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

**Annex 3:   The Analysis Files containing Summaries of the Tag-Files**

The third step was to examine each of the 38 Tag-Files.

This resulted in 38 Analysis-Files which primarily group together the input of members on particular themes, distinguished them according to the sentiments expressed about the particular theme, but also provide basic descriptive statistics.

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 15 | 13 |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Where should ACS spend its money? | 13 | 11 |
| Overview | 1 | 1 |
| Whose benefit? | 1 | 1 |
| **Jo's common topics** | | |
| Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it | 5 | 5 |
| Member benefit | 4 | 4 |
| Governance, roles & Responsibilities | 4 | 4 |
| **Jo's outliers from common topics** | | |
| Member benefit outlier (events) | 2 | 2 |

**Common Topics**

- **Spending Money where it is needed, and ability to spend it**
  (Responses 5; Responders 5)

  *no discretionary funds*
  *Branch Committees have no capacity…*
  *Funds are available*
  *Delegation*
  *financial resourcing for branches*
  *Enable branches*

  *Function effectively*
  *Flexible access to funds*
  *BEC told no budget*
  *money could have been used better*

- **Member benefit**
  (Responses 4; Responders 4)
  *serve members*
  *clear member benefit in financial expenditure*
  *member benefits at branch level*
  *not every service we do has to turn a profit*

- **Governance, roles & Responsibilities**
  (Responses 4; Responders 4)
  *Branches must have the Roles and Responsibilities for the BEC **and** the Staff*
  *BECs have the responsibility to run the branch*
  *Subsidiarity*
  *In the new structure will branches exist?*
  *allows for those local decisions to be made.*

**Outlier Topics**

- **Member benefit outlier**   (Responses 2; Responders 2)
  *You started charging for attendance at events*
  *80% of people who attended the NSW functions where the same group of people*

**Business-Lines  –  Commercial Business-Lines**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 10 | 5 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| **The Purpose of Commercial Business-Lines** | 2 | 2 |
| **Positive Indicators** | 2 | 2 |
| **Negative Indicators** | 5 | 3 |
| **Structural Separation** | 1 | 1 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

### The Purpose of Commercial Business-Lines

- "Commercial activities are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS" (Ashley Goldsworthy)
- "Business-lines must deliver a surplus.  Their function is to make gains that can be applied to the performance of ACS's key functions.  Their function is not to prop up loss-making business ventures" (Roger Clarke)

### Positive Indicators

- "There are some forms of business activity that are natural for a professional society, e.g. ongoing education programs, training for transition into the workplace, indexes to ICT expertise and bodies of knowledge, and guidance to professionals on career pathways" (Roger Clarke)
- "I don't have a problem with ACS running an incubator to help advance computing in Australia, where they aren't being provided by others, or in partnership with government, academia and industry ...  I would want an incubator to be revenue neutral, or positive. It could be used to fill up otherwise unusable office space, or use space donated by a government agency, or corporation" (Tom Worthington)

### Negative Indicators

- "There are many areas that a professional society has to avoid, e.g. competing with its own members, by itself performing consultancy or contracting within the ICT field, and commercial activities that conflict with its obligations to serve the public interest" (Roger Clarke)
- "Participating in, or operating, commercial activities is possible, so long as they are clearly separated from the Society and do not become the raison détre for the Society's existence, nor expose the Society to reputational damage or monetary loss" (Ashley Goldsworthy)
- "Engaging in running businesses like incubators is NOT a society role.  That is best left to universities, business organisations or government that can share their resources and capitalise on the interaction with start-up innovators" ('Fellow Enthusiast')

- "It would be nonsense to suggest the ACS should not support innovation. The issue is how should this be done.  I don't think support of ACS River City Labs is a key function of the ACS. The sort of support we offer and how much are the key questions" (Ashley Goldsworthy)
- "How much do members want to pay to provide space, training and networking opportunities for startups?  This is not a business-line.  It doesn't, and never could, generate a surplus.  Instead it eats up a lot of the surplus generated by other business-lines.  Running an incubator represents a donation to the people who benefit from the few start-ups that are successful.  That's maybe 5% of the people who attempt to innovate, plus a lot of well-heeled investors.  Subsidising investors is the government's business, not something a professional society should be doing" (Roger Clarke)

**Structural Separation**
- "If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio" (Rod Dilnutt)

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 48 | 24 |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Role of Branches **[BR]** | **38** | 24 |
| Scope of BEC Role and Responsibilities **[BEC]** | 18 | 16 |
| Branch in Control of its Geographic Area **[BC]** | 28 | 21 |
| Need for Chapters / Chapter Functions **[Ch]** | 8 | 8 |
| Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice **[MVC]** | 18 | 12 |
| Local ACS branches Appoint Governing Body **[ExC]** | 5 | 4 |
| Separate Company for Revenue Services **[Rev]** | 1 | 1 |
| Members and Funding Member Services **[MEM]** | 12 | 8 |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Common Topics**
- Branches
  - This discussion is about the vision for how you want things to be, and shouldn't be constrained at this stage (1;1)
  - BEC's as Branch command and control (3;3)
  - Branches are the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS hierarchy (6;5)
  - Manage branch performance by objectives and key result areas (2;2)
  - Subsidizing branches as loss leaders (3;3)
  - Each branch and each chapter is different and we need to be flexible in supporting them (1;1)
  - Follow federated model for branches (3;3)
  - Should replace branches with communities of interest (7;5)
- BEC's
  - Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee (4;4)
  - There should be equal representation on BEC of members of all ages, across industries for each state (1;1)
  - Need to review the role of the BEC and get it right (3;3)
  - BEC's to advise and contribute to strategic opportunities for ACS (2;2)

- Chapters
    - Need for Chapters for regional areas (5;4)
    - Branches and Chapters need funding for incidental and reasonable unexpected expenses, and budget provision to initiate projects and activities, without undue oversight (7;6)
- Members
    - Members are the reason the society exists (3;3)
    - The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure (1;1)
- Others
    - We need to take forward the principles of engagement and consultation. Let's use this as an opportunity to reimagine a new structure that potentially creates communities of interest, rather than local communities (6;4)
    - Major planning projects should not be driven by staff (1;1)
    - The ACS is a not for profit organisation, and should not even think of commercial activities (1;1)

**Outlier Topics**
- Manage External Contracts through separate company (1;1)
- Compare ACS to exemplar peer organisation (3;2)
- CLG vs Association (2;2)

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**
- Use of politically correct language in ACS governance bodies (2;2)
- Poor ACS web site (4;4)

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**CLG – Company Limited by Guarantee**

**N.B. This was not a pre-coded Tag, but the volume of postings on the topic meant that a Tag had to be added to facilitate the clustering of postings**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 67 | 21 |
|  |  |  |
| **Topics Relevant to Round 1** |  |  |
| The Primary Focus: The Members' Requirements of the Constitution | 10 | 9 |
| What Timing of any Change to a CLG would be appropriate? | 5 | 2 |
| **Topics Relevant to Rounds 2 and 3** |  |  |
| Has a Rationale been provided for a Change in the Form of Incorporation? | 11 | 10 |
| Is there an Ultimatum from the ACT Registrar of Associations? | 7 | 6 |
| Is Centralisation of Power Inevitable in a CLG? | 31 | 12 |
| Who would become members of a CLG? | 3 | 1 |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**The Primary Focus: The Members' Requirements of the Constitution (10, 9)**

- "It is fundamental that the ACS continue to be a professional society governed by its members, and not a commercial organization. If a company limited by guarantee is the best option based on legal advice, this should not diminish this fundamental imperative" (Ashley Goldsworthy, Karl Reed)

- "[We should be] turning our attention to **addressing the substantive matters raised in the issues paper within our existing legal structure**. The causes of the previous catastrophe, where the ACS was being lambasted across the nation for its governance failure and incompetence, were the improper actions of certain individuals (which were \*contrary\* to the Rules & NRs and the law), not our existing governing documents" (Jack Burton)

- "What is required is **a robust debate about what governance structure we want to have** and then to embody that in a new constitution ..." (P Argy)

- "**Our new constitution seems to be what we should be focussing on** whether we go to a company limited by guarantee or Incorporated association regime" (Paul O'Brien)

- "**The constitutional questions must not be jammed into a CLG framework** until and unless the membership is satisfied that, for good reasons, that form is to be used" (Susan Sly)

- "You could say **let's take the opportunity to re-engineer the whole ACS for the 21st Century**. So what I'd like to see is a debate on what we want the ACS to be and how it should be governed, and then what should go into the new Constitution to implement those agreed elements" (P Argy)

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

- "**We should concentrate on getting the new constitution fit for purpose** including how it would deal with membership on transition to a CLG and once we are comfortable that we have achieved this, ask for a new mandate from ACS members based on a thorough explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed transition to a CLG" (Paul Campbell)
- "**It is poor practice to start a vision for the future with the current state**.  The vision defines the end state.  Let's define a new, 21st century organisation that represents and supports digital professionals – one that exemplifies what we preach: professional excellence in effective development and use of digital technology.  When that vision is agreed, let's develop the transition plan" (Mark Toomey)
- "**Would we seriously consider a shift to a structure closer to a 'holacracy'**. For example a situation where all ACS information / data (discussions, minutes, …) are required to be accessible to all members for review and discussion all the time.  In this world-view maybe MC, BEC, chapters, SIGs are versions of teams with accompanying information held online and with task tracking visible to all.  Or would we stop somewhere short of that?  What form of electronic voting scheme would we support for decision making?" (Peter Mills)

### What Timing of any Change to a CLG would be appropriate?  (5, 2)

- "I see no compelling reason to move to a CLG ... If notice occurred the ACS would have the opportunity to argue its case for ongoing incorporation  or negotiate a reasonable time frame to transition to a CLG" (Paul Campbell)
- "We should **adopt a new constitution and evaluate its operational impacts on ACS governance and management before we revisit the need to transition**" (Paul Campbell)
- "**A two step approach** - first reform the constitution and confirm that it is fit for purpose and then consider the transition to a CLG" (Paul Campbell)
- "**Partition the risks into 2 phases**; of:
  (1)  New Constitution creation and adoption; followed by amendments
       (we should be open to having a few of amendments, post adoption)
  (2)  Move to a CLG structure" (Devindra Weerasooriya)
- "I do not believe that ACS's governance is mature enough to rely solely on a board of directors to look after the interests of all members across all branches.  I offer two pieces of evidence in support of my position:
  (1)  Management Committee approved the process that led to the successful legal challenge
  (2)  since that court case, Congress, rather than MC, has instigated all reform processes, including the Constitutional Reform Working Group that established this forum"
  (Paul Campbell)

### All of the following Topics are Relevant, but only to Rounds 2 and 3

### Has a Rationale been provided for a Change in the Form of Incorporation?  (11, 10)

N  "**I have not seen a rationale** for why this is being considered, [in 2019] or now with the consultation process" (Justin Pierce)

N  "In the IA article, the President is quoted as saying **"state government association registrars seek to avoid regulating large organisations"**.  That **appears to be very flimsy** indeed.  I'm sure the President is correct in his comment, but there is nothing to connect that remark with any sort of compelling case for ACS changing our form of incorporation. The first time around the stated justification was even weaker (some may argue even misleading), as it appeared to be based solely on associations legislation from jurisdictions other than the one we're actually incorporated in" (Jack Burton)

N  "**There would need to be a \*genuine\* and \*compelling\* case for change, grounded firmly in the needs of the Society** (which, by definition, means the needs of its professional Members)" (Jack Burton)

N	"The case for moving to a CLG had not been adequately made. It was generally accepted that **the rules are outdated and must change but** that **this does not necessarily equate to the need for a change to a CLG**" (Bob Tisdall, Paul Campbell, Beau Tydd)

N	"There has not been any case made to support the move to a CLG" (Bob Cole)

N	"No clarity has been provided about a compelling reason for conversion to a CLG. **It's essential that members be provided with the choices, and the pros and cons**" (Susan Sly)

Y	"The ACT **Associations** Incorporation Act, like its counterparts in other jurisdictions ... was **never intended as the mode of operation of a national enterprise with an annual turnover exceeding $50m**" (P Argy)

Y	"Management Committee is the Committee in whom is vested complete management responsibility for the ACS.  In that respect the legislative model does not differ between our current form and a CLG" (P Argy)

   ?	"[P Argy's] point regarding governance arrangements being similar for either form does not establish a case for a Company Limited by Guarantee" (Justin Pierce)

Y	"I believe **we previously engaged lawyers for advice on this**, Clayton Utz, and were advised to transition to CLG" (UI)

   ?	"Clayton Utz gave ACS a great deal of advice.  As a result of some of it, the Society made multiple, serious errors, lost a court-case and wasted much money and time. **It would help a great deal if there were a national Associations Incorporation Act, giving flexibility for not-for-profit organisations**. The CLG form is used by default. It's highly inflexible, and differs very little from a Corporation Limited by Shares" (Roger Clarke)


**Is there an Ultimatum from the ACT Registrar of Associations?   (7, 6)**

Y	"**As I understand it the ACT Registrar has intimated that he is minded to invoke s. 83 against the ACS**" (P Argy)

Y	"What Phil Argy says:  We are required by law to move to a more rigorous structure" (Michelle Sandford)

   ?	"**No one has sighted such a document**.  What correspondence are you referring to?" (Paul Campbell)

   ?	"**Assuming such a document does exist, why is this discussion (two years down the track) the first time we are hearing about it?**  If such a direction was foreshadowed by the registrar, why was that not front & centre in the "yes" case presented for the 2019 motion?.  And when do we the members get to see that letter from the Registrar, so we can decide for ourselves how much weight to attribute to it?" (Jack Burton)

   ?	"The only thing even vaguely approaching a compelling case for change in form of incorporation (cf. a series of Rule & NR changes) is Philip's remark about the Registrar's request -- but **I don't think it could possibly be reasonable to expect members to attach much if any weight to that unless & until we can actually see for ourselves what was written in that letter**" (Jack Burton)

Y	"It is only a matter of time before the ACT Registrar forces a move to a CLG structure" (Dennis Street)

N	"**I understand that the ACT is NOT suggesting we need to stop being an association**.  If the issue is the running of enterprises such as RCL the solution is to get rid of them as they lose money" (Bob Tisdall)


**Is Centralisation of Power Inevitable in a CLG?   (31, 12)**

Y	"It is axiomatic that **a company structure will reinforce the primacy of central management**" (Bob Tisdall)

Y	"I think **[a move to a CLG] will significantly reduce oversight of Board and management decisions**" (Paul Campbell)

Y    "**The Corporations ACT 2001 explicitly gives the company Board absolute powers**.  The Act explicitly refers to an event where any person or body that acts in the role of a director ... may be deemed to be 'shadow director' and consequently have the same legal responsibilities as a registered director" (Paul Campbell)

Y    "**The only oversight recognised in the Act is exercised by members of the company who can remove directors at a General Meeting**" (Paul Campbell)

Y    "The move to a CLG is **a clear step towards taking ACS towards a managerial / entrepreneurial model and way from the ACS' key / only role as an association of industry professionals**" (Bob Cole)

Y    "There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing.  This resulted in a lot of departures of **disillusioned now ex-members, and** pushback from **remaining members**, who **perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in values**" (Damien Charles)

Y    "I have had some experience with a Company limited by guarantee recently and I have to say that I was amazed at **the lack of Board accountability and transparency**" (Paul O'Brien)

Y    "**The default rules** for CLGs, or public companies in general **are VERY much in favour of the Board**" (Paul O'Brien)

Y    "Without a very clear and designed Constitution, **CLGs can seriously reduce the power of members**.  The default rules for CLGs without a Constitution put most of the decision-making power in the hands of the Board members and do not require transparency of decision e.g. members do not have the right to access Board minutes, only one general meeting is required every year - the AGM, the minimum required annual financial report is basically a summary with no details etc." (Paul O'Brien)

Y    "**Branch autonomy is unworkable in a CLG**" (Richard Baecher)

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

　?    "Could you **explain to me then how it would be possible enshrine in the Constitution of a company limited by guarantee the kinds of \*mandatory\* delegations of authority (mostly from MC to the BECs) that are enshrined in the ACS Rules and National Regulations**?  Mandatory delegations were written into our governing documents with good reason (for which there is a need in 2021 just as great - - if not more so -- than there was when they were first drafted) and therefore should ideally be strengthened, or at worst retained as-is, but certainly not abandoned nor weakened in any way" (Jack Burton)

　?    "**The Corporations Act** 2001 has more stringent requirements that the ACT Incorporated Association 1991 legislation.  Specifically it **explicitly restricts board oversight**.  [See the 'shadow director' provisions].  Under a company limited by guarantee, constituting a body, similar to the current ACS Congress to provide independent oversight on ACS board governance and direction is problematic; a board may delegate authority but cannot abrogate it.  So a company's constitution may include provision for board advisory bodies but **the board has no legal obligation to accept their advice or direction and the persons giving that direction may in fact be determined by a court to be a 'shadow director**" (Paul Campbell)

?    "Surprised to hear doubts expressed about the possibility of CLG member controls.  Surely a constitution can be drafted that maintains the Society's mission re public goods" (Stephen Hardy)

N  "Under the CLG model, we will eliminate the totally disfunctional, unrepresentative and gerrymandered model of governance under which the ACS has struggled to advance for as long as I have known it - more than 40 years  ...  updating its legal structure to one that assures the members of better control" (Mark Toomey)

Y  "Mark, it would be valuable if you could **clarify how a CLG "assures the members of better control"**.  As far as we've been able to work out, the key features of a CLG are: ...
- a relatively brief constitutional document that places very few constraints on what the Board can do
- an all-powerful Board
- delegation by the Board of most of its powers to a then all-powerful CEO
- no direct say by members in anything the CEO and Board do
- no meaningful way to remove the Board or the CEO
- a vote in elections of Directors, but without much influence by members on who the Board arranges to be on the ballot-paper

**If there are exemplars of Constitutions for CLGs that assure their members of better control, it would be extremely helpful to be pointed to them**" (Roger Clarke)

N  "**It's simply wrong to suggest that the attributes you've listed come with a CLG form** - they don't!  If we were concerned about a Board being too unaccountable you could make sure their mode of appointment, continued tenure, etc were dependant on ongoing support from your cohort of stakeholders whether they be branches or professional members or any other cohort you care to describe.  And you could make provision for the Board to be elected/re-elected weekly, monthly or annually by Congress or by a full plebiscite.  If a CLG can accommodate all that what is the problem with it - its form factor dictates almost nothing of material concern once it's all boiled down" (P Argy)

    ?  "**Adding clauses to a constitution does not make them lawful or imply they are compliant with legislation**" (Paul Campbell)

    ?  "**ASIC cannot be relied on to take action on behalf of members** over any perceived breach of the ACS company constitution.  ASIC explicitly states in its Information Sheets 153 and 186 that it does not generally get involved in disputes about the running of companies. In other words, unless there is a broader public interest, ASIC will not take an interest in disputes between company members and their board" (Paul Campbell)

N  Roger wrote:
   > •   an all-powerful Board
   "This is a misconception. **The powers of the board are as broad or narrow as the constitution allows**" (Mark Toomey)

    ?  {"**Mark overlooks the 'shadow director' provisions**, which are argued by the ACS CEO's governance consultant to dictate that Directors' powers must not be constrained by the members"} (Roger Clarke)

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

    ?  {"The Corporations Act requires 5% of the members, and that cannot be set at a lower level by a Constitution.  At 10,000 voting members, that's **500 signatures**.  And ACS provides **no means for a group of members to reach other members to gather signatures**"} (Roger Clarke)

N  > •   delegation by the Board of most of its powers to a then all-powerful CEO
   "**It is the role of boards to determine what powers they delegate to the CEO** and what powers they retain" (Mark Toomey)

N  > •   no direct say by members in anything the CEO and Board do
   "Entirely incorrect.  **The constitution can be written to require member engagement**, and there are many ways in which this can be set up" (Mark Toomey)

    ?  {"**Mark overlooks the 'shadow director' provisions**, which are said to prevent members from constraining Directors' powers"} (Roger Clarke)

N     > •     no meaningful way to remove the Board or the CEO
"This is incorrect.  There is a requirement at law that the **members can call a special general meeting**, which can remove the board or some members of the board, and which can give the board clear instructions, such as to remove the CEO" (Mark Toomey)

?       {"**It takes 5% of the voting members to call such a meeting**, and as things stand that's an insurmountable barrier"} (Roger Clarke)

N     > •     a vote in elections of Directors, but without much influence by members on who the Board arranges to be on the ballot-paper
"Boards do not normally arrange nominations for election via ballot.  Constitutions must contain details of how the board is elected, and **commonly this is by appointment of a returning officer who calls for nominations and conducts an election – completely independently of the board**" (Mark Toomey)

?       {"**The 2019 proposal featured a Nominations Committee**"} (Roger Clarke)

N     "My understanding is that the ACS is free to control and shape its destiny in whatever legal framework it operates" (Dennis Street)


## Who would become members of a CLG?  (3, 1)

•     "It was initially agued that all ACS members should become members of the CLG.  However despite my repeated requests **it was never explained** to me **how the necessary written permission would be obtained**" (Paul Campbell)

•     "Even if it legally feasible to have every member of the ACS become a company member, I would argue that this will lead to poor governance oversight.  Instead **I would recommend that company members are chosen on a senate model where a set number of representatives from each branch are elected to be members of the company**" (Paul Campbell)

•     **Analysis** of alternatives for membership of a CLG, in #277 (Paul Campbell)

# CRWG ANALYSIS
## #Directors

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 70 | 33 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| No of Directors [#DR] | 7 | 5 |
| Composition of Board (MC) [BRD] | 19 | 13 |
| Eligibility of Directors [DEL] | 12 | 12 |
| Selection Process for Board and BEC Roles [SEL] | 24 | 17 |
| Director Skill Requirements [SK] | 4 | 4 |
| Directors Training [DTr] | 9 | 9 |
| Goverance and Constitution [GOV] | 20 | 15 |
| Directors Remuneration [DRm] | 10 | 9 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Common Topics**
- Directors spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory, but not so many it's unworkably big (2; 2)
- Diversity of Directors – branches, gender, age, race (7;7)
- Any member in the professional division should be able to stand for the board (13;10)
- Do not want a nomination committee (3;2)
- ACS to have programme for developing future leaders – BEC experience and training (9;8)
- Is ACS a multi-million dollar company? (9;8)
- Need to include at least some people qualified as directors (11;10)
- We need a 21$^{st}$ Century organisation. Don't waste time fixing the past (3;2)
- Need for separation of powers between elected and employed (2;2)

**Outlier Topics**
- Allocation of surplus funds (1;1)
- Not the right stage to be discussing number of directors (6;6)

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**
-

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**Industry Associations**

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 24 | 17 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| ACS should only host people **[MO]** | 7 | 7 |
| ACS engagement with IA's should be external only **[Eng]** | 7 | 7 |
| ACS should divest itself of all currently owned IA's **[DIA]** | 9 | 7 |
| ACS should retain and acquire IA's **[RIA]** | 4 | 4 |
| ACS should use IA's for member benefit **[Ben]** | 2 | 2 |
| New ACS Constitution should set out internal IA management principles **[Con]** | 5 | 4 |
| | | |
| | | |
| **Branch Spread** | | |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**Common Topics**

- Industry Associations
  - o **[IA]** A number of submissions talk about Industry Associations but do not discuss how the ACS should relate to them. (4;4)
  - o ACS should engage with Industry Associations and build relationships with them. But it should not acquire or contain industry associations within its structure and should divest all those it currently has. (16:11)
  - o ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (Organisation) body (3;3)
  - o The new constitution should be designed so that ACS can have industry associations within it's structure, but maintain them at arm's length. These should then provide benefits to ACS members – e.g. professional development, (4;4)
  - o The Australian Institute of Digital Health has a brilliant model for engaging with organisations in a membership context (2;1)
  - o The ACS as a professional association, this is the core reason for its existence (3;3)

**Outlier Topics**

- Need for ACS Strategy / Master Plan for how we intend to operate as a national organisation in the digital era (1;1)

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

- –

## CRWG ANALYSIS
## KF – Key Functions

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 28 | 13 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| ICT (for Technology), and Technology Policy | 8 | 6 |
| Determination of ACS's Public Policy Positions | 6 | 3 |
| Standards | 6 | 4 |
| Innovation | 6 | 5 |
| The Face to Members | 1 | 1 |
| 'Practise what you preach' | 1 | 1 |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**ICT (for Technology), and Technology Policy**

- "Mission: **Advance [ICT] technology and practice for the benefit of the community**. Value-generation, for members, for employers, for the community" (Rimas Skeivyas)

- "[ACS's] distinctive role [is] developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of **performance of Australian ICT professionals**" (Paul Bailes)

- Among ACS's Objects, there is tension between "promoting **ICT [i.e. Technology] resources**" and "**policies on ICT and related matters**". The second of those assists people who want to "hobnob with Government 'community leaders and decision-makers'. [So] **suppress anything** from our Objects, Mission and Purposes **that distracts us from our Professional nature**" (Paul Bailes)

- "Paul, are you really intending that ACS should not recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of **ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy**? As test-cases, consider the risks involved in:
  - inadequate cybersecurity
  - the sensitivity of many categories of data
  - the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques
  - the impact on the workforce of automation
  - the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls
  - the need for government action to improve the state of venture capital accessibility, etc.?" (Roger Clarke)

- "The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice **in the ethical and positive use of computers and information technologies to improve society** ..." (David Abulafia)

- "It is the responsibility for us as a society to **proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate**. When I look at the current voices in these debates, I see that the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest" (Robert Estherby)

- "[There is] an obligation on the ACS to **continuously monitor** the sector to identify and address **new areas**, so they are covered from the professional aspect" (Tony Errington)
- "I am concerned about ACS **taking positions about anything 'topical'**, as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus" (Paul Bailes)

## Determination of ACS's Public Policy Positions

- "I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe. How do we stop this from happening?"  https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html (Paul Bailes)
- "If the CovidSafe app was an example of ACS professional standards, then ACS professional standards are very poor" (David Abulafia)
- "That the organisation which puts (or used to put) itself forward as the guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing without first auditing it was beyond belief" (Jack Burton)
- "**The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is [how to determine] what is ACS's position?**" (Paul Bailes)
- "**The reduction to three Boards** went to MC in October 2016 **was a regressive step**.
  As VP Academic I was implacably opposed to it" (Paul Bailes)
- "**There need to be more Boards**, each of which:
  - has much more **focussed scope**
  - is **a working board**
  - has the **authority to act independently within its defined area**, [i.e. is **a Committee of the governing committee, and has delegations**], rather than being a mere advisory group" (Jack Burton)

## Standards

- "The proposed Mission gives less priority to the development and promulgation of **technical standards** (Purpose 1: The establishment and maintenance of high professional standards). The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals" (Adrian Porteous)
- "It appears the interpretation of "standards" has focussed on **standards of knowledge and professionalism for members**, but overlooked the equally important role of **developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies**" (Ken Price)
- "ACS appears to still have at least some current **representation on**
  - the various **IFIP Technical Committees**
    https://www.acs.org.au/governance/ifip-working-group.html
  - the **Standards Australia IT and Management groups**
    https://www.acs.org.au/governance/standards-australia-working-group.html
  "This **would seem to be an important part of a national computing society**" (Ken Price)
- "Sam Burrell (previous ACS head of governance and risk) and I developed **a standards representation handbook** that was not adopted" (Rimas Skeivys)
- "Generally speaking, ACS members (not staff) continued to be our reps. on [technical committees].  In 2015 I had MC confirm that we would support approx. 10 of these at approx. $1.5K each (travel expenses) per annum – admittedly not much, but the specific value proposition to ACS was (and remains) hard to capture" (Paul Bailes)
- "Managing the connection with SA was (unexpectedly) difficult:
  - not easy to discover who was representing ACS
  - not easy to discover what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input
  - not clear what ACS expectations were of ACS reps.

**"The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is [how to determine] what is ACS's position?"**
(Paul Bailes)

**Innovation**

- " ... ACS should ... support innovation. [But] the issue is how should this be done. ... **I don't think support of ACS River City Labs is a key function of the ACS. The sort of support we offer and how much are the key questions**" (Ashley Goldsworthy)

- "ACS labs division should be run as a profit-making business" (Ian Dennis)

- "The ACS vision statement was written 50 years ago by our forebears and still holds true today: "For Australia to be a world leader in technology talent that fosters innovation and creates new forms of value" (Craig Horne)

  - { "The earliest evidence occurrence if that quotation appears to be in the Media Release for the purchase of RCL, 7 Sep 2018" (Roger Clarke)
    https://www.acs.org.au/insightsandpublications/media-releases/ACSRCL.html"

- "**ACS could potentially make a lot of money from investing a stake in start-ups in return for its support**" (Craig Horne)

- "Even if a contribution to innovation is within ACS's key functions, **direct grants are far more appropriate than space-renta**l" (Elizabeth Bromham)

**The Face to Members**

- "ACS certainly does not spend money on good Web site design. Most event booking sites have a feature to add the event to your calendar, but the ACS does not have this feature, and does not want one" (David Abulafia)

**'Practise what you preach'  [Warning:  Rant;  but there may be value in there]**

- **ACS Assessment Process**

  "In my honest opinion, the ACS is a farce. The CRWG seems to fantasize itself with philosophical questions when the practical applications of the society are the real issue. Have you ever had the chance to go through an ACS assessment? It's one of the most inhumane things I've ever had to go through. Try it for yourself.

  "The provided checklist won't cut it and you have to scrutinize every line of the in-depth document, missing a single line causes an immediate $500 lost.

  "Enquiries on assessments are either "we won't know until you apply" or "read the guide". And even the result email won't cover all the points and you might still fail on the second attempt.

  "The assessment portal is pure shame on one that calls itself the ACS. Upload interactions regularly fail, hidden limitations on number of uploads and don't forget the inability to delete existing documents. While that may be a business decision, it makes organizing a pain when you can't even rename an uploaded document. Come up with a more elegant solution, a student could do better.

  "And the assessment process doesn't even call up the work experience companies and any bozo could pass it as long as he follows the guidelines. Honestly if we were investigated for the legalities of that, I swear we'd be in trouble.

  "All this is coming from someone who was awarded an ACS internship. The assessment process is a sham and goes against the integrity and mission of the ACS. Whereas everything else never applies to regular devs. Go out and survey any single IT or development agency. The developers neither care nor know about the ACS, but some of us despise it.

  "All I'm asking is for the ACS to bring some value to our community, as opposed to preventing others from joining, what with all the corporate bullshit and cruel assessments" (Anonymous)

# CRWG ANALYSIS
## Mission and Purposes
Jacky Hartnett

| | | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | | 55 + 3 | 14 |
| | | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | | |
| Purposes and Outcomes | | 10 | 10 |
| | Core – the basis of all other ACS activities | 6 | |
| | Suggested changes | 6 | |
| | Should be measurable | 3 | |
| Technical Standards | | 19 | |
| | CBOK and other professional standards | 7 | 13 |
| | ACS position | 5 | |
| | Standards Australia | 11 | |
| | ACS recent past errors | 5 | |
| Does 'ICT' still encapsulate what ACS is about? | | 16 | 13 |
| | IT yes | 4 + 2 likes | |
| | ICT yes 4 + 1 like | 4 + 2 likes | |
| | Change but no suggestion | 8 | |
| | Suggestions | 3 | |
| Professional Society and Public Good, | | 16 | 12 |
| | Agree | 12 | |
| | Retired role | 7 | |
| | Public Comment | 5 | |
| | | | |
| Do we want to be called "engineering professionals? | | 16 | 9 |
| | Need to establish identity | 6 | |
| | No | 4 | |
| | Yes (as part of group of others) | 2 | |
| | Professional Grade | 3 | |
| **Branch Spread** | VIC,CBR,QLD,TAS,SA, ??? | | |

**Purposes and Outcomes:**

**These were seen as the basic underpinning of all ACS activities and this should be made clear in ACS documentation and decision rationale**. The outcomes needed to be measurable and reported upon and the terminology definition these should be clear to everyone. Th ere were several suggestions to

minor changes, including emphasising the **safe and ethical use** and also the inclusion of **the word computer** somewhere.

- *Activities should be in line with the mission/vision to support the community*
- *Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions*
- *Line up with mission, purposes and key functions.*
- *I have just been looking at the ACS' entry in the ACNC Charity Register and there is no mention of the objects of the ACS in the governing documents. I have also just been looking at the current set of ACS Rules and there is no mention of the purpose or objects of the ACS in those Rules. These objects should be embedded in the top level governing document*
- *The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decision makers in relation to effective policies on the science, practice, application and implications of ICT, information infrastructure resources, promotion of Australian owned creation of ICT products and services, and related matters.*
- *aimed at ensuring the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia*

**Technical Standards**

**There was universal agreement about the need to develop, extend and maintain the ACS CBOK, and monitor standards within the profession**. However, there was a strong emphasis that this should be done with correct **up to date** information and integrity.

There was a call to for ACS to develop **position papers** on which to base its public comments and also **much scorn poured on the recent ACS endorsement of the COVID safe app**.

Unfortunately, most of the comment on this topic evolved to lambast the way ACS moved from using knowledgeable volunteers as the ACS representatives on Standards Australia committees to appointing paid professional staff.

- *I think that the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving it's public image*
- *The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is what is ACS's position?*
- *raises a possible policy issue for ACS: Should government IT projects go through a technical feasibility and quality appraisal by a statutory body before adoption?*
- *The problem is how to integrate these representations actually into the life of ACS and its membership?*
- *If the CovidSafe app was an example of ACS professional standards, then ACS professional standards are very poor*
- *The ACS should be involved in the ethical and society issues of using IT, just because it can be done, should it be done*

**Does 'ICT' still encapsulate what ACS is about?**

The common threads in these posts wrestle with the need to make any change long lasting and relevant to younger generations. Terms such as 'digital' and technologist' were suggested and abandoned. It was easier to define that which was not wanted (mainly users). Only a few had strong views one way or another.

- *Ours is not the only profession with this problem of names and roles*

- *We went through this back when computing alone was not enough;  so we used 'IT' to also cover data and information systems*
- *The Society is should not be a computer club*
- *The Society is should not be a computer club*
- *I tend to agree that ICT is sufficient. In some ways I prefer digital, but I also don't think it's too important. I think the terms are still widely enough used. Change the byline underneath to explain it further. ICT is encompassing*
- *The Communications of ICT is even more relevant today ....... Given the increasing desire/confidence to use distributed systems it is a necessity that communications be delivered with the least amount of latency and the with viable scalability and resilience*
- *But there are quite a few fields that are clamouring for attention........ is 'ICT' a sufficient term to make sure we know they're within scope, and that other people know it too?*
- *Even "IT" is a bit dated, being overtaken by "digital". But I can remember when we were arguing over EDP versus ADP*
- *I suggest that the acronym "ACS" is still the most appropriate one for us to use, but with one small change: the "C" should probably stand for "computing" rather than "computer".*
- *It is also of course important to remember (and publicly to emphasise) that the "S" stands for "Society", although that has more relevance to the discussion about what a professional society should be t*
- *the society is made up of members who are involved in the practice of the profession. I.e those people that do more than just use the artifacts produced by said professionals.*

## Professional Society and Public Good

All agreed with the need for ACS to act for the public good; it was taken as a given. The interesting points were about the failures of ACS in its role to achieve this, from its failures in **helping the public understand current problems** and its inability to **advise and support government** correctly. There was also a discussion about the role retirees could take to help with this objective,

- *It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.*
- *But to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.*
- *Also emphasising the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals will play in shaping the future of the country and need **for a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology is always used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels***
- *Will the ACS be seen as a self-serving, self-promoting interest group, or will it have a broader "service" role to contribute?*

- *ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).*
- *Has the ACS made a difference during the pandemic so far? Could it? Is there **a role for ACS members as volunteers** or is this a career/network building group?*
- *How many so called IT projects has the Victorian Auditor General called out this year?  The ACS should be standing up and screaming about the waste and cost top the community, and pushing government to get it right.*
- *support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters, aimed at ensuring the **safe, ethical, socially beneficial  and effective application**, and**, production of the technology in Australia**  ;*
- *The ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.*

**Do we want to be called "engineering professionals?**

Although those with an engineering background were happy with the term the consensus seemed to be that we should embrace all related professions that worked in our area and identify as ICT professionals. There was also agreement that there needed to be a rigor to the degree of education to be able to use that term.

- *It is clear there is a combination of serious issues here that need to be addressed as a matter of importance. This includes the range of ICT Professions that the Society is seeking to engage and support, whether the scope of membership categories aligns to contemporary and arguably growing ICT enabled or driven areas needing skilled professional and expertise*
- *The problem of a lack of clear identity for the Society*
- *No, I am not comfortable being called an engineer, as I have not been admitted into that profession, and real engineers may get upset. I teach engineers, but I teach them computer stuff, as I am a computer professional.*
- *What aspects of development (analysis, design, implementation, maintenance) of computer-based information systems (broad term, including embedded systems etc. etc. etc.) wouldn't we want developed to the same "engineering" standards as roads & bridges, the electricity generation and supply network, etc*
- *I fear from this discussion that many of us would accept as "ICT professional" (or whatever) as including activity that is hard to recognise as "engineering" – happy to be persuaded otherwise*
- *I don't think ACS can claim to cover (other?) professional areas*

**Outlier Topics**

**Should the Constitutional Reform Process start with the current ACS foundational documents (Objects, Rules and Regulations)** ?'

If the answer is "Yes", we are reforming the society based on its current foundations.

- If the answer is "No", maybe we should be explicit in acknowledging that we are creating a 'new' society

**History of public definitions used by ACS**

... *we have in previous years been very upfront and clear about **our role on the ACS home page***:

**1996**

The ACS is the **professional** association in Australia for those in the **computing** and **information technology** fields. Established in 1966, the ACS has over 15,000 members and on a per capita basis is one of the largest **computer** societies in the world.

**1998**

The ACS as the recognised association for **IT professionals** has become the public voice of the **IT** professional and the guardian of **professional** ethics and standards. The Society has a commitment to the wider community to ensure the beneficial use of **IT**.

**2000**

the society for **information technology professionals**

**2003**

ACS Advancing **IT Professionals**

**2009 through 2012**

**ICT Professionals** Shaping Our Future

**2015**

Inspiring Success (comment: Huh?)

**2017** through current day

nothing!

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

- Current ACS Website woeful
  (Responses 2; Responders 2

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS  is all about. **There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT**

The ACS web site is not very good. The ACS should be embarrassed by its web site and facilityies the web site offers. **If the ACS is the professional association in Australia for those in the computing and information technology fields, then the ACS should have the most modern, the best IT facilities**, with the most amazing web site**, BUT it does not**

**CRWG ANALYSIS – ACS's Nature**

**Nature – The ACS's Nature (s.1 of Consltn Doc #1)**

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 22 | 11 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Professional Society {PS} | 1 | 1 |
| Professional Society & Public Good {PG} | 8 | 5 |
| Role of Retirees{RR} | 5 | 5 |
| | 0 | 0 |
| | 0 | 0 |
| | 0 | 0 |
| Exemplar {E} | 1 | 1 |
| Retiree membership value / concessions | 3 | 3 |
| ACS IT Systems | 5 | 4 |
| **Branch Spread** | | |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**Common Topics**

**Professional Society**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

There was only one direct response in this data source. It is <u>very</u> clear from responses in other areas that remaining a professional society is consistently supported.

- *Yes, the Consultation Document pretty much says it. ACS is a professional society, and needs to stay that way*

**Professional Society & Public Good**

(Responses 8; Responders 5)

There were a limited number of responses with endorsements of the contributions of ( retired) ACS volunteers in public good activities. A theme which was seen is that the ACS **should** be visibly active in public offerings

- *As individuals/members we spend a lot of our professional careers helping to solve business or research needs with technological advances and solutions. Should the ACS spend time making similar contributions to societal issues?*
- *We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities*
- *This is exactly the sort of thing that ACS should be supporting from a broad base*
- *The ACS should, as a national professional body, have a positive public presence*
  *to the public, a "computer society" might be providing a public good by offering public advice about this and lobbying to have solutions to the problem implemented nationally. And, more importantly, doing this visibly and publicly, via popular media.*

- *It's not just a matter of doing Public Good, but being seen to do it and achieving recognition as a body that does so as part of its operations.*
- *Very true, phone and SMS scams are an area where the ACS could make public good offerings. I could also see the ACS possibly involving itself in topics like e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Maybe these sort of topics could be objectives for the labs if we keep them.*
- *ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general).{*

**Role of Retirees**

(Responses 5, Responders 5)

Comments were made about the potential for retirees to share their skills and experience – contributing to the public good.

Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles; for example to promote early interest in computing during primary and secondary education or to help span the various digital divides

I am a 'retiree' but still working with my local community to help with IT issues

As  recent retiree myself, I totally agree with you. We should be considered as a group of active, highly skilled ACS professionals ready to continue our contribution to the benefits of the society and communities. I am a member of the Accreditation Board and vey happy to be actively involved in that group, or take any other useful responsibility as required

I have remained active in the ACS since retiring. Mentoring less experienced members and contributing our considerable knowledge of and experience in ACS

The role of retired members in mentoring and outreach is one way the ACS can contribute to public good.

- TOPICDESCRIPTION
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

**Outlier Topics**

**Retiree membership value / concessions**

(Responses 3; Responders 3)

Some comments about the value proposition for members to continue membership after retirement. The reduced fee is appreciated – but not well known

- *Those who were previously qualified practitioners and members seem to fall off a cliff at retirement unless you were famous/active enough to become a Fellow.  There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment*
- *The BCS has a scheme whereby members who 'retire' can buy a continuing membership for a sum then go on involvement in all BCS activities. I've suggested this several times to ACS people but no-one seems interested in taking the suggestion up*
- *Having a special rate for membership was greatly appreciated. It was  not mentioned in the ACS website - but it should be offered to anybody who is prepared to stay active and connected*

**Exemplar**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

One contributor had sought to find comparable organisations as a model / exemplar for ACS. Two others commented on that, but did not add further information.

- *I was asked about exemplar constitutions for a Company Limited by Guarantee. Well, how about we go one step further and look at a contemporary organisation that is not just a Company Limited by Guarantee, but is also gleefully eating the ACS breakfast, lunch and dinner in the health space.*
  *Every person involved in this debate should look outward a bit more.*
  *Start with the Australasian Institute of Digital Health.*


**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

**ACS IT systems**

(Responses 5; Responders 4)

In this section ( and in others) , members indicated that they thought the ACS website and IT systems were very poor – whereas they should be exemplars to the wide community.

- *It sounds like ACS belongs to the do as I say and not as I do group.*
  *The ACS should be leading by example in all things ICT.*
- *… They've even got a website that puts the ACS to shame*
- *I agree. The ACS website is a disgrace for an enterprise that holds itself up to represent the profession.*
  *Lets spend some of our large bag of money on getting a decent website rather than sending execs to WEF meetings.*
- *BTW, I fully agree with your remarks about the web-site problem   (:-(}*
- *I completely agree*

# P00 – Principle 0 - Centrality of the Professional Membership

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 115 | 39 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Industry associations | 17 | 13 |
| Distinguish Professional from Supportive Levels of Membership | 13 | 11 |
| Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice | 11 | 7 |
| Member Involvement in Key Policies | 10 | 7 |
| Professional Society and Public Good | 15 | 10 |
| Transparency | 5 | 4 |
| Role of Branches | 27 | 19 |
| Business lines | 1 | 1 |
| Boards | 2 | 2 |
| Secondary Objects for control by volunteers | 1 | 1 |
| Delegation to elected officials | 10 | 6 |
| | | |
| Branch Spread | TAS, VIC, QLD, NSW, SA, WA, NT | |

• **Industry associations**

(Responses 17; Responders 13)

ACS should host members and not organisations is the dominant view across responses.

On relationship to other industry associations, need to be a trusted voice

Need both people as members and engagements to industry associations. Need sufficient distance / closeness, "maybe share a common service company"

Musts: professional standards, code of conduct. Acquiring industry associations compromises member ethos; do not align to NFP or the professional member. ADMA members very different to ACS professional members.

ACS should not be driven by industry associations. Cannot see how ACS can have both. With a "plethora of industry associations", no place in ACS.

Having made the acquisitions and formed the relationships, need a way to maintain that "Arms-Length relationship" and this is a "central matter of governance within the new Constitution".

Bought entities should be sold asap. Not be constrained to acquired mistakes. Why keep if not "core".

As a parent company under our umbrella, associations and companies may run in a For Profit manner, or focus on Members. It's a shame to let associations disintegrate because they don't have someone to work with or claim affiliation to. Over the past year, some have dissolved. "Keep them under their own name, but with shared benefits for our members."

Whilst multiple responses thinks acquired entities should be divested, another responder also like to see these entities benefit members and advertise these possibilities to members. "Business-lines can assist Member upskilling". Refer the Australian Institute of Digital Health as a model for engaging with organisations.

Our "constitution/structure should have the capacity to address this" and adhere to our values by future

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

• **Distinguish Professional from Supportive Levels of Membership**

(Responses 13; Responders 11)

"Professional level" criteria may cater for roles in emerging tech as they may not qualify for professional status. Have more tiers to allow different ICT professions/specialties. C-Level and business owners in yet a different category.

We have Associate, Member, Senior Member and Fellow. Recognising specialisms as further grades would not accomplish any more. "Specialisms within a professional society (are) not attributes of organisational hierarchy."

Want "a 'grade' for pc techs" (re BCS) to show competence and validate skills as many small businesses rely on PCs. "Autodidacts without formal training" are most prominent in rural Australia. Further to PC techs, "the whole gamut of hardware service and support". These as other roles in IT can be qualified eg TAFE and at least a uni in WA, and vendors. There are many desktop technicians with degrees

Suggest: 'Cadet' grade with no fees to nurture next generation. Engage secondary level ICT teachers to provide a pathway to the profession. "Current R&R restrict membership". However, ACS need to ascertain what it can do for them; "in what way this membership might nurture their interests". Some past examples cited eg SIGs on specialties, Women in ICT videos on possible pathways.

'Practitioner' as a Member-category "may meet the threshold for MACS, but have never demonstrated that they've achieved the requirements of CP." Perhaps consider becoming "MACS without CP", and be voting members. AACS would not be voting members.

"Roles on board should be restricted to professional members, as should voting rights. Professional members must have either recognised skills and relevant experience or be a pioneer of good standing in an emerging area. All must adhere to the code of ethics. Associate members may have an interest, relevant experience, be an untrained manager working the ICT industry or be a student."

• **Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice**

(Responses 11; Responders 7)

"The issue of 'ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry its membership needs to be clearly reflected in the governance structure." Ref R12.3 is far from the case. The role of branches has diminished and should align with Member interests. BEC is the conduit. "The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic."

"There should be equal representation of members of all ages, across industries for each state"

"Branches "are not providing governance value. Under a company limited by guarantee, this would be further weakened as the constitution will place the authority with the board." "Precocial and academic factionalism" have not served interests, resulting in weakened effectiveness.

Need to "take forward the principles of engagement and consultation" and a new structure that creates "communities of interest, rather than local communities." "Digital communities" have never been embraced. Perhaps form a "core group and build those communities" of practice. Attendances at NSW branch are "far from representative of the full society". We can "re-think how it all works if we go back to a principles-based approach" and possibly use third-party tech.

The new board bound by Corporations Act will decide for the society regardless of sectional interests. Having the legal authority, BECs will not maintain their governance role. Regardless, "the constitution needs to embody the ideas of engagement and consultation so that there is trust and collaboration within the Society."

• **Member Involvement in Key Policies**

(Responses 10; Responders 7)

Constitution contain a small core having power over all documents. "How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?"

Two views emerged from responses on how to make the constitution work for us. P Argy starts with existing Rules and Regulations and "identify those elements that we like and" replacing "those that we don't" before giving to layers. Roger Clarke notes Congress and CRWG "expressly avoided such narrow scope" and instead to start "first understand what members' conception of the Society is in current and foreseeable-future

circumstances. Then imagine features that will provide the scope to deliver on that conception. Only then consider what we currently have, what needs to be retained, and how to transition gracefully from one to the other." https://www.acs.org.au/governance/rules-and-regulations.html

• **Professional Society and Public Good**

(Responses 15; Responders 10)

What public good ACS has provided?

What is the broader "service" it contributes?

What information can it provide beyond lobbying?

Has contributions been made to answer societal issues? Could it make a difference, for example during the pandemic? Can ACS support its members to do so?

Are member volunteers a career/network building group or can it be both?

There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Pathway for retirees are absent, unless already famous/active. Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles? Several retirees responded with acknowledging special rate for membership and their continuing contribution

Other public good contributions include addressing abundant phone scams via text and voice messages; offer public advice and lobbying solutions to problems be implemented; e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Be seen to do good and achieve recognition. One responder disagreed.

Another angle: government constantly failing IT is a problem of governance which ACS knows nothing about. ACS was a significant contributor to ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation. "ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right."

"ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general)."

"The first clause is "The Primacy of the Public Interest: You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests". Whether we like it or not the ACS is a sectional interest, and as members, we under our code, and constitution are bound to put ourselves second."

• **Transparency**

(Responses 5; Responders 4)

Is the board/management transparent to members and thus respecting the importance of members?

Greater transparency is required. Should be "by members, for members" and run "like a union".

"The Society is not entirely for the membership. The membership is not representative of the broader industry make-up." Call for "more accountable… more visibility of Board Meetings" with cameras. If ACS is not for the member, why pay membership fees? "Members will always have something in return, but as a member we all sign up to the Code of Ethics."

• **Role of Branches**

(Responses 27; Responders 19)

This discussion should be based on how you, as members, vision things to be. This should not be constrained by concerns such as personal liability. Noted suggestions include no BECs but have a pool of people that operational staff can access, to a command and control role at the BEC. Chapters also flagged as an important part of this consideration.

Chapters are limited in their focus because they can't hold a bank account (this view later clarified as a desire for "the ability of incidental expenses without a volunteer being out of pocket for an expense"). Call for clarity on membership funds vs business derived funds that can be utilised.

"BECs/branches/chapters should continue" and be given their voice, with

more autonomy with finance

more independence tailored to circumstances, enshrined in the Constitution (ref R12.3) and enforced in practice

Objective and Key Results to measure effectiveness the advice from BEC

The interpretation of 'subsidising' branches and a 'loss leader' at a CEO's presentation in June where current business lines were presented as part of the strategy being formulated instead of seeking 'members need' first. Asked: "the fundamental existential question here is ' Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?", in

response of this to the CEO. ADMA as commercial entity is non-congruent with ACS objectives.

"I would rather we were a financially smaller but successful professional society focused on its members, their standards and public good, than a larger commercially focused enterprise that forgot what it was."

The ACNC was "encouraging all NFP incorporated associationd to becoming CLG"

Activities at a Branch-level should focus on the Professional Excellence of Members. ACS must "demonstrate itself as a "MUST-HAVE" service for Professional-Excellence in ICT". "All activity threads, such as the CRWG and the New-Strategy must be refocused towards achieving the Mission of Professional Excellence, in a viable manner."

As part of the review and getting right the role of the BEC should be to have direct members votes to appoint the board. "The key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery." Also extend BEC to have "input and be empowered and encouraged to also provide advice and experience into the strategic opportunities".

As key link in the chain from member to ACS, the "role of branches should be enshrined in the future constitution, clearly spelling out the relationship between the elected members of the Branch BEC and the salaried Branch (or State) Manager". Branches should perform to the budget approved at MC level as a joint exercise rather than imposed. Branches need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focused.

Branches and chapters are seen as essential, allowing local governance and focus, and engage more effectively than is possible nationally. Budget provision without undue oversight from national must be limited to an agreed budget. A federal model with branches agreed levels and areas of autonomy should also include who is responsible for what.

Branches need to be able to operate quickly with all the checks and balances supporting initiatives

Clear objectives in a federated model with branches should support the whole society, preventing "branches from pulling away in multiple directsions".

CEO clarifies the state made was that membership "can't be viewed as a loss-leader, to illustrate a point that ACS does not necessarily have a sustainable model for member service delivery."


- **Business lines**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

Members departed because the ACS was seen as a commercial organisation competing in the market. This view shared with remaining members who "perceive the CLG notion as corporatization and with that a change in values".


- **Boards**

    Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards  #Mission-Purposes  #Key-Functions  #P01  #Q03  #Q07
(Responses 2; Responders 2)

"Reliable means of establishing positions on professional/technical matters": a terrible display re
 HYPERLINK "https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html"
https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2020/acs-members-back-covidsafe-app.html
 in that as "guardian of computer ethics (let alone professional standards) could endorse such a thing *without first auditing it* was beyond belief" and ""what happens to my data thereafter" could not be answered".

To stop this by referring to Technical Board for approval is not practical "mostly because we now have only three boards, each of which has a scope that is so incredibly broad that one cannot help but wonder whether they were designed to get as little done as possible." The 'breadth' of boards' ambit should be "narrow" to "have the authority to act independently, within their defined areas" and "are actually *representative* of the membership". It should be easy for the member to get in touch with a member of the relevant board and report back expeditiously.

There are no information on "*who* will actually choose between the nominees" to the board. The nomination for a role seems "futile" where "candidates are accepted or rejected in such a non-transparent fashion".

Noteworthy lapses of judgement by leadership:

Reduction of boards

2019 constitutional reform

COVIDSafe endorsement

During 2013-2016, MC meetings follow the predetermined agenda and no "other business", thus reducing opportunity for new comers to raise points.

- **Secondary Objects for control by volunteers**
    Re: Purposes and Outcomes  #Mission-Purposes   #P10   #Q03   #Q11

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

Suggests "Secondary Objects" as "ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation"

- **Delegation to elected officials**

(Responses 10; Responders 6)

The relationship between staff and elected officials and the function of staff to support elected officials is a concern.  The skill to delegate to elected officials is lost, with Boards and Committees tied down in red tape.  Safeguards to prevent reducing its member-centricity is vital.  Member-centricity is critical, not corporate thinking.

Students don't think ACS is for them

Organisation needs to be simple.  Growth and complexity has "dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus".

The strategy project may need to delay to enable constitutional work to run effectively.

"Member-centricity is critical.  There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity"

"We're no longer a principles-driven organisation, and delegation and freedoms "

This engagement with members is invaluable

"It should be a constitutional requirement that ACS ensure that Elected officials and other volunteers are supported by staff and also that they are not confronted with decision making structures that make action extremely difficult.  To ensure that this is achieved, ACS should operate in a delegation system that assigns appropriate action and financial capabilities to the  Elected Officials and Appointed Officials and other volunteers. "

- **Members and the use of resources**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

Expressed an interpretion that members are viewed "as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle" by Rod whose "fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member-centric professional society"

- **A principle is a guideline for behaviour**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

- **This is amazing**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

# CRWG ANALYSIS

## P01 – Principle 1 - Embodiment of Values

### Re professional society values, including those in the Code of Ethics, and particularly the primacy of the public interest

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 25 | 16 |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| The relationship of ACS values to the public interest | 5 | 5 |
| The potential for conflict between professional values and business values | 7 | 6 |
| The potential for conflict between professional values and policy formulation | 4 | 4 |
| The risk involved in ACS positions on 'hot button' / 'current' / 'bleeding-edge' issues | 2 | 2 |
| The importance of technical Standards | 4 | 3 |
| The determination of positions on technical Standards | 2 | 2 |
| Action in relation to the social value of First Nations peoples | 1 | 1 |
| **Branch Spread** | | |

**The relationship of ACS values to the public interest**

(Responses 5; Responders 5)

Y     "the point of ACS activities is that they are always <u>in the public good and member interests</u>" (Jacky Hartnett)

ACS Code of Ethics / Code of Professional Conduct:

1. **The Primacy of the Public Interest**

   You will place the interests of the public above those of personal, business or sectional interests.

2. **The Enhancement of Quality of Life**

   You will strive to enhance the quality of life of those affected by your work.

Y     "Given our Code of Ethics has the primacy of the public interest, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest" (Robert Estherby)

Y     "There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing. This resulted in a lot of departures of disillusioned now ex-members, and pushback from remaining members, who perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in values" (Damien)

N     "A business-line that is **ICT-related in any way** should be considered consistent with ACS' values" (Craig Horne)

N     "We can be **a parent company with other associations and companies** running under our umbrella. **Some of them, like the Labs, might want to run in a For Profit manner**, others focus on Members" (Michelle Sandford)

**The potential for conflict between professional values and business values**
(Responses 7; Responders 6)

"A professional society and ACS should host members not organisations" ('Fellow Enthusiast')

"ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (organisation) body" (Rod Dilnutt)

"ACS must avoid commercial activities that conflict with its obligations to serve the public interest ... Whereas **industry associations can prioritise the interests of profit-making companies over the interests of consumers**, professional societies cannot" (Roger Clarke)

"Professional societies and industry associations are sometimes lock-step and even arm-in-arm; and sometimes their views are very different, and even diametrically opposed. There's a need for sufficient distance, and sufficient closeness. Neither can exist within the other. Nor can both co-exist within a combined entity. Maybe share a common services company; maybe be co-located on adjacent floors, in smaller cities even in the same premises. But any closer than that compromises the freedom of action of both organisations" (Roger Clarke)

"We should have an open and cooperative relationship with ICT industry associations so that we are well informed but we should not be driven by them" (Paul O'Brien)

"There are a plethora of **industry associations** out there **serving particular organisations / employers, etc.**, they really **have no place within the ACS**" (Aubrey)

"It may be appropriate for the Society in the future to amalgamate with an industry association and require them to adhere to values" (Robert Estherby)


**The potential for conflict between professional values and policy formulation**
(Responses 4; Responders 4)

Y     "Formulation of policies [on ICT matters] and provision of information and advice to community leaders and decision-makers may distract from ACS's Objects, Mission and Purposes ... [and in particular] the ACS's distinctive role, developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals"

      "Warnings about misuse of ICT in X should come from the Australian X Society / Institute / whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS" (Paul Bailes)

N     ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and **a voice in the ethical and positive use of computers and information technologies to improve society** and not to squash society for only the elites" (David Abulafia)

N     "The future, member focused, ACS structure should create relevancy by broadening the reach of our **thought leadership into social and public roles**" (Jeff Mitchell)

N     "The Society's scope has for many years recognised the importance of the application of ICT, management of ICT, and implications of ICT, and its use for alignment with organisational and social purposes, transformational capabilities, and its disruptive potential ... [so] ACS should **recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy**" (Roger Clarke)


**The risk involved in ACS positions on 'hot button' / 'current' / 'bleeding-edge' issues**
(Responses 2; Responders 2)

Y     "I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything 'topical', as **the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus**"

      "**We need to protect ACS from being 'hijacked' by voices that**, as you say, **might be self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest**" (Paul Bailes)

N     "As a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to **proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate**"

      "**The majority of current voices in these debates are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest**" (Robert Estherby)

**The importance of technical Standards**

(Responses 4; Responders 3)

"The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals. [But **ACS is now giving] too low a priority to the development and promulgation of technical standards**" (Adrian Porteous)

"It appears the interpretation of "standards" has focussed on standards of knowledge and professionalism for members, but overlooked the equally important role of developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies" (Ken Price)

"I think that the **ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving its public image**" (Robert Estherby)

"Representation on the various IFIP Technical Committees and the Standards Australia IT and Management groups would seem to be an important part of a national computing society" (Ken Price)

**The determination of positions on technical Standards**

(Responses 2; Responders 2)

"Managing the connection with [Standards Australia] was (unexpectedly) difficult [even for the relevant ACS Vice-President], as it was not easy to discover who was representing ACS, what issues were being raised inside SA for ACS input, and what ACS expectations were of ACS reps. **The overarching problem ... is what is ACS's position?  how do we arrive at 'the ACS position'?**

"I would never again like to see us endorsing something like COVIDSafe.  How do we stop this from happening?" (Paul Bailes)

"**Restore [the situation prior to 2016] where**:
- **there are enough Boards** that the breadth of each Board's ambit is sufficiently narrow that each has a clear focus;  <u>and</u>
- **each board has the authority to act independently**, within its defined area.

"[But that depends on **open criteria and processes** rather than] candidates being accepted or rejected in a non-transparent fashion" (Jack Burton)

<u>**Outlier Topic**</u>

**Action in relation to the social value of First Nations peoples**

(Responses 1; Responders 1)

"I would like to know what the ACS as an organisation is doing about implementing an **Reconciliation Action Plan**.  Also, what accreditation or **capabilities the ACS requires of its members** to understand about working with 'other' peoples, and their Knowledges and Information.  For too long approaches to developing technologies have occurred by middle class white males and females who possess a **hidden bias that is reflected in the algorithms and development techniques, which is damaging to Aboriginal peoples in Australia**"
(Susan Beetson)

<u>**Notes:**</u>

1.    The Consultation Document contained only the following:

**Principle (1)                    Embodiment of Values**

Reflecting the Nature of a professional society, members may want the Constitution to embody its values, including those in the Code of Ethics, and particularly the primacy of the public interest.

2.    Many of the comments were tightly intertwined with other 'professionalism' issues

## P02 – Society Behaviour Consistent with Values

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 26 | 15 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| The Principle of Professional Society Values as the Reference-Point | 14 | 10 |
| Applications of the Principles | 6 | 6 |
| Assurance of Respect for the Principles | 6 | 5 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |

**The Principle of Professional Society Values as the Reference-Point**

- "We must make sure that it is enshrined that the point of ACS activities is always **the public good and member interests**" (Jacky Hartnett)
- "Given our Code of Ethics has the primacy of the public interest, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in **the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest**" (Robert Estherby)
- "Some forms of business activity are natural for a professional society, but there are many other areas that a professional society has to avoid" (Roger Clarke)
- "**Appendix A of the consultation document (Key Functions of a Professional Society)** states well the required functions we should expect of the ACS. Any business activity we engage in should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed" (Adrian Porteous)
- I would like to see a commitment to resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with the ACS's Objects. I suggest **a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership**', would bring a tighter focus on the key purpose of the Society" (Adrian Porteous)
- "It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that" (Richard Cousins)
- "**ACS standards for the various levels of membership** remain a critical component" (Swainy)
- "The Purposes need extending, to include ensuring that Australia has **the capability to guarantee the safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application of ICT** ..." (Karl Reed)
- "The Purposes need extending, to include ensuring that Australia has ... **production of ICT in Australia**" (Karl Reed)
- "**ACS must be for the members, and agreed among the members**, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical. The focus must be on **values, culture, inclusiveness, not revenue**" (Charlynn Miller)
- "The vital thing for the Society is that it be **of and for its members.** The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus" (John Graham)
- "Particular attention must be paid **to the quality of public facing systems, their security in the widest sense and their social and economic impact**" (Karl Reed)

- "Emphasise the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals play in shaping the future of the country and need for **a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology is always used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels**" (Michael Lane)
- "ACS must commit to **playing our part as a profession to solving big problems facing humanity such as climate change, sustainability and mental health etc., and making the world a better place for the next generation**" (Michael Lane)

**Applications of the Principles**

- "**Commercial undertakings such as ACS Labs do not seem congruent** with ACS member objectives.  If the aim is to support fledgling ICT endeavor then other ways of sponsorship could be found.  Running a real estate  business like this does little to create sustainable revenue and carries unwelcome risk" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "**If they are to be maintained, ACS-Labs should provide some pathways for Members**" (Devindra Weerasooriya)
- "**Investments in Innovation Labs in three cities** and **acquisition of a set of data marketing and analytics associations** do not immediately appear to me aligned with Society values or membership value" (Adrian Porteous)
- "**Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation is inappropriate** and devalues professional qualification" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "**I would be very concerned if there are instances** of granting 'membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation'" (Ken Price)
- "Member-centricity is critical.  **There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity**" (Jo Dalvean)

**Assurance of Respect for the Principles**

- "When ACS considers commercial activities to involve itself in, **there must be protections against pursuing an agenda that does not align with that of the ACS**" (Jacky Hartnett)
- "There are a couple of elements to this:
    (1)  **Who should decide the operational criteria** for evaluating possible new business-lines?
    (2)  If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, **how do the members know what the criteria are**?
    (3)  **How do the members find out** that a new business-line is being considered?
    (4)  **How do the members assess the case** for the new business-line against the criteria?
    (5)  **What can the members do** if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?
    The alternative is of course to trust a chain of unknown future Directors with prettymuch absolute power to make the decisions about the criteria they apply when they consider new business-lines" (Roger Clarke)
- "Members should be able to call a general meeting and pass **a 'disallowance motion that binds the board**" (Robert Estherby)
- "The reduction to three Boards went to MC in October 2016 was a regressive step.  I am one of many who have not given up on ACS, but are **very concerned about how we might 'vaccinate' the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership**" (Paul Bailes)
- "In my day (2013-16), **Management Committee meetings always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda**.  No 'other business' reduced opportunity for a relative outsider like myself to raise points for discussion" (Paul Bailes)
- "It is of vital importance that **safeguards** exist **to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity**" (Rod Dilnutt)

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 80 | 33 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Devolved Responsibility for Branches | 18 | 14 |
| Where should ACS spend its money? | 13 | 12 |
| Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice | 11 | 7 |
| Exemplar Peer Organisation | 5 | 4 |
| Role of Branches | 26 | 18 |
| Mission and Purposes | 4 | 2 |
| Others | 3 | 2 |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | CBR,NSW,QLD,SA,TAS,VIC,WA ||
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | 4 Branch chairs, I Chapter Chair 5xMC, 7x Congress ||

**Common Themes**

· Support for devolved responsibility to branches, chapters and BECs within a national framework
(Responses 41; Responders 25)

*Branches know their local community the best, agility to respond to local needs really give the branch the best chance to support and grow its backyard….*

*BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that*

Branches determine how best to execute the ACS core business processes, in the context of ACS vision, mission, and values, and with the support of national.

· Promotes simultaneous loose-tight properties.
· Doing so supports autonomy, agility, entrepreneurship, and being close to the customer.

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

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

- Support for Appropriate Financial and Other delegation to Branches
  (Responses 17; Responders 13)

  *It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought.*

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

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

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

**Outlier Themes**

- Branches are not providing Governance Value
  (Responses 5; Responders 3)

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

  *As part of the review, we must review the role of the BEC and get it right. One obvious change is that the BEC will no longer be the entity which disenfranchises members from voting for the board (MC) by appointing its delegates to Council - the members will be able to vote directly.*

**Themes not relevant to CRWG**

- ACS should not develop a position on technical issues without a more reliable means of developing such a position
  (Responses 4; Responders 1)

  *The overarching problem as I see it, which is common to any ACS intervention where a viewpoint needs to be put, is what is ACS's position? Consider for example an ACS rep. on a group working on system requirements. I might take the position that a clear requirements document should be the prerequisite to any procurement (development, purchase etc.), that agile development/codesign should be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Doubtless others in ACS would disagree. So how do we arrive at "the ACS position".*

# CRWG ANALYSIS
## #P04 – Principle 4 - Sub-Societies or Colleges

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 37 | 27 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Recognise managerial achievements | 1 | 1 |
| Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core | 3 | 3 |
| Do we want to be called "engineering professionals"? | 15 | 8 |
| Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines | 10 | 8 |
| Managers and users of ICT as professional members of ACS | 8 | 7 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
| Unknown |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

Many of these sub-topics illicited responses from the same respondents so the number of individual respondents in this topic is 21. There were 8 other indefinable contributors in the discussion sessions and messages

There was strong agreement that the ACS should embrace specialities however two approaches were mooted to achieve this - either set up sub-groups within the ACS and/or engage/partner with other associations.

Much of the discussion became distracted by the specific specialities that should be embraced and supported or otherwise.  There was also an extended discussion on the boundaries to set in recognising the qualifications needed to become a member of the professional division.

**Common Topics**

•  Recognise managerial achievements
   (Responses 1; Responders 1)

   This topic elected low interest with one responder and one person who 'liked' their response.

- Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core
  (Responses 3; Responders 2)

  From a low base there was agreement that the ACS should accommodate specialities with one responder explicitly favouring partnering with other specialist associations rather than duplicate effort.

- Do we want to be called "engineering professionals"?
  (Responses 15; Responders 8)

  There were mixed views expressed; some responders advocated to recognise the engineering philosophy behind computer science. Others argued that professionalism does not require university qualifications and that many ICT professionals also had university qualifications in allied disciplines.

  There was a substantial off-topic discussion on the change on the ACS home page to remove any description of the ACS's purpose and focus.

- Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines
  (Responses 10; Responders 8)

  Responses to this topic accepted the need to recognise specialist ICT disciplines but differed in the scope and practice to do so, including 'reaching out' to related organisations.

  There was an off-topic discussion on the historical ties of The Australasian Institute of Digital Health to the ACS and its successful transition to a CLG.

- Managers and users of ICT as professional members of ACS
  (Responses 8; Responders 7)

  Users of IT were not discussed, instead the discussion centred on the qualifications of CIOs. There was general agreement that only managers/CIOs with formal ICT qualifications should be eligible for ACS Professional Division membership.

**Outlier Topics**

- Subsidiary Commercial Operations
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)

  This comment was relevant in that to supported separating the structure & governance of specialised commercial operations from a core membership based ACS

- Creating Technical Societies or Branches
  (Responses 4; Responders 4)

  These comments are a more formal expression of the SIG concept but imply that any new structure would have greater independence either as a separate organisation or as a 'non-geographic' branch.

_____

Quotes I liked

A lot of people work very hard to get their credentials, industry certifications etc.  People may become managers without these as requirements.  Whatever the decision is, the decision needs to be fair in recognising and respecting the member's efforts in their achievements.

—-

What is necessary is an unrestrained commitment to delivering value for it's membership and the broader ICT-ecosystem. The branches must shoulder the brunt of this re-imagined intent; with the centre being responsible for Policy and Standards

—-

A casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS  is all about. There is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'. In fact, there is no clue to this being even a Professional Society.

—-

ICT hasn't just been spawning lots of new specialisations internally.  Even more than in the past, there are a lot of boundary-riders working astraddle two complex fields, and at least some of them would like to signify their dual expertise, and rub shoulders with colleagues on both sides of the boundary.

—-

The Society must remain free from industry influence as far as practical otherwise its creditability when representing its members to government is more readily called into question

—-

# CRWG ANALYSIS
## P05 – Open Nomination Processes for Board Positions
Jacky Hartnett Final?

|  |  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** |  | 61 + 1 message | 28 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |  |
| CURRENT METHOD | Too Complex | 7 |  |
|  | Narrow elite field | 4 |  |
| WHO | Any member | 8 + 2 likes |  |
|  | Any professional member | 13 |  |
|  | Not All Members, some independent directors | 4 |  |
| HOW | Nomination Committee NO | 4+ 2 likes |  |
|  | Advice from current directors | 1 + 3 likes<br>1 no advice |  |
|  | Direct nomination from membership | 3 |  |
| QUALIFICATIONS | Demonstrate to Voters | 10 + 3 likes |  |
|  | Engagement with ACS activities | 1 + 3 likes |  |
|  | AICD Qualification before | 2 |  |
|  | Paid for Training as required | 5 |  |
|  | No hurdle | 2 |  |
| PAID DIRECTORS | Yes | 2 |  |
|  | No | 5 but expenses + 2 likes |  |
| DIVERSITY | Gender Equity | 6 |  |
| **Branch Spread** | VIC,CBR,QLD,TAS,SA, ??? |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |  |

**Common Topics**

- The majority of responders thought that any member should be able to nominate for a position on the Board of ACS but that they needed to demonstrate their qualifications for this and receive funded opportunities to acquire the right training. There was little attention paid to the actual membership status, except by those who understand the need to say 'professional member'.

- The other hot topics that were strongly argued were:

    o The qualifications and experience needed prior to becoming a director

        ▪ *Any professional member should be entitled to stand for the membership of the governing body*

        ▪ *Directors should at a minimum be AICD trained, but really have had other relevant experience or board-level appointment before being suitable for nomination*

        ▪ *I do not accept that there should be a hurdle qualification for Board members*

        ▪ *I would argue that a board doesn't "run" (nor manage) an organisation - the staff do that - what a board does, in accordance with the best interests of the members (as the member express them) is develop and provide direction, policy guidelines, and LEADERSHIP*

        ▪ *Typically, in most limited companies, there is at least 1 director who's invited to sit in an observer/advisor capacity.*

    o Whether directors should be paid

        ▪ *Board Directors should be paid.*

        ▪ *No - This would encourage motivations and behaviours incongruent with ACS as a Professional Association*

        ▪ *I disagree STRONGLY. Professionals have a duty to give back to their profession and being Board members is one way that they can do that.*

        ▪ *Whilst my firm position is not to pay Board Members, in.line with our Professional Member driven and owned operation, I am very clear there is considerable skill and expertise in running an operation of the size and complexity, and nationwide reach of the ACS.*

    o The complexity of the current electoral system and the need to enable state representation

        ▪ *How many people understand that the field of candidates for president allowed by these clauses is less than 150? How many understand that for the branches with more than 25% of national membership, there can be only ten eligible candidates for president?*

        ▪ *Some of the complexities appear to many observers (including me) to be designed-in mechanisms to entrench an elite, or, perhaps better expressed, slow down each person's progression, giving time for them to be inducted / embedded / indoctrinated, before they get too far inside the small tent*

        ▪ *are state's BECs like the electoral college in the USA so large states do not overpower the smaller states?*

    o

    o Whether ACS should be viewed as a multi million dollar enterprise first or a professional member organisation first (and hence the need for the skill mix of Directors

        ▪ *This is NOT a multi-million dollar company. We are a Professional Association that, through good governance by "professional members", many of whom have had very successful senior management roles in the private and public sectors, is performing well financially*

        ▪ *According to the law, the ACS IS a company, and according to he financial statements, it has several million in assets,several million in income and several million in outgoings. It is, unquestionably, a multi-million dollar company, and we need to get over resisting that notion.*

        ▪ *It is an organisation that is worth more than $30M, and that does require good governance.*

        ▪ *a multi million dollar company doesn't automatically imply that it's a commercial enterprise*

        ▪

    o Some discussion for the need for diversity – 50 -50 gender representation

        ▪ *having a 50/50 gender representation would be difficult seeing the proportion of women in IT who join the ACS*

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

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

## Outlier Topics

- Member Liability in a CLG
  (Responses 4 Responders 3
- Making Directors Accountable
  (Responses 3; Responders 2)
- Majority of ACS members should be in professional division
  (1 Response )

## Topics not relevant to CRWG

- Current ACS Website woeful
  (Responses 4; Responders 4

# CRWG ANALYSIS

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

To reflect the twin factors of being both national and regionally diverse, members may want the Constitution to adopt the principle applied in the Australian Constitution, whereby <u>some Directors are elected by the voting members as a whole, and some by an electoral college comprising members drawn equally from each Branch</u>.

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 12 | 8 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| The SIgnificance of the Principle | 1 | 1 |
| Concerns about Large-Branch / Capital-City Dominance | 2 | 2 |
| A Single Electorate with One-Member / One Vote | 2 | 2 |
| A Hybrid Scheme, Featuring Both One-Member/One-Vote and a 'Senate' Scheme | 4 | 4 |
| The Current Electoral College Scheme | 3 | 3 |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**The SIgnificance of the Principle**

• "The complete dis-empowerment of Branches was a major reason for the Constitutional Debacle of 2019" (Devindra Weerasooriya)

**Concerns about Large-Branch / Capital-City Dominance**

• "[Under one-member/one-vote arrangements], **the states with the highest membership numbers have an advantage**.

"**NSW** where the ACS national office is situated **is in a unique position in being able to most easily organise members to attend any general meeting in person**.

"Under current ACS policy it is not possible for state branches or Board candidates to gain access to ACS member contact details in order to solicit or arrange voting proxies.

"**In the absence of a fair means to organise voting proxies**, a small number of local members in NSW or **even ACS staff with their associate member status**, could exert a decisive influence on Board elections by voting in person at General Meetings held in the ACS national office.

"[**That translates into**, or at least is perceived by members in smaller Branches to translate into, **the governing committee being dominated by the larger Branches, and particularly NSW, and particularly urban Sydney**]" (Paul Campbell – Qld)

• "I believe that there should be a principle that Staff should not be able [to vote] in either AGMs or Board Elections. There is a clear conflict of interest and as we saw can be used to bolster proxies"   (Robert Estherby – NSW)

**A Single Electorate with One-Member / One Vote**

- "I think we need **to avoid having a process that allocated directors to various states**; if the best directors are all from Darwin so be it" (Robert Estherby – NSW)
  - { "Voters' choices tend to be influenced only to a limited extent by candidates' intrinsic qualities;  so 'best' tends to lose out to 'local'.  Results tend to have a strongly parochial character, because **voters typically favour candidates from nearby areas over candidates from locations remote from the voter**.  So the chances of Darwin candidates garnering votes is very low" (Roger Clarke – Cbr) }


**A Hybrid Scheme, Featuring Both One-Member/One-Vote and a 'Senate' Scheme**

- "Currently the ACS embraces a 'senate' model to elect its Board.  Eligible ACS members vote for their state BEC which in turn elects its Congress representatives.  Congress then acts as an electoral college and elects both the Board and Committee Chairs.  This process gives all eligible ACS members a right to vote and nominate for their regional BEC.

  "[The loss of that designed-in bias would work to the disadvantage of candidates from outside the highly populous Branches].

  "**The alternative hybrid voting model is a fairer scheme [than a one-member/one-vote system]**" (Paul Campbell – Qld)
- "[The] suggestion of a hybrid model seems to have merit - addressing the risk of smaller states being and feeling lost" (Fellow Enthusiast – Branch unknown)
- "I support the Senate model, I don't want large-State dominance of member input" (Damien Charles – NT)
- " I also support the Senate model" (Alex Reid – WA)


**The Current Electoral College Scheme**

- "I don't believe the alternative hybrid model is fair as this still opens half the company board to being elected by the sheer number of members in a state.  **The current senate model is fairer as smaller states and territories can participate equally**" (UI – WA)
  - "Personally, I am for direct elections - but despite being from Sydney, I do understand the concerns of smaller states.  I personally would prefer a principle, that reserved a number of seats to say (25%) to be for members outside NSW and VIC and left the rest open for free nomination"  (Robert Estherby – NSW)
    - { "The current NSW + Vic membership is c.54% of voting members, not 75%. NSW+Vic+Qld is 68%, NSW+Vic+Qld+Cbr is 82%" (Roger Clarke) }

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**P07 – Workable Delegations**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 14 | 9 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Accountability and Transparency | 3 | 3 |
| Balance needed between board power and member power | 2 | 2 |
| Business Line Consistency with ACS Values | 2 | 2 |
| Devolved responsibility for branches | 3 | 2 |
| Other comments | 4 | 3 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | CBR, NSW, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC | |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | None | |

**Comment**

The relatively small sample on this topic means that there is a risk that individual responses could sway a theme or that some themes may be supported by rather few people.

**Common Themes**

• **There should be delegations to elected officials to support autonomy and this should be anchored in the constitution**
(Responses 6; Responders 3)

*It should be a constitutional requirement that ACS ensure that Elected officials and other volunteers are supported by staff and also that they are not confronted with decision making structures that make action extremely difficult. To ensure that this is achieved, ACS should operate in a delegation system that assigns appropriate action and financial capabilities to the Elected Officials and Appointed Officials and other volunteers.*

*Branches (as do other elements of ACS) need have a "delegation" which is sufficient for autonomous operation.*

*I think that elsewhere there appears to be a consensus that branches should have*
- *Responsibility to lead interactions with State Government and Organisations*
- *Responsibility to direct local activities and programs*
- *Spend a delegated budget*
- *Direct local staff (within limits)*

- ACS should find a way to require the governing body to consult with members before establishing new business lines
(Responses 3; Responders 3)

*How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?*
*I think this is why Board Minutes should be 'public' to members.*

*How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?*
*I think it would be appropriate for a business case (appropriately presented) to be shared with members or at a minimum, branches for review.*

*What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?*
*Members should be able to call a general meeting and pass a 'disallowance motion that binds the board.*

*The tricky question is how does a constitution ensure that the governing body does not steer ACS in directions with which members are uncomfortable. The answer I have so far, is to change the members of the governing body if such happens. Alas this is post fact. Is there a desire to look for a mechanism that requires consultation before such large changes are decided upon?*

- ACS should have a bias towards transparency
(Responses 3; Responders 2)

*I think that there should be a 'bias towards transparency' embedded in the constitution*
*Examples might include*
*- Board Meetings should be open to any professional member subject to agreement to appropriate confidentially provisions and in-camera sessions.*
*- Board minutes (with appropriate redactions) should be available to the membership*
*- AGMs should be interactive, online and out of business hours to allow for Members to effectively engage.*

*Accountability and Transparency are major reasons for the Constitutional debacle in 2019. Both are cornerstone principles in all its forms*

## Outlier Themes
- Nil
(Responses 0; Responders 0)

## Themes not relevant to CRWG
- Nil
(Responses 0; Responders 0)

## P08 – Accountability, Transparency, Engagement

Good governance requires timely and balanced disclosure of all matters that may have a material effect on the interests of the members and the public.

Members may also want the Constitution to require that members' input and feedback be gathered, and that the Board and management be responsive to members' input and feedback.

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 50 | 31 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Transparency | 17 | 16 |
| Engagement | 15 | 14 |
| Accountability | 18 | 13 |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**Transparency**

- "**[Lack of] Accountability and Transparency are major reasons for the Constitutional debacle in 2019**" (Devindra Weerasooriya)
- "**Principle 8 needs to be strengthened. A 'bias towards transparency' should be embedded in the constitution**. Examples:
  - Board Meetings should be open to any professional member (subject to agreement to appropriate confidentially provisions and in-camera sessions)
  - Board minutes should be available to the membership (with appropriate redactions)
  - AGMs should be interactive, online and out of business hours to allow for Members to effectively engage" (Robert Estherby)
- "**Greater transparency is required**. ACS is supposed to be by members, for members. the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable" (UI)
- "There must be an opportunity for regular review amongst interested members, and ongoing communication with the membership about significant decisions being made" (Sheldon King)
- "Do we really need (what is allegedly) **the most expensive office space in Australia**? How is that a benefit to members (and society)?" (Fellow Enthusiast)
- "I read that prominent member Ashley **Goldworthy asked a series of questions about activities and expenses but has been refused answers**. That culture needs to change!" (Fellow Enthusiast)
- "What about **buying a book on Menzies or being a member of WEF or attending meetings in Davos**? Not appropriate use of member's funds" (Ann Moffat)
- "From March 2013 to October 2019, **ACS' voting membership halved, and the number of MACS fell by 70%. Then the executive stopped publishing the data**. ACS needs to provide ACS' membership data to members so we can help it grow substantially. We need to encourage PROFESSIONAL membership, not these casual Associates and OSP's. We're unclear what categories make up the large numbers of voting and non-voting Associates, what level of the fee schedule they pay, and how many have gratis membership and why, e.g. because they are members of staff, or part of a start-up tenancy" (Martin Lack)
- "**Is the ACS working with government to expertly shape legislation that will affect IT professionals and consumers?** As a professional member, I'd have no idea" (Sheldon King)

- "How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered? ... " (Roger Clarke)
- "I was perplexed when I read about **the acquisition [of ADMA]** in Information Age – the only place I'd heard about it" (Sam Horwood)
- "No convincing evidence has been provided of benefits in having industry associations within ACS.  The secrecy surrounding the acquisition was **the inverse of the required transparency to members before the fact**" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "Members' reaction when **the incubators** were announced was "What the hell's going on?".  Suddenly there they were, a *fait accompli*.  I didn't ever see a detailed explanation why.  Members want to know about it in advance, and why" (Graeme Bond)
- "It would be nice if we knew what they do in ACS Labs.  How about a monthly newsletter?  Do they run start-up weekends – 2-1/2 day events?" (Matthew Bulat)
- "Do ACS Labs generate new members?  Do they generate revenue for us?  Is the space provided in return for equity?" (Bevin Irvine)
- "The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus" (John Graham)
- "The ACS's governance structure looks like a management structure.  It's not a consultative membership framework, but a managerialist framework.  **At the minimum, proposals must be communicated and explained to the membership, as the first step in accountability**" (Susan Sly)
- "There needs to be a transparent and distinct operational and structural separation between the professional and commercial activities of the society" (Jeffory Mitchell)

**Engagement**
- how does a constitution ensure that the governing body does not steer ACS in directions with which members are uncomfortable.  Is there a desire to look for a mechanism that requires consultation before large changes are decided upon?" (Jacky Hartnett)
- "As a principle **the constitution should require consultation ... of key areas such as Governance and Membership**" (Robert Estherby)
- "Management is not respecting the importance or value of Member needs / wants unless the **board/management shares their plans and seeks and embraces feedback from members**" (Fellow Enthusiast)
- "**Professional membership - Consultation - Yes**; Detailed involvement - No" (Brian Finn)
- "Consultation by members and for members is very important.  This consultation contrasts with the approach to consultation on the strategic plan, which was more consultant led" (Beau Tydd)
- "This open channel is AMAZING!!!! So much heard passion and collaboration.  THIS MUST KEEP GOING" (Helen McHugh)
- "This process has been an invaluable opening up of engagement with members" (Karl Reed)
- "The shared experience in a meeting like [the Constitutional discussion sessions] was **an effective mechanism for engagement**" (Susan Sly)
- "Multiple decisions have been made that members were not aware of.  There should be something in the strategy which should be taken to members around how such decisions are made" (PAB Board member)
- "ACS is too big for all members to be heard on all issues, so **it has to be a representative democracy, but it must also feature consultative arrangements**" (Alex Reid)
- "Do effective and efficient online voting facilities change that?" (Roger Clarke)
- "A significant difference exists between members' capacity to make a Determination by means of a Referendum cf. to give Strong Advice by means of a Plebiscite.  **A possible approach is to require that members must be informed, and their views must be sought**" (Anthony Ellard)
- "Care is needed as to what the topics are that fall within that scope of a plebiscite and even more so of a Referendum" (Susan Sly)

- "**There are hard choices to be made about which things are delegated to the Board, versus informed in advance, versus hard-consultative-with-plebiscite, versus determinative-with-member-vote / referendum**" (Denis O'Hara)
- "A balancing act is needed between direct democracy [binding referenda or non-binding plebiscites] and ungovernability. **A key issue is which documents are the ones that members most need to be strongly influenced by members rather than delegated to an all-powerful governing committee**" (Elizabeth Bromham)

## Accountability

- "**How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go**, unless the members have to ratify changes to the key documents?" (Roger Clarke)
- "The last 5 years has felt particularly disenfranchised. Controls are needed to better align people at the top with the rank-and-file" (Sam Horwood)
- "The current fad is for **a 'lean' constitution**, with most things able to be decided by the board. This has both obvious efficiencies and obvious downsides. It **implies the need for a high level of trust in any future board, and that may not be possible**" (Paul Campbell)
- "The 2019 corporatisation proposal seriously concerned many members because of the apparent intent to dilute, even remove, member influence on policy, esp. re membership" (David Air)
- "As a principle the constitution should require ... membership ratification of key areas such as Governance and Membership" (Robert Estherby)
- "There are a couple of elements to this:
  (1) Who should decide the operational criteria for evaluating possible new business-lines?
  (2) If it's not the members who set the operational criteria, how do the members know what the criteria are?
  (3) **How do the members find out that a new business-line is being considered?**
  (4) How do the members assess the case for the new business-line against the criteria?
  (5) **What can the members do if they don't think the business-line satisfies the criteria?**
  The alternative is of course to trust a chain of unknown future Directors with prettymuch absolute power" (Roger Clarke)
- "**It's of vital importance that safeguards exist to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity**" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "The accountability component of governance has been a serious shortfall. It's necessary to **identify the categories of initiative that need to go the members first, e.g. definitions of membership grades is one**. Member [AGM?] approval is essential" (Denis O'Hara)
- "Members should be able to call a general meeting and pass **a 'disallowance' motion that binds the board**" (Robert Estherby)
- "**Surplus allocation has to be based on the Objects**. It's impractical to go to the members for each decision, but **the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that guidance should be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes**. Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions" (Peter O'Halloran)
- "Electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club" (Peter O'Halloran)
- "A fighting fund needs to be specified in the Constitution, which requires member approval to expend" (Sarah-Louise MacDonald)
- "The CRWG process is important to ensure the new constitution includes **ability of members to influence matters well beyond just voting for Board-members**" (David Air)
- "I confess to feeling particularly disenfranchised over the last 5 years. I suggest these remedies:
  - I see the dual electorate mechanism / branch structures / company limited by guarantee / delegation of powers as being intrinsically linked

- I want to see less complication at the organisational structure level and more direct accountability and with that clearer delegation of power from the membership
- Part of my feeling of disenfranchisement is that **my voice does not directly count at a national leadership level**. Sure, we go through the motions in voting in local committees at branch level and we empower them to vote in appropriate national leaders (or vote out) at congress
- **This whole electoral college type of system** feels far too complicated, and **has helped isolate the membership from exerting direct power at what has been quite a tumultuous time for our society**
    - "I tried to use the Rules to draw the complex structure of representational democracy, and it's so illogical that it didn't prove possible. It needs a massive overhaul, and a great deal more transparency to the membership" (Mark Toomey)
- One professional member, one vote
- **I want to be able to directly vote out a board that has lost the confidence of the membership**, which is not something that I can do currently. I would also add that I think the events of the last 5 years would not have smouldered on for so long, if the professional membership were directly enfranchised, **then there would be less opportunity for a self-reinforcing clique to exist**
- I want professional members wherever they are, to be able to attend annual general meetings preferably online
- I want annual reports and financial statements to be reviewed and approved by the professional members
- **I want professional members to be able to propose motions of no confidence in AGM's that pass with a majority vote or maybe two thirds vote** (I don't recall what the corporations act says about the topic)
- I want the **financial revenue and expenditure by separate ACS business lines to be published annually** (preferably through annual report) to professional members" (Sam Horwood)
- "On the one hand, the Board needs to be able to make strategic and policy decisions, pass them to the CEO for implementation, and ensure effective, efficient and adaptable operation of the Society.

    "On the other, **the members need a basis whereby they can trust the Board and CEO to be acting in accordance with the values, mission and purposes of the Society**.

    For the members to have that trust, a series of layers of regulation are needed:

    (1) **Members need enough visibility** of what the Board and CEO are doing

    (2) **With major new initiatives, members need:**
    - **visibility in advance of decisions**, and
    - **meaningful opportunities to provide input**
        (the 'bring the members along on the journey with you' dictum)

    (3) Where member concern exists, **any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of concern'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO

    (4) Where that concern is serious, and responses by the Board and CEO do not dissipate the concern, **any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of serious concern'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO, but also to all other BECs, and the membership

    (5) Where the matter is so serious that trust by the members in the directions the Society is taking is being undermined, **any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of no confidence'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO, and to all other BECs, and the membership

    (6) **If any two BECs pass a materially identical 'motion of no confidence', the Constitution needs to provide that a General Meeting is automatically called at which the motion must be put and debated**

    As with all regulatory arrangements, the purpose is to avoid the need for 'nuclear option' (6) to ever be implemented" (Ashley Maher)

- "**There are hard choices to be made about which things are delegated to the Board, versus informed in advance, versus hard-consultative-with-plebiscite, versus determinative-with-member-vote / referendum**" (Denis O'Hara)

- "A balancing act is needed between direct democracy [binding referenda or non-binding plebiscites] and ungovernability. **A key issue is which documents are the ones that members most need to be strongly influenced by members rather than delegated to an all-powerful governing committee**" (Elizabeth Bromham)

- "Matters of importance must have member voice. Line up with mission, purposes and key functions, and **the more important among those matters must go to the members [for 'approval' / 'ratification' / 'endorsement' ]**" (Rod Dilnutt)

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**P09 – Member Involvement in the Approval of Key Documents**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 12 | 9 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| The Aim | 3 | 3 |
| Transparency | 1 | 1 |
| Engagement | 8 | 6 |

**The Aim**

• "We need **a mechanism to stop unpalatable changes of direction** by those to whom we have delegated authority, **before it happens**" (Jacky Hartnett)

• "The Objects should ensure that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation" (Karl Reed)

• "The principle should be that the constitution looks to embed **a mechanism for efficient and rapid consultation and endorsement**"  (Robert Estherby)

**Transparency**

• "We need to have an easy way for people to **find ... the key documents**.  Current method is not easy to use" (Cindy Chung)

**Engagement**

• "The executive needs to **share their plans and seek and embrace feedback** from members" (Fellow Enthusiast)

• "We do not have an environment ... where the management can assume a 'mandate' from a clearly articulated position before election" (Fellow Enthusiast)

• "The board should regularly seek member input on topics for debate" (Robert Estherby)

• "**Branches should always be involved**, and the constitution should enable / enshrine that principle" (Damien Charles)

• "Have **a minimum participation threshold** before a resolution is possible. If numbers are short, the proposal could be put at the next AGM" (Robert Estherby)

• "Undertaking this **consultation by members and for members** was very important.  This contrasts with the approach to consultation on the strategic plan, which was more consultant led" (Beau Tydd)

• "I'm happy with the direction taken by draft principle 9 ... [viz. **changes to the policies that define the Society's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities ... need to be endorsed by members** ... in a prompt and timely manner **using electronic communications and secure online voting facilities**]" (Devindra Weerasooriya)

• "It is the working level arrangements that put the brain and flesh onto the skeleton, i.e., the behavioural and cultural stuff!  Examples are **how the organisation is structured, member representation, branches, and authority levels**" (Denis Street)

# CRWG ANALYSIS

## P10 – Principle 10 - The Potential Role of Branches

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 75 | 0 |
| Importance of Branches | 12 | 10 |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Role of Branches – Service Delivery{Bs} | 11 | 9 |
| Devolved Responsibility for Branches  {Ba} | 20 | 16 |
| Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice{Bf} | 15 | 12 |
| BEC and overall governance{BG} | | |
| Purposes and Outcomes {P} | 4 | 3 |
| Where should ACS spend its money?{M} | 10 | 9 |
| Skills in ACS Staff | 0 | 0 |
| Accountability and Transparency{T} | 3 | 3 |
| Local ACS branches in control{Bc} | 2 | 2 |
| Branch Resources {Br} -<br>      see where should ACS spend its money | | |
| Can matrix management be made to work for Branches?{Bm} | 5 | 4 |
| SIG | 4 | 4 |
| **Branch Spread** | | |
|  | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**Common Topics**

**Importance of Branches**

(Responses 14; Responders 11)

Responses directly on this topic and inferences from other responses indicated strong support for the ongoing existence of branches and chapters. There was NO comment suggesting they should not exist.

- *BECs/branches/chapters should continue*
- *Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS*
- *branches (and chapters) are essential elements for a future ACS*
- *The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic*
- *The future, member focused, ACS structure should: <u>foster grass roots agility, innovation and value-added activities at a branch level.</u>*
- *Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs Chapters recently, plus with face-to-face events, has been critical*

**Role of Branches - Branch and/or regional chapter for delivery of Services {Bs}**
(Responses 11; Responders 9)

- *The state/territory branch should be the mechanism that addresses the requirements of the state based membership*
- *..having a revenue stream to allow for member benefits at branch level is fine*
- *Branches know their local community the best, agility to respond to local needs really give the branch the best chance to support and grow its backyard*
- *Branches is the critical link in the chain between members and the ACS and therefore have level of autonomy to service their member base.*
- *They also ran a lot of SIG's.*
- *ACS structure should foster grass roots agility, innovation and value-added activities at a branch level.*
- *the key role for direction and oversight of the branch should be focused on engagement with the local members and related through events, activities and other service delivery.*
- *Maintenance of an effective state Branch Structure– Most service delivery and interaction will be with a local Branch. These must have autonomy over budget and activities that allow differing local needs to be met. At the same time, members should be guaranteed a minimum level of uniform service*


**Branch for autonomy / delegation of control and budget {Ba}**
   (Responses 20; Responders 16)

Branches, and in particular BEC, needs delegation of control and budget.

- *The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.*
- *The ACS should delegate decisions to the lowest level at which those decisions are sensibly made*
- *If branches are to operate effectively, there must be some devolved responsibility which will need to include some level of access to funds*
- *The BEC should be empowered to act on behalf of the ACS as a whole, and require the autonomy and decision making to run their branch directly*
- *We lack the ability to contact our local members directly*
- *The BECs are there to forward the aims of the society, the branch managers are there to help them do that*
- *The ACS needs to make a strategic decisions about an appropriate level of funding of 'local events' and a subsidiarity principle that allows for those local decisions to be made.*
- *each branch and for that matter chapter is different and we need to be make sure we are able to be flexible to support each in the way that members feel empowered and engaged.  some of the best events and most engaged members (especially in QLD) are located regionally.  we need to give them a voice and support what is needed in each region*
- *Branches need much more autonomy*
   - *Agreed, but at a strategic level, not the amount of the rental*
- *responsibility for activities must be with Chapters*
   - *110% agreed Branches and Chapters should have that ability.*
- *When I was on the VIC BEC, a sensible person in National ACS advised not seeking permission, as the default answer was NO.*
   - o     Yes, I guess we have all faced this at different times
     *The line "its better to ask for forgiveness than permission" is attributed to Grace M. Hopper.*
     *But, from a Governance point of view it carries enormous risk and exposure.*
     *Far better to give people appropriate delegations.*
-

**Branch and/or regional chapter for identification and feedback of issues{Bf}**
(Responses 15; Responders 12)

Need to retain branches

- *The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS*
- *To ensure that we reach out to the current and future members, these voices need to be heard through branch and regional input*
- *branches are a key link in the chain from a member to the ACS ,*
- *I have found it invaluable to feel welcomed, included, and supported by the … branch ….. That strong sense of community has been appealing to me, …. This makes me want to contribute and give back to the community …*


**Purpose  - as constitution statement {P}**
(Responses 4 ; Responders 3)

Very few direct comments, but regular inference as to importance / orientation towards members.

- *There should be ONE purpose for the ACS. …*
  *My view is that the ACS should be a professional organisation of its members, with the following statement:*
  *"The purpose of the Australian Computer Society is to advance the science, practice and application of computer, information and communications technologies for the benefit of members and the Australian community".*
- *ACS as a Member organization' for the benefit of the ICT industry*
- *Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.*
- *The future, member focused, ACS structure should: <u>foster grass roots agility, innovation and value-added activities at a branch level.</u>*


**Where should ACS spend its money?{M}**
(Responses 10; Responders 9

As the conduit to members Branches need funding and flexible access to funds

- *having a revenue stream to allow for member benefits at branch level is fine. Not every service we do has to turn a profit. If we are there to serve members, and we do this by using a revenue stream (like skills assessment), then I think that's okay personally*
- *an appropriate level of funding of 'local events'*
- *Members are not loss leader, they are reason the society exists, and should be the society's priority.*
- there has to be a clear understanding of what is membership funds that may be used in *supporting the state/local members and what is business derived funds that the Branch / State / Chapter can utilise or apply for*
- *branches should have a budget which is approved at MC level, and they should perform to that, the creation of that budget should be a joint exercise and not simply imposed from above. Branches also need access to limited additional funds for small unplanned projects that are professional member focussed*
  - *the ACS shouldn't really have surplus beyond what is necessary to keep the Society viable, <u>**surpluses must be reinvested into the Society for the benefit of members**</u>. Such investment may include <u>events and initiatives to improve education and professional standing</u>, <u>lobbying efforts to improve the IT business environment</u>, <u>grants and scholarships to help support diversity and access in IT</u>*

and

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

## Accountability and Transparency   (3){T}

(Responses 3; Responders 3)

- *Accountability and transparency are major issues that need to be addressed in any new constitution.  The tricky question is how does a constitution ensure that the governing body does not steer ACS in directions with which members are uncomfortable.  The answer I have so far, is to change the members of the governing body if such happens.  Alas this is post fact.  Is there a desire to look for a mechanism that requires consultation before such large changes are decided upon?*
- *Accountability and Transparency are major reasons for the Constitutional debacle in 2019. Both are cornerstone principles in all its forms*
  *I'm happy with the direction taken by the draft principles 7. 8, 9 & 10 in the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 and expect to see a refined formulation, going forward*
- *I think that principle 8 needs to be strengthened.*
  *I think that there should be a 'bias towards transparency' embedded in the constitution Examples might include*
    - *Board Meetings should be open to any professional member subject to agreement to appropriate confidentially provisions and in-camera sessions.*
    - *Board minutes (with appropriate redactions) should be available to the membership*
    - *AGM's should be interactive, online and out of business hours to allow for Members to effectively engage.*

## Matrix Management

(Responses 5; Responders 4)

- *matrix management definitely can work. I have worked in large Fed Gov Service delivery agencies and small agencies where matrix management has been used successfully. It is often what makes the difference in success.*
- *It is based on Trust, Collaboration, Communication*
    - *BUT it also needs well defined and understood and albeit agreed frameworks. Roles & Responsibilities*

## Outlier Topics

- **Branches are not representative**
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)

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

## Branch for overall governance

(Responses 3; Responders 2)

Need to retain branches

There was a single mention for the branches to have a role in governance – primarily through the election process of a "board".  I note that this is different to another Q13 analysis.

- *ACS to be a federal body with subsidiary state branches with shares / voting rights to federal body. ( paraphrased).*
- *I wonder if the constitution should stipulate a management committee (unfortunate name given ACS history, but it's apt for my point) comprising the senior staff (CEO, CFO,*

*Chief Membership Officer), Branch Managers, and Branch Chairs, as the mechanism of operating the national body accounting for local activities. I realise that means ~20 members – so not really a working committee! – but I think a structure like that would allo allow branches to work in synchrony with the national strategies but adapting to local conditions*

### *SIG - Special Interest Groups*

(Responses 4; Responders 4)

There were 4 references to SIGs with the implication that they had been important.

### Definition of scope

Need to carefully define terms

- *For example, 'advancing the practice of communications technologies' might be seen by some to include improving the design and installation of phone cabling connectors. Is that in scope? 'Advancing the application of computer technologies' might be seen as marketing within the computer retail sector - is that in scope? And so on.*

### Topics not relevant to CRWG

- TOPICDESCRIPTION
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

.____   [Don:14/11/21]  ____

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**P11 – Appropriate Governance**

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 25 | 14 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Governance Structures and Processes | 7 | 9 |
| Member Powers | 12 | 6 |
| Separation of Powers of Elected Members and Staff | 1 | 2 |
| Separation of Business-Lines into a Separately-Managed Subsidiary | 3 | 3 |
| Director Qualifications | 2 | 2 |
| | | |
| **Branch Spread** | | |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

**Governance Structures and Processes**

- "In 2010, the Victorian Branch of the ACS reviewed ACS Governance. ... Appendix A has a detailed chart of how ACS elections and appointments worked in 2010" (Rimas Skeivys) https://groups.io/g/CRWG-1/attachment/384/0/ACS%20Governance%20v2.pdf

- "**I want to see less complication at the organisational structure level and more direct accountability and with that clearer delegation of power from the membership** ... **The electoral college system ... has helped isolate the membership from exerting direct power**" (Sam Horwood)

- "**The pool of eligible candidates for President is too constrained by the current rules and the eligibility rules for President should be changed as soon as possible**" (Qld BEC)

- **There is no mention of the objects of the ACS in the governing documents**. I have also just been looking at the current set of ACS Rules and **there is no mention of the purpose or objects of the ACS in those Rules. These objects should be embedded in the top level governing document**, ie, the rules, as the governing framework for everything else that follows. This is fundamental – how did that happen? Looking further afield I noticed that statement of objects is a standalone document with no reference to the source or authority for the objects. **This must be corrected and the Mission and Purpose of the ACS must be firmly embedded in the governing constitutional document**" (Denis Street)

- "In my day (2013-16), **MC meetings** always seemed to follow the predetermined agenda" (Paul Bailes)

- "**The reduction to three Boards** sent to MC in October 2016 was a regressive step" (Paul Bailes)

- "**There need to be more Boards**, each of which:
    - has much more **focussed scope**
    - is **a working board**
    - has the **authority to act independently within its defined area**, [i.e. is **a Committee of the governing committee, and has delegations**], rather than being a mere advisory group" (Jack Burton)

## Member Powers

- "The most involvement that members should have ... is to vote for which director they want to fill a vacancy.  Members are in effect the 'customers' of ACS" (Craig Horne)
- "It is of vital importance that **safeguards** exist **to prevent the Society being run away with**, reducing its member-centricity" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "**ACS activities must be** for the members and **agreed among the members**.  It must not be corporate in its thinking.  Member-centricity is critical.  Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed" (Charlynn Miller)
- "Member-centricity is critical.  There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity" (Jo Dalvean)
- "Alter the Objects to **ensure that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**" (Karl Reed)
- "**The members need a basis whereby they can trust the Board and CEO to be acting in accordance with the values, mission and purposes of the Society**.  For the members to have that trust, **a series of layers of regulation are needed**"  (Ashley Maher)
    - (1) "Members need enough **visibility** of what the Board and CEO are doing
    - (2) With major new initiatives, members need visibility in advance of decisions, and **meaningful opportunities to provide input** (the 'bring the members along on the journey with you' dictum)
    - (3) Where member concern exists, any **Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass 'a motion of concern'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO
    - (4) Where that concern is serious, and responses by the Board and CEO do not dissipate the concern, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity **to pass 'a motion of serious concern'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO, but also to all other BECs, and the membership
    - (5) Where the matter is so serious that trust by the members in the directions the Society is taking is being undermined, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity **to pass 'a motion of no confidence'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO, and to all other BECs, and the membership
    - (6) **If any two BECs pass a materially identical 'motion of no confidence', the Constitution needs to provide that a General Meeting is automatically called** at which the motion must be put and debated

    As with all regulatory arrangements, the purpose is to avoid the need for 'nuclear option' (6) to ever be implemented"
- "It's impractical to go to the members for each **surplus allocation decision**, but the governing documents need to provide guidance, and that guidance should be aligned with the Key Functions, which in turn reflect the Mission and Purposes [and hence with the Objects].  Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions" (Peter O'Halloran)

## Separation of Powers of Elected Members and Staff

- "Staff are 'controlling' the management of our profession with limited understanding of our skills" (Helen McHugh)
- "We need to allow the Branches to operate but work with the Head Office to ensure consistent product delivery" (Helen McHugh)

**Separation of Business-Lines into a Separately-Managed Subsidiary**

- "I understand that most of National ACS's income is from migration skills assessment.  This can lead to a conflict of interest between making money and looking after ACS member interests.  Migration Skills Assessment could be split into a separate company with shares owned by the ACS branches.  ACS branches would appoint the governing body that would decide on standards, appointment of CEO, and funding of ACS branches and the national ACS office" (Rimas Skeivys)
- "ACS is inherently conflicted as a "guarantor" of the quality of ICT education programs on the one hand, and a supplier of same on the other" (Paul Bailes)
- "I agree with Paul Bailes:  We have a serious COI on several fronts with skills assessment" (Karl Reed)

**Director Qualifications**

- "Professional ACS members should <u>not</u> be able to nominate as an ACS Director. Caveat: unless they can supply relevant board director qualifications to ACS" (Craig Horne)
- "Electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club" (Peter O'Halloran)

**CRWG ANALYSIS**
**Principle 12 - Legal Compliance**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 3 | 2 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Use the law wisely to achieve member wishes | 1 | 1 |
| Incorporation or CLG? | 2 | 1 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | TAS, VIC | |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | None | |

**Common Themes**

- Nil
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

**Outlier Themes**

- We should not let legal complexity stand in the way of an appropriate outcome
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)

  *I would suggest that in the law there seem to be many ways to achieve an outcome and we should not let legal complexity stand in the way of this.*

- Checks and Balances should be in place as no constitution or structure is perfect
  (Responses 2; Responders 1)

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

**Themes not relevant to CRWG**

- Nil
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**PS – Professional Society**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 23 | 16 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| ACS is a Professional Society | 10 | 8 |
| Distinguish Professional Memberships | 3 | 3 |
| Distinguish Practitioner Memberships | 1 | 1 |
| Distinguish Technical Memberships | 4 | 3 |
| Encourage Professional Memberships | 2 | 2 |
| Cadet Grade for K-12 | 3 | 3 |
|  |  |  |

## ACS is a Professional Society

- "ACS is a professional society, and needs to stay that way" (Roger Clarke)
- "How should people working in **emerging tech** be classified (i.e. roles that do not qualify for professional status for example someone working on blockchain development may not have any qualifications and have limited years of experience but are still a professional in the industry)" (Beau Tydd)
- "[Re managers and users] If we try to be all things to all people, we are no longer a professional society" (PAB)
- "Can we remain a professional society if we allow broad membership? There should be criteria to become a member, but the ICT definition should be broad enough to encompass the ICT industry in Australia" (PAB)
- "Industry associations are incompatible with a professional society" (Stephen)
- "Industry associations are very different from a professional society. The functions need to be separated – and then work together as and when appropriate" (David)
- "It would be good to know the options, and the pros and cons of each. But, in general, no other form that's been mentioned appears to be suitable other than a professional society." (Margaret Bramham)
- "A professional society is an organisation that comprises and is governed by members of a particular profession with a well defined vision and mission" (Michael Lane)
- "[A professional society must] emphasise the important role and responsibility that ICT Professionals will play in shaping the future of the country and need for a strong ethical perspective that emphasises technology is always used to improve our lives at personal, organisational and societal levels" (Michael Lane)
- "[A professional society must] have a commitment to playing our part as a profession to solving big problems facing humanity such climate change, sustainability and mental health etc and making the world a better place for the next generation" (Michael Lane)

## Distinguish Professional Memberships

- "We should **make it clear to all who ACS has verified** as being a member of the ICT profession  at a professional level and who is just an interested and supportive member" (Jacky Hartnett)

- "We should have more tiers [sub-categories?] of membership and some of them should have **criteria allowing for different ICT professions/specialities**" (Jerome Chiew)
- "Recognising specialisms is a worthy objective, however these are **specialisms within a professional society**, and not attributes of organisational heirarchy" (Adrian Porteous)

## Distinguish Practitioner Memberships

- "Should ACS permit people who meet the threshold to become MACS without CP, calling them a Practitioner, but not (yet) a (Certified) Professional?  It would be entirely reasonable for MACS (with or without CP) to be voting members.  Whereas future joiners at the AACS level would not be voting members" (Roger Clarke)

## Distinguish Technical Memberships

- "I would also like to see **a 'grade' for pc techs**.  The BCS has RITTECH" (Ann Moffatt) https://www.bcs.org/membership/get-registered/professional-registration-for-it-technicians-rittech/
- "Not only for PC techs, but **the whole gamut of hardware service and support**" (Adrian Porteous)
- "PC techs are qualified as are other roles in IT.  There are many TAFE qualifications in this field plus industry certifications such as CompTIA and Microsoft, Linux, etc." (Aubrey)
- "Most IT techs offering services for pc support are autodidacts and totally without formal training, esp here in rural australia. The usual tack is that after charging $50 an hour for several hours the most common advice to their customer is "go to Harvey Norman and buy a new computer'.  The BCS has tapped into this need. I think the ACS should too" (Ann Moffat)

## Encourage Professional Memberships

- "ACS clearly needs to provide membership data to members so we can help it grow substantially.  We need to encourage PROFESSIONAL membership not these casual Associates and OSP's" (Martin Lack)
- "Joining as an associate should be the starting point of a journey which leads to meeting professional membership requirement ...  whether that be by providing a pathway for them, or some other appropriate mechanism.  Catering for other membership classes that are outside that scope risks diverting attention and focus away from the society's core mission" (Sam Horwood)

## Cadet Grade for K-12

- "This cohort will become the next generation of professionals and I believe ACS has a role to nurture their interests.  It would be open to any student studying ICT oriented studies and be an active ACS program.  No fees are proposed and would also engage secondary level ICT teachers and provide a pathway to the profession.  Current R&R restrict membership to >16" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "Yes.  We need to make ICT more attractive to 10,11 & 12 students and teachers" (Paul O'Brien)
- "We'd need to ascertain exactly what ACS can do for them, and in what way this membership might nurture their interests. Past successes include special interest groups in areas like robotics, and hosting of competitions" (Ken Price)

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**Q01 – Should the ACS Continue to be a Professional Society**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 50 | 25 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Should the ACS (continue to) be a Professional Society **[PS]** | 29 | 19 |
| ACS Objects **[OBJ]** | 7 | 6 |
| ACS Policies **[POL]** | 4 | 3 |
| Purpose of the ACS and Scope of Activities **[ACT]** | 23 | 16 |
| Membership Classes, Alignment and Attraction **[MA]** | 10 | 7 |
| Contribute to broader society for the public good (volunteers, retirees) **[PG]** | 13 | 9 |
| Specialisations **[SP]** | 3 | 3 |
| Governance (including CLG and branch powers) **[GOV]** | 4 | 3 |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Common Topics**

- Professional Society
    - ACS objects aligned/not aligned to being a Professional Society (3;2)
    - ACS a voice in the ethical and positive use of computers and information technologies (2;2)
    - Need to formulate policy positions, but ensure these reflect professional consensus (2:2)
- Public Good
    - Recognition of volunteer/retirees skills and knowledge to assist society (outreach, mentoring). (5:4)
    - Involvement with under 16's will build recognition/fuel engagement with ACS (1;1)
    - Extensive range of services/information discussed relating to public good (10;7)
    - Calling out failure to meet professional standards (esp. Gov't) (3:3)
- Activities and Functions
    - Business activities should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions (1;1)
    - Business investments and income should fund member benefits (3;3)
    - Focus on how to help people deliver benefits from technology (1;1)
- Membership
    - Need to do more to attract graduates to become members (1;1)
    - Reduction in professional membership needs to be addressed (4;4)

- Society needs to appeal to younger people with diversity of backgrounds (1;1)
- Need greater activism to look after members' interests (1;1)

**Outlier Topics**

- **[MO]** Members should not be involved in the operational running of the ACS. This includes setting business strategies and priorities (1:1)
- Range and quality of ACS publications  (3;3)

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

- **[PPP]** PPP has been significant factor in dilution of professionalism (1:1)

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**Q02  –  Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope?  Include examples?**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 51 | >46 * |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Yes, 'ICT' is suitable | 20 | >19 * |
| Yes, but extend it | 17 | 16 |
| Ambivalent | 6 | 6 |
| No, use 'IT' | 5 | 4 |
| No, use 'Computing' | 3 | 1 |
|  | * the consensus in multiple events | |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Yes, 'ICT' is suitable**

- "ICT is fine – there will always be blurring of scope regardless of what term is used.  Digital can mean anything.  Specific terms lose meaning as the Industry evolves and Gartner hype invents more terms" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "There is so much we can do with that. Make IT good for you. Etc." (Ann Moffatt)
- "The term 'ICT' does cater for future evolution of all 3 aspects (Information, Communication and Technology).  Since the ACS is about the body of knowledge covering those 3 aspects, there is no need to change term" (David Kong)
- "ICT is sufficient. ...  the terms are still widely enough used. Change the byline underneath to explain it further. ICT is encompassing" (Rebecca Waters)
- "ACS should re-focus on its core message on ICT and some broad specialisations, such as Data-Science, AI and Robotics" (Devindra Weerasooriya)
- "The ACS' Rules (2010), Regulations (2011) and Core Body of Knowledge (2019) are quite explicit on the ACS being a society for 'ICT Professionals'.  From 1996 until 2015, the web-site always referred to either 'IT' or 'ICT'.  Yet a casual visitor to https://www.acs.org.au might find it difficult to discern what the ACS is all about.  [Since 2015,] there is no visible reference to the 'Australian Computer Society' or even 'ICT Professionals'" (Adrian Porteous)
- "Whatever term is used it should be widely understood in the community generally.  ICT is widely used throughout the world as an acronym for Information and Communication Technologies, as a set of technologies developed to manage and transmit information" (Ashley Goldsworthy)
- "YES" (Ian Dennis)
- "Yes.  ICT isn't great but I don't know what is better. Technology seems to be popular, as does digital, but they're not perfect. Data is terrible" (Craig Horne)
- "Stay away from using current buzz words that may not last a 10 or 20 year horizon" (Sam Horwood)
- "Other terms like 'Digital' seem to be fashionable but would be short-lived until the next trendy/marketing change" (PAB Board member)
- "'ICT' still works well enough" (David Mills)
- "Fine for now.  There's a risk of following hype-cycles" (Rod Dilnutt)

- "Yes, fine; but I'd be mortified if non-descriptive, fashion terms like 'digital', 'tech' or 'high tech' were used" (Graeme Bond)
- "An abstract phrase can sustain relevance, so avoid being too technology-specific" (Ashley Maher)
- "It's a well-known phrase, and more inclusive than the many other, ephemeral phrases that wouldn't pass the test of time" (Margaret Turner)
- "Still quite relevant, because it has the necessary breadth" (Richard Cordes)
- "Yes, it is a well understood and suitable descriptor for the ACS field of professional endeavour and suitable for a high-level formal statement of purpose. Any need for a more detailed description can be covered in lower-level business strategy and planning documents. At the constitutional level it is a futile exercise to try and describe ICT in greater detail. Technologies change frequently" (Dennis Street)
- "Information Communications and Technology (ICT) is well defined term but making that the general public understand this term and what it means and also maintaining the currency and relevance of the ACS CBOK is critical" (Michael Lane)
- "There's no better term available than 'ICT'" (general consensus in multiple events)

**Yes, but extend it**
- "ACS sees itself as covering the complete ICT technical spectrum [but] many of us see ACS as [also] embracing <u>non-technical aspects of ICT</u>" (Paul Bailes)
- "Gartner [using their latest term, 'hyper-automation] are emphasising the importance of IT organisations doing a much better job of partnering with professionals outside of IT to automate business processes and data integration" (Chris Radbone)
- "ICT is no longer broad-enough to remain in the objectives. If you think I'm wrong, watch anyone under the age of 35's face when you drop the term into the conversation and given the demographics of the industry they are who we need to be engaging" (Robert Estherby)
- "ICT covers it but consider more emphasis on <u>how ICT is used</u>" (Qld BEC member)
- "The ICT definition should be broad enough to encompass the ICT industry in Australia" (PAB Board member)
- "SFIA's scope is greater than 'ICT', adding in a penumbra of business skills" (Tristan Richards)
- "The word 'computer' is a problem. <u>The name should refer to the role not the artefact</u>, e.g. technologist not a particular technology" (Chris Baker)
- "Yes, ICT is a meaningful term to us. But data needs to be included. OTOH, people think they understand 'digital', so perhaps project that instead / as well?" (Peter O'Halloran)
- "ICT is not enough<u>: 'Enablement of society through appropriate use of technology'</u>" (Kristina Carroll)
- "As definitions start shifting to include terms such as digital, data science and the likes, we also need to be aware to not remove and alienate historically existing ICT categories such as information management, networking (hardware) in our redefining" (Amy Tang)
- "The term is [currently] good, but the rate of change is such that there can be no guarantee it will remain good. So <u>the wording needs to be generic, e.g. 'inclusive of ...'</u>" (David Air)
- "Intensely dislike the retention of ICT as the, or at least the sole, focus. ACS professionals are concerned with much <u>more than technology, including its integration into organisations, and organisational change</u>" (Susan Sly)
- "The scope needs to be 'ICT and its use for the benefit of society as a whole'" (Dennis O'Hara)
- "The breadth of the profession has shifted a long way, <u>as reflected in the SFIA framework</u>" (Susan Sly)
- "SFIA's a good framework (ICT + surrounds)" (Jan Kornweibel)
- "<u>By all means give examples [cf. 'inclusive of ...']</u>. As anchor-points consider reference to the Body of Knowledge, SFIA" (Rod Dilnutt)

- "The 'C' in ACS is a big problem.  The scope definition needs to be something like 'The application of digital technologies in all fields of human endeavour'.  There's a lack of focus on ICT as an enabler of corporate activity, adopting the 'business capability' approach, encompassing people/process/structure/technology" (Mark Toomey)

**Ambivalent**

? "Even 'IT' is a bit dated, being overtaken by 'digital'" (Tom Worthington)

? "The term Digital is hard to define and everyone has a view (which is not necessarily a bad thing)" (Beau Tydd)

? "IAPA themselves (the only one of the recent additions to ACS' stable that could conceivably be described as a professional society) ... in attempting to define the profession of data science / analytics concluded that it was a fusion of multiple professions, of which computing was only one (alongside e.g. statistics, operations research, psychometrics, etc. etc.)" (Jack Burton)

? "On the professions website, ACS members are identified as "engineering professionals".  Are we happy with this?" (Rimas Skeivys)

? "'ICT' is problematic but it is not clear what should replace it.  It puts people off who don't see themselves as 'IT'" (PAB Board member)

? "ICT isn't well-known by a lot of people.  It needs more promotion and explanation" (Matthew Bulat)

**No, use 'IT'**

- "Is the term 'ICT' even relevant in modern society?  seems the modern spin is simply 'IT' nowadays" (ConM)

- "The professional body of the creators and the implementors of IT environments, mainly software side, since the cabling and engineering has the engineering society.  In fact it should just be IT and not ICT because the Communication is both part of the Information and part of the Technology" (David Abulafia)

- "The Australian Computer Society (ACS) name has had its day.  It should be renamed / rebranded as IT Australia / InfoTech Australia / Information Technology Australia" (Michael Scott).   [BUT see Information Technology Professionals Association (ITPA) – itpa.org.au]

- "The general public have no idea what ICT stands for.  I think most people know what IT means / covers" (Michael Scott)

- "I think it's time for the word 'Communications' to go - it's well and truly implied.  I'm going with Information Technology Professional because it seems like that's a catch-all that's difficult to argue with" (Sheldon King)

**No, use 'Computing'**

- "[Rather than than 'ICT' or 'IT',] the term 'computing' still has a clearer connection to its design, implementation, analysis & maintenance.  I suggest that the acronym 'ACS' is still the most appropriate one for us to use, but with one small change:  the 'C' should probably stand for 'computing' rather than 'computer' (Jack Burton)

- "The lack of focus (on computing, as our core constituency) diminishes ACS appeal to generalists in the Australian computing profession too. For example, if my specialty is infosec, I'm going to want to hear (in technical detail, not marketing-speak) about the latest developments in processor design (even though my job will never involve designing microprocessors), because that may help me to identify new classes of vulnerabilities at ring 0 and/or better advise clients on the infosec aspects of architecture selection in future" (Jack Burton)

- "Yes, people in other professions have a genuine professional interest in computing which ACS should be able to serve too.  But an accountant, manager, lawyer or any other professional who works with ICT (but does not work on it) should be able to join ACS as an Affiliate (or perhaps Companion)" (Jack Burton)

# CRWG ANALYSIS
## Q03 – Dated or improvable terms and expressions in Mission and Purpose?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 48 | 29 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Purpose of ACS  {P} | 26 | 17 |
| Standards{s} | 15 | 10 |
| Public Good? {Pu} | 10 | 9 |
| Professional Society {Ps} | 15 | 0 |
| Benefits to Members{M} | 10 | 7 |
| Public Advice {Pa} | 16 | 11 |
| Scope of ACS | 0 | 0 |
| Jurisdiction | 0 | 0 |
| Who can be a member |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Common Topics**
- **Purpose of ACS**
  (Responses 26; Responders 17)

This topic generated quite a range of responses.

Many of the comments described activities rather than an underlying purpose and these are described as well.

A strong and repeated theme was "for" professionalism and promoting application, science, practice of ICT ( using various names) and for members interests ( without explaining what they might be!)

Most comments specified or implied the "purposes" should be narrow to provide a direction for board activities , but two supported broad purposes:

- *the main need is to <u>be as broad as possible so that future activities are not constitutionally impaired</u>. nobody pays much attention to M and P until it stops something.*

- *<u>I would expect the constitution to also have a general and broad statement in the Purposes section to allow the ACS "To do all such things as may appear to be incidental to or conducive to the attainment of any of the above purposes"</u>.  This broad statement allows the ACS to carry out activities that are consistent with the previous statements of Mission and Purpose that would be described and detailed in lower-level planning documents*

**Focus on members**
(Responses 10; Responders 7

- *I think the Mission should explicitly note the best interests of its membership. If there's no benefit to members (professional standing, development support, recognition, peering, etc) then is it a Professional Society at all?*
- *I like the emphasis on 'member'*
- *The most crucial function is <u>events, esp. educational</u>, which is what ACS is there for..*
- *Absence of information and clarity about the value-proposition for ACS membership*

And several comments describing involvement of commercial activites
- *surpluses must be reinvested into the Society for the benefit of members. Such investment may include events and initiatives to improve education and professional standing, lobbying efforts to improve the IT business environment, grants and scholarships to help support diversity and access in IT*
- *plus business-lines for the generation of surplus to use for key functions*
- ***<u>Commercial activities</u>** are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they **<u>must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS</u>**, ...*

Some members were disappointed that membership did not have benefits similar to other professional societies
- *If there's no <u>benefit to members (professional standing, development support, recognition, peering, etc)</u> then is it a Professional Society at all?*
- *For engineers, a key member benefit has been <u>eligibility for jobs</u>*
- *the failure of ACS to achieve any government regulation or control over the profession, in comparison with engineers and trade organisations*
- *Achieve registration requirements to do certain work, esp. cybersecurity*

But also
- *Absence of information and clarity about the value-proposition for ACS membership*

Two people made reference to the need for care in expressing membership benefits:
- *Great care is needed with the wording of (7) as there is a big difference between 'the benefits of being a member' and the 'delivery of benefits to members', certainly at a constitutional level.  **<u>A NFP cannot give benefits to its members</u>**, especially if members are on the governing body'.  **<u>Regulatory authorities have a problem with this</u>***

**Public Advice**
(Responses 16; Responders 11)
**In this aspect, members discussed ACS making public statements and lobbying**
- *The ACS is a trusted advisor to local, state and national governments*
- *The ACS needs to be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites.*
- *I would like to see the warnings about misuse of ICT in X to come from the Australian X Society/Institute/whatever BUT in collaboration with ACS. I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.*

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

> *I would urge that we suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature, i.e. strike out: ''*
> *- support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters; ..*
> *- The provision of information and advice to community leaders and decisionmakers*


**Public Good** ( not specifically representation)
Quite a number supported including a purpose of wider public benefits and actively lobbying business, government etc.
(Responses 10; Responders 9)

- *the ACS mission should be to represent the ICT professionals in Australia*
- *The purpose of the Australian Computer Society is to advance the science, practice and application of computer, information and communications technologies for the benefit of members and the Australian community.*
- *..make sure that any new constitution enshrines that the point of ACS activities are always in the public good and member interests*
- *..our Code of Ethics, has the primacy of the public interest*
- *..a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society..*
- *I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.*
- *, I think we need to enshrine that the ACS act in the public interest in preference to our own sectional interest*
- *I do think that as a group of professionals we can predict many of the technical and ethical dilemmas that our Australian society will face. To that end I think it is the responsibility for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate.*
- *.. consider the risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc*
- *The ACS is a trusted advisor to local, state and national governments*


But, as a contrary view

- *(If anyone wanted to hobnob with Government "community leaders and decision-makers", let them find a platform other than ACS.)*
- *, I am concerned about ACS taking positions about anything "topical",*
- *We need to protect ACS from being "hijacked" by voices that, as you say, might be "self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest", or even just plain wrong*
- *.. ACS risks being less of a force for the maintenance and improvement of the performance of individual ICT professionals, and more of a platform to lobby Goverments for whatever the leadership/management sees from time to time as worth pursuing* ..
  *My concern is for ACS to not become distracted from what I see as its distinctive role, as developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals.*

**Role in technical standards**

(Responses 15, responders 10)

Not just promoting standards of professionalism and skllls for members – but involvement in "standards"

- *(The development of ICT Standards through Standards Australia, ISO, IFIP and other standards bodies has been a key role of the ACS over decades. This has made a major contribution to society and professionals.*
- *… the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving its public image.*
- *We used to have acs representatives on most of the iso standards cttees. When did that stop?*
- *It is in my view inappropriate for Staff to represent ACS formally in these things*


**Professional Society**

(Responses 15, Responders 11)

- *My view is that the ACS should be a professional organisation of its members, with the following statement:*
  *"The purpose of the Australian Computer Society is to advance the science, practice and application of computer, information and communications technologies for the benefit of members and the Australian community".*
- *IMHO the question "Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?" is somewhat loaded, in that I am not quite confident that ACS is a "professional society".*
- *Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club*
- *The ICT sector in Australia needs a professional body, and the ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage. Furthermore, Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector. Because of the nature of the industry we are in, it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.*
- *I think the Mission should explicitly note the best interests of its membership. If there's no benefit to members (professional standing, development support, recognition, peering, etc) then is it a Professional Society at all?*


*Scope of ACS*

*Several responses discussed the matter of "what" was the scope for ACS – in technology, geography and application*

- *…we need to clarify our interpretation of terms, especially when the wider public might interpret them differently to those within the society.*
- *.. it is inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term .., it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect.*

**Jurisdiction**
(Responses 3; Responders 0)

- *<u>the ACS mission should be to represent the ICT professionals in Australia</u>*

- *The Mission of the Society is to advance the science, practice and application of information and communications technology (ICT) **in Australia** for the benefit of society. ,*

- *..it is reasonable to imagine that the ACS might expand to serve regional interests, so perhaps the word Australasian could be inserted instead.*

**Outlier Topics**

**Measureable Outcomes**
(Responses 2; Responders 2)

- *Outcomes must be clear, concise and measurable …. Eg…. Branches of the ACS manage activities to the satisfaction of more than 50% of that branch's members*

**Who can be a professional member**
(Responses 5; Responders 4)

- *ACS would be a strange "professional association" to include as members individuals without a degree-level qualification in the field*

- *Non degree people should not be professional grades*

- *ensure voting is restricted to professional members*

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

- TOPICDESCRIPTION
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

# CRWG ANALYSIS

## #Q04 Threshold requirements for Associate Grade, Pathways and Benefits io becoming a Member

Jacky Hartnett Final?

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 45 posts plus 8 messages | 55 + multiple unknown |
| Difference Associate / Member | 27 | |
| Need for Pathways | 25 | |
| Entry Threshold for Grades | 19 | |
| Members only Vote | 9 | |
| Need to show benefit of being in professional grade | 15 | |
| Membership for school age | 6 | |
| Non university certification | 8 | |
| No automatic membership for Labs | 4 | |
| Work as partners | 4 | |
| Existing Grades OK | 2 | |
| **Branch Spread** | TAS, QLD, CBR, VIC, WA, NSW ?? | |
| | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |

## Common Topics

There were constant themes running through all the content. Nothing was added in the content of 'do we want to be called engineers' and so I have not reported on that.

## Professional versus other membership grades

Only 2 comments agreed that the existing grades and entry points were satisfactory. All of the other 27 posts that mentioned the topic agreed that there should be a professional grade with well-defined thresholds and importantly tangible and demonstrable benefits. The latter two seemed to be missing to members at present. There are a plethora of quotes from which to choose.

- *The professional division members should remain at the heart of the ACS and that the recent decline in professional grade membership is alarming.*
- *Additionally, the ACS should be making it a primacy of its existence to ensure that Joe can't get a contract with the Victorian Government to manage the replacement of its customer management system if he is has not attained the requisite skills, experience and confidence to become a Professional member*
- *Because of the wide range of people involved in the development, application and use of ICT systems, it is important that these people can join the ACS in some sought-after and useful non-professional capacity. A grade of Associate is appropriate for that purpose. There needs to be THRESH threshold requirements otherwise the grade is a nonsense*
- <u>ACS needs something like the old Affiliate grade for members who are not ICT professionals but want to be part of the ACS</u>.
- *the benefits for Professional membership must appeal to the self-interest of the prospective professional member*
- *CP/CT costs too much up-front. It should be less expensive on entry, but have an additional fee on an annual basis. [ $90 p.a. would achieve payback in 4-5 years*
- *Membership must be valued, hurdles matter, standards must be set and maintained, and must be visible to everyone; but newer areas, e.g. data mining, must be drawn in*
- *Acknowledged that CP as an entry qualification for MACS is a big hurdle, and so is CPD hours to maintain it.*

## Who should be able to Vote

All those who commented upon the 'who should be able to vote' were in favour of this being confined to professional members.

- *Associate is the first stage of membership and there should be pathway to become full (professional) members, and hence gain voting rights*
- *Having more Associates voting than Professional Division members is an issue that needs to be addressed*

## Thresholds and Pathways

Most posts/comments required an entry threshold to the grade of Associate but believed strongly that should be the starting point for an ACS facilitated pathway into full professional membership.

- *Agree that a threshold is required. The associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners*
- *guide the professional development of those who want to come into the industry and guide them throughout*
- *joining as an associate should be the starting point of a journey which leads to meeting professional membership requirements*
- *Pathways are very much needed, to move up from Associate.*
- *There's a lot of training and certification by vendors. Thresholds need to reflect them*
- *Other professional ICT organisations e.g. (ISC)[2] require successfully passing an exam to be a member and the 'reward' for this might be, for example, a well-regarded certification.*

*Members do consider cost vs benefit of ACS certification, particularly as the ACS credential is not as widely recognised as other*

- *Any process to simplify paperwork and clear pathways towards CP will be good. It is a deterrent and people don't see clear value/benefit in early uptake of ACS membership*

## Youth membership

- *We need to prime the pipeline much earlier. We need a 'cadet' (or similar) approach, at Grades 11-12 and even 9-10.*
- *The suggestion of a membership grade aimed at year 10/11/12 students is interesting. However we'd need to ascertain exactly what ACS can do for them, and in what way this membership might nurture their interests*

## Catering for non university qualified members

- *There was agreement that ACS should accept people working in the profession with other than university based qualifications and provide pathways to becoming a member, but one thought professional members must be tertiary qualified*
- *Most small businesses only use PCs. In my experience, esp in regional australia, many people offering support services to business have no qualifications at all. Many of them offer only a very poor service. ACS should ensure there is an accreditation route for these people*
- *Should ACS permit people to become MACS without CP, calling them a Practitioner, but not (yet) a (Certified) Professional*

## Emerging disciplines and Partnerships

- *I would like ACS to be more specifically inclusive of the web design, marketing, digital strategy industry. I have the choice of being a member with ACS and AWIA, why both? I'd like more clarity how ACS works for me and I am not a deeply technical business (in the way many of the other ITC members are)?*
- *The breadth of the profession has shifted a long way, as reflected in the SFIA framework*
- *Yes to specialisations within ACS, and logical that they all work together within an overall organisation, e.g project management, testing. IT vs Business Systems is a challenge (e.g. a tech focus excludes project management)*
- *SFIA framework helps with boundaries*

## Summary Quote

- *As a principle within the discussion of the constitution I think;*
  - o *that we need to have professional members grades and associates grades.*
  - o *The majority of roles on the board should be restricted to professional members, as should voting rights.*
  - o *Professional members must have either recognised skills and relevant experience or be a pioneer of good standing in an emerging area. All must adhere to the code of ethics.*
  - o *Associate members may have an interest, relevant experience, be an untrained manager working the ICT industry or be a student.*

## Outlier Topics

- "grandfathering" should not apply unless an original grade had a proper knowledge/competence based requirement

## Topics not relevant to CRWG

- Current ACS Website woeful and inaccurate
  (Responses 2; Responders 2

## Q05 – Managers and users of ICT, subject to thresholds of professionalism?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 71 | 0 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Managers as members {Mm} | 12 | 10 |
| Users as members?  {Um} | 10 | 10 |
| Membership Threshold {Mt} | 19 | 17 |
| Accreditation path {AP} | 17 | 12 |
| Scope / Breadth {MS} | 14 | 11 |
| Levels of Membership{Ml} | 13 | 11 |
| Specialisations{SS} | 8 | 7 |
| Umbrella Organisation | 5 | 4 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Common Topics**

- **Managers as Members**
  (Responses 12; Responders 10)
  - *There were several comments regarding managers of ICT functions.  No-one supported unrestricted access to membership for such folk. The substantive opinion was that suich people could have some level of ACS membership, subject to meeting relevant thresholds.*
  - *a threshold is required.  The associate member grade should have threshold that they are engaged in Formal ICT study (students), or are otherwise capable ICT practitioners – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.  This should be referenced to the Body of Knowledge*
  - *Some CIOs are intentionally appointed from outside the ICT professions.  It might require some years of experience before they reach a threshold appropriate to professional membership of the ACS*
  - *I spent a few years writing IT policy for a CIO. But I still felt part of the computing profession*
  - *I think in principle the constitution should accommodate Managers and Users as members; however - without an understanding of a 'core-body of knowledge and adherence to the ethical principles I think that they should remain associates*
  - *I would see these ICT managers and users of ICT as associate members, who may not yet meet the requirements of professionals … they should be provided with opportunity or pathway to become professional members.*
  - *Managers of ICT could be appropriate professional members*

However, some contributors opposed this view

- *I have had a couple of managers of ICT functions that are 'professional managers' but have no understanding of the technology they manage. As such I do not think it would be appropriate for the ACS to give them standing as ICT professionals….. If anything, ACS should be \*pushing back\* against that alarming trend, not going out of our way to accommodate it (and thereby becoming complicit in it*

- *… It would be much more ACS's business …*
  *to criticise the appointment of an unqualified CIO (I would expect somewhat more acceptable if it were in the public sector){*

## Users as Members

(Responses 10; Responders 10)

There was mixed response to embracing users as members.  For those accepting such folk, the entry level membership would be low, ( eg affiliate or associate) with several suggestions that ACS provide a pathway for them to progress to higher levels.

- *An area of competence that we should acknowledge is people with just PC tech competence*

- *Users are a different kind of question ….*
  *there should be a threshold-point at which ACS should be able to welcome them into the ICT professional fold*

- *..the constitution should accommodate Managers and Users as members; however - without an understanding of a 'core-body of knowledge and adherence to the ethical principles I think that they should remain associates*

- *<u>I would see these ICT managers and users of ICT as associate members</u>, who may not yet meet the requirements of professionals, whether that be core body of knowledge, experience, or code of ethics,*

- *Barriers need to be drawn.  <u>Entry needs to remain tertiary qualification in an ICT discipline.</u> Re users, caution – a good car driver is not a motor vehicle mechanic*

- *There's a problem with including users, cf. IEEE including users of electricity.*
  *ACS risk blurring too much.  Needs focus on quality of membership / professionalism*

- ***<u>Users of ICT is likely to be too wide, especially in the present and future</u>***

## Membership Threshold

(Responses 19; Responders 17)

This was the topic that generated most interest.  Contributors supported there being multiple membership levels with each having relevant eligibility thresholds. Several criticised a perceived reduction in standards over recent times.
Many also asserted that ACS should provide pathways for progressing to a higher level.
This topic has some overlap with Managers, Users and Scope responses,

- *There seems to be an embedded assumption that 'Professionals' are 'members'.  This definition must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meeting eligibility standards.*

- *I would be very concerned if there are instances of granting "membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members without further validation".*
  *- hear hear*
  *- I agree{.*

- *Managers and users of ICT should be allowed as members, subject to defined standards being me*

- *Agree that a threshold is required*

- *…, unless they meet professional standards. There must not be any back-door entries. Integrity allows for no compromises*

- *.. If we try to be all thigs to all people, we are no longer a professional society, if this is the decision*

- *ACS needs to allow a broad church, but not undermine the professionalism*
- *Barriers need to be drawn. Entry needs to remain tertiary qualification in an ICT {MT} discipline.*
- *They should be subject to the same standards as professionals, otherwise it dilutes the quality*
- *The fundamental requirement for admission to a professional grade is for the individual applicant to demonstrate compliance with the defined CBOK/SFIA threshold, whatever the industry or occupation. The occupation of the applicant is irrelevant*
- *ACS's continuing readiness to offer MACS to people without an ACS-accredited degree (even with IMHO insufficiently-specialised BOK supporting same ... see above) gives me the impression that we are kind of a national "computer club" rather than a serious professional body (can you imagine the AMA or the Law Society offering membership to non-MBBS or non-LIB but with lots of "experience"!?)*
- *the fact that we currently hand out AACS to anyone who's willing to pay the fee makes us a bit of laughing stock as far as professional societies go*

## Accreditation Path

(Responses 17; Responders 12)

A couple of people suggested a probation period for some members, whilst other suggested a more formal training upgrade path. There were indications that the current CP offering was insufficient.

- *Could we have a Provisional Professional :P. Like your provisional licence.*
- *ICT managers would satisfy this criteria [associate] and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.*
- *ACS should ensure there is an accreditation route for these people.*
- *The Society should encourage and support those industry participants towards attaining a higher level of education and experience to enable them to become professional members of an organisation whose aims include to shaping nature of the industry that they work in as well as the legislative environment under which the operate in their own right*
- *users will inevitably undertake some form of certification, e.g. MSP, so at that point, ACS can support their articulation up to Associate, then Member grades.{*
- *they should be provided with opportunity or pathway to become professional members.*
- *…funnel members into pathways to professionalism*
- *We need a career-building framework that starts early and carries through*
- *Users with relevant expertise and skills need pathways too*
- *There's a problem with the CP pathways. There's a generalised IT, and a Cybersecurity, but nothing on, for example, Data Analysis/Science, Cloud Dev*
- *A better-articulated framework is needed, and a much broader range of pathways needs to be actively supported*
- *Arrangements helping existing Associates transition to the new standard are important. However, "grandfathering" should not apply unless an original grade had a proper knowledge/competence based requirement*

## Scope and Breadth of ACS

(Responses 18; Responders 0)

A number of responses indicated that ACS should embrace collaboration with, or membership from new disciplines or domains.

- *ACS sees itself as covering the complete ICT technical spectrum*
  *many of us (not illegitimately) see ACS as embracing non-technical aspects of ICT.*
  *I see the specific challenges from the above as including*

    - *apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists{SS}*

- *great breadth of interest exceeds ACS capacity to operate competently*
- *great breadth of interest risks competition/conflict with other organisations in the same space(s) …*

   *In recognition of the above, ACS needs to:*

- *realise that it is a means to an end, and not an end in itself. In particular, the presence in the ICT sector(primarily or secondarily) of other organisations with Objects, Goals etc. congruent with ACS's is not inherently a bad thing and ACS should strive to work collaboratively with such "compatible" organisations*
- *provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary{SS}*
- *reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - organisationally (e.g. by "Colleges" as with Engineers Australia)*
- *reflect the provision by ACS for specialisations - also by diversity in its marks of professional recognition such as specialisations of CP and variations to the BOK*

- *there's a question of how peripheral can the association with ICT be*
- *The breadth of the profession has shifted a long way, as reflected in the SFIA framework. ACS needs to allow a broad church, but not undermine the professionalism*
- *…newer areas, e.g. data mining, must be drawn in*
- *How do we ensure the constitution enables evolution but maintains integrity  [Q14]  The scope needs generic definition, with flexibility for extensions.  Cohorts change continually*
- *..many health clinicians, for example, are very understanding of IT.  Yes, it's feasible to recognise significant contributions to the use of IT as being within ACS's scope.*
- *ACS needs to maintain close contact with Professional and Industry organisations with which we have overlapping interests whether or not their members satisfy ACS requirements for Professional membership*
- *ICT Industry is a very large sector when counted correctly, so this should include professionals who are increasingly using ICT in sophisticated ways to undertake important roles in organisations such as Data Visualisation Analyst, so I believe we should accommodate a broad range of membership*


**Levels of Membership**

(Responses 13; Responders 11)

Responders embraced different levels of membership.  A common comment also included limiting voting rights or governance positions to the top professional membership levels

- *I like the old style of a hierarchy - full professional members / associates / affiliates.*
- *they should remain associates.{*
- *They can be labelled Associates, or "Friends" of the Society*
- *Affiliate would allow this*
- *the creation of a new non-qualified 'Enthusiast' grade of membership*
- *I would see these ICT managers and users of ICT as associate members*
- *Should we consider the concept of 'practitioner' as opposed to 'professional'*
- *For many years, the Affiliate grade was used for 'power-users' of ICT, outside the profession, but with close affinity to it.  We need to have clear ways of making membership in some form widely available to such people to associate with ACS.  That's imperative, to address the great deal of fragmentation that's occurred during the last 30 years*


**Specialisations**

(Responses 8; Responders 7)

Some responders regarded the question on "Umbrella Organisation" as referring to internal specialisations within ACS – not just embracing related organisations.
The presence / lack of specialisations within ACS was an issue for some.

- *..lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists…*
  *ACS needs to:..*
  *provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary*

- *Yes to specialisations within ACS, and logical that they all work together within an overall organisation, e.g project management, testing. IT vs Business Systems is a challenge*

- *: It is logical that all specialisations work together under an umbrella organisation*

- *I see nothing wrong with ACS being a general computing society (and yes the SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields, as should independent societies where the numbers are sufficient to support them and/or where new fields are a fusion of multiple professions), so long as that generality extends only to the boundaries of what is unique to our profession, what characterises it \*as\* our profession.*

- *ICT hasn't just been spawning lots of new specialisations internally.  Even more than in the past, there are a lot of boundary-riders working astraddle two complex fields, and at least some of them would like to signify their dual expertise, and rub shoulders with colleagues on both sides of the boundary*

- *There's a problem with the CP pathways.  There's a generalised IT, and a Cybersecurity, but nothing on, for example, Data Analysis/Science, Cloud Dev*

- *The issue of domain specific ICT and for that matter SE is extremely important …There are now either actual or developable BOK's in a wide range of domains such as banking, health, finance, booking systems, stock control, logistics, aeronautics and on we go.*

- *ICT has lagged behind conventional engineering in that regard*


**Umbrella Organisation**

(Responses 5; Responders 4)

The question might have expected responses about commercial activities or industry bodies such as incubator labs, ADMA etc. However all comments related to occupational specialisations and are included in the specialisation topic above.


**Outlier Topics**

- TOPICDESCRIPTION
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)
- TOPICDESCRIPTION
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)


**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

- TOPICDESCRIPTION
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

## Q06 – Risk-manage industry associations, or avoid tensions?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 64 | 43 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Industry Associations | 64 | 43 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | At least QLD, VIC, WA | |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | None | |

**Comment**

Although there was pretty good unanimity on the issue of ACS as a professional society, opinion on whether the ACS could devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations was very substantially split.

**Common Themes**

- ## ACS is a professional society
  (Responses 11; Responders 9)

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

  *ACS needs to be a professional society if we want to continue to be the premier body that represents the ICT community, promoting ethics and dialogue around technology with government and industry from a national perspective.*

  *ACS is a 'member' (people) not 'industry' (Organisation) body and membership must meet professional standards. ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain unless congruent with member principles.*

- ## ACS should find a way to manage the risk of collaborating with industry associations, including possibly hosting them
  (Responses 13; Responders 10)

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

  *ACS should support industry associations but not publicly, as they are quite different in their objectives and value-sets. Reasons to support are 1. potential for additional revenue + membership and 2. broadly supporting ICT across Australia is in ACS' interests. This could be*

*accomplished with an "Association as a Service" engine, that ACS could spin off in a in a subsidiary company.*

*An industry association could be an activity of the ACS*

*I think our constitution/structure should have the capacity to address this issue. It may be appropriate for the Society in the future to amalgamate with an industry association and require them to adhere to values. As a principle, I think we should have the capability to do this and look to successful integration in other societies constitutions.*

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

- ACS should avoid tensions by neither hosting nor acquiring industry associations
  (Responses 20; Responders 18)

  *Frankly - a professional society and ACS should host members not organisations.*

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

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

  *The ACS may well work with industry associations, and even participate in such associations as a distinct entity. However, it cannot become one. This removes any potential conflict.*

  *The ACS should not be acquiring industry associations.*

## Outlier Themes
- Nil
(Responses 0; Responders 0)

## Themes not relevant to CRWG
- NIL
  (Responses 0; Responders 0)

## CRWG ANALYSIS
## Q07 – Key functions missing, under-emphasised, over-emphasised?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 90 | 0 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Pathways Matter | 5 | 5 |
| Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership | 5 | 5 |
| Website desciptiom being called "engineering professionals"? | 1 | 1 |
| Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards | 3 | 3 |
| Professional Society and Public Good | 15 | 10 |
| What is ACS? | 9 | 5 |
| ? Short Comments in Event Reports | 20 | 19 |
| Dup?  Mission, Purposes, Key Functions | 77 | 43 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | CBR, QLD, TAS, NSW, VIC, QLD | |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**Common Topics**
- **Pathways Matter**
  (Responses 5; Responders 5)
  - o **Establish pathways where associate grade members would satisfy criteria for professional membership**
  - o Differentiate associate grade further
  - o **Adjust pathway to CT and CP so grading is appropriate to their circumstances eg certificate holders, years of experience**
  - o The most important focus on pathways, so as to guide professional development
  - o Must include explicit reference to Professional Members and meet eligibility standards. Threshold is required.  Membership benefits to ACS Labs tenants devalues professional qualification.
  - o "Provide clear pathways and opportunities for ACS Associate members to get more involved and committed as ICT professionals I think we can be more proactive here I am thinking we should provide student membership for free or at a nominal fee"

- **Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership**
  (Responses 5; Responders 5)
  - o **Revenue has increased nearly eightfold** since 2005 (then $6.141m), **professional membership has declined, yet no increase in member benefits**.  "We provided members with regular forum and professional development activities. The ACS had a range of award winning publications over the years: Australian Computer Journal, Journal

of Research and Practice in Information Technology, and later Information Age (I don't intend to spark debate on our current IA offering!). We provided specialist member skills to Australian and International Standards bodies and engaged in lobbying activities at state and federal levels. Local and national events were held to recognise leaders in the profession."

- A commitment as part of the review process on the constitution to "**resetting and resizing the ACS consistent with either the current ACS Objects, or as they are reformulated into a new Mission statement**." Suggest **"a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership'**, be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus with the key purpose of the Society."
- **The 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in**. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it can not be all things to all people." Related: the CLG reasoning
- **ACS should only provide services/benefits to its professional members**. ACS demonstrated that it is not a very good investor.
- "The primary and principal purpose of a Professional Society is to **ensure that its professional members enjoy the confidence of those who employ their services**. This means: Influencing policy, procedure and legislation relating to the industry". In answering Q7.

- **Website desciptiom being called "engineering professionals"?**
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - ACS website shows poor or complete lack of definition from 2017 onwards.
  - A serious issue to be addressed includes "the range of ICT Professions that the Society is seeking to engage and support, whether the scope of membership categories aligns to contemporary and arguably growing ICT enabled or driven areas needing skilled professional and expertise."
  - Refer to "the 2019 Federal Court judgement, reflecting poor and inappropriate leadership" as the cause behind "the 2017 website change to no longer clearly convey the profession on our website and also adopting a non descript 'ACS' logo that people had/have difficulty identifying with". Lack of clear identity was one such outcome. This resulted in key "focus for both the current voluntary elected leadership, but also the committed and renewed paid staff."

- **Mission and Purposes: Technical Standards**
  (Responses 3; Responders 3)
  - Amend Purpose 1 to include the role (or another specific Purpose defined) for development of Professional Standards. Referring to the Constitution and ACS Objects 2.4, **"the proposed Mission gives less priority to development and promulgation of technical standards"**.
  - equally important is the "role of developing, endorsing and promulgating a range of technical standards in conjunction with other international bodies"
  - "the ACS working to lead the development of Australian standards would go a long way to improving it's public image"

- **Professional Society and Public Good**
  (Responses 15; Responders 10)
  - Questions on what public good ACS has provided
  - There isn't much of a value proposition for a retiree to remain a paid-up member at the moment. Can the ACS make more use of retiree's skills in outreach and mentoring roles? Several retirees responded with acknowledging special rate for membership and their continuing contribution

- Other public good contributions include addressing abundant phone scams via text and voice messages; offer public advice and lobbying solutions to problems be implemented; e-voting/e-democracy, and privacy impacts from social media. Be seen to do good and achieve recognition. One responder disagreed.
- Another angle: government constantly failing IT is a problem of governance which ACS knows nothing about. ACS was a significant contributor to ISO 38500 - Governance of IT for the Organisation. "ACS needs to be an exemplar of good in its own right, so that the public good can be served by our getting it right."
- "ACS should ideally be in a position to "denounce", with a degree of authority based on the professional standards it has developed/endorsed/embraced, these kinds of failures in ICT development (or procurement in general)."
- "ACS should endeavour to capture in its constitution as a professional society is a commitment to playing our part as a profession to solving big problems facing humanity such climate change, sustainability and mental health etc and making the world a better place for the next generation."

- **What is ACS?**
  (Responses 9; Responders 5)
  - "Of course the ACS has to remain a professional society, otherwise the ACS is just a user club". It needs to "be both a professional organisation and a voice in the ethical and postive use of computers and information technologies to improve society and not to squash society for only the elites." Another responder agreeing to this as "ACS is not only the logical choice, but the only choice with a wide enough scope of coverage…Professions Australia officially recognise the ACS as the Professional Body for the sector." Due to the industry's nature, it is "inevitable that the scope of coverage will need to change over time. Hence the discussions over specialisations and whether ICT is the appropriate term. But this does not change the need for a professional body, and for ACS to be that body, it just imposes an obligation on the ACS to continuously monitor the sector to identify and address new areas, so they are covered from the professional aspect."
  - Health Sector is served by multiple professions and professional bodies
  - Referencing our Principal Object, ACS risks being less for ICT professionals and more of a platform to lobby Governments. Accordingly, "suppress anything from our Objects, Mission and Purposes that distracts us from our Professional nature" and strike out: "from Secondary Objects", "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters; from Purposes".
  - Strike out "support for the formulation of effective policies on ICT and related matters; from Purposes" leads to the ACS "not recognise an obligation to warn about any aspect of ICT's interaction with the broader society and economy". This pose "risks involved in inadequate cybersecurity, the sensitivity of many categories of data, the fuzzy / probabilistic / unreliable nature of a lot of inferencing techniques, the impact on the workforce of automation, the need for employers to take responsibility for workforce training rather than relying on the rest of the world to make up shortfalls, the need for government action to improve the parlous state of venture capital accessibility, etc".
  - There is a desire to see ACS warn about misuse of ICT.
  - ACS not to be distracted from "its distinctive role, as developing, maintaining and raising the effective level of performance of Australian ICT professionals."
  - Concern about "taking positions about anything "topical", as the necessarily rapid reaction time fails to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus".
  - "ACS needs to ensure that position reflects the professional consensus… The responsibility (is) for us as a society to proactively formulate policy positions and validate the consensus of the professionals in the ACS in order to independently and distinctively contribute the debate…. the majority are self-interested and not aligned to the primacy of the public interest."

- Short Comments in Event Reports
  (Responses 20; Responders 19)
    - R1: No need to revise Key Functions
    - R2: OK
    - R3: All of them
    - R4: Appropriate
    - R5: N/A response not on Key Functions as set
    - R6: *Under,* for students
    - R7: *Under,* for "public statements, submissions, advocacy to government". "I want an outwardly focused society who is engaging with policy makers, captains of industry, media outlets and the public"
    - R8: *Under*, as associate grade needs rethink when profession grade decline is alarming
    - R9: *Under*, as benefits for Professional membership must appeal to self-interest of prospects. Too little is done, contributing to decline.
    - R10: *Under*, as tension is from commercial activities in conflict with mission and purpose
    - R11: Okay
    - R12: *Under*, add 'Community building in ICT' / connections
    - R13: *Under*, ensure AU has capacity to meet growing ICT workforce, encourage youth and diversity in ICT
    - R14: *Under*, express positions on policy issues
    - R15: *Under*, **skill assessment focus on domestic, not just visa applicants**
    - R16, R17: Under – micro-credential direction should be important
    - R18: More emphasis on **networking and mentoring**, provide "events such as **Education Across the Nation and International speakers** ".
    - R19: Professional Standards – emphasis on ensuring graduates have high-technical and social competence
    - R19: Professional Development – SIGs, technical committees
    - R19: Benefits – "**facilitation of communications among members, through SIGS, State and National Committees which draw on the competence and knowledge of members**"
    - R19: Public Policy – particularly "**quality of public facing systems, their security in the widest sense and their social and economic impact**"
    - R19: Development of New Technology – provide support to solve problems for economy and society in manner that generates ICT products and services for domestic & export
    - R19: **effective Branch structure** and minimum level of uniform service
    - R20: making that the general public understand the term ICT and what it means and also "maintaining the currency and relevance of the ACS CBOK is critical"


- Mission, Purposes, Key Functions
  (Responses 77; Responders 43)
    - R1: "What's the value offered to the member?"
    - R2: "if the mission and purpose are correct then the rest follows"
    - R3 to R10: public policy, "voice of the profession to government, industry, and the public", address hot issues rather than be cautious and respectful of government. Communicate whether government like it or not. Open nights for concerns is more exciting for young tech.
    - R11: "Education and certification, in particular externally-imposed licensing"
    - R12: Licensing dying art form because of ongoing specialization/fragmentation
    - R13: registration tried for 50 years, a forlorn hope
    - R14 to R16: registration schemes are created out of political disasters or a major risk

- R17: migrations skills assessment need to be more robust to achieve workforce quality
- R18, R19: opportunities to meet others in the industry. Social aspect is missing.
- R20, R21: not enough for young professionals, "needs and values that need to be understood, articulated and addressed"
- R22, R23: "exchange of ideas", "information transfer and development", new tech, innovation, building eco-systems
- R24 to R26: employment contracts impose "unreasonable non-disclosure / non-compete / restraint-of-trade-clauses", ACS must have a clear and member-supportive policy position, but not a union.
- R27: disappointing benefits to members as large surplus seems not deliver a lot to members
- R28 to R30: "synergy with industry assocations" but no evidence of benefits, so need to be clear about ACS' Key Functions. "Unless industry associations are among the Key Functions, they are not a fit to ACS."
- R31: "Events, information, engagement, mentoring"
- R32: SIGs, bonding, professional networking and content at events is key
- R33: can see benefits to individuals but as CTO, not to the organization. Need more than talking heads, more articulation into coherent course, member discounts on third party courses.
- R34: want a "strong political lobby group representing people in the industry, and one different from AIIA"
- R35: want requirements of professionalism as condition of employment
- R36: ACS' academic link to industry is favorable. Disappointed when ACS dropped its engagement with education/edu institutions
- R37: Standards definition, accreditation for courses and institutions are essential and both being independent from governments and suppliers is key.
- R38: sustain entry without relevant/any university degree
- R39: need focus on jobs, wages, conditions for AU residents
- R40: need focus on requiring certification for categories of IT work
- R41: need to enable members to volunteer for natural disasters
- R42: support buy Australian
- R43: ACS' standards and certification used as a framework for professional employee award
- R44: ACS failed to achieve government regulation or control over the profession
- R45: want national / coordinated SIGs
- R46: want Professional Standards spelt out to two functions: 1. Tech & Bodies of Knowledge 2. for membership, and accreditation of courses/edu providers
- R47: relevance of ACS became meaningful once standards development changed from too academic but the focus is narrow and outlook is backwards.
- R48: ACS lacks the conduits to attract heavyweights; no events for CXOs or board directors. Need relevance.
- R49 to R52: need social impacts… on production, work, income distribution. Emphasis on policy and thought leadership. Policy work doesn't engage the community re ex legal and social implications committee.
- R53 to R55: web-site – poor service. IT Services rejected requests for improvements. "ACS should be a leader in applying ICT for effectiveness, efficiency, and agility"…and ISO 37000 governance Standard.
- R56: "Vision ('what we want to become') and Mission (why we exist') belong in constitution"
- R57: Code of Ethics is missing in action
- R58: want lobbying governments on benefits for society and members
- R59: education events are most crucial
- R60: want registration requirements to do certain work

- R61: want members' effort and expertise be used, promote committees visibility
- R62: value-proposition absent
- R63: need greater primacy of standards and ethics
- R64: create local talent and only go overseas immigrant as very last resort
- R65, R66: Skills assessment. Mission statement is non-trivial. Overcome negative impact of IT in the community
- R67: <u>emphasis on business-lines is excessive</u>, too little on member (jobs, prof dev, networks)
- R68: "Members must regard ACS as the central part of their career development, so it's what each segment of members regards as valuable that matters"
- R69: Huge issue of irrelevance; "who our members are, and especially who they will be"
- R70 to R72: CPD need 30 hours of new content pa. There are many webinars…and large library, improved a lot in last few years.
- R73: Support remote members and ensure they're exposed to latest info
- R74: Promote IT in Canberra
- R75 to R77: New technologies and skills aren't adequately support by ACS accreditation

## Outlier Topics

- The CLG reasoning is questionable
(Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - Structure of similar bodies has states as stakeholders, each state appoint/remove board member, extend to board add highly respected long-term professionals, and the board selects chairman. Role of board set policy, hire/fire CEO, clear roles between management and policy. Rules for appointment and revocation laid out in constitution.
- ACS should not be investing
(Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - ACS should only provide services/benefits to its professional members. ACS demonstrated that it is not a very good investor.
- Benefits of being a member vs delivery of benefits to members
(Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - Whilst agreeing the key functions except Benefits to Members because "NFP cannot give benefits to its members, and there is a real conflict of interest if professional members on the board (and they should be) are deciding on awarding benefits to members". Regulatory problem.

## Topics not relevant to CRWG

- Information Age
(Responses 2; Responders 2)
  - "I cringe every time I hear that information age is 'the flagship publication of the ACS'. IMHO it should be canned now"
- Member re-engagement
(Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - Re: public good. Co-author of technical paper wants ACS be a good partner, host for realization of the same. "If the current exercise results in an ACS that could be entrusted with this mission, I will be happy to re-engage."
- ACS Assessment Process
(Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - Issues with this process reflecting poorly on ACS and the CRWG efforts, citing money lost, lack of support and feedback, issues with interacting with the portal, and not checking on work experience companies. This person was awarded an ACS internship.
- Keep #Business-Lines channel going
(Responses 1; Responders 1)

# CRWG ANALYSIS

## #Q08 – Is support for innovation,
## e.g. through ACS Labs, a key function of the ACS?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 57 | 27 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Catalyst | 4 | 3 |
| Appropriate Business-Lines, and not Loss-Making | 3 | 3 |
| Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership | 4 | 4 |
| Why Company Limited by Guarantee | 44 | 15 |
| Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values | 2 | 2 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
| Unknown |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

The majority of respondents are in favour of the ACS supporting Innovation as long as it is a transparent process aligned to benefits to members and operate profitably.

There was a minority of members expressing strong articulate views that the direct financial support for innovation was not the role of a Professional Society.

The topic on transitioning to a Company Limited by Guarantee was an outlier in this group but did generate the largest number of responses by far.

This topic, while not central to the first phase of consultation, impacts it because it influences the subsequent structuring of a new constitution and the timeline pursued.

Responses were divided, articulate and comprehensive.  My personal knowledge of this area suggests that confusion, misinformation and lack of professional legal guidance all contribute to the viewpoints expressed.

The spread of respondents in this group of topics expanded to 24 individuals out of 27 respondents when summed.  There were 11 other indefinable contributors in the discussion sessions and messages.  So at least 35 members contributed to these topics in some way.

**Common Topics**

- ACS acts as a Catalyst
  (Responses 4; Responders 3)

Respondents favoured innovation but most of the comments focussed on whether the ACS should run incubators and if so, at what cost to members.

- Appropriate Business-Lines, and not Loss-Making
  (Responses 3; Responders 2)

From a low base there was agreement that the ACS should be able to run commercial businesses but with caveats including profitability, transparency and benefit to members.

- Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership
  (Responses 4; Responders 4)

There were only 2 substantive responses with the remaining 2 supporting the views expressed. So all respondents strongly supported a realignment of the ACS with its Professional members and a return to core values.

One of the 2 substantive responses included an off topic discussion on the structure of the ACS Board.

- Why Company Limited by Guarantee
  (Responses 44; Responders 15)

I declare my potential conflict of interest in summarising this topic because I offered substantive contributions. That said, there were many other substantive contributions arguing alternate viewpoints. All of these contributions should be set aside for further consideration at the appropriate time in the CRWG process.

The contributions fell into 3 types: those that saw the transition to CLG as beneficial or at least neutral, those that stated that they had not yet seen any compelling arguments to support this transition and those that advocated dividing the transition into 2 steps ( I advocated this position). The first step is to reform the constitution and once the new constitution has been shown to be fit for purpose, have members vote on the transition after extensive consultation.

There were also strong views expressed that this topic was a side issue at this time and the focus should be on the structure of the new constitution.

Many comments made under this topic demonstrated confusion and at times a misunderstanding of the pertinent legislation. This confusion and misinformation can only be cleared up by authoritative legal advice.

- Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values
  (Responses 2; Responders 2)

I am surprised that only one person responded to the initial questions posed. The focus of the response was the need for transparency in the process - both in the lead up to a new business line being proposed and the process used to ratify any decision.

**Message & Discussion Session Topics**

•     Subsidiary Commercial Operations

    I have broken down the views expressed in messages or the participants in various discussion sessions into the following categories with the number of people expressing relevant views attached.

No incubator investment x 13

Anti direct investment in innovation/incubators because of risk particularly financial risk x 9

Confusion as to the purpose and relevance of incubators because of a  lack of transparency in process x 3

Support for incubators, if structured, transparent process x 3

Support for incubators if consistent with ACS Objectives and supports member services x 1

Support for innovation if secondary to focus on member services x 4

Support for innovation if separate profit making commercial venture x 4

Support for innovation to fulfil ACS vision statement, support struggling startups and potentially make a profit. x 1

Support for innovation if ACS acts as a catalyst to leverage greater support from other sources x 5

**Topics not relevant to CRWG**

•     Charitable support as a benefactor for worthy causes
      (Message 1)

Suggested this could be achieved by the ACS acquiring the ACS Foundation and donate part of net surplus annually towards it.

•     Fund market research
      (Comment: 1)

•     Innovation funding is east coast centric.
      (Comment: 1)

•     Allocation of Financial Surpluses
      (Comment: 1)
      Large surpluses have not delivered a lot of benefit to members

_____

Quotes I liked

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

—-

If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio.

—-

Given we accept the ACS is a professional society, I think any business activity we engage should be strictly and transparently aligned with our functions as a professional society. Business activities need to have 'line of sight' relevance to members. If not, my view is that they should be shed.

—-

Revenue has increased nearly eightfold since 2005 (then $6.141m), professional membership has declined, but I don't see any increase in member benefits.

—-

In drafting a new constitution, I suggest a new Principle, '#P13: Strategic Alignment with ACS Professional Membership', be considered. This is partly covered in Principles #P0, #P1 and #P2, but I think we could benefit from a tighter focus with the key purpose of the Society.

—-

It seems to me the 'professional society' aspects have been lost along the way with all sorts of other orientations coming in. It needs to go back to its roots and core principles and build from that as it cannot be all things to all people.

—-

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

—-

As others have noted, it is true that the corporate form requires management to be vested in a Board of Directors upon whom the obligations of the Corporations Act rest.  However, that does not mean that Branches and other organs of the ACS cease to have any influence.  Under a properly designed new Constitution, the internal governance arrangements of the ACS can be established in any way desired.

—-

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

—-

Innovation investment is an excellent choice so long as it's structured in such a way as to garner a return on successful startups and that losses can be leveraged as lessons for the future.

Innovation investment is an excellent choice so long as it's structured in such a way as to garner a return on successful startups and that losses can be leveraged as lessons for the future.

It's unclear by what mechanism the ACS currently determines the level of investment in innovation. An innovation committee that works on an approved set of processes and criteria for investment decisions would make sense, but is that what actually happens?

—-

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

—-

The ACS vision statement was written 50 years ago by our forebears and still holds true today.

 "For Australia to be a world leader in technology talent that fosters innovation and creates new forms of value."

—-

I would like to see ACS acquire ACS Foundation to eliminate any brand confusion around whether they are related, then donate 10% of net surplus annually towards it.

—-

I would see these types of things like ACS Labs as being part of the ACS Enterprises where they would need to stand on their own feet financially without regular or substantial seed funding from our professional society.

—-

Compared to 20 years ago, support for start-ups in Australia is now an active and crowded field. Why is ACS in this space when there is not a gap in the market, or if there is a gap it needs to be clearly identified. This is an example of ACS losing its way over the last few years and to continue in this space, we need to demonstrate that ACS is adding value that others are not.

—-

in relation to funding innovation) -  but a 'catalyst' is a small amount of chemical added to a large-volume reaction,
i.e. we need to be seeking a substantial impact from a small amount of funding (

—-

Original intention was accelerator not incubator [i.e. maturing start-ups] , holding talent onshore instead of losing it to Silicon Valley, to invest an amount initially, then harness support from government, business and investors, and run in a cost-neutral manner.  Sydney filled fast, Melbourne was COVID-hit.  Need to separate the issue of expensive floor-space.

—-

 Tenants become Associates under their contracts and can vote.  Is this appropriate?

—-

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**#Q09 – How to ensure business-lines are consistent with Society values?**

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 25 | 21 |
| | | |
| **Sub-Topics** | | |
| Industry associations | 1 | 1 |
| Care Needed with Commercial Activities | 1 | 1 |
| Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership (duplicated under Q08) | 4 | 4 |
| Member Involvement in Key Policies | 10 | 7 |
| Centrality also of 'for the Public Good' | 2 | 2 |
| Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values | 2 | 2 |
| Transparency | 5 | 4 |
| **Branch Spread** | | |
| Unknown | | |
| **Other Notes** | | |
| I was surprised at the low response level for this important question with only 15 people contributing to the discussion.  A further 15 people made relevant comments in their submissions or in discussion sessions.<br><br>The bulk of the responses supported commercial operations as long as they were consistent with ACS values, provided benefit to members and the decision making around them was transparent and rigorous. | | |

**Common Topics**

• Industry associations
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)

  This post was a query rather than a statement

- Care Needed with Commercial Activities
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)

  The intent of this response confuses me

- Purpose of the ACS and Strategic Alignment with Membership
  (Responses 4; Responders 4)

  The responses here are duplicated under Q08 so refer to my summary there.

- Member Involvement in Key Policies
  (Responses 10; Responders 8)

  Strong support for members to ratify key decisions of the board but the bulk of the discussion became distracted by a discussion on the primacy of working through the existing constitution and identifying those clauses that are to be retained, discarded or modified. One respondent did point out that this analysis was not within the scope of this first consultation phase.

- Centrality of 'for the Public Good'
  (Responses 2; Responders 2)

  Agreement with this principle with reference to overlap with the ACS Code of Ethics.

- Business-Line Consistency with ACS Values
  (Responses 2; Responders 2)

  The responses here are duplicated under Q08 so refer to my summary there.

- Transparency
  (Responses 5; Responders 4)

  All respondents supported greater board transparency and accountability
  There was also discussion concerning the focus on public good being ahead of benefit to members.

  (NB: this type of discussion is in the absence of direct knowledge as to why the ACS Objects are expressed as they are and the tax implications of doing so).

**Message & Discussion Session Topics**

I have broken down the views expressed in messages or the participants in various discussion sessions into the following categories with the number of people expressing relevant views attached.

The ACS should not be in the business of investing or running commercial businesses x 2

The business strategy and priorities of ACS are completely operational, and members should have no involvement in the development of these. The paid staff should run ACS as a business and continue to provide membership benefits to the satisfaction of members. x 1

Centrality of the professional membership in decision making x 4

It is not necessary or useful for members to have a say on every strategic target, however, there should be something in the Constitution that its business is in line with the Society's values. x 5

The ACS is broad umbrella and should represent the entire australian ICT community. Not everything fits in a single bundle, so the ACS had to represent the different IT flavours – Cyber, Data Science, AI etc x 1

_____

Quotes I liked

We do not have an environment like politics where the management can assume a "mandate" from a clearly articulated position before election.
—-

ACS is supposed to be by members, for members.  the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable.  It currently looks like a public service where there's too much bureaucracy and members aren't able to access the services they actually require.
—-

If society is to remain relevant and useful, we need to accept that it is not there for the benefit of members, but for the benefit of Australian Society.
—-

The board should run regular internal audit processes to ensure management is accountable.
So if we take this back to the principles:
- The board should have a bias towards transparency and openness.
- The board should regularly seek member input on topics for debate
- The board should articulate why specific discussions are in-camera.
—-

The process for determining how and when to pursue business-lines must include an exercise in which the aims of the Society are considered against the opportunity being considered
—-

There's been an underlying assumption in some ACS events in the past that ACS is a commercial organisation, out there in the market competing.  This resulted in a lot of departures of disillusioned now ex-members, and pushback from remaining members, who perceive the CLG notion as corporatisation and with that a change in values.
—-

There needs to be more scrutiny of proposals, business cases need to be a lot more robust than they appear to have been, and the benefit to ACS must be demonstrated.
—-

The notion of an operating subsidiary is tenable, but it must not dilute the emphasis on the membership.
—-

There are serious dangers in diversion of attention away from professionalism and towards orthodox, commercial managerialism.
—-

**CRWG ANALYSIS**
**Q10 – How should the ACS allocate available surplus?**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 70 | 41 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Industry Associations | 1 | 1 |
| Where should ACS spend its money? | 13 | 12 |
| Member Involvement in Key Policies | 10 | 7 |
| Transparency | 5 | 4 |
| To whose benefit? | 7 | 7 |
| Other Comments | 34 | 17 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | Not easily discernable | |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | None | |

**Common Themes**

- Surplus funds should be directed to member benefits, the good of the wider ICT community and scholarships to encourage the development of ICT professionals
(Responses 13; Responders 10)

*The benefits to members have been disappointing, because the large surplus seems not to deliver a lot to members, and is instead used elsewhere.*

*Surpluses must be reinvested into the Society for the benefit of members. Such investment may include events and initiatives to improve education and professional standing, lobbying efforts to improve the IT business environment, grants and scholarships to help support diversity and access in IT.*

*All funds received through the ACS business or other activities should be spent to benefit the ACS community and spent to support ICT for public good initiatives. For example, as discussed at the forum, the Lab should be funded to be made available for some R&D activities for small businesses who can't afford such an infrastructure otherwise. Or some fellowships and grants can be offered to the community organisations on a transparent and competitive basis.*

*Apart from a strategic reserve, ACS should invest back into the ACS and its members or activities like scholarship for students, academic conferences, small research grants to boost R&D etc.*

- Provide some or improved discretionary financial resources for branches together with the devolved authority to spend them
(Responses 11; Responders 9)

*As the conduit to members Branches need more flexible access to funds. In Vic we were routinely told 'no budget' as member service ideas arose, then after the close of FY2020/21 we were informed that a $120K 'surplus', created to cover the 6-month member fee payment pause, was accounted back to consolidated funds.*

*The ACS should provide a local fund for local events of import that can be directed by local members.*

*It is hard for Branches to have to beg for funding for projects that they believe will serve members and grow ACS when they see the expensive offices and acquisitions that ACS funds seemingly without a thought.*

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

- There should be greater transparency regarding the expenditure of the society's funds
(Responses 7; Responders 6)

*I believe greater transparency is required. ACS is supposed to be by members, for members. the employees / staff / board / management must be fully transparent and accountable. It currently looks like a public service where there's too much bureaucracy and members aren't able to access the services they actually require.*

*Management is not respecting the importance or value of Member needs / wants unless the board/management shares their plans and seeks and embraces feedback from members. Such transparency and consultation process would not be popular with a commercial business that may wish to negotiate price or time sensitive deals - but really - is price or time sensitive deals a relevant limitation on a professional society?*

**Outlier Themes**

- Consider putting some surplus funds into a fighting fund which would require member approval to spend
(Responses 1; Responders 1)

A strong advocacy organisation like the Pharmacy Guild puts some surplus into a fighting fund, specified in the Constitution, which requires member approval to expend. The idea could be implemented in the ACS context [although the purposes would be different]

**Themes not relevant to CRWG**

- Branches should not charge members for events
(Responses 3; Responders 2)

*If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members coming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you started charging $20 per meeting in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.*

## Q11 – Branches responsibility, powers and resources re local activities?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 98 | 33 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| Devolved Responsibility for Branches | 5 | 5 |
| Purposes and Outcomes | 3 | 3 |
| Where should ACS spend its money? | 13 | 13 |
| Role of BEC as Conduit of the member voice | 11 | 7 |
| Skills in ACS Staff | 3 | 3 |
| Local ACS branches in control | 2 | 2 |
| Role of Branches | 28 | 19 |
| Can matrix management be made to work for Branches? | 3 | 3 |
| Other Comments | 30 | 15 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | CBR, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA (All branches) | |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | Responses from 8 Branch Chairs, 2 Chapter Chairs, one Chapter Vice-Chair. (3 Chapters in total) | |

**Common Themes**

- Branch BECs need sufficient autonomy to be able to act locally on events, initiatives and local industry/government liaison. (Responses 45; Responders 32)

*Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area, and powers and resources to enable them to perform those activities? YES! Covid has served to underscore the limitations of national governance, and the pivotal role of State Governments. ACS has a federated model, reflecting the national model, honour this.*

*Definitely needed. They understand their constituents. They're much closer to their [State/Territory/Local] politicians. They need sufficient autonomy and authority plus funding – that's very different from what's been done in recent times, centralising all control.*

*BECs have the responsibility to run the branch. They have the constitutional mandate to do that*

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

- BECs need to retain a level of control over budget setting, local staff and branch funds.
  (Responses 28; Responders 23)

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

  *Sufficient discretion in relation to both decisions and budget must be available for BECs and the Manager, so that events can reflect local knowledge and local needs*

  *Branches should have budgets and powers to make decision relevant to their state*

- A Clear definition of responsibilities between BECs, Branch Managers and National Office is needed
  (Responses 15; Responders 10)

  *Suppose a thousand-dollar decision is needed, to take advantage of an interesting ICT person who's in the district for a short time, and who's prepared to offer a seminar / workshop / demo / site-visit to local members.  It costs money to get a venue, some basic catering and a user-pays wet bar. Even now, following admin changes made over the last few years, Branch Committees have no capacity to make any such decision. The Branch Committee has to go cap in hand to the Branch Manager, who is an employee of ACS, beholden to the CEO, not the members.  The Branch Manager may or may not negotiate funding from Head Office.*

  *I suggest that the principle around branches is the desire for a federal model in which branches have agreed levels and areas of autonomy within a federal structure which clearly identifies who is responsible for what.*

**Outlier Themes**
- Branches are not providing Governance Value
  (Responses 4; Responders 1)

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

**Themes not relevant to CRWG**
- Branches should not charge members for events
  (Responses 2; Responders 1)

  *If you charge for turn up to branch meetings, you will decrease the number of members coming to meetings. I have a member for 40+ years, and was an active branch meeting attendees until you started charging $20 per meeting in the few years. I would be interesting to know did attendance increase, decrease, or stay the same when you started charging for attending branch meetings.*

## Q12 – Umbrella organisation fostering, administering specialist associations?

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 57 | 48 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| **Identity for the Society** | 1 | 1 |
| **Breadth of ACS Interest** | 2 | 2 |
| **Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core** | 3 | 3 |
| **Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines** | 10 | 8 |
| **Role of SIGs** | 5 | 5 |
| ? Cautions to being an umbrella | 4 | 4 |
| ? Capability of ACS | 5 | 5 |
| ? Type of content catered to Professionals | 2 | 2 |
|  | 0 | 0 |
|  |  |  |
| **Branch Spread** | SA, QLD, NSW, TAS, VIC, CBR, NT |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** | Two main parts: 1. discussions on the breadth of specialities 2. responses to the question are more Yes, with a sizeable amount of responses that don't call out either Yes or No |  |

**Common Topics**
- **Identity for the Society**
  Website desciptiom being called "engineering professionals"?
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)
  o Poor and lack of definition from 2017.
  o Would the range of ICT profession the Society engage be aligned to membership categories, or be driven by areas needing the skills.
  o "…all (specialized areas) rely on underpinning and effective ICT"
  o Lack of identity is an outcome of poor leadership (now departed)
  o "ACS to partner for success", Brenda Anysley

- **Breadth of ACS interest**
  (Responses 2; Responders 2)
  o Effectiveness in "covering the complete ICT technical spectrum" is challenging due to:
    ▪ "apparent lack of focus diminishes ACS appeal to specialists"

- ▪ "great breadth of interest exceeds ACS capacity to operate competently"
  - ▪ "great breadth of interest risks competition/conflict with other organisations in the same space(s)"
  - o Collaborate with compatible organisations to provide for specialisations
  - o Reflect diversity of professional recognition such as specialsations of CP, variations to the BOK
  - o "SIGs might possibly be part of the solution"
  - o "Lack of useful distinctive focus (or foci) by ACS detracts significantly from the usefulness of ACS and its products"
  - o Great efforts by the individuals are taken to "develop ourselves in one or more specialised areas" however this does not seem important when ACS treat the sector as a monolith that it can own ie "ACS risks looking as if it's an end in itself". MACS are offered without an ACS-accredited degree making us a "computer club" instead of a "serious professional body"
  - o Structural problem with the Journal ACJ and JRPIT. They're not distinctive.
  - o The "very same lack of focus (on computing, as our core constituency) diminishes ACS appeal to *generalists* in the Australian computing profession"
  - o 'a true generalist will be interested in the latest developments in many (perhaps even all) fields within his profession ... which is a completely different proposition to "we're not a specialist society, so everything has to be abstracted away to management, or otherwise pitched a level that everyone can understand"'. This appears to be reflected in the ACS section of PD in recent years.
  - o Having "technical detail, not marketing-speak" about the "latest developments" can open up to the professional, as examples, "new classes of vulnerabilities… on aspects of architecture selection in the future", or ways to design algorithms taking into consideration the latest developments in compiler designs. Even with no direct links, "we often have a general professional *interest* in what is going on in the other fields of computing".
  - o "SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields, as should independent societies where the numbers are sufficient to support them and/or where new fields are a fusion of multiple professions", "so long as that generality extends only to the boundaries of what is unique to our profession, what characterises it *as* our profession."

- **Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core**
  (Responses 3; Responders 3)
  - o R1: There's "merit in considering how to embrace these specialties whist also retaining a focus on core ICT knowledge"
  - o R2: "ACS, as it stands, doers not adequately address the above specialisations to any depth at all. On the contrary there is much time/space devoted to Leadership-topics, Diversity and un-restrained Marketing of Trends"
  - o "re-focus on it's core message on ICT and some broad specialisations, such as Data-Science, AI and Robotics. One can have a series of horizontals such as Programming, Testing, Systems-Configuration, Business-Analysis, Architecture, ICT-Management etc"
  - o Branches to shoulder the delivery of this value "with the centre being responsible for Policy and Standards"
  - o R3: be pragmatic as they "have their own associations etc… the constitution should allow the ACS to partner with other relevant associations to develop joint memberships - rather than try and duplicate communities of interest"

- **Recognise Specialised ICT Disciplines**
  (Responses 10; Responders 8)
  - o We must recognize specialised disciplines. Trick is defining between skilled user to one who can drive the product eg possessing idea of possible fallibility of product and likelihood of underlying assumptions

- To represent the breadth, "need to be a lot more agile than it currently is." Example of greater ethics, regulations and CPD where positions can cause loss of life. "ACS should be holding its members to high standards, as expected of someone who could be holding the keys to the kingdom (passwords, full admin privileges, complete access)". 1-like
- "consider linking eligibility to the Body of knowledge/SFIA and developing hurdle criteria"
- Caution to excluding software developers using higher level languages when underneath is a compiler. "ACS has utterly failed to recognise the opportunity in embracing these people", whilst the "Australasian Institute of Digital Health was launched on 24 February 2020"
- Can't own every ICT activity, "an interest that crosses traditional professional boundaries (such as AIDH) is going to stretch the definition of "ICT professional" to an extent that risks rendering it meaningless." ACS to:
  - "develop an understanding with AIDH (and similar groups)"
  - "do what can be done to support ICT professionals working in Digital Health"
  ICT professionals do not claim "Health" domain and neither should health claim to know how Digital Health ICT should be built. "ACS might push back against non-ICT professionals thinking they know how to manage ICT projects?"
- The origin of AIDH has connection to ACS through ACS SIG, Health IT which became HISA, a fore runner to AIDH.
- Caution for ACS to define "ICT professional' to include membership of AIDH which has overslapping interests with ACS; its members include those who aren't "recognisably ICT professionals".
- R10 agrees ACS reach out to related societies

- **Role of SIGs**
  (Responses 5; Responders 5)
  - SIGs are favourably seen as part of offering specialised offering to members
  - SIG was an origin to a recent established body in Health

- Other Yes / No Responses
  (Responses 6; Responders 6)
  - R1: No. "ill-eqipped"
  - R2: Yes
  - R3: *Yes* but "part of the Society itself, rather than separate entitites"
  - R4: Yes, "have done this… albeit badly"
  - R5: Yes, "This question does not clarify whether the hypothetical specialist associations are professional or industry". Idea for ACS to provide funds to run events in exchange for membership, effectively these specialist associations are similar to ACS branches.
  - R6: Yes, "As long as it does not distract from the central purpose of our society"
  Yes – 4          No - 2

- Discussion sessions
  (Responses 27; Responders 24)
  - R1: -, aSCSa don't want negative impacts
  - R2: Y. As "the premier professional body", "the only way it can do that is being able to reflect the different disciplines under the ICT umbrella"
  - R3: Y, "as long as specialisations conform to a core IT Body of Knowledge and values it should represent these as well"
  - R4: Y, preferred "but we want to keep administration simple"
  - R5: Y to "specialisations within ACS"

- R6: Y to "all specialisations work together under an umbrella organisation"
- R7: -, "SFIA framework helps with boundaries"
- R5: - (Y?), "Diversity and inclusiveness of background and specialisation is important"
- R8: Y but "how peripheral can the association with ICT be"
- R9: Y, "inclusiveness through all of obsorption"
- R10: -, "avoid excluding categories"
- R11: Y, "need to refresh and redesign specilisations"
- R12: -, SIGs
- R13: -, manage downsides and risks
- R14: N, but MoUs yes
- R15: -, processes exists, eg Pacific Island body with independent org
- R13: -, Pacific Island eg a good model
- R13: -, specialist groups a way of spawning pathways to CP
- R16: -, "potential for <u>conflicts</u> in aims and values, and <u>the large undermining the flexibility of the small</u>"
- R17: -, CP pathways doesn't cover enough
- R18: Y
- R19, - (N?), conflicts, eg using ACS membership list when member in multiple orgs. Extract benefit from co-branding.  Branches' effort end up in other orgs' events.  "<u>No quantifiable benefits arise, such as new memberships</u>."
- R20, -, SIGs enables flexibility but all this is lost
- R21, - (Y?), attract groups through a "service-set" to support them
- R22, Y
- R23, Y, but business leaders has to be interested in ACS members
- R24: - (Y?), "Principle 4:  Diversity and inclusion"

Yes – 11, Y? – 3       No – 1, N? – 1"-" commentary only 11


## Outlier Topics

- **Eligibility for membership**
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - Similar concern (to lack of distinctive focus) on eligibility for membership in that 'we have become far too broad in our "focus" and the removal of most of the former membership grades probably had a lot to do with that' and this affects credibility when large proportion of "voting members have never worked in the computing profession at all."

- **Membership Consultation Document**
  (Responses 1; Responders 1)
  - Re "Embrace Specialities, Retain the Core", call for an "exhaustive working-over of #Q02 of the Membership Consultation Document – Round 1 is mandatory during the CRWG deliberations"

# CRWG ANALYSIS

**Q13** Director appointment**?**

**Statistics**

| | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| **Overall** | 57 | 25 |
| | | 25 more in forums |
| **Sub- Topics** | 3 | |
| | | |
| *Number of directors* | 6 | 6 |
| | | |
| *Source of Directors* | 25 | 20 |
| | | |
| *Election Appointment process* | 7 | 7 |
| | | |
| *Payment* | 11 | 7 |
| | | |
| *Qualification criteria/ Director Skills* | 23 | 20 |
| | | |
| *Diversity* | 4 | 3 |
| | | |
| *CEO* | 1 | 1 |
| *Multiple Boards* | 1 | 1 |
| *Co-opt / sub committee* | 2 | 2 |
| *Representative Board* | 4 | 3 |
| **Branch Spread** | *CBR, NSW, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC, WA* | |
| | | |
| **Other** | | |

## Common Themes

### How many directors should there be.[Dn}

( 6 responses, 6 responders)
- *Various comments with some trend towards "enough" to have range of skills*
- *We need enough Directors that we get a spread of expertise, and turnover without losing corporate memory*
  *We need to avoid having so many Directors that it's unworkably big, and consensus can't emerge*
- *not too big – becomes unwieldy*
- *7-11   and another 9*

### Source of directors{ds}

(25 responses, 20 responders)

**All comments in topic expressed the view that all ( or a predominant majority) would be from the professional members – specifically excluding associates or guest members.**
- *any member in the professional division should be able to stand for the board*
- *They have to be Professional Division members (MACS and above).*

Two responses suggested 1 or 2 independent directors.
- *You should have 1 or 2 independent directors to provide an outside perspective.*

Two associated themes below are included regarding concern expressed repeatedly about limiting talent, fresh ideas, innovation through restricting candidature: ie. eligibility being restricted to those with current or prior congress / BEC appointments ( as currently operates), or introducing a nomination committee:
- o *We certainly do NOT want only candidates who have been vetted by the existing board via a nomination committee*
- o Everything except board endorsed sounds good
- o *The voice of members is drowned by a self-serving elite.*
- o *the complexities [ of the current election system] appear to many observers ... to be designed-in mechanisms to entrench an elite, or, perhaps better expressed, slow down each person's progression, giving time for them to be inducted / embedded / indoctrinated, before they get too far inside the small tent.*
- o *the best solution (to preventing "career politicians") is to short-circuit the path between the (professional) membership at large and the MC. Don't give Boards, Congress or BECs any capability to veto fresh blood*
- o Call For Nominations.
    - Six positions, each with a two-year term starting in January 2022, are up for election: President
    - Vice President (Membership Boards)
    - National Congressional Representative (4 positions)
    - One might be excused for thinking that this opportunity is open to all members.

    *How many people understand that the field of candidates for president allowed by these clauses is less than 150? How many understand that for the branches with more than 25% of national membership, there can be only ten eligible candidates for president?*
    *And we want candidates to have qualifications or at least experience as a company director? Do they even exist in this ridiculously narrow pool?*

One person suggested prior experience on BEC etc was useful to gain relevant skills – but did not indicate that this was a prerequisite path to board candidature.

**Director Skills{dt}**

(23 responses, 20 responders)

Many comments that directors need governance skills and experience.

A few suggesting this be a formal prerequisite with most indicating that with suitable candidate profiles, members could choose those with relevant experience and quals.
- o *candidates can detail their qualifications*
- o *I would like to see properly qualified company directors appointed to the board. i.e. those who are GAICD or equivalent*
- o *I think that Members who have ambitions to become Directors should at a minimum be AICD trained, but really have had other relevant experience or board-level appointment before being suitable for nomination.*

Several responders indicated that ACS should provide, or fund, relevant governance training for board members without that background.  Two suggested that a progression though BEC etc committees, in conjunction with formal governance training, would be a good path to the "board".

- o *Board members should undertake appropriate training if they are not already members of the Institute of Company Directors or similar, and that ACS should fund their training.*
- o *Professional Members interested in becoming Board Members should undertake training whilst they are BEC or Congress Members, or members of any of the advisory boards or subcommittees.*
- o *I would have thought this was one of the reasons for BEC and chapters (i.e. to gain the experience with older hands helping).*
- o *Having prior expertise and experience in governance is a definite benefit.  Training is available for those with less experience and does not hurt as a reminder for those with more experience.*

### Director Election / Appointment {De}

(7 responses, 7 responders)

There was no express question as to how directors would be elected.

All responses detailed or implied members directly electing the board with only one giving support for the current ( or similar ) process of candidates appointed by BEC, congress etc.

- *Candidates spell out their experience, views, etc, and members vote*
- *The members should be able to vote the people onto the MC*
- *Members have no say.  Members elect BEC.  BEC appoints representatives to Congress,  Congress elects MC.  The voice of members is drowned by a self-serving elite*

It is relevant however, that there were some comments expressing concern for and against proportional representation of different branch sizes.

- *There \*is\* no good or natural way to avoid the rest of the country feeling as if it's dominated by Sydney and Melbourne,*

However:

- *, I think we need to avoid having a process that allocated directors to various states; if the best directors are all from Darwin so be it*

## Outlier Themes

### A few comments regarding paying directors. {pd}

(9 responses FOR payment, 2 against, 7 responders)

- *Board members should be paid  - This would encourage motivations and behaviours incongruent with ACS as a Professional Association*
- *typically, board members are remunerated for their time and service. Otherwise the positions would be jeopardised as members would not give priority and time to devote to the position over their own job*
- *Where you put this in the hands of volunteers - you put the members at risk - when a volunteer has to choose between the work they are paid to do, and something they do out of the goodness of their heart, they prioritise on what they must, not what they want to - and members suffer, and organisations fail*
- *There are degrees of payment, and we must recognise that being a director of a substantial organisation can involve a heavy workload.  Because some members are well paid and wealthy does not mean that all members enjoy the same.  At the least, board expenses must be paid.*
- *. CPA & Engineers Australia, both being professional associations, remunerates their board members*
- The board (MC) needs to shift from being a representation-based model to a model with professional board directors. The board directors at ACS should be professional directors, {pd}whose job is being a non-executive director, and who are directors on other boards. As being a director is their job, they should be paid to sit on the ACS board

## Diversity  ( not referring to states)

(4 responses, 3 responders)

There were a few suggestions of requiring diversity representation on the board:
age, gender, race – and of course location.

- *Diversity in gender is important, and it's noteworthy that ZA has done it better*
- *While I agree with your sentiment, <u>having a 50/50 gender representation would be difficult seeing the proportion of women in IT who join the ACS</u>.*


## CEO

One comment, *CEO should not be on the board*

Any new Constitution/Board **should not have the CEO as a Director**. ACS is a not-for-profit charity - <u>the CEO should not be a Board member of a member-servicing, member-based organisation</u>. The CEO has an incredibly important role but from a governance perspective they should not oversee their own work.


## Multiple Boards

One response suggested the organisation have two boards, one for (personal) membership and another for subsidiary businesses or organisations.

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

## Co-opting Directors / Committee

(2 responses, 2 responders)

- *6-9 Board members, <u>c.5 elected by members, and the remainder [in some sense] independent Directors appointed by the Board based on gaps in the Board expertise matrix</u>.*
- *:  In addition to Board-members directly elected by the membership, there are **<u>benefits in having some appointed Board-members so that the skills-matrix can be balanced out</u>**.*

And, one comment:

- *The ACS board should have the power to create sub committees (Risk/Audit, Policy etc.) which include non-elected ex officio members*

## Representative Board

(4 responses, 3 responders)

There were a few comments regarding the legal obligation for directors to act in the best interests of the organisation

- *Representational Board members can be problematic, however, not impossible. Representatives need to understand their role on the Board is to represent the ACS not their particular constituency and agree to behave as such.*
- *Directors' obligations may conflict with the best thing for the members. ……the corporations law precludes Directors representing members.  The reference-point is the company, not the members, and definitely not any sub-set of the members, e.g. Branches*


**___  [Don:14/11/21]  ____**

**CRWG ANALYSIS**

**Q14 – Members' ratification required for key documents?**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 53 | 32 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| The Significance of Members' Approval | 8 | 7 |
| No Role at all for Members | 1 | 1 |
| What are the 'key documents'? | 10 | 13 |
| How to implement? | 8 | 7 |
| Consultation / Engagement | 12 | 12 |
| Member Endorsement / Ratification | 7 | 6 |
| Member Approval | 4 | 4 |
| Member Recall of the Governing Committee | 3 | 1 |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**The Significance of Members' Approval**

- "The 2019 corporatisation proposal seriously concerned many members because of the apparent intent to dilute, even remove, member influence on policy, esp. re membership" (David Air)
- "The CRWG process is important to **ensure the new constitution includes the ability of members to influence these matters well beyond just voting for Board-members**" (David Air)
- "The accountability component of governance has been a serious shortfall" (Denis Street)
- "Members' reaction when [the incubators] were announced was 'What the hell's going on?'. Suddenly there they were, a *fait accompli* ... members want to know about it in advance, and why" (Graeme Bond)
- "I am one of many ... who has not given up on ACS ..., but I'm very concerned about how we might "vaccinate" the Society against what might be considered to be presumably well-intentioned but otherwise noteworthy lapses of judgment by the leadership" (Paul Bailes)
- "It is vitally important that safeguards exist to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity" (Rod Dilnutt)
- "The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus" (John Graham)
- "Member-centricity is critical.  There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity" (Jo Dalvean)

**No Role at all for Members**

- "**Zero [member involvement is appropriate** for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities]. Internal policies are best set by the CEO and the Board. Members are in effect the 'customers' of ACS.  ... **The most involvement that members should have ... is to vote for which director they want to fill a vacancy**" (Craig Horne)

**What are the 'key documents'?**

- "How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the members have to ratify changes to **the key documents**?" (Roger Clarke)

- "We need a mechanism to stop **unpalatable changes of direction** by those to whom we have delegated authority, before this happens" (Jacky Hartnett)

- "Care is needed as to what the topics are that fall within that scope" (Susan Sly)

- "A key issue is which documents are the ones that members most need to be strongly influenced by members rather than delegated to an all-powerful governing committee" (Elizabeth Bromham)

- "That's the hard choice about which things are delegated to the Board, versus informed in advance, versus hard-consultative-with-plebiscite, versus determinative-with-member-vote/referendum" (Dennis O'Hare)

- "The 2019 corporatisation proposal seriously concerned many members because of the apparent intent to dilute, even remove, member influence on **policy, esp. re membership**" (David Air)

- "As a principle the constitution should require consultation and membership ratification of key areas such as **Governance** and **Membership**" (Robert Estherby)

- "The constitution ... must [extend to] ... **membership, branches and chapters, the ACS objectives and major activities, membership grades** etc. ..." (Tony Errington)

- "If such things [as the Code of Ethics] are 'owned' by the membership, they are subject to majoritarianism / hijack. On the other hand, the Board of Directors should not have the power to change **the Code of Ethics**" (PAB)

- "It's necessary to identify the categories of initiative that need to go to the members first, e.g. **definitions of membership grades** is one. Member approval is essential" (Denis Street)


**How to implement?**

- "We need **a mechanism to stop unpalatable changes of direction** by those to whom we have delegated authority, before this happens" (Jacky Hartnett)

- "How can the members stop some future Board using its power to drag the Society somewhere the members don't want it to go, unless the **members have to ratify changes to the key documents**?" (Roger Clarke)

- "[Should the mechanisms used be of the nature of] **'transparency' or 'consultation', or member 'approval', 'ratification' or 'endorsement'**?" (Roger Clarke)

- "Note the difference between members' capacity to make a **Determination by means of a Referendum cf. give Strong Advice by means of a Plebiscite**. A possible approach is to require that members must be informed, and their views must be sought" (Anthony Ellard)

- "That's the hard choice about which things are delegated to the Board, versus **informed in advance, versus hard-consultative-with-plebiscite, versus determinative-with-member-vote/referendum**" (Dennis O'Hare)

- "A balancing act is needed between direct democracy [binding referenda or non-binding plebiscites] and ungovernability" (Elizabeth Bromham)

- "Alter the 'Secondary Objects' to **ensure that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**" (Karl Reed)

- "The members need **a basis whereby they can trust the Board and CEO** to be acting in accordance with the values, mission and purposes of the Society. For the members to have that trust, **a series of layers of regulation are needed**" (Ashley Maher)

**Consultation / Engagement**

- "At the minimum, proposals must be **communicated and explained** to the membership, as the first step in accountability" (Susan Sly)
- "Members and committees with responsibilities can create and amend, but members should be **informed and encouraged to give feedback**" (Jan Kornweibel)
- "There must be an opportunity for regular review amongst interested members, and **ongoing communication with the membership about significant decisions being made**" (Sheldon King)
- "**Consultation <u>by members</u>** and for members is very important.  This was contrasted with the approach to consultation on the strategic plan, which was felt to be more consultant led" (Beau Tydd)
- "We should have the broadest **consultation** possible – **in line with the importance / magnitude of the decision**" (PAB)
- "The principle should be that the constitution looks to embed **a mechanism for efficient and rapid consultation ...**" (Robert Estherby)
- "Representative democracy, but must also feature **consultative arrangements**" (Alex Reid)
  - { "Does convenient online voting affect the assumption that representative democracy is the appropriate form?"  (Roger Clarke) }
- "Members' reaction when [the incubators] were announced was 'What the hell's going on?'. Suddenly there they were, a *fait accompli* ... **members want to know about it in advance, and why**" (Graeme Bond)
- (1)  Members need enough **visibility** of what the Board and CEO are doing
  (2)  With major new initiatives, members need **visibility in advance of decisions**, and **meaningful opportunities to provide input** (the 'bring the members along on the journey with you' dictum)
  (3)  Where member concern exists, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass **'a BEC motion of concern'**, and communicate it to the Board and CEO
  (4)  Where that concern is serious, and responses by the Board and CEO do not dissipate the concern, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass **'a BEC motion of serious concern', and communicate it to** the Board and CEO, but also to all other BECs, and **the membership**" (Ashley Maher)

**Member Endorsement / Ratification**

- "**Lots of [member involvement] is necessary [for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities], if we wish the policies to succeed**. You have to take the people with you" (Ian Dennis)
- "**Fundamental matters**, e.g. fundamental rule changes, **require consultation with the support of the full membership**. On the other hand, many if not most policy matters are resolved within the established authority structure" (Denis Street)
- "As a principle the constitution should require consultation and **membership ratification** of key areas such as Governance and Membership" (Robert Estherby)
- "The principle should be that the constitution looks to embed a mechanism for efficient and **rapid** consultation and **endorsement** ... with a minimum participation threshold before a resolution is possible" (Robert Estherby)
- "**Endorsement of Key Policies** - Yes **by professional member voting**" (Brian Finn)
- "[Member involvement is appropriate] **only for the larger 'big ticket items'**" (Sam Horwood)
- "Note the difference between members' capacity to make a Determination by means of a Referendum cf. give Strong Advice by means of a Plebiscite.  A possible approach is to **require that members must be informed, and their views must be sought**" (Anthony Ellard)
- "[An] **appropriate balance of Board oversight and member plebiscite** must be found to prevent the ACS from becoming hamstrung by constantly deliberating minor decisions" (Sheldon King)

**Member Approval**

- "Matters of importance must have member voice.  Line up with mission, purposes and key functions, and the more important among them must go to the members [for 'endorsement' / 'ratification' / 'approval' ]" (Rod Dilnutt)

- "If such things [as the Code of Ethics] are 'owned' by the membership, they are subject to majoritarianism / hijack.  On the other hand, the Board of Directors should not have the power to change **the Code of Ethics**" (PAB)

- "It's necessary to identify the categories of initiative that need to go the members first, e.g. **definitions of membership grades** is one.  **Member approval is essential**" (Denis Street)


**Member Recall of the Governing Committee**

(5)   "Where the matter is so serious that trust by the members in the directions the Society is taking is being undermined, any Branch Executive Committee needs the capacity to pass **'a BEC motion of no confidence', and communicate it to** the Board and CEO, and to all other BECs, and **the membership**

(6)   If **any two BECs** pass a materially identical 'motion of no confidence', the Constitution needs to provide that **a General Meeting is automatically called at which the motion must be put and debated**

- "As with all regulatory arrangements, **the purpose is to avoid the need for 'nuclear option' (6) to ever be implemented**" (Ashley Maher)

**SIGs – National Special Interest Groups (SIGs)**

|  | No of responses | No of responders |
|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 42 | 26 |
|  |  |  |
| **Sub-Topics** |  |  |
| The Importance of SIGs | 12 | 10 |
| The Badly-Mistaken Destruction of SIGs | 11 | 10 |
| Necessary Support by ACS for Effective SIGs | 2 | 2 |
| Digital Platform Support by ACS for Effective SIGs | 17 | 9 |
| **Branch Spread** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other Notes** |  |  |

**The Importance of SIGs**

- "ACS needs to ... provide for specialisations within the ICT sector, either in collaboration with other compatible organisations (if they exist) or by itself if necessary ... SIGs might possibly be part of the solution, e.g.
    - **as seeds of structures within ACS reflecting new specialisations**
    - **as designations of ACS collaboration with compatible organisations**" (Paul Bailes)
- "SIGs can and should cater to specialist fields" (Jack Burton)
- "ASCILITE [tertiary ed] has very active SIGs, which have kept me sane since COVID-19 struck" (Tom Worthington)
- "**SIGs enabled [specialisations], in a flexible and relatively inexpensive manner** ..." (Adrian Porteous)
- "Specialist groups might also be **a way of spawning additional pathways to CP**" (Damien Charles)
- "**Professional networking and content** at events is the key driver" (Graeme Bond)
- "I had very good experiences with SIGs, and the **speakers and networking** that enabled" (Margaret Turner)
- "**Social networking** [e.g. SA's Curry SIG] is vital" (Ashley Maher)
- "ACS' Key Functions include Benefits for the Public and Members – including ... **facilitation of communications among members**, through SIGs, ..." (Karl Reed)
- "Some SIGs were social, some meeting non-ICT needs, however they reflected members' needs. It is something we should be proud of ... we need to have this again!" (Karl Reed)
- "SIGs is another area in which considerable activity used to occur, with **significant benefits to members in specialised areas, mostly achieved on the cheap, mostly performed by individuals**. Many were ephemeral, but **addressed a topical purpose**" (Philip Head)
- "National SIGs, or **coordination among Branch SIGs**, has considerable potential [in fulfilling Purposes]" (Philip Head)

**The Badly-Mistaken Destruction of SIGs**

- "The list of SIGs that were active **in 2016**, totalled across all states, was **about 65**" (Karl Reed)

- "**In December 2016, the Vic Branch manager advised that the Governance and Management SIG was suspended without notice after 7 years of operation**" (Rimas Skeivys)

    - "Management Committee or the Branch Executive Committee may dissolve any chapter, sub-committee or branch special interest group ...
    "... **a Branch Manager does not have the legal authority to take any such action**.
    "On the face of it, neither does the CEO, so any delegation to the Branch Manager could not have come from the CEO.
    "Did anyone ask the Vic Branch Manager for evidence of authority?
    "But **BECs can exercise the powers that they have at their disposal**" (Roger Clarke)

- "How many SIGS are still active in 2021?" (David Abulafia)

    - [ No-one offered an answer. **Searches on the ACS web-site found no index, and evidence of current activities is hard to find** (Roger Clarke) ]

- "ACS took a wrong turn when **SIGs were effectively abolished**" (Graeme Bond)

- "Social networking [e.g. SA's Curry SIG] is vital, and **the centralisation and bureaucracy has lost track of Branch members as people**" (Ashley Maher)

- "A big percentage of surplus funds should be member-focussed.  Instead it's drifted into corporate uses, e.g. **SIGs have been unfunded, and have all-but disappeared**" (Alan McLeod)

- "**SIGs enabled [specialisations], in a flexible and relatively inexpensive manner.  That's all been lost**" (Adrian Porteous)

- "SIGs is another area in which **considerable activity used to occur**, with significant benefits to members ..." (Philip Head)

- "I [once] had very good experiences with SIGs, and the speakers and networking that enabled.  My Branch was very supportive" (Margaret Turner)

**Necessary Support by ACS for Effective SIGs**

- "State bodies have the advantage of physical control of local events.  To achieve that, **local scope and resources are needed, e.g. SIGs:  topic, speaker, food**" (Richard Hemsworth)

- "Accommodating special interests is important.  And Special Interest Groups with **in-kind and financial support** can really make these SIGS really grow and prosper you only have look at how Meet-ups have been so successful and for ACS somewhat of a missed opportunity.  There may be some opportunities to **work collaboratively with other entities** such as Canvas Co-Working here in Toowoomba to make SIGs thrive but this does also require champions and volunteers and here if ACS can provide some **digital platforms for SIGs to have a permanent presence** this will really help" (Michael Lane)

**Digital Platform Support by ACS for Effective SIGs**

- " ... ACS could provide some **digital platforms for SIGs to have a permanent presence.** This will really help" (Michael Lane)

- " ... ACS could spin off **an "Association as a Service" engine** in a subsidiary company. Corporate services (i.e. legal, finance, marketing, IT, HR) could be packaged up ..." (Craig Horne)

- "ACS could attract existing and new groups through the **establishment of a service-set** to support them" (Siobhan Casey)

- **Key Positives in ACS support (NatSIG aSCSa)**:
  - Event registration and payments
  - Local ACS Branch support for Conference Registration Desk, variable by Branch
  - Rights to, and control over, SIG retained earnings
  - Interface to Purchasing
  - Rights and convenient processes re access to logos for co-branding

- **Areas in which ACS support is deficient, limited or non-existent (NatSIG aSCSa)**:
  - *** No defined services model between ACS and National SIGs
    i.e. what services are available, and under what conditions?
  - *** No case manager or link person
  - *** Applications and approvals process is dependent on a personal relationship with the CFO
  - ** No membership admin system, so variously bundled with conference or gratis
  - ** No customer management system / mailing service, and have to run own mailchimp
  - ** No publication service for a journal or technical papers, because CRPIT (tedious as it was) appears to have been abandoned by ACS and is no longer supported
    https://www.ascsa.org.au/assc-proceedings
    https://50years.acs.org.au/digital-archive/crpit.html#
    https://crpit.scem.westernsydney.edu.au
  - ** Inadequate arrangements for discovery of aSCSa on the ACS web-site:
    Site-search returns a single hit, also accessible via this menu-sequence:
    ACS / Professional Recognition / Certification / leads only to:
    https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/acs-documents/Certifications/ACS-SCS-Assessment-Chart.pdf
    https://www.acs.org.au/carousel-pages/certification-tile3-scs.html
    Site-Search returns a single hit.  Google search on <aSCSa+site:acs.org.au> returns 14 hits, including old events (with no year shown)
  - Missed opportunities in such areas as Micro-Credentials (do not require ACS membership)
  - Difficulty of integration of CPD events (because credit does require ACS membership)