

Australian Computer Society
Branch Development Task Force
Terms of Reference

Revision of 26 February 2021

PURPOSE

The Task Force is to develop specific proposals for no-regrets, quick-win, low-resource measures and changes to procedures, in order to stimulate greater activity by Branches in serving members, retaining members, and gaining new members.

The Task Force's activities, and the measures proposed, are to make the minimum necessary demands on staff time.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

A small group is to take responsibility for establishing the Task Force, attracting participants, coordinating communications among them, and achieving consensus on the specific measures to be proposed.

The convening taskforce comprises, initially: Beau Tydd (Qld), Michael Johnson (NSW), Rod Dilnutt (Vic), Roger Clarke (Cbr), Jacky Hartnett (Tas), Tony Errington (WA, TBC).

COMPOSITION

Participation is to have its focus on Branch members and Branch activities, in particular BEC members, but extending beyond current BEC members as appropriate. The Task Force may engage with national committees such as MAB as appropriate.

TIMEFRAME

1 March 2021 – 1 June 2021 – 3 months with possible extension if required.

ACS ENGAGEMENT

The Task Force will directly engage the CEO. Engagement will be by means of a monthly update highlighting activities that it is proposed be undertaken, aligned with the goals of low-budget / high impact activities.

At all times the task force will act to strengthen rapport across ACS and will act in the spirit of inclusivity.

DECISION MAKING

Even though the Task Force will have no decision making capabilities, it is anticipated the recommendations will be implemented with immediate effect once accepted by the CEO. The Task Force will assist with the implementation of the recommendations with BEC, including development of relevant process documentation and will assist with reporting on their effectiveness.

BUDGET

No budget is required for this taskforce. Task Force members will arrange their own communications facilities, subject to ACS systems providing appropriate arrangements by the time of commencement on 1 March.

SCOPE

The focus of the Task Force is on developing specific proposals for low-budget / high-impact measures that will assist BECs in generating momentum among their membership.

It is envisaged that a variety of initiatives will emerge from the Task Force's discussions.

The taskforce will engage with each branch to identify problems areas and will suggest approaches to addresses these problems. Based on previous work examples of problem areas are below with initiatives that if agreed could be trialled to address each area. It should be noted that each initiative should be “sponsored” by at least one branch and it is the responsibility of the branch to report on the effectiveness of the measure proposed.

It is expected that the taskforce work through each problem and measures with sponsoring branch and document processes required changes to process.

Examples of problems and measures that may be considered are as follows (note this will be expanded and prioritised based on consultation with Branches):

<u>Problem Area</u>	<u>Identified Issue</u>	<u>Approach</u>	<u>Branch Sponsor</u>
<u>Communications</u>	Capacity for BEC office-bearers to address emails to Branch members, and to Chapter members, without dependence on Head Office or Branch staff-members	Establishment and promotion of communications channels for communities of interest within Branches, within Chapters, and within geographical areas that are potential Chapters	
		Establishment of communications channels among Branches, variously at Chair and Vice-Chair level, among Secretaries, and among Treasurers	
		Establishment of a channel where information about BEC initiatives is shared with other BECs	
	There is no simple way to identify elected members and senior executive staff including roles and responsibilities of positions.	A readily-accessible organisation-chart, showing all national and BEC Committee Chairs, and all senior managers and the scope of their responsibilities, in all cases showing contact-points	
	Information available to BEC's from national	Provision of detailed statistical data to BECs rather than just graphs, to enable local analysis. [Note: We understand this to be already work-in-progress; but note it as being within-scope.]	
<u>Structure</u>	Decisions making process and authority has been centralised from Branch creating a sense of frustration and requiring additional process and time to make simple decisions on local branch matter	Shifting of Branch staff to a matrix organisation arrangement, retaining existing lines to head office for common matters, but also reporting to BEC in relation to local matters	
<u>Budget</u>	Previous localised initiatives have been discontinued with little understanding of localised context. An example is the	Authorisation for Branches to variously resume or continue modest cash awards to students at tertiary education institutions	

	<p>University awards, little information available as to the rationale for the change but the result has led to reputational damage at some Universities</p>	<p>within their geographical area</p>	
		<p>A budget allocation of funds directly under BEC control for such local matters as hiring marketing interns to support Branch staff to undertake communication and engagement tasks with key targets, rejuvenating flagship Branch Conferences as a means of broad exposure to the IT industry, tertiary institution awards, and other such initiatives</p>	
<p><u>Membership Engagement</u></p>	<p>Branches and Chapters don't believe they have the ability or knowledge on how to run localised interest groups that support group in the local area.</p>	<p>Cataloguing of specialist IT professional and interest groups that are active in each Branch's regions, as a basis for negotiation of cross-advertising of events, pre-qualification of professional development points, and projection of the primary professional society to a broader cross-section of practitioners</p>	
		<p>An engagement process encouraging Fellows, CP and CT's to contribute to ACS events and activities such as mentoring</p>	