



Public Policy Reference Group Terms of Reference

Version: 1.0



Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define the specific Terms of Reference relative to the Public Policy Reference Group.

The role of the Public Policy Reference Group is to provide strategic advice regarding public policy to Management Committee and be the approvers for any operational public policy/position matters. As there are a number of factors which need to be considered in any determination of public policy (e.g. member benefit, commercial risks, political impacts, partner relations etc), it is important that any proposal be reviewed and approved by a diverse representative panel.

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1 Role

- 1.1 Provide final operational approval on policy issues to be addressed by ACS including:
 - reviewing coordinated response to government draft policies and requests for information; and
 - related communication/implementation strategies.
- 1.2 Develop an annual policy plan linked to the overall ACS annual plan for approval by Management Committee which includes:
 - setting of priorities;
 - identifying new and emerging policy areas for consideration; and
 - endorsing commission of direct policy research and analysis activities in existing or emerging areas within approved budget frameworks.
- 1.3 Measure and report progress of current policy activities. (See 5 - Reporting.)
- 1.4 Engage ACS members by, for example:
 - seeking experts among the ACS membership to advise and assist in developing policy;
 - engaging state-based advisors and liaisons within elected Branch Executive Committees;
 - developing mechanisms to engage with a diverse cohort of ACS members; and/or
 - forming task specific working groups as required.

2 Membership

- 2.1 The Public Policy Reference Group is to include the following standing positions:
 - The ACS President
 - Vice President – Academic
 - Vice President – Communities
 - Vice President – Membership
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - Director of Corporate Affairs and Public Policy
- 2.2 Attendance by Vice Presidents is optional at their individual discretion for operational approval matters which are unrelated to their respective portfolios.



3 Principles

- 3.1 When assessing any proposal to be approved as a public policy position of ACS, the Public Policy Reference Group considers the following statement of principles:
- Remain objective and apolitical
 - Only develop policy that supports the ACS objects, and where appropriate expertise can be leveraged
 - Be nimble and responsive to requests from stakeholders
 - Be engaged with the membership
 - Practice data driven / evidence-based policy development
 - Deliver defined outcomes and measurable results
 - Be transparent
 - Leverage relevant expertise contained within the membership

4 Authority

- 4.1 The Public Policy Reference Group is authorised to:
- approve public policy positions on behalf of the ACS membership;
 - request and obtain information from the National Secretariat via their Secretary, Strategic Initiatives Executive (SIE) or appropriate representative (collectively “Secretariat Representative, SR”) as required in the fulfilment of their responsibilities;
 - monitor the effectiveness and outputs of activity within their portfolio; and
 - establish short-term Working Groups on an ad hoc basis to provide additional insights and expertise. All decisions and outputs remain the responsibility of the Public Policy Reference Group. Non-elected working group members:
 - have no executive powers;
 - cannot vote on any Public Policy Reference Group; and
 - should not be exposed to confidential information.
- 4.2 The public Policy Reference Group may not:
- alter these Terms of Reference but may recommend alteration to Management Committee;
 - operate outside its approved annual budget or its ToR; or
 - enter into any arrangements that legally bind ACS.
- 4.3 The Public Policy Reference Group have no other executive powers unless expressly delegated by Management Committee.



5 Reporting

- 5.1 The Public Policy Reference Group shall report to Management Committee at least every six months, or more frequently if required by Management Committee. The Report will describe the activities of the Public Policy Reference Groups during the previous period including the effectiveness of policies adopted.

6 Privacy and Conflicts

- 6.1 All members of the Public Policy Reference Group shall formally declare any actual or perceived conflict of interests and shall hold information obtained as confidential.

7 Vacancies and Casual Vacancies

- 7.1 Members' positions are tied directly to the standing roles, and all casual vacancies are to be filled in line with the specific appointments of each particular role.

8 Secretariat

- 8.1 Secretariat support will be provided to the Public Policy Reference Group as follows:
- meeting co-ordination including minute taking and distribution, preparation and dissemination of relevant documents, transport, accommodation, video conferencing, IT support, processing of expense reimbursement, and any other operational aspects of meetings;
 - assistance with the preparing of documentation for the authoring and distribution of policy positions; and
 - supply of software licenses and any required technical support for the Public Policy Reference Group to discharge its duties.

9 Meetings

- 9.1 The Public Policy Reference Group shall meet at such times as it deems appropriate to fulfil its functions (within approved budgets), however not less than twice a year, or as approved by Management Committee.
- 9.2 Other than with the consent of the President, agenda items, papers, reports and supporting documentation will be made available to the Public Policy Reference Group at least seven days prior to each meeting.
- 9.3 Copies of sensitive documents (in paper or electronic form) retained by



members and others assisting on their behalf should be appropriately secured to protect the privacy of any personal information and the confidentiality of the business information contained therein.

- 9.4 Papers and other material provided to a Member remain the property of ACS and at its direction will either be destroyed or returned to the Society on a Member ceasing to be a Member.

10 Quorum

- 10.1 The quorum for any meeting shall be a majority of the members entitled to attend and vote at that meeting (noting under section 2.2, Vice Presidents who opt not to attend are not included in the calculation of a quorum).

11 Definitions

- 11.1 Terms defined in the Rules and Regulations shall have the same meanings as defined.

12 Review Date

- 12.1 This document is to be reviewed by the Custodian annually.
- 12.2 Minor changes to any Terms of Reference may be made by the Custodian.



13 Document Control

Version History

Name	Revision History	Date of Issue	Version
Strategic Initiative Executives	Initial version based on existing ToR and Common ToRs	29/01/21	0.1
Strategic Initiative Executives	Review and updates	01/02/21	0.2
Strategic Initiative Executives	Review and updates	16/02/21	0.3
Strategic Initiative Executives	Finalisation of initial draft	26/02/21	1.0

Approvals

Name	Date of Issue	Version
Management Committee(Out of Session)	15/03/2021	1.0

Distribution

	Date of Issue	Version
Management Committee	01/03/21	1.0

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Responsible Business Unit:	Governance & Risk
Content Security: (Delete entries as required)	PUBLIC Distribution unlimited