



SOUTH GIPPSLAND
Shire Council



SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL
GOVERNANCE TOOL KIT

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INTRODUCTION

The Governance Tool Kit has been developed for the use of not-for-profit associations within the Shire of South Gippsland, Victoria. This tool kit covers all aspects of managing a small-to-medium association and is designed to be used by volunteer committees or staff as a resource to assist them in the growth and development of their association.

The Governance Tool Kit covers a broad range of subjects relating to the management of an association and is divided into two main sections.

Section 1 – This section covers the overall general compliance requirements for an association, including the roles and responsibilities of the governing committee, the importance of the constitution, and the running of association committee meetings.

Section 2 – This section covers the general operating functions of an association and includes practical ideas about the general management of the association, including managing members, volunteers, and marketing and strategic planning.

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ABOUT THE GOVERNANCE TOOL KIT

Welcome to the South Gippsland Shire Governance Tool Kit. This document has been developed as a resource for the leaders of associations within the South Gippsland Shire.

Section One; This area covers the legal requirements of managing an association and includes roles and responsibilities of the Committee, President, Secretary, and other office bearers. This section also includes best practice in managing a committee meeting, including agendas, minutes, action items, and policies. It is vital that all committee members review this section, so they understand their roles and responsibilities and their own personal liability in the role of a committee member.

Section Two; This section covers the main areas of operational governance. This covers the concept of leadership of associations, strategic planning, membership, Information technology, managing volunteers, and using social media platforms.

In Appendix of this manual, there are numerous templates for minutes, agendas, job descriptions and development of policies

This tool kit is an ideal reference manual to assist association committees in managing their associations.

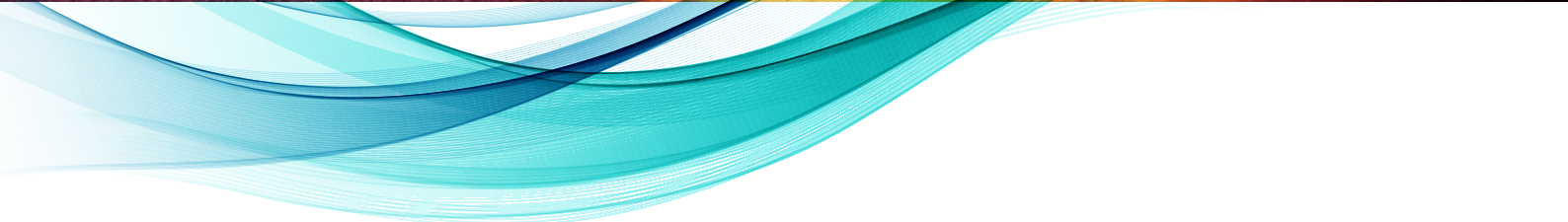
Definitions:

Constitution – These are the rules of the association which are required by law to be followed by the members of the association.

Governing Committee – Often termed a committee, board, or council, depending on how they are described in the constitution. An association can have numerous committees, however, for this document, the Governing Committee are those committee members nominated or elected by the members to manage the association.

Chief Executive Officer – This is an operational position which reports to the Governing Committee. Other titles may include General Manager, Executive Officer, and Administration Officer. In most cases, this is a paid employee.

SECTION ONE



ABOUT ASSOCIATIONS

An association is a group of people who join an entity because they have a common interest. There are over 60,000 associations located throughout Australia; some have been in existence for years while others are very new.

Often, associations commence as small groups of people who meet at a coffee shop to discuss their common interest, or as well-established organisations with significant resources and membership.

Associations are referred to by numerous names, including clubs, societies, institutes, or networks. A common characteristic of associations is the reliance on members to support the growth and management of the organisation/association.

Not only do the members manage the association, but they also establish the rules of how the association should operate and nominate members to be responsible for the daily operations.

Associations are not-for-profit organisations which are not charities, although they may have a charitable purpose in some of their activities. However, the reason for their existence is to serve the direct needs of their members. Charities are different; although they have members, their purpose is to receive funds to distribute as appropriate, such as to those suffering from poverty, sickness, or disabilities.

There seems to be an association for everything and for all pursuits. The predominant associations, other than sporting associations, are those that are industry-based and individual or professional associations. Common industry-based associations that we know of in Australia are the Master Builders Association, while there are professional associations such as Engineers Australia.

All associations are normally not-for-profit organisations, in that they do not have to pay corporate tax. However, it is important to note that the term not-for-profit means the association cannot make a profit. Associations can and should make a profit and never operate for a loss. Not for Profit in relation to NFP organisations means that the association cannot make any profit that is distributed to the members

ASSOCIATION LEGAL STRUCTURES & OBLIGATIONS

Over the years, for various reasons, the legal compliance for associations has developed and covers both state and national compliance requirements. It can be very complicated, but in general there are three types of associations.

These are: Unincorporated Associations

These are associations which are not legal entities. They are groups of members who may join their group for a certain purpose, which may only be a meeting with each other, and their intention maybe to run events which attracts attendees other than members. An unincorporated association may have a bank account with substantial cash assets. However, as an unincorporated association, each member is personally liable for any acts by the association as an entire organisation or individual members.

It is important to identify if your association fits into this category, as each member has a personal liability when they join your association. There are many unincorporated associations within the community with no intention of becoming a legal entity. They rely on their insurance coverage to protect them in case of being sued, however there have been case studies where the insurance has been inadequate and individual members have been sued for acts of neglect by the association.

If you association is not incorporated, contact Consumer Affairs Victoria or go to this link [How to become a registered association in Victoria](#).

Incorporated Association

An incorporated association is an association of members which is a legal entity and, in Victoria, is registered with Consumer Affairs Victoria under the [Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 \(the Act\)](#). The association needs to comply with the requirements of the act and failure to do so can result in fines or other sanctions. In extreme cases, the association may be deregistered.

Some of the benefits of being an incorporated association are as follows:

- » As a legal entity it protects the members and office bearers from personal liability for debts and legal obligations of the association
- » The ability of the association to invest or borrow
- » The ability of the organisation to receive gifts or donations
- » As a legal entity it can apply for government grants

If your association is incorporated in Victoria, there is a log-in facility to Consumer Affairs Victoria which allows office bearers the opportunity to log in and lodge the required documentation to ensure they are compliant. ([Reference CAV Link](#))

Unless special permission has been granted by the regulator, it is important to ensure that all incorporated associations include the word Inc. after their name on all stationary, websites, and invoices.

Company Limited by Guarantee

A company limited by guarantee is an association or charity that is regulated by ASIC and is a common structure for associations which need to operate outside of their state. This structure is often found for national organisations, although it may be incorporated regionally in Victoria as they may have members in other states and need to organise activities, events, or training in other states of Australia.

The governing body for these organisations is the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and the committee or office holders are termed Directors of the Company. They are required to act as they would if they were a Director of a for-profit company.

These organisations have members and a limited guarantee, in that if the association, for example, was in financial difficulty then the members would only be liable for a small amount of the debt.

Unless your association is trading outside your state there is no reason to move to becoming a company limited by guarantee. Under the circumstances that your association wants to become a company limited by it can be an expensive and time-consuming exercise.

For more information about companies limited by guarantee click here [ASIC](#).

THE CONSTITUTION

One of the most important legal documents for any association is the constitution, which outlines the rules of how the members and office bearers should conduct themselves to ensure a smooth operation of the association.

Members are required to obey the rules; any breaches by members could result in fines or disciplinary action either by the association or the regulatory body.

For an association to be registered in Victoria as an incorporated association, it must submit its constitution or rules to Consumer Affairs Victoria before it is registered as an association and be eligible to be termed a not-for-profit organisation.

Once the Constitution is lodged with Consumer Affairs Victoria, the rules cannot be changed unless there is a special resolution and 2/3rds of members vote to change the rules. (Always refer to the specific provisions of the constitution or acts.

Ensure all members of the governing committee have read and understood the rules within the constitution before they join as committee member.

Constitution Review

Consider your constitution as the rule book. Everyone must abide by it, but it should not restrict the members to make necessary changes.

Here are some changes you may want to consider to your constitution;

Fixed annual member subscription fees that appear within the body of the constitution.

Unless you want to change the constitution, the set membership fee must be adhered to. As the operational costs increase, the rules do not allow for changes in the membership subscription, which means access to funding from other sources.

Governing Committee members Best practice in association governance has highlighted that governing committee members need a diversity of skills, abilities, and technical knowledge in order to create an effective governing committee. Your constitution should follow up on recruiting committee members who are skilled, knowledgeable, and competent to become an active committee member.

Governing Committee Constitutions may delineate a specific number of governing committee or for companies Directors. For instance, the Committee or Board will consist of 14 Committee members or Directors. But why cripple the organisation with so many people on the committee? The greater the number of Governing Committee members, the more difficult it is to achieve a majority consensus. Plus, what happens if your association is unable to recruit 14 Committee Members?

In the instances outlined above and a variety of others not covered here, many association leaders are faced with the need to change their constitution as its outdated rules and regulations simply cannot be complied with any longer.

Often, association leaders will use legal practitioners to assist them in changing their constitution. This can be a very expensive exercise, particularly when legal costs start at (on average) \$300 per hour and the amount of time required to write an entirely new constitution is considerable.

Despite the cost, all association leaders should seek legal advice regarding changes to their constitution. However, you can save yourself a considerable sum if the draft of your new constitution is written by a committee member, volunteer or an employee and then reviewed by your legal counsel.

If you decide to draft your new constitution yourself, a good place to start is reviewing the model rules of clubs and not-for-profit organisations, which can be downloaded from various government regulatory sites throughout Australia, such as [Consumer Affairs Victoria](#).

If your current constitution is restrictive and giving everyone a headache, then it's time to make a change.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING COMMITTEE

The Governing Committee or Board of Directors (if your association is a company limited by guarantee) are responsible for all matters related to the management of the association. This authority for the Governing Committee should be expressed as part of the rules of the constitution.

Powers of Committee

42 Role and powers

- (1) The business of the Association must be managed by or under the direction of a Committee.
- (2) The Committee may exercise all the powers of the Association, except those powers that these Rules or the Act require to be exercised by general meetings of the members of the Association.

(Extract from Model Rules Consumer Affairs Victoria 2019)

Your association may also have subcommittees, tasked to manage events or other projects, but, overall, these project committees are responsible to the governing committee for all their actions.

The governing committee have the authority to determine the policy, practices, management, and operations of your association. They should do all things necessary to carry out the objectives of the association.

Without limiting this general role, the principal functions and responsibilities of Committee should include:

- » Setting the short, medium, and long-term goals of the association through the strategic plan
- » Providing direction in the context of the strategic needs of the association
- » Determining the policies governing the operations of the associations
- » Appointing and approving the terms and conditions of the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer (if you do not have a CEO, any other person or persons responsible for the operations of the organisation)
- » Reviewing and providing feedback on the performance of the Chief Executive Officer
- » Establishing and determining the powers and functions of all subcommittees
- » Approving major operations plans or project plans for allocated projects
- » Approving the annual budget and long-term budgets
- » Approving all items of capital expenditure, such as furniture, buildings, etc.
- » Using the strategic plan for reviewing annual progress and performance in meeting the objectives of the association, including reporting on the outcome of such reviews

The Governing Committee shall make sure these activities are carried out either through the CEO, designated staff, or volunteers.

A primary task for the Governing Committee is to ensure consensus in all decision making, at the same time as encouraging the investigation, review, and debate relating to important matters presented to the committee for decision.

GOVERNING COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

In line with good governance principles, the committee’s structure should reflect independence, transparency, and flexibility. As such, the structure of the Governing Committee should comprise mostly voting committee members, including the President.

Governing committee members can only be appointed under the conditions of the associations’ constitution. The term of a governing committee member serving on the committee is determined by the constitution’s rules. If it is necessary to appoint a committee member for shorter periods, to fill a casual vacancy, make sure your rules provide you with the provision to appointing a casual vacancy to the governing committee.

The Role and Responsibility of Individual Committee Members

When a member of the governing committee has been appointed or voted by the members to be appointed on the Governing Committee, the committee member must ensure they fully understand their responsibilities as there are personal liabilities associated with being appointed to this role.

General responsibilities of a committee member would most likely include the following:

- » Be responsible for ensuring the proper financial operations of the association and ensure the association remains solvent
- » Attend to all matters as that require legal compliance for the association, including tax, fair work, and consumer affairs requirements
- » Ensure and support the strategic direction of the association
- » Ensure the statutory requirements of the association comply with developments in common law
- » Discharge their duties in good faith, honestly, and in the best interests of the association, with the level of skill and care expected of a committee member
- » Owe a fiduciary duty to the association using the powers of office for proper purpose and in the best interests of the association as a whole
- » Always act with required care and diligence, demonstrating commercial reasonableness in decisions
- » Avoid conflicts of interest (see declaration of conflict of interest policy)
- » Act for the benefit of the association as a whole
- » Not take improper advantage of the position of a governing committee member
- » Not allow personal interests, or the interests of any associated person, to conflict with the interests of the organisation
- » Make reasonable enquiries to ensure that the association is operating efficiently, effectively, and legally towards achieving its goals
- » Undertake proper due diligence and analysis of all proposals placed before the Board
- » Act in harmony with other committee members and acknowledge other committee members may have differing views or values
- » Treat committee members with respect at all time

Core competencies for a committee member?

As a member of the governing committee there is a requirement that those members can demonstrate core competencies which can contribute the decision making of the association. Those core competencies should include the following:

- » Understand the overall purpose of the association and its reason for being
- » The ability to contribute to discussion in governing committee meetings

- » Understand financial reports and the overall financial performance of the association
- » Understand the fundamentals of risk management
- » Ability to understand, develop, and implement policy
- » Work as a member of a team, respecting the views of other committee members

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF A GOVERNING COMMITTEE?

The Governing Committee should decide what association matters are delegated to either specific committee members or the Chief Executive Officer. The committee should have written delegation and controls in place to oversee the operation of these delegated powers. Where there is a lack of resources within the association, committee members have delegated powers to act on behalf of the committee on projects. These projects could include running events or accessing information from third parties for the benefit of the members of the association.

It is important to note that a committee member has no individual authority to participate in the day-to-day management of the association, including making any representations or agreements with member companies, suppliers, business partners, employees, or other parties or organisations, unless such authority is explicitly delegated to that committee member by the Governing Committee. Such delegation would need to be recorded as a resolution within the minutes.

Committee members are expected to give their specific expertise generously to the association. It is important that committee members keep confidential any committee discussions and deliberations. Committee members are expected to be forthright in their meetings and have a duty to question, request information, raise any issue, fully canvas all aspects of any issue confronting the association, and cast their vote on any motion according to their own decision.

Outside the confines of the committee room, committee members are expected to support and acknowledge all committee resolutions or decision. In discussions with members, suppliers, staff and other parties, it is important to only refer to decisions of the committee rather than individuals. For example, “The committee today resolved that the association will make their policy available to the government.”

Any confidential information received by a committee member in the course of the exercise of their duties remains the property of the association.

It is improper to disclose, or allow the disclosure of, any information received in this nature, unless that disclosure has been authorised by the person from whom the information is provided or is required by law. Committee members who disclose information obtained in their role, without proper authority, may be liable to being fined by the regulatory body or be in breach of their member code of conduct and could be subject to disciplinary action.

INDUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

It is important for any association, which has new committee members appointed, to ensure their committee members are fully aware of their responsibilities.

The President, on behalf of the Governing Committee, should conduct their own diligence into the character and fit-for-purpose of the new committee member to act on behalf of the association. The President may wish to request information about the committee member on behalf of the association, which may include a police or ASIC check, to determine if the committee member has been convicted for an offence under the Corporations Act or is a declared bankrupt.

The President should be responsible for inducting the new committee member and should provide the committee member with the following:

1. The association's Constitution and Rules
2. Overview of the roles and responsibilities of the members of the Governing Committee
3. Committee meeting protocols
4. Committee meeting dates
5. Code of conduct
6. Financial position, including balance sheet, profit and loss statement
7. Certificate of currency of all appropriate insurance policies
8. Any matters arising that may have impact on the sustainability of the association
9. All committee policies

As a requirement of risk management, a signed statement should be obtained from the committee member to the effect that they have perused all the documents provided and understand their obligations and responsibilities as a member of the Governing Committee.

While we have discussed the process of induction and due diligence on the character and suitability of the new committee member. There is a case to encourage or warn new committee members to complete their own due diligence of the association. The committee member should be aware of any potential exposure to personal liability before accepting any appointment. In the initial induction session with the new committee member, the President should disclose any matters that may harm the reputation or risk the personal liability of the committee member.

ASSOCIATION OFFICE BEARERS

Often termed the executive, the office bearers are appointed to be responsible for the daily management of the association. There are often management decisions that need to be made daily and the executives are normally appointed by the Governing Committee to make those decisions without having to convene a full committee meeting.

All office bearers are appointed as determined by the association’s constitution. It is therefore important to refer to the constitution to ensure your committee acts in accordance with the legal obligations when appointing the office bearers.

An example of the roles and responsibilities of the office bearers can be viewed by accessing the model rules at the [Consumer Affairs Victoria Website](#)

THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The President, in most cases, is elected by the committee or, in rare cases, the members. The President normally serves for a period of at least a year before nominating for re-election. The President may be elected by the members based on the person’s achievements and their record as a leader or elected by the Governing Committee. The President is normally the spokesperson for the association at the AGM and in the reporting of the performance, profit, and figures. They are normally the spokesperson for all media contacts and represents the decisions of the committee.

There should be a documented process which highlights the responsibility and requirements of the President as the chair of committee meetings.

The President should ensure the following:

- » Chair all committee meetings (in their absence the Vice President performs the role)
- » Create the agenda for the committee meetings in consultation with the Secretary, other committee members, and CEO if there is a paid staff member reporting to the committee

In particular, the President should:

- » Be the major point of contact between the Board and the Executive Officer or CEO
- » Be kept fully informed by the Chief Executive Officer on all matters which may be of interest to committee
- » Regularly review, with the Chief Executive Officer, progress on important initiatives and significant issues facing the organisation
- » Manage the performance of committee members
- » Be responsible for the discipline of non-compliant committee members
- » Provide mentoring for the Chief Executive Officer
- » Chair the Chief Executive Officer evaluation process
- » Commence the annual process of committee evaluation

THE ROLE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

The Vice President can be elected by the committee or members. It is envisaged that the normal term for a Vice President could be for a determined number of years, subject to their satisfactory performance.

The Vice Presidents, if elected by the members, should be based on the person's achievements and their record as a leader.

A Vice President normally:

- » Chairs committee meetings if the President is not present. A common benchmark is fifteen (15) minutes after the time appointed for the holding of that meeting. In the case of either Vice President not being present and there is a quorum, the committee members should choose one of their number in attendance to act as Chairperson for the duration of that meeting and when the President is absent.
- » Participate in the Executive Committee

In particular, the Vice Presidents should:

- » Provide a supporting role to the President in all areas of representation and social responsibility
- » Ensure the committee is informed of issues and activities
- » Chair major portfolios of the association, e.g. marketing and policy development
- » Be kept fully informed by the Chief Executive Officer of all matters which may be of interest to committee
- » Regularly review, with the President and the Chief Executive Officer, progress on important initiatives and significant issues facing the organisation
- » Participate in the Chief Executive Officer supervision, support, and evaluation process

In many cases the Vice President role is part of the succession plan for the association. To maintain the leadership culture of the association, the Vice President ascends to the role of President after the serving President's term is over or the President ceases to remain in the role.

THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary is an important office bearer for the association and is appointed according to the constitution.

The key roles of the Secretary should include the following:

- » Confirm the meeting dates of all committee meetings.
- » Liaise with the President and key staff to ensure the agenda and relevant board papers are sent to Governing Committee at least seven (7) days before the governing committee meeting with an initial agenda and notice of meeting sent fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
- » Make sure the minutes are recorded at all committee meetings. The Secretary may assign the recording of the minutes to another committee or nominated person. However, it is important to note the Secretary is responsible for the correct and accurate scribing of minutes so that they accurately record resolutions or decisions from the meeting.
- » Make sure that the association is compliant to all the legislative requirements for the association to operate. This includes lodging updates that have been resolved by the members and lodged as amendments with the regulator, for example Consumer Affairs Victoria.
- » Make sure all the requirements of the ATO are met as required. This would also be in conjunction with the Treasurer.

Each year associations should complete a self-assessment, as per the requirements of the ATO; see [link](#).

- » If there is an election process for the appointment of committee members, the association must ensure this is done correctly and all aspects of diligence are met, as per the constitution.
- » Manage and maintain all aspects of the seal register, ensuring the minutes are always kept on record.
- » Ensure the minutes and any action items resulting from the minutes are followed up before the next meeting.
- » Make sure all copies of the minutes are circulated to the committee members only.

THE ROLE OF THE TREASURER

The Treasurer may be elected by the committee or the members as determined by the Constitution. It is envisaged that the normal term for a Treasurer could be for an allotted period, based on their satisfactory performance.

The Treasurer is to be elected by the committee or members based on the person's achievements, their record as a leader, and their understanding of the responsibilities of their role.

The Treasurer should:

- » Meet regularly with the Chief Executive Officer, Accountant, or Bookkeeper to monitor financial progress of the association
- » Ensure the annual budget is prepared and presented to the committee for endorsement
- » Identify and report on any financial matter that may place the association at risk
- » Ensure there are proper protocols in place for the payments of debts incurred by the association
- » Participate as an active member of the committee
- » Oversee the risk management committee

In particular, the Treasurer should:

- » Ensure financial management reports are provided in a timely manner and are in accordance with the directives of the committee
- » Ensure that appropriate internal financial controls are in place and operating efficiently

- » Ensure that the activities of the association are in accordance with the financial policies
- » Be kept fully informed by the Chief Executive Officer or Executive Officer on all matters which may be of interest to the committee
- » Regularly review, with the Executive Committee and the Chief Executive Officer, progress on important initiatives and significant issues facing the organisation
- » Participate in the Chief Executive Officer's evaluation process
- » Analyse project costs against revenue
- » Consider matters raised by the auditors (Include the names of the auditors, if available)
- » Review reports on legislative compliance
- » Monitor reports on effectiveness of internal controls in order to establish an environment in which controls can operate effectively
- » Debrief the committee and staff on the annual budget
- » Ensure financial budgets have been developed which support the strategic plan
- » Become familiar with the financial software, e.g. MYOB or XERO and, if necessary, learn to generate financial reports
- » Manage the access to the online bank accounts
- » Ensure any auditor's reports to the committee are received by the committee in a timely fashion

THE ROLE OF A SUBCOMMITTEE

Subcommittees are those groups of members who work on operational actions, as delegated and directed by the governing committee. In most cases they are only formed as a result of a project or strategy. They report to the governing committee or, in many cases, to the paid CEO depending on the resources available to the association.

Subcommittees are an asset to the association, not only to provide expertise and knowledge on a certain matter, but as potential governing committee members or Office Bearers. However, successful subcommittees must be provided with clear terms of reference as to their roles and responsibilities. It is important to note that subcommittee members cannot enter into any contract with suppliers, or make promises on behalf of the association, unless they receive authority from the Governing Committee. This authorization should be clearly documented within the minutes.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

One of the biggest challenges for many associations is the recruitment of members who are potential governing committee members. Many members are reluctant to volunteer to the committee positions because of time commitments, or they may not consider they have the skills or abilities to contribute to the management of the association.

All associations should have a plan to recruit members to become a part of the governing committee. There should be an emphasis on encouraging young members to consider joining a subcommittee.

Before inviting members to consider joining the committee, refer to the constitution as it should covers all the qualifications for a member of the committee to be a financial member.

Many associations survey new members, seeking those who may have experience in the following areas:

- » Governance
- » Strategic planning
- » Leadership
- » Marketing and branding
- » Social media
- » Knowledge of the association and its purpose
- » Negotiation skills

Engaging new members with the skills, knowledge, and experience to add value to the management of the association should be a priority for the Governing Committee on an ongoing basis.



GOVERNING COMMITTEE MEMBER - JOB DESCRIPTION

In this section we cover
Job Descriptions for
committee members.

▲ CONTENTS

Association Committee Member - Job Description

Responsible to the association as an incorporated association or company limited by guarantee for the management of the full range of regulatory responsibilities, as required by the Governing Committee.

Plays an integral role in the development, implementation, and monitoring of progress at regular intervals of the association's strategic plan.

Responsible to the association as an incorporated association or company limited by guarantee for the effective development of the association's strategic plan.

Reporting to the Governing Committee

An appointed committee member may, at times, be required to provide regular and concise reporting, particularly if they hold the position as Chairperson of the association's subcommittee.

Time Commitment

Frequent out-of-hours meetings and attending association events as required.

Statement of Key Responsibilities/Duties

An appointed committee member will be responsible to the association's Governing Committee for the strategic leadership and management of all legal and regulatory responsibilities.

The incumbent will be required to:

- » Understand the history of the association
- » Explain the core functions of the association
- » Explain the relationship between the association and its stakeholders
- » Understand the relationship between Governing Committee and staff (if any)
- » Understand the relevant aspects of the law relating to associations and Consumer Affairs
- » Understand and adhere to the Constitution of the association
- » Inform the Governing Committee of identified community needs
- » Understand and adhere to the association's vision, strategic plan, and key performance measures
- » Review and approve the association's strategic plan
- » As part of the Governing Committee, review and endorse the annual budget
- » Review and approve major policies
- » Interact with key stakeholders in accordance with Governing Committee's strategic vision
- » Act within professional boundaries, including the Governing Committee code of conduct

- » Participate actively, attending meetings and other activities regularly
- » Contribute positively and constructively
- » Diligently prepare for and follow up on meetings
- » Be part of the succession planning process
- » Annually approve the performance review of the CEO and establish compensation based on recommendations from the appropriate committee and Chairperson
- » Contribute to effective Governing Committee recruitment and succession planning
- » Contribute to an annual performance review of the Governing Committee and take steps to improve its performance
- » Attendance and active participation in Governing Committee meetings, for example physical attendance per year, and/or sub-committee meetings via teleconference

Selection Criteria

Essential Skills

- » Highly developed leadership skills, including the ability to maintain positive working relationships across a diverse stakeholder network
- » Demonstrated conceptual, analytical, verbal, and written communication skills of a high order
- » Highly developed advocacy and negotiation skills in order to represent the association and its network in a professional and positive manner to local government agencies and other organisations
- » Ability to research, develop, and review policy
- » Strategic management skills of a high order, together with a proven record of success in the management of other organisations
- » Ability to understand the legislative, ethical, and corporate management reporting requirements needed to manage a not-for-profit organisation
- » Highly developed interpersonal skills including openness, fairness, flexibility, and liaison and negotiation skills
- » Ability to deal constructively with complex and sometimes conflicting situations
- » Knowledge of the environment and location in which members operate
- » High level of commitment to the work of the association
- » Ability to work cooperatively and participate in the discussions and deliberations of the Governing Committee
- » Knowledge and skills in one or more areas of Governing Committee governance, including policy, finance, corporate law, risk management, or possess skills as determined by the Governing Committee from time to time

- in line with strategic goals of the association
- » Willingness to serve on and actively participate in at least one sub-committee
 - » Prepare for, and attend, the Governing Committee meetings, plus any sub-committee meetings, teleconferences, and extraordinary general meetings
 - » A time commitment of approximately X hours per month, (includes Governing Committee meeting preparation, meetings, and committee meeting time)
 - » Stay informed of the association's services and publicly support them
- » Be aware, disclose, and abstain from any conflicts of interests
 - » Prepare for, and attend, the Governing Committee meetings, plus any sub-committee meetings, teleconferences, and extraordinary general meetings
 - » A time commitment of approximately X hours per month, (includes Governing Committee meeting preparation, meetings, and committee meeting time)
 - » Stay informed of the association's services and publicly support them
 - » Be aware, disclose, and abstain from any conflicts of interests

Qualifications

May include, but not limited to, Qualifications in Business, Business Administration, Finance, Marketing, Business Development, or general business experience.

Governing Committee Meetings

Committee meetings are an important facet of managing an association. They should be well-planned and executed. The meetings should focus on strategies and outcomes rather than trying to solve problems. The success of your association will depend on how effective the meetings are in terms of decision making.

The meetings should encourage debate about the matters on the agenda but be completed within the required time frame (which is managed by the Chair). Any matters that need further discussion should be conducted outside the committee meeting.

Well-managed meetings are those that start and finish on time.

How often should your committee meet?

Check your constitution to determine if there are any set requirements for meetings. In most cases, committees would meet every six weeks or, if there are key strategies to discuss and implement, it could be every month. It is important to remember that it is a legal requirement of all committee members to attend these meetings. If the committee member cannot give the time to contribute to these meetings, they should review their commitment and determine how best they can contribute to the association.

Preparing for the meeting

Dates & Location

Ensure that all meeting dates are planned early to ensure the best availability for all committee members. In most cases, committee members meet face to face. However, there are situations in which a committee cannot meet face-to-face and the meeting is conducted through a teleconference. Technology platforms such as Skype and Red Back Conferencing are all excellent platforms for facilitating meetings.

Face-to-face meetings must be budgeted as part of the expense for operating the association, which includes travel costs for committee members, accommodation, and food. It is important that committee members are reimbursed for any personal expenses incurred whilst attending these types of meetings. Ensure that there is a policy in place that outlines the level of remuneration for committee members to attend and participate in committee meetings.

Meeting Agendas

It is the responsibility of the President and the Secretary to ensure the agenda is developed and presented at least 7 days before the meeting. It is good practice to develop a draft agenda covering the items to be discussed. In best practice, associations' agendas cover key goals and strategies outlined in the strategic plan (see strategic planning for associations).

Make sure there is plenty of time to ensure informal discussion. However, best practice agendas allocate specific time limits for each item to ensure the important matters are discussed and decisions are made in the form of resolutions.

Ideally, circulate the draft agenda to the committee for their comment and if they wish to add any item on the agenda for discussion and decision. The purpose of a committee meeting is to make decisions, so, in many cases, the agenda contains reports together with statements of resolution to be voted on by the committee.

Ensure there is a time limit for any comment and amendment for the draft agenda. When the meeting agenda is sent out to the committee it should include previous minutes, reports, correspondence, and resolutions for decision.

Agenda Preparation

Draft Agenda

An agenda will be prepared for each Board and Board of Directors meeting. The Board meeting agenda will generally follow the outlined format. Each meeting should allow time for informal discussion between Directors.

Agenda Preparation

The Secretary, or Secretary in consultation with the President, should prepare the first draft of the agenda. The draft agenda should then be prepared, in detail, by the Secretary and the final agenda should be discussed by the Executive Board of Directors.

Matters Arising from the Minutes/Action Sheet

Matters arising will normally cover any item from the previous minutes about which any committee requires further information. It will not be raised in the main body of the meeting:

- » In the first instance the President will flag matters for reporting in the action list
- » At the end of the Presidents' flagged, the President shall call for any items arising that need to be addressed
- » Those items will either be dealt with as raised, or it will be noted where in the agenda the item is planned to be discussed
- » The President shall determine whether to record the items that are raised and the response in the minutes of the meeting

Management of Correspondence

Most correspondence comprises is received by the President, Secretary, Chief Executive Officer, or committee members. In this regard, only correspondence which may have an impact on the performance of the association or committee members are at risk of fines or litigation. Documents could include the following items:

- » Government bodies
- » Letters of complaint addressed to the committee
- » Any correspondence which impacts the due diligence requirements of a committee member
- » Any correspondence threatening or taking legal action against the association
- » Major correspondence should be included in the committee papers, unless
- » such correspondence is received within the seven days between the circulation of committee papers and the committee meeting, in which case it can be tabled at the meeting
- » Major correspondence will normally be 'For Noting'. However, any committee member can ask for any item of correspondence to be discussed
- » Contracts of suppliers

Chief Executive Officer's or Executive Officers Report

If your association has paid staff, they should report to the committee and a report from the Chief Executive Officer should relate to the effectiveness of the strategic plan and the key performance indicators (see [strategic plan](#)).

The Chief Executive Officer's report is a key component of the committee meeting. It is through this report that committee members are kept apprised of operations and activities. The Chief Executive Officer's report is provided in a verbal or written format and expanded by the Chief Executive Officer at the meeting. Any written report is usually included with the Board papers and circulated seven (7) days before the meeting. The Chief Executive Officer's report, at a minimum, must contain information on:

Progress against the strategic plan

- » Overall financial performance
- » Key performance indicators as per the strategic plan
- » Any staffing activities changes
- » Marketing activities
- » General operation matters
- » Due diligence (including risk management and compliance)
- » Any other significant items
- » If a decision is required on any aspect of the Chief Executive Officer's report, which is not included elsewhere in the agenda, the report will contain the recommended motion

The resolution accompanying the Chief Executive Officer's report is that this report be accepted as lodged.

Please note, the Chief Executive Officer or reporting staff are not members of the Governing Committee and do not have the authority to vote. In the minutes of the meeting it should be noted that the CEO has been invited to attend the meeting.

The Financial Reports

This report will contain:

- » Balance sheet to the end of the previous month
- » Statutory Profit & Loss (P&L) to the end of the previous month
- » Cash flow forecasts
- » Comments on any significant variation from budget
- » Key performance indicators, both financial and non-financial
- » Review or audit report

The resolution accompanying the Treasurer report is that the report of the Treasurer be accepted as lodged.

Committee Portfolio Reports

In many cases, a committee will allocate portfolios to various committee members. Their role is to manage these portfolios, for example membership, website, communication, and government relations. Each committee member with a portfolio responsibility reports their progress to the Governing Committee at each meeting, adhering to the strategic plan. These

reports will be written, although it is not expected that they be lengthy, except if a resolution is required. These reports may be collated by the Chief Executive Officer or Secretary and, where a decision is required, a recommended resolution should be included with the papers.

Committee Meeting Papers

The Secretary is normally responsible for the preparation and circulation of papers that need review by the committee. All committee papers should be circulated to the committee to arrive a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

At a minimum, the committee papers should contain:

- » Minutes of the previous meeting
- » Agenda
- » Major correspondence
- » Chief Executive Officer's report including due diligence
- » Reports against goals
- » Key performance indicators, both financial and non-financial
- » Any related party transactions which have occurred in the past quarter or are proposed to occur
- » Any Board submissions requiring decision
- » Review of nominated strategies from the strategic plan

Papers should be clearly marked as either information papers or decision papers. These papers will normally be on different coloured paper. All decision papers should be submitted and included on the agenda and include the recommended resolution.

It is expected that all committee reports and papers be read by the committee before the meeting. When the papers are for reading and reference, it should be noted that all papers of this nature have been tabled and read by all the committee members.

Minutes

Minutes may contain a brief review of the discussion plus the official resolution adopted by the committee members. All decisions will be recorded as resolutions or decisions.

There is no reason to include the names of those who have put the resolution forward and those who have seconded the resolution.

The draft resolution is often contained in the first item of each set of documentation sent out in committee papers.

For example, there may be some discussion outside the meeting for the need to purchase a capital item, such as a computer or printer.

A committee paper is developed to be tabled at the meeting with a short description on the requirements or need to purchase an item such as a computer or a printer. As the bottom of

the paper should be a draft resolution, the following resolution should read as, “The [name] association will purchase a computer and printer.” The committee may vote on the draft resolution that is presented and, if the vote is in favour, the decision to purchase the computer would be carried and the following would be written as part of the minutes: “The committee resolved that they would purchase a computer or printer.”

The President will read the precise resolution before the Board asks for those in favour and those against. The exact wording will be recorded, as well as whether the resolution was carried or defeated, but it will not contain the number of votes. Committee members who dissent can ask to have their decision noted in the minutes.

Minutes will be prepared in draft form by the Secretary, Chief Executive Officer, or nominated person and circulated to the committee for amendments within five (5) days of the meeting. Once the minutes have been adopted by the committee as the second item of business, they cannot be amended. The Secretary or Chief Executive Officer will maintain a complete set of Board papers at the end; it is recommended that each committee member maintains their own, complete set of papers.

It is important to note that committee minutes are confidential to the committee or board and are not for distribution or circulation to members. The President may respond to questions about the decisions that are within the minutes, but not disclose the details of the minutes.

Important Information About Minutes

Minutes are legal documents and must be kept forever by the association in a secure place either, as hard copies or digital. The decisions within the minutes are committee decisions and, if there is a challenge as to the decision making by the committee, the minutes are held as evidence those decisions were made.

It is not necessary to include the board papers with the minutes or any other supporting documentation.

Minutes should only record the outcome of the resolutions. However, other associations include more detail surrounding the reason for the resolution. It is suggested, if there is a contentious issue that needs to be decided on through resolution, it may be appropriate to include supporting comments within the body of the minutes.

At times, suppliers who are entering into contract with an association may wish to receive a copy of the committee resolution confirming the acceptance of their quote or service. This is best practice to protect the supplier, as it confirms that the decision to engage the supplier has come from a decision of the committee and, as such, binds the association to that decision.

It is common practice that, after the minutes have been ratified by the committee, the President and the Secretary places their electronic signatures on the bottom of each page with the date.

Best practice in the development of minutes for associations in Australia is a focus on what matters were considered, discussed and that a Resolution if any was recorded. There is often too much unnecessary detail in minutes which is time consuming. If your constitution refers to the detail of the taking of minutes, then those processes must be followed.

Delegation of Authority

Decisions

The following decisions be referred to the Executive for approval before presentation to the Governing Committee:

- » Budgets, including background papers
- » Details of any proposed changes to the budget
- » Proposals of any capital item not included in the budget
- » Proposals of major changes to any committee policy, including marketing, human resources, and financial, including credit control and operations
- » Any proposed change in strategic direction

The following decisions must be referred to the Executive Committee for approval by committee members or staff:

- » Any new initiatives not included in the budget
- » Details on any budgeted capital expenditure over a certain amount
- » Details on any legally binding agreements for goods and services more than a designated amount
- » Any decision for any legal advice

The following should be reported to the committee or the appropriate Executive for advice and action:

- » Aged debtors more than 90 days
- » Any potential legal action against the association
- » All insurance matters
- » Any non-routine financial claim against the organisation
- » Any risks relating to the breach of fair work, safety, privacy, etc.

Legal and Professional Advice

The Executive, on behalf of the committee, should be empowered by the committee to seek legal advice or other professional advice on any matter that may impact on the performance of the association and the health or wellbeing of any committee members or staff.

Motion for Resolution by Circular

Any urgent decision, other than those acted upon by the executive which cannot wait to the next committee meeting, can be dealt with a flying minute:

- » Flying minutes must be agreed by the majority of committee members approving the action
- » They will be entered in the minute book
- » If not agreed by a majority of committee members, the item is deferred to the next committee meeting
- » If not agreed by a majority of committee members, the item is deferred to the next committee meeting

Key Performance Indicators

In order to monitor association performance, the committee should review the following key performance indicators, as presented within the strategic plan measures, include the following:

- » Membership growth and retention
- » Member products and services
- » Engagement with government
- » Media exposure
- » Level of surplus

Key performance measures will be used as part of the agenda item.

Legal Compliance

The Chief Executive Officer or Secretary is charged with implementing appropriate compliance systems within the organisation. Aspects of this process may be delegated. As part of the Chief Executive Officer report, they should include a compliance report for each Board meeting. The compliance report should contain statements that the association is meeting its requirements, under the various requirements or legal responsibility for Directors, or notifies Directors of any issue or concern. Areas of coverage include:

- » Legislative requirements
- » Financial solvency
- » OH&S
- » Environment
- » Taxation requirements
- » Trade practices
- » Insurance
- » Privacy
- » Whistleblowing

Meetings of Members

Meetings of members are normal activities undertaken by an association for the purposes of decision making regarding the overall governance of the association, or for the purposes of members sharing common interests or ideas.

If your association is an incorporated association in Victoria, it is important to ensure you comply with the requirements of the Incorporated Association Act regarding meetings of members and voting on matters, such as changes to the constitution.

See [link](#)

Meetings of Members as Part of the Overall Governance

All incorporated associations are required by law to convene meetings of members. The conduct of those meetings is outlined within their Constitution. Before they join, all members need to have been given the opportunity to read the constitution and understand their obligations as a member of the association.

It is common practice for those associations that allow members to join on-line a tick box is included which covers the terms and conditions of membership. Within those terms and conditions is that the members must have read the constitution and have agreed to abide by the requirements of the rules. When box has been ticked it is recorded that the member has read the constitution as part of the application for membership. In the case that a member breaches the rules of the association then the governing committee can implement a disciplinary process (which would be outlined within the Constitution and expel the member if the committee so decide

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

An Annual General Meeting is a meeting of members held once a year in accordance with the association's constitution or rules. The AGM is convened by the President/Chairperson and is for the presentation of the overall financial position of the association and, in some cases, the election of directors or committee members.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

A formal notice is sent to members at least 21 days before the Annual General Meeting. It is again important for provision within your rules which may apply to what information is provided to members, by way of notice of the AGM. For instance, the rules may expressly provide for the agenda and financial statements to be provided prior to the AGM.

If you are in doubt, it is best to consult the act under which the association is incorporated and look at the requirements for sending notices. Some legislation may not specify that an agenda be provided within the notice, but there is invariably a requirement to hold an AGM

which effectively limits the matters to be dealt, such as the consideration of the financial statements, election of office bearers, etc.

In Victoria you will find that a Notice of AGM must be provided to members at least 21 days before the AGM (Victorian Act).

It is good practice to include the financial statements (FS) of the association with the notice, even if it is not required under the legislation, and where appropriate after the FS have been reviewed or audited. However, if not so sent, then it should be provided at the AGM. If proxies are permitted, proxy forms must be provided with the notice.

Procedure at an Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) for many associations is not the most popular meeting, as it tends to be a very dry and formal process which does not allow for a lot of debate regarding the management of the association.

When members attend, make sure you record who is in attendance. The President opens the AGM meeting with an overview of the agenda and ensures the reports are presented on time. It is important to note this is a key function of the committee and it is required that committee members attend, unless they are ill or had an emergency which prevented them from attending.

Ensure there is approval of the minutes of the AGM – if there is a mover and seconder, make sure they attended the last AGM in the minutes they are referring to.

Voting at an AGM

Depending on the rules, there may be a requirement for the appointment of committee members or Directors to only occur when they are voted in by the members. It is difficult to prescribe how this should be done, as each association’s rules may be different, so be guided by the constitution. Just ensure that your process is transparent and fair.

When asking for questions from the floor during the AGM, members can only ask questions based on the reports presented during the AGM. This may seem rather restrictive to members, those who may have issues of concerns they want to raise. If there are some burning issues members may want to raise with the committee, the best option is for the President or Chair to close the AGM and open the floor for discussion or debate.

Extraordinary General Meeting

An extraordinary general meeting is a meeting of members called outside the annual general meeting to deal with an urgent matter, or matter would need approval by the members, to allow the association to move forward.

An example of an extraordinary general meeting often occurs when there needs to be a change to the constitution. A notice of an extraordinary meeting must be sent to members at

least majority 21 days before the meeting. The notice should contain the resolutions that are requiring a vote from members. Other resolutions for voting could be the winding up of the association. Matters dealing with issues of members or committees need to be referred to the discipline procedures within your constitution.

Members may call an extraordinary meeting of members but, before they do, they must follow the rules outlined in their constitution in relation to calling an extraordinary general meeting.

Subcommittee Meetings or Branch Meetings

It is important to discuss branch meetings or subcommittees. This may relate to your association, but many have subcommittees or branches in different parts of the state, or even throughout the country. It is important to note that, unless defined in the rules, subcommittee meetings and branch meetings are informal meetings that are managed by the Governing Committee.

The Governing Committee may set up a subcommittee to manage a local event or special project. The Governing Committee needs to determine what level of authority the subcommittees should be able to operate. They can organise their own meetings and manage their own events, however it is important to note that the Governing Committee hold the ultimate responsibility.

If you have subcommittees or project committees responsible for managing a member or non-member event, ensure you have adequate insurance and defined written procedures and responsibilities.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Association committees or Boards must fully understand the risks to the performance of the association by ensuring there is a risk management strategy in place. If the Governing Committee are aware of the legal and strategic risks that face an association, and have policies and plans to mitigate the risk, then the governing committee should be comforted that any serious threat to the association can be managed.

If your committee has the resources and volunteers, establish a risk management committee consisting of a member from the governing committee and member representatives who are skilled in supplier relationships or managing contracts.

The role of the risk management committee would be to review all supplier contracts, conduct due diligence on the organisations that are providing services to the association, and

make recommendations to the Governing Committee based on the risk assessment of the supplier and proposed contract.

Committee/ Board Governance Policies

This is possibly one of the most important documents developed by the governing committee to ensure the association acts in accordance with all legal requirements, members’ code of conduct, and to reduce any risk from litigation to the organisation.

Association Insurance

As an association or a not-for-profit organisation, investing in a comprehensive insurance policy is something that cannot be overlooked.

Managing an association or a not-for-profit organisation carries significant risk of liability to both individuals and the organisation itself. In different circumstances, board members and senior managers can be held personally liable for a failure to act, or for their actions.

Associations, like any business, are often exposed to being sued by other entities for various reasons. It is important that committee members understand the insurance cover required for your association.

What does (or should) association insurance include?

In this section we have asked David Federici from Focus Insurance, who specialises in Association Insurance, to provide us with some association insurance general information.

Generally, association insurance should provide protection for the association as well as its committee members and office bearers. It should cover a variety of situations, from employment practices, fines, and penalties, through to fraud and omissions during the provision of expert advice or training.

According to David Federici from Focus Insurance:

“Insurance options will obviously vary considerably depending on the organisation’s profile, but most associations and not-for-profit entities will need to consider:

- » *Office bearers’ liability insurance*
- » *Professional indemnity*
- » *Public liability*
- » *Asset and contents insurance*
- » *Employee liability*
- » *Crime and theft*
- » *Cyber liability*
- » *Voluntary workers’ personal accident insurance”*

Should office bearers’ have specific insurance coverage?

According to Federici, *“Individuals take on the role of office bearer for many reasons, but they are generally driven by a passion for their industry or cause. This is fantastic, but many people that take on these responsibilities don’t understand the breadth of their responsibilities and liabilities.”*

“It is vitally important that all new office bearers are provided with the right tools and educated about their responsibilities and the consequences of non-compliance. This is a critical governance and risk management step.”

“Association and not-for-profit office bearers carry many responsibilities. Despite best endeavours, decisions made by office bearers can result in external challenges and potential liabilities for the entity and themselves. This is where insurance, and the right insurance, is important and provides security and peace of mind. Office bearers can be exposed to personal financial loss if they don't execute their duties in accordance with their legal and fiduciary duties. Actions of one or more office bearers can also impact on the liability of all office bearers and the entity itself,” said Federici.

As such, Federici recommends that associations and not-for-profit industry office bearers consider many factors when guiding their organisation, including:

- » Their responsibilities under state association laws
- » Their responsibilities under federal legislation
- » Member and stakeholder interests
- » Employees
- » Suppliers
- » Sponsors
- » Financial position
- » Privacy legislation
- » Employees and OH&S
- » Volunteers
- » Consumer and competitions laws

Are there instances in which insurance policies can be voided?

There are several instances where insurances policies may become void. Just some of these instances include reckless, deliberate and fraudulent acts, non-disclosure of material risk information to insurers, and late notification of claims. It is suggested that committee members and staff carefully review their insurance policies to ensure that they are aware of these instances..

What are the most common insurance claims made by associations or not-for-profit organisations?

Based on his extensive experience in the insurance industry, Federici said that most common claims for associations arise in the following circumstances:

- » Disgruntled members or stakeholders
- » Theft of association or member funds
- » Claims by association employees against the entity and office bearers
- » Members that have had their membership suspended or cancelled
- » Conflict of interest issues
- » Misuse of knowledge gained during the execution of Board duties
- » Misuse of position on Board
- » Trading while insolvent
- » Complicit involvement
- » Defamation

Many associations run events and meetings.

Does an association’s public liability insurance cover events?

There is no single answer to this question. An association’s coverage will depend on the details of their specific insurance policy, as well as the details that have been disclosed to the insurance company. It is worth remembering that venues will rarely extend their insurance policies to cover the liability of the event organiser.

Given the rise of issues associated with hacking and the stealing of data, do associations and not-for-profit organisations need to take out special insurance or this covered by general insurance?

“Traditional insurance policies provide limited cover for these issues. As such, cyber liability insurance should be a significant consideration for all organisations that hold sensitive third-party information,” said Federici.

What happens if an association or not-for-profit needs to make a claim? Does this effect the cost of insurance premiums?

Federici encourages organisations to make claims where necessary. *“You should never hesitate to lodge a claim and seek support from your insurer. Your insurer has the expertise and experience to manage claims and deal with the claimant(s),”* said Federici.

“When processing an insurance claim and determining the cost of your premium, insurers consider several factors, including the nature of claim (was it a one off or because of a systemic issue), the frequency of claims, the severity of claims, processes put in place to minimise future claims, and overall insurer portfolio performance and loss ratios.”

If an association or not-for-profit receives a writ, when do we need to notify our insurance company?

If you receive a writ, you should:

- » Notify your broker or insurer immediately
- » Do not incur legal costs without your insurers’ consent
- » Do not admit liability
- » Do not communicate with the third party without first speaking to your insurer for guidance

Are there different processes or factors to consider for unincorporated associations that are not a legal entity?

“When it comes to unincorporated associations, all the same issues apply in terms of what your insurance should cover and what you should do in the event of receiving a writ.”

“However, it is important to keep in mind that, when it comes to unincorporated associations, officer bearers do not have the same security that a legal entity provides. As such, officer bearers may be personally responsible for debts, liabilities, and so on.”

GOVERNING COMMITTEE POLICIES

Governance policies are those made by the committee and cover the following:

It is important to ensure there is a review of policies as an item on each agenda.

- » Code of Conduct
- » Accountabilities
- » Privacy Policy
- » Media Policy
- » OH&S Policy
- » Finance Policy
- » Committee Remuneration Policy
- » Travel Policy
- » Contract and Supplier Policy

The general policies for associations are in Appendix A of this tool kit and are for reference only. Identify what policies are applicable to your association – develop the policy and present the policy as the next Committee meeting. If the committee support and resolves the policy will be adopted, make sure it is available for viewing by members. Review each policy again before adopting it, to ensure the policy complies with your constitution and the relevant regulatory act is up to date. For example, changes to the Privacy Act or Acts relating to OHS are frequently updated.

Example Template

Association Committee Policy - Template

Authorised By:

Prepared By:

Issue Date:

Review Date:

Version: #

POLICY – WRITE NAME OF POLICY

Purpose	Outline the purpose of the Policy (Example Privacy)
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Definitions	Committee includes any groups of designated committee or members and /or co-opted persons deemed necessary to be part of the committee
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Guiding Principles	The committee or board should refer to the guiding values and principles requirements by the legislation or within the constitution
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References - Internal	Reference to Constitution or policy manual
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References - External	Any reference regulation or act that support the policy
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Review	<p>The association\ at its own discretion reserves the right to change the policy and procedure in line with relevant legislation and organisational needs.</p> <p>Policies will be reviewed every three years.</p>
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SECTION TWO



Governance Tool Kit
Operations

SECTION 2— GOVERNANCE TOOL KIT OPERATIONS

In section one of this tool kit we covered the key elements regarding ensuring the committee are compliant with the legal requirements of managing an association. This included the role of the committees, constitution, and meetings of members.

Good governance also includes understanding and managing the operational aspects of the association, including managing membership, strategic planning, financial management, and managing volunteers. In many cases committees do not have the trained staff or resources to implement the operational aspects of their association so this section covers ideas and guidelines to management of your association. This section is not only ideal for paid staff but volunteer members including governing committee members who have been assigned operational portfolios or responsibilities

Association Leadership

While associations are part of the not-for-profit sector, they may differ considerably from charitable and community-based not-for-profits. Associations represent a broad field of interests, but their purpose is to serve their members, all of whom expect their association to deliver on the services promised when they joined

For associations that have small business owners as members, there is often a reliance by the members for the association to lobby on issues that may be impacting on their business, while at the same time deliver other member benefits in a timely manner.

Although office bearers for the association, such as the President, Vice President, and Secretary, are generally seen as the leaders and are behind the main decisions on behalf of the committee, Each committee member and those paid staff who are reporting to the committee should understand intense complexity of managing the daily requirements and needs of member-based organisations.

The complexity arises from the nature of the stakeholders or owners of the association. Those stakeholders may be the members, suppliers and the community that may be influenced or benefited by actions of the association and its members. All who may have different needs and expectations. The other issue is the association leaders are restricted as they need to comply with the rules of the constitution and if the association’s constitution is restrictive it limits the abilities of the association leaders to make significant changes.

Committee members and executives without relevant experience managing an association quickly come to realise that managing these types of organisations can be the most challenging time, but also very satisfying because as an association of members with a strong purpose they certainly can instigate change and influence government policies.

To help association committees, as well as those seeking to be on the committee, here are some core competencies, skills, and characteristics demonstrated by successful association leaders:

» **Relationship Management Skills**

Relationship management is possibly the most important skill that association leaders must possess. Association leaders need to build relationships with their committee, members, government representatives, and suppliers. Engagement and communication are critical with key stakeholders such as members, funders, or government bodies that are developing policy which may influence the business performance of their members.

For many associations, there is already a broad knowledge base available. However, the association leader must also be able to call on a wide range of individuals to provide support, expert advice, and implement action plans.

» **Knowledge and Understanding of the Role of the Board or Governing Committee**

A key skill that association leaders must possess is the ability to understand the overarching operation and management of the Board, as well as the legal requirements under which the association is operating. As most Boards or Governing Committees are comprised of volunteers, the association Executive must have a sound understanding of the changing legal landscape. This includes a thorough understanding of the constitution, compliance with regulatory authorities, and development and review of Board policies.

» **Marketing and Membership Management**

Members often have an emotional interest in their association. As such, while the services an association delivers need to address member needs, it can be the emotional connection to the association that is more important. Association leaders must combine their knowledge of brand development and marketing with consideration for their members to ensure the emotional needs of members are met. Plus, while retaining existing members is vital, association executives must carefully monitor (and learn from) why members leave and/or grow.

» **Knowledge of Strategic and Business Planning**

Association leaders must have a sound knowledge of strategic planning for small businesses, as well as overall business planning for an association. A critical skill, this type of business planning is often one that cannot be developed outside the association sector. This is because strategic planning tends to be reserved for larger for-profit entities, while most small businesses develop a business plan – an association business plan is somewhere in between.

An association's strategic plan is an important tool for communication, from the volunteer committee right through to operational staff. As such, association leaders must understand the strategic planning process and how it should be used to focus the committee on elements of the strategic plan, translated into an operational business plan, which is understood and implemented by staff and/or volunteers.

» **Financial Acumen**

While association leaders do not need to be accountants, they do need to understand what the organisation's financial reports mean. The committee members and CEO must be fully conversant with all the financial reports produced and, more importantly, understand the overall financial health of the organisation. This is particularly important as not all appointed Treasurers are financially literate in financial reports, profit and loss statements, and balance sheets.

» **Risk Management**

Over the past twenty years, associations have become more and more vulnerable to litigation and fines which can place the association, committee, and staff at personal risk. Association leaders need to ensure Board policies are developed, reviewed, and implemented to reduce these potential risks. The core risks to an association include breaches of copyright, industrial relations, privacy, consumer law, and constitution breaches. It is imperative that the association holds up-to-date insurance which covers and mitigates any financial loss if such breaches occur.

» **Ability to Articulate Industry Issues to the Community**

Association leaders must take advantage of the wealth of knowledge within the membership of the association when issues arise which impact on the membership or the community they serve. It is vital for association leaders to demonstrate they understand the issues at hand and organise members to challenge or support those issues.

For example, these issues could include pending government policies that may impact the business growth of their members. The members turn to the Governing Committee to present their position and point of view.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ASSOCIATIONS

One of the most effective tools for managing an association is a strategic plan. It is the most effective tool to not only measure the performance of the association and its staff, but to assist in the communication between the board and staff and your members.

What is a Strategic Plan?

Most associations have volunteer management committee members with different views, agendas, and passions. Together with the varying levels of skills and abilities to manage an association of members, they must rely on management tools to help with their decision making. In this case, the strategic planning process is the activity of the management committee to ensure all who are responsible for managing the association, including committee members, volunteers, and paid staff, are working towards shared goals and objectives.

In the attempt to achieve the common goals or vision, the management committee needs to set the priorities, understand the resources available, and give proper direction to employees or volunteers so they can achieve the intended outcome.

A strategic plan is a working document; although developed as part of the strategic planning process, it is constantly reviewed and updated as the association changes to meet the needs of their members. It enables a committee to identify the following:

1. How is their association positioned at the present time?
2. Where do they need to go to?
3. How are they going to get there?

The structure of a strategic plan

A strategic plan can come in all shapes and sizes, but the strategic plans that work for an association are those that are simple, often no more than 5 pages in length, and contain the following structure:

- » Vision
- » Mission
- » Goals
- » Strategies
- » Key Performance Measures

STRUCTURE OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION	» Clear & precise statement of the future
MISSION	» The methodology of how we are going to achieve the vision
GOALS	» Goals that support the success of the vision
STRATEGIES	» Strategies which support the goals » Key performance measures of goals

Down the right column, is an example of a strategic plan developed and used by a typical association. This strategic plan is designed to cover three years and contains a clear vision, mission, goals, strategies, and key performance indicators.

How to develop your Strategic Plan?

First, it is important to consider the strategic plan document is part of the strategic planning process. The first consideration is therefore to evaluate what strategic plan, if any, you have in your association. Here are some key questions that you need to address before you commence developing your strategic plan:

Does your association have a current strategic plan?

In many cases an association may have developed a strategic plan and is using it effectively in their decision making. Many associations' Governing Committees have developed their strategic plan and actively use this in their regular committee meetings. However, others have a developed a strategic plan and never refer to it. A strategic plan is developed for the Governing Committee and should be used or referred to during all committee meetings.

Committee members need to know the benefits of and use the strategic plan

It is imperative that all committee members understand the importance of the strategic plan and how it used within an association. This awareness of the strategic planning process for your association should be part of the committee induction process. Make sure that committee members understand how the strategic plan was developed, how critical it is to the growth and sustainability of the association, and ensure they are aware of what they must to contribute to the effectiveness of the planning process.



New Association Strategic Plan



New National Event Association – Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Key Goals	Strategies	Key Performance Measures (KPIs) Reporting & Actions	Times Lines & Responsibility
Grow Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a web based - Develops a website - National Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion and completion of project website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December
Grow and Retain Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops membership categories Develops a national member database Develops a website for member process Create a marketing program Develops a robust and interactive website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth of Memberships Retention of members Member proposition for each member to join Website and on-line CRM platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> January - December
Develop Member Products & Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops training program Develops an event agenda each year City and Regional Events Job board Develops and implement new events structure Joint events and Government events National Conference Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of table top products sold % of national online issuing % attendance at national conference Jobs on website Number of members of events submissions Average number of product offerings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full training and PD program developed and launched by July Membership program - ongoing Planning for conference and events to follow

New National Event Association – Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Key Goals	Strategies	Key Performance Measures (KPIs) Reporting & Actions	Times Lines & Responsibility
Financial Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an overall Budget Plan for Actual Monitor all events and budgeted Complete a cost analysis of all products and services Invest in product development Develop a robust and interactive website Joint events and Government events Annual review of membership fees Profit & Loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet expenditure % of revenue Financial structure Robust and agreed KPIs in position 5 year revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 2018 budget for one Develop costing analysis per product offering Reduce members of the increase
Develop and maintain National Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a national sponsorship prospectus Develops a national sponsorship database Develops a national sponsorship marketing strategy Develops a strategy to recruit and promote our sponsors to the event management community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 of sponsorship per annum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed by one
National Advocacy Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops a national policy platform Develops a national and regional communication strategy to review policies Develops a robust and interactive website Identify Government and Media spokesperson Develops a strategy to recruit and promote our sponsors to the event management community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # submission to Government Media articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of platform and key messages to drive advocacy

New National Event Association – Strategic Plan 2017-2020

Key Goals	Strategies	Key Performance Measures (KPIs) Reporting & Actions	Times Lines & Responsibility
National Governance Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain constitution to ensure proper governance Develop Governance Framework for Directors Develop Governance Rules - OAG, activities Establish Risk Management Committee Establish a robust and interactive website Develop Quality Management System Annual review of NPI status with CEO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of Compliance to Governance Commitment to Governance Annual review of governance policies Positive Board Performance Review Developing compliance reporting program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually
High Quality Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and review the recruitment requirements to support strategic plan Review open positions and contracts each year Implement a KPI program for all staff Develop open positions with contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure KPIs and performance management platform for all staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually

Notes
 The Goals remain constant
 The strategies to achieve the goals are developed by the Board and implemented
 The measurement of how well the organization is performing through the KPIs
 Each meeting of the national executive the CEO reports against the KPIs
 If the organization is not achieving the desired performance then the strategies would need to be reviewed
 The priority of what is reported will be determined by the Board and the CEO

New National Event Association – Strategic Plan 2017-2020

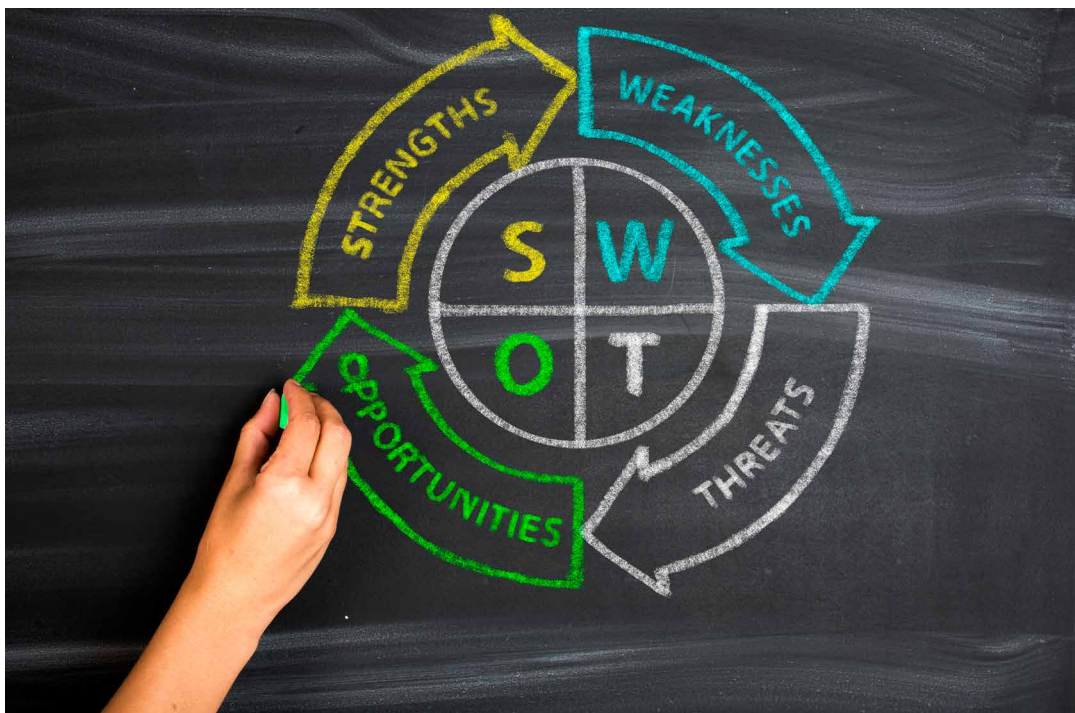
Stage One

Gathering Information Using a “Swot” Analysis

If the committee needs to develop or review their strategic plan, the first step is to gather information about their association, their members, the growth opportunities, and areas of risk. One of the most effective tools to assist your committee is the SWOT analysis. This is a tool often used by facilitators to identify areas of threat and risk, as well as what priorities they need to work on. Although the SWOT analysis is commonly used by the management team of commercial organisations, it demands a lot of time from the committee. For a volunteer committee which does not have much spare time, this tool may be inappropriate.

Your association should nominate a committee member who may be familiar with the tool and identify some key volunteer members to meet, discuss, and work through the strengths and weaknesses.

SWOT analysis procedure



With your group, move through each section covering elements like strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Ideally with a group of about 8 to 10 participants, each person can nominate a strength or a weakness. For example, a weakness may be the number of members could be limited by a certain area or qualification, so there would be a finite income stream which would impact on the budget for the association. An example of a strength could be the opportunity for members to share resources, or commence a buying group, which would add value to the member base.

The facilitator should cover the segments they can with ideas from the group.

The next stage is to gain consensus of the level of importance from each segment. Ideally, the facilitator would take all the weaknesses that have been highlighted and number each one in the order of priority, based on their impact on the association.

Following the analysis, it is crucial for the facilitator or nominated person to spend some time undertaking further analysis of the priorities highlighted. For example, if it has been highlighted that the total number of members, both individual or business, able to join the association are limited in number, it is important to ensure the undertaking of research to validate this suggestion, as this would have an impact on the ability of the association to not only generate new members but would impact on the potential revenue generated from new member subscriptions.

It is recommended that a report should be developed by the facilitator or nominated person which covers the outcomes of the SWOT analysis. It should be available to be used a reference document during the development of the strategic plan.

Strategic Plan - Developing the Vision of the Association



The development of a vision for the association is a critical first step for an association and, unless the committee are fully committed to the vision and believe it is the focus of their association, then it would be difficult to complete the strategic plan.

The vision statement represents the values of the association and is the foundation of the strategic plan. It is a statement where the association wants the community, or world, to be affected as result of their services or actions. It is different from for-profit visions in that the association vision must be aligned to the purpose as described in their constitution.

The best option is to encourage the committee to come up with some ideas as to what the vision should be. Here are a couple of things to consider:

It should be clear, precise, and achievable

Example: "Smart Ville will be recognized as a prominent tourist destination through the delivery of quality products and services."

In this simple example of a vision for a local tourist town, the association comprised of small business members who have formed to grow as an association to help their members to develop their business. In doing so, they will grow the economic fabric of their community.

It is important that this vision is shared and owned by the Governing Committee and is aligned with the purpose of the association, as defined in the constitution.

The vision is the anchor point for everything else within the strategic plan; it is what the association wants to achieve and should be communicated to members, stakeholders, and staff. The total objective of the association is to achieve the vision. Everything done within the association, including meetings, conferences, products, services, and the overall structure, is for achieving this vision.

For more information access Videos in [Online Resources](#).

Developing the Mission Statement

Following the development of the vision statement, the committee should then focus on developing the mission statement.

The mission statement is basically a description of how the association should operate to support the vision. In the mission statement, the association should define who its primary members are, identify the products and services it produces, and describe the geographical location in which it operates. It is through the who, what, and why that we are going to achieve the vision.

In reference to our vision statement, the mission statement should be similar.

The mission statement of the Smart Ville Association would be to develop products and services to enhance the business performance of their members by ensuring the products and services meet the needs of the members; the association is able to deliver those products and services in a timely and efficient manner.

The mission statement basically covers what your association is going to do to contribute to the vision.

Developing Key Goals or Objectives



After the committee has developed the mission and vision, identify the key goals that your association needs to constantly achieve to maintain the overall objective outlined in the vision.

Include these key goals in your strategy plan; there is no weighting regarding priority for any of these goals, as they must all be equally important, but in most cases the priority goals are membership and the delivery of services to members.

Always refer to the constitution, as the goals within the strategic plan need to also align with the constitution.

When developing the goals, make sure they are aligned to supporting the vision and mission.

Goals can be long-term or short-term but, like the vision or mission, are not changed unless they are not aligned to achieving the vision or mission.

Development of Strategies

After the committee have identified the goals, the next major challenge is to develop a series of strategies that, when implemented, will meet the goals that have been developed and ultimately support the achievement of the vision and mission.

At this stage, if there have been some ideas developed using the SWOT analysis, this is the time to review this information highlighted and use this in the development of the strategies.

When creating strategies, be conscious of the resources available to implement those strategies. The committee identify each goal and then brainstorm what are the most important strategies for the association, what resources available to implement these strategies and who on the committee is responsible.

Timelines

Unless your association has significant resources, then most strategies are those that can be covered over a three-year period. When you have developed and prioritised your strategies, ask the committee to determine the priorities of which strategies to be implemented and when.

Strategy Champions

In large associations, the strategic plan is handed to the staff to implement. The CEO or Executive Officer would develop a business plan which would include operational aspects of implementing the strategies.

For example, a strategy could be the surveying of members on an annual basis. Depending on the number of members and locations, the survey could be a major task using survey tools or limited to calling each member and asking certain questions.

However, no matter the resources available, it is good practice to have each committee member to act as a champion on either one or number of strategies. The role of the champion is to ensure the strategies are being implemented.

- » Remember, strategies are developed by the committee and the implementation can be delegated to staff, other committee members, or volunteers
- » The effectiveness of the strategies is measured against the goals and reported by the champion or person responsible
- » to the committee. This is included on the agenda for a report at all committee meetings
- » If the strategies are not achieving the goals, they can be changed during the committee meetings

Key Performance Measures (KPI'S)

A well-known business management consultant quoted, "You cannot manage what you can't measure" (Reference Peter Drucker). It is very important that the committee develop Key Performance Indicators which measure the effectiveness of the strategies being implemented and whether they are achieving the key goals of the strategic plan.

When developing KPI'S, make sure they are defined measures of the goals that have been developed within the strategic plan.

A common goal for many associations within their strategic plan is to grow their membership numbers the committee would have developed numerous strategies they would like to implement to achieve the growth of membership. In this case the Key Performance measure for all these strategies would most likely be membership growth, or the number of members who have renewed their membership.

The key performance indicators would be a quantitative measure or the number of members who have joined. If the committee have implemented their strategies and the membership is not growing, then they would change the strategy never the KPI

VISION & MISSION			
GOALS	STRATEGIES & OUTCOMES BY DATE: REVIEWED BY BOARD	TIMELINES	KPI'S MEASURE GOALS
Grow and maintain our membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop a marketing plan to grow membership » Members get a member program » Instigate member profile » Review our member value proposition 	December 2017 January 2018 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Membership Growth 10% » Membership retention 95%
Develop products and services which meet the needs of our members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop & implement member survey » Review existing product offering - board report » Review brand for 2018 » Launch Awards program 	June 2017 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 80% staff retention » 90% of take up by members
Ensure and effective operational infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Integrated Database System by 2018 » IT website & CRM platform developed » New premises secured » Staff development program instigated » Performance Management system Implemented 		
Maintain a financially sustainable association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Cash flow analysis review » Develop budget with surplus approx. 25% » Review bank accounts - fixed term deposits » Program of overhead reduction » Develop Return of Investment Strategy 	October 2019 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 35% surplus per annum
Increase the profile of the association to government, media & general community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop government policy platform » Develop submission template » Identify media spokespersons 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Media exposure: articles published per month » Times mentioned in industry mags » # times called for comment » Social media likes from community » Member perception » # submissions to government

Model Template

This is an example template you can use for your strategic plan. The key goals and strategies examples in this template are very popular.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

The success of many associations in growing membership numbers or securing funding for various projects is often determined by the leadership within the Governing Committee and their approach to developing a plan and use it as a management tool to main important decisions.

Strategic Plan Cycle



In this diagram we see how the strategic plan is a major tool for communicating the strategies to the rest of the organisation. The operational plan is a plan used by staff or volunteers with more detailed strategies of achieving the key goals. The operational plan covers more detailed actions by staff and volunteers. Nonetheless, the outcome of every action should be determined on how well they are achieving the Vision and Goals of the association and the outcomes of the operational plan is measured by the same KPI'S as the Strategic Plan.

With all the good intentions of implementing the strategic plan, each week the average association does not go to plan. If you are managing a very dynamic and diverse membership base that contains several stakeholders with different demands, thinking about the strategic plan or referring to it seems to go out the window.

Often when the committee meeting comes around it appears to be a rush to gather reports, arrange the meeting, and develop the agenda. In many cases the strategic plan tends to be put aside, and the focus of the committee agenda seems to more often be on dealing with immediate rather than strategic issues.

How to develop and implement a strategic plan?

- » Firstly, consider the strategic plan as a strategic planning process rather than an event which produces a piece of paper with the title “Strategic Plan”
- » Document the process and timelines; manage the development of a strategic plan as a major project with objectives and results
- » Gather organisational performance data, including financial data, product and services performance, survey results, and, if necessary, membership or stakeholder information, etc.
- » Discuss and raise the awareness of the strategic planning process with staff and committee members; ensure all involved in the process understand their individual contribution to the strategic plan is critical for success
- » CEO or President develops the draft strategic plan document, which includes goals, objectives, strategies, key performance indicators, and timelines
- » Run a strategic planning day with the Board/committee, including a facilitator
- » Develop the draft strategic plan – usually no more than five pages
- » CEO or President presents the draft strategic plan at the next Board or Governing Committee meeting for endorsement, and there should be an agreement on how to use the strategic plan in all board meetings
- » Goals of the strategic plan become the key agenda items at every Board meeting and strategies are reviewed against key performance measures

How do we measure the effectiveness of the strategic plan we have developed for our association? Firstly, we would notice elements of the strategic plan is constantly referred to in the minutes. The Governing Committee meeting key agenda items would focus on reporting on results and how well the association is achieving the goals that were set as part of the strategic plan. Finally, if your association has a CEO reporting to the committee or Board, it would be expected the CEO’s report would be outlining their progress of the association towards achieving the goals and using the KPI’s.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

The strength of any association is its membership an association's strength depends on the number of members who are engaged and use the products and services provided by the association.

In recent research we have identified that the most successful associations have the following characteristics regarding their membership:

- » Attractive member benefits
- » Member communication strategies
- » Member engagement processes
- » Established value proposition
- » Skilled staff or volunteers to deliver those services
- » Documented processes/policies of serving members
- » Ability to promote their members to the community
- » Strategic approach to growing membership, developed by using the strategic plan

Types of Members

It is important to read your constitution to understand the types of members who can join association and the membership rights of members which includes voting rights. If the constitution describes your members as only being businesses, then you cannot invite individual members to join unless you change your constitution

If your association is a society or designed for individual interest, then your membership should focus on individual members. A Governing Committee cannot change the rules about who can join unless the majority of members support a special resolution to change the rules to include individual members agree.

Below is an extract from the [model rules](#), which describes the nature of a member in the model rules constitution. In the model rules example the constitution stipulates anyone who support the association can be a member. Many associations use this example but opening the opportunity for anyone to join the association can be problematic if not all members share the same values and expectations.

Who is eligible to be a member

Any person who supports the purposes of the Association is eligible for membership.

9 Application for membership

- (1) To apply to become a member of the Association, a person must submit a written application to a committee member stating that the person—

- (a) wishes to become a member of the Association; and
 - (b) supports the purposes of the Association; and
 - (c) agrees to comply with these Rules.
- (2) The application—
- (a) must be signed by the applicant; and
 - (b) may be accompanied by the joining fee.

Note

The joining fee is the fee (if any) determined by the Association under rule 12(3).

In this extract from the model rules there is an allowance for the committee to allow any person who supports the purpose of the association to join.

Why do people want to join an association and become members?

There are several reasons why people want to join an association. The main reason is the structure of the association provides a framework for members to engage with other members who have a common point of interest.

Other reasons include:

- » Improved business opportunities
- » Increase their knowledge of their interest
- » Opportunity to improve the community
- » As a vehicle for collaboration
- » Influence and lobby governments on important issues
- » Spiritual purposes or to support religious
- » Sporting association or social clubs
- » To enhance their career through professional development, networking, or professional recognition

Developing the right value proposition

According to Wikipedia a value proposition “is a promise of value to be delivered, communicated, and acknowledged. It is also a belief from the customer about how value will be delivered, experienced and acquired.”

This is a common marketing phase but increasingly it is being used in reference to the offering for potential members as to why they should join an association.

Association committees or membership managers need to get the value proposition right if they want to attract and retain members in their association.

The latest membership research (the AES Association Management Best Practice Survey 2016) indicates that traditional membership benefits are failing to attract new members from younger generations. People wanting to become members are expecting their association to go above and beyond, to demonstrate that the association is providing real-world tangible value, and to deliver a return on their investment.

Luckily, while some of the more traditional member benefits are losing their impact and importance, there are several benefits that are becoming crucial for member engagement.

Here are two key areas that associations must address as part of their value proposition:

» **Access to information that will assist your members to grow their business**

One of the key values that your association should provide is access to valid, reliable information. According to the Association Matters 2013 State of the Sector Report, a survey undertaken of the members of over 40 Australian associations, members are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information received via emails and when searching social media.

As such, members rely on their association to validate the information they receive. Members want peace of mind that the information disseminated by their association is accurate and, more importantly, up to date.

By accessing the latest information for businesses through organisations like [Small Business Victoria](#), as a business community you can provide speakers on a range of subjects which individual members would not be able to access.

If your association's membership is a business, then the events you organise and facilitate must present the leading edge thinking within business management. Your speakers must provide information or ideas that add value for your members. Similarly, your industry publications (such as magazines, newsletters, and even social media content) must present information that is accurate, timely, relevant, and forward-thinking.

» **Awards Endorsement and Recognition**

The value of recognition and endorsement cannot be underestimated; it's why celebrities are venerated in gossip columns and on social media. Having your business members endorsed by the local community, through promotion on your community website, is always a key member benefit.

Many associations organise business excellence awards, hosting an annual celebration to award to those members who have demonstrated excellence in their business.

Those businesses who are endorsed by the association, as being at a level of best practice in their business operations, is certainly an incentive for members to join.

If your association is considering implementing an award for excellence in managing a business, make sure the business excellence criteria is well understood and entrants can

benefit by not only being involved, but also learning about their business by undergoing the application and judging process.

Buying group

One well-known benefit for organisations to join is for your association to establish a buying group for your business members. Many associations provide benefits to their members through the power of purchasing as a group.

This would be of benefit for those organisations that have a mutual supplier base. This could include items such as power, stationary, food, furniture, motor vehicles, etc.

A buying group would suit an association which has a reasonable membership base, possibly from the same industry. Those members do not have the power to negotiate with suppliers as individual businesses, but as an association have greater buying power.

There are several associations that commenced their own buying groups and have grown to million-dollar organisations. One such organisation is [Frontline Group](#), whose membership base are small retailers located predominantly throughout regional and country Australia.

Your value proposition must resonate with those who are thinking of joining your association. For any association committee or membership manager, the test of a good value proposition is assessed by the following:

If a potential member calls and wants to know why they should join your association, if your value proposition does not excite them enough to the point they want to join, then the value proposition that you have developed is not good enough.

Member Subscriptions

Member subscriptions are always an area that raises a lot of concern with committees. Here are some items to consider when deciding on member subscriptions:

1. Member subscriptions should be annual 12-month subscriptions with one renewal date per year. For many business associations, the 1st of July is the normal renewal time for annual membership, as the membership is normally treated as a business expense or tax deduction. If you have a small association of members, it is acceptable to renew their memberships by the anniversary of their joining but, if your members numbers are above 100, consider an annual membership date. It is often logistically difficult to manage a renewal on anniversaries.
2. **What should we charge members for an annual subscription fee?** Setting the annual fee is always a difficult exercise and should be undertaken with care. Make sure your subscription fee covers the basic costs of managing the association, which includes salaries, insurance, marketing, business development, website development, and design.

3. One strategy that has helped several associations is the introduction of an application fee, which would be a nominal one-off fee to join the association. This not only covers the administration costs of processing the membership, but it also contributes to the reduction of the attrition levels of membership. Members who do not have to pay an application fee can join and then opt in and out of membership. By including an application fee for new members, members who are considering leaving the association but are happy with most of the service tend to remain as a member.

How to Recruit New Members

Associations are always looking to grow their membership. There are some fortunate associations that do not need to grow their members because their members cannot practice unless they are a member of their professional association, such as those in legal and health related professions.

Most associations are actively seeking to recruit new members. They rely on their marketing strategies and their value proposition to lure new members to join their association.

Here are some ideas to recruit members:

- » **Join now and receive a 14-month membership** – a great strategy to provide a value for members who have considered joining and renewal date is approaching.
- » **Member gets a member** – a strategy for members to approach potential members to join the association. Has varying results but these depend on how motivated the members are to approach non-members.
- » **Offering member-only events to non-members** – often used as an opportunity to emphasise the value proposition by offering member-only events to the broader community. It is important to ensure the speaker at the event be of interest to the general community, such as a key government decision maker or the launch of an initiative that may impact on the industry or the community.

Onboarding New Members

As outlined within our strategic plan, a measure of a successful association is the ability to retain new members. Here are the steps to onboard new members:

1. Members should be able to join online through a payment portal. Your constitution again provides directions as to who can join and the process of approval. The member may have to undertake a process to qualify for membership; this may be determined by their qualifications, experience, compliance to legislation, or legal status as a business.
2. Before the member is accepted online, or by other means, make sure the member

acknowledges that they have read and agreed to the terms of the constitution, privacy statements, code of conduct, and grievance procedures.

3. Suggest that new members receive a welcome pack, which often includes details of membership logon to the association website. It is common practice to include a signed letter from the President welcoming them to the association.
4. Follow the member up with a welcome telephone call from the President, committee member, or staff member.
5. Identify the next member event and, if appropriate, invite the member to the event. Make sure a committee or staff member is assigned to meet with the member when they attend. If part of your value proposition is the provision of networking, this is the opportunity to ensure that the new member develops a

sense of belonging with the association.

Make sure that the new member is introduced to as many other members as possible. The role of the committee at these events is to ensure all members feel engaged

6. All new members, both individual and business, should receive a certificate of membership or logo transfers they can use on the front door of their business or frame in their office or home. It is good practice to ensure certificates of membership are presented to new members at members' events. One of the major benefits offered by associations is the opportunity for members to be recognised by their peers. The practice of the President presenting the certificates to new members at members' events has proven to be a successful strategy to ensure members engage with their association.

For a period of approximately 4 weeks after the member has joined, the President, committee, or staff member should follow up with the new member. Ideally a personal phone call can make a difference.

Member Engagement

Keeping members so they can engage with the association is always a challenge. In a recent meeting of a local business association, the President facilitated a morning meeting of members to address the problem of member engagement. Of the 140 business members, only 40 would attend member events and they seemed to be the same members.

No matter how well the association is organised and the nature of the events, if the members do not want to turn up or be engaged the association will not continue to thrive.

Many associations such as rotary clubs are not attracting young people to join and contribute to rotary. Other organisations who are seeking to attract young members suffer the same fate.

The engagement for young people needs to be different. Most young people are already networked on social media platforms; many associations tend to rely on social media platforms but there still needs to be that personal contact.

To entice members so they will turn up to your events, join committees, or be engaged, try these ideas:

- » Find out the birth date of the key contact from the business membership. Include these details on your database and, when their birthday comes around, organise one of your committee members to call to wish your member a happy birthday. Success in growing membership is all about building personal relationships.
- » If you have a regular newsletter or relationship with a local newspaper, make it a point to profile a member each month in the local newspaper or through your eNews letter.
- » If there are special events to be organised, seek volunteers from the membership for the project rather than leave it to the committee. The committee's role is to govern and to delegate to volunteers.

Member Subscription Renewals

Membership renewal time is always difficult for associations, as the association seems to come under scrutiny from your members when they are faced with an invoice for the next year.

Regardless of how much growth you may have experienced in the past year, members who are undecided as to whether to renew their membership will critically assess whether your association is doing a good job and meeting their needs. If you have not connected with your members within the past year you face the prospect that the member does not want to re-join.

If your association has not been delivering on the services promised, or your board of directors or staff have not engaged members over the last 12 months, then the annual membership renewal drive can be the moment of truth.

While there is no single compelling reason for association membership renewal (except where renewal is required to maintain employment or operate a business), in accounting terms, members who have been asked to renew cannot be classed as debtors; they simply remain un-financial until payment is made.

Given that the long-term sustainability of any association depends upon the strength of its members, be sure you implement these five steps to help ensure your existing members renew their memberships:

1. Clearly Demonstrate Your Association's Value Proposition

If the first thought your members have upon receiving your renewal notice is, “who are you again?”, then you’re in hot water. You need to ensure that your association’s member value proposition is crystal clear. Make sure your renewal notice clearly spells out why they should renew their membership, including member benefits (an industry magazine and newsletters, discounts on training, or member-only events), as well as broader industry benefits derived from lobbying.

2. Highlight the Benefits and Services Accessed by Members

Keep in mind that, if the only interaction you have had with your members all year is the distribution of your invoice, membership renewal is highly unlikely. To help overcome this, ensure that you have a detailed database or Customer Retention Management system CRM that automatically lists association activities with which your members have been involved over the last 12 months. Be sure to include the details of all the benefits and services used in your renewal notice.

3. Distribute Your Renewal Notice the Right Way

When it comes time to distribute your renewal notices, be sure that you do it the right way. Make sure your database is up to date before you send the renewal notices. You can do this by distributing an ‘Update Your Contact Information’ email to all members a month or two before your renewal notices are due for distribution. Do not send your renewal notices via email on a Friday or Monday; these are busy days of the week and your members are more likely to forget or lose your email. Include an incentive if members renew immediately, as this will help improve cash flow. Develop a three-month renewal program that commences the personal engagement leading up to the time the invoice is sent.

4. Make It Easy for Members to Renew Via Your Website

People expect to be able to undertake just about everything online; membership renewal is no different. So, make it easy for members to renew via a secure payment gateway on your website. These types of payment systems are readily available, operating similarly to online shopping. If you opt for online payment, make receipts immediately available either via email or as a downloadable PDF. Members will need their receipt for taxation purposes.

5. Don't Forget About Members Who Fail to Renew Immediately

From our research, members may fail to renew for several reasons:

- » They have lost the invoice
- » They have forgotten
- » They have moved industry or changed jobs
- » The association is not delivering on its promises

There are some solutions that can help overcome these issues, ensuring that lagging members eventually renew their membership. The most important is keeping in touch, make sure your association is front of mind and your members feel a sense of belonging and involvement.

Managing Volunteers

Many community-based associations rely on volunteers to deliver the services to members. Associations like the Scouts, St John's Ambulance, Rotary and Lions clubs, and Neighbourhood Watch would not function if they did not have volunteers to deliver their program and to raise funds.

Members and other people volunteer for a range of activities; if your association is reliant on volunteers to deliver services, it is important that your association understand nature of volunteers how they are involved with your association and to ensure your association manages the effective recruiting of volunteers who will help the your organisation thrive.

An ideal resource to help your committee manage the recruitment of volunteers is through [Volunteering Australia](#) the not-for-profit peak body for volunteers throughout Australia. This organisation activity represents the interest of volunteer groups and, in consultation with not-for-profit law, they have developed a National Volunteer Guide which provides an overview of the key legal obligations owed to volunteers by associations and other organisations. The guide has templates and tips to manage your volunteers.

Managing Staff

One of the challenges for many associations is the management of staff who are responsible for ensuring the association is achieving the objectives and goals outlined within the strategic plan and constitution.

Many associations are small and do not have the finances to employ staff. However, as they prosper, they rely on paid staff to ensure the delivery of quality services and benefits to the members.

Employing the right staff is very important. The average association has less than 20 staff, with the majority employing about 4 staff. In most cases the association employs a Chief Executive Officer who supports the Committee and implements the strategic plan.

Chief Executive Officer

This person is a paid staff member who reports to the committee and is responsible for the implementation and reporting against the strategic plan. Although in this document we refer to this role using the term CEO, other titles include Executive Officer, General Manager, and Executive Director. The overall responsibility for the person who fulfils this role is to ensure the operational aspects of the association are undertaken.

The management of an association, either by volunteers or paid staff, can be a very complex experience. The core competencies for a CEO of an association should cover the following:

1. Understanding of the regulatory governance requirements for the management of the association
2. Ability to engage with a voluntary committee, providing leadership and advice as required
3. Understand the strategic planning process and their role in developing and implementing a strategic plan
4. Understand and be able to develop membership needs and expectations
5. Ability to promote and market the benefits of membership to potential member groups
6. Build relationships with stakeholders, including local, state, and federal government organisations
7. Understand and develop relevant policies to be implemented by the committee
8. Seek out potential members of the committee
9. Provide advice and information to the Office Bearers
10. Understand the financial performance of the association and manage the budget and cashflow


See Appendix A:

Templates –

CEO

Administration Officer

Membership & Events Officer



SYSTEMS & PROCEDURES

In this section we discuss
quality management systems.

SYSTEMS & PROCEDURES

Quality Management Systems

In this section we discuss quality management systems as an important management practice for all associations both large and small.

Many associations rely on the knowledge of the individuals that are providing the services to the association and members. The wealth of knowledge developed by a number of these individuals adds value to the members. A member could call the office and request something; the long-term employee responds because they have the accumulated knowledge. This service is seen as a benefit of the membership.

When key staff members or volunteers who are providing this service fall ill or leave the association and fail to document their knowledge of how the association operates or processes of delivery of services to members, this places the association at significant risk. Even when the staff member or volunteer leaves voluntarily and provides a verbal handover it is not enough to maintain the quality of service delivery. There are always practices that are not documented which can cause poor member services.

To address this potential risk, check if the following key procedures have been documented or updated in your association;

- » Process of onboarding new members
- » Process for managing and updating the website
- » Process for running events
- » Process for managing finances
- » Process for onboarding new committee members

How to develop a Quality Management System

- » Identify what the key services are that your association is providing to your members.
- » Has the association documented the process of delivering these services to the members?
- » If the association has documented processes, are they up-to-date and being used?
- » Are the processes in electronic format?
- » Who should be trained in these procedures?

FINANCE

The core responsibility for association leaders is to ensure the association is financially viable and sustainable. Earlier we discussed the term not for profit association if you need further information about the term, we suggest going to the Australian Taxation Office; The organisation cannot provide surplus to members. It does not mean the association should not make a profit; it is in fact important that any NFP association make a profit per annum if they want to ensure the organisation can deliver services to present and future members.

All associations should seek professional financial advice from qualified accountants or financial advisers when developing their budgets or considering major purchases.

In this section we invited some well-known qualified accountants who provide advice to the not for profit sector to provide us with general finance information.

We have included an explanation of some of the financial reports or terms commonly referred to by association committees.

Balance Sheet

One of the most common financial reports reviewed by association committees is the Balance Sheet. A balance sheet provides a snapshot or overview of the financial position of a business or association at a specific point in time. The contents of a balance sheet changes progressively over time, often as a result of ongoing trading activities. Given its highly dynamic nature, a balance sheet should be assessed in conjunction with other financial reports, such as the profit and loss statement and/or cashflow projections.

The balance sheet does not determine the market value of a business or association. The business value is dependent on a myriad of factors; the balance sheet is just one item that should be considered.

When it comes to associations, balance sheets are not overly complex; particularly if you view your balance sheet considering this simple equation:

Assets - Liabilities = Equity (Net assets/Shareholder Equity)

Just remember, the main objective of a balance sheet is to provide your committee with the confidence that your association retains a positive and solid equity position.

The Key Components of a Balance Sheet

To be able to read and understand your association's balance sheet, you need to be familiar with the key components included within. There are five key components of any balance sheet; fixed assets, current assets, intangible assets, current liabilities, and non-current liabilities.

1. Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are usually purchased assets which are required to operate an association or business and, in most cases, cannot easily be converted into cash or liquid form. Examples of fixed assets include items such as cars, property, and IT equipment.

2. Current Assets

Current assets are generally those that are used to financially run an association or business and are more liquid in form. Examples of fixed assets include items such as cash in a bank account, stocks, and account receivables such as money owing to an association from outstanding memberships.

3. Intangible Assets

A company or association may also have valuable assets which are not included on a balance sheet. These are called intangible assets. This type of asset is usually not physical in nature and will have evolved over time without any money changing hands. Examples of intangible assets include the value associated with a brand, goodwill, a methodology, members database or a trademark.

4. Current Liabilities

Current liabilities comprise items that need to be paid by a business or association within the next one to 12 months. Within associations, most current liabilities are expenses incurred to operate the business daily. These are normally paid within 30 to 60 days from when the service or goods were provided. Should there be other liabilities (where payment is due over the next 12 months), then these would also need to be included in the current liabilities section. For example, an agreement to hire or lease equipment with monthly instalments would be classified as a current liability.

5. Non-Current Liabilities

Non-current liabilities represent the items where a commitment has been made but the payments are not due within the following 12 months. For example, a long-term loan from a bank would be considered a non-current liability. Payment of these liabilities has a minimal effect on cash flow requirements for the immediate 12 months.

Ref Michael Moran – Online Tax Australia

ASSOCIATIONS & TAX

In Australia, an exemption from income tax is available for qualifying not-for-profit organisations, including associations formed for certain purposes. If an organisation is exempt from income tax, it does not have to lodge income tax returns or pay income tax. Where a full exemption is not available, special rules may apply to determine a not-for-profit's taxable income and rates of tax.

This exemption does not extend to other potential tax obligations such as GST, PAYG withholding, and Fringe Benefits Tax, each of which must be considered separately. Certain not-for-profit organisations can only obtain relief from income tax by receiving endorsement from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). This includes charities and certain charitable funds.

Non-charity not-for-profit organisations can self-assess their income tax status. This assessment must be made each year and, to help protect against penalties, should be documented by completing the ATO's income tax status review worksheet.

This can be found [here](#):

Where the relevant law and the activities or purpose of the organisation have not changed, the self-assessment is unlikely to differ from year to year.

Broadly, the following types of organisations can self-assess as exempt from income tax:

- » Community Service Organisations (excluding those established for political or lobbying purposes)
- » Cultural Organisations (for the encouragement of art, literature, music, or medicine)
- » Education Organisations
- » Employment Organisations (recognised under Fair Work)
- » Health Organisations
- » Resource Development Organisations (for the promotion of agriculture, aquaculture, aviation, fishing, horticulture, industrial resources, manufacturing resources, pastoral resources, tourism, viticulture, and IT)
- » Scientific Organisations
- » Sporting Organisations

Each of these broad headings has specific conditions that must also be considered. For example, most, but not all, require that the organisation is not-for-profit. Professional advice should be obtained if an association is unsure of its income tax status.

Many professional and business associations may be able to self-assess as resource development organisations. However, the purpose of the association, usually evidenced by its actual activities, constitution, and marketing documentation, is critical. Take the following two examples from the ATO:

Example: Exempt Resource Development Association

A not-for-profit association's purpose is to run a tourism information booth. Its volunteers provide brochures and information to tourists and residents about the tourism opportunities in the district. The association is performing the development of tourism and is exempt.

Example: Not Resource Development and Non-Exempt

A not-for-profit association is set up by a group of horticulture businesses. Its purpose is to buy supplies for its members in bulk and undertake joint marketing of their businesses. The association is not promoting the development of horticultural resources and is not exempt.

Where there is a non-profit requirement for an organisation, this does not mean that the organisation cannot make a profit. However, any profit made by the organisation must go back into its operations to enable it to carry out its purpose and cannot be distributed to its members.

The ATO considers that the governing documents of the organisation should prevent the distribution of profits to members, both during operation and on windup. There is no prescribed wording which must be used, though the ATO provides examples on their website.

Where an organisation is not prescribed as income tax exempt, certain income may still qualify as income tax exempt under the mutuality principle. Under this principle, a group of individuals join and contribute to a common fund which is created and controlled by all of them for a mutual purpose. Any surplus created in the fund from the individual contributions or most dealings between the members is not considered to be assessable income of the organisation for tax purposes.

Where this principle can be applied, this does not relieve the organisation from the requirement to lodge an income tax return.

Stay tuned for next month's article where we will explore some specific association-related tax questions in more detail.

(Reference Aaron Fitchett is a partner at Baumgartners)

MARKETING YOUR ASSOCIATION

In this section we will cover the marketing of your association to the community you serve and the surrounding areas. Your association is a group of members with a common purpose and, if that purpose is to deliver services to your members who in turn can be better businesses, the clear purpose could be to market your association to members only. However, taking that stance can be problematic as your members expect your association to be recognised. The branding of your association is therefore important.

Developing Your Brand

It is important to get the branding of your association right before you start marketing it. There are well-known association brands that we are already familiar with, such as RACV, AFL, and CPA. These are associations which all have well-known, recognisable brands. A Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) is a well-known brand which presents itself to its members as being professional, honest, and efficient. Other well-known brands include Scouts, Rotary, and Lions Club.

If your association is a local chamber of commerce or business community, make sure you have a brand or logo which is vibrant, stands out, and is recognisable. Include the vision of your strategic plan in your logo.

Make sure the brand or logo is present and on view to the public; suggest that all member websites add the following; *"We are a proud member of the town business association."*

Licensing your Brand

Your brand or logo will become a very important asset for your association; as new members want to belong to your association; you can allow them to use the logo on their premises or vehicles.

As you progress and raise the profile of the brand and association, you do need to protect the brand from other entities or persons using the brand without authority.

We suggest that the association's brand be trademarked. This is not a difficult process but, for an association, the cost is about \$250 through [IP Australia](#).

Marketing Through Social Media

With digital age and social media becoming part of our business culture, it is important for all associations to understand how to use social media to increase their profile and association.

What is social media?

A social media platform is an online network of people who want to communicate, share ideas, build relationships, and engage in conversations.

When we refer to social media marketing, this refers to the process of gaining traffic to your association through the respective media platforms.

Your association has no option but to embrace social media; it has a role in your marketing and is a great opportunity to provide two-way interaction between members and potential members. Overall, there is no option but to use social media.

The main social media channels are:

- » Facebook
- » Twitter
- » LinkedIn
- » Google+
- » Instagram
- » Pinterest

Associations who use social media can develop great content which they post on the platforms, attracting people interested in your association.

What Social Media Platform to use?

This is a very difficult question to answer, as each social media platform covers the interests of different groups. Possibly the most effective for business-to-business associations or community associations is Facebook and LinkedIn. Associations can set up their own pages and include members-only pages, which is often a very good member benefit as they can share information or ideas without much interference from the administration or committee.

A note on member-only pages; ensure there are rules for all members to agree to before they are admitted into the members-only Facebook page.

Social Media Platforms are changing every day

One of the challenges for all associations or businesses which are using social media platforms to promote and market their products or services, is the owners of these platforms are changing the conditions and infrastructure on a regular basis. This is in response to their commercial interests, but also due the pressure of government and threats of litigation.

ASSOCIATION WEBSITES

In the current digital age, your website is usually the first point of call for potential new members, a regular source of news for existing members, and a valuable resource for government bodies.

As we all know, a website is comprised of two main components: design and layout, and content. All too often, associations focus solely on design and aesthetics and fail to put in as much hard work and dedication when it comes to their content. While website design is vital (it is a huge indicator of how professional your association is), website content should be given at least as much attention. There is no point in having a beautifully crafted website if your content is full of typos, technical jargon, or just doesn't make sense.

Here are some ideas on how to manage your website:

Keep Content Simple

Your association website could be accessed and read by all sorts of people; people whose first language is not English, people who have no knowledge of the technical jargon that might be second nature to you, and people with no background in your area of expertise. Keep this in mind when writing website content. Keep content simple so that all possible audience members understand and remain interested. If you run a highly technical association and need to use jargon, restrict this to certain areas of your website (such as a technical paper page) and set up a glossary of technical terms.

Use the Inverted Pyramid Writing Style

It's sad but true; the average attention span is dwindling. So, write every page (or article, or post) in an inverted pyramid style. This means including broad coverage of your chosen topic first, followed by increased specificity and then the most important information. Basically, include the most important information first. That way, when your readers lose interest (or their attention is diverted), they will have already gleaned the most salient points.

Put a Big Red Line Through 'Fluff'

It can be difficult, but I urge you to resist the temptation to write in marketing-speak. People are much more consumer-savvy than ever before. We can all recognise marketing-speak from a mile and tend to avoid it like the plague. So, even if you're trying to influence your website readers, or trying to make them embark on a specific course of action, do not use 'fluff'. Instead, provide value in every website page; give your website visitors a reason to keep reading.

Keep Your Website Pages Short and Sweet

Your website should not double as a textbook, an industry guide, or even as an e-book. Website content should be short, sharp, and punchy. As a rule, keep static page content to approximately 2,000 words and blog posts or news articles to around 1,200 words. Again, this goes back to dwindling attention spans; it is likely that you will lose your audience with content that is any longer. Instead, split longer content over two pages.

Write for the Web

It is not ok to simply copy and paste the content from your most recent brochure, flyer, or annual review onto your website. Website copy should be written specifically for its intended purpose. Website copy should include multiple levels of headings, short sentences, short paragraphs, lists, and bullet points. It should not include great slabs of text that look like block of boring grey waffle when viewed on a computer screen.

Focus on Your Website Readers, Not on the Search Engines

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is important to boost the ranking of your website within the search engines (like Google). However, when it comes to content, do not focus all your attention on the search engines and forget about your human audience. When it comes to writing for a keyword, it is fine to include the specific keyword in your page or article heading, as well as in body content a couple of times; any more than that and it is overkill and considered keyword stuffing. It looks spammy and your readers won't appreciate it.

If you use these few simple steps, your website copy will be top-notch. With top-notch web content you should see improved website traffic and enhanced usability statistics, including longer average session durations.

Ref Sally Wood from Wordly

PURCHASING A NEW WEBSITE AND DATABASE SYSTEM?

One of the biggest financial decisions an association's committee must make is the purchase of a membership database system. In some cases, there are not enough members to warrant a membership database and often an excel spread sheet is enough. If your association is growing and running regular events, the committee should be considering a website and integrated database to manage the day-to-day interactions with your members and the community.

The decision by your committee to buy the right website and database is very important; the wrong decision can have a serious impact on an organisation, not only financially but in the delivery of appropriate services to members, resulting in frustration by everyone including staff and volunteers.

Associations can purchase an off-the-shelf database system, hosted by vendors in your IT infrastructure or hosted and managed offsite by the vendor. A system can also be custom-developed and hosted onsite or, alternatively, hosted and managed offsite.

A recent survey revealed most associations purchase an off-the-shelf database system rather than going for the option of a custom-developed system, as the cost for this can often be greater.

The number of vendors providing database systems to the association or not-for-profit sector has grown over the last 15 years and the pricing is very competitive. You will find several vendors presenting their products with supporting testimonials from association customers.

This may be very convincing, but remember, your needs may be totally different. Here are some tips to help you when deciding the best system for you:

Do not seek out vendor's solutions before you have documented requirements outlining what it is your system should do.

Vendors are out to sell you a solution and their system may not be the best one for your association. A requirement document is not a specification document, but rather a document outlining what it is you want your database system to do. Requirements could include such things as web online log-in for members, community user groups, subscription payments, shopping carts, and the list goes on. This will not only help you make it easier for the vendor to provide the best solution for you but will also provide you with a better understanding of your own needs.

Requirements should be as complete and accurate as you can make them.

This can be a problem when the board is involved in the process, as the wish list tends to grow and grow. Associations may, at times, want ‘bells and whistles’ but in fact they really only have basic requirements. Typical questions to ask may include, for example: What reports do you need? How many users will require access? How much data will you need to store? How are your members going to use the system?

If you have an existing member database system and are not happy with it, then there will already be learnings to be gained.

This helps you get an idea of what your requirements are. A good approach is to have a brainstorming session with all the current users. Find out what is working well and what is needed. Also, consider the future direction of the association and check out the strategic plan, as it is important to know what is planned over the next five years. It is also important to know what functionality is required in your database if you have growth in members, the industry changes, or you are selling new products or services. Get all this right before you approach any vendors.

Consider the resources available to implement your new database.

Staff will need to be trained and there is a lot of time required to implement a database system. Do you have enough resources to implement a new system? You may have to consider hiring contract staff to help with administration tasks to allow your staff to concentrate on the implementation. Develop a budget and include all your direct and indirect costs. Remember, if you are going to use your existing staff, you are going to take them away from their normal work.

Budget and time lines.

In your requirements document ensure you have identified a sufficient budget. If you can avoid doing so, do not enter into a financial arrangement to secure your funding. In the last ten years the marketplace has changed, many products and services have become very affordable, and technology is changing constantly.

Clearly define in your requirements document the timelines you require for implementation testing and acceptance of the system.

You would have timelines that impact on your revenue streams, such as membership renewals, donations, events, and member services. This is a critical part of your requirements document and must be clearly thought through.

Approaching membership database vendors.

Remember, all database vendors want to sell you their product. If you do not have a requirements document available, then communication is really about solutions available rather than your needs. In your discussions with the vendor, your timelines would be discussed, and you should evaluate the responses to your questions. Remember, if you are missing some functionality and would like the vendor to develop additional functionality, this may be costly.

The package selected should have all your mandatory requirements as outlined in your requirements document.

Unless the system selected is a good fit for your organisation, it is not worth embarking down this path as it may be a costly mistake. Before you sign any vendor, agreement make sure you are satisfied the solution meets your requirements (or at best, your mandatory requirements).

The vendor's system, as part of the evaluation, should have some live data uploaded so you can readily see how the system meets your requirements.

The vendor should generate reports using your live data. This is an important aspect during testing and staff training, as there must be examples of live data so they can understand how the system functions. This should be included in test cases and training materials. If a system is hosted by the vendor, ensure you have access to the data that you want, and that data can be extracted and provided to your organisation for statistical analysis, marketing, or other purposes as required.

Support for your system is important.

An important consideration is the level of support for various incidents. For example, will the vendor respond within 30 minutes to get your system online if there is no access by members? Hence, the duration to get critical incidents/bugs fixed is important. You need to outline the hours and days for the help desk support and the turnaround time; support outside the normal business hours and over the weekend can be expensive.

Security for your system is also important.

You need to ensure that privacy is always maintained and that members' and customers' details and controls are in place to ensure that data cannot be accessed unlawfully. If your data is hosted by the vendor, who else can have access to the information?

Expansion.

Systems should easily allow for increasing volumes of data to be held and increasing numbers of staff accessing the system. Decisions will occur as to whether older records are held offline but retrievable, or if held online indefinitely.

SUMMARY

The Governance Tool Kit covers the fundamentals of managing an association and provides an overview of the day to day actions needed to ensure your association is running smoothly. While there is a lot of information included in this kit, the success of the association depends on the understanding of good governance by the committee and their ability to provide leadership to their members.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Association Compliance Regulators

Consumer Affairs Victoria
Australian Securities & Investment Commission
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
Australian Tax Office
Australian Charities & Not-For-Profit Commission

Pro- Bono Legal Support

Justice Connect - Free Legal Advice for NFP Community Groups

Free IT Hardware & Software

Connecting Up

Association Consulting & Secretariat Services

Association Executive Services

Financial

Business Victoria - Budget Templates

Community Grants and Philanthropic Funding

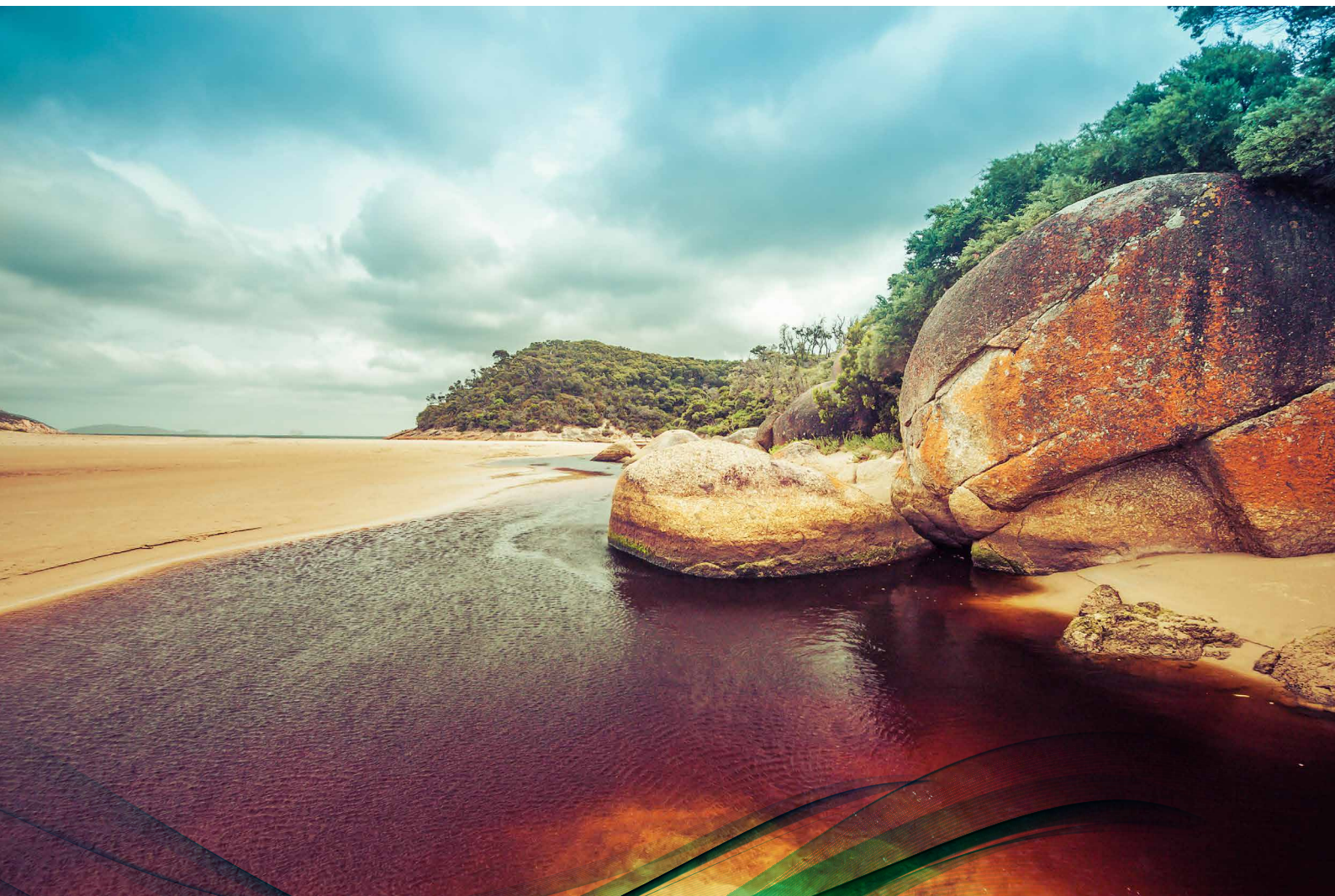
Bendigo Bank
Philanthropy Australia

ONLINE VIDEOS

- » Governance for Associations
John Crosby
- » Strategic Planning Nick Koerbin
- » Grow your membership Nick Koerbin
- » Managing Bullying Gavin Sharp
- » Finding New Revenue for Your
Association Nick Koerbin

OTHER RESOURCES

IP Australia - Copyright and Trademarks



APPENDICIES

▲ CONTENTS

APPENDIX (A) TEMPLATES

Conflict Of Interest Policy

Authorised By: Committee

Prepared By:

Issue Date:

Review Date:

Version:

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Purpose The Committee is committed to high standards of ethical conduct and accordingly places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflict of interest.

Definitions **Conflict of interest** – is a situation in which a person has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective exercise of his or her official duties as, say, a public official, an employee, or a professional.” Source: Chris MacDonald, Michael McDonald, and Wayen Norman, “Charitable Conflicts of Interest”, Journal of Business Ethics 39:1-2, 67-74, August 2002. (p.68).

Guiding Principles

1. Association places great importance on making clear any existing or potential conflicts of interest.
2. All conflicts of interest shall be declared by an individual or members concerned at commencement to the organisation or when relevant issues arise. The nature of this conflict of interest should be entered meeting minutes and the interest documented.
3. A person who believes another person has an undeclared conflict of interest should specify in writing the basis of this potential conflict to the President
4. Ensuring individuals declare any conflicts of interest either at the start or when a relevant issue arises.

5. At Committee level, where a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest is identified and/or registered, the person concerned shall leave the room as soon as that item comes up for discussion. The concerned committee member shall not vote on that issue, nor initiate or take part in any Committee discussion on that topic (either in the meeting or with other Committee members before or after the Committee meetings), unless expressly invited to do so by unanimous agreement by all other members present.
6. If a person declares themselves to have existing or potential conflict of interest confidentiality will be respected. If a person alleges that another person has a conflict of interest, whether existing or potential, and if the Committee cannot resolve this allegation to the satisfaction of both parties the matter shall be referred to an external authority. This external authority will make a recommendation to the Committee as to what action shall be taken.
7. Examples of conflict of interest could be (but are not limited to):
8. When an employee/ committee member/volunteer or member of their immediate family or business interests stands to gain financially from any business dealings, activities or services of the organisation.
9. When a committee member him or herself offers a professional service to the association
10. When an employee or committee member stands to gain personally or professionally from any insider knowledge if that knowledge is used to personal advantage.
11. Where a committee member or the ex/officio member of the committee has a role on the governing body of another organisation, where the activities of that other body may be in direct conflict or competition with the activities of the association.

References - Internal -

References - External None

Review Policies should be reviewed every three years.

Code of Conduct Policy

Authorised By: Committee

Prepared By:

Issue Date:

Review Date:

Version: 0000

CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Purpose Undertake ethical and proper practices to the highest possible standards in providing quality services to the members of the XXXX Association and the South Gippsland Community

- Guiding Principles**
- » The Committee and staff of (Insert Name Association) have a legal and moral responsibility to manage the organisation in the best interests of the members. Committee and staff will always demonstrate professional ethical behaviour – in their responsibilities to the organisation, in their professional relationships with each other, and in their professional service to the members and the South Gippsland community – all members should adhere to these code of conduct
 - » **The Committee Members shall:**
 1. Be diligent, attend committee meetings and devote enough time to preparation for meetings to allow for full and appropriate participation in decision-making and governance of the organisation.
 2. Observe confidentiality relating to non-public information acquired by them in their role as committee members and not disclose such information to any other person.
 3. Meet regularly to monitor the performance and management of the association. To do this the committee will ensure that appropriate monitoring and reporting systems are in place and that these are maintained and utilised to provide accurate and timely information to the Committee.

4. Ensure there is an appropriate separation of duties and responsibilities between itself, staff and volunteers and that no individual has unfettered powers of decision-making.
 5. Ensure that the independent views of committee members are given due consideration and weight.
 6. Ensure that stakeholders are provided with an accurate and balanced view of the organisation's performance, including both financial and service provision.
 7. Regularly review its own performance as the basis for its own development and quality assurance. Individual Committee Members should also review their own performance with a view to ensuring a suitable contribution to Committee deliberations and decision-making and, if found lacking, should either pursue training or assistance to improve their performance, or resign.
 8. Carry out its meetings in such a manner as to ensure fair and full participation of all Committee members.
 9. Ensure that the organisation's assets are protected via a suitable risk management strategy.
 10. Ensure that personal and financial interests do not conflict with their duty to the organisation.
- » **Staff (paid and unpaid) shall:**
1. Publicly and privately support the organisation and each other, acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of others and acting with courtesy and respect.
 2. Act honestly and in good faith always in the interests of the association and objects, ensuring that all stakeholders, particularly those who are recipients of services, are treated according to their rights.
 3. Perform their duties as best they can, considering their skills, experience, qualifications and position.
 4. Act in a safe, responsible and effective manner.
 5. Be punctual and reliable in their attendance and adhere to their prescribed and authorised hours of duty.
 6. Comply with the prescribed terms and conditions of their employment agreement.

7. Record their attendance for duty in the manner prescribed.
8. Notify the organisation of any inability to attend duty as early as possible so as not to inconvenience others or delay the work of the organisation.
9. Carry out their duties in a lawful manner and ensure the organisation carries out its business in accordance with the law and recognise both legal and moral duties of their role.
10. Respect and safeguard the property of the organisation, the public and colleagues; and observe safe work practices so as not to endanger themselves or others.
11. Maintain confidentiality regarding any information gained through their work and not divulge personal information or the address or phone numbers of clients, staff, volunteers and Committee members, unless authorised to do so.
12. Ensure that all transactions, agreements and records that flow from relationships with Association's stakeholders will be accurately and openly recorded in the organisation's records, and no entries will be made which obscure the true nature of a transaction.
13. Ensure that Association will promote its services with integrity and accuracy.
14. Ensure that personal and financial interests do not conflict with their duty to the organisation.
15. Undertake no personal or business activities for personal gain while at the organisation or while conducting business of the organisation: procedures associated with such activities will not be carried out on the organisation's computers without open and express permission of a higher authority.
16. Work within the organisation's policies, principles and procedures.
17. Discuss issues where appropriate with others to determine whether a contemplated action is ethical.
18. Maintain a standard of dress that reflects a positive image of the organisation.

Privacy Policy

Policy Applies: Association – Committee Members – Staff & Volunteers

Authorised By:

Prepared By:

Issue Date:

Version:

PRIVACY POLICY

Purpose This policy is to safeguard and protect the right to privacy, responsible collection, maintenance and disposal of personal information relevant to members employees, volunteers or other persons using the services of association

- Guiding Principles**
1. Associations through collects personal information about their members
 - a) This is necessary for the lawful provision of services to members in accordance with the constitution
 - b) Important that this policy is made available to members or other persons using the services of the association
 - c) Any attack through hacking – ensure that members are advised, and actions are taken to rectify any breach
 - d) Data must be stored securely
 2. When in possession or control of a record containing personal information, the association will ensure that:
 - a) The record is protected against loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure, by such steps as it is reasonable in the circumstances to take;
 - b) If it is necessary for that record to be given to a person in connection with the provision of a service to your association

everything reasonable will be done to prevent unauthorised use or disclosure of that record.

3. Association will not disclose such personal information to a third party:

a) Without the individual's consent; or

b) Unless that disclosure is required or authorised by or under law.

References - Internal Privacy Procedure

References - External [The Privacy Act 1988](#)

Check if your association needs to comply with The Privacy Act 1988. Those over \$3.Million in revenue per annum need to [comply](#). Ideally organisations under \$3.Mill should opt in and adopt the requirements of the Privacy Act.

Media Policy

Authorised By:

Issue Date:

Review Date:

Version:

MEDIA POLICY

Purpose Local, state, national and international media are vital partners in achieving the goals of your association. In order to maximise the advantages of media presentation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation it is necessary to establish guidelines for how media contacts with your association.

Definitions Media includes Print, Electronic and Social Media

Guiding Principles

1. It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. Your association welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to debate issues in the public arena.
2. Associations media policy operates on the following
 - a) Honesty; Your association should never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.
 - b) Transparency; Your association should promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
 - c) Clarity; all communications with the media will be written in plain English
 - d) Balance; information provided to the media by your association as far as humanly possible be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

3. The Association works with the media in order to:
 - a) advocate for the aims of your members
 - b) promote the work of members
 - c) inform the public of the details of your association
 - d) assist in the recruitment of member
 - e) this policy regulates the choice of people entitled to speak on behalf of your association
4. It is the responsibility of all committee members and volunteers to ensure that effective media relations are maintained in order to achieve the association's aims
5. The policy deals with the day-to-day relationship between your association and the media.
6. Who should speak to the media?
 - a) This person is nominated by the Governing Committee
 - b) they have the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion
 - c) they have some experience in media relations and where any of these criteria do not apply are recommended to exercise extreme caution.
7. Where, however, media inquiries concern straightforward provision of information on uncontentious issues responses may be made by any officer or member who has enough knowledge about the matter concerned.

References – Internal Minutes – allocation of who is nominated to speak on behalf of your association

References – External

Health and Safety Policy

Related Section: Organisational Health & Safety

Authorised By: Committee

Prepared By:

Issue Date: 0

Next Review Date:	
Last Review Date:	
Status:	
Version:	XXXX-X.X

POLICY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Purpose Association is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment consistent with the provisions of the Victorian Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 and other relevant legislation.

Definitions Employee – in relation to Organisational Health & Safety (OH&S), the term means any person engaged or involved in an activity at any association event or workplace

- Guiding Principles**
1. To achieve this end, we commit to the following:
 - a) Proactive identification of hazards posed to employees.
 - b) Timely implementation of best practice risk control solutions.
 - c) Provision of appropriate and well-maintained equipment to enable employees to perform their work in a manner that is safe and without risks to health.
 - d) Provision of information, instruction, training and supervision to employees as is necessary to enable the employees to perform their work in a manner that is safe and without risks to health.
 - e) Application of appropriate resources to ensure continuous improvement in the prevention of workplace injuries.
 - f) To utilise expert assistance as necessary, in managing occupational health and safety.
 - g) To consult with committee on matters relating to health and safety (refer to OH&S Consultation Policy).

- h) To ensure that suitable arrangements are in place across all worksites for the prevention of, response to and management of any incident and / or emergency.
- 2. Committee is responsible for the provision of resources to ensure the implementation, monitoring and continuous improvement in the prevention of workplace injuries and responding to breaches of OH&S policies and procedures.
- 3. Committee, Volunteers and Staff are responsible for ensuring their own health and safety and not endangering others in the course of their work by:
 - a) Complying with all OH&S policies and procedures.
- 4. Reporting hazards and incidents.

References – Internal

-
- References – External**
- » [Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 – Victorian Government](#)
 - » [Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2017 – Victorian Government](#)

Review Association at its own discretion reserves the right to change the policy and procedure in line with relevant legislation and organisational needs.

PROCEDURE

Managing Data Breach Process – Your Association

Related Policy Managing Breach Data Policy

Related Section

Purpose The purpose of this procedure is to enable Your Association to identify and manage a breach or attempted breach of the Your Association database or general IT system. This procedure is to reduce the risk to Your Association when a breach of data has been identified and to ensure Your Association complies with the requirements of the Privacy Act and the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Scope All Your Association Staff and Volunteers

Definitions Eligible Breach of Data

Procedure When a member of Your Association suspects a breach of data the following process will occur:

1. Determine if there has been a breach of the Your Association information system – see definition of attached support notes detailing examples of a data breach.
2. Immediately confer or consult with President to assess the type of breach if the breach is an eligible breach of data for reporting purposes?
3. Identify and take note of characteristics of the data breach – example spyware, unlawful downloads, information sent to other parties accidentally.
4. Upon confirmation of a nominated person of a data breach or potential data breach. Ensure any association computers and internet connections are shut down or takes steps to contain the breach.
5. The CEO or delegated person will have the overall responsibility for containing, assessing and managing any data breaches.

6. The President or CEO will be responsible for the implementation of the Data Breach Plan which would cover the following:
 - » Identify the data breach
 - » Confirm if the data breach can be contained immediately
 - » Assess if the data breach is an eligible data breach- for reporting purposes see flow chart.
 - » Upon confirmation of an eligible data breach, alert the Senior Management Team or Data Recovery Response Team
 - » Contact external information technology contractor who will consult with the Data Recovery Response team
 - » The response team will undertake immediate steps to contain, assess the data breach and review what actions should be taken to limit any further breach.
 - » Implement communication strategy to notify impacted individuals there has been a breach of data and how Your Association is managing the data breaches
 - » CEO will direct staff to contact members, families and other staff members, advising them that there has been a breach of data and criminals could use their personal information. Refer to Victoria Police to report any evidence of the illegal use of personal data
 - » CEO or designated person to adhere to the Privacy Act requirements if there is a notifiable breach of data and report the matter to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner
 - » Notify Insurance Broker of any breach of data
 - » Keep an ongoing record of data breaches for annual review.

Responsibilities

Be specific and insert responsibilities in relation to this procedure, not just generic responsibilities

Governing Committee is responsible for:

1. Will have overall responsibility for the containing, assessing and managing any data breaches
2. Ensuring the Data Breach Plan is activated and coordinating the activities of the Data Recovery Response Team and to help

identify any reportable breaches of data. The appointed service manager is responsible for all recording of breaches and preparation of information for the purposes of reporting

3. Insert

Employees are responsible for:

1. Are responsible for ensuring proper due diligence to prevent any breach of

2. Insert

References - Internal

References - External » [Office of the Australian Information Commissioner](#)
» [Private Act 1988](#)

Review

Your Association at its own discretion reserves the right to change the policy and procedure in line with relevant legislation and organisational needs.

AGENDA – TEMPLATE

Committee Meeting – 00/00/0000.

Meeting commenced at 00:00:00

1. Present
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - 3.1 Amendments to Previous Minutes
4. Business arising from Previous Minutes
5. Correspondence
 - 5.1 Correspondence in
 - 5.2 Correspondence out
6. Reports
 - 6.1 Treasurer – Budget to Actual
 - 6.2 Board Member- Champion/ Port Folio Reports
 - 6.3 Schedule Policy Review
 - 6.4 Strategic Plan
 - Goals
 - Key Performance Measures Reports
 - Strategy Review
 - 6.5 CEO Report
7. General Business
 - 7.1
8. Next Meeting

Meeting closed at 00:00:00

MINUTES TEMPLATE

Committee Meeting – 00/00/0000.

held at

Meeting opened at:

AGENDA NO.		ACTION	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
1.	Present			
2.	Apologies			
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting			
	3.1 Amendments to Previous Minutes			
4.	Business Arising from Previous Minutes			
5.	Correspondence			
	5.1 Correspondence in			
	5.2 Correspondence out			
6.	Reports			
	6.1 Treasurer			
	6.2 Board Member/ Staff against strategic plan KPI'S			
	6.3 Committee			
	6.4 Discussion; Only brief Example Resolution; "It was resolved that YXX association will implement the new digital membership system"			
	6.5 Item #			
	6.6 Item #			
	6.7 Item #			
	6.8 Item #			
	6.9 Item #			
7.	General Business			
	7.1			
8.	Next Meeting			

Meeting Closed at:

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

Secretary: _____

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Position Description: Finance & Administration Officer

Location	Association
Objectives of the role	Responsible for the financial administration and support of the association and services as directed by the CEO or Committee
Working relationships	Reports to the CEO or Committee
Expectations of the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage delivery of outcomes as directed • Exercise a high level of initiative • Prioritise both daily and on a long-term basis • Exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality • Liaise with a variety of people and organisations • Operate as a member of the team • Work unsupervised • Utilise relevant computer skills at a high level
Duties and responsibilities	<p>Finance Administration Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of financial bookkeeping functions for the association • Provide financial reports as required • Manage relationships with auditors and external financial services <p>Administration Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support on projects as directed • Ensure invoicing is completed • Attend meetings with members and events as directed by the Committee • Provide liaison services to ATO, auditors and external accountants.
<p>Key performance indicators</p> <p>Key performance measures are those used to determine levels of performance by the employee and are linked to the goals, strategies and outcomes of the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All financial reports and records are kept up to date • Growth in membership • Satisfaction by members • Growth in Revenue
Competencies for the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level computer skills (MS Office) • Excellent writing and analytical skills • High level communication ability • Ability to work with Committee, Staff, Volunteers • Strong interpersonal skills • Skilled financial software • Strong financial analytical skills

Position Description: Chief Executive Officer – Executive Officer

Location	Association
Objectives of the role	Responsible for the implementation of the strategic plan and the overall operations of the association
Working relationships	Reports to the Board and Governing Committee through the President
Expectations of the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage delivery of outcomes as directed • Exercise a high level of initiative • Prioritise both daily and on a long-term basis • Exercise discretion and maintain confidentiality • Liaise with a variety of people and organisations • Represent the Association with Stakeholders • Work with members and stakeholders • Utilise relevant computer skills at a high level
Duties and responsibilities	<p>Manage the operations of the association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of finances • Implement strategies • Manage relationships with members, staff and external stakeholders <p>General Duties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee ensure projects are completed on schedule • Market and grow membership • Attend meetings with members and events as directed by the Committee • Provide liaison services to ATO, auditors and external accountants.
<p>Key performance indicators</p> <p>Key performance measures are those used to determine levels of performance by the employee and are linked to the goals, strategies and outcomes of the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All financial reports and records are kept up to date • Growth in membership • Satisfaction by members • Growth in Revenue
Competencies for the role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level communication skills • Excellent writing and analytical skills • High leadership ability • Ability to work with Committee, Staff, Volunteers • Strong interpersonal skills • Skilled governance and risk management • Strong financial analytical skills