least one university here in WA incorporates PC hardware and software units in their computer systems degree. There was a second university here some years ago offering similar but the units were canned because they were too popular and too "vocational" - needless to say there are many desktop support technicians with degrees - so is an IT professional defined by their qualifications and training, or just the role they are performing at the time .. or both?

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26   #204

YOUNG A 'Cadet' grade (or similar) should be considered to encourage young people in K-12, but particularly 10, 11, 12, when they are commencing study related to our body of knowledge. This cohort will become the next generation of professionals and I believe ACS has a role to nurture their interests. It would be open to any student studying ICT oriented studies and be an active ACS program. No fees are proposed and would also engage secondary level ICT teachers and provide a pathway to the profession. Current R&R restrict membership to >16.

2 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 26   #205

This is a great idea, Rod.

We need to make ICT more attractive to 10,11 & 12 students and teachers.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #208

The suggestion of a membership grade aimed at year 10/11/12 students is interesting. BENE YOUNG However we'd need to ascertain exactly what ACS can do for them, and in what way this membership might nurture their interests. Past successes include special interest groups in areas like robotics, and hosting of competitions. ACS resources like the Women in ICT videos were valuable in exposing students to possible career paths, and we could do more in getting students, their parents and the wider community aware of the scope and opportunities in IT careers.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #214   Edited Oct 30

Hi Aubrey,

CERT I'm well aware of the TAFE offerings as I was on the board of nsw TAFE and chair of the north Sydney institute. I am aware of the Microsoft and other vendor training offerings. However, I stand by my comment that most IT techs offering services for pc support are autodidacts and totally without formal training, esp here in rural australia. The usual tack is that after charging $50 an hour for several hours the most common advice to their customer is "go to Harvey Norman and buy a new computer".

The BCS has tapped into this need. I think the ACS should too.

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #292

DIFF A further term that's been suggested in other threads as being applicable as a Member-category is 'Practitioner'.

THRESH This could be defined in various ways, but one argument is that a person may meet the threshold for MACS, but have never demonstrated that they've achieved the requirements of CP.

CERT Should ACS permit people to become MACS without CP, calling them a Practitioner, but not (yet) a (Certified) Professional?

VOTE It would be entirely reasonable for MACS (with or without CP) to be voting members. Whereas future joiners at the AACS level would not be voting members.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #297

As a principle within the discussion of the constitution i think;

DIFF that we need to have professional members grades and associates grades.

VOTE the majority of roles on the board should be restricted to professional members, as should voting rights.

Professional members must have either recognised skills and relevant experience or be a pioneer of good standing in an emerging area. All must adhere to the code of ethics.

Associate members may have an interest, relevant experience, be an untrained manager working the ICT industry or be a student.

Do we want to be called "engineering professionals"?   (15)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 27   #219   Edited Oct 30

On the professions website ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals".

Are we happy with this?

If not, what should we be called?

Adrian Porteous Oct 27   #220   Edited Oct 30

Hi Rimas

Good pick up!

We seem to be a bit conflicted with our identity.

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS is all about. There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'. In fact, there is no clue to this being even a Professional Society. If the visitor persists, they might try to find some form of 'About' tab; there isn't one. They might notice that the most significant tab, largest and centred, is 'Migration Skills Assessment'.

This shyness was not always the case; we have in previous years been very upfront and clear about our role on the ACS home page:

1996

The ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields. Established in 1966, the ACS has over 15,000 members and on a per capita basis is one of the largest computer societies in the world.

1998

The ACS as the recognised association for IT professionals has become the public voice of the IT professional and the guardian of professional ethics and standards. The Society has a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of IT.

2000

the society for information technology professionals

2003

ACS Advancing IT Professionals

2009 through 2012

ICT Professionals Shaping Our Future

2015

Inspiring Success (comment: Huh?)

2017 through current day

nothing!

Why the change? Was this a considered decision of Management Committee? Does it reflect that membership accounts for only 7% of revenue and other 'Business Lines' dominate?

The ACS' Rules (2010), Regulations (2011) and Core Body of Knowledge (2019) are quite explicit on the ACS being a society for 'ICT Professionals'. Our casual website visitor would need some curiosity and persistence delving to the 'Governance' tab at the bottom of the page to find these documents, and to know what they were looking for in the first place.

A question that has not been asked in the current process (at least that I can find) is:

 'Should the Constitutional Reform Process start with the current ACS foundational documents (Objects, Rules and Regulations) ?'

If the answer is "Yes", we are reforming the society based on its current foundations.

If the answer is "No", maybe we should be explicit in acknowledging that we are creating a 'new' society.

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #221   Edited Oct 30

There's a great deal of ICT professional activity that objectively merits the "engineering" distinction (and to which practitioners of same should at least aspire). Some of this activity is recognised as such by the established Engineering profession (i.e. EA). To cut a long story short, the technical diversity in "ICT" means that ACS is going to have to come to terms with the organisations with which its interests overlap (as partners not rivals).

But …

I fear from this discussion that many of us would accept as "ICT professional" (or whatever) as including activity that is hard to recognise as "engineering" – happy to be persuaded otherwise.

Also, I I fear from this discussion that at least some would like ACS to include, as professional members, individuals whose background stretches the distinction between "profession" and "trade". Again to cut a long story short, ACS would be a strange "professional association" to include as members individuals without a degree-level qualification in the field (as characterised by the association's BOK etc.)

David Abulafia Oct 27   #222   Edited Oct 30

Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live and have effects on all professional services. So the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects. From design to implement.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #223   Edited Oct 30

Some very good points here

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #227

I agree with "Computers have and do have a effect on all aspects of live [sic] and have effects on all professional services" but the "the ACS does cover from trade to professional aspects" looks like a non sequitur to me. Why "does" or even "should"? Apologies if I am jumping to conclusions – are you suggesting that "trade" members should be MACS rather than AACS?

I hope to have more to say about the challenge to ACS that arises from the breadth of its interests, but for now may I share may fears that if ACS embraces sub-degree-qualified individuals as (professional grade) members, then our "professional" standing is threatened. (E.g. the Law Society does not seem to allow paralegals as members; and let's not get started about the exclusiveness of the various medical professional bodies).

David Abulafia Oct 27   #232   Edited Oct 30

DIFF Non degree people should not be professional grades, but non degree technician should be involved somehow with ACS.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #233   Edited Oct 30

Normally the board hired professional people to look after the day to day operations and legal requirements and the board provides direction, only the treasury really needs accounting skills to make sure the finance employees are not trying to con any one.

Ann Moffatt Oct 28 #254   Edited Oct 30

I think we should go back to the 1996 version. Including being honest about the number of members we have. Its about 14/15000.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #265

I agree, Paul B.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #275   Edited Oct 30

The ACS web site can always not very good. The ACS should be embrass by its web site and facility's the web site offers. If the ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields, then the ACS should has the most modern, the best IT facilities, with the most amazing web site, BUT it does not.

The ACS web site should a combination of 1996 and 1998 right on the front landing page.

The ACS need to starts with foundation documents and go back to grass roots. The only reason the ACS makes money is to cover costs of the support of it members.

What is the business product lines the ACS offers to have such a hugh turnover.

Tom Worthington Oct 30 #289

On 27/10/21 11:13 am, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> On the professions website ... ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals". Are we happy with this? ...

No, I am not comfortable being called an engineer, as I have not been admitted into that profession, and real engineers may get upset. I teach engineers, but I teach them computer stuff, as I am a computer professional.

Ali Shariat Oct 30 #291

Hi Tom

I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. I learned to do microchip chip design programming and solving mechanical and chemical problems using electronic concepts. There should be no discredit to include the title of Engineering in computers.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #338

110% agree Ali!

Indeed, what aspects of development (analysis, design, implementation, maintenance) of computer-based information systems (broad term, including embedded systems etc. etc. etc.) wouldn't we want developed to the same "engineering" standards as roads & bridges, the electricity generation and supply network, etc.

EA's acceptance of "Software" and "Computer" as "Engineering" qualifiers (alongside "Civil", "Electrical" etc.) back in the 1980s-90s remains an under-exploited asset to the professionalisation of ICT.

Tom Worthington 08:46 #373

On 30/10/21 10:10 am, Ali Shariat wrote:

> I gained my degree at the Westminster University in London. My Degree is BEng Control and Computer Engineering. ...

Ali, many of us span multiple disciplines: you computing and engineering, me computing and education. I don't think ACS can claim to cover professional areas.

———————————————

A2 – Textual Submissions 13

1.   Anthony Mayer – anthony@onlineiseasy.com.au   Thu 30/09/2021 3:18 AM

BENE DIFF I would like ACS to be more specifically inclusive of the web design, marketing, digital strategy industry. I have the choice of being a member with ACS and AWIA, why both? I'd like more clarity how ACS works for me and I am not a deeply technical business (in the way many of the other ITC members are)?   **[Q04]**

7.   Martin Lack FACS - martin.lack@mlaa.com.au   Wed 20/10/2021 10:30 AM
- What categories of people are in the Associate grade? How many are there in each category? (+/- 100 would be fine).
- How many of each category have the right to vote after allowing for those who are disallowed to vote: e.g. Overseas Branch members, students, etc?
- How many of each category pay what level of the fee schedule at https://www.acs.org.au/join-acs.html ?
- How many of each category have a gratis membership, granted because they are members of staff, or part of a start-up tenancy?

———————————

3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

OK Q4 I see no compelling reason to re-establish threshold requirements for Associate grade VOTE but I question whether people of that grade should have any voting rights

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q4 /Q5

3.2 A Society of Professionals - There seems to be an embedded assumption that 'Professionals' are 'members'. This definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.

THRESH Agree that a threshold is required. The **associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners** – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.

YOUNG The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as **Secondary students should also be recognized**, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member?'

Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

Further, all members of ACS Governing bodies should be Professional Members.

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q4 Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

In a world that changes as often as ours does, this should be a regular occurrence. Professional standing has to be the motivating factor here, not membership numbers.

DIFFF THRESH The point has been well made by others that a professional society should have a high bar to membership. The proprietor of Joe Bloggs Computer Shop who set up because his friends thought he'd be good at computers after a tragic plumbing accident is not a viable candidate for instant Professional membership. The ACS should, however welcome Joe with open arms as an

PATH Associate and provide <u>support by way of, recommendations to endorsed educational resources, networking events, peer mentoring and even grants or investment if it's appropriate</u>.

<u>Additionally, the ACS should be making it a primacy of its existence to ensure that Joe can't get a contract with the Victorian Government to manage the replacement of its customer management system if he is has not attained the requisite skills, experience and confidence to become a Professional member.</u>

...

Having spent a sizeable majority of my ICT career working with professional services organisations of all shapes and sizes, it's my position that the primary and principal purpose of a Professional Society is to Q <u>ensure that its professional members enjoy the confidence of those who employ their services</u>.

This means: ...

- **<u>Designing and supporting pathways that lead from layperson to professional</u>** **[Q04]**

———————————————

1. Ashley Goldsworthy 1 October 2021

<u>Q4</u> It is important that the ACS be, and be seen to be, <u>governed by members who have achieved a VOTE recognised professional level</u>, preferably by accredited or recognised Australian tertiary qualifications (degree or diploma), supported by at least three years appropriate relevant experience. Grades of Member and Fellow are appropriate. Hon Life Member is not a grade, but an honour recognising outstanding service to the profession or the ACS.

Because of the wide range of people involved in the development, application and use of ICT systems, it is important that these people can join the ACS in some sought-after and useful non-professional capacity. **A grade of Associate is appropriate for that purpose. There needs to be THRESH threshold requirements otherwise the grade is a nonsense**; the ACS could admit housepainters and gardeners. In the light of the widespread use of the technologies these threshold requirements need to be much more than just using the technologies. For example, using a laptop in one's job is not enough. **[Q04]**

<u>VOTE Voting should be restricted to professional members</u>. **[P11]**

The ACS should also have a Student grade, for those studying in the field.

<u>THRESH I am opposed to granting 'professional' status to categories such as 'manager of ICT professionals'. Just because one manages a group of engineers or accountants does not entitle that person to membership of Engineers Australia or the Australian Society of Certified Public Accountants</u>. The manager of a hospital does not become a member of the AMA. It also flies in the face of the definition of profession as used by the Australian Council of Professions. Encourage them as Associates.

...

... LABS I think the following offer on the ACS website is completely inappropriate- *River City Labs Residents will have <u>free ACS membership</u> which entitles members to significant savings in insurance for business, as well as other additional benefits as follows.* It <u>makes a complete mockery of any claim to professionalism on the part of the ACS</u>. **[Q04]**

2. Ian Dennis FACS, HLM 2 October 2021

<u>Q4</u>: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them? (p.3)

THRESH DIFF PATH Yes, **It is important to have clearly defined meaning to grades, most societies use the term Affiliate for non-professional members**

3. Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber) 5 October 2021

Q4:   Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them? (p.3)

THRESH PATH CERT Yes – but <u>any form of ICT certification should qualify people as an Associate</u>, e.g. a one-week PRINCE2 Practitioner certification. The idea is to <u>articulate members along a membership continuum, like a funnel</u>. As an Associate, members will naturally be interested in moving up to Member, then Senior Member, etc. and ACS should support that journey.

5.   **Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au**   **16th October 2021**

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

BENE Feedback: I am unclear what the point of someone with no real interest in becoming a professional has joining a professional society. The ACS is a professional society and as such PATH THRESH **joining as an associate should be the starting point of a journey which leads to meeting professional membership requirements**. We all individually and collectively strive to uphold the values of professionalism, and while associates do not yet meet all of the requirements of professionals, whether that be core body of knowledge, experience, or code of ethics, we need to encourage them along that way, whether that be by providing a pathway for them, or some other appropriate mechanism.

<u>Q Catering for other membership classes that are outside that scope risks diverting attention and focus away from the society's core mission</u>.

RECEIVED AFTER NOVEMBER 1ST

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

<u>DIFF THRESHYes, most definitely, as this is fundamental to the professional standing of the ACS.</u>

I was most concerned to see the word '*re-establish*' in the heading to this question, and to see the statement in Section 3.2 that '*the Associate grade has had no threshold requirements*'. Worse still is to see the mention of '*affiliation with the ICT profession*'. This clearly is a degradation of professional standards.

DIFF THRESH I was even more horrified to see on the ACS website, in the governing documents on membership grades, that '*the Associates grade is an entry level and open grade of membership'*. This is a major retrograde step in the professional standing of the ACS.

By way of explanation for my concern, a brief background is necessary. As the saying goes –those who forget history are bound to repeat it!

 CBOKOne of the fundamental components of the ACS Towards 2000 project that I led was the introduction of a Core Body of Knowledge, which articulated the core knowledge expected of an ICT professional. This led to the ability to accredit courses on the basis of the delivery of the requisite core knowledge. Possession of the CBOK could also be demonstrated by other means, e.g., RPL. **The SFIA skills framework also developed in a similar timeframe and is an important adjunct to the CBOK.**

DIFF Turning to the **Associate grade**, as part of the ACS Towards 2000 project, this grade **was intended for applicants who could only demonstrate compliance with part of the CBOK** (and other requirements). **Associates could generally be considered as para-professionals and on their way to full professional status**. This could be students who had graduated from an accredited course but still had no requisite experience, or applicants who could demonstrate only partial compliance with the CBOK by other means. SFIA is also relevant in providing a suitable benchmark. I am out of touch with TAFE qualifications and how they would fit into the CBOK/SFIA frameworks these days.

The benefit of this CBOK approach is that it is not occupation or industry specific.

The ACS Towards 2000 project also, to the disappointment of many, abolished the **Affiliate grade** whereby a person just paid their subscription fee and became a member of the ACS. This grade **was removed as it was seen at the time as not consistent with the professional standing of the ACS. If appears that this aspect has crept back into the ACS under the Associate umbrella. This a significant retrograde step for the professional status of the ACS that must be corrected.**

DIFFIf there is a wish to have affiliates associated with the ACS then a way needs to be found that does not imply membership of the profession. When the ACS did have an affiliate grade, members of that grade could legitimately claim that they were a member of the ACS, but this caused confusion with the professional grade of Member. The big 'M' versus the little 'm' question.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

DIFF I believe so.

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

DIFF Arrangements helping existing Associates transition to the new standard are important. However, "grandfathering" should not apply unless an original grade had a proper knowledge/competence based requirement.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

PATH Provide clear pathways and opportunities for ACS Associate members to get more involved and committed as ICT professionals I think we can be more proactive here I am thinking we should provide student membership for free or at a nominal fee   **[#Q07]**

(30)

2. Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q4 Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate Grade?

Bob suggested that the associate grade needs a rethink. Several opinions were expressed that DIFF VOTE professional division members should remain at the heart of the ACS and that the recent decline in professional grade membership is alarming. **[Q07]**

Paul expressed the view that the benefits for Professional membership must appeal to the self-interest of the prospective professional member. **[Q07]**

BENE There was general support for the view that too little had been done to enhance the benefits of professional membership and that this was a contributing factor in its decline. **[Q07]**

3. Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

- There are long-term Associate members who are not necessarily eligible for professional status but who are committed to and contribute to the Society in meaningful ways and have done over a long period of time.
- BENE The reason/s that Associate members do not go through the certification process seems to be the more important issue. Perhaps a better question for discussion is what advantage/s there might be to a more streamlined process.
- THRESH Other professional ICT organisations e.g. (ISC)² require successfully passing an exam to be a member and the 'reward' for this might be, for example, a well-regarded certification. Members do consider cost vs benefit of ACS certification, particularly as the ACS credential is not as widely recognised as others. The recent promotional pricing appears to have attracted more members to go through the Certification process.
- ACS needs something like the old Affiliate grade for members who are not ICT professionals but want to be part of the ACS.
- PATH We need an easy way for eligible Associates to become professionals and to recognise those who are expired professionals.
- DIFF All members are required to ascribe to our Code of Ethics, but the 'average' Associate grade member is unaware of this obligation, although they may have 'ticked a box' in their application. We need a way to make sure all members are reminded of this obligation.

4. Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

- PATH **Any process to simplify paperwork and clear pathways towards CP will be good. It is a deterrent** and people don't see clear value/benefit in early uptake of ACS membership.
- BENE What are the compelling reasons to become a member then to become certified? Will it help them get a job, get promoted? We need to make it straight forward but not lower the bar. Employers need to value ACS CP.

5. Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

- VOTE Surprised and concerned that Associate members can vote. Associates should be able to take part in activities but not be able to vote.
- BENE PATH Why would members go from Associate to Professional if they already have voting rights? **Associate is the first stage of membership and there should be pathway to become full (professional) members, and hence gain voting rights.**
- VOTE Involvement in activities of the Society might give 'credit' towards full membership but voting should be restricted to full members

- Just because you are a voting member doesn't necessarily make you feel more like a member. We should have categories of both – with most members being professional members who make the decisions in the organisation because we are a profession.

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q4: Associate grade

THRESH PATH Michael: Thresholds are needed, to enable evaluation of applicants.

CERT Ray: We need continual review of the make-up of the membership as qualifications and skill sets keep evolving. There's a lot of training and certification by vendors. Thresholds need to reflect them

THRESH Michael: Need to be inclusive, but need to use levels of membership to signify it

PATH David: Need to be inclusive, but also to keep focus ('5 careers in a worklife')

Q12: Umbrella organisation

PART Ray: Yes to specialisations within ACS, and logical that they all work together within an overall organisation, e.g project management, testing. IT vs Business Systems is a challenge (e.g. a tech focus excludes project management)

PART Michael: It is logical that all specialisations work together under an umbrella organisation

PART Tristan: Case of engineering / built environment / CAD, i.e. with strong tech capabilities.
Case of an ICT recruiter with limited ICT who's a valuable contributor. **SFIA framework helps with boundaries**   [Q04]   [Q05]

Ray: People in the creative economy, applying IT.
PART Diversity and inclusiveness of background and specialisation is important

Justin: Agreed, but there's a question of how peripheral can the association with ICT be

7.   Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q4: Associate grade

THRESH Peter: We need to decide what we want to embrace, and then support it.
We definitely need the decision-makers involved [mid-level ICT mgrs, CIOs, ?Boards]
That should be relatively easy to define, whereas many specialised areas are harder.

PATH Vicki: ACS is a Council member of the **SFIA** Foundation. That **should provide a basis for developing pathways for new and emergent categories of professional**. So ACS cannot exclude people who are not "ICT degree professionals" as there are many pathways. [Reflecting afterwards, the ACS is similar to the RACI in that and ICT professional is hard to define, just like a chemist. In the chemistry world you have biochemists, nanotechnologists, blah blah blah. In fact, if you look at the Nobel Prize for medicine, these are often chemists with a different name. Professional Engineers are quite different because they have a specific degree that is common everywhere.]

PATH Kristina: A teacher shifting to e-Learning Developer can leverage the SFIA framework.

Kristina: There are definitely barriers to membership for some relevant people.

PATH Sarah-Louise: **Pathways for other professionals could leverage micro-credentials.**
Maybe 'science-based ICT professional' / 'health sector ICT professional' / etc.
That could be linked with joint recognition programs with other societies.

PATH Vicki: That could also assist individuals jumping across industry sectors.

[But does that ensure a sufficient core? Or should there be another membership category for professionals in other fields who have a strong second suit in ICT, e.g. 'practitioner'?]

National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q4:   Re Associate-grade and pathways:

DIFF Tom:　　　　　　Don't say 'no' to money. Have <u>both basic members and voting members</u>.

The young want a structure that delivers them the experience they need.

BENE We may not be providing them with a helpful process to get the reward they want.

Lucia: That's not a problem she's experienced in NT

BENE Amy:　　　　　Her cohort on the ADF Cybergap program saw no value in the $72 to stay on as members when the Dept stopped paying for them. (OTOH, she jumped onto BEC)

BENE Anthony: Amy's nailed **a problem with ACS offerings after people become Associates**.

Tom: Perhaps ACS should engage the services of specialists in **social enterprise principles**, such as Mill House Ventures. In the past ACS has tended to hire consultants who advise for-profit businesses. We don't want ACS to be a profit making business, so perhaps we need different advice: https://www.millhouseventures.com.au/

DIFF Tom: The Australian Government is very keen to promote <u>more flexible qualifications</u>, and would [might] be open to a proposal from ACS

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q4:　Associate and professional grades

BENE Damien:　Acknowledged that <u>CP as an entry qualification for MACS is a big hurdle, and so is CPD hours to maintain it</u>. Recording CP hours can be tricky, needs improvement.

'Affiliate' status is a norm in industry associations, e.g. for foreign companies /- local footprint

PATH Alex:　　The flip-side is that, **to adapt to changes in technology and business, ACS needs to provide members with pathways, and support a sufficiently broad range of specialisations**

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q4-5:　Associate grade, managers, users, thresholds　**[Q2]**

DIFF Susan:　**The breadth of the profession has shifted a long way, as reflected in the SFIA framework**. ACS needs to allow a broad church, but not undermine the professionalism

BENE Erica:　　Supported Susan. Wasn't aware of the CP barrier to moving Assoc to Member.

Membership must be valued, hurdles matter, standards must be set and maintained, and must be visible to everyone; but <u>newer areas, e.g. data mining, must be drawn in</u>

PATH Susan:　　How do we ensure the constitution enables evolution but maintains integrity **[Q14]** The scope needs generic definition, with flexibility for extensions. Cohorts change continually.

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q4-5:　Associate grade, pathways, specialisations

PATH Elizabeth:　Needs analysis of the <u>member profiles</u> within the Associate group, identification of the <u>barriers</u>, and <u>means to address the barriers </u>confronting the various profiles

PATH Rod:　The difference between <u>Affiliate and Associate grades</u> was, and remains, material.

Associates are part of the Society's membership life-cycle, and pathways are vital.

Rod:　**We need to prime the pipeline much earlier. We need a 'cadet' (or similar) approach, at Grades 11-12 and even 9-10**.

YOUNG We need a career-building framework that starts early and carries through, to address the issue of near-graduates joining, and leaving within 1-3 years.

BENE Elizabeth: Associates perceive not much benefit in upgrading to Member.

PATH Elizabeth: Users with relevant expertise and skills need pathways too.

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q4: DIFF THRESH <u>Threshholds for graduation</u> from the Associate grade to the Professional Division must not only be defined but must also be <u>under constant review</u> to keep them relevant.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q4: Associates, thresholds, pathways

BENE Alan: **CP/CT costs too much up-front**. It should be less expensive on entry, but have an additional fee on an annual basis. [$90 p.a. would achieve payback in 4-5 years]

DIFF **Associates should have an obligation in relation to CPD units p.a.**

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q4: Associate grade

Alison: <u>Understanding of standards and ethics is important as a step to membership</u>

—————————————

Queensland Chapters Event – Thu 11 Nov 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10

Q4: Associate Membership Threshold
VOTE Bevin: <u>Having more Associates voting than Professional Division members is an issue that needs to be addressed.</u>
THRESH Bevin: <u>Could it be time-based, e.g. Associates must upgrade within a given number of years?</u>
Bevin: There should be a threshold for entry to that grade.
Ann: Agreed.
PATH Michael: Pathways are very much needed, to move up from Associate.
BENE Holly: **Gratis certification during COVID could be extended to gratis at the time a person joins**, to draw far more of the better-qualified Associates into MACS CP from the outset. **And/or that could be combined with occasional special offers**.
Budget implications need to be considered of course, but the gratis period this was highly valued, by members who took advantage of it, and employers.

(25)

Tag Consolidation
#Q05 – 4 Topics – 17 Posts + 32 Other Messages   +3   +5
Managers and users of ICT, subject to thresholds of professionalism?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 11-12

Recognise managerial achievements   (1)

cindy.chung@... Oct 8   #59

Professional bodies have qualifying criteria that admits the member to the category relevant to the depth of their knowledge and experience.

Management plays an influential role. Due to the low barrier of entry to work in the tech field, there may be a variety of experiences behind someone working in management. They may rely on their team or organisational support to perform their function effectively, or otherwise, They may have worked their way and sought a range of experience including technical experience. The title may be shared across a sample of people but they may perform functions to a varying degree of mastery.

A lot of people work very hard to get their credentials, industry certifications etc. People may become managers without these as requirements. Whatever the decision is, the decision needs to be be fair in recognising and respecting the member's efforts in their achievements.

1 person liked this

ACS Standards Threshold Requirements and Users of ICT   (6)

swainy@... Oct 12   #91

ACS standards for the various levels of membership remain a critical component. Our increasingly digital society has made even the average person a User of ICT. As such it should still be a requirement to assess relevant ICT education, training, and experience necessary to work as a competent ICT professional to ICT industry standards. ACS Membership level should to reviewed for appropriate capabilities. This is important so employers of ICT professionals can assess the levels of capability as assessed by the ACS.

1 person liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #101

There seems to be an embedded assumption that 'Professionals' are 'members'. This definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.

Agree that a threshold is required. The associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional. This should be referenced to the Body of Knowledge.

The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as Secondary students should also be recognized, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member, cadet ?'

Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

Further, all members of ACS Governing bodies should be Professional Members.

2 people liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #137

An area of competence that we should acknowledge is people with just PC tech competence. The BCS has a grade RITTECH. https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/

Most small businesses only use PCs. In my experience, esp in regional australia, many people offering support services to business have no qualifications at all. Many of them offer only a very poor service. ACS should ensure there is an accreditation route for these people.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #212

I would be very concerned if there are instances of granting "membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation".

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #217

Hear hear ken!!!!!

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28   #264

I agree

Breadth of ACS interest   (2)

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #334

 [There's been a lot of traffic in the last few days while I've been preoccupied with domestic chores etc so apologies if the below insufficiently acknowledges or otherwise takes into account the insights shared recently ...]

IMHO a standing challenge to the effectiveness of ACS is the breadth of concerns it faces (both potentially and actually). That is:

* ACS sees itself as covering the complete ICT (see note 1 below) technical spectrum

* many of us (not illegitimately) see ACS as embracing non-technical aspects of ICT.

I see the specific challenges from the above as including

* apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

* great breadth of interest exceeds ACS capacity to operate competently

* great breadth of interest risks competition/conflict with other organisations in the same space(s)

By way of analogy, compare the ICT sector with the Health sector and how it addresses these issues (even if unconsciously):

* Whereas some people seem (erroneously) to think in terms of "the" ICT profession, noone thinks in terms of a single "Health profession". Rather, the health sector is served primarily by a range of professions (and trades); and secondarily (for want of a better word) by other professions (e.g. not but limited to ICT)

* "Health professions" include: medical, nursing, plus distinctive therapies each with their own professional bodies

* Within individual "health professions" there are a range of organisations catering for special interests. E.g. the AMA aims to represent the entire medical profession, but independent Colleges cater to specialist interests (noting that nowadays, a GP is a "specialist" also)

* There are also groups (such as AIDH) that seem to address special interests across the range of professions that are both (using my classification above) primarily and secondarily engaged with the Health sector

In recognition of the above, ACS needs to:

* realise that it is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. In particular, the presence in the ICT sector(primarily or secondarily) of other organisations with Objects, Goals etc. congruent with ACS's is not inherently a bad thing and ACS should strive to work collaboratively with such "compatible" organisations

* provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary

* reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - organisationally (e.g. by "Colleges" as with Engineers Australia)

* reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - also by diversity in its marks of professional recognition such as specialisations of CP and variations to the BOK (see note 2)

In particular, SIGs might possibly be part of the solution, e.g.

* as seeds of structures within ACS reflecting new specialisations

* as designations of ACS collaboration with compatible organisations

May I close by making clear my anxiety that lack of useful distinctive focus (or foci) by ACS detracts significantly from the usefulness of ACS and its products. For example:

* We've all made great efforts to develop ourselves in one or more specialised areas of ICT, but generally speaking appearances seem as if that's not important to ACS; rather ACS looks as if it's more important to treat the ICT sector as a monolith that ACS can own (for whatever purpose of its own - i.e. ACS risks looking as if it's an end in itself)

* ACS's continuing readiness to offer MACS to people without an ACS-accredited degree (even with IMHO insufficiently-specialised BOK supporting same ... see above) gives me the impression that we are kind of a national "computer club" rather than a serious professional body (can you imagine the AMA or the Law Society offering membership to non-MBBS or non-LIB but with lots of "experience"!?)

* I became unable to identify anything distinctive about the ACJ (and then JRPIT) that would encourage me to publish in it, to read it, or to encourage colleagues and students to do so. (I don't think the editors' heroic efforts with special issues etc. were able to overcome this inherent structural problem with the Journal.)

It's fair to say that at some stage(s) in the past all the things I've identified as issues now needing fixing were features rather than bugs. But no longer.

Notes

1. "ICT" or whatever term usefull stands for the universe connected with computers/digital/etc ...

2. Body Of Knowledge

Jack Burton Oct 31   #341

On Sat, 2021-10-30 at 23:52 -0700, Paul Bailes wrote:

> I see the specific challenges from the above as including

> * apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

Agreed and I'd add that the very same lack of focus (on computing, as our core constituency) diminishes ACS appeal to *generalists* in the Australian computing profession too.

Let us not forget that a true generalist will be interested in the latest developments in many (perhaps even all) fields within his profession ... which is a completely different proposition to "we're not a specialist society, so everything has to be abstracted away to management, or otherwise pitched a level that everyone can understand" -- which unfortunately (viewed from the outside) appears to have been one of the principles guiding the ACS selection of PD in recent years.

To a certain extent, the same should be true of actual specialists.

For example, if my specialty is infosec, I'm going to want to hear (in technical detail, not marketing-speak) about the latest developments in processor design (even though my job will never involve designing microprocessors), because that may help me to identify new classes of vulnerabilities at ring 0 and/or better advise clients on the infosec aspects of architecture selection in future.

Likewise, if my specialty is writing software for engineering applications that are heavy on numerical analysis, I'm going to want to hear about the latest developments in compiler design (even though my job will never involve writing compilers), simply so that I can figure out how best to take advantage of those developments when designing my own algorithms.

Even when, unlike in those examples, there is no direct link to other fields of computing, as computing professionals we often have a general professional *interest* in what is going on in the other fields of computing.

I see nothing wrong with ACS being a general computing society (and yes the SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields, as should independent societies where the numbers are sufficient to support them and/or where new fields are a fusion of multiple professions), so long as that generality extends only to the boundaries of what is unique to our profession, what characterises it *as* our profession.

My focus above has been on PD, but the same ideas apply to a certain extent in terms of eligibility for membership.

My gut feeling is that over the last decade and a bit we have become far too broad in our "focus" and the removal of most of the former membership grades probably had a lot to do with that.

Yes, people in other professions have a genuine professional interest in computing which ACS *should* be able to serve too. But an accountant, manager, lawyer or any other professional who works *with* ICT (but does not work *on* it) should be able to join ACS as an Affiliate (or perhaps Companion -- I forget which was which now) and thereby gain general membership benefits (e.g. no extra fee to attend ACS events) but *not* post-nominals (the fact that we currently hand out AACS to anyone who's willing to pay the fee makes us a bit of laughing stock as far as professional societies go) and definitely *not* voting right either.

After all, it is impossible to claim with any degree of credibility to represent the Australian computing profession when such a large proportion of our voting members have never worked in the computing profession at all.

Managers and users of ICT as professional members of ACS   (8)

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #43

Some CIOs are intentionally appointed from outside the ICT professions. It might require some years of experience before they reach a threshold appropriate to professional membership of the ACS. On the other hand, direct reports to CIOs commonly have, and certainly need to develop, specialised   managerial expertise, and to become and remain familiar with the nature of a range of technologies and associated dialects. If ACS isn't the appropriate home for that particular form of ICT professionalism, what professional society is?

z6957315@... Oct 6   #44

Users are a different kind of question.

A first test is whether, say, an astrophysicist or a (digital) chemistry researcher should be able to achieve professional membership of the ACS without, say, a major in an ICT discipline. Surely (given the deep data and processing challenges they address), there should be a threshold-point at which ACS should be able to welcome them into the ICT professional fold?

How about cartographers (probably working in teams with GIS specialists)? statisticians in what we're now calling the data analytics / data science space? epidemiologists using complex modelling techniques? the graphics and process specialists in the games industry (working in teams with ICT professionals)?

ICT hasn't just been spawning lots of new specialisations internally. Even more than in the past, there are a lot of boundary-riders working astraddle two complex fields, and at least some of them would like to signify their dual expertise, and rub shoulders with colleagues on both sides of the boundary.

Tom Worthington replied on Oct 7 #53:

On 6/10/21 4:09 pm, Roger Clarke wrote:

> ... direct reports to CIOs ... remain familiar with the nature of a range of technologies and associated dialects. If ACS isn't the appropriate home for that ...

I spent a few years writing IT policy for a CIO. But I still felt part of the computing profession.

Fellow Enthusiast posted on Oct 8   #62

I like the old style of a hierarchy - full professional members / associates / affiliates.

There is room is such a structure for many staff in as ICT business as well as "nearby" activities such as biotechnic, GIS, or emerging fields.

Robert Estherby posted on Oct 31   #357:

I think in principle the constitution should accommodate Managers and Users as members; however - without an understanding of a 'core-body of knowledge and adherence to the ethical principles I think that they should remain associates.

At a practical level, there may be ways for managers or users to demonstrate an understanding of a core body of knowledge developed via experience.

However, I have had a couple of managers of ICT functions that are 'professional managers' but have no understanding of the technology they manage. As such I do not think it would be appropriate for the ACS to give them standing as ICT professionals.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #358

Could we have a Provisional Professional :P. Like your provisional licence.

Jack Burton 1 Nov 13:02   #383

On Sun, 2021-10-31 at 18:42 -0700, Roger Clarke wrote:

> However, I have had a couple of managers of ICT functions that are 'professional managers' but have no understanding of the technology they manage. As such I do not think it would be appropriate for the ACS to give them standing as ICT professionals.

Couldn't agree more Roger.

Could anyone imagine a large corporation appointing as its CFO someone with no professional background in accounting & finance? Of course not.

Could anyone imagine that same hypothetical large corporation appointing as its Chief General Counsel someone who had no professional background in the law? Again, no of course not.

So why is it somehow okay for that same hypothetical large corporation to appoint as its CIO someone with no professional background in computing & information systems?

If anything, ACS should be *pushing back* against that alarming trend, not going out of our way to accommodate it (and thereby becoming complicit in it).

Paul Bailes 13:18   #385

Agreed, Roger then Jack!

To put it another way, perhaps ...

It would be much more ACS's business …

to criticise the appointment of an unqualified CIO (I would expect somewhat more acceptable if it were in the public sector)

rather than …

to encourage citizens to sign up for the COVIDSafe app

_____

6.   Tom Cleary - tom.cleary@gmail.com   Mon 18/10/2021 1:05 PM

I think we need to **distinguish between "being a Professional" (which is a status related to experience and probity, good standing etc.) and "being a Practitioner"** which means you have expertise in a given skillset and invest time/money in staying current in your specialism. I think that the distinction would allow us to let ICT Leaders focus on Management/policy aspects of their career, whilst enabling those whose career leads them into increasing specialisation can avoid being mired in irrelevant Business elements to focus on their muse.

Frankly, although I can speak Business, the fact that the Managers I seek to persuade only work off loose analogy, and refuse to "learn to speak Dolphin" permitting them to understand the issues, so they can make decisions on fact instead of only seeing the numbers, would be nirvana. Impossible, but easy to improve, since COVID?   **[Q05]**

_____

3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

Q5 Managers and users of ICT should be allowed as members, <u>subject to defined standards</u> being met

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q4 /Q5

3.2 A Society of Professionals - There seems to be an embedded assumption that 'Professionals' are 'members'. <u>This definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards</u>.

Agree that a threshold is required. The **associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners** – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.

The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as **Secondary students should also be recognized**, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member?'

Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

Further, all members of ACS Governing bodies should be Professional Members.

5.   Dr Tim Turner, FACS, GAIC   12 October 2021

I think that the **ACS should continue to allow 'members' who do (yet) meet the 'professional' threshold. They can be labelled Associates, or "Friends" of the Society**. They, and the other **non-professional grades** (e.g. students, retirees), **would not have voting rights** in matters concerning the operations of the society but could reasonably expect to participate in (some of) the benefits of membership (access to knowledge resources, access to professional development opportunities, etc).   **[Q05]**

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q5 Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Should the Law Society of NSW, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, embrace paralegals and secretarial staff as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Should the Australian Medical Association, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, embrace orderlies and cleaners as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Asked another way, would you be happy for a legal secretary with a Cert II in office skills to review the lease for your office, or are you happy having the unqualified wards-person at the hospital change the dressing on a wound?

Of course not.

The Society should <u>encourage and support those industry participants towards attaining a higher level of education and experience to enable them to become professional members</u> of an organisation whose aims include to shaping nature of the industry that they work in as well as the legislative environment under which the operate in their own right.

The aim should be to continually raise public expectations of IT professionals ability to deliver and to dramatically reduce the number of high-profile IT projects that "crash and burn" at enormous public and professional expense.

—————————————

1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021

<u>Q5</u>   No, as per answer to Q4, unless they meet professional standards. <u>There must not be any back-door entries. Integrity allows for no compromises</u>.

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

<u>Q5</u>: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership? (p.3)

See answer to q4 above, <u>Affiliate would allow this</u>

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

<u>Q5</u>:   Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership? (p.3)

Yes of course.

Although not stated, I assume that ICT users are better described as non-qualified ICT professionals, and so <u>the intent of the question is whether non-qualified ICT professionals should be embraced by the ACS</u>.

To this, I say yes, and wholeheartedly support the **creation of a new non-qualified 'Enthusiast' grade of membership**.

Reason 1: increased revenue from membership funds, and increased membership numbers.

Reason 2: at some point in their long careers, users will inevitably undertake some form of certification, e.g. MSP, so at that point, ACS can <u>support their articulation</u> up to Associate, then Member grades.

Reason 3: just because a professional is non-qualified does not mean they can't satisfy the description of being a professional put by ACoP. That is, they can be non-qualified and also disciplined, ethical, possessing special knowledge, and interested in supporting others and the general public.

As an example, a young friend of mine is an elite white-hat hacker who conducts freelance penetration testing on websites and applications, then submits any vulnerabilities found to the organisation's bug bounty program. He earns over AUD$1 million per year but is <u>self-taught and has never been to university or completed a certification</u>. He clearly has special knowledge and

skills, and engages in research and self-training. I would hate to think there is no place in the ACS for him.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Q5: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Feedback: I would see these ICT managers and users of ICT as associate members, who may not yet meet the requirements of professionals, whether that be core body of knowledge, experience, or code of ethics, and they should be provided with opportunity or pathway to become professional members. I do not support lowering the bar of the existing professional membership requirements to cast the net wider as it would undermine and cheapen the brand.

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q5 Should ACS embrace Managers and Users of ICT?

The majority expressed the view that having Managers as members of the ACS enhanced the credibility and standing of the ACS and should be embraced.

3.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q5. Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

*   ACS has a pathway to professional membership for senior managers who have appropriate interest/involvement in ICT but do not have an ICT qualification and this is a good thing. However, it has also been misused and there are members who work in organisations who do some ICT and have gained CP status but are not actually ICT professionals.

*   Should we consider **the concept of 'practitioner' as opposed to 'professional'**?

4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q5. Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

*   If we define things so the majority of their role involves IT in some way or the technical expertise in their current role is in IT in some way, we need to include them. If we try to be all thigs to all people, we are no longer a professional society, if this is the decision.

*   Regarding CPD – you have to be able to include things that are directly relevant to your role e.g. a course in people management is directly relevant to a CIO. We need to have a nuanced view rather than black and white criteria.

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Ray: Yes to specialisations within ACS, and logical that they all work together within an overall organisation, e.g project management, testing. IT vs Business Systems is a challenge (e.g. a tech focus excludes project management)

Michael: It is logical that all specialisations work together under an umbrella organisation

Tristan: Case of engineering / built environment / CAD, i.e. with strong tech capabilities. Case of an ICT recruiter with limited ICT who's a valuable contributor. **SFIA framework helps with boundaries**   [Q04]   [Q05]

Ray: People in the creative economy, applying IT.
Diversity and inclusiveness of background and specialisation is important

Justin: Agreed, but there's a question of how peripheral can the association with ICT be

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National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q5:   managers, users, thresholds

Devin: Although enough scope is needed, professional membership isn't for just any computer-related person. **Retaining 'core requirements' is essential**.

Stephen: It's an uncomfortable, transitional period, with tech becoming more democratised, and generalisation to higher-level 'machines' is ongoing; but principles, constraints, what constitutes quality, ethical factors, ... are key parts of that core

Marilyn: But this needs to be related to the constitutional question

Sam: With knowledge fragmenting into yet more specialisations, we need some boundaries around what we see as being ICT professionalism and hence within the Society's scope.
A manager can become a professional, but not just by being a manager.
Constitution plus policies and practices must avoid being overly exclusive, and must encourage and funnel members into pathways to professionalism, but in ways that sustain the importance of core knowledge and ethicality, and not by lowering the bar

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q4-5:   Associate grade, managers, users, thresholds   **[Q2]**

Susan: **The breadth of the profession has shifted a long way, as reflected in the SFIA framework**. ACS needs to allow a broad church, but not undermine the professionalism

Erica: Supported Susan. Wasn't aware of the CP barrier to moving Assoc to Member.
Membership must be valued, hurdles matter, standards must be set and maintained, and must be visible to everyone; but newer areas, e.g. data mining, must be drawn in

Susan: How do we ensure the constitution enables evolution but maintains integrity **[Q14]**
The scope needs generic definition, with flexibility for extensions. Cohorts change continually.

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q4-5: Associate grade, pathways, specialisations

Elizabeth: Needs analysis of the member profiles within the Associate group, identification of the barriers, and means to address the barriers confronting the various profiles

Rod: The difference between Affiliate and Associate grades was, and remains, material.
Associates are part of the Society's membership life-cycle, and pathways are vital.

Rod: **We need to prime the pipeline much earlier. We need a 'cadet' (or similar) approach, at Grades 11-12 and even 9-10**.
We need a career-building framework that starts early and carries through, to address the issue of near-graduates joining, and leaving within 1-3 years.

Elizabeth: Associates perceive not much benefit in upgrading to Member.

Elizabeth: Users with relevant expertise and skills need pathways too.

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q5:   Richard: Specialisations, e.g. managers, users

Graeme: Barriers need to be drawn. Entry needs to remain tertiary qualification in an ICT discipline. Re users, caution – a good car driver is not a motor vehicle mechanic

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q5, Q12:   Specialisations, e.g. managers, users; Umbrella organisation

David: There's a problem with the CP pathways. There's a generalised IT, and a Cybersecurity, but nothing on, for example, Data Analysis/Science, Cloud Dev.
A better-articulated framework is needed, and a much broader range of pathways needs to be actively supported – even if that just means a clearing-house for available courses. Current hot-points include electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles

[How many of the long list have ACS-supported or -indicated pathways to achieve them?
https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/ACSimages/ACS-Certified-Professional-Pathway-Chart.pdf]

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q5: <u>Many members have been raised to Fellow on the basis of their contributions to the practice of ICT management, in both commercial areas and the public sector. Why aren't we doing the same thing at the Member level</u>?

For many years, the Affiliate grade was used for 'power-users' of ICT, outside the profession, but with close affinity to it. <u>We need to have clear ways of making membership in some form widely available to such people to associate with ACS</u>. That's imperative, to address the great deal of fragmentation that's occurred during the last 30 years.

However, **<u>only Professional Division members should have the vote, not Associates</u>**.

National Discussion Session #12 Wed 20 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q5: Managers, Users

Ali: There's a problem with including users, cf. IEEE including users of electricity.
ACS risk blurring too much. Needs focus on quality of membership / professionalism

Ali: OTOH, <u>many health clinicians, for example, are very understanding of IT. Yes, it's feasible to recognise significant contributions to the use of IT as being within ACS's scope</u>.

Ashley: The 'user' space is challenging, but opportunities arise as ICT becomes as ubiquitous a business function as, say, marketing long has been.

Ashley: Accountancy bodies don't include book-keepers, but they train them. Should ACS look to articulate back somehow into training for categories of employment that use IT?

Ashley: Some effective contributors to open source code collections are hobbyists. (Examples of an airline pilot during his downtime, a child who contributed code to Apple).

Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines #P04   #Q12   #Q05

Dr. Paul O'Brien Nov 2   #393

I agree 100% with Paul B.

ACS needs to <u>maintain close contact with Professional and Industry organisations with which we have overlapping interests</u> whether or not their members satisfy ACS requirements for Professional membership.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Nov 2   #401

On Thu, Oct 28, 2021 at 06:17 PM, Mark Toomey wrote:

> There is an extraordinary array of <u>people who use IT to produce valuable products, while having no knowledge at all of the lower levels of the machines they wield</u>.

I'm aligned with abstractions and Use of Components; and that is likely to be an increasing trend. Data-Scientists rely on Data-Engineers to run their simulations at Scale. The former may not know how an available set of resources could be best adapted for a simulation task. It is quite possible also that both functions are performed by the same individual.

This does not at all mean that the Data-Scientist is NOT-ICT; so long s/he can Create / Modify / Differentiate-between Models. However a distinction should be drawn between that example and trends such as

- Low-code or No-code
- Change-management without Business/Systems Analysis or High-Level Design
- People involved simply in Product/Concept Marketing

and there are many others of a comparable nature. <u>ICT people with these specialisations should ne requested to gather more substantive ICT-specialisation before before accreditation as a Professional</u>.

karl Nov 3   #419

The issue of domain specific ICT and for that matter SE is extremely important.

Areas like Health informatics now must have a great BOK which would form the basis of a Degree, if that has not already been done.

But it goes beyond that.

There are now either actual or developable BOK's in a wide range of domains such as banking, health, finance, booking systems, stock control, logistics, aeronautics and on we go.

ICT has lagged behind conventional engineering in that regard.

No-one would trust a civil engineer with 10 years of road design experience to design a wide-bodied passenger jet.

I can go on at length on this.

<u>Right now, we teach either Comp Sci or Information Systems. And, any specialisation is extremely limited.</u>

We could say that the education is application domain agnostic

<u>That might have been good enough 30 years ago, but, it cannot be justified today!</u>

<u>The problem is that the creation of a BOK suitable for teaching and presentation of standards of practice requires a large effort by professionals and academics already the relative field.</u>

The former are too busy and the latter need highly novel results that will attract ARC grants and create publications in top journals.

A radical idea for ACS would be to push for a large applied research organisation dedicated to the process of capturing and codifying and validating existing domain practices.

Happy to discuss this more

Q5: Managers and Users

Bevin: They should be subject to the same standards as professionals, otherwise it dilutes the quality.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

Yes, and this is normal. The fundamental requirement for admission to a professional grade is for the individual applicant to demonstrate compliance with the defined CBOK/SFIA threshold, whatever the industry or occupation. The occupation of the applicant is irrelevant. This is the benefit of the CBOK and SFIA frameworks approach.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

Not sure what is meant by 'professional membership'; my understanding has been all member levels should follow the Code of Ethics, and, in the past, Associates and Member levels could vote and stand for most office bearer roles. Managers of ICT could be appropriate professional members, but Users of ICT is likely to be too wide, especially in the present and future.

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

I agree with [Ashely Goldsworthy]:   *No, as per answer to Q4, unless they meet professional standards. There must not be any back-door entries. Integrity allows for no compromises.*

Arrangements helping existing Associates transition to the new standard are important. However, "grandfathering" should not apply unless an original grade had a proper knowledge/competence based requirement.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

ICT Industry is a very large sector when counted correctly, so this should include professionals who are increasingly using ICT in sophisticated ways to undertake important roles in organisations such as Data Visualisation Analyst, so I believe we should accommodate a broad range of membership but there be a requirement that they undertake certification of ACS CBOK etc to gain full membership and maintain that currency as all full members should during their professional career

Tag Consolidation
#Q06 – 1 Topics – 17 Posts + 33 Other Messages   +0   +5
Risk-manage industry associations, or avoid tensions?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p.8

Industry associations   (17)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #63   Edited Oct 30

Frankly - a professional society and ACS should host members not organisations.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 12   #87

ACS should be engaged and have a relationship to other industry associations. We do not live in a bubble and need to be a trusted voice.

1 person liked this

z6957315@... Oct 13   #95   Edited Oct 13

On Tue, Oct 12, 2021 at 10:17 AM, <Beau.tydd@...> wrote:

> relationship to other industry associations

I agree with both 'people not organisations as members', and 'ACS having engagement and relationships to industry associations'. An effective society and economy needs both kinds of organisations. The question for me is how that can be achieved.

Historically, there have been times and issues when professional societies and industry associations were in lock-step and even arm-in-arm; and times and issues when their views have been very different, and even diametrically opposed.

So I see the need for sufficient distance, and sufficient closeness; and I have difficulty seeing how either can exist within the other. Nor can I see how both could co-exist within a combined entity.

Maybe share a common services company; maybe be co-located on adjacent floors, in smaller cities even in the same premises. But any closer than that compromises the freedom of action of both organisations.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #102

ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (Organisation) body and membership must meet professional standards.   ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain unless congruent with member principles. ACS should not be acquiring industry associations and should divest those that compromise the member ethos.

The ACS entity portfolio needs review as ADMA and ACS Labs/RCL and maybe others that we are unsure of, do not align well in a NFP or with the professional member. The $1mill+ loss by ADMA in 2019/20 is a further distraction away from the member focus. Further, ADMA members are very different to ACS professional members.

3 people liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15   #106

I agree with Rod.

We are a professional association that represents ICT professionals and sets standards that those claiming to be ICT professionals should meet.

We are NOT an industry association. That said, of course we should have an open and cooperative relationship with ICT industry associations so that we are well informed but we should not be driven by them.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #130

Yes, I can't see how the ACS can have both professional individuals and other organisations as members. There are a plethora of industry associations out there serving particular organisations/employers, etc., they really have no place within the ACS.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 20   #148

In principle I agree with Rod, Paul and Aubrey. However, having made the acquisitions and formed the relationships; a way needs to be found to maintain that Arms-Length relationship. I see this as a central matter of governance within the new Constitution.

Ann Moffatt Oct 20   #152   Edited Oct 30

Why have ANY relationship with the entities we bought. I think they should be sold asap.

Paul Bailes Oct 20   #153   Edited Oct 30

With respect, I don't follow Devidra's logic: having mistakenly acquired business(es) considered to be inimical to ACS's mission and identity, why should ACS be constrained to retain such (a) millstone(s)?

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 20   #154

if they are not part of ACS core business why keep them

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20   #155   Edited Oct 30

I totally agree David.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 20   #156   Edited Oct 30

I fully agree Paul.

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 20   #157

I also agree with Paul B.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21   #162

We can be a parent company with other associations and companies running under our umbrella. Some of them, like the Labs, might want to run in a For Profit manner, others focus on Members. But it would be a shame to let associations disintegrate because they don't have someone to work with, or claim affiliation to. We took some in that would have dissolved over the past year or so. It's good to be able to keep them going under their own name, but with shared benefits for our members.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 23   #191

I hear what most of you are saying; i.e. that they should be divested. If I were asked to vote for these acquisitions, in the first place, would've had similar thoughts. But that's not where we are now; and I'd like to see whether these entities can benefit members, in an ICT sense.

I see the following; if I were to take a positive view of 2 Business-Lines.

Significant amount of Data-Science in organisations is oriented towards Marketing of Products/Services to Customers based upon their behaviour. From that point of view there is some possibility of enhancing Member-skills in Data-Science if they are exposed a-priori what they may be required to deliver, via ADMA.

The innovative activities of ACS-Labs could be designed as a skills upgrade opportunity for Members, to engage in their innovative activities.

For the fruition of both of these it is necessary to advertise the possibilities and assess and generate some interest among Members. It is a given that they will be competitive and Members will need to have a background/interest to benefit, With the ACS-Labs there would be some confidentiality criteria as well.

I have seen nothing like this, advertised by the ACS, at all. In fact the advertising by ACS of these acquisitions was much lower-key, when compared to it's favoured themes such as Reimaginations, Skill-shortages etc,

The possible ways in which these Business-lines can assist Member upskilling should be carefully set-out and agreed with the respective boards/managements before any decision to proceed these within the ACS umbrella.

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #270

The Australian Institute of Digital Health has a brilliant model for engaging with organisations in a membership context.

See my recent post on exemplars.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #296

The current purchases aside, I think our constitution/structure should have the capacity to address this issue. It may be appropriate for the Society in the future to amalgamate with an industry association and require them to adhere to values.

As a principle, I think we should have the capability to do this and look to successful integration in other societies constitutions.

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2.   Rod Dilnutt   **16 Jun 2021**

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs **the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society**. Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values? **[Q06]**

3.   Brian Finn   **30 September 2021**

Q6 The ACS should **dispose of these Industry Associations in an orderly manner**

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   **4 October 2021**

Q6 – ACS is a 'member' not 'industry' body and membership must meet professional standards. ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain. **ACS**

should not be acquiring industry associations and should divest those that compromise the member ethos.

The ACS entity portfolio needs review as ADMA and ACS Labs/RCL and maybe others that we are unsure of, do not align well in a NFP or with the professional member. The $1mill+ loss by ADMA in 2019/20 is a further distraction away from the member focus. Further, ADMA members are very different to ACS professional members.

6.   **Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021**

Q6 Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

From my observation, the ACS "acquisition" of seemingly unrelated loss-making industry associations without any kind of consultation or reference to existing membership is where things really started to go wrong.

The settings around conflict of interest would be dependent on how important it is for existing members for the professional recognition and lobbying aims of the Society are. I'd say that aligning with industry associations when there is a mutual benefit is a sound strategy (subject to formal agreement and regular review), but when that benefit is realised or times have moved on, that alignment must be relinquished. The Society must remain free from industry influence as far as practical otherwise its creditability when representing its members to government is more readily called into question.

I think the formation of **"Technical Societies" for specialised areas could be a valuable initiative**, and could be a good membership draw-card, **but the type of support would have to be carefully managed**. Support with venues for meetings, promotion internally to the broader membership, break-out sessions at national congress and so forth all seem sensible. **[P04]**

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1.   **Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021**

Q6   The ACS as a professional association should not be an industry association, the two are completely different concepts. **The ACS may well work with industry associations, and even participate in such associations as a distinct entity. However, it cannot become one**. This removes any potential conflict.

The ACS should not be acquiring industry associations. That was one of the critical mistakes of the ACS in 2019. It is very clear the management at that time was pursuing a very different purpose, and one that conflicted with and bastardised the core identity of the ACS. The desire to make money is not a valid reason for the ACS to spend member funds, if so why not buy a bank? **Divest of what we bought**. That will undoubtedly rankle those with commercial aspirations chasing the dollars. Don't get me wrong- dollars are necessary; it's just how you get them that is important.

It is not just about managing risk. It is about the core reason for the existence of the ACS. The problem with such suggestions as operating subsidiaries is the **impossibility of separating their activities from the purpose of the ACS**, assuming they would have to have some level of independence. The parent entity always carries responsibility. The best way to avoid tensions is not to create them in the first place. **[IA]**

The issue of Technical Societies is an interesting one. As I understand it, Engineers Australia has the following - Australian Cost Engineering; Sustainable Engineering Society; the Society for Building Services Engineers; Australian Geomechanics Society; Australian Shotcrete Society; Australian Tunnelling Society. These societies serve many functions related to the establishment and maintenance of engineering qualifications. My understanding, and I may be wrong, is that these societies were established by individuals in the various fields and were not instigated by Engineers Australia, and hence they are self-driven.   **[P04]**

Engineers also has colleges which represent easily defined sub-divisions of engineering such as electrical, chemical, civil, etc.

ACS needs a structure which will attract those working in diverse areas of ICT. It could well replicate, as appropriate, the structures used in IFIP- Technical Committees (TCs) and Working Groups (WGs). The TCs and WGs are- ...

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q6: Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

The core political strength of **ACS** is that it **represents people, not companies**. There is no reason for ACS not to host ICT organisations of people, but **corporates should not be members or their bodies hosted**

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q6:   Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

This question is ambiguous because, like overlapping circles in a Venn diagram, these two alternatives could be the same thing. The 'risk managed way' could be an alternative 'organisational structure'.

Anyway, what I think this question is asking is whether ACS should support industry associations or stay away. I strongly believe ACS should support industry associations but not publicly, as they are quite different in their objectives and value-sets. Reasons to support are 1. potential for additional revenue + membership and 2. broadly supporting ICT across Australia is in ACS' interests.

This could be accomplished with **an "Association as a Service" engine, that ACS could spin off in a subsidiary company**. Corporate services (i.e. legal, finance, marketing, IT, HR) could be packaged up and these services sold in an Association-aaS business model. Therefore, ACS remains arm's length from being publicly associated with the front-end 'business' of industry associations but still makes money from supporting their back-end functions. **[P04]**

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Q6: Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

Feedback: I would support a **separation of these industry associations and our professional society to avoid tension**. If that is not practical then a risk managed way to host industry associations would be tolerable. At a really high level, I would view industry associations as only tangentially related to our professional society, and as such would support a separate holding subsidiary (e.g. ACS Enterprises Pty Ltd) as suggested. I am not at all fussed if that could constrain the association (which in my humble opinion might actually be a good thing to protect the professional society).

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4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations? Or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

- Second paragraph is a yes – **'Specify structural separation between ACS as a professional association and the commercial'**
- There should be an organisational structure that avoid tensions (especially with regard to appropriate corporate governance)

5. Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- ACS needs to be a professional society if we want to continue to be the premier body that represents the ICT community, promoting ethics and dialogue around technology with government and industry from a national perspective.
- An industry association could be an activity of the ACS **[Q06] [IA]**

Q6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations? Or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

- Is it there to generate income or just cover running costs so as not to become a financial drain on the ACS?
- This is a philosophical decision about the ACS. It the ACS an entity that represents the Australian ICT community under this umbrella or it is that that ACS is leading a family of industry associations as well as itself that represents the ICT community. This was not the aim when the ACS was set up, but **this is the situation we have found ourselves in, given decisions were made that members were not aware of**. In the future we might have more of these satellite entities - is that what the ACS want so to be?   **[P08]**
- **Having lots of satellite entities will take time and resources from the ACS, taking energy and drive from** the broader umbrella of **ACS's focus**.

6. Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q6 & Q8: Industry Associations & Innovation Labs

Alan: ACS shouldn't be trying to pick winners

Ray: The original motivations for the investments were ill-conceived.
It's possible that they could deliver member-value, but not as they've been set up.

Michael: My investments and my professional body are different.
ACS should transition away from those two ventures

Alan: Agreed. **The business case, due diligence and/or risk assessment was flawed. Both were bad decisions.**

Ray: **The ACS has a role to play in supporting innovation, but this isn't it**.

Justin: ACS should support and contribute but not OWN

Alan: The money is going to people not businesses

Justin: There is perhaps an ethical issue around which members are being supported?

_____

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q6:   Industry Associations
Damien: Are future acquisitions really where we want to go? It seems doubtful.
Alex: Uncomfortable about their involvement, but no depth of analysis behind the feeling.

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q6:   industry associations
Sam: Perplexed when he read about the acquisition [of ADMA] in Information Age – the only place he'd heard about it.   **[P08]**

If it were a <u>source of funds for other purposes</u>, and were separated into an <u>ACS Enterprises</u> activity, maybe? But not if it's unprofitable or diverts attention.

Devin: The acquisition was something of a debacle. Due diligence did not occur. Nothing was heard in advance by members, as, at the least, it should have been.   **[P08]**

Marilyn: Perplexed also about multiple associations within one association, because of the potential for <u>conflicts</u> in aims and values, and <u>the large undermining the flexibility of the small</u>. **[Q12]**

Stephen: **Industry associations are incompatible with a professional society** – there is no grey area **[PS]**

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q6-11:   Key functions, business-lines, surplus allocation

Susan: The financial responsibility aspect is critical. **The financial principles must be clearly defined in the constitution, re revenue-sources, and what is and isn't done with the surplus**. **[Q10]**

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q6:   Industry Associations

Karl: <u>ACS should not be an industry association</u>.

Jeff M: Do we know yet if those business are profitable?

Q10: Surplus allocation

Jan: The benefits to members have been disappointing , because **the large surplus seems not to deliver a lot to members**, and is instead used elsewhere. **[Q7]   [Q6]   [Q8]**

Richard H: He, and many others, **question the limited benefits offer to members, and lots of money spent elsewhere (Labs, industry associations, high-cost premises)**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q6-7:   Industry Associations, Key Functions

Elizabeth: ACS needs to **look for synergy with industry assocations, but the relationships need to be arms-length**, to avoid harm to ACS's purpose and ACS's reputation.

Rod: **No convincing evidence has been provided of benefits in having industry associations within ACS**.

The secrecy surrounding the acquisition was the inverse of the required <u>transparency</u> to members before the fact. And we're paying > $1m p.a. for the privilege - !?   **[P08]**
ADMA Members do not equate to ACS professional members.

Elizabeth: We need to be clear about what ACS is about [its Key Functions], and **unless industry associations are among the Key Functions, they are not a fit to ACS**.

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q6:   Industry Associations

Graeme: A peculiar arrangement. Where there's a common interest, there should be no hesitation to collaborate. But **owning them is very strange**.

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q6:   Industry Associations

David: <u>Industry associations are very different from a professional society.</u>
<u>The functions need to be separated</u> – and then work together as and when appropriate.

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Q6: Industry Associations

 Bevin: <u>There's risk of conflict of values between professionalism and corporate needs</u>.

 Matthew: <u>Have joint events, even joint ventures, but they must be separate organisations.</u>

 Michael: Hosting means what? And what's the benefit?

 Ann: Prefers the second option: Avoid the tension

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

<u>As a professional society the ACS must only be a society of individuals, not corporations or commercial entities</u>. I have no problem with relationships with such entities but it must be in a way that does not have any hint of or imply membership of the ACS.

I don't feel that I can sensibly comment on the approaches suggested at 3.3. Suffice to repeat that **<u>any arrangement must not suggest or imply membership of the professional body</u>**.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

The arrangement adopted by Engineers Australia is an interesting approach, but we should devise a risk-managed way to avoid harm to the ACS and the relevant industry associations. ACS acquiring industry associations can be offered as benefits to its members, but <u>the associations need to be assessed as appropriate to the profession</u>.

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

I agree with AG, but see my note below. The ACS as a professional association should not <u>be</u> an industry association, the two are completely different concepts. The ACS may well work with industry associations, and even participate in such associations as <u>a distinct entity</u>. <u>However, it cannot become one</u>. This removes any potential conflict.

KR adds: In 1985, I established as a National SIG, ACS-Software Industry Association. It was an ACS SIG. In retrospect it was probably not a good idea, and I would not suggest this again.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

 Also as a professional society <u>we should better connect and collaborate with other associations where there are natural synergies and commonalities for both industry and academia</u>

Tag Consolidation
#Q07 – 6 Topics – 35 Posts + 55 Other Messages   +2   +14
Key functions missing, under-emphasised, over-emphasised?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 17-19

Pathways Matter   (4)

Nick Tate Oct 6   #45

At the moment, the associate grade covers a huge range of people from students to those who could become professional members if they went through a certification process. Establishing **pathways** for those who would satisfy the criteria for professional membership could make a lot of sense.

1 person liked this

UI Oct 11   #76

agreed.

rather than lumping everyone together in the associate grade, we should differentiate them further. Eg. Student, Graduate, Associate.

pathway to CT & CP to be adjusted accordingly. Not everyone is tertiary educated, so we will need to have grading that's appropriate for their circumstances. Eg. Cert IV IT Networking with MS certs in O365 & Azure and 3 years of experience

mathew_eames@... Oct 14   #99

Pathways are I believe the area ACS should focus on the most, guide the professional development of those who want to come into the industry and guide them throughout. This I believe is **the most important deliverable for the ACS**

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #108

Definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.

Agree that a threshold is required. The **associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners** – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.

The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as Secondary students should also be recognized, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – '**student member / cadet**?'

Granting **membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification**.

Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership   (4)

Adrian Porteous Oct 25   #199   Edited Oct 30

The Consultation document raises the fundamental question of whether the ACS continues to be a professional society (Q1). Nowhere in any of the subsequent discussion is that disputed. I think this is good!

Appendix A of the consultation document (Key Functions of a Professional Society) **states well the required functions we should expect of the ACS**, namely around technical, ethical and professional standards, criteria for membership, skills assessment and accreditation, professional development, member benefits, public outreach and public policy development.

The most recent Annual Report (2020) informs us we have 48,025 members. It also provides membership revenue of $3.323m for the year. The reported membership is significantly larger than my understanding of our current national professional membership. From various BEC, Council (pre Congress) and MC roles over the last 20 years, my understanding is that the current total number of Student, Associate and Professional Members is closer to 12,000 members. The ACS's Annual Report does not provide any breakdown of membership, however a figure of 12,000 members is roughly consistent with our reported membership income.

Given we accept the ACS is a professional society, I think **any business activity we engage should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society**. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed.

Investments in Innovation Labs in three cities and acquisition of a set of data marketing and analytics associations do not immediately appear to me aligned with membership value. The annual report is a bit opaque on full detail of the investments, but lists cash outlay of $2.6m for data and analytics association investments and $799,527 in the preceding year for River City Labs. These are substantial investments for a professional society of our size; it is not clear to me how they provide member value, or even whether they make a positive financial contribution to the ACS.

Fifteen years ago we ran the ACS with higher membership revenue ($3.550m -we had a greater number of professional members), significantly lower revenue from migration assessment activities and a smaller contribution from education services. We provided members with regular forum and professional development activities. The ACS had a range of award winning **publications** over the years: Australian Computer Journal, Journal of Research and Practice in Information Technology, and later Information Age (I don't intend to spark debate on our current IA offering!). We provided specialist member skills to Australian and International Standards bodies and engaged in lobbying activities at state and federal levels. Local and national events were held to recognise leaders in the profession.

Revenue has increased nearly eightfold since 2005 (then $6.141m), professional membership has declined, but I don't see any increase in member benefits.

I would like to see as part of the review process on the constitution **a commitment to resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with either the current ACS Objects, or as they are reformulated into a new Mission statement**.

In drafting a new constitution, I suggest **a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership'**, be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus with the key purpose of the Society.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26   #203   Edited Oct 30

Fully agree, Well put Adrian.

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #216   Edited Oct 30

I agree Adrian,

v well put.

BUT I WOULD like to see comments about our current 'publications'.

I cringe every time I hear that information age is 'the flagship publication of the ACS'. IMHO it should be canned now.

rcousins@... Oct 27   #239

From a background of the structure of several not too dissimilar bodies, might I suggest that each state is analogous to a group of stakeholders and a structure can be made such that each state can

appoint (and remove) a board member. This could be extended to have the board add a couple of highly respected long-term professionals as well as have that full board then select the chairman.

The role of a board is to set policy, hire/fire the CEO, etc so there are clear roles between management and policy with equally clear paths as to how people get (and lose) those positions.

The rules for appointment (with term limitations) and revocation by the state need to be clearly laid out in the constitution.

I question the CLG reasoning and have seen many structures of how the above can be achieved within a company.

But to me the first step is to determine what sort of animal the ACS is!

It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it can not be all things to all people.

As a starting point it would not hurt to review how the AICD is structured.

1 person liked this

Website desciptiom being called "engineering professionals"? (1)

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 30   #290

Thank you Adrian for collating the temporal listing of Australian Computer Society website statements, and drawing attention to the poor or complete lack of definition from 2017 onwards.

It is clear there is a combination of serious issues here that need to be addressed as a matter of importance. This includes the range of ICT Professions that the Society is seeking to engage and support, whether the scope of membership categories aligns to contemporary and arguably growing ICT enabled or driven areas needing skilled professional and expertise.

Areas like Blockchain, Cyber Security, Data Analytics and AI/ Machine Learning for example, all rely on underpinning and effective ICT.

In reflection, I believe that what caused the 2017 website change to no longer clearly convey the profession on our website and also adopting a non descript 'ACS' logo that people had/have difficulty identifying with,, was played out in the 2019 Federal Court judgement, reflecting poor and inappropriate leadership.

Importantly as reflected in many comments posted in these Group posts, the essential need to urgently address the poor leadership and resultant behaviours, culture and practices is and has been a key and essential priority focus for both the current voluntary elected leadership, but also the committed and renewed paid staff.

Whilst it can be argued strongly that the leadership under Ian Oppermann and others in leadership positions within the Society, have been focused on proactively addressing the serious concerns raised from the Federal Court judgement and importantly on behalf of members, what led to this occuring.

The problem of a lack of clear identity for the Society is one such outcome from decisions made and the approaches taken from leadership now departed. The hard work is being done to rebuild trust of the members and wider stakeholders. This is based on respect and while there is a lot to be done, I am pleased there is healing occurs across the ACS, as we work together to ensure the culture, practices (policies, technology platforms, behaviours, expectations, member engagement) is focused on meeting member's needs and the wider communities expectations for ICT Professionals.

Therefore, as indicated in Paul Bailes comments, we need to work together, with the Society having come to terms with overlapping organisations interests in ICT,. As quoted by a previous ACS President Brenda Aynsley, who often expressed the importance for the "ACS to partner for success".

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards   (3)

Adrian Porteous Oct 23   #190

The Consultation document suggests a cluster of Professional Standards: (as follows)

> including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies

The current ACS Objects include 2.4:

> To define and promote **the maintenance of standards of knowledge of information and communications technology** for members.

In my view, the proposed Mission gives less priority to the development and promulgation of technical standards (Purpose 1: The establishment and maintenance of high professional standards)

The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals.

Purpose 1 could be amended to include this role, or another specific Purpose defined (I realise that we are not at the drafting stage yet!)

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #210

It appears the interpretation of "standards" has focussed on standards of knowledge and professionalism for members, but overlooked the equally important role of developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #311

I think that the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving it's public image.

Professional Society and Public Good, (14)

Peter Oct 12   #89

How could/should the ACS contribute to broader society for a Public Good? Will the ACS be seen as a self-serving, self-promoting interest group, or will it have a broader "service" role to contribute? Will the ACS provide information and assistance to society beyond lobbying on policy to governments similar to other industry associations? As individuals/members we spend a lot of our professional careers helping to solve business or research needs with technological advances and solutions. Should the ACS spend time making similar contributions to societal issues? Has the ACS made a difference during the pandemic so far? Could it? Is there a role for ACS members as volunteers or is this a career/network building group? Can the ACS support both aspects?

While retiree's are mentioned in the consultation document as potential members, I've seen little consideration previously of that pathway and the possible value to the ACS and broader society. Is there an implicit assumption that Professional equates to knowledgeable AND EARNING? Should this be continued? Those who were previously qualified practitioners and members seem to fall off a cliff at retirement unless you were famous/active enough to become a Fellow. There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Can the ACS make

more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles; for example to promote early interest in computing during primary and secondary education or to help span the various digital divides?

The use of CPD as THE way of recognising continuing development may also be a bit financially self-serving for the ACS (a possible over-emphasis). Should this be a discrete business line? It may be seen as competing with commercial training organisations.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 19   #136   Edited Oct 30

Hi Peter,

I am a 'retiree' but still working with my local community to help with IT issues.

I'm a fellow of the BCS in addition to the ACS.

The BCS has a scheme whereby members who 'retire' can buy a continuing membership for a sum then go on involvement in all BCS activities. I've suggested this several times to ACS people but no-one seems interested in taking the suggestion up.

A scheme such as this has the advantage of keeping people within the ACS and raising a smallish revenue for the society.

frada.burstein@... Oct 19   #138

Hi Ann,

As recent retiree myself, I totally agree with you. We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities. I am a member of the Accreditation Board and vey happy to be actively involved in that group, or take any other useful responsibility as required.

Having a special rate for membership was greatly appreciated. It was not mentioned in the ACS website - but it should be offered to anybody who is prepared to stay active and connected.

Thanks for your suggestion,

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19   #139

I agree, Frada.

I have remained active in the ACS since retiring. Mentoring less experienced members and contributing our considerable knowledge of and experience in ACS (I have been a member since 1978   ) is worthwhile and rewarding.

There is a concessional membership for retired members that has a reduced membership fee:

Retired: You are a Retired member if you have been a financial full fee paying member of the ACS continuously for 2 years and have retired from all regular employment. This is a permanent concession. Should you return to paid work you must notify the ACS in writing so that your retired membership status can be changed. Normal benefits and services apply.

Peter Oct 20   #150

Thanks Paul, Yes, the retired concession will be useful now that I'm aware of it.

I've been volunteer mentoring girls with robotics in high school to improve STEM awareness and hopefully open up ICT careers for them and balance the diversity a bit better. But this is not through anything that the ACS is part of, I just got into a discussion with a teacher one day. I guess it's the lack of discussion/promotion/awareness in this area, amongst others, from the ACS that I am noticing. I think these sort of gaps need raising as part of the discussion for our new constitution and strategies (professionalism and public good). That way the group can have a more open discussion about its purpose, and members can make choices.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 21   #159

Hi Peter Well done on your volunteering here. This is exactly the sort of thing that ACS should be supporting from a broad base. This would build positive outcomes and **a recognition of ACS among young people that will fuel engagement with ACS and promote life-long awareness/belonging as a professional member.   I believe some membership category for K-12 students is appropriate - maybe 'cadet member' at no cost**. At the moment 'student' is the only option for those >16.

Ann Moffatt Oct 21   #161   Edited Oct 30

I agree rob,

There are so many bright young people under 16 who are vvv competent.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #211

The role of retired members in mentoring and outreach is one way the ACS can contribute to public good. However there are other ways that I feel should be considered.

The ACS should, as a national professional body, have a positive public presence.

An example - I asked a couple of random friends about what they thought the ACS might do for them. A couple mentioned the abundant phone scams where text and voice messages appear to come from someone's mobile phone number, and contacting the number confirms it's either inactive or some random number. Their question was "how can scammers impersonate a phone number, and how is ACS involved in getting this loophole fixed?"

I could find no answer on ACS website other than some general involvement in technical standards development.

But to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.

It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.

1 person liked this

Peter Oct 27   #213

Very true, phone and SMS scams are an area where the ACS could make public good offerings. I could also see the ACS possibly involving itself in topics like e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Maybe these sort of topics could be objectives for the labs if we keep them.

David Abulafia Oct 27   #225   Edited Oct 30

I agree with these comments

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #226

I don't

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #256

Can I suggest another angle for public good?

We see government constantly failing with IT. What is the cost to date of CovidSafe, and the benefit? How many so=called IT projects has the Victorian Auditor General called out this year? The ACS should be standing up and screaming about the waste and cost top the community, and pushing government to get it right.

But of course, these problems are all problems of governance, and the ACS as it stands now knows absolutely nothing about governance.

How many of you know that the ACS was a significant contributor to the development of ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation? How many of you are surprised that the ACS does not make use of, and certainly does not conform to that standard? How can the ACS credibly criticise government, when it can't get its own governance and use of IT right?

To contribute to the public good in a significant way, the ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right.

David Abulafia Oct 28   #274   Edited Oct 30

Mark what you say is so true. It sounds like ACS belongs to the do as I say and not as I do group.

The ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #342

Bravo Mark.

ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).

FWIW I co-authored (with others including Nick Tate) a proposal for a "Discipline of Software Engineering Forensics Analysis" (http://www.scitepress.org/Papers/2014/49700/49700.pdf). Again ideally, ACS would be a good partner, indeed host, for the realisation of same. If the current exercise results in an ACS that could be entrusted with this mission, I will be happy to re-engage.

What is ACS?   (9)

Paul Bailes Oct 27   #224

IMHO the question "Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?" is somewhat loaded, in that I am not quite confident that ACS is a "professional society".

Our Principal Object "to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources" is "professional" to the extent that the "resources" might be human resources, but IMHO unfortunately not necessarily exclusively. E.g. our Secondary Objects include "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters" which might as well be found in the Objects of AIIA (or ADMA!).

In other words, I fear that ACS risks being less of a force for the maintenance and improvement of the performance of individual ICT professionals, and more of a platform to lobby Goverments for whatever the leadership/management sees from time to time as worth pursuing (under the guise of "support for the formulation of effective policies ...").

Accordingly, I would urge that we suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature, i.e. strike out:

* from Secondary Objects

• support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters;

* from Purposes

(8) The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decisionmakers

in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and

implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, and related matters

(If anyone wanted to hobnob with Government "community leaders and decision-makers", let them find a platform other than ACS.)

David Abulafia Oct 27   #234   Edited Oct 30

Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club

David Abulafia

David Abulafia Oct 27 #235   Edited Oct 30

The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites.

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #293

Paul wrote:

> ... strike out <support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters>

During video discussion sessions, it's been argued that, central though 'information {and communications} technologies' are to the Society's scope, it has for many years also recognised the importance of the application of ICT, management of ICT, and implications of ICT, and its use for alignment with organisational and social purposes, transformational capabilities, and disruptive potential. (That leads to arguments by quite a few members that we need to encompass specialisations that are not highly technical – but making clear what those specialists are and are not specialised in).

Are you really intending that ACS should not recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy?

As test-cases, consider the risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc.?

 (For clarity, I have a lot of sympathy with the proposition that there are many forms of advocacy / lobbying that are emphatically not within a professional society's scope, such as seeking advantages for business enterprises along the lines of tax breaks and de-regulation).

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #319

David Abulafia is correct in both his comments on this topic. The ICT sector in Australia needs a professional body, and the ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage. Furthermore, Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector.

Because of the nature of the industry we are in, it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #336

Not necessarily "a" professional body – the Health Sector is served by multiple professions and professional bodies. (See mine just now re "Breadth of ACS interest #Q02 #Q05 #Q12 #SIGs")

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #337

Good point, thanks Roger for raising this.

My concern is for ACs not to become distracted from what I see as its distinctive role, as developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals.

Very sincere congrats to you for your great work resisting the Australia Card but how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

I would like to see the warnings about misuse of ICT in X to come from the Australian X Society/Institute/whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS.

Even then, I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything "topical", as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus. Consider for example: https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (and despite being in the name of "ACS Senior Members", the 12/5/2020 email from ACS " Seeking your support - COVID-19" enlisting signatories to the foregoing makes it clear to me that this was owned by ACS). Congrats again to you for providing another view (and to ACS/IA for publishing it), but again how often can we rely on Roger Clarke?

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #354

Hi Paul,

I have to admit, that when I first saw your post I was in vehement disagreement; however, I recognise your point that the ACS needs to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus.

That aside, I do think that as a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.

When I look at the current voices in these debates, I see that the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest.

I also acknowledge that we have not done well at this to date.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #363

Most gracious, thanks Rob!

We need to protect ACS from being "hijacked" by voices that, as you say, might be "self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest", or even just plain wrong.

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4.   Anonymous –   **Tue 5/10/2021 7:24 AM**

ACS Assessment Process

In my honest opinion, the ACS is a farce. The CRWG seems to fantasize itself with philosophical questions when the practical applications of the society are the real issue. Have you ever had the chance to go through an ACS assessment? It's one of the most inhumane things I've ever had to go through. Try it for yourself.

The provided checklist won't cut it and you have to scrutinize every line of the in-depth document, missing a single line causes an immediate $500 lost.

Enquiries on assessments are either "we won't know until you apply" or "read the guide". And even the result email won't cover all the points and you might still fail on the second attempt.

The assessment portal is pure shame on one that calls itself the ACS. Upload interactions regularly fail, hidden limitations on number of uploads and don't forget the inability to delete existing documents. While that may be a business decision, it makes organizing a pain when you can't even rename an uploaded document. Come up with a more elegant solution, a student could do better.

And the assessment process doesn't even call up the work experience companies and any bozo could pass it as long as he follows the guidelines. Honestly if we were investigated for the legalities of that, I swear we'd be in trouble.

All this is coming from someone who was awarded an ACS internship. The assessment process is a sham and goes against the integrity and mission of the ACS. Whereas everything else never applies to regular devs. Go out and survey any single IT or development agency. The developers neither care nor know about the ACS, but some of us despise it.

All I'm asking is for the ACS to bring some value to our community, as opposed to preventing others from joining, what with all the corporate bullshit and cruel assessments. **[Q07] [KF]**

9.   Michael Scott   – michael.scott@ths.tas.gov.au   Fri 29/10/2021 5:30 AM
The ACS should only have a scope/remit of providing services/benefits to its professional members. The ACS should not be in the business of investing – it has clearly demonstrated that it is not a very good investor! **[Q07]   [Q09]**

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3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021
Q7 No need to revise the Society's Key Functions

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021
Q7 OK

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021
Having spent a sizeable majority of my ICT career working with professional services organisations of all shapes and sizes, it's my position that the primary and principal purpose of a Professional Society is to ensure that its professional members enjoy the confidence of those who employ their services.
This means: ...
•   Influencing policy, procedure and legislation relating to the industry   **[Q07]**

Q7 Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised?
From the list in the consultation document, I'm inclined to say "all of them!"

Member support seems to be at a particular low, with the number of events (whether virtual or IRL) have plummeted to just about zero, if there are professional advocacy campaigns running it's hard to tell. I realise COVID put paid to a lot of conferences and events, but are ACS staff working towards new initiatives as things open up?
Is the ACS working with government to expertly shape legislation that will affect IT professionals and consumers?
As a professional member, I'd have no idea.   [P08]

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   1 October 2021
Q7 The Key Functions listed seem appropriate.

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021
Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)
Almost certainly, emphasis within ACS has rarely been strategic or consistent

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021
Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)
Support for Student members is under-emphasised. Student membership should be free, like any other professional society. The time while students are studying is a golden opportunity for ACS

to introduce itself and provide enough value to ensure students remain members for life. <u>Articulation from Student to Member should be celebrated as a major milestone in their professional development</u>, with gala events, etc. Reason is that ACS has typically experienced a 40% drop-off in membership numbers when articulating from student to full member and increased emphasis would help improve this ratio. Other benefits include increased membership revenue and increased membership numbers.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   **16th October 2021**

<u>Q7</u>: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised?

Feedback: Yes. I've felt this for a long time now (over a decade). While I can appreciate the many key functions of the ACS, the one that is of most importance to me is actually the one that always seems to be listed last and is seldom, if ever, given any weight. Specifically, **public statements, submissions, advocacy to government etc**. <u>In my humble opinion, this **is the most valuable thing that the ACS can actually do for me, and members like me**, as it's the only one that I cannot do myself.</u> Maintaining a code of ethics, professional development, education programs, networking events, career advice, etc are all things that I can and am currently doing myself. However, <u>I can't lobby government for better conditions in the ICT industry in Australia</u>. I have tried, multiple times, with polite dear insert name here responses from staffers of our elected officials.

<u>I want our professional society to be a mouth piece to give us members a voice in the public domain, similar to how the AMA issue statements representing Doctors</u> whenever some politician thinks something (usually silly) is a good idea, advocating for sensible outcomes and the rights of Doctors. I don't want to be reading in the AFR about how tech entrepreneurs who have not yet paid a cent of tax in Australia want to dictate their terms on Australian public policy so their offshore domiciled profits can be maintained; I want to read a considered rebuttal to that corporate greed advocating on behalf of the members who work for these sociopaths. **I want an outwardly focused society who is engaging with policy makers, captains of industry, media outlets and the public**.

Casey's recent articles in the Information Age actually capture a really good thread, <u>the great resignation vs skills shortage vs foreign worker imports vs employers no longer investing in training staff vs poor career outcomes for STEM students</u>. While this discussion appears fairly obvious to anyone currently working in the industry and is well-articulated by Casey, <u>it is not a mainstream public discussion, and would benefit all members if this was injected into the news cycle</u> along to counter act the existing self-serving articles.

This may be a tad more detail than you were looking for, but I'm just really passionate about this, and I feel it has the opportunity to add great value to membership by having "someone in our corner".

...

... there is still plenty of room for volunteers in ACS. Tertiary students can volunteer their time as ambassadors and place ACS pamphlets in common rooms which they have access to and mentor other students on professional standards. Senior industry and academic members can volunteer their time mentoring more junior members. Special interest groups are best run by enthusiastic members who are passionate about the group's topic. Professional associations in other industries are much better at organising volunteer programs than ACS is. This points to a gap in ACS capabilities – **a strong volunteering program is required**, that organises and rewards members who donate their time.   **[Q07]**

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q4 Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate Grade?

Bob suggested that the associate grade needs a rethink. Several opinions were expressed that <u>professional division members should remain at the heart of the ACS</u> and that <u>the recent decline in professional grade membership is alarming.</u>   **[Q07]**

Paul expressed the view that the benefits for <u>Professional membership must appeal to the self-interest of the prospective professional member</u>.   **[Q07]**

There was general support for the view that <u>too little had been done to enhance the benefits of professional membership and that this was a contributing factor in its decline</u>.   **[Q07]**

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q3. Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

•   As discussed, <u>the ACS mission should be to represent the ICT professionals in Australia</u>.

•   Tension originated because **the driver for the commercial arm of ACS activities came into conflict with the general mission and purpose**.   **[Q07]**

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Alan: What's the value offered to the member?

Justin: Everything flows from this – if the mission and purpose are correct then the rest follows.

7.   Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q7:   Key Functions [Framing: 'what are your top-of-mind / most important things to do]

Peter: **Public policy – voice of the profession to government, industry and the public**.
ACS has to have a conscience, and be an advocate for appropriate and against inappropriate technologies and applications of technologies

Sarah-Louise: Policy influence is not done well. We tack on and copy others.

We should **get out in the forefront and address hot button issues**.
Instead we're cautious, too respectful of government views, even partisan.

Issues means where ICT interacts with society. It's not about kit, but problem-solving.

Peter: e.g. when SA proposed a technology-enabled virtual prison for quarantine people (incl. biometrics, always-on geo-location and geo-fencing, 3rd party service, offshore data).
ACS needs to communicate concerns, whether governments like the message or not.

Kristina: When the Child eSafety Commissioner says something, ACS should be offering an opinion [whether it be support, suggestions about enablement, a qualification, or opposition]

Sarah-Louise: **Open nights for concerns / issues. That's more exciting for young tech professionals**
[Old name: 'Infotech politics in the pub'? What should such events be called now?]

[Additional Question posed by CRWG member: MC, CEO and staff work hard to build and protect ACS brand. <u>How do we sustain brand, but have debates, and make submissions?</u>]

Sarah-Louise: We're a members' organisation, and positions/topics should be led by members. Measured opinions by the ACS is separate / separable from the views of members of groups of members.
It's probably appropriate for the CEO to generally be the spokesperson.

Peter: **Universities manage this, by distinguishing individual academics' statements from the University's position**, and keep receiving grants from organisations that academics criticise.

Vicki: **ACS can pull back from / extract / abstract, in order to enunciate agreed principles**. Example of nuclear energy as a polarising issue within IE Aust. Focus the official position on 'solution requires a mix of sources' rather than the specifics of the technology

Grant: <u>Education and certification</u>, in particular externally-imposed licensing cf. CPA Aust
Sarah-Louise: Because of ongoing specialisation/fragmentation, licensing may be a dying art-form?

Martin: We've tried for registration for 50 years, and not got there [even in the most obvious areas, such as safety-critical systems and (current name) cybersecurity]. Is it a forlorn hope?

Vicki: Most Eng Aust members don't need to be chartered, not even all civil, just structural.

Kristina: **The creation of registration schemes follows not just any kind of disaster, but specifically _political_ disasters. People have to perceive ICT, or lack of quality in ICT activities, as being the root cause of a political disaster**.

Sarah-Louise: **We have to achieve a sufficient public policy profile, because otherwise ICT and quality in the application of ICT are not seen as a major risk factor**.

Sarah-Louise: The quality standards associated with migration skills assessment aren't good enough. We need a much more robust mechanism to achieve workforce quality.

Neil: **Opportunities to meet others in the industry**. The altruistic aspect is good; but for some people ready access to public liability insurance matters, and for many members the feeling of a community is paramount – social, as well as CPD events + professional networking

Eric: **The social aspect is missing**. Non-CPD events have a different vibe from CPD ones [The networking inevitably involves a lot of 'talking shop' and vicarious experience]

Amy: **Younger generations have different membership needs and values that need to be understood, articulated and addressed**. For example, the relevance and need for insurance through ACS depends on individuals but is potentially less of a driver for the emerging professional/professional market segment where professional indemnity and liability insurance is covered by their employer. Communicating the benefits of insurance through ACS as part of membership and how it differs to other insurance offerings could be promoted further with relevant ACS market segments. Evolution is important.

Eric: The ACS brand doesn't get enough exposure to young professionals. That's true in both educational institutions and for young people moving to jobs in Canberra.

Vicki: The constitutions she's familiar with include purposes like 'facilitating exchange of ideas', 'information transfer and development'

Sarah-Louise: A focus is needed on new tech, innovation, building eco-systems

Neil: What does, and what should ACS do, about clauses in employment contracts that seek to impose **unreasonable non-disclosure / non-compete / restraint-of-trade clauses**?

Sarah-Louise / Martin / Others ==>> Consensus: ACS must have **a clear and member-supportive policy positio**n, and should be able to provide background information to a member confronted by the problem, perhaps including a pointer to specialist advisers; but isn't a union and shouldn't provide direct support

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National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q7:   All: The Key Functions are okay

Lucia: **Add 'Community building in ICT' / connections**

Lucia: Also ensuring Australia has capacity to meet growing ICT workforce; encouraging young people into tech careers, ensuring diversity in ICT

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q7:   Key Functions

Karl: **ACS should express positions on policy issues**.

Karl: Skills assessment should have a major focus on domestic members, not only on visa-applicants.

Richard H: Micro-credential direction has been important for PMI, should be for ACS

Karl: Plumbers seem to have micro credentials I am not sure about it

Q10: Surplus allocation

Jan: The benefits to members have been disappointing , because **the large surplus seems not to deliver a lot to members**, and is instead used elsewhere. **[Q7]   [Q6]   [Q8]**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q6-7:   Industry Associations, Key Functions

Elizabeth: ACS needs to **look for synergy with industry assocations, but the relationships need to be arms-length**, to avoid harm to ACS's purpose and ACS's reputation.

Rod: **No convincing evidence has been provided of benefits in having industry associations within ACS**.

The secrecy surrounding the acquisition was the inverse of the required transparency to members before the fact. And we're paying > $1m p.a. for the privilege - !?   **[P08]**
ADMA Members do not equate to ACS professional members.

Elizabeth: We need to be clear about what ACS is about [its Key Functions], and **unless industry associations are among the Key Functions, they are not a fit to ACS**.

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q7:   Key Functions

Prabin: Events, information, engagement, mentoring

Graeme: **ACS took a wrong turn when SIGs were effectively abolished**. The (Pods?) idea didn't fly. Lockdown has enabled access to events in other Branches, which has been a great bonding mechanism across borders. Hybrid events have worked. **Professional networking and content at events is the key driver**.   **[P04]   [SIGs]**

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q7:   Key Functions

David: [He'll examine Appendix A of the Consultation Document and send comments.]

When ACS came to him as a CTO, with 40-odd engineers, he could see benefits to the individuals, but not to the organisation.

Events need more than talking-heads. More **value-add is needed** than that, **such as articulation into a coherent course/program**, or ACS-member discounts on 3rd party courses.

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q3, Q7:   Mission and Purposes, Key Functions

Frank: Wants to see a strong political lobby group representing people in the industry, and one different from AIIA

Frank, Michelle: It's desirable to achieve requirements of professionalism as a condition of employment in [at least some] ICT roles

John: I joined ACS because of the professionalism and the link from academe to industry. So standards definition is essential.
Accreditation mechanisms for courses and institutions are essential.
In both cases, independence from both governments and suppliers is key.

John: **I was very disappointed that ACS dropped its engagement with education, and its engagement with educational institutions**

Michelle: Need to sustain the scope for entry without [relevant] university degrees, and even in appropriate circumstances without any university degree at all

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q7:   Key Functions

Tom: Needs a focus on jobs, wages and conditions for Australian residents

Alan: Needs an ongoing focus on requiring certification for categories of IT work.

Chris: ACS needs a new focus on reducing the cowboy factor, e.g. in web-site dev.
ACS should provide a service to small business. in the form of a register pre-evaluated SME service-providers [in conjunction with State Small Business agencies? Chambers of Commerce?]

Alan: Supports that proposal. Plus:
ACS needs to enable members to deliver voluntary services in support of victims of natural disasters (fire, flood, etc.). This needs a framework / channels / insurance.

The political reality is that importing people, to get gratis access to trained staff, will continue to be attractive to business and hence governments. However, we need to be locally developing talent as well, and encouraging employers to develop existing staff.

Tom: Should ACS have a focus on 'Buy Australian'?

National Discussion Session #14 Fri 22 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Anthony: ACS's standards and certification work has been used as a framework for the professional employees' award

Margaret: Expressed disappointment about the failure of ACS to achieve any government regulation or control over the profession, in comparison with engineers and trade organisations

Philip: **National SIGs, or coordination among Branch SIGs, has considerable potential**

Margaret: In the Consultation Document, Appendix 1 (p.9), I would like to see the Professional Standards function separated out into 2 functions:
(1) ICT Technical Standards and Bodies of Knowledge;
(2) Standards for membership, accreditation of courses, educational providers etc.

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Mark: For many years, ACS was irrelevant to the technical work he and his staff were performing, because it was too academic. That changed once standards development became a meaningful part of ACS's contributions. But the focus is narrow and the outlook is backwards not forwards (see Q2). This fails to attract business leaders, even CIOs.

Mark: **The heavyweights need to be engaged, but ACS lacks the conduits to them. Where are the events for CXOs, and for Board Directors?**
ACS has to position itself for relevance to them.

David: In addition to applications, **social impacts of ICT must be addressed**.

Mark: **Agreed! Focus is needed on ICT's impacts on production, on work, and on income distribution** as work becomes less readily available as a conduit for personal income.

Nick: [So it needs more emphasis on public policy and thought leadership?]

Mark: **The demise of the Ec, Legal and Social implications Committee is unsurprising. The policy work doesn't engage the community. Use online virtual fora to do that.**

David: The web-site is a serious embarrassment. One example of poor service is the absence of single-click entry from bookings into individuals' own calendars. Another is the rejection by IT Services of requests for improvements. Another is the bureaucratisation inherent in needing support tickets for the simplest of tasks like changing a distribution-list.

David: ACS should be a leader in applying ICT for effectiveness, efficiency, and agility.

Mark: ACS should also be a leader in applying the ISO 37000 governance Standard, but ACS has long since dropped the ball on Australian-led ICT governance initiatives.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Richard: Vision ('what we want to become') and Mission (why we exist') belong in constitution

Richard: Code of Ethics is missing in action (i.e. action by the ACS and as a practical guide to ACS members), esp. diversity and inclusion, customer at centre, integrity of action

Andrew: (Younger than others present). Looking for lobbying governments re benefits for society and members

Alison: The most crucial function is events, esp. educational, which is what ACS is there for

Andrew: Achieve registration requirements to do certain work, esp. cybersecurity

Andrew: Take more advantage of members' effort and expertise.
Committees are barely visible, except when ads are published for new members

Andrew: Absence of information and clarity about the value-proposition for ACS membership

Alison: There needs to be greater primacy of standards and ethics

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Keep this open channel going!!! #Business-Lines   #P00   #P08   #Q07

helenmchugh@... Nov 1   #390

This <u>open channel</u> is AMAZING!!!! So much heard passion and collaboration

THIS MUST KEEP GOING

Well done CRWG Team

Migration Skills Assessment #P11   #Directors   #Chapters

David Abulafia Nov 4   #421   [#Q07]

The <u>ACS should be encouraging, the creation of local talent and only going to overseas immigrant at very last resort</u>.

<p align="center">Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11</p>

Q7: Key Functions

Karl: Skills assessment as an element

Karl: Design of mission statements is non-trivial

<u>Overcome the negative impact of IT in the community.</u> <u>Public information infrastructure evidences continual failure (CensusFail, RoboDebt, COVIDsafe, ...), and ACS is tarred with that brush rather than being perceived to be an antidote to it. We're not seen as 'the light on the hill' for IT professionals, and have not achieved</u>

Rod: There's been **excessive emphasis on business-lines, too little on member voice.** Jobs, professional development, networks

Jo: **Members must regard ACS as the central part of their career development, so it's what each segment of members regards as valuable that matters**

Other groups have a stronger bond with members, e.g. women's groups, value of networking, Branch SIGs

Susan: **Re-investigate who our members are, and especially who they will be. We have a huge issue of irrelevance. Our offerings to members don't sell the Society to them.**

[More details sought on what's needed, e.g. Social elements in events? Charging for events? Express support for and enablement of Branch SIGs?]

<p align="center">Queensland Chapters Event – Thu 11 Nov 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10</p>

Matthew: For CPD, <u>we need 30 hours of new online content p.a.</u>

Holly: There are many <u>webinars, available live and on replay, and a large library</u>.

Michael: That's been <u>improved a lot in the last few years</u>.

Bevin: **<u>Supporting the members, especially those remote from the capital cities, and ensuring they're exposed to the latest information</u>**.   **[#Chapters]**

Matthew: <u>Promote IT, in Canberra.</u>

Ann: **New technologies and skills aren't adequately supported by the ACS accreditation process**, e.g. old multimedia terms cf. new virtual/augmented reality terms, and that results in accreditation difficulties. The rate of change is very fast in such areas.

Matthew: In SFIA 8, does 'Animation Development' work?

Ann: No, e.g. spatial trackers aren't covered at all.

<p align="center">Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021</p>

<u>I agree with the key functions at Section 4 and Appendix A, except for the references to Benefits to Members, as stated at Question 3.</u>

<u>Great care is needed with the wording of the third bullet point as there is a big difference between 'the benefits of being a member' and the 'delivery of benefits to members', especially at the constitutional level. An NFP cannot give benefits to its members, and there is a real conflict of interest if professional members on the board (and they should be) are deciding on awarding</u>

benefits to members. Regulatory authorities have a problem with this. I have had first-hand experience with this and the need to restructure a NFP to accommodate this aspect, causing lots of angst.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

The importance of networking and mentoring could be more emphasised (at least in this branch)

... centrally provided events such as Education Across the Nation and International speakers should be continued.

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

My suggested improvements are shown below

- **Professional Standards** – including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies. With special emphasis on ensuring graduates have high-technical and social competence

- **Professional Development** – including provision of professional education programs and of continuing professional development events, the operation of communities of practice, SIG's, technical committees etc, learned publications, professional publications

- **Benefits for the Public and Members** – including community outreach, networking events, **facilitation of communications among members, through SIGS, State and National Committees which draw on the competence and knowledge of members**, information resources, on career advice, employment assistance, advocacy to governments., in particular, commenting on the feasibility of Professional insurance for members

- **Public Policy** – including public statements, submissions and publications in relation to ICT and information infrastructure resources, their applications, and their implications. **Particular attention will be paid to the quality of public facing systems, their security in the widest sense and their social and economic impact.**
  [#MP]   [#P02]

- **Development of New Technology**– Support the function and development of National Research Institutions, university and commercial R&D to solve problems facing the Australian economy and society in a manner that generates ICT products and services for domestic use and export.

Comment In the last few years, Australia's economy and hence it's sovereignty has been at risk due to our dependence on single export markets, and, upon supply chains focused on one country. Reducing our dependence on external markets for high technology products will also have a positive impact on balance of trade and increase our economic diversity.

• Maintenance of an effective state Branch Structure– Most service delivery and interaction will be with a local Branch. These must have autonomy over budget and activities that allow differing local needs to be met. At the same time, members should be guaranteed a minimum level of uniform service.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Information Communications and Technology (ICT) is well defined term but making that the general public understand this term and what it means and also **maintaining the currency and relevance of the ACS CBOK is critical   [#Q07]**

Provide clear pathways and opportunities for ACS Associate members to get more involved and committed as ICT professionals I think we can be more proactive here I am thinking we should provide student membership for free or at a nominal fee   **[#Q07]**

Maintaining these functions is critical and suggests the following clusters:

- **Professional Standards** – including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies
- **Professional Development** – including provision of professional education programs and of continuing professional development events, the operation of communities of practice, learned publications, professional publications
- **Benefits for the Public and Members** – including community outreach, networking events, facilitation of communications among members, information resources, professional insurance, career advice, employment assistance, advocacy to governments
- **Public Policy** – including public statements, submissions and publications in relation to ICT and information infrastructure resources, their applications, and their implications

ACS's Role in Addressing the Big Problems

The other thing on reflection that ACS should endeavour to capture in its constitution as a professional society is a **commitment to playing our part as a profession to solving big problems facing humanity such climate change, sustainability and mental health etc and making the world a better place for the next generation**

[#MP]   [#P02]   [#Q07]

Tag Consolidation
#Q08 – 5 Topics – 57 Posts + 35 Other Messages   +1   +5
Is support for innovation, e.g. through ACS Labs, a key function of the ACS?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p.26

Catalyst   (4)

Fellow Enthusiast

Oct 8   #64

Encouraging innovation is relevant - along with encouraging research, education, professional development. But actually engaging in running businesses like incubators is NOT a society role. That is best left to universities, business organisations or government that can share their resources and capitalise on the interaction with start-up innovators.   Noting that most start-ups fail - one has to see that overall the investment and interaction is worthwhile.

Running incubators at a profit is the exception - and offers little prestige.

Tom Worthington

Oct 10   #68

On 8/10/21 2:49 pm, Fellow Enthusiast wrote:

> Encouraging innovation is relevant - along with encouraging research, professional development. ...

I don't have a problem with ACS running an incubator to help advance computing in Australia, where they aren't being provided by others, or in partnership with government, academia and industry.

Canberra has a good example, with the Canberra Innovation Network (CBRIN), supported by the ACT Government, several universities, and businesses. There would be room for professional bodies as well.

Traditionally, incubators are in old offices, factories, and warehouses. CBRIN is in an old government office. https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/2015/04/designing-innovation-course-part-3.html#cbb

River City Labs in Brisbane, which ACS now operates, is in an old department store: https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/search/label/River%20City%20Labs

z6957315@...

Oct 10   #70

Tom Worthington wrote:

> I don't have a problem with ACS running an incubator to help advance computing in Australia ...

How much do members want to pay to provide space, training and networking opportunities? This is not a business-line. It doesn't, and never could, generate a surplus. Instead it eats up a lot of the surplus generated by other business-lines.

Running an incubator represents a donation to the people who benefit from the few start-ups that are successful. That's maybe 5% of the people who attempt to innovate, plus a lot of well-heeled investors. Subsidising investors is the government's business, not something a professional society should be doing.

> River City Labs in Brisbane, which ACS now operates, is in an old department store:

The ACS Labs in Sydney and Melbourne are in extremely high-rental space, not an old department store.

2 people liked this

Tom Worthington

Oct 14 #97

On 10/10/21 8:36 am, z6957315@UNSWalumni.com wrote:

> How much do members want to pay to provide space, training and networking opportunities? ...

Yes, I would want an incubator to be revenue neutral, or positive. It could be used to fill up otherwise unusable office space, or use space donated by a government agency, or corporation.

This is one reason why start-up centers are often in old buildings. Space-cubed in Perth had one in an old bank, with a very quiet meeting room in the strongroom:
https://blog.tomw.net.au/search?q=spacecubed

Appropriate Business-Lines, and not Loss-Making (3)

z6957315@... Oct 10 #69

There are some forms of business activity that are natural for a professional society. Ongoing education programs are fundamental to the needs of professionals and the employers, and there is no reason why ACS should not compete with commercial providers. Where tertiary educational institutions fail to prepare their graduates to be work-ready, training for transition into the workplace can be a useful further offering. Another areas is indexes to ICT expertise and bodies of knowledge, and guidance to professionals on career pathways.

But there are many other areas that a professional society has to avoid. It must not compete with its own members, by itself performing consultancy or contracting within the ICT field. It must avoid commercial activities that conflict with its obligations to serve the public interest. The ACS has no role to play in the conduct of innovation, although it can stimulate innovation by others. And whereas industry associations can prioritise the interests of profit-making companies over the interests of consumers, professional societies cannot.

A professional society must also ensure that it doesn't operate business-lines that fail to deliver a surplus. The gains made from successful business-lines must be invested in the ACS's key functions, not in loss-making business ventures.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15 #103

While the need to attract revenue is obvious, commercial undertakings such as ACS Labs does not seem congruent with ACS member objectives. If the aim is to support fledgling ICT endeavor then other ways of sponsorship could be found. Running a real estate business like this does little to create sustainable revenue and carries unwelcome risk. If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24 #192

If they are to be maintained ACS-Labs should provide some pathways for Members. See my comments with #Industry-Associations.

1 person liked this

Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership (4)

Adrian Porteous Oct 25 #199   Edited Oct 30

The Consultation document raises the fundamental question of whether the ACS continues to be a professional society (Q1). Nowhere in any of the subsequent discussion is that disputed. I think this is good!

Appendix A of the consultation document (Key Functions of a Professional Society) states well the required functions we should expect of the ACS, namely around technical, ethical and professional standards, criteria for membership, skills assessment and accreditation, professional development, member benefits, public outreach and public policy development.

The most recent Annual Report (2020) informs us we have 48,025 members. It also provides membership revenue of $3.323m for the year. The reported membership is significantly larger than my understanding of our current national professional membership. From various BEC, Council (pre Congress) and MC roles over the last 20 years, my understanding is that the current total number of Student, Associate and Professional Members is closer to 12,000 members. The ACS's Annual Report does not provide any breakdown of membership, however a figure of 12,000 members is roughly consistent with our reported membership income.

Given we accept the ACS is a professional society, I think any business activity we engage should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed.

Investments in Innovation Labs in three cities and acquisition of a set of data marketing and analytics associations do not immediately appear to me aligned with membership value. The annual report is a bit opaque on full detail of the investments, but lists cash outlay of $2.6m for data and analytics association investments and $799,527 in the preceding year for River City Labs. These are substantial investments for a professional society of our size; it is not clear to me how they provide member value, or even whether they make a positive financial contribution to the ACS.

Fifteen years ago we ran the ACS with higher membership revenue ($3.550m -we had a greater number of professional members), significantly lower revenue from migration assessment activities and a smaller contribution from education services. We provided members with regular forum and professional development activities. The ACS had a range of award winning publications over the years: Australian Computer Journal, Journal of Research and Practice in Information Technology, and later Information Age (I don't intend to spark debate on our current IA offering!). We provided specialist member skills to Australian and International Standards bodies and engaged in lobbying activities at state and federal levels. Local and national events were held to recognise leaders in the profession.

Revenue has increased nearly eightfold since 2005 (then $6.141m), professional membership has declined, but I don't see any increase in member benefits.

I would like to see as part of the review process on the constitution a commitment to resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with either the current ACS Objects, or as they are reformulated into a new Mission statement.

In drafting a new constitution, I suggest a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership', be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus with the key purpose of the Society.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26   #203   Edited Oct 30

Fully agree, Well put Adrian.

Ann Moffatt Oct 27   #216   Edited Oct 30

I agree Adrian,

v well put.

BUT I WOULD like to see comments about our current 'publications'.

I cringe every time I hear that information age is 'the flagship publication of the ACS'. IMHO it should be canned now.

rcousins@... Oct 27   #239

From a background of the structure of several not too dissimilar bodies, might I suggest that each state is analogous to a group of stakeholders and a structure can be made such that each state can appoint (and remove) a board member. This could be extended to have the board add a couple of highly respected long-term professionals as well as have that full board then select the chairman.

The role of a board is to set policy, hire/fire the CEO, etc so there are clear roles between management and policy with equally clear paths as to how people get (and lose) those positions.

The rules for appointment (with term limitations) and revocation by the state need to be clearly laid out in the constitution.

I question the CLG reasoning and have seen many structures of how the above can be achieved within a company.

But to me the first step is to determine what sort of animal the ACS is!

It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it can not be all things to all people.

As a starting point it would not hurt to review how the AICD is structured.

1 person liked this

Why Company Limited by Guarantee   (44)

jp@... Oct 6   #40

To me, one critical issue has been skimmed over: the proposed restructure to be a company limited by guarantee.

So far I have not seen a rationale for why this is being considered, then or now with the consultation process.

It is central to the reason why I voted no at the fateful General Meeting.

Why is it necessary to move to a company limited by guarantee?

Jack Burton Oct 6   #41

I agree with Justin.

The only attempt at a rationale I've seen this time around (in the IA article, the President is quoted as saying "state government association registrars seek to avoid regulating large organisations") appears to be very flimsy indeed. I'm sure the President is correct in his comment, but there is nothing to connect that remark with any sort of compelling case for ACS changing our form of incorporation.

The first time around the stated justification was even weaker (some may argue even misleading), as it appeared to be based solely on associations legislation from jurisdictions other than the one we're actually incorporated in.

Having said that, everything (including a potential change to form of incorporation) should be on the table for this process.

But a change to legal structure is not a matter to take lightly -- to make it worth considering, there would need to be a *genuine* and *compelling* case for change, grounded firmly in the needs of the Society (which, by definition, means the needs of its professional Members) ... and I haven't seen anything even vaguely resembling such a justification yet.

That should not dissuade us from participating in this process at all though -- the questions being asked are good ones to ask and all of the issues raised could be addressed by suitable amendments to the Society's Rules, National Regulations and/or Guidelines for Membership, just as most (but not quite all, due to the nature of a public company) could be addressed by careful drafting of a constitution & set of by-laws for a company limited by guarantee.

But Justin is right -- the elephant in the room is that the mooted restructure as a CLBG appears to have been treated as a fait accompli, without any compelling justification being offered.

As computing professionals, we should automatically recognise that as a failure of requirements engineering and seek to correct it, either by discovering & clearly articulating a compelling justification or (more likely, as after two years one does not yet appear to have emerged) by noting the absence of any compelling justification and therefore abandon the mooted change to legal form of incorporation, instead turning our attention to addressing the substantive matters raised in the issues paper within our existing legal structure.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall Oct 11 #80

As elephants go this is the biggie. I have not read any compelling arguments on the need to stop being an association and start being a company. It is axiomatic that a company structure will reinforce the primacy of central management.

I understand that the ACT is NOT suggesting we need to stop being an association.

Finally, if the issue is the running of enterprises such as RCL the solution is to get rid of them as they lose money.

1 person liked this

paul.campbell@... Oct 15 #109   Edited Oct 31

I originally supported the move to a CLG but after further research and as a consequence of events over the previous 2 years I have changed my view.

I now see no compelling reason to move to a CLG and think such a move will significantly reduce oversight of Board and management decisions.

I will explain my reasoning below, however in summary I believe we have to argue that the premise for moving to a CLG is flawed and so withdraw our support.

Instead we should recommend that the support of members be again put to a vote once a new constitution is adopted and had time for its operational impacts to be accessed.

I was originally told that the ACS had grown to a size that no longer complied with the requirements of the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991

As such, the ACS was compelled to change it's legal structure to a CLG.

I have now researched this premise and can't find any guidance in the Act or from Access Canberra on explicit limitations for associations being incorporated in the ACT.

The only clause that I could identify in the ACT Associations Incorporation Act 1991 on the subject is - 83 Cancellation where continued incorporation inappropriate.

This clause states

(1) If the registrar-general is satisfied that the continued incorporation of an association under this Act would be inappropriate or inconvenient because of the registrar-general's assessment of—

(a) the scale or nature of the activities of the association; or

(b) the value or nature of the property of the association; or

(c) the extent or nature of the association's dealings with persons

who are not members or applicants for membership of the association;

the registrar-general may—

(d) serve a notice on the association; and

(e) give public notice in relation to the association.

Note

Public notice means notice on an ACT government website or in a daily newspaper circulating in the ACT (see Legislation Act, dict, pt 1).

Note this clause does not state that incorporation is automatically removed. Instead it states that the registrar-general MAY serve notice…….

If notice occurred the ACS would have the opportunity to argue its case for ongoing incorporation or negotiate a reasonable time frame to transition to a CLG.

I would argue that a reasonable timeframe, given the need to prepare governance documentation, seek member feedback and have a vote at an AGM would be at least 2 years.

So in my view there is no pressure on the ACS to transition to a CLG as soon as possible.

Instead I would argue that we should adopt a new constitution and evaluate its operational impacts on ACS governance and management before we revisit the need to transition.

There are two major governance issues with incorporation as a CLG.

First the Corporations ACT 2001 explicitly gives the company Board absolute powers.

The Act explicitly refers to a event where any person or body that acts in the role of a director, or the directors of a company commonly act according to their instructions, may be deemed to be 'shadow director' and consequently have the same legal responsibilities as a registered director.

The consequences for breaching these duties are also the same.

https://openlegal.com.au/what-is-a-shadow-director/

So the only oversight recognised in the Act is exercised by members of the company who can remove directors at a General Meeting.

This leads to the second major governance issue - Who will be members of the company?

Members of a CLG have the right to access a financial report and director's report and have access to the company's register of members, constitution and meeting minutes.

The company is obligated to hold meetings of members, keep records of member's resolutions and meetings and make available their financial and director's report.

https://openlegal.com.au/what-is-a-company-limited-by-guarantee/

Because company members take on financial liability if the company becomes insolvent, (Note this liability is very small, typically $10) the Corporations Act requires potential members to agree in writing to becoming a member.

It was initially agued that all ACS members should become members of the CLG.

However despite my repeated requests it was never explained to me how this written permission would be obtained.

The only mechanism I can identify beyond writing to every member is to incorporate an explicit statement in membership forms that state by becoming a member of the ACS or renewing your membership, you agree to become a member of the company and accept the responsibilities and liability that this company membership entails.

I have not had legal advice on this approach or any alternative so at this stage it remains conjecture.

Even if it legally feasible to have every member of the ACS become a company member, I would argue that this will lead to poor governance oversight.

Instead I would recommend that company members are chosen on a senate model where a set number of representatives from each branch are elected to be members of the company.

This approach has several advantages.

It reduces the size of the company member register from thousands to potentially less than 50, making decision making and administration simpler.

It ensures that people put into the position of making important oversight decisions are passionate, informed, engaged and elected by their BEC or local ACS members.

It ensures that oversight reflects the views of all branches equally.

Under this senate model, the rights of ACS members are recognised through the CLG constitution and by-laws. Society members impact on the decision of company members through their election of their state representatives.

bobcole@... Oct 15 #110

I agree that there has not been any case made to support the move to a CLG. It is, as stated above, a clear step towards taking ACS towards a managerial/entreperneurial model and way from the ACS' key/only role as an association of industry professionals which does not dabble directly in the industry itself, but interacts with it at arms length for the benefit of members, the industry and the community as a whole. This is how the the ACS was first set up and envisioned and should be restored.

P Argy Oct 15 #111

The ACT Associations Incorporation Act, like its counterparts in other jurisdictions, was intended to provide perpetual succession so that tennis clubs and hobby associations could own property and rent premises and the like. It was never intended as the mode of operation of a national enterprise with an annual turnover exceeding $50m. As I understand it the ACT Registrar has intimated that he is minded to invoke s. 83 against the ACS unless we voluntarily undertake the exercise that is contemplated by s. 82. When that is done all members of the ACS will automatically become members of the company limited by guarantee.

As others have noted, it is true that the corporate form requires management to be vested in a Board of Directors upon whom the obligations of the Corporations Act rest. However, that does not mean that Branches and other organs of the ACS cease to have any influence. Under a properly designed new Constitution, the internal governance arrangements of the ACS can be established in any way desired. For example, the Board could continue to be appointed by Congress and Congress members could continue to be appointed by Branches. Whatever other aspects of the ACS governance are sought to be retained, that can be accommodated under the Constitution.

So for me, arguing about whether to incorporate as a CLG is a bit of a red herring. What is required is a robust debate about what governance structure we want to have and then to embody that in a new constitution that complies with the Corporations Act requirements for a CLG. By the way, under the existing Associations Incorporation Act Management Committee is the Committee in whom is vested complete management responsibility for the ACS. In that respect the legislative model does not differ between our current form and a CLG.

1 person liked this

jp@... Oct 15 #112

Thank you, Philip, this is the first post I have seen that attempts to address my concern.

This thread is most certainly not a red herring, but an important issue that until now has been obfuscated by the Committee.

The legislation Philip refers to, for everybody's benefit, can be viewed here: https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/View/a/1991-46/current/html/1991-46.html

Note that section 82 suggests a special resolution must be reached and I think that refers to the invalid vote the other year. Also note that section 83 is silent on how the Register-General will make their assessment. The Act itself also does not define the 'scale' by which the Register-General can make the determination. While the Corporations Act (2001) makes such definitions, the Act you refer to does not. It does, however, have specific requirements for auditors when turnover reaches a certain threshold.

I appreciate you making an attempt to help clear this up. Your point regarding governance arrangements being similar for either form does not establish a case for a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Act you refer to, and whatever the Register-General may have intimated comes close I admit. I will be very interested if you or somebody else can get us to the next level on this.

rcousins@... Oct 15 #113

Totally agree

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15 #115

Paul is absolutely correct.

I have had some experience with a Company limited by guarantee recently and I have to say that I was amazed at the lack of Board accountability and transparency. Under the Corporations Act, a Company limited by guarantee that is not also a registered charity:

- is only required to meet once a year - the AGM

- only has to table a very brief financial summary at the AGM, with no details of transactions during the year required.

- members do not have the right to access Board meeting minutes

Board members do not have to face re-election once appointed. They hold their position until they resign, die or are removed by a general meeting

On the other hand, Incorporated Associations in Queensland have quite strict rules regarding frequency of Management Committee meetings, financial reporting, election and tenure of office bearers, distribution of minutes etc.

David Abulafia Oct 15 #116   Edited Oct 31

The synagogue I am a member and board member and is a company limited by guarantee. We have elections every year where there are more candidates than positions we hold a election for those positions. Our constitution say a president can only be a president for more than six years unless the members approve of an extension.

The ACNC has strict laws also.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 15 #118

David, that is excellent. You appear to have strong governance and transparency through your constitution. If ACS moves to a company limited by guarantee we need to ensure that our constitution has provisions like those in your synagogue's constitution. Our new constitution seems to be what we should be focussing on whether we go to a company limited by guarantee or Incorporated association regime.

Ann Moffatt Oct 19 #140   Edited Oct 31

Thanx Paul,

Great research.

David Abulafia Oct 19 #146

Hi Ann,

Glad to see you are still around. I have not seen your name mentioned at the ACS for a very long time. Since we had ACS meetings at the masonic centre.

Ann Moffatt Oct 20 #151   Edited Oct 31

Wow David that's so long ago. I'm now retired and living in qld.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #163

What Phil Argy says: We are required by law to move to a more rigorous structure. We are mult-State, and have too much money. Either we change to one that is compliant with the law or we lose the right to choose. CLBG is the easiest, simplest, cheapest and least restrictive choice for us.

UI Oct 22 #169   Edited Oct 22

I believe we previously engaged lawyers for advice on this, Clayton Utz, and were advised to transition to CLG. We've outgrown the Inc. by a quantum leap. Thankfully ACS isn't Incorporated in NSW as there's a $2million limit if i'm not mistaken. the Inc. laws aren't designed for multi-state and multi million dollar organisations.

Roger as Member Oct 22 #172

Clayton Utz gave ACS a great deal of advice. As a result of some of it, the Society made multiple, serious errors which resulted in a lost court-case and a huge waste of money and time.

There are various ways in which an organisation can be incorporated. It would help a great deal if there were a national Associations Incorporation Act, which would provide greater flexibility to reflect the many different kinds of not-for-profit organisations. But there isn't.

There's been a tendency to default to the Corporation Limited by Guarantee (CLG) form. One reason is that it suits lawyers, and another that it suits people who want to centralise power. But it's a highly inflexible form, adapted only very slightly from the main, for-profit variant, the Corporation Limited by Shares.

In short, depending on what members want ACS to be, and whether members want to have any say at all in what it becomes and what it does in the future, a CLG might be just right; or it might be absolutely terrible, and the death knell for the professional society.

P Argy Oct 22 #174

The assumption that a CLG constrains what we can do compared to what we can do under the Associations Incorporation Act is misconceived. The concept of the legal responsibility for managing the organisation being vested in a core group of people is the same under both regimes, so the proposal to move to a CLG per se is not really an issue. The critical issue under both regimes is what is in the organisation's Constitution. So what we should be debating is what should go into the new Constitution. For that purpose you could take the view that there should be the bare minimum difference between the current and the new Constitution, ior you could say let's take the opportunity to re-engineer the whole ACS for the 21st Century.

So what I'd like to see is a debate on what we want the ACS to be and how it should be governed, and then what should go into the new Constitution to implement those agreed elements.

Jack Burton Oct 22 #175

On Thu, 2021-10-21 at 21:35 -0700, P Argy wrote:

> The assumption that a CLG constrains what we can do compared to what we can do under the Associations Incorporation Act is misconceived. The concept of the legal responsibility for managing the organisation being vested in a core group of people is the same under both regimes, so the proposal to move to a CLG per se is not really an issue. The critical issue under both regimes is what is in the organisation's Constitution.

Indeed, in principle I quite agree, other than your second sentence -- but perhaps you can prove me wrong on that...

Could you explain to me then how it would be possible enshrine in the Constitution of a company limited by guarantee the kinds of *mandatory* delegations of authority (mostly from MC to the BECs) that are enshrined in the ACS Rules and National Regulations?

[for the purposes of the question at hand we can ignore the fact that several successive management committees have, quite improperly, assumed that they are above the law and simply purported to countermand those mandatory delegations ... that is indeed a problem of its own, but its solution will no doubt stem from discussions around the need for measures to hold future MCs directly accountability to the professional membership rather than from discussions around form of incorporation]

Some of us believe that those mandatory delegations were written into our governing documents with good reason (for which there is a need in 2021 just as great -- if not more so -- than there was when they were first drafted) and therefore should ideally be strengthened, or at worst retained as-is, but certainly not abandoned nor weakened in any way.

1 person liked this

rcousins@... Oct 22 #176

Spot on Phil

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #182 Edited Oct 31

Well; said Phillip

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 22 #183

Very well said Philip.

It is CRITICAL that the Constitution of a CLG is very well thought out. Without a very clear and designed Constitution, CLGs can seriously reduce the power of members. The default rules for CLGs without a Constitution put most of the decision -making power in the hands of the Board members and do not require transparency of decision e.g. members do not have the right to access Board minutes, only one general meeting is required every year - the AGM, the minimum required annual financial report is basically a summary with no details etc

1 person liked this

P Argy Oct 23 #184 Edited Oct 23

I'm not sure what you mean by not agreeing with my second sentence, Jack. If you're wanting to know what provision of the ACT Associations Incorporation Act provides for legal responsibility to be vested in the Management Committee, it's section 60(2):

"The committee of an incorporated association has the management of the association".

The equivalent provision in the Corporations Act, in case that's what you didn't agree with, is s. 198A(1):

"The business of a company is to be managed by or under the direction of the directors".

The Constitution can have in it anything we like that is not prohibited by the Corporations Act. In fact even s. 198A may be replaced by a different provision as it's a replaceable rule!

I really urge people to discuss what they want the ACS to look like and stop debating WHETHER to convert to a CLG. It can't be an issue if the Constitution reflects what members want the ACS to look like!

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 23 #185

Agreed.

Our focus should be on the new Constitution regardless of whether we go with a CLG or incorporated Assn

Mark Toomey Oct 27 #230

Like many pieces of legislation, the legal framework defining the way NFP organisations were governed became quite a mess. Each state was different, while many organisations were shifting to a national and branch focus. There were many legal problems, and a lack of consistent legislated controls. From this mess, the ACNC was born, and the notion that a NFP should become a CLG became solidified.

Thousands of local, state and national organisations now operate as companies limited by guarantee. It's called progress. And, it's better.

Instead of resisting the change and looking for disadvantage, we should be embracing the change, and looking for the benefits. There are many.

One clear benefit is that under the CLG model, we will eliminate the totally disfunctional, unrepresentative and gerrymandered model of governance under which the ACS has s5truggled to advance for as long as I have known it - more than 40 years. That alone will allow it to attract digital professionals who have until now considered the ACS irrelevant to their careers.

If in doubt, look at the major professional organisations in Australia. How many of them are not ACNC registered and governed as CLGs?

It is interesting to look at www.acnc.gov.au and search for entities that are "Incorporated":. At the large end, the list is dominated by state based religious, educational and community service organisations. In the first 100, there are no professional organisations.

I will be very pleased ot see the ACS move into the 21st century in many ways, including updating its legal structure to one that assures the members of better control.

Roger Clarke Oct 27   #231

G'day Mark

Thousands of local, state and national organisations now operate as companies limited by guarantee [CLGs]. It's called progress. And, it's better. ...

I will be very pleased to see the ACS move into the 21st century in many ways, including updating its legal structure to one that assures the members of better control.

It would be valuable if you could clarify how a CLG "assures the members of better control".

As far as we've been able to work out, the key features of a CLG are:

- a relatively brief constitutional document that places very few constraints on what the Board can do

- an all-powerful Board

- delegation by the Board of most of its powers to a then all-powerful CEO

- no direct say by members in anything the CEO and Board do

- no meaningful way to remove the Board or the CEO

- a vote in elections of Directors, but without much influence by members on who the Board arranges to be on the ballot-paper

If there are exemplars of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of better control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them.

Thanks! ... Roger (as a member of the CRWG, and as a member of ACS)

P Argy Oct 27   #236

The key feature of a CLG is that it has no shareholders and that the liability of directors under the Corporations Act is much greater than under the Associations Incorporation Act. Apart from that, we can have whatever we like in the Constitution, including replication of the existing ACS Rules and Regs if we wanted a minimalist change. So it's simply wrong to suggest that the attributes you've listed come with a CLG form - they don't! That's why I've made numerous attempts in this thread to re-direct the conversation to what we want in the new Constitution. The issue of WHETHER to be a CLG should be a no-brainer - it has zero adverse consequences so this thread is essentially a red herring!

1 person liked this

jp@... Oct 27   #237

Dear Philip,

Any company may be registered with replaceable rules (as updated in the Corporations Act 2001 from time to time) or a constitution. A fundamental problem I have with the CLBG is the lack of shareholders. For an institution that has amassed a $50 million warchest (probably more), an alternative to this route would be to return that capital to its members. Granted it is unlikely to occur, but nobody on this forum has even considered that possibility, and, if they did, it would render the proposed move to a CLBG moot.

The red herring characterisation is not fair. A constitution would remain a consideration for a new company or if it was to remain an incorporated entity. Mark (who I respect, as I have done his 'Dancing with the Elephant' course) also misses the mark here. An incorporated entity may also have "whatever we like in our constitution." Thus, you and the committee have not yet made a case for CLBG or any other type of form. To suggest otherwise is obfuscating the issue.

One disadvantage I can think of is that a CLBG would be scrutinised by ASIC. Do we want that? What are the implications? Nobody is discussing this.

I'm sorry, but it is not a no-brainer, unless we were to skip over these important concerns. If you wash them away as "red herring" material, you're further disenfranchising the members who have a genuine concern. The status of incorporation or company has absolutely no impact on the constitution discussion. Red herring? Please stop.

Somebody, please give a cogent argument here.

P Argy Oct 27 #238

Please go back to my comments earlier in the thread, Justin. The starting point is that the Registrar under the ACT legislation has intimated that we are likely to become the subject of an order to transition to a CLG. So this exercise is simply pre-empting that so that it happens in an orderly way instead of by regulatory imperative. The incremental costs of complying with the Corporations Act vs the Associations Incorporation Act are largely irrelevant because the main compliance costs now are under the ACNC regime.

You don't need shareholders if you have a Constitution which reflects the extent to which you want your desired stakeholders to choose the directors and how frequently. So to take a bizarre example, if we were concerned about a Board being too unaccountable you could make sure their mode of appointment, continued tenure, etc were dependant on ongoing support from your cohort of stakeholders whether they be branches or professional members or any other cohort you care to describe. And you could make provision for the Board to be elected/re-elected weekly, monthly or annually by Congress or by a full plebiscite. If a CLG can accommodate all that what is the problem with it - its form factor dictates almost nothing of material concern once it's all boiled down.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #240   Edited Oct 31

If the ACS is not a professional body, it really has no real purpose, or need for members.

David Abulafia Oct 28 #241   Edited Oct 31

I agree with this, particularly from the experience I had with being on the board of our synagogue when the synagogue move from an incorporated association to a CLG, we only had minor changes to our constitution to allow for the transition. ACNC suggested to us to we should convert so we did. We were on of the first houses of worship associations to move over, so they gave us a lot of free help

jp@... Oct 28 #244

Thanks, Philip.

Yep, and what did you make of my response to your earlier comments in which I showed the Registrar's intimation could be without base?

The problem is that the CLBG appears to be a fait accompli without compelling reason, since the constitution and governance arrangements you describe apply to both forms.

This consultation forum is ostensibly about a new constitution that is required for a CLBG. But a new constitution could also be adopted by the existing entity.

Best, Justin

paul.campbell@... Oct 28 #246

G'day Phil

I have asked members of the Management Committee, Congress and the CEO if any are aware of a direction from the ACT Registrar for Incorporated Associations that the ACS should must/should transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee.

No one has sighted such a document.

What correspondence are you referring to?

Jack Burton Oct 28   #247

On Wed, 2021-10-27 at 18:42 -0700, paul.campbell@cogentia.com.au wrote:

> I have asked members of the Management Committee, Congress and the CEO if any are aware of a direction from the ACT Registrar for Incorporated Associations that the ACS should must/should transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee.

> No one has sighted such a document.

> What correspondence are you referring to?

Good question Paul.

I think it also needs to be asked, assuming such a document does exist, why is this discussion (two years down the track) the first time we are hearing about it?

If such a direction was foreshadowed by the registrar, why was that not front & centre in the "yes" case presented for the 2019 motion? After all, the incredibly weak, mostly spurious non-arguments presented in 2019 for the restructure surely could not have warranted more space than such a missive from the Registrar...

And, perhaps most importantly, when do we the members get to see that letter from the Registrar, so we can decide for ourselves how much weight to attribute to it?

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #251

Roger, and all.

Allow me to address your points one at a time, and then add some additional information:

> It would be valuable if you could clarify how a CLG "assures the members of better control".

> As far as we've been able to work out, the key features of a CLG are:

> - a relatively brief constitutional document that places very few constraints on what the Board can do

The constitutional document can be as brief or as extensive and detailed as you like. However, law firms generally recommend keeping them brief, because changing them involves regulatory process. Many constitutions specify creation of a set of replaceable rules, which can be amended according to controls in the constitution, such as by majority vote of all members.

Getting the constitution right is important, but explaining it is even more important. Our industry has a lot of armchair lawyers who shoot their advice from the hip. When I created the Digital Leadership Institute, I engaged with the experts to get its constitution right.

> - an all-powerful Board

This is a misconception. The powers of the board are as broad or narrow as the constitution allows, and as such, again I say that getting the constitution right is critically important.

The power of the board is limited by the will of the members, and of course, the law. If the members do not like the board's behaviour, they can call special general meetings to address problems. The percentage of members required to call a special general meeting is defined in law, but, I think, can be overridden in the constitution to a lower, but not higher percentage.

> - delegation by the Board of most of its powers to a then all-powerful CEO

My first comment here is to ask how this is different to what we have had.

But, more seriously, it is the role of boards to determine what powers they delegate to the CEO and what powers they retain. The extent of delegation often relaxes after a CEO has been in the seat for some time and has gained trust – but this is by no means a requirement.

Further, boards often establish specialised committees, and delegate some of their powers to the committees. There are many ways to structure delegations, and nobody should feel that power is being ceded in any absolute way.

As will be seen in some of my further notes, the CLG model actually provides greater protection against rogue boards and CEOs. Might a reasonable person suggest that the IA model did not adequately protect the ACS from the apparent folly of its own MC (which is by any other name, a board) and then CEO?

> - no direct say by members in anything the CEO and Board do

Entirely incorrect. The constitution can be written to require member engagement, and there are many ways in which this can be set up.

> - no meaningful way to remove the Board or the CEO

This is incorrect. There is a requirement at law that the members can call a special general meeting, which can remove the board or some members of the board, and which can give the board clear instructions, such as to remove the CEO.

> - a vote in elections of Directors, but without much influence by members on who the Board arranges to be on the ballot-paper

Boards do not normally arrange nominations for election via ballot. Constitutions must contain details of how the board is elected, and commonly this is by appointment of a returning officer who calls for nominations and conducts an election – completely independently of the board. Some constitutions also allow the board to appoint additional directors, where special skills are needed, such as may occur during a merger. The law requires, and constitutions generally reaffirm that such appointments are for the no longer than until the next board election.

> If there are exemplars of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of better control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them.

I am sure that there are many, and I could write the challenge in the inverse: If there are examples of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of reduced control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them.

But I feel that a better approach is to draw from the wealth of guidance available online. These are just a few items that come up from a search for variants of "incorporated associations vs limited by guarantee".

Incorporated association or company limited by guarantee? (ACT) (nfplaw.org.au)

Incorporated association or company limited by guarantee? (Vic) (nfplaw.org.au)

Some points made in these papers:

An IA that is registered as a RAB must comply with certain sections of the Corporations Act as well as the Associations Incorporation Reform Act.

Conducting business overseas: If your group wants to pursue its purposes by carrying on its business overseas, you will need to get legal advice about the requirements under the laws of the country in which you want to operate. Using Australia as an example, any overseas (foreign) company that wants to 'carry on business' (conduct activities) in any part of Australia must register with ASIC under the Corporations Act. Many other countries will have similar requirements, even if your group is operating as a not-for-profit. Generally, a CLG structure will be a more readily understood and recognised legal structure in other countries, compared with other structures such as an IA.

This might be relevant if the ACS looks to engage digital specialists in, for example, Fiji, or the Solomon Islands, or Papua New Guinea, or establish chapters for Australians working overseas.

56-Associations-vs-Company-Limited-by-Guarantee.pdf (murfett.com.au)

Making the switch – Part 1: pros and cons of a Company Limited by Guarantee | Mullins Lawyers Advisors Partners

Content found in this paper:

Some of the benefits of a CLG compared to an Association are outlined below.

1.   The board of directors of a CLG can appoint additional directors, which can help to fill skills gaps on the board. By contrast, all committee members in an Association must be elected at a general meeting of the members.

2.   Changes to the CLG constitution take effect immediately upon a special resolution being passed to effect the change, as opposed to changes to an Association's constitution which must first be approved by and registered with the Office of Fair Trading.

3.   Once a CLG is registered, it can operate anywhere in Australia. Associations on the other hand, cannot operate outside of Queensland unless they either set up another Association in the other States where they intend to operate, or register as an "Australian Registered Body" under the Corporations Act, in which case the Association must comply with obligations under both the IA Act and the Corporations Act.

4.   Members of a CLG have greater rights that are protected by law, including the right to appoint a proxy to vote at meetings, which is not mandatory under the AI Act. Five percent of members of a CLG can also call a general meeting; this is not mandatory under the AI Act but there is often a similar right for members to call general meetings set out in an Association's constitution.

5.   As noted below, CLGs are traditionally subject to more onerous laws in relation to management and governance. On the one hand this may be seen as a disadvantage, but on the other hand, these more onerous requirements should not only result in improved governance and accountability within CLGs, but also a perception amongst third parties (e.g. banks, landlords, authorities and other stakeholders) that CLGs are more credible organisations.

6.   Under new changes to the AI Act, management committee members will be required to disclose any remuneration paid to them, their family, or senior staff. By comparison, while the directors of CLGs must disclose conflicts of interest, they are not specifically required to disclose their salary or the salaries of other staff.

POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS – WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE MAKING THE SWITCH

Traditionally, one of the big points of difference between a CLG and an Association has been that the directors of a CLG have owed more onerous duties towards their organisation and its members compared to committee members of an Association. In particular, although directors of a CLG and committee members of an Association both owe duties to act in good faith in the interests of their organisation, to act for a proper purpose and to give proper consideration to their decisions, the statutory duty for directors to avoid insolvent trading has always been unique to CLGs.

This is set to change from 30 June 2021, when the AI Act will be amended so that an Association's committee members can be fined up to $8,007 if the Association engages in insolvent trading while the committee members have reasonable grounds to expect that the association is insolvent, or would become insolvent by incurring a debt.

Other potential disadvantages of a CLG compared to an Association are:

- as above, more onerous requirements in terms of administration and regulatory compliance;

- unlike Associations, CLGs do not have the same ability to amalgamate with other companies or Associations – though the amalgamation provisions in the AI Act are not used very often anyway; greater audit and reporting requirements – but not so much greater as to be prohibitive; and

- higher annual fees ($1,267 for a CLG versus $57.60 for an Association).

Is A Non Profit Company Limited By Guarantee The Right Legal Structure? (mgisq.com.au)

Content found in this paper:

Which Option is Correct for Your Organisation

Generally speaking, if your NFP is only operating in one State and is not deemed to be a large (*) not-for-profit, then an IA model may be an appropriate structure for your organisation.

N.B.(*) 'Large' in this sense is generally accepted to follow the tiered classifications under the ACNC Act 2012– e.g revenue greater than $1M.

However, if your NFP is operating in multiple States across Australia, and/or your organisation is of a larger size, the CLG model may be a more appropriate structure for your organisation.

Other benefits of considering a move to a CLG include:

1.   Removal of dual reporting – a CLG legislated under the ACNC would only need to report to the ACNC once per annum, not to 2 separate regulators (as under an IA model);

2.   Ability to attract independent directors to your Board may be easier in a CLG rather than attracting Committee Members to an IA. The advantages include a greater certainty of legal obligations and the ability for a company to indemnify its officers;

3.   CLGs are arguably a more readily understood and accepted commercial legal structure than IAs. Consequently, it may be easier for a CLG to raise finance from creditors or receive funding from government or philanthropic trusts than IAs.

paul.campbell@... Oct 28   #262   Edited Oct 31

The statements that the constitution of a company limited by guarantee may contain any clause the organisation wishes is, in part, misleading.

Adding clauses to a constitution does not make them lawful or imply they are compliant with legislation.

A constitution is a contract between the company and each member, the company and each director, the company and the company secretary, and a member and each other member. (see 140 (1) of the Corporations Act 2001).

Essentially a constitution is an agreement between parties creating mutual obligations mediated by the courts.

In the case of any proposed constitution for the ACS as a company limited by guarantee, this means that members would have to prosecute their grievance in either the Local or District court of NSW.

Taking court action is an expensive process that must be funded privately by the plaintiffs, whereas the ACS Board can call on ACS funds to defend itself.

The high cost of bringing this court action would be a deterrent for any ACS member or group of members to uphold any perceived grievance or accusation of misconduct.

Although a company limited by guarantee is administered under the Corporations ACT 2001, ASIC cannot be relied on to take action on behalf of members over any perceived breach of the ACS company constitution.

ASIC explicitly states in its Information Sheets 153 and 186 that it does not generally get involved in disputes about the running of companies. In other words, unless there is a broader public interest, ASIC will not take an interest in disputes between company members and their board.

See https://asic.gov.au/about-asic/contact-us/how-to-complain/how-asic-deals-with-reports-of-misconduct/

and https://asic.gov.au/about-asic/contact-us/how-to-complain/disputes-about-access-to-company-information/

Referring back to the premise that a new constitution can contain anything the ACS wishes and by extension can emulate our current constitution, The Corporation Act 2001 has more stringent requirements that the ACT Incorporated Association 1991 legislation.

Specifically it explicitly restricts board oversight.

The Corporations Act creates a breach, as determined by a court, if a person or group acts as a 'shadow director' in that they perform the functions of a director and/or actively influence or instruct the board of directors.

Under a company limited by guarantee, constituting a body, similar to the current ACS Congress to provide independent oversight on ACS board governance and direction is problematic; a board may delegate authority but cannot abrogate it.

So a company's constitution may include provision for board advisory bodies but the board has no legal obligation to accept their advice or direction and the persons giving that direction may in fact be determined by a court to be a 'shadow director'.

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #266

All of what Paul says may be true, but it misses one profoundly important point: The constitution must be approved by members to be adopted. This means that the members must inspect it before

it is adopted, and begs the expectation that members must bot contribute to the constitution, and ensure that the constitution is drafted by people with appropriate expertise.

So how about we shift the tone of this discussion, as Phil Argy and others have asked, from finding ways to undermine the idea of a new constitution, and instead find ways to ensure that a new constitution is bulletproof.

Remember, the current constitution and rules of the ACS got us into the previous catastrophe, where the ACS was being lambasted across the nation for its governance failure and incompetence. Right now, the ACS is not qualified to lecture on the topic - it needs to learn.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #268

I agree Phil.

The Constitution is the key thing we should focus on, not CLG or IA.

CLGs do not have shareholders but do have members and the members can have as much power as members of an IA PROVIDED the Constitution specifies clear rights for members. The default rules for CLGs, or public companies in general are VERY much in favour of the Board.

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 28 #271

Well said, Philip.

It is true that a CLG cannot distribute dividends to members BUT if the CLG, with the agreement of members, wishes to donate its excess assets to another, CLG, non-CLG company or IA I understand that they can do that. The Constitution of that Company or IA could have a provision that all members of ACS automatically become members (or shareholders) of the other company (I believe)

David Abulafia Oct 28 #272   Edited Oct 31

Why would the ACS what to giving dividends to its members?

That what a PTY company is for.

paul.campbell@... Oct 29 #277   Edited Oct 31

I fully support the need to reform the ACS constitution as stated in my original post.

In that post I advocated a two step approach - first reform the constitution and confirm that it is fit for purpose and then consider the transition to a CLG. My position has not changed.

My argument against moving to a CLG immediately remains, I do not believe the ACS's governance is mature enough to rely solely on a board of directors to look after the interests of all members across all branches.

I offer two pieces of evidence in support of my position.

First, Management Committee approved the process that led to the successful legal challenge by Clarke.

Second, since that court case, Congress, rather than the Management Committee, has instigated all reform processes, including the Constitutional Reform Working Group that established this forum.

Mark raises the issue of 'members' approving the new constitution.

ACS members will indeed vote to accept a new constitution before transition to a CLG.

On transition to a CLG the question arises who will be the members of the CLG as required under the Corporations Act 2001?

There are four obvious options.

First, all existing ACS members become members of the CLG.

Second, members of the Professional Division become members of the CLG.

Third, all ACS members vote for their preferred candidates to become members of the CLG

Fourth, the ACS sets up an electoral college to allow ACS members to select their representatives to be members of the CLG.

Section 84 of the ACT Incorporated Association Act 1991 allows for all exisiting members of an existing Incorporated Association to be listed as subscribers (members at registration) for the CLG that the IA is transitioning to.

However this provision does not negate the requirement under 5H Registration of body as company on basis of State or Territory law of the Corporations ACT 2001 that states in part

 '(j) for a company limited by guarantee—the proposed amount of the guarantee that each member agrees to in writing.'

https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2021C00274

Written confirmation is required by the legislation because each member of the CLG takes on the personal liability of a financial guarantee in the event of the company becoming insolvent. Note that the limit of this guarantee is small, typically between $10- $100.

Nevertheless, as a requirement under the Corporations ACT, I interpret this provision to mean that the ACS must seek written confirmation from all members the ACS proposes as members of a new CLG.

When I first raised this issue during the original process to move to a CLG, I was told by MC members that the ACS lawyers would have a way to circumvent this. However, I have subsequently enquired on many occasions on how this would be handled and no-one on MC or ACS management has said that they have been told how it will be accomplished.

The corollary of successfully obtaining written confirmation that an existing ACS member agrees to be a member of the CLG, is how to handle ACS members who choose not to agree or even respond.

Legally these ACS members cannot become members of the CLG so the ACS then has to either manage these members as a separate ACS entity or cancel their membership.

Until legal advice is obtained that demonstrates a way forward, I do not see how options 1 or 2 are realistic.

The third option is workable but given the very small number of ACS members who vote at AGMs, lends itself to manipulation by parochial or vested interests.

So I think the fourth option gives the best outcome.

I support a senate model where local members vote for their branch committees who then nominate their representatives to become members of the CLG.

To support this model, any new constitution would recognise and strongly protect the rights and privileges of ACS members.

The constitution would also enshrine branch representation (BECs) that were voted by ACS members along the lines of existing processes.

This process gives ultimate authority to ACS members, yields a very much smaller and manageable register of CLG members and ensures that these CLG members are drawn from committed and engaged ACS members and equally representative of all state ACS branches.

I raise this membership issue now to support my contention that we should concentrate on getting the new constitution fit for purpose including how it would deal with membership on transition to a CLG and once we are comfortable that we have achieved this, ask for a new mandate from ACS members based on a thorough explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed transition to a CLG.

Jack Burton Oct 29   #279

On Thu, 2021-10-28 at 01:16 -0700, Mark Toomey wrote:

> Remember, the current constitution and rules of the ACS got us into the previous catastrophe, where the ACS was being lambasted across the nation for its governance failure and incompetence. Right now, the ACS is not qualified to lecture on the topic - it needs to learn.

What makes you think that the ACS' current Rules & National Regulations were responsible for that?

On my reading of the Federal Court decision it seemed pretty clear that the causes of that catastrophe were the improper actions of certain individuals (which were *contrary* to the Rules & NRs), not our governing documents themselves. If I'm mistaken, please point me to what I missed in that judgement.

I'm the first to agree that our Rules & NRs *do* need substantial change (in ways almost completely opposite to those embodied in the ill-fated 2019 proposal), but I fail to see the logic of the throw-the-baby-out-with-the-bathwater approach. The only thing even vaguely approaching a compelling case for change in form of incorporation (cf. a series of Rule & NR changes) is Philip's remark about the Registrar's request -- but I don't think it could possibly be reasonable to expect members to attach much if any weight to that unless & until we can actually see for ourselves what was written in that letter.

If we take your example of the 2019 disaster, would having a CLbG structure in place already really have made things any better and if so how? Or would it have exacerbated the situation? Or would it have made no difference whatsoever?

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 29 #281

On Fri, Oct 29, 2021 at 11:17 AM, <paul.campbell@...> wrote:

>I raise this membership issue now to support my contention that we should concentrate on getting the new constitution fit for purpose including how it would deal with membership on transition to a CLG and once we are comfortable that we have achieved this, ask for a new mandate from ACS members based on a thorough explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed transition to a CLG.

Having seen the various views expressed here I too support this view of Paul Campbell. My view-point here is Management of Risk. By proceeding in this manner. One would be able to partition the risks into 2 phases; of

-   New Constitution creation and adoption; followed by amendments (we should be open to having a few of amendments, post adoption)

-   Move to a CLG structure

It is my understanding, gained within this thread, that the activity 1 can be accomplished within an IA structure. The significant advantage with this approach is that when Activity 2 is commenced ACS will have a constitution with far fewer barnacles to use a current terminology. Aspects that are specific to Activity-2 can then be differed to that stage.

If the above plan is shown to the ACT-Regulator I'm certain s/he will agree to give more time, seeing that ACS has a road-map and is making progress.

The above can be considered to be in the traditions of Agile-Program-Management as well, which at the highest levels is about decomposing a Monolith, where viable, and better Managing the Risk in the decomposed projects.

David Abulafia Oct 29 #287   Edited Oct 31

I like and agree with Devindra.

Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values (2)

Roger Clarke Oct 6 #42

There are a couple of elements to this:

(1)   Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?

(2)   If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?

(3)   How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?

(4)   How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?

(5)   What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?

The alternative is of course to trust a chain of unknown future Directors with prettymuch absolute power to make the decisions about the criteria they apply when they consider new business-lines.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #368

> (1) Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?

> (2) If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?

I think the constitution should allow for an AGM to agree on an initial set of operating criteria and to update as required.

> (3) How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?

I think this is why Board Minutes should be 'public' to members.

> (4) How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?

I think it would be appropriate for a business case (appropriately presented) to be shared with members or at a minimum branches for review.

> (5) What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?

Members should be able to call a general meeting and pass a 'disallowance motion that binds the board.

————————————————

9.   Michael Scott   – michael.scott@ths.tas.gov.au   Fri 29/10/2021 5:30 AM

As a professional investor (ie my other job, so to speak), I do not agree that the ACS should be investing in startup incubators, etc.   **[Q08]**

————————————————

3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

Q8 The Society should not provide substantial, **direct support for innovation**. It **has no place in a professional society**

Centrality of Professional membership - Consultation - Yes; Detailed involvement - No   **[P08]**

Embodiment of Values - Yes

Behaviour consistent with Values - Yes

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q8 While the need to attract revenue is obvious, commercial undertakings such as ACS Labs does not seem congruent with ACS member objectives. If the aim is to support fledgling ICT endeavor then **other ways of sponsorship could be found**. Running a business like this does little to create sustainable revenue and carries unwelcome risk. If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio.

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q8 Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9) If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

I support the ACS making investments of surplus so long as the choices of investment support the industry at large. Innovation investment is an excellent choice so long as it's structured in such a way as to garner a return on successful startups and that losses can be leveraged as lessons for the future.

It's unclear by what mechanism the ACS currently determines the level of investment in innovation. An innovation committee that works on an approved set of processes and criteria for investment decisions would make sense, but is that what actually happens?

In any event, I'd be <u>more inclined to consider it a side-interest than a key function</u> of the Society, however it may be more plausible for the Society to agree to administer a government-funded program of innovation investment to the benefit of the industry and its membership in general.

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1.   Ashley Goldsworthy   **1 October 2021**

Q8   Commercial <u>activities</u> are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they **must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS**, ...   **[BL]**

... but this reason alone is not enough. It is too broad and opens the door to almost anything, as we have seen. I am not in favour of double negatives and therefore 'not inconsistent' needs to be replaced by the **positive requirement 'to be consistent' with the Objects of the Society**.   **[Q03]**

<u>The suggestion that 'supporting business lines could have the advantage of providing for a Board with business expertise is not only irrelevant but is a worrying window into the thinking of the CRWG.</u> ...   **[Dir]**

...   There is and has been many members of the ACS with substantial business experience. People like Brian Finn, former Chairman of IBM Australia; Alan Coulter a former president of ACS and a senior executive in Telstra and the CEO of a broking firm, spring to mind. I myself was the CEO of Australia's largest construction firm, a bank, an insurance company, and the owner and operator of several vocational training companies. Suggesting we have to go outside the Society is unnecessary, and a bit of a red herring.

As a Fellow of CPA Australia, I am well aware that their constitution provides that the Board consists of a maximum of 10 independent non-executive Directors but must have at least two external Directors (who are neither members nor employees). Arguments from example are not necessarily relevant or persuasive, and I still disagree with the need for non-member directors. I recognise differing views on this aspect.

All members of the board of Engineers Australia are professional engineers. Similarly, the Boards of Australian Medical Association are all medicos.

It would be nonsense to suggest the ACS should not support innovation. The issue is how should this be done. To answer the question posed, **I don't think support of ACS River City Labs is a key function of the ACS. The sort of support we offer and how much are the key questions**.   **[BL]**

... For example, I think the following offer on their website is completely inappropriate- *River City Labs Residents will have <u>free ACS membership</u> which entitles members to significant savings in insurance for business, as well as other additional benefits as follows.* It <u>makes a complete mockery of any claim to professionalism on the part of the ACS</u>.   **[Q04]**

I don't think there should be a blanket ban on the Society getting associated with, as opposed to <u>participating in or operating, commercial activities so long as they are clearly separated from the Society and do not become the *raison détre* for the Society's existence, nor expose the Society to reputational damage or monetary loss</u>.   **[BL]**

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   **2 October 2021**

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9) If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

ACS labs division should be run as a profit-making business. Some capital investment may be required to achieve this. but as the question does not distinguish between operating surplus and capital surplus it is unclear whether ACS understands the difference.

3. Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   **5 October 2021**

Q8:   Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9)

Yes.

The ACS vision statement was written 50 years ago by our forebears and still holds true today.

 "For Australia to be a world leader in technology talent that fosters innovation and creates new forms of value."

[Earliest occurrence appears to be in the Media Release for the purchase of RCL, 7 Sep 2018: https://www.acs.org.au/insightsandpublications/media-releases/ACSRCL.html]

ACS has never, in its entire 50-year history ever conducted any activity whereby it could credibly claim to be achieving the "fosters innovation" segment of the vision statement. ACS Labs allows ACS, for the first time ever, to claim that it is actually fulfilling its vision.

As well, support for founders is crucial. Most technology founders live below the poverty line and work long hours to bring their dream to life. ACS has a role in supporting the next Canva or Atlassian and I don't know why ACS wouldn't want to support these dreamers.

Maintaining and expanding ACS Labs is crucial to ACS achieving its vision.

a.   If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

A reasonable amount of support is required. As well as being a benefactor and supporting the ICT industry, Australian economy and struggling founders, ACS could potentially make a lot of money from investing a stake in start-ups in return for its support.

On a similar but different matter, I would like to see stronger support for charitable efforts being conducted by ACS. It is presently unclear to me exactly what meaningful support ACS provides for charities (i.e. one indigenous scholarship does not a charity make). As well, there is branding confusion in the market between ACS and ACS Foundation. I would like to see ACS acquire ACS Foundation to eliminate any brand confusion around whether they are related, then donate 10% of net surplus annually towards it.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   **16th October 2021**

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

Feedback: No. I would argue that this is **a misdirection of funds** on the following grounds:

- We are not a research institute.
- We are not an education provider.
- We are not venture capitalists.
- We are not an incubation hub.
- We are not a shared office space provider.
- We are not government departments.
- We are not universities.

We are a society of professional members. Let the above groups do the bits that they are good at, and **if there is a crying need that is not met by the above groups, then I would recommend partnering with universities or government to make our impact significantly greater than we would be able to achieve alone**.

I would see these types of things like ACS Labs as being part of the ACS Enterprises where they would need to **stand on their own feet financially without regular or substantial seed funding from our professional society**.

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3. Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

- <u>ACS should continue funding market research even if it is at a loss</u>. There are some questions that must be answered and if no one else is funding it, ACS needs to.
- **It is important to fund innovation** as many members would benefit from it **but not if it is at a loss**.
- Compared to 20 years ago, support for start-ups in Australia is now an active and crowded field. **Why is ACS in this space when there is not a gap in the market, or if there is a gap it needs to be clearly identified**. This is an example of ACS losing its way over the last few years and to continue in this space, we need to demonstrate that ACS is adding value that others are not.
- **Until and unless ACS has a demonstrable appoint of difference, we should not be doing this**.

4. Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

- **It is not appropriate** - but **if it is deemed to be appropriate it needs to be organised in a way that clearly separates/isolates those activities from ACS member functions**.
- It poses a risk to the Society - <u>if it's not a core function why are we assuming the risk?</u>
- Innovation is good for the industry - it provides value but **shouldn't be a prime focus** of the ACS.

5. Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

- <u>In favour of the lab view – with the ACS leading by example and supporting innovation, but not the other professional entities</u>
- If their purpose is to generate income, how does this benefit members?

6. Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q6 & Q8: Industry Associations & Innovation Labs

Alan: ACS shouldn't be trying to pick winners

Ray: <u>The original motivations for the investments were ill-conceived.</u>
<u>It's possible that they could deliver member-value, but not as they've been set up.</u>

Michael: My investments and my professional body are different.
ACS should transition away from those two ventures

Alan: Agreed. **The business case, due diligence and/or risk assessment was flawed. Both were bad decisions.**

Ray: **The ACS has a role to play in supporting innovation, but this isn't it**.

Justin: <u>ACS should support and contribute but not OWN</u>

Alan: The money is going to people not businesses

Justin: There is perhaps an ethical issue around which members are being supported?

7. Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q8: Innovation Labs

Amy: One of the three current Strategy 2017-2022 deliverable categories is 'Catalyst – sparking innovation' through objectives of enhancing domestic clusters and leveraging global IP. If our current organisational purpose is stated "to promote the development of Australian ICT resources", shouldn't we be allocating some surplus into sparking innovation?

[Agreed; but a 'catalyst' is a small amount of chemical added to a large-volume reaction, i.e. we need to be seeking a substantial impact from a small amount of funding.]

Vicki: if the ACS is about skills development in the ICT, then skills development in our professionals' abilities to take digital innovation to market would also fit within the purpose of the organisation.

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National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q8:   Tom: The innovation centres are a bit "East Coast" at the moment. **Can we work with existing centres in other locations?** Places like Canberra Innovation Network (CBRIN)

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation

Damien: **The criterion is 'What's the value to members?'. If it generated funds to support mainstream Society activities, that would be an argument. But there are other avenues for start-ups, in tech parks and government-sponsored incubators.**

Alex: Also uncomfortable, and agree there has to be a justification, and none is apparent.

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q8:   innovation

Sam: Appreciate the intent in relation to start-ups, but **it's not related to professional functions. It's corporate enterprise**, supported by governmental stimulation. Such activities need to be separated, and should not absorb funds from members or other business-lines.

Anthony: Original intention was accelerator not incubator [i.e. maturing start-ups] , holding talent onshore instead of losing it to Silicon Valley, to invest an amount initially, then harness support from government, business and investors, and run in a cost-neutral manner. Sydney filled fast, Melbourne was COVID-hit. Need to separate the issue of expensive floor-space.

Marilyn: She and others prepare students through internships; so why not apply the same idea to entrepreneurship. Don't abandon the idea lightly. [Would grants / commissions to Universities specialising in the area be a better way for ACS to spend less than it does now?]

Stephen: Alignment to the Society's purpose is the test, and it's not clear that this aligns.

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation

Jeff M:
ACS can advocate for innovation without being an owner of a set of innovation labs

Q10: Surplus allocation

Jan: The benefits to members have been disappointing , because **the large surplus seems not to deliver a lot to members**, and is instead used elsewhere. **[Q7]   [Q6]   [Q8]**

Richard H: He, and many others, **question the limited benefits offer to members, and lots of money spent elsewhere (Labs, industry associations, high-cost premises)**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation

Rod: **No convincing evidence has been provided of benefits in having labs within ACS. It's a landlord business, and using high-cost premises.** Leave it to industry, govt.

Elizabeth: Flexible office-space is an active market segment. Why is ACS in it?

Elizabeth: **Even if a contribution to innovation is within ACS's key functions, direct grants are far more appropriate than space-rental**. It comes with a rationale and transparency.

Rod: Supported Elizabeth's statement. Different approaches to supporting the start sector can be considered i.e. Angel Investor, sponsorships …..

Rod: Tenants become Associates under their contracts and can vote. Is this appropriate??

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation / Labs / Incubators   [Also Q14 Membership Involvement in Key Policies]

Graeme: **Members' reaction when this was announced was "What the hell's going on?". Suddenly there they were, a *fait accompli*.** He didn't ever see a detailed explanation why.   **[P08]**
Are there any (successful) overseas models, or any known instances of a professional society doing this. Not dogmatically opposed, but members want to know about it in advance, and why. If it were a channel for (adequate) government funding, that could make a difference?

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation / Labs / Incubators   [Also Q14 Membership Involvement in Key Policies]

David: ACS should support innovation, but there are queries about an ACS Labs Division.
ACS should be linked to multiple accelerators, which are operated by government, industry and university, commonly in consortia. **This avoids the competitive aspect, and spreads the ACS branding more widely.**
Rather than landlord / service-provider, focus on grants, e.g. to universities for training, project-work and pre-enterprise R&D, and even accelerator activities. This can be **complemented by mentoring to provide students with industry insights**, while getting some of students' mindshare while they're still studying.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation: Just one among many other relevant matters, not a primary one for ACS

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Re: Catalyst #Business-Lines   #Q08

helenmchugh@... Nov 2   #392

Tom it would appear that the members have little say...but the Branches 'privileged' ?!?! <u>to have a Lab in their space – they have no choice</u>

Queensland Chapters Event – Thu 11 Nov 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10

Q8: Matthew: <u>It would be nice if we knew what they did in there.</u>
<u>How about a monthly newsletter?</u>
Do they run start-up weekends – 2-1/2 day events?
Bevin: **Do they generate new members? Do they generate revenue for us?**
Is the space provided in return for equity?
Ann: The ACS Lab is out-of-reach even for Gold Coast Chapter.
Is it supporting innovation in education?
Holly: RCL runs Start-up programs, esp. 'River Pitch' annually, and casual use of the [Branch? ACS Labs?] facilities by ACS members is available.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

<u>I do not see a need for it to be added as a formal function for the ACS.</u> Without any real understanding of where ACS Labs currently sit within the ACS structure I can see it as a business matter (not constitutional) entered into with consideration of professionalism, ethics, and the public good.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

I see the Society's business lines as means to an end, not ends in themselves. Prioritisation of the allocation of surpluses from operational activities should reflect the Society's Nature, Mission, Purposes and Key Functions.

Revenue generating activities need to be not inconsistent with ACS' objectives and code of ethics; **ACS could have advantage in having a Board with business expertise, though not at the expense of supporting members and objectives and ethics.**

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Michael: <u>This is important space for ACS to have a presence and show leadership</u> in ACS Labs Startups/Entrepreneurship <u>but keep ACS membership informed with regular reports on their activities, outcomes and financial status and provide and promote access to these faculties for ACS members and showcase with general public and interested stakeholders</u> such as businesses, government, Universities and Schools

Tag Consolidation
#Q09 – 7 Topics – 25 Posts + 20 Other Messages   +0   +2
How to ensure business-lines are consistent with Society values?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 07:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p.10

Industry associations   (1)

DAF Oct 2   #20

I see a question about industry associations - but it is hard to answer without understanding why ACS got involved in the first place?? I am an outsider to this topic - Be nice to understand the rationale?

Care Needed with Commercial Activities   (1)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #54

This principle seems to relate to the commercial activities that ACS chooses to involve itself in. It is one of those clauses that could be used to protect activists of any persuasion from pursuing an agenda that does not align with that of the ACS to which members see themselves as belonging to.

1 person liked this

Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership   (4)

Adrian Porteous Oct 25   #199   Edited Oct 30

The Consultation document raises the fundamental question of whether the ACS continues to be a professional society (Q1). Nowhere in any of the subsequent discussion is that disputed. I think this is good!

Appendix A of the consultation document (Key Functions of a Professional Society) states well the required functions we should expect of the ACS, namely around technical, ethical and professional standards, criteria for membership, skills assessment and accreditation, professional development, member benefits, public outreach and public policy development.

The most recent Annual Report (2020) informs us we have 48,025 members. It also provides membership revenue of $3.323m for the year. The reported membership is significantly larger than my understanding of our current national professional membership. From various BEC, Council (pre Congress) and MC roles over the last 20 years, my understanding is that the current total number of Student, Associate and Professional Members is closer to 12,000 members. The ACS's Annual Report does not provide any breakdown of membership, however a figure of 12,000 members is roughly consistent with our reported membership income.

Given we accept the ACS is a professional society, I think any business activity we engage should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed.

Investments in Innovation Labs in three cities and acquisition of a set of data marketing and analytics associations do not immediately appear to me aligned with membership value. The annual report is a bit opaque on full detail of the investments, but lists cash outlay of $2.6m for data and analytics association investments and $799,527 in the preceding year for River City Labs. These are substantial investments for a professional society of our size; it is not clear to me how they provide member value, or even whether they make a positive financial contribution to the ACS.

Fifteen years ago we ran the ACS with higher membership revenue ($3.550m -we had a greater number of professional members), significantly lower revenue from migration assessment activities and a smaller contribution from education services. We provided members with regular forum and professional development activities. The ACS had a range of award winning publications over the years: Australian Computer Journal, Journal of Research and Practice in Information Technology, and later Information Age (I don't intend to spark debate on our current IA offering!). We provided specialist member skills to Australian and International Standards bodies and engaged in lobbying activities at state and federal levels. Local and national events were held to recognise leaders in the profession.

Revenue has increased nearly eightfold since 2005 (then $6.141m), professional membership has declined, but I don't see any increase in member benefits.

I would like to see as part of the review process on the constitution a commitment to resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with either the current ACS Objects, or as they are reformulated into a new Mission statement.

In drafting a new constitution, I suggest a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership', be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus with the key purpose of the Society.

3 people liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 26 #203   Edited Oct 30

Fully agree, Well put Adrian.

Ann Moffatt Oct 27 #216   Edited Oct 30

I agree Adrian,

v well put.

BUT I WOULD like to see comments about our current 'publications'.

I cringe every time I hear that information age is 'the flagship publication of the ACS'. IMHO it should be canned now.

rcousins@... Oct 27 #239

From a background of the structure of several not too dissimilar bodies, might I suggest that each state is analogous to a group of stakeholders and a structure can be made such that each state can appoint (and remove) a board member. This could be extended to have the board add a couple of highly respected long-term professionals as well as have that full board then select the chairman.

The role of a board is to set policy, hire/fire the CEO, etc so there are clear roles between management and policy with equally clear paths as to how people get (and lose) those positions.

The rules for appointment (with term limitations) and revocation by the state need to be clearly laid out in the constitution.

I question the CLG reasoning and have seen many structures of how the above can be achieved within a company.

But to me the first step is to determine what sort of animal the ACS is!

It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it can not be all things to all people.

As a starting point it would not hurt to review how the AICD is structured.

1 person liked this

Member Involvement in Key Policies (10)

z6957315@... Oct 5   #37

It's normal for a Constitution to only contain a relatively small, core proportion of what makes an organisation tick.

One common pattern is for a Company Board to have absolute power over all of the other documents that are important to members. Things like the membership levels and the requirements to achieve and sustain levels. And things like the Code of Ethics.

How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?

3 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #298

Some aspects of this will be protected as the objectives are within the constitution.

I think as a principle the constitution should require consultation and membership ratification of key areas such as

Governance

Membership

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #318

The key issue with a constitution is that it needs to cover all the key points, but must not end up being a Victorian novel that no-one looks at. If we accept Philip Argy's view expressed in Q08 (and I have a lot of respect for Philip), then the constitution is the way to make a CLG work for us. So it must cover governance (including electing and removing directors), membership, branches and chapters, the ACS objectives and major activities, membership grades etc. However, the actual drafting of the constitution is a matter for later stages of this project.

P Argy Oct 30   #320

My suggestion is to take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't. For those that we don't, what do we want to replace them with? That will at least give us a set of drafting instructions for the lawyers. When they come back with a draft Constitution we can then discuss how faithfully they have imp[lamented what we wanted, but separating the drafting from the higher level discussion is important.

For those who haven't actually read the ACS existing Constitutional documents, they are attached. If they're not the latest versions they're close enough for the exercise I'm suggesting!

ACS National Regulations as at Apr 2011.pdf

ACS-Rules-Nov-2010.pdf

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #321

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 07:58 PM, P Argy wrote:

> ... take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't ...

That's a poor substitute for requirements analysis, Philip.

Congress and CRWG expressly avoided such narrow scope.

First understand what members' conception of the Society is in current and foreseeable-future circumstances. Then imagine features that will provide the scope to deliver on that conception. Only then consider what we currently have, what needs to be retained, and how to transition gracefully from one to the other.

If anyone actually wants them at this early stage, the authoritative versions are at
https://www.acs.org.au/governance/rules-and-regulations.html

P Argy Oct 30   #322

I was not suggesting that's ALL we do, but it does ensure that the basics are covered and assists people to identify topics for further discussion.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #323

Great ideato create a base to start from

David Abulafia Oct 31   #324

I think Phillip's approach would be a good basis for a requirement analyst

Dr. Paul O'Brien <paulobrien56@...> Oct 31   #327

Philip

I agree 100%

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #330

I disagree strongly with this.

The current constitution and rules, while appropriate for the time, are no longer appropriate for today or the future.

Aside from that, we have a process that Nick and Roger have thoughtfully developed and we should trust them to lead us through this process.

Centrality also of 'for the Public Good'   (2)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #55

This principle is included to make sure that any new constitution enshrines that the point of ACS activities are always in the public good and member interests. The rest should follow from this central principle.

2 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #355

I agree, but given out Code of Ethics, has the primacy of the public interest, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest.

Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values (2)

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #42

There are a couple of elements to this:

(1)   Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?

(2)   If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?

(3)   How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?

(4)   How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?

(5)   What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?

The alternative is of course to trust a chain of unknown future Directors with prettymuch absolute power to make the decisions about the criteria they apply when they consider new business-lines.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #368

> (1) Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?

> (2) If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?

I think the constitution should allow for an AGM to agree on an initial set of operating criteria and to update as required.

> (3) How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?

I think this is why Board Minutes should be 'public' to members.

> (4) How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?

I think it would be appropriate for a business case (appropriately presented) to be shared with members or at a minimum branches for review.

> (5) What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?

Members should be able to call a general meeting and pass a 'disallowance motion that binds the board.

Transparency   (5)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #65   Edited Oct 30

Management is not respecting the importance or value of Member needs / wants unless the board/management shares their plans and seeks and embraces feedback from members.

Such transparency and consultation process would not be popular with a commercial business that may wish to negotiate price or time sensitive deals - but really - is price or time sensitive deals a relevant limitation on a professional society?

We do not have an environment like politics where the management can assume a "mandate" from a clearly articulated position before election.

UI Oct 11   #73

i believe greater transparency is required. ACS is supposed to be by members, for members. the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable. It currently looks like a public service where there's too much bureaucracy and members aren't able to access the services they actually require.

ACS should be run like a union. by members, for members. our members are the number 1 priority. all decisions made should be done so with the primacy of members in mind.

I acknowledge there are commercial decisions to be made, and business decisions must benefit members, financially or otherwise. Eg. profits used to fund member services, keep membership fees low, etc.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #299

I agree regarding the transparency, but I don't think that the Society is entirely for the membership. The membership is not representative of the broader industry make-up.

If society is to remain relevant and useful, we need to accept that it is not there for the benefit of members, but for the benefit of Australian Society.

That said, we should be more accountable. There should be more visibility of Board Meetings. Board Meetings should be observable by members (with in-camera exceptions as appropriate).

The board should run regular internal audit processes to ensure management is accountable.

So if we take this back to the principles:

- The board should have a bias towards transparency and openness.
- The board should regularly seek member input on topics for debate
- The board should articulate why specific discussions are in-camera.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #302

If the ACS is not there for the member, why should members paid memship fees, for nothing in return, or is the membership fee a donation to a society that looks after IT in Australia

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #369

Hi David,

Members will always have something in return, but as a member we all sign up to the Code of Ethics.

The first clause is "The Primacy of the Public Interest: You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests".

Whether we like it or not the ACS is a sectional interest, and as members, we under our code, and constitution are bound to put ourselves second.

Should the ACS make sure it has a good membership proposition? Yes.

Is the ACS for the benefit of members? No (well not in its current form or under our current constitution)

_____

9.   Michael Scott   – michael.scott@ths.tas.gov.au   Fri 29/10/2021 5:30 AM

The ACS should only have a scope/remit of providing services/benefits to its professional members. The ACS should not be in the business of investing – it has clearly demonstrated that it is not a very good investor!   **[Q07]   [Q09]**

_____

3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

Q9 The ACS should dispose of these business lines. They have no place in a Professional Society

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q9 – Benchmarking against the Mission and Purposes statement. The test is 'how does this benefit the member at large?'

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q9 How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

The process for determining how and when to pursue business-lines must include an exercise in which the aims of the Society are considered against the opportunity being considered. If there are doubts or special considerations, the Board should be able to make a sensible, conflict-of-interest free final determination.

_____

2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q9: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

By appointing appropriate boards of directors to run them, and by establishing a proper governance model for reporting/auditing

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

<u>**Q9**</u>: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

<u>A business-line that is ICT-related in any way should be considered consistent with ACS' values</u>. The way to ensure its consistency with values is simply to check whether the business-line is ICT-related in any way.   **[P01]**

There is a comment in the preamble stating:

"The Centrality of the Professional Membership

Members may want the Constitution to entrench direct involvement of the professional membership in the determination of the Society's <u>values, purposes, strategy and priorities</u>.

We seek your thoughts on whether this is an appropriate foundational statement."

Although views are sought on this statement, a question was not asked about it.

<u>It is ridiculous to suggest that members should get involved in the operations of running the business of ACS.</u> The <u>business strategy and priorities of ACS are completely operational</u>, and members should have no involvement in the development of these. These are business matters and are best left to paid staff employed by the ACS. As well, there are two sets of values – the values prescribed by ACS that ICT professionals who are members should apply when working in their ICT jobs, and the internal values that paid staff should abide by when performing their job in ACS. Either set of values does not have a place in the Constitution. **The paid staff should run ACS as a business** and continue to provide membership benefits to the satisfaction of members. **[Q01]**

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

<u>**Q9**</u>: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

Feedback: **I <u>support the draft meta-principle</u> as the centrality of the professional membership, as <u>this has been sorely lacking in the last 5 years</u>**. The draft wording of the foundational statement is also good.

I think the three draft principles provided in the examples toward the end of page 6 provide good practical direction to strategic decisions to ensure the centrality is maintained. I should however note that I am not a lawyer.

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4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

*   It is not necessary or useful for members to have a say on every strategic target, however, <u>there should be something in the Constitution that its business is in line with the Society's values</u>. We have to give the organisation's Directors sufficient latitude, but they should not to things that are inconsistent with the values members signed up for.   **[P08]**

*   **We can't go to the members for everything but <u>there should be something in the strategy which should be taken to members around how such decisions are made</u>**

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

*   The Constitution of **acquired** industry **groups (like IAPA) should align with ACS's**   **[P04]**

*   The ACS is broad umbrella and should represent the entire australian ICT community. Not everything fits in a single bundle, so the ACS had to represent the different IT flavours – Cyber, Data Science, AI etc

7.   Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Peter: <u>Allocation has to be based on the Objects. It's impractical to go to the members for each decision, but the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that guidance should</u>

be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes.   [P08]
[P11]

For this to work, however, electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club.
[P11]   [Dir]

**Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but
need not be Key Functions.   [Q09]**

[Break-even is adequate for Functions that are relevant but not Key Functions.]

_____

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business-Lines

Damien: **There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that
ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing. This resulted in
a lot of departures of disillusioned now ex-members, and pushback from remaining
members, who perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in
values**. **[P00]   [P01]**

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q6-11:   Key functions, business-lines, surplus allocation

Susan: The financial responsibility aspect is critical. **The financial principles must be
clearly defined in the constitution, re revenue-sources, and what is and isn't done with
the surplus**. **[Q10]**

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business Lines

Jeff M: **There needs to be a transparent and distinct operational and structural
separation between the professional and commercial activities of the society** **[P08]**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business Lines

Rod: Skills assessment is appropriate, because it's aligned with values and purpose. It
would be a channel for recruitment, but retention-rates have been very poor, and action is
needed to understand and address that.

Karl: **Proposition of skills assessment for residents as well as visa-applicants**

Rod: Supported.
However, employers' staff education budgets have collapsed since a change in tax
concessions some years ago, which affected both PPP participation and the ed market.

Elizabeth: If there's a need, it could improve recruitment. Can it contribute to the costs?

Rod: **Educational offerings have reduced to the portions aligned with PPP and SFIA
services to employers. Those are legitimate, but that's far too narrow a range of
professional development offerings. ACS is an RTO. It should partner with quality
educational bodies**, e.g. PRINCE II, TOGAF.

Elizabeth: The gateway tests are fit with ACS values, appropriateness of approach, and only
then business case – and based on contributions to key functions and/or surplus-generation.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business Lines

Alan: There needs to be more scrutiny of proposals, business cases need to be a lot more
robust than they appear to have been, and the benefit to ACS must be demonstrated.
There's been too much focus on the 'business' aspect of business-lines.

Adrian: There's been a lack of clarity about ACS's business plan. **A range of acquisitions / initiatives appeared to be inconsistent with the Objects**. [Context: ADMA, ACS Labs.]

Alan: The notion of an operating subsidiary is tenable, but it must not dilute the emphasis on the membership. [cf. manage on an 'ethical investment' basis.]

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9: Business-Lines

Philip: Caution is needed – stick to the knitting. <u>There are many key functions</u> to be performed. <u>Innovation per se isn't one of them</u>, cf. facilitating the sharing of knowledge.

Mark: <u>There are serious dangers in diversion of attention away from professionalism and towards orthodox, commercial managerialism</u>. AIM was once a professional association for managers, but it drifted into just being a training company; and now a new professional association has had to emerge. AICD was shrinking because the emphasis had shifted from member services to making money. CPA Aust had similar travails to the other two.

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Jo: <u>There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity</u>

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

Any ACS activity, including business-lines, should at all times be consistent with, the Society's purposes and values. Could this be ensured through the Code of Ethics?

Industry associations   (1)

DAF Oct 2   #20

I see a question about industry associations - but it is hard to answer without understanding why ACS got involved in the first place?? I am an outsider to this topic - Be nice to understand the rationale?

Where should ACS spend its money? (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 4   #32   Edited Oct 30

It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it - but the need to show a clear member benefit in financial expenditure can perhaps be somewhere in the constitution?

4 people liked this

Roger Clarke

Oct 4   #33   Edited Oct 30

On Mon, Oct 4, 2021 at 03:20 PM, Jacqueline Hartnett wrote:

> ... It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it ...

I imagine most members would be pleased that the Society delegates the majority of the strategic and policy decisions to the governing committee, and happy that the governing committee delegates the ongoing operational decisions and actions to employees. I certainly am.

But I have a problem with the ideas that (a) no decisions at all can be made at regional level, and (b) no discretionary funds are available at regional level.

Suppose a thousand-dollar decision is needed, to take advantage of an interesting ICT person who's in the district for a short time, and who's prepared to offer a seminar / workshop / demo / site-visit to local members. It costs money to get a venue, some basic catering and a user-pays wet bar.

Even now, following admin changes made over the last few years, Branch Committees have no capacity to make any such decision.

The Branch Committee has to go cap in hand to the Branch Manager, who is an employee of ACS, beholden to the CEO, not the members. The Branch Manager may or may not negotiate funding from Head Office. Despite its small size, the organisation's bureaucracy grinds slowly. By that time, the opportunity's gone. And everyone in the region quickly learns that it's pointless asking ACS if they could host an event, even at all, but especially at short notice.

Effective organisations recognise as a basic principle a thing called 'subsidiarity': Delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made. Regions vary in the their needs. Regions need decision-making powers, and discretionary budgets.

4 people liked this

Jo Dalvean

Oct 6 #49

Not just begging - the situations where the funds are available but the means to access it to spend it are challenging, and in these cases Branches hand dollars back.

2 people liked this

Ul

Oct 11 #75

agreed. more delegation and better financial resourcing for branches is needed.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall

Oct 11 #79

BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that and MC is not allowed to deny branch expenditure or disapprove a budget. The current approach adopted by the MC/CEO appears to be in contradiction to this understanding. The BECs are there to forward the aims of the society, the branch managers are there to help them do that.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 12 #93   Edited Oct 30

Well said bob.

Michael Driver

Oct 16 #121

Hi Roger,

I have posted a similar response elsewhere.

Branches cannot exist (?) on membership revenue, so how do we enable the branches/chapters to function effectively on membership revenue while the business needs to seek alternate business revenue to progress. (i.e. we need to generate more revenue to offset Government changes).

1 person liked this

David Abulafia

Oct 17 #123   Edited Oct 30

If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members comming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you started charging $20 per meeting in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17 #124

In my time at ACS, Stats showed that 80% of people who attened the NSW functions where the same group of people. It is important to encourage diversity and maintain membership through engagement. If there is no engagement, membership is like a sieve.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 17 #126

As the conduit to members Branches need more flexible access to funds. In Vic we were routinely told 'no budget' as member service ideas arose, then after the close of FY2020/21 we were informed that a $120K 'surplus', created to cover the 6-month member fee payment pause, was accounted back to consolidated funds. So many questions - did Branch have access to these funds? who knew about this in FY21? why weren't these funds available to support member servicing? Why was BEC told 'no budget? I assume similar scenarios in other Branches?

Ali Shariat

Oct 17 #127

Obviously, this is not only indicating the failure of management committee to communicate global decision but also failure to understand the marketplace. ICT staff were in the best position to continue working during the pandemic. There is a high skill shortage of ICT. While a nice gesture, money could have been used better.

Rebecca.waters@...

Oct 29 #285

I feel that having a revenue stream to allow for member benefits at branch level is fine. Not every service we do has to turn a profit. If we are there to serve members, and we do this by using a revenue stream (like skills assessment), then I think that's okay personally.

Robert Estherby

Oct 30 #295

Are we potentially putting the cart before the horse here. In the new structure will branches exist?

I think the key point is this. The ACS needs to make a strategic decisions about an appropriate level of funding of 'local events' and a subsidiarity principle that allows for those local decisions to be made.

As a general answer to this question, I think they ACS should spend more of its money on being a 'good-citizen'. Working with other interested parties to help discuss policy and work with other societies, interest groups etc. to bring about high quality events (ones with the best discussions, ideas, instruction - not the best location or catering). In addition we should be clear as a society about the 'gaps' we fill in the market and make these our 'tent pole' events.

So if i was to distil this to principles.

> The ACS should fund targeted, high quality activities that benefit the profession or Australian Society, rather than members specifically.

> The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.

> The ACS should delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made.

I would also suggest as a principle

> The ACS where sensible should partner with other organizations in line with its objectives to increase value to our members and the wider public.

Member Involvement in Key Policies (10)

z6957315@... Oct 5 #37

It's normal for a Constitution to only contain a relatively small, core proportion of what makes an organisation tick.

One common pattern is for a Company Board to have absolute power over all of the other documents that are important to members. Things like the membership levels and the requirements to achieve and sustain levels. And things like the Code of Ethics.

How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?

3 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #298

Some aspects of this will be protected as the objectives are within the constitution.

I think as a principle the constitution should require consultation and membership ratification of key areas such as

Governance

Membership

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #318

The key issue with a constitution is that it needs to cover all the key points, but must not end up being a Victorian novel that no-one looks at. If we accept Philip Argy's view expressed in Q08 (and I have a lot of respect for Philip), then the constitution is the way to make a CLG work for us. So it must cover governance (including electing and removing directors), membership, branches and chapters, the ACS objectives and major activities, membership grades etc. However, the actual drafting of the constitution is a matter for later stages of this project.

P Argy Oct 30   #320

My suggestion is to take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't. For those that we don't, what do we want to replace them with? That will at least give us a set of drafting instructions for the lawyers. When they come back with a draft Constitution we can then discuss how faithfully they have imp[lamented what we wanted, but separating the drafting from the higher level discussion is important.

For those who haven't actually read the ACS existing Constitutional documents, they are attached. If they're not the latest versions they're close enough for the exercise I'm suggesting!

ACS National Regulations as at Apr 2011.pdf

ACS-Rules-Nov-2010.pdf

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #321

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 07:58 PM, P Argy wrote:

> ... take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't ...

That's a poor substitute for requirements analysis, Philip.

Congress and CRWG expressly avoided such narrow scope.

First understand what members' conception of the Society is in current and foreseeable-future circumstances. Then imagine features that will provide the scope to deliver on that conception. Only then consider what we currently have, what needs to be retained, and how to transition gracefully from one to the other.

If anyone actually wants them at this early stage, the authoritative versions are at https://www.acs.org.au/governance/rules-and-regulations.html

P Argy Oct 30   #322

I was not suggesting that's ALL we do, but it does ensure that the basics are covered and assists people to identify topics for further discussion.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #323

Great ideato create a base to start from

David Abulafia Oct 31   #324

I think Phillip's approach would be a good basis for a requirement analyst

Dr. Paul O'Brien <paulobrien56@...> Oct 31   #327

Philip

I agree 100%

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #330

I disagree strongly with this.

The current constitution and rules, while appropriate for the time, are no longer appropriate for today or the future.

Aside from that, we have a process that Nick and Roger have thoughtfully developed and we should trust them to lead us through this process.

Transparency   (5)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #65   Edited Oct 30

Management is not respecting the importance or value of Member needs / wants unless the board/management shares their plans and seeks and embraces feedback from members.

Such transparency and consultation process would not be popular with a commercial business that may wish to negotiate price or time sensitive deals - but really - is price or time sensitive deals a relevant limitation on a professional society?

We do not have an environment like politics where the management can assume a "mandate" from a clearly articulated position before election.

UI Oct 11   #73

i believe greater transparency is required. ACS is supposed to be by members, for members. the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable. It currently looks like a public service where there's too much bureaucracy and members aren't able to access the services they actually require.

ACS should be run like a union. by members, for members. our members are the number 1 priority. all decisions made should be done so with the primacy of members in mind.

I acknowledge there are commercial decisions to be made, and business decisions must benefit members, financially or otherwise. Eg. profits used to fund member services, keep membership fees low, etc.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #299

I agree regarding the transparency, but I don't think that the Society is entirely for the membership. The membership is not representative of the broader industry make-up.

If society is to remain relevant and useful, we need to accept that it is not there for the benefit of members, but for the benefit of Australian Society.

That said, we should be more accountable. There should be more visibility of Board Meetings. Board Meetings should be observable by members (with in-camera exceptions as appropriate).

The board should run regular internal audit processes to ensure management is accountable.

So if we take this back to the principles:

- The board should have a bias towards transparency and openness.
- The board should regularly seek member input on topics for debate
- The board should articulate why specific discussions are in-camera.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #302

If the ACS is not there for the member, why should members paid memship fees, for nothing in return, or is the membership fee a donation to a society that looks after IT in Australia

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #369

Hi David,

Members will always have something in return, but as a member we all sign up to the Code of Ethics.

The first clause is "The Primacy of the Public Interest: You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests".

Whether we like it or not the ACS is a sectional interest, and as members, we under our code, and constitution are bound to put ourselves second.

Should the ACS make sure it has a good membership proposition? Yes.

Is the ACS for the benefit of members? No (well not in its current form or under our current constitution)

To whose benefit ??   (7)

Fellow Enthusiast Oct 8   #66

I read that ACS is a $50m business. Wow.

Lots of income - and clearly lots of spending. But the balance sheet does not look to be accumulating lots of wealth??

Where does the money go? The published accounts are not expansive.

Do we really need (what is allegedly) the most expensive office space in Australia?

But how is that a benefit to members (and society).

I read that prominent member Ashley Goldworthy asked a series of questions about activities and expenses but has been refused answers.

That culture needs to change!

2 people liked this

bill@... Oct 8   #67

> That culture needs to change!

Yes.

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #104

Surplus should be invested back into providing member benefit. All activity should be tested through business case with delegated sign-off extended to BEC.

frada.burstein@... Oct 19 #141

I totally agree with this proposal. There should be NO surplus generated for a sole reason of a profit. All funds received through the ACS business or other activities should be spent to benefit the ACS community and spent to support ICT for public good initiatives. For example, as discussed at the forum, the Lab should be funded to be made available for some R&D activities for small businesses who can't afford such an infrastructure otherwise. Or some fellowships and grants can be offered to the community organisations on a transparent and competitive basis.

David Abulafia Oct 20   #147

I agree Frada

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 20   #149

I agree with Frada and David

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #370

To play devil's advocate; It is prudent to have a cash flow buffer up to a point.

I think there should be more spending, but it needs to be directed not just at member benefits, but at the growth of the society and to the public benefit too.

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2.   Rod Dilnutt   16 Jun 2021

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the **funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services**. Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidies' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos. **[Q10]**

3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

Q10 Any surplus belongs to the Members. The surplus should be allowed to build up a reasonable contingency to cater for unexpected events. Any <u>substantial surplus should be returned to member perhaps in the form of lower fees</u>. If the ACS exits Commercial Busines Lines, as I advocate, it is unlikely that there will be a significant surplus

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

Q10 – **Surplus should be invested back into providing member benefit**. All activity should be tested through business case with delegated sign-off extended to BEC.

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q10 How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

Notwithstanding that the ACS shouldn't really have surplus beyond what is necessary to keep the Society viable, **surpluses must be reinvested into the Society for the benefit of members**. Such investment may include <u>events and initiatives to improve education and professional standing</u>, <u>lobbying efforts to improve the IT business environment</u>, <u>grants and scholarships</u> to help support diversity and access in IT.   **[Q03]**

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2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   **2 October 2021**

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus? (P2)

Strategically, <u>to support the mission and purpose</u>

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   **5 October 2021**

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus? (P2)

Available surplus from business lines should <u>first partly be reserved as retained earnings for future growth of that business line</u>, then <u>the remainder should go back to supporting ACS, its membership, and its activities</u>.

The ACS organisation should be supported by ensuring it has enough resources such as cash reserves and staff, etc.

The membership should be supported in a number of ways, such as subscription fees could be made free-of-charge. Free events and drinks for members every month in Branch hubs. Professional development for members could be supported with one free vendor training course annually, e.g. CISSP.

ACS activities should include development of key publications such as Digital Pulse, events that influence political leaders, and education about ICT for the general public.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   **16th October 2021**

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

Feedback: <u>Towards serving members</u>. Ultimately our society, like all businesses will be subjected to the ebbs and flows of business cycles, and a strong financial position should be maintained. If we have the luxury of a surplus (profit) and we have already used that to financially <u>strengthen our balance sheet</u> by paying down debt and liabilities (something not always possible in leaner times), then I would suggest the guidance of the previous principles. On the off chance you are also looking for specific actionable examples, then I would suggest <u>partnering</u> with Pluralsight as their <u>training material</u> is excellent, covers many of the ACS's focus areas and is already widely used in the industry (I've used it myself to do about 5 certifications exams so far).

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4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q10. How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

•   **<u>There should be some parameters around how MC may allocate expenditure of surplus</u>**

•   <u>There has to be some reference to materiality</u> – a surplus of $2,000 is different to one of $2,000,000

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q10. How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

•   Apart from a strategic reserve, <u>ACS should invest back into the ACS and its members or activities like scholarship for students, academic conferences, small research grants to boost R&D etc.</u>

•   <u>Activities should be in line with the mission/vision to support the community</u>.

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Alan: All **the money disappears to Head Office, and lots is burnt in wildly expensive premises in Sydney and Melbourne. There's insufficient dividend to the Branches**.

Alan: A 'not-for-profit' (which is really a 'not-for-loss' organisation) needs **to build reserves, and otherwise to focus the allocation of its surplus on core functions**

Justin: must specify amount to be held in reserve for future unknowns – not all surplus can be spent

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Sarah-Louise: A strong advocacy organisation like the Pharmacy Guild puts some surplus into <u>a fighting fund, specified in the Constitution, which requires member approval to expend</u>. The idea could be implemented in the ACS context [although the purposes would be different]

Peter: **Allocation has to be based on the Objects. It's impractical to go to the members for each decision, but the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that guidance should be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes.**   **[P08]   [P11]**

For this to work, however, electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club.   [P11]   [Dir]

Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions.   [Q09]

[Break-even is adequate for Functions that are relevant but not Key Functions.]

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q10: Principles for allocation of surplus

Damien: <u>Branches should always be involved, and the constitution should enable / enshrine that principle.</u>   **[Q11] [P09] [P10]**

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q6-11:   Key functions, business-lines, surplus allocation

Susan: The financial responsibility aspect is critical. **The financial principles must be clearly defined in the constitution, re revenue-sources, and what is and isn't done with the surplus**. **[Q10]**

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q10: Surplus allocation

Jan: The benefits to members have been disappointing , because **the large surplus seems not to deliver a lot to members**, and is instead used elsewhere. **[Q7]   [Q6]   [Q8]**

Richard H: He, and many others, **question the limited benefits offer to members, and lots of money spent elsewhere (Labs, industry associations, high-cost premises)**

Jan: A WA concern has been **a loss of quality in social networking and professional networking events**.

Jeff P: Echo **the criticality of social and professional networking**   **[P10]**

Richard M: A switch to cheaper and less convenient venue reduced attendances. **[P10]**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q10: Surplus allocation

Rod, Elizabeth: As above, **the purpose of surplus is support for key functions**.

Rod: Expressed concern about the CEO's use of language that discloses a bias towards membership services as being a subsidised cost-centre that can't pay for itself, rather than the raison detre for the Society's operations.

Rod: **Charging members for events**, as has occurred particularly in WA, **is to the serious detriment of member morale**, because it stands in stark contrast to <u>financial waste</u> on premises and loss-making business-lines of marginal relevance to key functions.

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9, Q10:   Business-Lines / Allocation of Surplus

David: It's an NFP, so the idea is to **use surplus to support key functions plus build a war-chest / reserves for rainy days**.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business Lines

Alan: There needs to be more scrutiny of proposals, business cases need to be a lot more robust than they appear to have been, and the benefit to ACS must be demonstrated. There's been too much focus on the 'business' aspect of business-lines.

Adrian: There's been a lack of clarity about ACS's business plan. **A range of acquisitions / initiatives appeared to be inconsisent with the Objects**. [Context: ADMA, ACS Labs.]

Alan: The notion of an operating subsidiary is tenable, but it must not dilute the emphasis on the membership. [cf. manage on an 'ethical investment' basis.]

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q9:   Business-Lines

Philip: Caution is needed – stick to the knitting. There are many key functions to be performed. Innovation per se isn't one of them, cf. facilitating the sharing of knowledge.

Mark: There are serious dangers in diversion of attention away from professionalism and towards orthodox, commercial managerialism. AIM was once a professional association for managers, but it drifted into just being a training company; and now a new professional association has had to emerge. AICD was shrinking because the emphasis had shifted from member services to making money. CPA Aust had similar travails to the other two.

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To whose benefit ?? #P08   #Q10

Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #398

Robert said "I think there should be more spending, but it needs to be directed not just at member benefits, but at the growth of the society and to the public benefit too.'_._,

But what about <u>buying a book on Menzies or being a member of WEF or attending meetings in Davos</u>?

Not appropriate use of member's funds imho.

Ann Moffatt Nov 10   #437

Hi Paul

Re:

> Finally re "reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters", e.g. I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (please let's not pretend it was just a group of "ACS members" – ACS solicited members to use their names, and it was published under the ACS logo. I bet ACS and not the members paid for the ad.)
> How do we stop this from happening? Refer everything to the Technical Board for approval? (maybe in principle, but practically???)

I was in hospital when that doc came out so missed it.

Certainly the acs didn't speak for me.

As this abomination has cost australia well in excess of $10 million and imho would never work. Esp as apple and google produced their own version for free I wonder what the acs thinks now?

Much egg on face.

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

> Susan: Profit-for-Good principles include 'how you make your profit', and 'what do you use it for'. Those reference-points for decision need to be in the Constitution.
>
> That plays across to management through KPIs.
>
> Boundaries need to be placed, including how much do we need, and what for, for reserves and for delivering value to members
>
> <u>The executive need to not be micro-managed, with their arm tied behind their back</u>
>
> [But what principles will enable members to **macro**-manage the CEO and staff?]

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

This question applies to all funds that should **only** be allocated **in advancing professional standards, ethical standards, and the public good**.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

In allocating surplus arising from business-lines, **ACS is to prioritise expenditure on the ACS's Key Functions, in particular services to the public and to the membership**.

Q8:   **I see the Society's business lines as means to an end, not ends in themselves. Prioritisation of the allocation of surpluses from operational activities should reflect the Society's Nature, Mission, Purposes and Key Functions.**

Devolved Responsibility for Branches (5)

Nick Tate Oct 7 #58

If branches are to operate effectively, there must be some devolved responsibility which will need to include some level of access to funds

2 people liked this

UI Oct 11 #74   Edited Oct 14

i think this is part of a broader problem where BEC members, although elected to represent their respective state/territory, do not really have any recognition by ACS in responsibility, role or function. The BEC should be empowered to act on behalf of the ACS as a whole, and require the autonomy and decision making to run their branch directly. Eg. We lack the ability to contact our local members directly, which is a ridiculous position to be in.

2 people liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12 #83

Could not agree more with @Nick.

I think that Draft Principles 3, 6 and 10 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 appear to be in the correct direction.

The complete dis-empowerment of Branches was a major reason for the Constitutional Debacle of 2019.

Ann Moffat Oct 13 #96

I agree.

mathew_eames@... Oct 14 #98

Branches know their local community the best, agility to respond to local needs really give the branch the best chance to support and grow its backyard….

1 person liked this

Purposes and Outcomes (3)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 21 #158   Edited Oct 31

Purpose of the ACS

There should be ONE purpose for the ACS.

The use of terms such as mission, objects, vision, multiple purposes etc. distract from the understanding of what ACS stands for.

My view is that the ACS should be a professional organisation of its members, with the following statement:

"The purpose of the Australian Computer Society is to advance the science, practice and application of computer, information and communications technologies for the benefit of members and the Australian community".

The above purpose is a modified version of the one used by Engineers Australia.

The word "computer" should be in the purpose, otherwise we should consider changing the name of the Australian COMPUTER Society.

Desired Outcomes of the ACS

Outcomes can be defined as the result of things working "just right".

This means that both ACS members and the Australian community can confirm that the ACS is meeting its purpose.

Outcomes must be clear, concise and measurable.

The test should be: is the ACS delivering these outcomes, or not?

The following draft ACS outcomes should be discussed and changed to ensure there is a common understanding and direction.

Once the outcomes have been agreed, the path dependency to achieving them can be determined.

Following this, value generation strategies can be developed to achieve the desired outcomes.

Draft outcomes for the ACS (not in any order):

The fulfillment of the purpose of ACS is endorsed by over 75% of ACS members

Branches of the ACS exist, and are elected by members on that branch's register

Branches of the ACS manage activities to the satisfaction of more than 50% of that branch's members

Branches of the ACS appoint the governing body of the ACS

The ACS is a trusted advisor to local, state and national governments

2 people liked this

Ann Moffatt Oct 21   #160

Very well put, rimas.

kenjprice@... Oct 26   #209

I tend to agree.

Of course, the next layer has to unpack these terms.

For example, 'advancing the practice of communications technologies' might be seen by some to include improving the design and installation of phone cabling connectors. Is that in scope? 'Advancing the application of computer technologies' might be seen as marketing within the computer retail sector - is that in scope? And so on.

 I agree that multiple terms like mission, objectives, vision etc can obscure the underlying purpose but at the same time we need to clarify our interpretation of terms, especially when the wider public might interpret them differently to those within the society.

Where should ACS spend its money? (13)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 4   #32   Edited Oct 30

It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it - but the need to show a clear member benefit in financial expenditure can perhaps be somewhere in the constitution?

4 people liked this

Roger Clarke

Oct 4   #33   Edited Oct 30

On Mon, Oct 4, 2021 at 03:20 PM, Jacqueline Hartnett wrote:

> ... It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought. I guess this is really about communication or the lack of it ...

I imagine most members would be pleased that the Society delegates the majority of the strategic and policy decisions to the governing committee, and happy that the governing committee delegates the ongoing operational decisions and actions to employees. I certainly am.

But I have a problem with the ideas that (a) no decisions at all can be made at regional level, and (b) no discretionary funds are available at regional level.

Suppose a thousand-dollar decision is needed, to take advantage of an interesting ICT person who's in the district for a short time, and who's prepared to offer a seminar / workshop / demo / site-visit to local members. It costs money to get a venue, some basic catering and a user-pays wet bar.

Even now, following admin changes made over the last few years, Branch Committees have no capacity to make any such decision.

The Branch Committee has to go cap in hand to the Branch Manager, who is an employee of ACS, beholden to the CEO, not the members. The Branch Manager may or may not negotiate funding from Head Office. Despite its small size, the organisation's bureaucracy grinds slowly. By that time, the opportunity's gone. And everyone in the region quickly learns that it's pointless asking ACS if they could host an event, even at all, but especially at short notice.

Effective organisations recognise as a basic principle a thing called 'subsidiarity': Delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made. Regions vary in the their needs. Regions need decision-making powers, and discretionary budgets.

4 people liked this

Jo Dalvean

Oct 6   #49

Not just begging - the situations where the funds are available but the means to access it to spend it are challenging, and in these cases Branches hand dollars back.

2 people liked this

Ul

Oct 11   #75

agreed. more delegation and better financial resourcing for branches is needed.

2 people liked this

Bob Tisdall

Oct 11   #79

BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that and MC is not allowed to deny branch expenditure or disapprove a budget. The current approach adopted by the MC/CEO appears to be in contradiction to this understanding. The BECs are there to forward the aims of the society, the branch managers are there to help them do that.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 12 #93   Edited Oct 30

Well said bob.

Michael Driver

Oct 16 #121

Hi Roger,

I have posted a similar response elsewhere.

Branches cannot exist (?) on membership revenue, so how do we enable the branches/chapters to function effectively on membership revenue while the business needs to seek alternate business revenue to progress. (i.e. we need to generate more revenue to offset Government changes).

1 person liked this

David Abulafia

Oct 17 #123   Edited Oct 30

If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members comming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you started charging $20 per meeting in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17 #124

In my time at ACS, Stats showed that 80% of people who attened the NSW functions where the same group of people. It is important to encourage diversity and maintain membership through engagement. If there is no engagement, membership is like a sieve.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 17 #126

As the conduit to members Branches need more flexible access to funds. In Vic we were routinely told 'no budget' as member service ideas arose, then after the close of FY2020/21 we were informed that a $120K 'surplus', created to cover the 6-month member fee payment pause, was accounted back to consolidated funds. So many questions - did Branch have access to these funds? who knew about this in FY21? why weren't these funds available to support member servicing? Why was BEC told 'no budget? I assume similar scenarios in other Branches?

Ali Shariat

Oct 17 #127

Obviously, this is not only indicating the failure of management committee to communicate global decision but also failure to understand the marketplace. ICT staff were in the best position to continue working during the pandemic. There is a high skill shortage of ICT. While a nice gesture, money could have been used better.

Rebecca.waters@...

Oct 29 #285

I feel that having a revenue stream to allow for member benefits at branch level is fine. Not every service we do has to turn a profit. If we are there to serve members, and we do this by using a revenue stream (like skills assessment), then I think that's okay personally.

Robert Estherby

Oct 30 #295

Are we potentially putting the cart before the horse here. In the new structure will branches exist?

I think the key point is this. The ACS needs to make a strategic decisions about an appropriate level of funding of 'local events' and a subsidiarity principle that allows for those local decisions to be made.

As a general answer to this question, I think they ACS should spend more of its money on being a 'good-citizen'. Working with other interested parties to help discuss policy and work with other societies, interest groups etc. to bring about high quality events (ones with the best discussions, ideas, instruction - not the best location or catering). In addition we should be clear as a society about the 'gaps' we fill in the market and make these our 'tent pole' events.

So if i was to distil this to principles.

> The ACS should fund targeted, high quality activities that benefit the profession or Australian Society, rather than members specifically.

> The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.

> The ACS should delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made.

I would also suggest as a principle

> The ACS where sensible should partner with other organizations in line with its objectives to increase value to our members and the wider public.

Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice   (11)

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #105

R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained AND enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic.

1 person liked this

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #193

The degeneration of the role of the branches is not at all aligned with Member interests. The state/territory branch should be the mechanism thet addresses the requirements of the state based membership.

The objectives of Principles #3 and #10 must be truly manifest at a branch-level.

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@... Oct 26   #206

Agree. Additionally, if BEC should act as a conduit of their members. Then, there should be equal representation of members of all ages, across industries for each state.

1 person liked this

Rebecca.waters@... Oct 29   #284

I agree Jia.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #300

Controversially, I disagree.

The branches are not providing governance value. Under a company limited by guarantee, this would be further weakened as the constitution will place the authority with the board.

In my opinion, the ACS's precocial and academic factionalism have not been serving the interests of the society and we have been less effective as a result.

I think we need to take forward the principles of engagement and consultation. I also think we need to have some form of local engagement for developing activities - but let's use this as an opportunity to reimagine a new structure that potentially creates communities of interest, rather than local communities.

1 person liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 30 #301

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 04:40 PM, Robert Estherby wrote:

> *take forward the principles of engagement and consultation.* ...

> ... communities of interest, rather than local communities.

How do you see this working, Robert?

Are you aware of any way in which ACS has been supporting communications among dispersed members?

During the fracas of late 2019, it was impossible for members who were opposed to the motion being put to the AGM to communicate their arguments to other members.

Then, when the CRWG was setting up this Online Forum, the ACS was unable to provide infrastructure to support it.

So CRWG used an appropriate, commercially-available service, outside the acs.org.au domain, to deliver it.

One approach whereby ACS could support dispersed communities of interest would be to provide infrastructure, establish a Participation Guide / Code of Conduct such as the one we set up at https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/files/CRWG-CodeofConduct.pdf , and enable any organiser to create a community and publicise its existence and purpose to the membership as a whole.

But I've not seen any concrete proposals of such an idea.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30 #303

@roger ... not sure how to tag...Roger, Robert is an amazing champion of the ACS... almost a recent founder of Young IT...but a very clear thinker....ex ACSNSW BC member

and this is a KEY to ACS TRUST and COLLABORATION

knowing what that looks like seems to be a point of confusion!!!!

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #305

That is a good question.

And no, the ACS 'as a corporate entity' never really embraced the creation of 'digital communities'. We had quite an effective one via Facebook for interstate Young IT at one time, but it was always 'under the radar.

I think your idea is a good one, re: setting up the environment - but I think what is needed is to have people form a core group and build those communities. We have a lot of discussion around having specialisation recognition but we could start with providing an online community of practice around that online or even deliver online discussions and AMA's on that build a live community.

Within those communities, you could then provide input and expertise for a range of different topics. The trick though is to build the community and that does take time.

But if we are honest. The active number of NSW members who attended branch meetings voted etc was less than 1000, from memory much less. We are kidding ourselves if we think that the branches are representative of the full society.

1 person liked this

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #307

We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #314

I feel you are right Helen, I just don't know how they will work in the new structure.

I feel like we might have an opportunity to re-think how it all works if we go back to a principles-based approach and I think we should be open to that in the process.

I feeling as we enter the next phase of the pandemic, is that the society has the opportunity to do build a richer digital experience; and we probably shouldn't do it on "ACS tech" use third-party to tech to experiment.

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #316

But to take it back to the main point.

The suggestion is that the BEC's act as a conduit - but I just don't see how that will work.

If we have a new board, the legal authority will be in that one entity and state BEC's will not maintain their governance role.

Board members will I understand, will be bound by the Corporations Act, so they will be making the best decisions for the society, regardless of sectional interests (as I understand it).

So it brings me back to this point, regardless of if we have branches or not - the constitution needs to embody the ideas of engagement and consultation so that there is trust and collaboration within the Society.

Skills in ACS Staff   (3)

helenmchugh@... Oct 30   #313

With the GREATEST respect

Staff are 'controlling' the management of our profession with limited understanding of our skills.

So so sadly the thinking it is a 'product' to be sold...there IS A MIDDLE GROUND

Business acumen would suggest that we need to be able to pay for our services and make money...maybe!!!

David Abulafia Oct 31   #325

If members pay for services why should members paid a membership fee

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #331

I'm in great sympathy with your point Helen.

I don't know if it is a constitutional issue though. I think it goes much more to the culture of the organisation; which should be actively monitored by the board.

As a principle, I think the constitution should require all members of the board (including the CEO) to abide by a code of conduct (in addition to the Code of Ethics)

Local ACS branches in control   (2)

Rimas Skeivys Oct 28   #243

Local ACS branches in control:

- Local ACS branches set up as separate organizations
- Local ACS members elect the local ACS governing body
- National ACS set up with each branch having shares in the national ACS
- The local ACS branches thus elect and control the national ACS governing body

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #372

To be honest, I think that is a move back to what we had in the 80's - my understanding was that there were problems with that and that might be hard to unwind now.

Role of Branches (28)

Jacqueline Hartnett

Oct 3   #29

Surely this must be an important discussion point. Some have suggested that life would be much simpler if there were no Branch Executive Committees(BECs), just a pool of people that operational staff can ask advice from when required. Others want BECs have a command and control role.

This discus should not be constrained by worries about personal liability for actions undertaken by volunteers. There are ways to protect from that. This discussion is about the vision for how you want things to be, the next phase will look at the trade offs that may be needed to enshrine such a vision in the constitution

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 5   #36

Jacky, i would also like to add the roles of chapters as they are critically important for regional reach.

3 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 16   #119   Edited Oct 30

hi Jacky,

I agree that the Jurisdictions are a vital part of the ACS. As Beau mentioned, QLD and possibly others have healthy chapters as QLD is a geographically large state. To ensure that we reach out to the current and future members, these voices need to be heard through branch and regional input.

Under the current arrangement, which I was party to in Congress in 2019, the inability of these regional chapters to hold a bank account, albeit in the ACS name, limits there focus.

For clarity, there has to be a clear understanding of what is membership funds that may be used in supporting the state/local members and what is business derived funds that the Branch / State / Chapter can utilise or apply for.

Ali Shariat

Oct 17   #125

Hi Mike

I agree with branch and chapters, however creating separate bank accounts is not an answer. A good accounting system with allow everyone to have a budget and clarity on the expenditure.

2 people liked this

Michael Driver

Oct 18   #131   Edited Oct 30

Hi Ali,

It has been too long between chats, my fault.

I didn't mean to suggest or imply separate bank accounts rather the ability of incidental expenses without a volunteer being out of pocket for an expense.

1 person liked this

UI

Oct 22   #170

BECs/branches/chapters should continue and ACS should function similar to State/Federal governments. Branches should have more autonomy with their finances and greater independence in deciding what works for their circumstances.

1 person liked this

Ann Moffatt

Oct 22   #181   Edited Oct 30

I agree.

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 23   #186

Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS and therefore have level of autonomy to service their member base. This must be enshrined in the Constitution AND Enforced in practice. This is actually in the current rules but snubbed (R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations).

1 person liked this

jiaranai.keatnuxsuo@...

Oct 26   #207

It would also be great to have Objective and Key Results to measure how effective the advice from BECs are.

Beau.tydd@...

Oct 27 #218

100% agree Rod. each branch and for that matter chapter is different and we need to be make sure we are able to be flexible to support each in the way that members feel empowered and engaged. some of the best events and most engaged members (especially in QLD) are located regionally. we need to give them a voice and support what is needed in each region

Rod Dilnutt

Oct 28 #242

To add a different dimension to this debate I, as VicBEC elected member, was privy to a presentation for the CEO and (less so) President sharing ACS progress in June.   It was a useful overview however, I was disturbed by the perhaps unintentional bias in reference to Branches which included terminology like 'subsidising' branches and 'loss leader'.

As posted above, Branches are the conduit for the member vice and are integral to a cohesive professional organisation. Therefore reference to branches, and by implication, members in these terms seems to be reflective of an attitude that is counter member voice. Copy of my, as yet unanswered letter to CEO follows below.

My concerns have been exacerbated in recent weeks by participation in the Strategy refresh (Dovetail) project and a member segmentation project. Both of these projects are driven by staff using a framework from which to formulate ACS strategy though 2025 that presents the key areas for ACS more or less as the current business lines i.e. Skills Assessment, ACS Labs.... My understanding of marketing strategy 101 is that it starts with the 'customer need',i.e. ACS members. Both projects purport to be Member first'. Hmmm..

<< end of rant>>

Letter to CEO June 2021

Dear Rupert

Many thanks for sharing ACS progress with the BEC, Victoria on Wednesday last. It is heartening to see early signs of leadership transparency on ACS matters.

If I may, there are two observations I would like to make.

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches. Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member- centric professional society. To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle.

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services. Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidies' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos.

In making these comments I point out that language use is central to the politically correct' debates we are having over workplace health, and safety. In our recent ACS training the recognition of 'indirect inference' as a factor in bullying was an emphasis and our awareness of micro-aggression is heightened - language is important.

The fundamental existential question here is ' Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society. Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values?

Rupert, I offer these observations in good faith and trust they make a positive contribution as ACS looks to the future.

Happy to speak anytime.

1 person liked this

Peter

Oct 28 #245

Thank you Rod for sharing this episode. The more I think about this phrasing of 'loss-leader' the more concerned I become.

Is there a fundamental weakness in the current combined ACS enterprise so that it will always return to seeing members as a 'loss-leader'? If so I would rather we divest or disband than become a trojan horse commercial enterprise masquerading behind a professional society. I would rather we were a financially smaller but successful professional society focused on its members, their standards and public good, than a larger commercially focused enterprise that forgot what it was. As a smaller more focused association we may not need to worry abut a CLG structure at all.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #248   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Peter.

Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.

The ACS is a not for profit organisation, and should not even think of commercial activities.

A smaller more focus financially stable society is what should exist.

During my involvement in converting my synagogue from an association to CLG, the ACNC told us they were encouraging all NFP incorporated associationd to becoming CLG.

devindra.weerasooriya@...

Oct 28 #249

I do not hold any elected positions within the Branch/National structure. But I have learnt from those that do hold such positions about a recent heightened emphasis about politically correct' debates over workplace health, and safety, within Executive deliberations; as pointed by Rod Dilnutt.

If so, I do believe that many participants of this thread, and the whole CRWG-Conversation, would agree that referring to activities at a Branch-level focused on the Professional Excellence of Members in a derogatory manner is equally or more inimical to their sensitivities and more generally their perception of what ACS should be.

To put it more bluntly, for the ACS to advertise as having a "Mission of Professional Excellence" and regard the process towards achieving that as Loss-leading and Non-viable; must cease right-away and be declared as out-of-order throughout the ACS. All activity threads, such as the CRWG and the New-Strategy must be refocused towards achieving the Mission of Professional Excellence, in a viable manner.

When ACS really demonstrates itself as a "MUST-HAVE" service for Professional-Excellence in ICT, I'm certain that it will have no difficulty in rekindling the interest of ICT-Professionals, that is falling-away away, at present.

David Abulafia

Oct 28 #250   Edited Oct 30

Yes definitely.

All forms of political correctness should shot down immediately.

Political correctness is the cancer of our society inside and outside of the ACS.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28 #252   Edited Oct 30

Grrrr. What sort of dopey platform is this - my reply to a comment well above here is not linked to the comment and instead appears out of context at the end!

Well, referring to Rod Dilnut comment #186...

Agree, but as part of the review, we must review the role of the BEC and get it right. One obvious change is that the BEC will no longer be the entity which disenfranchises members from voting for the board (MC) by appointing its delegates to Council - the members will be able ot vote directly. I think that the key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery.

Christopher (Chris) Radbone

Oct 28 #255

Relying to Mark's comments #252

Could we also extend the Branch Executive Committee memberd to having input and be empowered and encouraged to also provide advice and experience into the strategic opportunities for the ACS, and ICT driven and enabled developments that are occurring both locally in the jurisdiction but also nationally?

Ann Moffatt

Oct 28 #259   Edited Oct 30

Well said dev.

Mark Toomey

Oct 28 #269

That would seem to be a perfectly sensible thing to do Chris Radbone.

tony.errington@...

Oct 29 #282

I fully agree with Rod Dilnutt (#186) and Chris Radbone (#255). I also agree with the various comments regarding the need to eliminate any comments such as 'loss-leading' and 'non-viable' when talking about supporting our members. Members are at the very core of the ACS and must remain so and be recognised as such by the hierarchy (both elected and employed).

As Rod says, branches are a key link in the chain from a member to the ACS, they are the only parts of the organisation that understand what their local members want and need. Their role should be enshrined in the future constitution, clearly spelling out the relationship between the elected members of the Branch BEC and the salaried Branch (or State) Manager

And while branches should have a budget which is approved at MC level, and they should perform to that, the creation of that budget should be a joint exercise and not simply imposed from above. Branches also need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focussed, without needing to go through an extended process of approval that takes unreasonable time and resources.

David Abulafia

Oct 29 #286   Edited Oct 30

I agree with Tony

Nick Tate

Oct 31 18:37 #339

In my view, branches (and chapters) are essential elements for a future ACS. Local governance (such as BECs and Chapter Committees) allow the branch to focus on issues and events in their own state or territory and to engage more effectively with their state/territory Government, than is

possible nationally. To be able to do that, there will need to be some level of budget provision for the BECs and Chapter Committees to initiate projects and activities, without undue oversight from a national committee or national office; this of course must be limited to an agreed budget. Any contracts that a branch wishes to enter into will need to go through a process to ensure that it does not have unintended effects on the ACS as a whole. To implement these projects or activities will require access to staff resources and this can also be manged via an appropriate budget process.

In this round, we are trying to tease out principles and I suggest that the principle around branches is the desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

Nick as a member not as CRWG Co-convenor

Dr. Paul O'Brien

Oct 31 #345

I agree with Nick.

A Federal model with fairly autonomous branches has a lot of advantages, particularly the ability for Branches to work closely with State and Territory governments, other professional associations and industry associations.

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31 #347

I agree with Mike and Beau...We must be able to operate quickly with all the checks and balances supporting initiatives not closing them down...sadly the perceived "No Culture"

helenmchugh@...

Oct 31 #348

Double like.

Initiatives at the moment go no where @beau @chris we did the Branch listening taskforce and then where di it go ...

I am currently working up an understanding with ACS staff on that NO Culture eg where are the Access cards for the Branches who are "lucky?!?!" to have a hub as their office..and in Lockdown..

Robert Estherby

Oct 31 #353

On Sun, Oct 31, 2021 at 06:37 PM, Nick Tate wrote:

> desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.

I agree that if we continue with a federated model with branches, they also should have clear objectives that support the whole society, and prevent branches from pulling away in multiple directions. We should be looking to encourage collaboration and initiative rather than unaccountable

Rupert.Grayston@... 1 Nov 09:01 #374

In this conversation thread 'Role of Branches', I seem to have been portrayed as saying in an internal ACS meeting conversation that membership is a loss-leader for ACS. Actually I'm pretty sure that I said that it can't be viewed as a loss-leader, to illustrate a point that ACS does not necessarily have a sustainable model for member service delivery. I know that was an internal discussion to share financial information whereas this is a member forum on constitutional principles but I detected some misplaced outrage and thought I should clarify that point.

Peter 11:04 #377

Thank you for the clarification Rupert. Then it sounds like we had a burst of violent agreement [:-)] around not wanting the ACS Membership to be, or to be seen to be or treated as, a loss-leader in a larger organisation. My apologies for my part in the 'misunderstanding'.

Can matrix management be made to work for Branches?   (3)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 6   #51

It is a communication challenge to let the operational side and volunteer side of ACS work in concert and especially at the Branch level. Who has not been to a meeting with say X and found that another ACS person has chatted to them at some event or other and covered much of the same ground as you went to a meeting to discuss? This is made worse when you wanted some specific terms attached to a promise of funds and then find these funds have been more or less promised anyway. Governance over money is fraught.

Michael Driver Oct 16   #120

During my career I have worked in and led several teams both national / state and local where matrix management is involved.

As long as the delegations and authorities are properly defined, approved and published, there shouldn't be an issue.
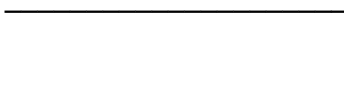
2 people liked this

helenmchugh@... 12:17   #379

Agree with both. Yes matrix management definitely can work. I have worked in large Fed Gov Service delivery agencies and small agencies where matrix management has been used successfully. It is often what makes the difference in success.

It is based on Trust, Collaboration, Communication

BUT it also needs well defined and understood and albeit agreed frameworks. Roles & Responsibilities

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1.   Jeff Mitchell   **1 June 2019**

The future, member focused, ACS structure should:

• **foster grass roots agility, innovation and value-added activities at a branch level**. **[P10] [Q11]**

3.   Brian Finn   **30 September 2021**

Q11 No - there is no more global industry than ICT. That being so, <u>why should Branches plot their own course?</u>

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   **4 October 2021**

Q11 [Branches] – Yes Absolutely and subject to R12.3. <u>Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee</u> constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained and enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure. **The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic**. **[P10]**

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q11 Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

As a member of ACS who has lived regionally for the last 20 years, I'd be inclined to refer to the Branches as City Branches rather than State Branches. We've been very light on any kind of events during COVID, and prior to that everything is very city centric. Recent changes in worker behaviour find people much more spread out and needing access to networking and education literally all over the country. The current constitution of branch responsibility, reporting and electoral make-up seems unnecessarily complicated and riddled with needless duplication whilst increasingly delivering less and less of member value - particularly outside Sydney.   **[Ch]**

Technology breaks down geography - so it seems almost anachronistic for a this Society to purposely organise itself by location.

Perhaps a better constitution would be to **have Branches that are organised amongst area of interest (Specialist Branches), led by recognised experts in the fields and supported by dedicated administrative staff funded by the ACS**. These Specialist Branches would have national reach, deep and specific engagement with their members and representation at higher levels of the ACS.   **[P04]**

Most IT related issues are national (with Federal government responsible for over-arching IT related legislation), and as a regional dweller, it seems that there is more commonality of IT issues amongst regional areas as a group and metropolitan areas as a group than there would be in Sydney vs Foster. Where there are nonsensical state-by-state treatments of IT issues, workers or infrastructure by government, this might be a good place for the ACS to flex its lobbying muscle.

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2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q11: Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities? (P3, P9)

YES! Covid has served to underscore the limitations of national governance, and the pivotal role of State Governments. ACS has a federated model, reflecting the national model, honour this.

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q11: Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities? (P3, P9)

Yes. Branches are different sizes and have different strengths and weaknesses and only branches would know how best to allocate resources and develop local relationships.

To be clear however, the branch staff should have primary responsibility for activities. **BECs should** only perform three functions (i.e. advice, advocacy, and access) and **have zero operational involvement**. This ensures good governance and avoids any potential conflict of interest scenarios, which have happened in the past.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16ᵗʰ October 2021

Q11: Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

Feedback: Yes, **the branches should continue to have the power to organise activities in their geographical area**. However, I must confess I don't fully understand or appreciate the federated structure to our organisation. It seems to me to be a little over complicated. If the last 2 years are anything to go by, then I'm guessing that an amount of our events going forward would be online, in which case local branches might be less required. I'm unclear whether a single branch organises their own events in isolation, as it would seem to me that there might be a number of events that would be nationally relevant.

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Q11 Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area?

This question produced the most debate and discussion of the session.

There was wide support for the view **that there should be sufficient autonomy for the branches so that they are in control of their own destiny**.   **[P03]**

Bob expressed the view that **a professional society needs to support and be supported by local professionals, who in turn need the branch and chapter structure for support**. This view was again widely supported across the BEC. **[P03]**

3.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q11. Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

- Having grown from a federated model of relatively autonomous states there has been no emphasis on the common issues. IT is now central to many things and potentially **we should delegate things to different states to enable them to deal with things in their own state legislative context. But we also need to emphasise that there are commonalities that we don't currently recognize**.   **[P03]**
- Yes, branches should be able to deal with things specific to their state but there needs to be co-ordination of national input and involvement.

4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q11. Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

- The strategy direction should come from the overall ACS, and branches are there to execute the strategy. Over the years Branches have had too much power to over-rule the strategy.
- Branches should execute the strategy in their state but like membership needs to be coordinated/managed nationally. States should be responsible for local execution of specific programs and activities.
- At national level – provide parameters for the strategy at a broad level. **Which speaker to use locally and what topics to have are decisions for Branches at a local level**.
- **Branches should have delegation/discretion to spend up to a certain amount, but they also need to be accountable** for how that is spent. For example, Branches may have delegated authority to spend $XX over 6 months and they have to be accountable for the spend. They should also be able to request additional budget
- It's not just about spending but also changing policy. On the other hand, Branches are the part of the ACS that members interact with most, like local government/council. They provide local services (e.g. rubbish collection) but we don't want local council deciding major policy like which side of the road to drive on. The **boundaries need to be drawn in a reasonable way**.

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q11. Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities?

- **Branches should have a level of autonomy**
- Need to have Branches that represent the different states e.g. the impact of COVID on the ICT community is different in Vitoria to Western Australia.
- Branches are extremely important to represent members of their state
- This also affects our model of federation in terms of **interacting with state and territory governments and dealing with issues at that second tier of government**

- **Branches should have budgets and powers to make decision relevant to their state**
- Branches should have access to the generic pool of resources
- **Needs to be a balance between the local level and the federal level**

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q11: Branches

Alan: CPA Aust uses employees but engages with local committees of members. **ACS needs a presence in each State**

Justin: Scale can be an issue. Representation of all regions matters, but it's expensive to deliver equivalent services in all relevant locations. In small Branches, BECs must provide labour to support the Branch Manager

Ray: **Sufficient discretion in relation to both decisions and budget must be available for BECs and the Manager, so that events can reflect local knowledge and local needs**

Jacky: Particularly in small Branches, BEC experience can be useful training for professionals with tightly-defined, limited-scope day-jobs

Michael: This is my experience as a previous BEC member when young.

David: It's critical to have a local Committee, to stay connected with local industry.

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National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q11: Lucia: Branches should continue. **Each area has its own needs and environment, and addresses those needs. The localness is very important**. BEC is important to provide support on strategy, **but it's a challenge to get Committee-members to engage**

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q10: Principles for allocation of surplus

Damien: Branches should always be involved, and the constitution should enable / enshrine that principle.   **[Q11] [P09] [P10]**

Q11: Branches

Damien: Branch control over staff has been taken away by Head Office. **Branches are the local presence, and the organisation's key differentiator; so any reduction in emphasis harms the organisation. It also dries up the supply-chain of suitable people serving the Society.**

Alex: Agreed on the primacy of Branches in relation to activities; but the COVID era has qualified that, by opening up cross-Branch access to events, and that's been a plus.

Damien: Agreed on cross-leveraging between Branches, and referred to the MSM initiative (coming through one of the Boards?) intended to improve Branch standing in H.O.

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Jeff: Yes. But they need to be adequately supported, funded and have committed volunteers to make the branch model work

Karl: We need Branches! And they need more autonomy! Including Budget

Karl: As a BEC member (I am speaking personally) I feel we are strangled by bureaucracy and, that was less an issue 40 years ago

Karl: Branches need to able top respond to local politics!

Jeff M: Scope is needed for some risk-taking, but with accountability.
Sufficient alignment with national directions is needed. Note 2019 Cbra paper.

Rimas: Other professional societies have retained Branches even in a corporate structure, and ACS needs to achieve the same.

Richard H: State bodies have the advantage of physical control of local events.
To achieve that, local scope and resources are needed, e.g. SIGs: topic, speaker, food

Jan: WA wants to keep 'Education Across the Nation', great for smaller branches

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches and BECs

Peter: Definitely needed. They understand their constituents. They're much closer to their [State/Territory/Local] politicians. **They need sufficient autonomy and authority plus funding –** that's very different from what's been done in recent times, centralising all control.

Frank: Branches built fiefdoms. The tail wagged the dog.

Discussion: **Some things are appropriate at Branch level, e.g.**
• **where a State government is particularly active in innovation, e.g. Vic and games**
• **conception of events, acquisition of speakers**
• **some discretionary budget needed for short-term opportunities**

Michelle: Events are entirely a State Office function, nothing to do with BEC.

Michelle: BECs' [sole?] function is to liaise with State government and inform national office of opportunities.

Peter, Jacky: Disagreed fundamentally with Michelle, particularly in the case of small and dispersed Branches with limited staff resource and hence the need for BEC effort

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q11: Richard: Re Branches and BECs, ACS must avoid falling back into BEC fiefdoms and conflicts of interest. In any case, Branch autonomy is unworkable in a CLG.
BECs are only for liaison with members, and to offer comments on strategic initiatives in relation to the membership.
Any powers for Branches / BECs can only work with clear definitions of delegations, roles and responsibilities, because otherwise there is inevitable conflict with Branch staff.
Limited budgetary autonomy can be permitted in the form of a discretionary budget for Branch events, and Head Office must not delete discretionary budget included in budget submissions by Branches, merely on the basis of cost-savings.

There should be requirements that BEC members have qualifications in governance.

National Discussion Session #12 Wed 20 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Ali: The attrition-rate has long been very high, with many people leaving at about the 3-year mark. How do we keep members? / keep members engaged?

Ali: **We should spend more effort nurturing new members during their first few years.**

Ashley: The longest-running SIG is SA's Curry SIG. **Social networking is vital, and the centralisation and bureaucracy has lost track of Branch members as people.**

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Alan: **Violently opposed to getting rid of State Branches. It assumes all areas are the same . They're not. They're quite diverse. There must be localness.**

Tom: **Branches need to have industry focus relevant to their local circumstances.**

Alan: NSW Branch manager has been hampered in gaining access to people arriving in Australia in order to promote the benefits of ACS membership to them.

Adrian: **BECs should be *core* to the Society, not under threat. Without that local dialogue, the relationship with members fails [as has been occurring for the last 5 years.]**

Siobhan: There's surely a minimum viable size for a Branch or Chapter to have a staff-member. And video- and hybrid delivery has changed / is changing the economics.
[But the need for localness remains, and delivering Hobart and Launceston from Melbourne is problematic, as is Townsville from Brisbane, and Darwin from (Adelaide?). And surely calculations are needed on the extent of the subsidies involved, and the capacity of the surplus from business-lines to support that subsidy.]

National Discussion Session #14 Fri 22 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Margaret: If Branches are primary, we need to know the responsibility for budget, and how funded. However, a discretionary budget is needed, and there needs to be power at the grass-roots level, particularly in relation to events.
Attracted to the '2 houses of Parliament' idea.

Philip: SIGs is another area in which considerable activity used to occur, with significant benefits to members in specialised areas, mostly achieved on the cheap, mostly performed by individuals. Many were ephemeral, but addressed a topical purpose.

Margaret: Also had very good experiences with SIGs, and the speakers and networking that enabled. Her Branch was very supportive

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

David: The value of ACS membership has substantially declined. **Charging for events reduced participation-levels and and changed the categories of people attending. Some Branches have ceased to deliver on the vital feature of professional and social networking**.

Philip: **Branches are vital, especially for those outside the SE crescent**, because they're left out. That's not a denial of the importance of national approaches to the many functions that are genuinely national in nature.

Mark: It clearly needs more work to get the balance right. **States are real and necessary, and State Branches are, for the same reason. But regional presence and activities are also vital**, because the days of ICT being a capital-city matter have long since gone.

Mark: The Branch Chair and executive committee have to have responsibility for events. The loss of professional and social networking reflects the absence of a Branch 'feel' for the local community. Being able to harness opportunities for visiting speakers in a local area, and bringing them to the notice of members is dependent on 'capability-based architecture'.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Richard: 1: Branch-centred, nationally supported – autonomy, agility, close to customer

Alison: Branch involvement really, really important, to get members involved
A serious disappointment was the closure of a committee she was on -– dictated by national

Alison: Too much is done centrally, failure to take advantage of members' capabilities,
e.g. a poor ACS website without members even as testers, let alone participants in the design

Alison: Need to distinguish Branch functions from other, genuinely national functions

Richard: Get value from centralised strategy, but then autonomy of execution / delegation

Alison: Locally-discovered guest speaker opportunities need local powers and budget

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Re: Can matrix management be made to work for Branches? #P10   #Q11

helenmchugh@... Nov 1   #389

And Jacqui referring to the comms issue. How many good initiatives have gone to a point and been 'lost'!!

Good Management suggests that <u>keeping good records including member and/or staff suggestions and then workshoping / proposing the initiative HAS to be the way forward</u>. And then look for where or if it fits.

But park them on a list, not lost in the perceived "No Culture"

Re: Local ACS branches in control #P10   #Q11   #Chapters

Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #399

Robert said "To be honest, I think that is a move back to what we had in the 80's - my understanding was that there were problems with that and that might be hard to unwind now."

I was chair of nsw branch in the 1980s. I never saw any probs with the constitution we had then.

karl Nov 3   #409

I agree with Ann. There were no real problems.

<u>In the minds of a series of centralists, of course the Branches were a nuisance, limiting their desire to set goals which were not really enunciated or even sensible.</u>

The Branches, especially the in QLD, WA and SA, had great <u>relationships with [State] Govts</u>. They were also extremely nimble and could respond very rapidly when needed.

Their decision chain was short and this gave them great <u>responsiveness</u>.

They also had <u>budgetary independence</u>. This <u>was not without its problems</u>, BTW.

They also ran <u>a lot of SIG's</u>.

Importantly, they could respond to local State conditions and politics as appropriate.

At the National Council, they ensured that <u>a wide diversity of views was represented and influenced policy and decisions making</u>.

Under the old constitutions, (and I was at Council from 1984 to 2006) <u>I never saw an activist President prevented from achieving their objectives</u> except those who used up vast energy and resources trying to reorganise ACS to limit branches.

Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #410

My (somewhat lengthy) suggestion is..

"to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources **ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and production of the technology in Australia**".

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

•   advancement of professional excellence in ICT;

•   furthering ICT study, science and application;

•   promotion, development and monitoring of competence in the practice of ICT;

•   definition and promotion of the maintenance of standards of knowledge in ICT;

•   support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters, **aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia**;

- extension of the knowledge and understanding of ICT; and
- promotion of the code of ethics
- <u>promoting gender balance and social diversity</u>
- **<u>ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation</u>**   **[#P00]**   **[#P09]**   **[#P11]**   **[#Q14]**

There seems to be some confusion between the "Secondary Objects" and the "Purposes"

I would add to Purpose (8) so that it reads..

(8) **The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decision makers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, promotion of Australian owned creation of ICT products and services, and related matters**.

In doing so, recognizing that ICT is a maturing area of human activity with standards of practice and competencies.

Of particular importance are security, safety and the user experience.

I would also add to Purpose (8)..

<u>ACS must ensure its interactions with its members create "good experiences". The interaction with the members goes beyond the "value proposition".</u>

Re: Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03   #P06   #P10   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #411

<u>Branches (as do other elements of ACS) need have a "delegation" which is sufficient for autonomous operation</u>.

The needs <u>to include budgetary autonomy with normal rules of authority</u>.

Again, the past systems worked very well (even though there were stuff-ups).

<u>I am on the VIC BEC and we cannot move without national authority. We seem to be tied up by the national Strategy and Budget.</u>

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #413

When I was on the VIC BEC, a sensible person in National ACS advised not seeking permission, as the default answer was NO.

karl Nov 3   #418

Yes, I guess we have all faced this at different times.

The line "its better to ask for forgiveness than permission" is attributed to Grace M. Hopper.

But, from a Governance point of view it carries enormous risk and exposure.

Far better to give people appropriate delegations.

SIGs as an example Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03   #P06   #P10   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #412

I have attached **the list of SIGs that were active in 2016. The total across all states was about 65**.

Some were social, some meeting non-ICT needs, however, they reflected members' needs.
It is something we should be proud of.

And, **we need to have this again!**

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #414

In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation.

It was never re-instated.

Roger Clarke Nov 3 #415

On 3/11/21 5:41 pm, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation. It was never re-instated.

I can see NatReg 8.15.7:

> Management Committee or the Branch Executive Committee may dissolve any chapter, sub-committee or branch special interest group acting under any delegation function on an affirmative vote by a 2/3 majority or any time without having to provide reasons.

On the face of it, a Branch Manager does not have the legal authority to take any such action.

On the face of it, neither does the CEO, so any delegation to the Branch Manager could not have come from the CEO.

Did anyone ask the Vic Branch Manager for evidence of authority?

Why not ask the current BEC to reform the SIG under NatReg 18.5.1?

These aren't hypothetical questions.

What appears to have happened in 2016, in at least Victoria, was in apparent breach of the Rules of the Society.

We can't 'roll back time' (images of US battleship).

But BECs can exercise the powers that they have at their disposal.

David Abulafia Nov 4 #422

How many SIGS are still active in 2021?

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Karl: The Society should not be sucked into the mantra that States are not relevant. They've been crucial during the COVID era; they have functions to perform

Karl: Branches need much more autonomy

Jo: Agreed, but at a strategic level, not the amount of the rental

Jo: **Local presence** is important, and Branch structures already exist. Evacuation of CBDs in Melbourne and Sydney were location-specific. **On-the-ground knowledge of circumstances** has to be reflected in Society actions and

Susan: Constitutionally, **we have to be national and local**. Ability to operate both physically and virtually. **Matrixed arrangements are inherent. We need better collaboration and sharing**. Inclusion is one example where **connections** are lacking. It's hierarchical and it's not at all **collaborative**. We need collaboration at the core of the Constitution   **[P03]**

Jo: Did it work better when there was **direct Branch involvement in each national Committee**? Would it work better now than the current non-Branch-based approach?

Susan: Election-based appointments alone are limiting. Election-Plus can work better [i.e. based on the expertise matrix, some appointees to complement those available]

Karl: **The Society has lost its skills at delegation to elected officials, with Boards and Committees tied down in red tape**   **[#P00]   [#P03]   [#P07]   [#Q11]**

Queensland Chapters Event – Thu 11 Nov 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10

Bevin: **Branches should continue their primary role.**
If they were removed, the Society would be dominated by the larger cities, and there
would be nothing for remote members.   **[#Chapters]**
Matthew: Agreed, and **the States should share more of their events**
Holly: Events are recorded, and available
Matthew: How do members know what's going into the archive?
Holly: Fortnightly eNews.
Michael: **Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs**
Chapters recently, plus with face-to-face events, has been critical.
Bevin: **Chapters should have enough independence, including some funds control**
where they've built a reserve. Townsville's $10,400 pot was confiscated to national
Matthew: Supports Bevin's comment.   **[#Chapters]**
Ann: **Definitely responsibility for activities must be with Chapters.**
Holly: 110% agreed Branches and Chapters should have that ability.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

Yes. Branches are the focal point for member activity and should be resourced
appropriately. Branches are also a key training ground for members to gain experience with ACS
governance and also be encouraged to nominate for a position in national governance.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

Although **ACS Branches should be responsible for activities in their area**, centrally provided
events such as Education Across the Nation and International speakers should be
continued.

Q7:   Key Functions

The importance of networking and mentoring could be more emphasised (at least in this
branch)

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

Maintenance of an effective state Branch Structure– Most service delivery and interaction
will be with a local Branch. These must have autonomy over budget and activities that allow
differing local needs to be met. At the same time, members should be guaranteed a
minimum level of uniform service.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs Chapters recently,
plus with face-to-face events, has been critical. Working closely with State Branches has
been critical to the success of local chapters, the support in-kind and financial that the
Downs and South West Chapter has received from ACS via its Queensland Branch Executive
has been outstanding and the stronger we can make our grassroot activities, events and
membership the stronger we will be as a professional society ACS.

Tag Consolidation
#Q12 – 4 Topics – 16 Posts + 24 Other Messages   +3 +5
Umbrella organisation fostering, administering specialist associations?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 16:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p. 11-12

Website desciptiom being called "engineering professionals"? (1)

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 30   #290

Thank you Adrian for collating the temporal listing of Australian Computer Society website statements, and drawing attention to the poor or complete lack of definition from 2017 onwards.

It is clear there is a combination of serious issues here that need to be addressed as a matter of importance. This includes the range of ICT Professions that the Society is seeking to engage and support, whether the scope of membership categories aligns to contemporary and arguably growing ICT enabled or driven areas needing skilled professional and expertise.

Areas like Blockchain, Cyber Security, Data Analytics and AI/ Machine Learning for example, all rely on underpinning and effective ICT.

In reflection, I believe that what caused the 2017 website change to no longer clearly convey the profession on our website and also adopting a non descript 'ACS' logo that people had/have difficulty identifying with,, was played out in the 2019 Federal Court judgement, reflecting poor and inappropriate leadership.

Importantly as reflected in many comments posted in these Group posts, the essential need to urgently address the poor leadership and resultant behaviours, culture and practices is and has been a key and essential priority focus for both the current voluntary elected leadership, but also the committed and renewed paid staff.

Whilst it can be argued strongly that the leadership under Ian Oppermann and others in leadership positions within the Society, have been focused on proactively addressing the serious concerns raised from the Federal Court judgement and importantly on behalf of members, what led to this occuring.

The problem of a lack of clear identity for the Society is one such outcome from decisions made and the approaches taken from leadership now departed. The hard work is being done to rebuild trust of the members and wider stakeholders. This is based on respect and while there is a lot to be done, I am pleased there is healing occurs across the ACS, as we work together to ensure the culture, practices (policies, technology platforms, behaviours, expectations, member engagement) is focused on meeting member's needs and the wider communities expectations for ICT Professionals.

Therefore, as indicated in Paul Bailes comments, we need to work together, with the Society having come to terms with overlapping organisations interests in ICT,. As quoted by a previous ACS President Brenda Aynsley, who often expressed the importance for the "ACS to partner for success".

Breadth of ACS interest   (2)

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #334

 [There's been a lot of traffic in the last few days while I've been preoccupied with domestic chores etc so apologies if the below insufficiently acknowledges or otherwise takes into account the insights shared recently ...]

IMHO a standing challenge to the effectiveness of ACS is the breadth of concerns it faces (both potentially and actually). That is:
•   ACS sees itself as covering the complete ICT (see note 1 below) technical spectrum

- many of us (not illegitimately) see ACS as embracing non-technical aspects of ICT.

I see the specific challenges from the above as including

- apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists
- great breadth of interest exceeds ACS capacity to operate competently
- great breadth of interest risks competition/conflict with other organisations in the same space(s)

By way of analogy, compare the ICT sector with the Health sector and how it addresses these issues (even if unconsciously):

- Whereas some people seem (erroneously) to think in terms of "the" ICT profession, noone thinks in terms of a single "Health profession". Rather, the health sector is served primarily by a range of professions (and trades); and secondarily (for want of a better word) by other professions (e.g. not but limited to ICT)
- "Health professions" include: medical, nursing, plus distinctive therapies each with their own professional bodies
- Within individual "health professions" there are a range of organisations catering for special interests. E.g. the AMA aims to represent the entire medical profession, but independent Colleges cater to specialist interests (noting that nowadays, a GP is a "specialist" also)
- There are also groups (such as AIDH) that seem to address special interests across the range of professions that are both (using my classification above) primarily and secondarily engaged with the Health sector

In recognition of the above, ACS needs to:

- realise that it is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. In particular, the presence in the ICT sector(primarily or secondarily) of other organisations with Objects, Goals etc. congruent with ACS's is not inherently a bad thing and ACS should strive to work collaboratively with such "compatible" organisations
- provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary
- reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - organisationally (e.g. by "Colleges" as with Engineers Australia)
- reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - also by diversity in its marks of professional recognition such as specialisations of CP and variations to the BOK (see note 2)

In particular, SIGs might possibly be part of the solution, e.g.

- as seeds of structures within ACS reflecting new specialisations
- as designations of ACS collaboration with compatible organisations

May I close by making clear my anxiety that lack of useful distinctive focus (or foci) by ACS detracts significantly from the usefulness of ACS and its products. For example:

- We've all made great efforts to develop ourselves in one or more specialised areas of ICT, but generally speaking appearances seem as if that's not important to ACS; rather ACS looks as if it's more important to treat the ICT sector as a monolith that ACS can own (for whatever purpose of its own - i.e. ACS risks looking as if it's an end in itself)
- ACS's continuing readiness to offer MACS to people without an ACS-accredited degree (even with IMHO insufficiently-specialised BOK supporting same ... see above) gives me the impression that we are kind of a national "computer club" rather than a serious professional body (can you imagine the AMA or the Law Society offering membership to non-MBBS or non-LIB but with lots of "experience"!?)
- I became unable to identify anything distinctive about the ACJ (and then JRPIT) that would encourage me to publish in it, to read it, or to encourage colleagues and students to do so. (I don't think the editors' heroic efforts with special issues etc. were able to overcome this inherent structural problem with the Journal.)

It's fair to say that at some stage(s) in the past all the things I've identified as issues now needing fixing were features rather than bugs. But no longer.

Notes

1. "ICT" or whatever term usefull stands for the universe connected with computers/digital/etc ...

2. Body Of Knowledge

Jack Burton Oct 31 #341

On Sat, 2021-10-30 at 23:52 -0700, Paul Bailes wrote:

> I see the specific challenges from the above as including

> * apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

Agreed and I'd add that the very same lack of focus (on computing, as our core constituency) diminishes ACS appeal to *generalists* in the Australian computing profession too.

Let us not forget that a true generalist will be interested in the latest developments in many (perhaps even all) fields within his profession ... which is a completely different proposition to "we're not a specialist society, so everything has to be abstracted away to management, or otherwise pitched a level that everyone can understand" -- which unfortunately (viewed from the outside) appears to have been one of the principles guiding the ACS selection of PD in recent years.

To a certain extent, the same should be true of actual specialists.

For example, if my specialty is infosec, I'm going to want to hear (in technical detail, not marketing-speak) about the latest developments in processor design (even though my job will never involve designing microprocessors), because that may help me to identify new classes of vulnerabilities at ring 0 and/or better advise clients on the infosec aspects of architecture selection in future.

Likewise, if my specialty is writing software for engineering applications that are heavy on numerical analysis, I'm going to want to hear about the latest developments in compiler design (even though my job will never involve writing compilers), simply so that I can figure out how best to take advantage of those developments when designing my own algorithms.

Even when, unlike in those examples, there is no direct link to other fields of computing, as computing professionals we often have a general professional *interest* in what is going on in the other fields of computing.

I see nothing wrong with ACS being a general computing society (and yes the SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields, as should independent societies where the numbers are sufficient to support them and/or where new fields are a fusion of multiple professions), so long as that generality extends only to the boundaries of what is unique to our profession, what characterises it *as* our profession.

My focus above has been on PD, but the same ideas apply to a certain extent in terms of eligibility for membership.

My gut feeling is that over the last decade and a bit we have become far too broad in our "focus" and the removal of most of the former membership grades probably had a lot to do with that.

Yes, people in other professions have a genuine professional interest in computing which ACS *should* be able to serve too. But an accountant, manager, lawyer or any other professional who works *with* ICT (but does not work *on* it) should be able to join ACS as an Affiliate (or perhaps Companion -- I forget which was which now) and thereby gain general membership benefits (e.g. no extra fee to attend ACS events) but *not* post-nominals (the fact that we currently hand out AACS to anyone who's willing to pay the fee makes us a bit of laughing stock as far as professional societies go) and definitely *not* voting right either.

After all, it is impossible to claim with any degree of credibility to represent the Australian computing profession when such a large proportion of our voting members have never worked in the computing profession at all.

Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core   (3)

Nick Tate Oct 6   #46

ICT now encompasses a number of different specialties. For example, Cybersecurity, AI, Data Science, to name but a few. There seems to be some merit in considering how to embrace these specialties whist also retaining a focus on core ICT knowledge.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 12   #84   Edited Oct 12

I'd suggest that the speciality domains be Data-Science. AI and Robotics, espousing added values of

> Prescriptive/Predictive insights - Data-Science

> Learning and functioning in a a domain with minimal guidance - AI

Advanced automation - Robotics (the Software Components of Robots are the focus. Robots also contain extensive hardware componentry)

Cyber-security is protecting Data-at -Rest and Data-in-Motion from web-based attacks. It could be argued that Cyber-security is a part of the broad Information and Communication domains. But the elevation of the area to a separate domain may be warranted, given the current National/International relevance of this domain.

The mater is dealt with in #Q02 of Membership Consultation Document – Round 1. However, I do have reservations about the Principle-4 dealing with Hubs of specialisation. The reason for that is because **ACS, as it stands, doers not adequately address the above specialisations to any depth** at all. On the contrary there is much time/space devoted to Leadership-topics, Diversity and un-restrained Marketing of Trends.

Hence **ACS should re-focus on it's core message on ICT and some broad specialisations**, such as Data-Science, AI and Robotics. One can have a series of horizontals such as Programming, Testing, Systems-Configuration, Business-Analysis, Architecture, ICT-Management etc. (this is not exhaustive). ACS has a bit to do to get it's house in order.

What is necessary is an unrestrained commitment to delivering value for it's membership and the broader ICT-ecosystem. The branches must shoulder the brunt of this re-imagined intent; with the centre being responsible for Policy and Standards, where appropriate. As such an exhaustive working-over of #Q02 of the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 is mandatory during the CRWG deliberations.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #356

I think that we need to be pragmatic with this. Many of these area's have their own associations etc.

I think that **the constitution should allow the ACS to partner with other relevant associations to develop joint memberships - rather than try and duplicate communities of interest**.

Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines   (10)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 6   #52

We recognise that many people use ICT in their work. The tricky question is about defining the line between a skilled user and someone who understands the concepts being used to drive the product that they are using - by this I mean having some idea of the possible fallibility of the product and likelihood of underlying assumptions not being as the user might want. Perhaps this is not necessary?

No one person can have this understanding across all that comprises ICT these days. We must then recognise specialised disciplines and the interest groups that serve them. We accept that other professions have specialised disciplines and we must too.

UI Oct 10   #71

i think one of the issues why we've struggled is that ICT is as wide as the field of healthcare.

to draw an analogy: in healthcare you have specialists, primary care providers, allied health providers, health informatics, etc. within each main category there are various professional bodies

related to the discipline, eg. dermatology, hematology, renal, psychiatry, physiotherapy, pharmacy, psychology, etc.

In ICT, we also have a dizzying array of categories like health informatics, big data, programming, sys admin, db admin, etc. however, we don't have professional bodies for each of those disciplines.

If ACS wishes to be the representative professional body across all ICT disciplines, the organisation will need to be a lot more agile than it currently is. Perhaps some ICT disciplines should be governed with greater ethics, regulations and CPD as they are in key positions that can potentially cause loss of life. Eg. db admin of a large hospital. ICT is prevalent across all industries and the ACS should be holding its members to high standards, as expected of someone who could be holding the keys to the kingdom (passwords, full admin privileges, complete access)

1 person liked this

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #114

One option is to consider linking eligibility to the Body of knowledge/SFIA and developing hurdle criteria. I recognise that the BoK needs updating and this could be a valuable debate leading to clarity.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Oct 24   #194   Edited Oct 30

Totally agree with the comments of @Jacqueline Hartnett. ACS is not adequately distinguishing between a skilled user and someone who understands the concepts being used to drive the product.

The events of ACS in general sense do not cater adequately to people who understand the concepts being used to drive the product. Addressing this anomaly is a pre-requisite to fixing the falling numbers of ACS-Professional-Memberships.

David Abulafia Oct 25   #195

I would agree with this

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #260

We need to be careful here, or we will end up with something silly like excluding programmers who work in higher level languages, because underneath it is a compiler.

There is an extraordinary array of people who use IT to produce valuable products, while having no knowledge at all of the lower levels of the machines they wield. They are legitimate Digital Professionals just as the people developing software for the ATO are Digital Professionals. The ACS has utterly failed to recognise the opportunity in embracing these people, and has stood by and watched while The Health the Australian Institute of Digital Health has eaten its lunch in the health space.

This from the AIDH website: The Australasian Institute of Digital Health was launched on 24 February 2020 following a member and Fellow vote to merge the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA) and the Australasian College of Health Informatics (ACHI). Members and Fellows of the two organisations are Australia's leaders and emerging leaders in health informatics and digital health.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #350

IMHO ACS cannot expect (and cannot be expected by us) to "own" every professional activity in the country connected with ICT ("computers and stuff", if you will).

People outside ACS will keep having their own ideas.

Further, an interest that crosses traditional professional boundaries (such as AIDH) is going to stretch the definition of "ICT professional" to an extent that risks rendering it meaningless.

HOWEVER … ACS should move to

- develop an understanding with AIDH (and similar groups)

- do what can be done to support ICT professionals working in Digital Health

 In extremis, 2. might (perish the thought) conceivably entail reminding others in AIDH that just as ICT professionals do not claim "Health" domain expertise, neither should Health professionals claim to know how Digital Health ICT should be built.

More generally, ACS might push back against non-ICT professionals thinking they know how to manage ICT projects?

Christopher (Chris) Radbone 10:00   #375

As a member of AIDH, the peak member driven digital health and health informatics organisation in Australasia,

Given the reference to AIDH in several posts, I felt there are some important learnings and insights that the AIDH offers the ACS.

Coincidently at the time the illfated and poorly run ACS constitutional change process was occurring, the AIDH we went through a well run, engaging, transparent and 'respectful' process where members we well engaged and the process to adopt a CLG went remarkably smoothly.

The relatively recent AIDH constitutional reform was an organisational governance change from it's fore runner the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA).

I felt it was important to share the story of AIDH and it's origin and connection to the ACS. One of my colleagues Dr Peter DeFante mentioned in the past couple of weeks the link between HISA and the ACS.

I would greatly appreciate any members recollection and clarification on the following, c/- Chris.radbone@...

I know Tom Worthington, Graeme Philipson and other members will recall Glen Heinrich, who became a member of the ACS in 1969, and as a member of CPA Australia, he was the ACS National Treasurer for well over a decade. I 'believe' but would greatly appreciate clarification, whether through, Glen's work at the South Australian Health Commission (fore runner to SA Health Department) he and 'others... (any names please let me know?) collaborated as ACS Professionals running an ACS Special Interest Group (SIG) on Health IT.

This ACS SIG lead to the establishment of HISA and therefore it's origins through the ACS to what the AIDH has become today.

In putting this out to my learned ACS colleagues, I am keen to be able to confirm, capture and record the early history, in order to acknowledge and appreciate where we are today, ...

 "If I have seen further," Isaac Newton wrote in a 1675 letter to fellow scientist Robert Hooke, "it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.".

Paul Bailes 13:41   #386

Very interesting Chris.

ACS should be able to count its "grandparenthood" of AIDH (via ex-SIG HISA) as a definite win.

The fact that AIDH is independent of ACS should not be regarded as a disaster, however:

Generally speaking, while ACS should be able to recognise professional specialisations within ICT in a more substantial way than "mere" SIGs, 100% inclusion of every coming-together of ICT professionals within the corporate framework of ACS can't be expected. (We should however reach out to these and do our best to ensure that we have compatible understandings of what it means to be that kind of ICT professional. For example, ACS should be on the same page as EA regarding what it takes to be a "Software Engineer".)

In the specific case of AIDH, it seems that its membership includes people who are recognisably ICT professionals, but also many who don't: see https://digitalhealth.org.au/communities-of-practice/institute-fellows/. IMHO it would be wrong for ACS to define "ICT professional" in such a way as to include the membership of AIDH. Rather, AIDH is one of those organisations (like EA – see above) with overlapping interests with ACS with which we need to maintain contact (and where possible, consistency).

David Abulafia 15:16   #388

I agree, the ACS should reach out to related societies

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3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

<u>**Q12**</u> No - the ACS is a professional Society <u>ill-equipped to manage and supervise diverse interests,</u> <u>especially those of a commercial nature</u>

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

<u>**Q12**</u> – Yes notwithstanding congruence of entity aims see response to Q6 and Q9

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q12: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations?

I think the Society as a whole would be <u>better served by specialist groups who were part of the</u> <u>Society itself, rather than separate entities</u>. Creating more entities, more constitutions and more administration doesn't seem to be a sensible way to structure a Professional Society which, in order to be effective in public education, government policy and member representation should be able to present a unified front.

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2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

<u>**Q12**</u>: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations? (P4)

<u>YES, in fact, in the past we have done this, albeit badly</u> (Telecommunications Society for example). Narrow minded academic interpretations focussed purely on computer science simply miss the point

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

<u>**Q12**</u>: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations? (P4)

Yes. Is this question similar to/same as question 6? This question does not clarify whether the hypothetical specialist associations are professional or industry.

In one idea, ACS could provide funds to run events and also corporate services (IT, HR, finance, marketing) for other associations in exchange for membership (i.e. members of the other specialist association become members of ACS, and ACS gets their membership revenue). In effect, these specialist associations would become similar to ACS branches – members are provided with resources to run activities similar to what is described in Q6.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

<u>**Q12**</u>: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations?

Feedback: Yes, probably a good idea given that we already have other industry associations. <u>As</u> <u>long as it does not distract from the central purpose of our society</u>.

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1.   KI Discussion Session aSCSa Wed 13 Oct 2021 18:00 UT+11

aSCSa wants to retain the positive elements of the relationship, and improve the situation, and not go backwards as the result of any negative impacts arising from a change in the ACS's form or constitution. **[P04] [SIGs] [Q12]**

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q12. Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations?

- The ACS is the premier professional body for the ICT community and the only way it can do that is being able to reflect the different disciplines under the ICT umbrella.
- ACS is the broadest professional association in the country, and as long as specialisations conform to a core IT Body of Knowledge and values it should represent these as well.
- Yes, an umbrella is **a preferred model, but we want to keep administration simple**.

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Ray: Yes to specialisations within ACS, and logical that they all work together within an overall organisation, e.g project management, testing. IT vs Business Systems is a challenge (e.g. a tech focus excludes project management)

Michael: It is logical that all specialisations work together under an umbrella organisation

Tristan: Case of engineering / built environment / CAD, i.e. with strong tech capabilities. Case of an ICT recruiter with limited ICT who's a valuable contributor. **SFIA framework helps with boundaries**   **[Q04] [Q05]**

Ray: People in the creative economy, applying IT.
Diversity and inclusiveness of background and specialisation is important

Justin: Agreed, but there's a question of how peripheral can the association with ICT be

7.   Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Peter: That's the future of the ACS. [**Inclusiveness** through all of absorption of existing smaller groups, and various kinds of collaboration and MoUs with larger ones.]

Amy: We need to avoid excluding categories because of narrow definitions.

Eric: This is an important conversation. There's rapid change, and the industry is in transition. It's no longer about computers and software, but about **digital transformation. We have to move beyond [i.e. add to, rather than abandon] skills with the computer as the tool. Yes, to testers, Fintech, games specialists, etc. We need to refresh and redesign specialisations.**

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National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q12: Re ACS as an umbrella organisation:
Tom: ASCILITE [tertiary ed] has very active Sigs, which have kept me sane since COVID-19 struck. **Meetings via Zoom every week, collaborating with people I have never met. ACS could try that.** Also noted that rarity – an active ACS National SIG, in secondary ed

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Damien: Need to manage downsides and risks, e.g. would other organisations want us? Noted example of AISA some time back billing itself more broadly than just Security.

Alex: Not appropriate to draw all groups under ACS, but MoUs yes.

Anthony: Note that some processes exist, esp. Nat SIGs, e.g. aSCSa [and ACCE]
Also an approach at one stage from a Pacific Island body, seeking (non-voting) Chapterdom and access to qualifications and PD processes; but independent organisational existence.

Damien: That could be a good model in the Pacific.

Damien: Specialist groups might also be a way of spawning additional pathways to CP.

National Discussion Session #04 Tue 12 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q6:   industry associations

Marilyn: Perplexed also about multiple associations within one association, because of the potential for conflicts in aims and values, and the large undermining the flexibility of the small. **[Q12]**

National Discussion Session #09 Mon 18 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q5, Q12:   Specialisations, e.g. managers, users; Umbrella organisation

David: There's a problem with the CP pathways. There's a generalised IT, and a Cybersecurity, but nothing on, for example, Data Analysis/Science, Cloud Dev.

A better-articulated framework is needed, and a much broader range of pathways needs to be actively supported – even if that just means a clearing-house for available courses. Current hot-points include electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles

[How many of the long list have ACS-supported or -indicated pathways to achieve them? https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/ACSimages/ACS-Certified-Professional-Pathway-Chart.pdf]

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella organisation approach

Frank: Supported

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q12: An umbrella organisation approach would create impossible conflicts of interest between the ACS and other associations. There have been ample examples in the past with individuals playing roles in multiple organisations, and seeking to utilise the ACS membership list. Using the MoU approach, it's very difficult to set up a framework for interaction, risk management is almost impossible, and an 'ACS Enterprises' subsidiary wouldn't solve the problem either.

The conflicts-of-interest issue is less of a concern with associations whose focus is on technology, and much more serious with those more concerned with technology use.

In principle, it ought to be possible for ACS to extract enough benefit from co-branding of events, but in practice other organisations take advantage of ACS funding and use of its communication channels to promote its events and brand. Branches end up having to invest effort into other organisations' events. No quantifiable benefits arise, such as new memberships.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella Organisation

Adrian: The debate about specialisations can lead to a 'Chapter'/ 'College' model (by whatever name), whether based on, e.g. the IEEE model, SFIA, other.
SIGs enabled this, in a flexible and relatively inexpensive manner. That's all been lost.

Siobhan: **ACS could attract existing and new groups through the establishment of a service-set to support them**. Possibility mentioned of an Augmented Reality / Virtual Reality group that Siobhan's been approached about in her ACS Labs capacity.

[This can be linked with the similar set of specific needs raised by aSCSa.]

National Discussion Session #15 Mon 25 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Mark: Yes! And attract serious experts to build, and to address, the sub-entity specialities.
Australia has those people, but few of them are integral to ACS at present.

Philip: Agreed. But that has to lead to business leaders being interested in ACS members.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Richard: Principle 4:   Diversity and inclusion

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Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines #P04   #Q12   #Q05

Dr. Paul O'Brien Nov 2   #393

I agree 100% with Paul B.

ACS needs to <u>maintain close contact with Professional and Industry organisations with which we have overlapping interests</u> whether or not their members satisfy ACS requirements for Professional membership.

devindra.weerasooriya@... Nov 2   #401

On Thu, Oct 28, 2021 at 06:17 PM, Mark Toomey wrote:

> There is an extraordinary array of <u>people who use IT to produce valuable products, while having no knowledge at all of the lower levels of the machines they wield</u>.

I'm aligned with abstractions and Use of Components; and that is likely to be an increasing trend. Data-Scientists rely on Data-Engineers to run their simulations at Scale. The former may not know how an available set of resources could be best adapted for a simulation task. It is quite possible also that both functions are performed by the same individual.

This does not at all mean that the Data-Scientist is NOT-ICT; so long s/he can Create / Modify / Differentiate-between Models. However a distinction should be drawn between that example and trends such as

•   Low-code or No-code

•   Change-management without Business/Systems Analysis or High-Level Design

•   People involved simply in Product/Concept Marketing

and there are many others of a comparable nature. <u>ICT people with these specialisations should ne requested to gather more substantive ICT-specialisation before before accreditation as a Professional</u>.

karl Nov 3   #419

The issue of domain specific ICT and for that matter SE is extremely important.

Areas like Health informatics now must have a great BOK which would form the basis of a Degree, if that has not already been done.

But it goes beyond that.

There are now either actual or developable BOK's in a wide range of domains such as banking, health, finance, booking systems, stock control, logistics, aeronautics and on we go.

ICT has lagged behind conventional engineering in that regard.

No-one would trust a civil engineer with 10 years of road design experience to design a wide-bodied passenger jet.

I can go on at length on this.

<u>Right now, we teach either Comp Sci or Information Systems. And, any specialisation is extremely limited.</u>

We could say that the education is application domain agnostic

<u>That might have been good enough 30 years ago, but, it cannot be justified today!</u>

<u>The problem is that the creation of a BOK suitable for teaching and presentation of standards of practice requires a large effort by professionals and academics already the relative field.</u>

The former are too busy and the latter need highly novel results that will attract ARC grants and create publications in top journals.

A radical idea for ACS would be to push for a large applied research organisation dedicated to the process of capturing and codifying and validating existing domain practices.

Happy to discuss this more

Q12: Umbrella / Hub

Matthew: Doesn't Brisbane run a few SIGs already?

Bevin: Support for specialisations is important, through whatever channels.

Ann: **At the moment there's no specialised group for Virtual Reality / Augmented Reality, Would more emphasis on hosting specialised groups address that?**

Michael: Accommodating special interests is important.

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

I have no basis on which to comment on this question, in addition to earlier comments that I have already made. **Any arrangement should be with a kindred association, professional (non-trade) in nature, be consistent with ACS ethics, and have no suggestion of membership, other than for individual members of that association who might meet normal ACS membership requirements.**

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

The capability can be included, but assessed and managed in line with Code of Ethics and Mission and Purposes.

Special Interest Groups and specialist associations can be included, for example.

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Accommodating special interests is important. And Special Interest Groups with in-kind and financial support can really make these SIGS really grow and prosper you only have look at how Meet-ups have been so successful and for ACS somewhat of a missed opportunity.

There may be some **opportunities to work collaboratively with other entities such as Canvas Co-Working here in Toowoomba to make SIGs thrive** but this does also require champions and volunteers and here ...

... **if ACS can provide some digital platforms for SIGs to have a permanent presence this will really help**   [#SIGs]

Tag Consolidation
#Q13 – 3 Topics – 57 Posts + 28 Other Messages   +4   +4
ACS member ability to nominate as an ACS Director?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 16:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On p.16

How many #Directors should there be?   (8)

z8300046@... Oct 2   #13

I reckon 9's the right number.

z8300046@... Oct 2   #14

[Another participant replies] That's too precise. Make it in the range 7 to 11.

1 person liked this

z8300046@... Oct 2   #15

 [And someone else chimes in] Hold on. We're supposed to be discussing Principles, not Features or Clauses.

I think what we're saying is that:

1. We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory

2. We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge

DAF Oct 2   #18

I am not sure about this exact number - but what skills? Who selects them?

UI Oct 2   #22

this is the first round of consultation and we're not focusing on the actual text of the constitution, rather on the principles that will later be distilled down. the principle is that as a limited company, representatives (perhaps elected in some manner) in a committee (we can call it a board) are required for governance and these representatives (we can call them directors). the directors will be responsible for all legal matters with the ACS (amongst other functions) and have "their necks on the line" so to speak.

we can discuss how the board members are chosen, under what criteria, to fulfil what functions, etc.

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 3   #24

This is cart before the horse. Of more interest to me is the idea that there should be one board to run any commercial dealings of ACS (with directors with experience of such) and perhaps another to run the services side with an overarching board to oversee that both are operating in the interest of members.

Roger as Member Oct 3   #25   Edited Oct 6

Note that there are additional hashtags for some of these Topics:

#P05   Open Nomination Processes for Board Positions

#P06   A Dual-Electorate Mechanism to Ensure Balance among Interests

#Q13 Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

Robert Estherby Oct 31 #360

1. We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory

2. We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge

Additionally, I think we need to avoid having a process that allocated directors to various states; if the best directors are all from Darwin so be it.

Nomination for the Board   (20)

DAF Oct 2   #19

I like the option of any member being eligible to stand for the board - but how do we get to understand them? In my experience with company boards, the recommendation of the nominations committee (often a subset of the board) is always followed. So unless known-to/liked-by the existing board -> No chance!

2 people liked this

Nick Tate Oct 3   #26

With a bias towards openness, any member in the professional division should be able to stand for the board

2 people liked this

Roger Clarke Oct 6   #38

I support openness to all members in the professional division.

But a nominee needs to demonstrate to the voters that the nominee 'has got what it takes' to get enough votes to be elected.

Voters should be looklng for energy and ideas, but also for demonstrated experience on Boards of Not-For Profits, and demonstrated commitment to the Society. We're likely to be better served by people who have cut their teeth on the Boards of smaller organisations.

The incumbent Directors can reasonably provide information about the desirable expertise of new Directors, but they have to be very careful to inform the voters in an even-handed manner, rather than indulging in direct bias for or against specific nominees.

3 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #128

Totally agree, if there's any mention of a nomination committee I will not be supporting any constitutional change. Any financial member must be eligible to be elected to the board of directors. Let the members choose. This, and the terrible process that was put in place, is why I opposed the last attempt to change to ACS to a company limited by guarantee. It is up to the organisation to support and provide any necessary PD for new directors. I have seen the totally abhorrent misuse/abuse of a nomination committee process by a state level sporting organisation in my state.

Candidates spell out their experience, views, etc, and members vote.

2 people liked this

Aubrey Oct 18   #129

Roger, demonstrated experience on boards/executive of other not-for-profits may be a plus but I wouldn't want this to be mandatory - as you say, commitment to the ACS and involvement/leadership in ACS events; with enthusiasm (and the the time to commit to the role) are key attributes. Candidates spell out what they can bring to the ACS board, with their relevant experience, and then the members decide who gets elected. We certainly do NOT want only candidates who have been vetted by the existing board via a nomination committee! Once elected the organisation should provide/facilitate necessary training for all directors.

1 person liked this

Beau.tydd@... Oct 19   #133

agree with the point roger but I would also like to see the ACS develop the future leaders through a program where even if the nominee doesn't have the demonstrated experience on Boards that they are supported to gain the experience - I would have thought this was one of the reasons for BEC and chapters (i.e. to gain the experience with older hands helping). The other point you make is that every elected needs to have the commitment to be actively engaged is also very important

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 19   #142   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with the below idea

David Abulafia Oct 19   #143   Edited Oct 30

If the ACS is not a company limited by guarantee, does that mean all the members of the ACS personally financially responsible for all debts in the case of bankruptcy.

Roger Clarke Oct 19   #144

One of the key features of *any* kind of incorporation is limitation of the liability of members.

There's usually a theoretical limit, such as $10 per member. I've never heard of it being called on (because it would cost too much to collect it).

I'm a member of a number of associations and companies limited by guarantee, and I lose zero sleep about my liabilities (:-)}

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 19   #145

Hi Aubrey

No, Companies limited by guarantee have a fixed maximum liability for members..typically about $10. Members and office bearers of Incorporated Associations are not liable for debts of the Association if it becomes insolvent and most associations have office bearers insurance to cover the office bearers for negligence etc.

apkriedemann@... Oct 25   #198

HI Roger, the most important principal for a "Member Representative Organisation" is that all members can nominate for any position and state their claim, the next part is that it is up to other members to evaluate the claim and pass judgement by way of a fully transparent / auditable / equitable ballot. This is so that those who can oppose an existing make up of a board can challenge. Also those how nominate must be able to canvass the vote just like in our general elections. They must have access to communicate to members at the very least via email and forums/groups and invite those to make contact.   That way members can seek to get to know a nominee and they have a chance to meet members one-on-one.

1 person liked this

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #258

How many of us realise that it is impossible for an ordinary professional member to nominate for MC, which is the current board. To nominate, a member must first satisfy onerous conditions of service on BEC or MC and , if I remember correctly, must be nominated by their branch. These requirements have starved the ACS of new blood and new ideas for many years.

I did attempt to model the governance structure once, and gave up. When individuals gain the right to vote on who goes on MC by being in a role that is appointed by the MC, all semblance of proper representation of member interests is lost.

How many individuals have been appointed to the ACS Chair role multiple times?

David Abulafia Oct 28   #261   Edited Oct 30

I would assume you need to work up to being on the MC. I would assume you would start as an active member of a BEC get experience to learn about running of the ACS, before you can be usefulon the MC. The members should be able to vote the people onto the MC.

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #267

Should is the problem, David. Members have no say. Members elect BEC. BEC appoints representatives to Congress, Congress elects MC. The voice of members is drowned by a self-serving elite.

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 28   #273   Edited Oct 30

So are state's BECs like the electoral college in the USA so large states do not overpower the smaller states?

Is the congress like the members of the board of management, and the MC consists of the president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary?

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #294

Roughly but not quite, David. Expanding a little on what Mark Toomey said:

• Branch Members elect a BEC of about 6-15 people

   BEC has modest theoretical power within that Branch. But the previous CEO centralised all power in the hands of the Branch Manager, so the BECs mostly have no discretionary funds and can make very few decisions. (It does vary quite a bit between Branches, however)

• Each BEC appoints 2 Branch Congress Reps (BCRs) to Congress

They have to be Professional Division members (MACS and above). They don't have to be on BEC at the time, but usually are.

Commonly, the BCRs are the Branch Chair and another office-bearer. But it's a decision by each BEC, taken at worst once every 2-years. Sometimes temporary appointments are made, to ensure someone can represent the Branch at a particular meeting

• Congress elects 9 of the Management Committee (MC) positions:

- 5 office-bearers

- 4 'National Congress Reps' (NCRs)

- the Immediate Past President and CEO are ex officio members, making up 11 MC members

The 5 Office-Bearer positions are subject to eligibility Rules that keep the potential candidates down to 25-40 at any given time (out of 10,000 Professional Division members), and for the President there are only maybe 5-10 eligible each time.

In practical terms, NSW and Vic each get an NCR, and 2 others are elected by Congress from among the remaining 14 Branch Congress Reps. In practice, the 3rd and 4th are almost always from Branches other than NSW and Vic.

Some of the complexities appear to many observers (including me) to be designed-in mechanisms to entrench an elite, or, perhaps better expressed, slow down each person's progression, giving time for them to be inducted / embedded / indoctrinated, before they get too far inside the small tent.

Some of the complexities were, however, designed with every good intent!

There's a strong bias in the Congress membership towards other than NSW and Vic. They get only 4/16 BCRs, and people voted in by BECs have 16/26 votes on Congress. Currently, only 1 of the office-bearers, plus 3 others are from NSW or Vic, so those Branches have only 8/26 Congress members = 31%, compared with a bit over 50% of Prof'l Division members.

There *is* no good or natural way to avoid the rest of the country feeling as if it's dominated by Sydney and Melbourne, but that formula was a real (if convoluted) endeavour to achieve it.

P.S. It takes quite a while of grappling with the Rules, and preferably a few Congress meetings, to get to grips with the above, and what it means for the management of the Society.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #304

A very confusing structure.

Do you are saying the BEC is a toothless pussy cat.

Tom Worthington Oct 31   #326

On 28/10/21 6:54 pm, David Abulafia wrote:

> I would assume you need to work up to being on the MC ...

Yes, I served my apprenticeship on the Canberra BEC before aspiring to a national role. Getting on the BEC was not hard, and being on it was not onerous.

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #352

Yes, the part of the 2019 reorg. of ACS that really made my hair stand on end was the proposal for a Nomination Committee for the Board ("Management Committee" as currently known), that (as I recall) could have included the CEO(!)

OTOH, the current system is not good enough. Too often (once being too often) we see people whose professional record is predominantly internally focussed (ie as an ACS committee person, somewhat in the vein of a career politician) rising to MC , rather than someone who has achieved as an actual ICT professional and who wants to share their capabilities and experience with ACS.

IMHO the best solution (to preventing "career politicians") is to short-circuit the path between the (professional) membership at large and the MC. Don't give Boards, Congress or BECs any capability to veto fresh blood – direct elections instead! (OK, maybe reserve some positions – President, Treasurer, VPs perhaps – to people with MC or maybe BEC experience).

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #359

I would agree with you Paul.

I think that direct elections and term limits are important to ensure that we have fresh ideas and eager directors.

Additionally, direct elections and a simple governance process will enable greater member participation and engagement in the governance of the society.

Any qualifications for a Director?   (29)

Nick Tate Oct 3   #27   Edited Oct 31

Any professional member should be able to stand. Trying to determine relevant experience will be too hard.

Jo Dalvean Oct 4 #34

Good evening Nick. I would also like to see any professional member be eligible.

2 people liked this

Nick Tate <n.tate@...> Oct 5 #35 Edited Oct 31

Thanks, Jo. ... Best Regards ... Nick

jp@... Oct 6 #39

Before any vote is conducted, candidates can detail their qualifications in much the same way that they do now.

3 people liked this

Peter Oct 12 #88

Any member should be eligible, yes. How to deal with any future necessary qualification for appropriate governance? Should any necessary training be made available (online, at own pace?) if they are successful? or will they be required to have the qualification before standing?

2 people liked this

Jo Dalvean Oct 12 #92

Peter, I would hope that the ACS supports volunteer Elected Members by providing opportunities to gain training and certifications suitable for Board membership. It may also assist risk and governance requirements to ensure that relevant training for Elected Members is up to date.

2 people liked this

Tom Worthington Oct 13 #94 Edited Oct 31

On 12/10/21 3:43 pm, Peter wrote:

> Any member should be eligible, yes. How to deal with any future necessary qualification for appropriate governance? ...

The only legal requirement I could see to be a director of an Australian company is to be at least 18 years old.

http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/ca2001172/s1.5.5.html

> Should any necessary training be made available (online, at own pace?) if they are successful? ...

Yes good idea.

Michael Driver Oct 16 #122

Hi Nick, I agree that the professional Members should stand. I fear that not enough professional members stand or commit in the current arrangement.

michelle.sandford@... Oct 21 #164

I would like to see properly qualified company directors appointed to the board. i.e. those who are GAICD or equivalent.

Professional Members interested in becoming Board Members should undertake training whilst they are BEC or Congress Members, or members of any of the advisory boards or subcommittees. There should be a funding avenue made available to interested parties if they cannot afford to purchase their own training. From a diversity and inclusion perspective this would enable a wider candidate pool.

Board Directors should be paid.

If your only qualifier is that candidates are professional members - then you are putting a multi-million dollar company at great risk from underqualified governance. When we become a company limited by guarantee, Board members have a very real fiduciary duty and this should not be a popularity contest, nor a longevity reward. Appoint properly qualified directors and pay them to do the job properly. If you do not pay them, you reduce the applicant pool to the most privileged within the society. Those that can afford to give their time and resources without it impacting other aspects of their lives. You restrict diversity on the board, and you create more risk for the organisation.

Also - they should not all be Professional Members of this organisation. You should have 1 or 2 independent directors to provide an outside perspective.

7 Directors in total. 5 ACS Professional Members with GAICD and 2 Independants

1 person liked this

Dr. Paul OBrien Oct 21   #165

Hi Michelle

I am sure you have the best interests of the ACS when making your contribution but I strongly disagree with most of your proposals:

I would like to see properly qualified company directors appointed to the board. i.e. those who are GAICD or equivalent.

I don't disagree that Board members should undertake appropriate training if they are not already members of the Institute of Company Directors or similar, and that ACS should fund their training.

Board Directors should be paid.

I disagree STRONGLY. Professionals have a duty to give back to their profession and being Board members is one way that they can do that. However, I also agree that members who are in a financial situation that makes it difficult for them to commit the time to being a Board member should be eligible for an ex-gratia payment.

If your only qualifier is that candidates are professional members - then you are putting a multi-million dollar company at great risk from underqualified governance.

This is NOT a multi-million dollar company. We are a Professional Association that, through good governance by "professional members", many of whom have had very successful senior management roles in the private and public sectors, is performing well financially. We should be focussed on developing professionalism in our members and assisting educational institutions to educate the ICT professionals of the future.

When we become a company limited by guarantee, Board members have a very real fiduciary duty.

As does the Management Committee of Incorporated Associations in most States.

Also - they should not all be Professional Members of this organisation. You should have 1 or 2 independent directors to provide an outside perspective.

I don't disagree with this, but they should have a VERY good understanding of the role of Professional Associations e.g. members of the AMA, EA, CPAs, ICA etc

1 person liked this

David Abulafia Oct 21   #166

I agree with Paul

Rod Dilnutt Oct 22   #167

Hi Michelle

I do not accept that

1. There should be a hurdle qualification for Board members - ACS members should have the right to represent themselves and, as professionals, are qualified through MACS/CP and our Code of Conduct. Additional governance training should be available from ACS.

2. Board members should be paid - This would encourage motivations and behaviours incongruent with ACS as a Professional Association

2. ACS is a multi-million company - implying that this is a commercial business venture - it is NOT.

1 person liked this

UI Oct 22 #168

Typically, in most limited companies, there is at least 1 director who's invited to sit in an observer/advisor capacity. The skills and experience required for governance, risk, legal, finance, compliance are on a whole different level. the need for proper induction + training to be a board member is paramount. Some members may already have such skills and experience as they are either in C-Level positions, eg. CIO, CTO or business owners. We have to acknowledge that while we're good at IT, we may not be good at being a director. It would be myopic to elect members into board positions who have zero skills and experience in running a board, let alone a multi million dollar company; it would end in disaster.

Also, typically, board members are remunerated for their time and service. Otherwise the positions would be jeopardised as members would not give priority and time to devote to the position over their own job (which puts food on the table). This also attracts the people with necessary talent and skill. Running a big organisation is very different to running a server farm. Also, being an NFP, it's different to running a for profit enterprise. Eg. CPA & Engineers Australia, both being professional associations, remunerates their board members. Again, terribly myopic if there is no remuneration.

a multi million dollar company doesn't automatically imply that it's a commercial enterprise. Don't know why people here have such misconceptions, perhaps it's a lack of knowledge and ignorance on company structure and governance. Eg. Anglicare is a multi million dollar company, it's a NFP & registered charity. They commercial ventures, eg. their retirement villages, to generate income to support the organisation's activities and goals. Engineers Australia is also a multi million dollar company.

Michelle Sandford <msandford@...> Oct 22 #173

Hi Paul,

Looking at your answers I would have to disagree with your statement that you strongly disagree with me on most of my points.

I think there is only one that you strongly disagree with me on, and your solution requires people who are less privileged to put their hand up and ask for money - which will put off all diverse candidates and may cause the ones that ask for money to be discriminated against in their application. If Board Members are paid (I'm not saying on the same level as a commercial board, but a fee that compensates the time they contribute), individual board members have the right to decline that payment if they feel they do not need it. I have seen that happen on several boards.

It is an organisation that is worth more than $30M, and that does require good governance. The Membership organisation itself does not make money, that is the part of the organisation that we spend money on - and I agree with you - that is where we want to invest the funds that have been earnt through other sources.

I am happy for the Congress and BECs, and the Advisory Boards to have a focus on members and advocacy, and also the right teams within the employed staff of the ACS. But the role of the Board for a company with more than 30M on its books is to ensure it keeps a healthy financial outlook so that members can be supported in the many years ahead.

Where you put this in the hands of volunteers - you put the members at risk - when a volunteer has to choose between the work they are paid to do, and something they do out of the goodness of their heart, they prioritise on what they must, not what they want to - and members suffer, and organisations fail. I would like to see ACS set-up to serve and protect members for another 50 years, and I do not believe you do this by luck. It requires careful governance in the hands of qualified professionals. Many of our Professionals are both qualified and experienced in this, and so I do not doubt they can do it. But the current choices are limited to those that have the time and the money, and sacrifice little to sit at the table. I do not think they are the best candidates our organisation has to offer. And I think that is what we need or we will surely fail.

David Abulafia Oct 22 #177   Edited Oct 31

I am on the board of management of a NFP CLG of 12 board members, we are not paid. My brother has as president, treasurer, and member of many not for profit organisations and never got paid.

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #178   Edited Oct 31

Agree with Paul.

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #179   Edited Oct 31

I agree with your sentiment, Michelle but not your conclusion.

Ann Moffatt Oct 22 #180   Edited Oct 31

I agree with rod.

Aubrey Oct 26 #201

On Fri, Oct 22, 2021 at 08:14 AM, UI wrote:

> It would be myopic to elect members into board positions who have zero skills and experience in running a board, let alone a multi million dollar company;

Who is suggesting that members with zero skills in anything will be elected to the board? If ordinary professional members cannot nominate then the organisation loses all pretence at being a member serving organisation. There needs to be requirements (in addition to financial membership status), such as requiring the candidate to be nominated by, say, 10 other members. and have to submit a statement laying out their qualifications, experience, and aims if elected, etc. Then the members vote accordingly. I seem to have more confidence in the common sense of members than you do. (Though I do concede that voters in political elections often make very strange choices!) The last thing the ACS needs is a board whose members belong to the professional board members club and do nothing else except attend board meetings!

Aubrey Oct 26 #202

On Fri, Oct 22, 2021 at 08:14 AM, UI wrote:

> Running a big organisation is very different to running a server farm

Other than they're usually called data centres these days, I see this artificial distinction as the key problem in this discussion. There really isn't much difference in the underlying processes (and therefore skills) required to manage any complex system, whether it is tek, or people, or, as is most often the case, both.

Also I would argue that a board doesn't "run" (nor manage) an organisation - the staff do that - what a board does, in accordance with the best interests of the members (as the member express them) is develop and provide direction, policy guidelines, and LEADERSHIP. I am probably mistaken, but I don't recall seeing the "L" word mentioned by anyone yet.

I want to see members who nominate for election to the board state how they will lead the organisation, and contribute to leadership role that the ASC can take.

Ann Moffatt Oct 27 #215   Edited Oct 31

I agree Aubrey.

David Abulafia Oct 27 #228   Edited Oct 31

I agree

David Abulafia Oct 27 #229   Edited Oct 31

I agree

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #253

Replying to Rod Dilnutt (spelling correct this time) #167...

> Hi Michelle

> I do not accept that

> 1. There should be a hurdle qualification for Board members - ACS members should have the right to represent themselves and, as professionals, are qualified through MACS/CP and our Code of Conduct. Additional governance training should be available from ACS.

Yes, paid up members should be eligible - but not guest members.

Being qualified as CP does not in any way provide credibility as a company director.   I hold a GAICD qualification, and can safely declare that CP is as far from GAICD as possible. Many NFP organisations put new directors through the AICD training because they want their directors to understand the job. Being a CP in systems design is irrelevant to directing the company.

> 2. Board members should be paid - This would encourage motivations and behaviours incongruent with ACS as a Professional Association

There are degrees of payment, and we must recognise that being a director of a substantial organisation can involve a heavy workload. Because some members are well paid and wealthy does not mean that all members enjoy the same. At the least, board expenses must be paid.

> 2. ACS is a multi-million company - implying that this is a commercial business venture - it is NOT.

According to the law, the ACS IS a company, and according to he financial statements, it has several million in assets,several million in income and several million in outgoings. It is, unquestionably, a multi-million dollar company, and we need to get over resisting that notion. Being a multi-million dollar company gives us great opportunity, but that comes with great responsibility. Discharging that responsibility, while siezing that opportunity, requires considerable experience and skill.

If it didn't, we'd think it fine for a high school PC jock to be advising the CEO of a major Australian business on digital transformation!

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 28   #257

Thanks again Mark - replying to #253

Having been fortunate to be able to be considered by my peers, and with an MBA and Australian Institute of Company Directors training and experience, in stepping up on the ACS Management Commiittee in February this year, I reiterate Mark's comments on the size and scale and breath of the ACS activities, notably an operation with $48m turnover is a company. Whilst my firm position is not to pay Board Members, in.line with our Professional Member driven and owned operation, I am very clear there is considerable skill and expertise in running an operation of the size and complexity, and nationwide reach of the ACS.

1 person liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #309

From a principles point of view:

- Any professional member should be eligible to stand

- There should be at least 1 independent director

- The ACS should seek to have 50:50 gender representation on the board

- The ACS should seek to encourage younger members to the board (Under 40).

- The ACS should have an absolute limit of 8 years as a board member (extension to 12 if you run as president) - non-consecutive.

- The ACS board should have the power to create sub committees (Risk/Audit, Policy etc.) which include non-elected ex officio members

David Abulafia Oct 30 #315   Edited Oct 31

Are you there enough full quality female member in the ACS to match up with male members, or do we take any female member irrespective of quantity.

Again there should be equal opportunity for men and women to be nominated, but you cannot guarantee equal outcome.

Robert Estherby Oct 30 #317   Edited Oct 31

Hi David,

At this stage we are talking principles; and if ASX boards are looking for 50:50 representation, I think this should be our goal.

I am confident, given we have had several female Management Committee members, BEC chair's and Presidents we will have no trouble with having an appropriate quantity of quality female candidates.

Paul Bailes Oct 31 #349

One of the "issues" I had as VP was ACS's inconsistency about which members got paid versus who worked for free.

ACS employed (still employs?) members as tutors for its own education product, for remuneration as I understood. (As I recall I was not successful in getting the details from management – another failure on my account.)

But ACS expects members to work for free on accreditation panels for ICT degrees. In view that ACS surely derives much of its standing from being the accreditor of professional qualifications in the ICT space (even if these qualifications can routinely be waived for MACS), the fact that ACS isn't prepared to remunerate the key individuals in the process is remarkable.

This is not to say we want pay for MC members, but ay least to say that the inconsistencies in ACS's approach to remunerating members for work done need to be fixed.

—————————————

5.   **Rimas Skeivys MACS Snr – rimas@ugovern.com.au**   **Wed 13/10/2021 3:52 AM**
2.   Any MACS or FACS member can stand / <u>nominate</u> for governing body election with support from two other MACS or FACS members.   **[Q13]**

—————————————

3.   **Brian Finn**   **30 September 2021**
Q13 <u>Yes for professional members but not associate grade</u>

4.   **Rod Dilnutt FACS CP**   **4 October 2021**
Q13 – <u>Any member should be able to stand</u>.

6.   **Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021**
Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

Being an IT Professional does not automatically qualifies someone as suitable to sit on a Board, and certainly not one of a large organisation. I think that Members who have ambitions to become Directors <u>should at a minimum be AICD trained, but really have had other relevant experience or board-level appointment before being suitable for nomination</u>.

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2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

<u>**Q13**</u>: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

YES, **any member should be able to nominate, but it would be prudent to develop appropriate vetting proceses** in order to ensure that the ACS Board possess a membership which includes the relevant expertise in governance and financial acumen to lead a multimillion dollar enterprise.

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

<u>**Q13**</u>: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

No, **professional ACS members should not be able to nominate as an ACS Director**. Caveat: **unless they can supply relevant board director qualifications to ACS**.

ACS has grown over the last decade and is experiencing growing pains. In the distant past, the operational work of ACS was performed by well-intentioned volunteers, because ACS had small membership numbers, hence budget, and could not afford many full-time staff. Now, ACS has over 100 full-time staff nationally and volunteers are not required to perform the daily functions of ACS any more. Members who have previously volunteered their time working operationally might be left feeling unwanted and upset now that they are not required, and perhaps want to return to the old days when they were needed.

The curious part of this situation is that there is still plenty of room for volunteers in ACS. Tertiary students can volunteer their time as ambassadors and place ACS pamphlets in common rooms which they have access to and mentor other students on professional standards. Senior industry and academic members can volunteer their time mentoring more junior members. Special interest groups are best run by enthusiastic members who are passionate about the group's topic. Professional associations in other industries are much better at organising volunteer programs than ACS is. This points to a gap in ACS capabilities – **a strong volunteering program is required**, that organises and rewards members who donate their time.   **[Q07]**

The other growing pain being experienced is at board-level. <u>ACS</u> has grown to a $50 million organisation and <u>cannot allow boardroom-unqualified members to sit on its board of directors</u>. Addressing the wording in the question, previous experience serving on boards should not be confused with governance qualifications. Again, in the past, ACS depended on the altruistic efforts of ICT-experienced but board-unqualified MC members. ACS has grown to the point where a professionalisation of the board is now required. Performing board duties should not be confused with acting as an ICT professional. The ACS has ICT professionals as members, not board directors. The AICD would be able to draw from amongst its membership to fill its board of directors, but not ACS. The board (MC) needs to shift from being a representation-based model to a model with professional board directors. The board directors at ACS should be professional directors, whose job is being a non-executive director, and who are directors on other boards. As being a director is their job, they <u>should be paid to sit on the ACS board</u>. The idea that Joe, who runs the corner IT shop in Darwin, should sit on the board of a $50 million organisation, simply because he represents NT, is ludicrous (no offence to NT members). We all support the idea that ACS should be a professional association that supports high standards for ICT professionals, so why wouldn't we want the same for board directors on the board of ACS? Asking unqualified individuals to perform work is completely contrary to ACS values.

Now, of course, there are some ACS members who also own their own medium/large companies and are therefore experienced and qualified board directors. Those members who are experienced

in fulfilling board director roles for other companies that are at least $50 million in size should be allowed to serve on the ACS board, but there will not be many. The ACS board should therefore allow independent non-executive directors, who are not members, to provide diversity of thought. The number should ebb and flow, depending on how many qualified ACS members put their hand up. A small board of around seven independent directors is good governance and is the recommended model from AICD.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

Feedback: Any professional member with appropriate experience or qualifications should be able to nominate for the board.

_____

3.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

Q13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director? Or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

•   Anyone should be able to nominate but only if they are trained.

4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director? Or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

•   This is a really important question and how the board is constructed is incredibly important. For example, are they representing the Branches? Are there some who are directly elected by members? Good idea to have at least a couple who are directly elected.

•   Any new Constitution/Board **should not have the CEO as a Director**. ACS is a not-for-profit charity - the CEO should not be a Board member of a member-servicing, member-based organisation. The CEO has an incredibly important role but from a governance perspective they should not oversee their own work.

•   **A Board Charter provides the guardrails – what is the Board allowed to do, what is it not allowed to do, what is its purview, where are its boundaries?**

•   Representational Board members can be problematic, however, not impossible. Representatives need to understand their role on the Board is to represent the ACS not their particular constituency and agree to behave as such.

5.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director? Or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

•   Anyone professional member should be able to nominate

•   They need to be aware of legal implications and risks to becoming a Director

•   **Appropriate (professional) training should be offered with the understanding it is completed in a certain amount of time**

•   Don't want to turn it into an old boy's club

•   Other questions raised: Is it ok that if I can line up 20 mates, I might be able to get onto the Board? Do we need to ensure Board members have appropriate range of skills?

6.   Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Q13: Board composition

Michael: In addition to Board-members directly elected by the membership, there are **benefits in having some appointed Board-members so that the skills-matrix can be balanced out**.

Alan: It's **important that voting powers of the two main States are constrained in some way, to prevent dominance over the composition and hence over the orientation of the Board**.

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination as a Director **[P05]   [P06]**

Damien: **The Board needs to** be elected, left to get on with it, but **be effectively accountable**. If Congress ceases to have its current power to determine directions and policy, then what??

Alex: Directors' obligations may conflict with the best thing for the members.

Damien: This loops back to 'Who are the Directors and are they representing the members?'.

Damien: Supports the Senate model, doesn't want large-State dominance of member input.

Alex: Also supports the Senate model.

[But the corporations law precludes Directors representing members. The reference-point is the company, not the members, and definitely not any sub-set of the members, e.g. Branches]

Alex: Should Directors have short terms, in order to achieve better control by members?

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q13: Directors

Dennis: Openness to all professional members is an important aspect

Susan: Adequacy of background and expertise? What about a skills matrix?

Susan: Diversity of candidates, and of Directors? (On gender, race, etc. lines). How can this be achieved? Some allocated roles?

Erica: Diversity in gender is important, and it's noteworthy that ZA has done it better.

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q13: Directors

Karl: Primacy of elected officials in decision-making, with staff for support and execution **[Dir]**

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination of Directors

Michelle: Might the inclusion of some independent Directors help?
[But will they actually exercise power? And how do we find them? Does a Nomination Committee, appointed by a governing committee, achieve actual independence?]

Frank: The nomination provisions in the HCF Constitution and associated documents could have relevance to ACS's needs

Michelle: Members' control over the governing committee is and should be solely through the ballot box [i.e. the opportunity to choose which candidates to vote onto the committee]

John: To address the imbalance in Branch sizes, ACS needs to retain some parallelism with the Australian federal solution [i.e. some Directors by universal suffrage, some with a bias in the vote-value to benefit smaller Branches.]

National Discussion Session #11 Tue 19 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q13: Re who can nominate as a Director, the first question is what the law requires.
Although it's an ideal or equitable goal for anyone to become a Director, in practice it doesn't work that way. Few have formal training or significant expertise in corporate governance. ACS should require completion of an appropriate external course such as AICD's, because being required to read through a few documents doesn't deliver. So a disqualification process is needed, based on defined criteria.

However, even AICD course material is all-to-quickly forgotten by some members. One example very apparent in BECs is lack of knowledge of meeting procedure. The motivation for many people is enthusiasm for events, and personal networking.

Associates should not be permitted on BECs, only Professional Division members.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q13: Nomination as an ACS Director / the Board generally

Alan: The Board should be elected by professional members, 50% each by the general membership and the BECs [i.e. a blended HoR / Senate approach.]
Consideration could be given to specified criteria for nomination.

Siobhan: 6-9 Board members, c.5 elected by members, and the remainder [in some sense] independent Directors appointed by the Board based on gaps in the Board expertise matrix.

[But what about member control over a runaway Board?]

—————————————

Any qualifications for a Director? #P05   #Q13   #Directors
Ann Moffatt Nov 2   #395

While I agree with your sentiment, <u>having a 50/50 gender representation would be difficult seeing the proportion of women in IT who join the ACS</u>.

Nomination for the Board #P05   #Q13   #Directors
Mark Toomey Nov 4   #426

The latest two editions of Information Age contains the following paragraph:

> ACS needs a new president

> Nominations for ACS national governance positions close next Monday 8 November at 5pm AEDT, so if you're keen to run for office, head over to our website: ACS National Elections 2022/2023 – Call For Nominations.

Six positions, each with a two-year term starting in January 2022, are up for election:

- President
- Vice President (Membership Boards)
- National Congressional Representative (4 positions)

The elections will be held on 23 November, 2021.

One might be excused for thinking that this opportunity is open to all members.

But following the link takes us to this:

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Criteria for selection is taken from the ACS Rules and ACS National Regulations, and the relevant clauses are specified below. Applicants should review the criteria in the Rules and Regulations prior to nominating.

...

<u>How many people understand that the field of candidates for president allowed by these clauses is less than 150? How many understand that for the branches with more than 25% of national membership, there can be only ten eligible candidates for president?</u>

<u>And we want candidates to have qualifications or at least experience as a company director? Do they even exist in this ridiculously narrow pool?</u>

David Abulafia Nov 4   #427

Every thing accept board endorsed sounds good.

A past company director sound a bit hard to get

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

<u>Yes. Any professional member should be entitled to stand for the membership of the governing body</u>, be it incorporated entity or CLG; governance requirements are not all that dissimilar.

<u>Professional members should constitute the significant majority of the members of the governing body</u>.   **[#P09]**

Having prior expertise and experience in governance is a definite benefit. <u>Training is available for those with less experience and does not hurt as a reminder for those with more experience.</u>

For this reason <u>I prefer the collegiate model of selecting board members, rather than direct election, although I would be comfortable with a small number of directly elected members</u>. I have not had a chance to give any thought to non-ACS members serving on the board.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

<u>Professional ACS members should be able to nominate, even if 'training' is</u> required for association or corporate Boards is <u>provided by the ACS</u>. This will include anticipation of legal requirements.

Tag Consolidation
#Q14 – 4 Topics – 19 Posts + 19 Other Messages   +3   +6
Members' ratification required for key documents?
As at Mon 1 Nov 2021, to 16:00 UT+11
Additional Content 1-12 Nov 2021 – On pp. 8-9

Member Involvement in Key Policies (10)

z6957315@... Oct 5   #37

It's normal for a Constitution to only contain a relatively small, core proportion of what makes an organisation tick.

One common pattern is for a Company Board to have absolute power over all of the other documents that are important to members. Things like the membership levels and the requirements to achieve and sustain levels. And things like the Code of Ethics.

How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?

3 people liked this

Robert Estherby Oct 30   #298

Some aspects of this will be protected as the objectives are within the constitution.

I think as a principle the constitution should require consultation and membership ratification of key areas such as

Governance

Membership

tony.errington@... Oct 30   #318

The key issue with a constitution is that it needs to cover all the key points, but must not end up being a Victorian novel that no-one looks at. If we accept Philip Argy's view expressed in Q08 (and I have a lot of respect for Philip), then the constitution is the way to make a CLG work for us. So it must cover governance (including electing and removing directors), membership, branches and chapters, the ACS objectives and major activities, membership grades etc. However, the actual drafting of the constitution is a matter for later stages of this project.

P Argy Oct 30   #320

My suggestion is to take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't. For those that we don't, what do we want to replace them with? That will at least give us a set of drafting instructions for the lawyers. When they come back with a draft Constitution we can then discuss how faithfully they have imp[lamented what we wanted, but separating the drafting from the higher level discussion is important.

For those who haven't actually read the ACS existing Constitutional documents, they are attached. If they're not the latest versions they're close enough for the exercise I'm suggesting!

ACS National Regulations as at Apr 2011.pdf

ACS-Rules-Nov-2010.pdf

Roger Clarke Oct 30   #321

On Sat, Oct 30, 2021 at 07:58 PM, P Argy wrote:

> ... take the existing Rules and National Regulations and identify those elements that we like and those that we don't ...

That's a poor substitute for requirements analysis, Philip.

Congress and CRWG expressly avoided such narrow scope.

First understand what members' conception of the Society is in current and foreseeable-future circumstances. Then imagine features that will provide the scope to deliver on that conception. Only then consider what we currently have, what needs to be retained, and how to transition gracefully from one to the other.

If anyone actually wants them at this early stage, the authoritative versions are at https://www.acs.org.au/governance/rules-and-regulations.html

P Argy Oct 30   #322

I was not suggesting that's ALL we do, but it does ensure that the basics are covered and assists people to identify topics for further discussion.

David Abulafia Oct 30   #323

Great ideato create a base to start from

David Abulafia Oct 31   #324

I think Phillip's approach would be a good basis for a requirement analyst

Dr. Paul O'Brien <paulobrien56@...> Oct 31   #327

Philip

I agree 100%

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #330

I disagree strongly with this.

The current constitution and rules, while appropriate for the time, are no longer appropriate for today or the future.

Aside from that, we have a process that Nick and Roger have thoughtfully developed and we should trust them to lead us through this process.

Policy Making   (1)

Rod Dilnutt Oct 15   #107

Members should have decision making power and visibility over all policy and operational activity. Staff should not determine ACS Policy but should be advising Governing bodies of requirements.

Exemplar Peer Organisation   (5)

Mark Toomey Oct 28   #263   Edited Oct 30

I was asked about exemplar constitutions for a Company Limited by Guarantee. Well, how about we go one step further and look at a contemporary organisation that is not just a Company Limited by Guarantee, but is also gleefully eating the ACS breakfast, lunch and dinner in the health space.

Every person involved in this debate shoudl look outward a bit more.

Start with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

They've even got a website that puts the ACS to shame!

Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au) It's accessible in just 2 clicks from their landing page.

Their website puts the ACS to shame.

And don't forget to check out the credentials of their CEO!

Ann Moffatt Oct 29   #276   Edited Oct 30

Thanx mark,

I agree. The ACS website is a disgrace for an enterprise that holds itself up to represent the profession.

Lets spend some of our large bag of money on getting a decent website rather than sending execs to WEF meetings.

Roger Clarke Oct 29   #278

Mark Toomey wrote:

> Australasian Institute of Digital Health.

> Here is their constitution: Constitution_ammended-ratified_19-Nov-2020.pdf (digitalhealth.org.au)

...

Thanks Mark.

But I can only detect one provision that's other than mainstream.

For example, re member-numbers to call a General Meeting, cl.15(2)(b) merely refers to Corps Act s.249F (5%).

And there are no occurrences in the document of 'transparency' or 'consultation', or member 'approval', 'ratification' or 'endorsement'.

The exception is:

28. Direct Votes

(a) The Board will determine from time to time if Voting Members are entitled to vote by a Direct Vote on a matter or a resolution ...

But that empowers the Board, not the members, and the members can't force the provision to be invoked.

So in what way does the AIHD Constitution "assure the members of better control"?

BTW, I fully agree with your remarks about the web-site problem   (:-(}

David Abulafia Oct 29   #280   Edited Oct 30

I completely agree with Ann

Mark Toomey Oct 31   #343

Roger, all.

First, apologies for the delay in replying. I have no power, no phone and no internet due to the storms on Thursday and Friday morning. Unlikely to have anything until Monday at best, unless I drive to somewhere that the phone can connect. Who knows when this little contribution will be sent.

So you seem terribly worried that a clg based governing body can run riot. I guess that's fair, as the current model allowed MC to run riot. In fact, MC has been ignoring members for years, and has been totally unaccountable.

In the AIDH model, which is quite unremarkable and very consistent with the model I used for the digital leadership institute, the board is accountable to members normally through the election process, in which all financial members vote according to their individual preference. Directors who do not have the interests of members foremost will lose their seats.

The second form of accountability is the special general meeting, which can be called by members, regardless of whether the board wants it to not. The constitution defines the exact rules for special general meetings, such as how many members are required to call the meeting. Special General Meetings are generally used to address major concerns with board behaviour.

But the above is a somewhat nuclear approach. Smart companies have highly developed methods of addressing and solving problems. Many use a quality management system aligned to ISO 9000. It beggars belief that the ACS does not have an ISO 9000 QMS, but then again, given the raft of failure over the years, it should be no real surprise.

OH, if anyone feels that I have missed something, just remember that I assess on hard evidence, not on bluster. The ACS may have something it calls a QMS, but there is no evidence of any such thing that actually works.

Because of the storm related issues, this is probably my last contribution to this stage of the process. I look forward to contributing in the next stages too.

Stop Unpalatable Changes of Direction   (3)

Jacqueline Hartnett Oct 7   #56

Oh dear! So many of the answers to this one are centred around what you mean by the terms' involvement' and 'key documents'. My take on this is that <u>we need a mechanism to stop unpalatable changes of direction by those to whom we have delegated authority, before this happens</u>. I am not sure how this principle might turn into practical method of achieving this aim. Suggestions are needed.

cindy.chung@... Oct 8   #60

Need to have an easy way for people to find the terms and the key documents. Current method is not easy to use.

Robert Estherby Oct 31   #371

I think this is important in ensuring we have the mechanisms to adapt more generally; not just stop the 'unpalatable'.

I think <u>the principle should be that the constitution looks to embed a mechanism for efficient and rapid consultation and endorsement</u>.

I think the key to this would also be having <u>a minimum participation threshold before a resolution was possible</u>.

Eg. We have an online forum to discuss making the President a life appointment, no resolution could be made until 20% of membership had endorsed the proposal. If numbers were short, the proposal could be put at the next AGM.

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3.   Brian Finn   30 September 2021

<u>Q14</u> Endorsement of Key Policies - Yes by professional member voting

4.   Rod Dilnutt FACS CP   4 October 2021

<u>Q14</u> – <u>Members should have decision making power and visibility over all policy and operational activity</u>. Staff should not determine ACS Policy but should be advising Governing bodies of requirements.

6.   Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com   30 October 2021

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

The <u>appropriate **balance of Board oversight and member plebiscite** must be found to prevent the ACS from becoming hamstrung by constantly deliberating minor decisions</u>. Once the Membership has agreed the constitution, the Board and ACS staff must be left to execute the strategies this informs.   **[P09]**

There must be an <u>opportunity for regular review amongst interested members</u>, and **ongoing communication with the membership about significant decisions being made**. We are, after all, a Society of Information Professionals so we should surely be able to get this right??!   **[P08]**

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2.   Ian Dennis FACS, HLM   2 October 2021

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

<u>Lots, if we wish them to succeed</u>. You have to take the people with you.

3.   Dr Craig Horne MACS (Snr) CS (Cyber)   5 October 2021

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

<u>Zero</u>.

<u>Internal policies are best set by the CEO and the Board</u>. <u>Members are in effect the 'customers' of ACS</u>. ...   [P01]

... Members can provide feedback on what services they enjoy and would like to see more of but not how those services should be delivered. Imagine trying to tell Facebook what their internal policies should be, simply because you have a Facebook profile? Imagine telling YouTube how to run their business because you made a video once? From an ownership perspective, imagine telling Woolworths how to set internal policies because you bought a parcel of 10 shares on the ASX? Just because members are the customers (and owners) of ACS, doesn't mean they can tell ACS how to do its job. **The most involvement that members should have, as with other organisations, is to <u>vote for which director they want to fill a vacancy</u>**. Bizarrely, whether ACS members should be able to vote directly for directors, instead of the old boy's club voting for themselves from amongst Congress in a massive conflict of interest, doesn't form part of the questions in this survey.   **[P11] [Dir]**

Again, we expect ICT professionals to adhere to high standards in their work. Why would we expect any different for the ACS business staff? Why would an ICT professional have any expertise in marketing, HR, or event management? It makes no sense and ACS members should stick to being recognised as experts on ICT matters, not business management.

5.   Sam Horwood – sam@horwood.id.au   16th October 2021

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

Feedback: Yes, but **only for the larger "big ticket items"** like changes to the mission or purposes. Otherwise, aren't we constraining the delegation of powers?

Ashley Maher 13:43   #387

On the other, <u>the members need a basis whereby they can trust the Board and CEO to be acting in accordance with the values, mission and purposes of the Society</u>.

<u>For the members to have that trust, a series of layers of regulation are needed</u>:

(1) members need enough visibility of what the Board and CEO are doing

(2) with major new initiatives, members need visibility in advance of decisions, and meaningful opportunities to provide input (the 'bring the members along on the journey with you' dictum)

(3) where member concern exists, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of concern', and communicate it to the Board and CEO

(4) where that concern is serious, and responses by the Board and CEO do not dissipate the concern, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of serious concern', and communicate it to the Board and CEO, but also to all other BECs, and the membership

(5) where the matter is so serious that trust by the members in the directions the Society is taking is being undermined, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of no confidence', and communicate it to the Board and CEO, and to all other BECs, and the membership

(6) if any two BECs pass a materially identical 'motion of no confidence', the Constitution needs to provide that a General Meeting is automatically called at which the motion must be put and debated

As with all regulatory arrangements, the purpose is to avoid the need for 'nuclear option' (6) to ever be implemented.

The warning signs turning into thunderclouds is intended to be sufficient to communicate to the Board and CEO that a serious problem exists, such that consultative processes are implemented to address them.

At each step of seriousness a define response from the Board and-or CEO would be the result. For example a report to all members explaining why an action causing concern is in fact in the wider interest of members.

A similar series of escalating motions could be oversight for the associated State Manager.

Too often organisations have the fail safe of members being able to call a special general meeting if there are sufficient members who are not happy. But this often tends to be a MAD (Mutually Assured destruction) option. The purpose of the above is to build in relief valves to ensure nobody reaches the MAD option.

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2.   Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Beau expressed the view that undertaking this **<u>consultation by members and for members was very important</u>**. This was <u>contrasted with the approach to consultation on the strategic plan, which was felt to be more consultant led</u>. **[P08]   [P09]   [Q14]**

4.   Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

Q14. What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

- Who owns the Code of Ethics? **If such things are 'owned' by the membership, they are subject to majoritarianism/hijack. On the other hand, the Board of Director should not have the power to change the Code of Ethics**. It is not necessarily either/or. We need to build in guard rails e.g. the Code of Ethics can be changed after consultation with x and y.
- <u>Who are the 'members'</u> proposed to be? All members? Members of Congress? The people on the Board?
  [Roger clarified that the proposal is that all professional division members and associates would be treated as members as members of the CLG. The law may preclude changes the number of voting members. But it may preclude the removal of voting rights from existing Associates.]

- Roger invited thoughts on opportunities for guard rails e.g. only after consultation with . . .

5. Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

Q14. What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

- **Should have the broadest consultation possible – in line with the importance / magnitude of the decision.**

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National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q14: Creation and amendment of Key Policies

Alex: Too big for all members to be heard on all issues, so has to be a representative democracy, but **must** also **feature consultative arrangements**.   **[P08]**
A voice through representatives needs to be enshrined in some way.
[Does convenient online voting change that?]

National Discussion Session #05 Thu 14 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q4-5:   Associate grade, managers, users, thresholds   **[Q2]**

Susan: How do we ensure the constitution enables evolution but maintains integrity **[Q14]**
The scope needs generic definition, with flexibility for extensions. Cohorts change continually.

Q14:   Member involvement in key policies

David: **The 2019 corporatisation proposal seriously concerned many members because of the apparent intent to dilute, even remove, member influence on policy, esp. re membership.   [P08]**
The CRWG process is important to ensure the new constitution includes the ability of members to influence these matters well beyond just voting for Board-members.

Susan: The ACS's governance structure looks like a management structure. It's not a consultative membership framework, but a managerialist framework. **At the minimum, proposals must be communicated and explained to the membership, as the first step in accountability.   [P08]**

Behavioural norms need to be embedded within the process, and responsible and sustainable change must be achieved within the ACS. But some initiatives, such as countermeasures against discrimination, may not be achieved by popular vote.

Dennis: The accountability component of governance has been a serious shortfall.
It's necessary to identify the categories of initiative that need to go the members first, e.g. definitions of membership grades is one. Member [AGM?] approval is essential.

Susan: However, what degree of power do members need to have?
[AGM / 75%? Online vote / 50%?   Do members Approve? Ratify? Endorse?]

There's tension between representational and direct democracy approaches.

[Under the present Rules, ACS is 3-layered / buffered representational: Members elect BECs; BECs elect Congress Representatves; Congress Reps are 16 of 26+ votes on the electoral college for the Management Committee; at most a couple of score people are qualified to nominate for the 4 office-bearer roles, only 16 people for other 4 elected MC positions, and very few indeed for the Presidency.]

Anthony: Note the difference between members' capacity to make a Determination by means of a Referendum cf. give Strong Advice by means of a Plebiscite. **A possible approach is to require that members must be informed, and their views must be sought.   [P08]**

Susan: **And then care is needed as to what the topics are that fall within that scope.**

Dennis: **That's the hard choice about which things are delegated to the Board, versus informed in advance, versus hard-consultative-with-plebiscite, versus determinative-**

National Discussion Session #07 Fri 15 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q14: Membership Involvement in Key Policies

Elizabeth: A <u>balancing act</u> is needed between direct democracy [binding referenda or non-binding plebiscites] and ungovernability.

Elizabeth: <u>A key issue is which documents are the ones that members most need to be strongly influenced by members rather than delegated to an all-powerful governing committee</u>.

Rod: <u>Matters of importance must have member voice</u>.   **[P08]**
Line up with <u>mission, purposes and key functions</u>, and the more important among those must go to the members [for 'approval' / 'ratification' / 'endorsement']

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q8:   Innovation / Labs / Incubators   [Also Q14 Membership Involvement in Key Policies]

Graeme: **Members' reaction when this was announced was "What the hell's going on?". Suddenly there they were, a *fait accompli***. He didn't ever see a detailed explanation why.   **[P08]**
Are there any (successful) overseas models, or any known instances of a professional society doing this. Not dogmatically opposed, but <u>members want to know about it in advance, and why</u>. If it were a channel for (adequate) government funding, that could make a difference?

National Discussion Session #10 Mon 18 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q14: Member involvement in key policies

Michelle: How much detail should be in the Constitution, and how much elsewhere?
[And is the governing committee to be granted full power over all other documents?]

Michelle: Directors' actions must be in the members' best interests.
[But for a CLG the reference-point is the company, not members; and a professional society has a strong social/community responsibility; and litigation to enforce is almost unknown.]

———————————

Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards #Mission-Purposes   #Key-Functions   #P01 #Q03   #Q07

Paul Bailes Nov 4   #433

Dear Jack

Thanks very much for the below. Good thing we had Roger Clarke to expose the other side of the COVIDSafe story for ACS!

I am also VERY GLAD to see your comment about Boards.

The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016.

As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to this regressive step, despite being intensively lobbied in the lead-up to the MC meeting. I don't to this day quite understand why it was sooooo important to some people to go this way.

As soon as the vote was taken, and being unable to live with the decision (as required by the prevailing MC code of conduct), I announced my resignation and left the meeting. (Fortunately meeting in Brisbane, so able to take a suburban train home :-)

As you will see from all this discussion, I am one of many (like you) who has not given up on ACS (despite the foregoing), but very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership, for example: **[#P00]   [#P02]   [#P07]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

•   reduction of Boards

•   2019 constitutional reform

•   COVIDSafe endorsement

•   <add your own here>

One detailed observation about **MC - meetings (in my day: 2013-16) always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**. No "other business", thus reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion.

Re: Purposes and Outcomes #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #410

My (somewhat lengthy) suggestion is..

"to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources **ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and production of the technology in Australia**".

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

...

•   **ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**   **[#P00]   [#P09]   [#P11]   [#Q14]**

Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Rod: **Vital importance of safeguards existing to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity.** The incorporation form is less vital than that issue
                          [#Dir] [#P00] [#P02] [#P08] [#P11] [#Q14]

Charlynn: Must be for the members and agreed among the members, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical.   **[#P00] [#P02] [#P08] [#P11] [#Q14]**
Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed
Students don't feel the ACS is there for them – and that's the Society's future!

Susan: Focus on members, because so much has changed

John: <u>The vital thing for the Society is that it be of and for its members</u>   **[#P00]**

The organisation needs to be kept simple. <u>The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus</u>

Jo: Angst in Vic and in NSW Branch about the impact of the strategy project on the constitutional work. May need to delay the strategy work to enable the constitutional work to run effectively

<u>Member-centricity is critical. There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity</u>   **[#P00]   [#P02]**

We're no longer a principles-driven organisation, and delegation and freedoms

Submission by Dennis Street – 30 October 2021

This is always a matter of judgment and there can be no definitive answer. Obviously, some <u>fundamental matters, i.e., fundamental rule changes, require consultation with the support of the full membership</u>.

On the other hand, <u>many if not most policy matters are resolved within the established authority structure</u>.

Submission by Jan Kornweibel – 31 October 2021

Members and committees with responsibilities for defining these can create and amend, but members should be informed and encouraged to give feedback as appropriate.

Website desciptiom being called "engineering professionals"? (1)

Christopher (Chris) Radbone Oct 30   #290

Thank you Adrian for collating the temporal listing of Australian Computer Society website statements, and drawing attention to the poor or complete lack of definition from 2017 onwards.

It is clear there is a combination of serious issues here that need to be addressed as a matter of importance. This includes the range of ICT Professions that the Society is seeking to engage and support, whether the scope of membership categories aligns to contemporary and arguably growing ICT enabled or driven areas needing skilled professional and expertise.

Areas like Blockchain, Cyber Security, Data Analytics and AI/ Machine Learning for example, all rely on underpinning and effective ICT.

In reflection, I believe that what caused the 2017 website change to no longer clearly convey the profession on our website and also adopting a non descript 'ACS' logo that people had/have difficulty identifying with,, was played out in the 2019 Federal Court judgement, reflecting poor and inappropriate leadership.

Importantly as reflected in many comments posted in these Group posts, the essential need to urgently address the poor leadership and resultant behaviours, culture and practices is and has been a key and essential priority focus for both the current voluntary elected leadership, but also the committed and renewed paid staff.

Whilst it can be argued strongly that the leadership under Ian Oppermann and others in leadership positions within the Society, have been focused on proactively addressing the serious concerns raised from the Federal Court judgement and importantly on behalf of members, what led to this occuring.

The problem of a lack of clear identity for the Society is one such outcome from decisions made and the approaches taken from leadership now departed. The hard work is being done to rebuild trust of the members and wider stakeholders. This is based on respect and while there is a lot to be done, I am pleased there is healing occurs across the ACS, as we work together to ensure the culture, practices (policies, technology platforms, behaviours, expectations, member engagement) is focused on meeting member's needs and the wider communities expectations for ICT Professionals.

Therefore, as indicated in Paul Bailes comments, we need to work together, with the Society having come to terms with overlapping organisations interests in ICT,. As quoted by a previous ACS President Brenda Aynsley, who often expressed the importance for the "ACS to partner for success".

Breadth of ACS interest   (2)

Paul Bailes Oct 31   #334

 [There's been a lot of traffic in the last few days while I've been preoccupied with domestic chores etc so apologies if the below insufficiently acknowledges or otherwise takes into account the insights shared recently ...]

IMHO a standing challenge to the effectiveness of ACS is the breadth of concerns it faces (both potentially and actually). That is:

* ACS sees itself as covering the complete ICT (see note 1 below) technical spectrum

* many of us (not illegitimately) see ACS as embracing non-technical aspects of ICT.

I see the specific challenges from the above as including

* apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

* great breadth of interest exceeds ACS capacity to operate competently

* great breadth of interest risks competition/conflict with other organisations in the same space(s)

By way of analogy, compare the ICT sector with the Health sector and how it addresses these issues (even if unconsciously):

* Whereas some people seem (erroneously) to think in terms of "the" ICT profession, noone thinks in terms of a single "Health profession". Rather, the health sector is served primarily by a range of professions (and trades); and secondarily (for want of a better word) by other professions (e.g. not but limited to ICT)

* "Health professions" include: medical, nursing, plus distinctive therapies each with their own professional bodies

* Within individual "health professions" there are a range of organisations catering for special interests. E.g. the AMA aims to represent the entire medical profession, but independent Colleges cater to specialist interests (noting that nowadays, a GP is a "specialist" also)

* There are also groups (such as AIDH) that seem to address special interests across the range of professions that are both (using my classification above) primarily and secondarily engaged with the Health sector

In recognition of the above, ACS needs to:

•   realise that it is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. In particular, the presence in the ICT sector(primarily or secondarily) of other organisations with Objects, Goals etc. congruent with ACS's is not inherently a bad thing and ACS should strive to work collaboratively with such "compatible" organisations

•   provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary

•   reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - organisationally (e.g. by "Colleges" as with Engineers Australia)

•   reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - also by diversity in its marks of professional recognition such as specialisations of CP and variations to the BOK (see note 2)

In particular, SIGs might possibly be part of the solution, e.g.

•   as seeds of structures within ACS reflecting new specialisations

•   as designations of ACS collaboration with compatible organisations

May I close by making clear my anxiety that lack of useful distinctive focus (or foci) by ACS detracts significantly from the usefulness of ACS and its products. For example:

* We've all made great efforts to develop ourselves in one or more specialised areas of ICT, but generally speaking appearances seem as if that's not important to ACS; rather ACS looks as if it's more important to treat the ICT sector as a monolith that ACS can own (for whatever purpose of its own - i.e. ACS risks looking as if it's an end in itself)

* ACS's continuing readiness to offer MACS to people without an ACS-accredited degree (even with IMHO insufficiently-specialised BOK supporting same ... see above) gives me the impression that we are kind of a national "computer club" rather than a serious professional body (can you imagine the AMA or the Law Society offering membership to non-MBBS or non-LIB but with lots of "experience"!?)

* I became unable to identify anything distinctive about the ACJ (and then JRPIT) that would encourage me to publish in it, to read it, or to encourage colleagues and students to do so. (I don't think the editors' heroic efforts with special issues etc. were able to overcome this inherent structural problem with the Journal.)

It's fair to say that at some stage(s) in the past all the things I've identified as issues now needing fixing were features rather than bugs. But no longer.

Notes

1. "ICT" or whatever term usefull stands for the universe connected with computers/digital/etc ...

Jack Burton Oct 31 #341

On Sat, 2021-10-30 at 23:52 -0700, Paul Bailes wrote:

> I see the specific challenges from the above as including

> * apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists

Agreed and I'd add that the very same lack of focus (on computing, as our core constituency) diminishes ACS appeal to *generalists* in the Australian computing profession too.

Let us not forget that a true generalist will be interested in the latest developments in many (perhaps even all) fields within his profession ... which is a completely different proposition to "we're not a specialist society, so everything has to be abstracted away to management, or otherwise pitched a level that everyone can understand" -- which unfortunately (viewed from the outside) appears to have been one of the principles guiding the ACS selection of PD in recent years.

To a certain extent, the same should be true of actual specialists.

For example, if my specialty is infosec, I'm going to want to hear (in technical detail, not marketing-speak) about the latest developments in processor design (even though my job will never involve designing microprocessors), because that may help me to identify new classes of vulnerabilities at ring 0 and/or better advise clients on the infosec aspects of architecture selection in future.

Likewise, if my specialty is writing software for engineering applications that are heavy on numerical analysis, I'm going to want to hear about the latest developments in compiler design (even though my job will never involve writing compilers), simply so that I can figure out how best to take advantage of those developments when designing my own algorithms.

Even when, unlike in those examples, there is no direct link to other fields of computing, as computing professionals we often have a general professional *interest* in what is going on in the other fields of computing.

I see nothing wrong with ACS being a general computing society (and yes the SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields, as should independent societies where the numbers are sufficient to support them and/or where new fields are a fusion of multiple professions), so long as that generality extends only to the boundaries of what is unique to our profession, what characterises it *as* our profession.

My focus above has been on PD, but the same ideas apply to a certain extent in terms of eligibility for membership.

My gut feeling is that over the last decade and a bit we have become far too broad in our "focus" and the removal of most of the former membership grades probably had a lot to do with that.

Yes, people in other professions have a genuine professional interest in computing which ACS *should* be able to serve too. But an accountant, manager, lawyer or any other professional who works *with* ICT (but does not work *on* it) should be able to join ACS as an Affiliate (or perhaps Companion -- I forget which was which now) and thereby gain general membership benefits (e.g. no extra fee to attend ACS events) but *not* post-nominals (the fact that we currently hand out AACS to anyone who's willing to pay the fee makes us a bit of laughing stock as far as professional societies go) and definitely *not* voting right either.

After all, it is impossible to claim with any degree of credibility to represent the Australian computing profession when such a large proportion of our voting members have never worked in the computing profession at all.

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Craig Horne

"ACS could spin off an "Association as a Service" engine in a subsidiary company. Corporate services (i.e. legal, finance, marketing, IT, HR) could be packaged up and the services sold in an Association-aaS business model"

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1.   KI Discussion Session <u>aSCSa</u> Wed 13 Oct 2021 18:00 UT+11

Roger Clarke (CRWG)
Derek Reinhardt (Pres), George Nikandros (Treas), Simon Connelly (Sec), Holger Becht, Edmund Kienast, Tim McComb [6 participants]

Australian Safety-Critical Systems Association, operating as an ACS National SIG
https://www.ascsa.org.au
https://www.ascsa.org.au/committee-members

30 years of existence, annual conference with 50-100 attendees, financially secure

A long-time National SIG that has benefitted from the relationship with the ACS

Key Positives in ACS support:

- Event registration and payments
- Local ACS Branch support for Conference Registration Desk, variable by Branch
- Rights to, and control over, aSCSa funds
- Interface to Purchasing
- Rights and convenient processes re access to logos for co-branding

Areas in which ACS support is deficient, limited or non-existent:

- ***   No defined services model between ACS and National SIGs
  i.e. what services are available, and under what conditions?
- ***   No case manager or link person
- ***   Applications and approvals process is dependent on a personal relationship with the CFO
- **   No membership admin system, so variously bundled with conference or gratis
- **   No customer management system / mailing service, and have to run own mailchimp
- **   No publication service for a journal or technical papers, because CRPIT (tedious as it was) appears to have been abandoned by ACS and is no longer supported
  https://www.ascsa.org.au/assc-proceedings
  https://50years.acs.org.au/digital-archive/crpit.html#
  https://crpit.scem.westernsydney.edu.au
- **   Inadequate arrangements for discovery of aSCSa on the ACS web-site:
  Site-search returns a single hit, also accessible via this menu-sequence:
  ACS / Professional Recognition / Certification / leads only to:
  https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-documents/Certifications/ACS-SCS-Assessment-Chart.pdf
  https://www.acs.org.au/carousel-pages/certification-tile3-scs.html

  Site-Search returns a single hit. Google search on <aSCSa+site:acs.org.au>
  returns 14 hits, including old events (with no year shown)
- Missed opportunities in such areas as Micro-Credentials (do not require ACS membership)
- Difficulty of integration of CPD events (because credit does require ACS membership)

aSCSa wants to retain the positive elements of the relationship, and improve the situation, and not go backwards as the result of any negative impacts arising from a change in the ACS's form or constitution. **[P04] [SIGs] [Q12]**

National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q12: Re ACS as an umbrella organisation:

Tom: ASCILITE [tertiary ed] has very active SIGs, which have kept me sane since COVID-19 struck. Meetings via Zoom every week, collaborating with people I have never met. ACS could try that. Also noted that rarity – an active ACS National SIG, in secondary ed

National Discussion Session #03 Tue 12 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Damien: Need to manage downsides and risks, e.g. would other organisations want us? Noted example of AISA some time back billing itself more broadly than just Security.

Alex: Not appropriate to draw all groups under ACS, but MoUs yes.

Anthony: Note that some processes exist, esp. Nat SIGs, e.g. aSCSa [and ACCE] Also an approach at one stage from a Pacific Island body, seeking (non-voting) Chapterdom and access to qualifications and PD processes; but independent organisational existence.

Damien: That could be a good model in the Pacific.

Damien: Specialist groups might also be a way of spawning additional pathways to CP.

National Discussion Session #06 Thu 14 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Richard H: State bodies have the advantage of physical control of local events. To achieve that, local scope and resources are needed, e.g. SIGs: topic, speaker, food

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

Q7:   Key Functions

Prabin: Events, information, engagement, mentoring

Graeme: **ACS took a wrong turn when SIGs were effectively abolished**. The (Pods?) idea didn't fly. Lockdown has enabled access to events in other Branches, which has been a great bonding mechanism across borders. Hybrid events have worked. **Professional networking and content at events is the key driver**.   [P04] [SIGs]

National Discussion Session #12 Wed 20 Oct 2021 08:00 UT+11

Q11: Branches

Ashley: The longest-running SIG is **SA's Curry SIG. Social networking is vital, and the centralisation and bureaucracy has lost track of Branch members as people**.

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q10: Available Surplus

Alan: **A big percentage of surplus funds should be member-focussed. Instead it's drifted into corporate uses, e.g. SIGs have been unfunded, and have all-but disappeared.**

National Discussion Session #13 Wed 20 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q12: Umbrella Organisation

Adrian: The debate about **specialisations** can lead to a 'Chapter'/ 'College' model (by whatever name), whether based on, e.g. the IEEE model, SFIA, other.

SIGs enabled this, in a flexible and relatively inexpensive manner. That's all been lost.

Siobhan: **ACS could attract existing and new groups through the establishment of a service-set to support them**. Possibility mentioned of an Augmented Reality / Virtual Reality group that Siobhan's been approached about in her ACS Labs capacity.

[This can be linked with the similar set of specific needs raised by aSCSa.]

National Discussion Session #14 Fri 22 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

Q3/Q7:   Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Philip: **National SIGs, or coordination among Branch SIGs, has considerable potential**

Q11: Branches

Philip: SIGs is another area in which considerable activity used to occur, with significant benefits to members in specialised areas, mostly achieved on the cheap, mostly performed by individuals. Many were ephemeral, but addressed a topical purpose.

Margaret: Also had very good experiences with SIGs, and the speakers and networking that enabled. Her Branch was very supportive

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SIGs as an example Devolved Responsibility for Branches #P03   #P06   #P10   #Q11

karl Nov 3   #412

I have attached **the list of SIGs that were active in 2016. The total across all states was about 65**.

Some were social, some meeting non-ICT needs, however, they reflected members' needs. It is something we should be proud of.

And, **we need to have this again!**

Rimas Skeivys Nov 3   #414

In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation.

It was never re-instated.

Roger Clarke Nov 3   #415

On 3/11/21 5:41 pm, Rimas Skeivys wrote:

> In December 2016, the VIC Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation. It was never re-instated.

I can see NatReg 8.15.7:

> Management Committee or the Branch Executive Committee may dissolve any chapter, sub-committee or branch special interest group acting under any delegation function on an affirmative vote by a 2/3 majority or any time without having to provide reasons.

On the face of it, a Branch Manager does not have the legal authority to take any such action.

On the face of it, neither does the CEO, so any delegation to the Branch Manager could not have come from the CEO.

Did anyone ask the Vic Branch Manager for evidence of authority?

Why not ask the current BEC to reform the SIG under NatReg 18.5.1?

These aren't hypothetical questions.

What appears to have happened in 2016, in at least Victoria, was in apparent breach of the Rules of the Society.

We can't 'roll back time' (images of US battleship).

But BECs can exercise the powers that they have at their disposal.

David Abulafia Nov 4   #422

How many SIGS are still active in 2021?

Submission by Karl Reed – 1 November 2021

Q7: **Functions: Benefits for the Public and Members** – including ... **facilitation of communications among members, through SIGS, State and National Committees which draw on the competence and knowledge of members**, ...

Submission by Michael Lane – 12 November 2021

Accommodating special interests is important. And Special Interest Groups with in-kind and financial support can really make these SIGS really grow and prosper you only have look at how Meet-ups have been so successful and for ACS somewhat of a missed opportunity there may be some **opportunities to work collaboratively with other entities such as Canvas Co-Working here in Toowoomba to make SIGs thrive** but this does also require champions and volunteers and here if **ACS can provide some digital platforms for SIGs** to have a permanent presence this will really help   **[#SIGs]**