



Task groups: General Protocols and Operating Procedures May 2019

Rationale

- We have established semi-autonomous Task Groups with the intent to devolve responsibility and operations direct to those task groups
- We are challenged by limited (human) resources; limited Committee Meeting time; and a widening list of issues in which the Association is involved
- Therefore we need to clearly define the scope, authority, reporting arrangements and degree of autonomy that govern the ways these groups operate.
- Each group is ultimately answerable and reports to the Committee, but should be free to draft its own direction and actions providing they are consistent with the Committee's Plan.

Leadership and Decision-making:

- Each group has its own designated coordinator, who is responsible for the group's actions; and must recruit from the Committee or elsewhere its own working groups(s).
- Each group should decide and record their own leadership structure and decision-making processes. As a general rule, policy positions and actions must be consistent with those of the Committee, and those which will impact upon the reputation or image of the Association, should be brought to the full Committee for ratification. Otherwise Groups are free to get on with their own business
- All significant decisions should be agreed by at least two members of the group.
- The Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that protocols and procedures are followed

Planning:

Each task group is to develop a concise action plan. This should include objectives and planned actions. Obviously, many actions will be identified as the group goes about its business, but a clear focus and planned actions will assist the group to remain on task, make reporting easier, and enable the full Committee to meaningfully respond to the Task Group.

Communication:

As a general rule, each Group must ensure in its communications that it is acting in accord with the Committee's objectives and directions, and not undertake any communications which might compromise, embarrass or reflect poorly upon the Committee and the Association.

However, to operate effectively, the Group will need to be messaging, making telephone calls and having other conversations with the broader community, stakeholders, politicians and significant others. This will need to be tempered with safeguards that ensure that no Group is speaking on behalf of the Committee or Association without the endorsement and approval of the Committee.

In addition, each Group must recognize that the Association has 10 task groups; 2 independent task groups over whom we have no control; plus there are a number of other community organisations

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with whom we have no (or limited) relationship. It is expected that our Committee Task groups will operate respectfully and communicate where necessary with these other groups.

Some guidelines might be:

- Recognize that we have Groups that regularly meet with Federal, State and local Government politicians and staff. It may be best to confer with and direct those Groups, rather than going direct
- Public Statements, letters, or announcements that might find their way into the public arena, should be channeled through the President, whose role is to represent and speak on behalf of the Association. He/she should attempt on all occasions to delegate that function to the Group's Coordinator or spokesperson, but remain as "gate-keeper"
- Regarding on-going communications: it is expected that Groups will undertake these in a responsible, professional manner
- Any formal or informal discussions held with the community or significant others MUST be attended by at least two members of the Group, who must each keep and file notes of that meeting. If the meeting is likely to be very important or controversial, the Group Convener should invite another Committee member

Making Commitments:

Groups should not make any commitments, promises or undertakings unless absolutely sure that the Committee is in agreement. This is in no way intended to restrict or inhibit the work of any Group – simply to ensure that Groups are acting in accord with the broader objectives and well-being of the Association

Operating procedures and protocols:

Each Task group is bound by the following;

- 1/ Initially, each group is to develop and report its own scope, produce a concise action plan; plus decide their own leadership structure and decision-making processes.
- 2/ The next task is to recruit additional volunteer members, preferably from outside the Committee, and to make them aware of these guidelines
- 3/ Task Group actions, decisions, an "issues log" and recommendations for Committee decision will be reported in writing to the Committee for attachment to the agenda of monthly Committee meetings, plus a brief report on new critical issues (ie not covered in the minutes, issue log or agreed previously by the Committee). This is particularly important where the Task Group may be concerned that they are moving beyond their delegated authority and protocols
- 4/ Each group must seek direction/endorsement for any proposed strategies from the Committee that are outside the Committee protocols.
- 5/ The Coordinator (or delegate) is to convene the task group and call meetings 6 -8 times per year, including issuing agenda and organising minute taking and distribution
- 6/ The group is responsible for Identifying on-going relevant issues, and responding to issues raised by the Committee
- 7/ The Coordinator (or delegate) is responsible for coordinating follow up actions arising from meetings and the issues log. If necessary, seek Committee or President involvement. Phone/text follow ups and reminders

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- 8/ To minimise over-lap and maintain good relationships, the group must liaise with other local groups, relevant parties (via Gmail or if a letter. on Association letterhead) and other Association task groups as required and according to Committee protocols and procedures
- 9/ Lead Major/Minor Project reviews and campaigns
- 10/ Communicate with and consult the local community
- 11/ Produce a brief monthly report for inclusion in Association news publications in the agreed format via Gmail
- 12/ Coordinate all administrative tasks associated with the task group (eg one-off printing)
- 13/ Review Government initiatives, policies; Council agendas and actions, media statements
- 14/ Where necessary, Initiate and maintain contact with Councils, Government, Private Enterprise and other parties (in collaboration with other task groups)
- 15/ Re external communications, and any statement that might find its way into the public domain, refer to [Communication](#) above