

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

Annex 1: The Unprocessed Input from Members

The input from members arrived in multiple channels.

The plan had been for consultation to be open for the month of October, enabling extraction on 1 November. Delays were encountered at the beginning of October. In addition, it does not appear that any previous consultation processes of this kind had ever been undertaken with ACS members. The acceleration in participation was accordingly a little later than anticipated.

The backend constraint of the Christmas closedown loomed, and it was anticipated that the whole of the month of November would be needed for analysis and reporting.

An extraction was accordingly performed on 1 November, but a supplementary extraction was also taken on 13 November, and retro-fitted onto the portions of the analysis process that had already been completed.

This Annex contains the raw material that was extracted for each of:

- The 30 Submissions
- The Meeting-Notes for each of the 15 video-meetings run by CRWG
- The Event-Notes for each of the 9 events run by Branch and national organs
- Not the raw material from the Online Forum, for which see Annex 2

The reasons for this are that:

- the material is substantial
- the most efficient acquisition mechanism was to copy-and paste the content from the 38 Tags into .doc files,
- that data is replicated in Annex 2
- the differences between the content of the raw files and that in Annex 2 is merely the addition of some Tags on some threads which the original posters had failed to include

A1: Attachments via crwg.submission@acs.org.au on Response Forms

As at Wed 20 Oct 2021, to midnight UT+11

1. Ashley Goldsworthy

1 October 2021

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ACS – Constitutional Reform

Q1

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 (CLG) is the best option based on legal advice, this should not diminish this fundamental imperative.

Q2

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.

Q3

The statement of the Mission in the document is appropriate.

Q4

It is important that the ACS be, and be seen to be, governed by members who have achieved a recognised professional level, preferably by accredited or recognised Australian tertiary qualifications (degree or diploma), supported by at least three years appropriate relevant experience. Grades of Member and Fellow are appropriate. Hon Life Member is not a grade, but an honour recognising outstanding service to the profession or the ACS.

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 threshold requirements otherwise the grade is a nonsense**; the ACS could admit housepainters and gardeners. In the light of the widespread use of the technologies these threshold requirements need to be much more than just using the technologies. For example, using a laptop in one's job is not enough. **[Q04]**

Voting should be restricted to professional members. [P11]

The ACS should also have a Student grade, for those studying in the field.

I am opposed to granting 'professional' status to categories such as 'manager of ICT professionals'. Just because one manages a group of engineers or accountants does not entitle that person to membership of Engineers Australia or the Australian Society of Certified Public Accountants. The manager of a hospital does not become a member of the AMA. It also flies in the face of the definition of profession as used by the Australian Council of Professions. Encourage them as Associates.

Q5

No, as per answer to Q4, unless they meet professional standards. There must not be any back-door entries. Integrity allows for no compromises.

Q6

The ACS as a professional association should not be an industry association, the two are completely different concepts. **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. That was one of the critical mistakes of the ACS in 2019. It is very clear the management at that time was pursuing a very different purpose, and one that conflicted with and bastardised the core identity of the ACS. The desire to make money is not a valid reason for the ACS to spend member funds, if so why not buy a bank? **Divest of what we bought.** That will undoubtedly rankle those with commercial aspirations chasing the dollars. Don't get me wrong- dollars are necessary; it's just how you get them that is important.

It is not just about managing risk. It is about the core reason for the existence of the ACS. The problem with such suggestions as operating subsidiaries is the **impossibility of separating their activities from the purpose of the ACS,** assuming they would have to have some level of independence. The parent entity always carries responsibility. The best way to avoid tensions is not to create them in the first place. **[IA]**

The issue of Technical Societies is an interesting one. As I understand it, Engineers Australia has the following - Australian Cost Engineering; Sustainable Engineering Society; the Society for Building Services Engineers; Australian Geomechanics Society; Australian Shotcrete Society; Australian Tunnelling Society. These societies serve many functions related to the establishment and maintenance of engineering qualifications. My understanding, and I may be wrong, is that these societies were established by individuals in the various fields and were not instigated by Engineers Australia, and hence they are self-driven. **[P04]**

Engineers also has colleges which represent easily defined sub-divisions of engineering such as electrical, chemical, civil, etc.

ACS needs a structure which will attract those working in diverse areas of ICT. It could well replicate, as appropriate, the structures used in IFIP- Technical Committees (TCs) and Working Groups (WGs). The TCs and WGs are-

TC1: Foundations of Computer Science

- WG 1.2 Descriptive Complexity
- WG 1.3 Foundations of System Specification
- WG 1.5 Cellular Automata and Discrete Complex Systems
- WG 1.6 Rewriting
- WG 1.7 Theoretical Foundations of Security Analysis and Design
- WG 1.8 Concurrency Theory
- WG 1.9 Verified Software (joint with WG 2.15)
- WG 1.10 String Algorithmics & Applications

TC2: Software: Theory and Practice

- WG 2.1 Algorithmic Languages and Calculi
- WG 2.2 Formal Description of Programming Concepts
- WG 2.3 Programming Methodology
- WG 2.4 Software Implementation Technology
- WG 2.5 Numerical Software
- WG 2.6 Database
- WG 2.7 User Interface Engineering (joint with WG 13.4)
- WG 2.8 Functional Programming
- WG 2.9 Software Requirements Engineering
- WG 2.10 Software Architecture
- WG 2.11 Program Generation
- WG 2.13 Open Source Software
- WG 2.14 Service-Oriented Systems (joint with WG 6.12/8.10)
- WG 2.15 Verified Software (joint with WG 1.9)
- WG 2.16 Programming Language Design

TC3: Education

- WG 3.1 Informatics and Digital Technologies in School Education
- WG 3.3 Research into Educational Applications of Information Technologies
- WG 3.4 Professional and Vocational Education in ICT
- WG 3.7 Information Technology in Educational Management

TC5: Information Technology Applications

- WG 5.1 Global Product Development for the whole life-cycle
- WG 5.4 Computer Aided Innovation
- WG 5.5 Cooperation Infrastructure for Virtual Enterprises and electronic Business (COVE)
- WG 5.7 Advances in Production Management Systems
- WG 5.8 Enterprise Interoperability
- WG 5.10 Computer Graphics and Virtual Worlds
- WG 5.11 Computers and Environment
- WG 5.12 Architectures for Enterprise Integration
- WG 5.13 Bioinformatics and its Applications
- WG 5.14 Advanced Information Processing for Agriculture
- WG 5.15 Information Technology in Disaster Risk Reduction (ITDRR)

TC6: Communication Systems

- WG 6.1 Architectures and Protocols for Distributed Systems
- WG 6.2 Network and Internetwork Architectures
- WG 6.3 Performance of Communication Systems
- WG 6.6 Management of Networks and Distributed Systems
- WG 6.8 Mobile and Wireless Communications
- WG 6.9 Communication Systems in Developing Countries
- WG 6.10 Photonic Networking
- WG 6.11 Communication Aspects of the e-World
- WG 6.12 Service-Oriented Systems (joint with WG 8.10/2.14)

TC7: System Modeling and Optimization

- WG 7.2 Computational Techniques in Distributed Systems
- WG 7.3 Computer System Modeling
- WG 7.4 Inverse Problems and Imaging
- WG 7.5 Reliability and Optimization of Structural Systems
- WG 7.6 Optimization - Based Computer Aided Modeling and Design
- WG 7.7 Stochastic Control and Optimization
- WG 7.8 Nonlinear Optimization

TC8: Information Systems

- WG 8.1 Design and Evaluation of Information Systems
- WG 8.2 The Interaction of Information Systems and the Organization
- WG 8.3 Decision Support
- WG 8.4 E-Business: Multi-disciplinary research and practice
- WG 8.5 Information Systems in Public Administration
- WG 8.6 Transfer and Diffusion of Information Technology

- WG 8.9 Enterprise Information Systems
 - WG 8.10 Service-Oriented Systems (joint with WG 6.12/2.14)
 - WG 8.11 Information Systems Security Research (joint with WG 11.13)
 - WG 8.12 Industrial Information Integration
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TC9: ICT and Society

- WG 9.1 Computers and Work
 - WG 9.2 Social Accountability and Computing
 - SIG 9.2.2 Special Interest Group on Framework on Ethics of Computing
 - WG 9.3 Intelligent Communities
 - WG 9.4 The Implications of Information and Digital Technologies for Development
 - WG 9.5 Our Digital Lives
 - WG 9.6 Information Technology: Misuse and The Law (joint with WG 11.7)
 - WG 9.7 History of Computing
 - WG 9.8 Gender, Diversity and ICT
 - WG 9.9 ICT and Sustainable Development
 - WG 9.10 ICT Uses in Peace and War
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TC10: Computer Systems Technology

- WG 10.2 Embedded Systems
 - WG 10.3 Concurrent Systems
 - WG 10.4 Dependable Computing and Fault Tolerance
 - WG 10.5 Design and Engineering of Electronic Systems
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TC11: Security and Privacy Protection in Information Processing Systems

- WG 11.1 Information Security Management
 - WG 11.2 Pervasive Systems Security
 - WG 11.3 Data and Application Security and Privacy
 - WG 11.4 Network & Distributed Systems Security
 - WG 11.5 IT Assurance and Audit
 - WG 11.6 Identity Management
 - WG 11.7 Information Technology: Misuse and The Law (joint with WG 9.6)
 - WG 11.8 Information Security Education
 - WG 11.9 Digital Forensics
 - WG 11.10 Critical Infrastructure Protection
 - WG 11.11 Trust Management
 - WG 11.12 Human Aspects of Information Security and Assurance
 - WG 11.13 Information Systems Security Research (joint with WG 8.11)
 - WG 11.14 Secure Engineering
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TC12: Artificial Intelligence

- WG 12.1 Knowledge Representation and Reasoning
- WG 12.2 Machine Learning and Data Mining
- WG 12.3 Intelligent Agents
- WG 12.5 Artificial Intelligence Applications
- WG 12.6 Knowledge Management
- WG 12.7 Social Networking Semantics and Collective Intelligence

- WG 12.9 Computational Intelligence
- WG 12.10 Artificial Intelligence & Cognitive Science
- WG 12.11 AI for Energy & Sustainability (AIES)
- WG 12.12 AI Governance (AIGOV)

TC13: Human-Computer Interaction

- WG 13.1 Education in HCI and HCI Curriculum
- WG 13.2 Methodologies for User-Centered Systems Design
- WG 13.3 Human Computer Interaction, Disability and Aging
- WG 13.4 User Interface Engineering (joint with WG 2.7)
- WG 13.5 Human Error, Resilience, Reliability, Safety and System Development
- WG 13.6 Human-Work Interaction Design
- WG 13.7 Human-Computer Interaction & Visualization (HCIV)
- WG 13.8 Interaction Design and International Development
- WG 13.9 Interaction Design and Children
- WG 13.10 Human-Centered Technology for Sustainability

TC14: Entertainment Computing

- WG 14.1 Digital Storytelling
- WG 14.2 Entertainment Robot
- WG 14.3 Theoretical Foundation of Entertainment Computing
- WG 14.4 Entertainment Games
- WG 14.5 Social and Ethical Issues in Entertainment Computing
- WG 14.6 Interactive TeleVision
- WG 14.7 Art and Entertainment
- WG 14.8 Serious Games
- WG 14.9 Game Accessibility
- WG 14.10 Sound and Music Computing

I am not suggesting ACS should have all these, but the structure is important in that these WGs give practitioners the opportunity to work in a meaningful way with their peers in specialised fields. They provide a concrete and constructive reason for joining the ACS. In the past several members of the ACS have played prominent roles in the TCs, e.g., Judy Hammond in TC3, Alan Coulter in TC6, Bill Caelli in TC11, me in TC9, and others. WGs are the professional core of IFIP.

Q7

The Key Functions listed seem appropriate.

Q8

Commercial activities are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they **must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS**, ... [BL]

... but this reason alone is not enough. It is too broad and opens the door to almost anything, as we have seen. I am not in favour of double negatives and therefore 'not inconsistent' needs to be replaced by the **positive requirement 'to be consistent' with the Objects of the Society**. [Q03]

The suggestion that 'supporting business lines could have the advantage of providing for a Board with business expertise is not only irrelevant but is a worrying window into the thinking of the CRWG. ... [P11]

... There is and has been many members of the ACS with substantial business experience. People like Brian Finn, former Chairman of IBM Australia; Alan Coulter a former president of ACS and a senior executive in Telstra and the CEO of a broking firm, spring to mind. I myself was the CEO of

Australia's largest construction firm, a bank, an insurance company, and the owner and operator of several vocational training companies. Suggesting we have to go outside the Society is unnecessary, and a bit of a red herring.

As a Fellow of CPA Australia, I am well aware that their constitution provides that the Board consists of a maximum of 10 independent non-executive Directors but must have at least two external Directors (who are neither members nor employees). Arguments from example are not necessarily relevant or persuasive, and I still disagree with the need for non-member directors. I recognise differing views on this aspect.

All members of the board of Engineers Australia are professional engineers. Similarly, the Boards of Australian Medical Association are all medicos.

It would be nonsense to suggest the ACS should not support innovation. The issue is how should this be done. To answer the question posed, **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.** [BL]

... For example, I think the following offer on their website is completely inappropriate- *River City Labs Residents will have free ACS membership which entitles members to significant savings in insurance for business, as well as other additional benefits as follows. It makes a complete mockery of any claim to professionalism on the part of the ACS.* [Q04]

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 d'être* for the Society's existence, nor expose the Society to reputational damage or monetary loss. [BL]

Comment

As a Foundation Member of the ACS, a Foundation Fellow, a Foundation Hon. Life Member, and a former National President I see this exercise as critical to the future of the Society.

Ashley Goldsworthy

1 October 2021

Responses to the ACS Constitutional questions.

Q1: Should the ACS continue to be a professional society? (Consultation Document, p.1)

YES

Q2: Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? (p.2)

YES to both parts of this question

Q3: Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered? (p.2)

Look ok, the main need is to be as broad as possible so that future activities are not constitutionally impaired. nobody pays much attention to M and P until it stops something.

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them? (p.3)

Yes, **It is important to have clearly defined meaning to grades, most societies use the term Affiliate for non-professional members**

Q5: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership? (p.3)

See answer to q4 above, Affiliate would allow this

Q6: Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

The core political strength of **ACS** is that it **represents people, not companies**. There is no reason for ACS not to host ICT organisations of people, but **corporates should not be members or their bodies hosted**

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)

Almost certainly, emphasis within ACS has rarely been strategic or consistent

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9) If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

ACS labs division should be run as a profit-making business. Some capital investment may be required to achieve this. but as the question does not distinguish between operating surplus and capital surplus it is unclear whether ACS understands the difference.

Q9: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

By appointing appropriate boards of directors to run them, and by establishing a proper governance model for reporting/auditing

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus? (P2)

Strategically, to support the mission and purpose

Q11: 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? (P3, P9)

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.

Q12: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations? (P4)

YES, in fact, in the past we have done this, albeit badly (Telecommunications Society for example). Narrow minded academic interpretations focussed purely on computer science simply miss the point

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

YES, **any member should be able to nominate, but it would be prudent to develop appropriate vetting processes** in order to ensure that the ACS Board possess a membership which includes the relevant expertise in governance and financial acumen to lead a multimillion dollar enterprise.

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

Lots, if we wish them to succeed. You have to take the people with you.

Q1: Should the ACS continue to be a professional society? (Consultation Document, p.1)

Yes.

However, at the moment, I do not believe it is doing a good job of that. According to ACS Australia's Digital Pulse 2021, there are 805,525 Australian ICT workers. Yet, there are only around 50,000 members of ACS, which equates to around 6%. Other professional associations enjoy membership levels around 70% of total population (e.g. AMA, which is voluntary for medical professionals to join). ACS really needs to strongly focus on growing its membership base to at least 50%, so political and business leaders have to listen to ACS because it represents the majority of ICT professionals in Australia.

Q2: Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? (p.2)

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.

What follows is some clumsy attempt to change the Objects of the ACS, under the guise of a question about the term 'ICT'. Q2 does not mention Objects at all, so how did commentary about Objects find its way into the preamble?

I'll address this subterfuge anyway. Putting on my MBA hat, the proposed use of the word 'Mission' is wrong. Vision and mission are very specifically defined when used within an organisation. Generally, vision is externally-focussed and mission is internally-focussed. That is, vision is why the organisation exists to make the world a better place, and mission is how the organisation will achieve it.

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

This proposed wording sounds more like a vision statement, as it is externally-focussed on the benefit to society, so 'Mission' is incorrectly used in this proposed statement. The Purposes sound more like the mission of the organisation, as they describe how the ACS will achieve its vision. Therefore, I recommend you change the titles Mission/Purposes to Vision/Mission.

However, the main criticism I have with this Mission wording is that it is not an accurate characterisation of the purpose of ACS at all. The ACS does not exist to advance ICT; the ACS exists to support its members, who work in ICT. Secondary to that, ACS should advance ICT, advance Australia as a leading ICT-enabled nation, support ICT in government, business and education sectors, and support ICT use within the general public.

The proposed new wording is missing two clauses from the current Objects:

- To promote the formulation of effective policies on information and communications technology and related matters. [See (8)]
- To extend the knowledge and understanding of information and communications technology in the community. [See (6)]

These clauses should not be extinguished because ACS has a duty to support the broad development of ICT in Australia. As an organisation with the resources to profoundly make a difference in Australia, it is incumbent on ACS to wield this power wisely.

The introduction of the word high into object 1: "(1) The establishment and maintenance of high professional standards" seems designed to ensure that only a university professor can become a member of ACS. ACS cannot reverse its recent progress towards inclusion by refocussing to serve only the interests of highly-qualified academics as its members. ACS must be inclusive of all who work in ICT, not just reactionaries who wish to sit around in circles and sermonise about their latest research.

Q3: Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered? (p.2)

There is no mention of geographic scope, as the ACS currently exists to serve ICT professionals in Australia. This necessary because, for example, ACS will never look to expand and acquire members in Britain, competing with the BCS. We need to be clear in our focus, so that resources

are properly allocated. Looking to the future however, it is reasonable to imagine that the ACS might expand to serve regional interests, so perhaps the word Australasian could be inserted instead.

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them? (p.3)

Yes – but any form of ICT certification should qualify people as an Associate, e.g. a one-week PRINCE2 Practitioner certification. The idea is to articulate members along a membership continuum, like a funnel. As an Associate, members will naturally be interested in moving up to Member, then Senior Member, etc. and ACS should support that journey.

Q5: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership? (p.3)

Yes of course.

Although not stated, I assume that ICT users are better described as non-qualified ICT professionals, and so the intent of the question is whether non-qualified ICT professionals should be embraced by the ACS.

To this, I say yes, and wholeheartedly support the **creation of a new non-qualified 'Enthusiast' grade of membership**.

Reason 1: increased revenue from membership funds, and increased membership numbers.

Reason 2: at some point in their long careers, 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.

Reason 3: just because a professional is non-qualified does not mean they can't satisfy the description of being a professional put by ACoP. That is, they can be non-qualified and also disciplined, ethical, possessing special knowledge, and interested in supporting others and the general public.

As an example, a young friend of mine is an elite white-hat hacker who conducts freelance penetration testing on websites and applications, then submits any vulnerabilities found to the organisation's bug bounty program. He earns over AUD\$1 million per year but is self-taught and has never been to university or completed a certification. He clearly has special knowledge and skills, and engages in research and self-training. I would hate to think there is no place in the ACS for him.

Q6: Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

This question is ambiguous because, like overlapping circles in a Venn diagram, these two alternatives could be the same thing. The 'risk managed way' could be an alternative 'organisational structure'.

Anyway, what I think this question is asking is whether ACS should support industry associations or stay away. I strongly believe 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 subsidiary company**. Corporate services (i.e. legal, finance, marketing, IT, HR) could be packaged up and these services sold in an Association-aaS business model. Therefore, ACS remains arm's length from being publicly associated with the front-end 'business' of industry associations but still makes money from supporting their back-end functions. **[P04]**

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)

Support for Student members is under-emphasised. Student membership should be free, like any other professional society. The time while students are studying is a golden opportunity for ACS to introduce itself and provide enough value to ensure students remain members for life. Articulation from Student to Member should be celebrated as a major milestone in their professional development, with gala events, etc. Reason is that ACS has typically experienced a 40% drop-off in membership numbers when articulating from student to full member and increased emphasis would

help improve this ratio. Other benefits include increased membership revenue and increased membership numbers.

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9)

Yes.

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.”

[Earliest occurrence appears to be in the Media Release for the purchase of RCL, 7 Sep 2018: <https://www.acs.org.au/insightsandpublications/media-releases/ACSRCL.html>]

ACS has never, in its entire 50-year history ever conducted any activity whereby it could credibly claim to be achieving the “fosters innovation” segment of the vision statement. ACS Labs allows ACS, for the first time ever, to claim that it is actually fulfilling its vision.

As well, support for founders is crucial. Most technology founders live below the poverty line and work long hours to bring their dream to life. ACS has a role in supporting the next Canva or Atlassian and I don't know why ACS wouldn't want to support these dreamers.

Maintaining and expanding ACS Labs is crucial to ACS achieving its vision.

a. If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

A reasonable amount of support is required. As well as being a benefactor and supporting the ICT industry, Australian economy and struggling founders, ACS could potentially make a lot of money from investing a stake in start-ups in return for its support.

On a similar but different matter, I would like to see stronger support for charitable efforts being conducted by ACS. It is presently unclear to me exactly what meaningful support ACS provides for charities (i.e. one indigenous scholarship does not a charity make). As well, there is branding confusion in the market between ACS and ACS Foundation. 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.

Q9: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

A business-line that is ICT-related in any way should be considered consistent with ACS' values. The way to ensure its consistency with values is simply to check whether the business-line is ICT-related in any way. **[P01]**

There is a comment in the preamble stating:

“The Centrality of the Professional Membership

Members may want the Constitution to entrench direct involvement of the professional membership in the determination of the Society's values, purposes, strategy and priorities.

We seek your thoughts on whether this is an appropriate foundational statement.”

Although views are sought on this statement, a question was not asked about it.

It is ridiculous to suggest that members should get involved in the operations of running the business of ACS. The business strategy and priorities of ACS are completely operational, and members should have no involvement in the development of these. These are business matters and are best left to paid staff employed by the ACS. As well, there are two sets of values – the values prescribed by ACS that ICT professionals who are members should apply when working in their ICT jobs, and the internal values that paid staff should abide by when performing their job in ACS. Either set of values does not have a place in the Constitution. **The paid staff should run ACS as a business** and continue to provide membership benefits to the satisfaction of members. **[Q01]**

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus? (P2)

Available surplus from business lines should first partly be reserved as retained earnings for future growth of that business line, then the remainder should go back to supporting ACS, its membership, and its activities.

The ACS organisation should be supported by ensuring it has enough resources such as cash reserves and staff, etc.

The membership should be supported in a number of ways, such as subscription fees could be made free-of-charge. Free events and drinks for members every month in Branch hubs. Professional development for members could be supported with one free vendor training course annually, e.g. CISSP.

ACS activities should include development of key publications such as Digital Pulse, events that influence political leaders, and education about ICT for the general public.

Q11: 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? (P3, P9)

Yes. Branches are different sizes and have different strengths and weaknesses and only branches would know how best to allocate resources and develop local relationships.

To be clear however, the branch staff should have primary responsibility for activities. BECs should only perform three functions (i.e. advice, advocacy, and access) and have zero operational involvement. This ensures good governance and avoids any potential conflict of interest scenarios, which have happened in the past.

Q12: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations? (P4)

Yes. Is this question similar to/same as question 6? This question does not clarify whether the hypothetical specialist associations are professional or industry.

In one idea, ACS could provide funds to run events and also corporate services (IT, HR, finance, marketing) for other associations in exchange for membership (i.e. members of the other specialist association become members of ACS, and ACS gets their membership revenue). In effect, these specialist associations would become similar to ACS branches – members are provided with resources to run activities similar to what is described in Q6.

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

No, **professional ACS members should not be able to nominate as an ACS Director.** Caveat: **unless they can supply relevant board director qualifications to ACS.**

ACS has grown over the last decade and is experiencing growing pains. In the distant past, the operational work of ACS was performed by well-intentioned volunteers, because ACS had small membership numbers, hence budget, and could not afford many full-time staff. Now, ACS has over 100 full-time staff nationally and volunteers are not required to perform the daily functions of ACS any more. Members who have previously volunteered their time working operationally might be left feeling unwanted and upset now that they are not required, and perhaps want to return to the old days when they were needed.

The curious part of this situation is that there is still plenty of room for volunteers in ACS. Tertiary students can volunteer their time as ambassadors and place ACS pamphlets in common rooms which they have access to and mentor other students on professional standards. Senior industry and academic members can volunteer their time mentoring more junior members. Special interest groups are best run by enthusiastic members who are passionate about the group's topic. Professional associations in other industries are much better at organising volunteer programs than ACS is. This points to a gap in ACS capabilities – **a strong volunteering program is required,** that organises and rewards members who donate their time. [Q07]

The other growing pain being experienced is at board-level. ACS has grown to a \$50 million organisation and cannot allow boardroom-unqualified members to sit on its board of directors. Addressing the wording in the question, previous experience serving on boards should not be confused with governance qualifications. Again, in the past, ACS depended on the altruistic efforts of ICT-experienced but board-unqualified MC members. ACS has grown to the point where a professionalisation of the board is now required. Performing board duties should not be confused with acting as an ICT professional. The ACS has ICT professionals as members, not board directors. The AICD would be able to draw from amongst its membership to fill its board of directors, but not ACS. 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,

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. The idea that Joe, who runs the corner IT shop in Darwin, should sit on the board of a \$50 million organisation, simply because he represents NT, is ludicrous (no offence to NT members). We all support the idea that ACS should be a professional association that supports high standards for ICT professionals, so why wouldn't we want the same for board directors on the board of ACS? Asking unqualified individuals to perform work is completely contrary to ACS values.

Now, of course, there are some ACS members who also own their own medium/large companies and are therefore experienced and qualified board directors. Those members who are experienced in fulfilling board director roles for other companies that are at least \$50 million in size should be allowed to serve on the ACS board, but there will not be many. The ACS board should therefore allow independent non-executive directors, who are not members, to provide diversity of thought. The number should ebb and flow, depending on how many qualified ACS members put their hand up. A small board of around seven independent directors is good governance and is the recommended model from AICD.

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

Zero.

Internal policies are best set by the CEO and the Board. Members are in effect the 'customers' of ACS. ... [P01]

... Members can provide feedback on what services they enjoy and would like to see more of but not how those services should be delivered. Imagine trying to tell Facebook what their internal policies should be, simply because you have a Facebook profile? Imagine telling YouTube how to run their business because you made a video once? From an ownership perspective, imagine telling Woolworths how to set internal policies because you bought a parcel of 10 shares on the ASX? Just because members are the customers (and owners) of ACS, doesn't mean they can tell ACS how to do its job. **The most involvement that members should have, as with other organisations, is to vote for which director they want to fill a vacancy**. Bizarrely, whether ACS members should be able to vote directly for directors, instead of the old boy's club voting for themselves from amongst Congress in a massive conflict of interest, doesn't form part of the questions in this survey. **[P11] [Dir]**

Again, we expect ICT professionals to adhere to high standards in their work. Why would we expect any different for the ACS business staff? Why would an ICT professional have any expertise in marketing, HR, or event management? It makes no sense and ACS members should stick to being recognised as experts on ICT matters, not business management.

RE: Suggestions of Principles for Draft ACS Constitution.

Thank you for allowing ACS members the opportunity to make suggestions about the principles for the draft ACS constitution. Please find my ideas for 11 principles below.

For the purposes of my response, I define **a principle as a guideline for behaviour**. [P00]

With warm wishes. Richard Cordes MACS CP

1 Living Vision Statement

Constitutional Principles

A vision statement answers the question, 'What does the ACS want to become?'

- For example: To be Australia's go-to for ICT professionals.
- Both vision and mission statements are succinct one-line statements.

2 Living Mission Statement

A mission statement answers the question, 'Why does the ACS exist?'

- For example: To advance the ICT profession in Australia.

3 Decisions/Activities Contribute to ACS Vision/Mission, and Values

The vision, mission, and values of the ACS provide the context in which decisions are made.

4 Utilise Successful Delivery Methods

For example, led by applying the Managing Benefits ® Methodology.

Supported by:

- Prince 2
- Managing Successful Programs

5 Core ACS Businesses Processes Are Architected End-To-End at National Level

- Core businesses processes are architected end-to-end at the national level, within the context of the ACS constitution, vision, mission, and values.
- These processes are base lined, placing them under change control.
- A relentless focus on making things simpler, more accessible, and responsive.
- ACS has a simple organisation form, with lean staff.

6 Branch Centred Execution, and Nationally Supported

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. [P03] [P10]

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

7 Customer at the Centre and Forefront of Everything That the ACS Does

Understand who ACS' customers are, and always satisfies their needs.

- Customers may include: members, organisations, industry associations, Universities, TAFE's, RTO's, other?

8 Stick to the Knitting

- The ACS does what it is naturally great at.
- The ACS focuses on the intersection of where its natural ability and passion collide.

9 ACS Supports Diversity and Inclusion in All That It Does

- Tolerance and respect for the individual.
- Actively supports diversity including age, gender, culture.
- Recognition that the loss of any one voice diminishes the harmony of the entire choir.
- Actively strives to build bridges; not brick walls.

10 Upholds the Australian Constitution and Australian Values

The ACS constitution supports and upholds the Australian constitution, and Australian values.

11 Branch Executive Committee Candidates

Members have sufficient opportunity to attend sessions where candidates 'pitch' their vision/ideas/reasons for wanting to being elected to the BEC, followed by Q&A. **[P10]**

Attention: Australian Computer Society Constitutional Reform Working Group

Regarding: Membership Consultation Round 1

Dear Dr Nick Tate and Dr Roger Clarke,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide first round feedback on the proposed constitutional reform. I will do my best to provide my feedback, which will be a combination of both the objective and subjective, directly covering the 14 specific questions, as well as some other areas that I feel is as important. I'll also do my best to be as clear as possible, and where necessary will aim to provide background context to my feedback to aid interpretation. I have included my contact details at the end of this submission and am more than happy to discuss any of these items in further detail if that would be helpful.

I will start with a brief summary of myself and my ACS membership so you can understand my circumstances. I am a 39-year-old living with my wife and our two pre-school age boys in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne. I have many decades left to work so my hope is that I will be able to continue my decades of mortgage repayments working as an ICT Professional in Melbourne. I have been an ACS member since 2004 when I graduated from the ACS accredited Bachelor of Information Technology from Swinburne. I take our code of ethics seriously, and strive to embody our professional values in my 17 years working in the ICT industry in Melbourne. Over that time, I have attended three ACS events in total. While I consider myself an ICT Professional, I am disengaged from the ACS, and over the last 5 years specifically, I have questioned myself many times about whether there is any value in me continuing my membership. I am not alone. Many of my university classmates have struggled with this too, so that I now know of only two remaining ACS members from my year. The reason I have remained an ACS member, is the same reason I am taking time to provide this feedback; **I want the ACS to discard the distractions, and focus on delivering the greatest value to professional members.** It is from this perspective that I respectfully provide the following feedback.

Q1: Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

Feedback: Yes, I believe the ACS should continue to be a professional society as defined by the Australian Council of Professionals.

Q2: Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

Feedback: That's challenging as I don't have a better simple umbrella label that might still be relevant in a couple of decades than "ICT". I would suggest we **stay away from using current buzz words that may not last a 10 or 20 year horizon.** At that next level down, there are technologies that all need to be included, like hardware, software, networking, data, analytics, etc, but I don't have a better label to offer than "ICT".

Q3: Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

Feedback: I would like to suggest that the proposed Mission and Purposes be rephrased to include a specific reference to the jurisdiction in which we are expecting these purposes to be carried out. This could be handled by adding a place to the Mission statement such as:

*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.*

While I understand the Australian focus of the Australian Computer Society may be implicitly assumed in whatever we do, I feel the Davos trips probably warrant some reframing to ensure that focus remains squarely on our locality.

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

Feedback: I am unclear what the point of someone with no real interest in becoming a professional has joining a professional society. The ACS is a professional society and as such **joining as an associate should be the starting point of a journey which leads to meeting professional membership requirements.** We all individually and collectively strive to uphold the values of professionalism, and while associates do not yet meet all of the requirements of professionals, whether that be core body of knowledge, experience, or code of ethics, we need to encourage them

along that way, 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.

Q5: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Feedback: I would see these ICT managers and users of ICT as associate members, who may not yet meet the requirements of professionals, whether that be core body of knowledge, experience, or code of ethics, and they should be provided with opportunity or pathway to become professional members. I do not support lowering the bar of the existing professional membership requirements to cast the net wider as it would undermine and cheapen the brand.

Q6: Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

Feedback: I would support a **separation of these industry associations and our professional society to avoid tension**. If that is not practical then a risk managed way to host industry associations would be tolerable. At a really high level, I would view industry associations as only tangentially related to our professional society, and as such would support a separate holding subsidiary (e.g. ACS Enterprises Pty Ltd) as suggested. I am not at all fussed if that could constrain the association (which in my humble opinion might actually be a good thing to protect the professional society).

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised?

Feedback: Yes. I've felt this for a long time now (over a decade). While I can appreciate the many key functions of the ACS, the one that is of most importance to me is actually the one that always seems to be listed last and is seldom, if ever, given any weight. Specifically, **public statements, submissions, advocacy to government etc**. In my humble opinion, this is the most valuable thing that the ACS can actually do for me, and members like me, as it's the only one that I cannot do myself. Maintaining a code of ethics, professional development, education programs, networking events, career advice, etc are all things that I can and am currently doing myself. However, I can't lobby government for better conditions in the ICT industry in Australia. I have tried, multiple times, with polite dear insert name here responses from staffers of our elected officials.

I want our professional society to be a mouth piece to give us members a voice in the public domain, similar to how the AMA issue statements representing Doctors whenever some politician thinks something (usually silly) is a good idea, advocating for sensible outcomes and the rights of Doctors. I don't want to be reading in the AFR about how tech entrepreneurs who have not yet paid a cent of tax in Australia want to dictate their terms on Australian public policy so their offshore domiciled profits can be maintained; I want to read a considered rebuttal to that corporate greed advocating on behalf of the members who work for these sociopaths. **I want an outwardly focused society who is engaging with policy makers, captains of industry, media outlets and the public**.

Casey's recent articles in the Information Age actually capture a really good thread, the great resignation vs skills shortage vs foreign worker imports vs employers no longer investing in training staff vs poor career outcomes for STEM students. While this discussion appears fairly obvious to anyone currently working in the industry and is well-articulated by Casey, **it is not a mainstream public discussion, and would benefit all members if this was injected into the news cycle along to counter act the existing self-serving articles**.

This may be a tad more detail than you were looking for, but I'm just really passionate about this, and I feel it has the opportunity to add great value to membership by having "someone in our corner".

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

Feedback: No. I would argue that this is **a misdirection of funds** on the following grounds:

- We are not a research institute.

- We are not an education provider.
- We are not venture capitalists.
- We are not an incubation hub.
- We are not a shared office space provider.
- We are not government departments.
- We are not universities.

We are a society of professional members. Let the above groups do the bits that they are good at, and if there is a crying need that is not met by the above groups, then I would recommend partnering with universities or government to make our impact significantly greater than we would be able to achieve alone.

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.

Q9: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

Feedback: I support the draft meta-principle as the centrality of the professional membership, as this has been sorely lacking in the last 5 years. The draft wording of the foundational statement is also good.

I think the three draft principles provided in the examples toward the end of page 6 provide good practical direction to strategic decisions to ensure the centrality is maintained. I should however note that I am not a lawyer.

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

Feedback: Towards serving members. Ultimately our society, like all businesses will be subjected to the ebbs and flows of business cycles, and a strong financial position should be maintained. If we have the luxury of a surplus (profit) and we have already used that to financially strengthen our balance sheet by paying down debt and liabilities (something not always possible in leaner times), then I would suggest the guidance of the previous principles. On the off chance you are also looking for specific actionable examples, then I would suggest partnering with Pluralsight as their training material is excellent, covers many of the ACS's focus areas and is already widely used in the industry (I've used it myself to do about 5 certifications exams so far).

Q11: 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?

Feedback: Yes, the branches should continue to have the power to organise activities in their geographical area. However, I must confess I don't fully understand or appreciate the federated structure to our organisation. It seems to me to be a little over complicated. If the last 2 years are anything to go by, then I'm guessing that an amount of our events going forward would be online, in which case local branches might be less required. I'm unclear whether a single branch organises their own events in isolation, as it would seem to me that there might be a number of events that would be nationally relevant.

Q12: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations?

Feedback: Yes, probably a good idea given that we already have other industry associations. As long as it does not distract from the central purpose of our society.

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

Feedback: Any professional member with appropriate experience or qualifications should be able to nominate for the board.

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

Feedback: Yes, but only for the larger "big ticket items" like changes to the mission or purposes. Otherwise, aren't we constraining the delegation of powers?

A2: Postings to crwg.submission@acs.org.au on Response Forms

As at Sat 30 Oct 2021, to 10:00 UT+11

1. Anthony Mayer – anthony@onlineiseasy.com.au Thu 30/09/2021 3:18 AM

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)? [Q04]

2. Susan Beetson – s.beetson@uq.edu.au Thu 30/09/2021 5:50 AM

I would like to know what the ACS as an organisation is doing about a implementing 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.

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/>

[P01]

3. Justin Pierce – jp@justinpierce.com.au Sun 3/10/2021 9:41 PM

You have not made the case for why a company limited by guarantee is necessary. Everything else on the consultation is reasonable, but this important aspect has been sidestepped. There appears to be no compelling reason why a company limited by guarantee is needed, except perhaps to justify the expenditure to consultants the year before last.

All else is justified nicely and appears you want consultation on it, but the company structure is a fait accompli. What is the rationale? What were the pros and cons discussed? Please justify this decision. [CLG]

4. Anonymous – Tue 5/10/2021 7:24 AM

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. [Q07] [KF]

5. **Rimas Skeivys MACS Snr – rimas@ugovern.com.au** **Wed 13/10/2021 3:52 AM**

1. Governing body to consist of chair and an even number of members, with the chair having the casting vote. **[Dir]**
2. Any MACS or FACS member can stand / nominate for governing body election with support from two other MACS or FACS members. **[Q13]**
3. **Governing body appoints a full time company secretary reporting to the chair.** **[Dir]**
4. **Chief executive officer is appointed by the governing body and IS NOT a member of the governing body.** **[Dir]**

6. **Tom Cleary - tom.cleary@gmail.com** **Mon 18/10/2021 1:05 PM**

I think we need to **distinguish between "being a Professional" (which is a status related to experience and probity, good standing etc.) and "being a Practitioner"** which means you have expertise in a given skillset and invest time/money in staying current in your specialism. I think that the distinction would allow us to let ICT Leaders focus on Management/policy aspects of their career, whilst enabling those whose career leads them into increasing specialisation can avoid being mired in irrelevant Business elements to focus on their muse.

Frankly, although I can speak Business, the fact that the Managers I seek to persuade only work off loose analogy, and refuse to "learn to speak Dolphin" permitting them to understand the issues, so they can make decisions on fact instead of only seeing the numbers, would be nirvana. Impossible, but easy to improve, since COVID? **[Q05]**

7. **Martin Lack FACS - martin.lack@mlaa.com.au** **Wed 20/10/2021 10:30 AM**

Up until October 2019, I was able to analyse ACS' membership each month across all membership categories. For example, since March 2013, voting membership had halved; Associate membership had fallen by 40%; whilst Fellows had basically maintained numbers, the number of MACS had fallen by 70%. Clearly the Executive hated this mathematical analysis and stopped publishing data each month. Very sad because I gave insight into where they should focus effort especially knowing an ACS/Deloitte report showed there were 200,000 ICT workers in Australia compared to just 45,000 in the ACS including 25,000 Overseas Skills Prep so net 20,000 just 10%.

ACS clearly needs to provide this data to members so we can help it grow substantially - five time say. We need to encourage PROFESSIONAL membership not these casual Associates and OSP's. we need to show value to employees so they prefer to hire ACS Professionals. Win-win for members, business/government, Australia.

At a very detailed level, some tedious questions:

- What categories of people are in the Associate grade? How many are there in each category? (+/- 100 would be fine).
- How many of each category have the right to vote after allowing for those who are disallowed to vote: e.g. Overseas Branch members, students, etc?
- How many of each category pay what level of the fee schedule at <https://www.acs.org.au/join-ac.html> ?
- How many of each category have a gratis membership, granted because they are members of staff, or part of a start-up tenancy?

Knowing this will help focus discussions on A PROFESSIONAL ICT ASSOCIATION in Australia. We don't have one. :(**[P08] [Q04] [PS]**

8. Helen Vorrath FACS * – hvorrath@livenet.com.au Sun 24/10/2021 12:10 PM

I've been a CEO of a non-profit, and on the Board/Management Committee of another half a dozen. I also facilitate Strategic Planning sessions for NFPs. I've therefore spent a lot of time thinking about constitutions and organisation.

If there's one thing I'm absolutely convinced about, it is that **all Board/Management positions should have a tenure limit of between 3 and 5 years. No exceptions.** [Dir]

And **I don't think that having an "immediate past president" position is always helpful to the new President. It can be a constraint on new ideas.** [Dir]

Happy to provide my reasons if you're interested.

* except that I refused to keep paying my membership under the previous management, so I'm lapsed

9. Michael Scott – michael.scott@ths.tas.gov.au Fri 29/10/2021 5:30 AM

Thanks for the opportunity to express my views about the future of the ACS. Although the [Tasmanian Branch] session was about the ACS developing a new Constitution for a not-for-profit public holding company, I think there is much more at play here. That is why I made the special effort to attend on Tuesday. I hope my contribution was worthwhile.

This is just a quick note to confirm some of my strong views. Please forward all (or part of) this email to whoever you think needs to see it.

The Australian Computer Society (ACS) name has had its day in my opinion. I think it should be renamed/rebranded as IT Australia / InfoTech Australia / Information Technology Australia.

This would mean that the letters after my name would change from MACS to MITA. I have pondered on this matter for many years, and I will be shocked if anyone came up with a better name/brand/abbreviation.

Logically, the ACS should sort out its future branding before doing a new Constitution.

In my view, **ICT is wrong in so many ways.**

My definition: **IT = Computer Technology + Communications Technology**

Whenever I hear ICT, that to me is like hearing "Motor Vehicles and Toyotas".

Obviously someone at Telecom/Telstra insisted that the word Communications be included; hence we ended up with ICT which is just horrible branding!

I never have and never will describe myself as an ICT Professional.

The general public have no idea what ICT stands for (to them, you could have said XYZ and they would be just as confused).

I think most people know what IT means/covers (even if they cannot tell you what it is an abbreviation for). [Q02]

As a current Director of a Medical Research Foundation, I have recently been involved with a complete rewrite of the Constitution for the associated not-for-profit public trustee company. The biggest takeaway from that process was that (under the new Constitution) some Directors are elected and other Directors are directly appointed by the Board of Directors. [Dir]

The old Constitution did not have the flexibility to get a Board with the right experience/skills mix (and hence was dysfunctional). [Dir]

The ACS should have this flexibility in order to get a high performing Board of Directors.

As a professional investor (ie my other job, so to speak), I do not agree that the ACS should be investing in startup incubators, etc. [Q08]

The ACS should only have a scope/remit of providing services/benefits to its professional members. The ACS should not be in the business of investing – it has clearly demonstrated that it is not a very good investor! [Q07] [Q09]

A3: Attachments Sent Directly to CRWG Members

As at Fri 22 Oct 2021, to midnight UT+11

1. Jeff Mitchell

1 June 2019

ACS Canberra – Future Statement

For many years there has been a debate across the ACS about how we, as the peak body for ICT professionals, is to remain relevant in an era of rapid technical and business disruption.

In a world characterised though technically enabled fake news and manipulation of social media for political ends, an unsettling trust vacuum is being created in our society which is not being filled by either government or industry.

In our near-term future, the ethics which we instill in our members, and the trust in we promote in our stakeholders and community, will become our essential core asset, and point of difference, of our value.

In this future, our trusted collective voice will increasingly be sought after by Australian government, industries and communities.

This provides a clear context for an ACS strategic narrative and is the opportunity for the Future ACS.

There has never been a better time for professional associations to regroup and refocus, to collaborate, and to celebrate their relevance.

The future, member focused, ACS structure should:

- promote a shared vision to shape our future
- create relevancy by broadening the reach of our **thought leadership into social and public roles** [P01]
- amplify the career opportunities of our individual members, and
- **foster grass roots agility, innovation and value-added activities at a branch level.** [P10] [Q11]

ACS Canberra strives to demonstrate ACS Best Practice and we believe in the relevance of our Society and our role in shaping a vibrant future Australia. ACS Canberra Branch Executive 2019

2. Rod Dilnutt

16 Jun 2021

From: Rod Dilnutt <Rod.Dilnutt@acs.org.au>

Sent: 19 June 2021 11:36:03 (UTC+10:00) Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

To: Rupert Grayston <Rupert.Grayston@acs.org.au>

Cc: Ian Oppermann <Ian.Oppermann@acs.org.au>; VIC Branch Executive Committee <VIC.BEC@acs.org.au>; Keith Sherringham <Keith.Sherringham@acs.org.au>

Subject: CEO BEC Victoria Update 16 June

Dear Rupert

Many thanks for sharing ACS progress with the BEC, Victoria on Wednesday last. It is heartening to see early signs of leadership transparency on ACS matters.

If I may, there are two observations I would like to make.

1. During the presentation of the revenues and expense breakdowns session I noted a number of instances where the word 'subsidising' was used in reference to members and Branches.

Other similarly connotated words included 'loss leader', and 'non-viable'. There was also inference those members should be paying consumers of ACS services to overcome the shortfall in membership fee contribution to overall revenue.

My interpretation of ACS objects and my fundamental reason for being a member is that ACS is first and foremost, a member-centric professional society. **To view members as a drain on resources is in conflict with this member-centric principle.** [P00]

I have no quarrel with ACS seeking revenue however, the **funds raised must be channelled into supporting member services.** Viewing member and Branch transactions as 'subsidiaries' underlies a conflicting perception of the ACS ethos. [Q10]

In making these comments I point out that language use is central to the politically correct debates we are having over workplace health, and safety. In our recent ACS training the recognition of 'indirect inference' as a factor in bullying was an emphasis - language is important.

The fundamental existential question here is 'Is ACS a member-centric organisation or not?'

2. ADMA. Notwithstanding the significant impact on the overall budget position, the projections of ADMA achieving a positive financial contribution in future financial years begs **the question of congruency of aims of ADMA as a commercial entity with ACS objectives as a NFP professional society.** Positive financial contribution is good, but is this aligned with ACS values? [Q06]

Rupert, I offer these observations in good faith and trust they make a positive contribution as ACS looks to the future.

Happy to speak anytime.

Dr Rod Dilnutt FACS FBCS CP
Vice Chair Branch Executive Committee, ACS Victoria
0413 777 537
<http://au.linkedin.com/in/roddilnutt/>

Q1 The ACS should continue to be a professional society

Q2 I see no compelling reason to change the Mission and Purposes

Q3 The re-phrasing as suggested seem fine to me

Q4 I see no compelling reason to re-establish threshold requirements for Associate grade but I question whether people of that grade should have any voting rights

Q5 Managers and users of ICT should be allowed as members, subject to defined standards being met

Q6 The ACS should **dispose of these Industry Associations in an orderly manner**

Q7 No need to revise the Society's Key Functions

Re Commercial Business Lines - **The ACS should dispose of these commercial business lines in an orderly manner. They have no place in a Professional Society**

Q8 The Society should not provide substantial, direct support for innovation. It has no place in a professional society

Centrality of Professional membership - Consultation - Yes; Detailed involvement - No [P08]

Embodiment of Values - Yes

Behaviour consistent with Values - Yes

Q9 The ACS should dispose of these business lines. They have no place in a Professional Society

Q10 Any surplus belongs to the Members. The surplus should be allowed to build up a reasonable contingency to cater for unexpected events. Any substantial surplus should be returned to member perhaps in the form of lower fees. If the ACS exits Commercial Business Lines, as I advocate, it is unlikely that there will be a significant surplus

Q11 No - there is no more global industry than ICT. That being so, why should Branches plot their own course?

Q12 No - the ACS is a professional Society ill-equipped to manage and supervise diverse interests, especially those of a commercial nature

Q13 Yes for professional members but not associate grade

Dual-Electorate Mechanism - No

Workable delegations - No.

Accountability - Yes

Q14 Endorsement of Key Policies - Yes by professional member voting

Role of Branches - No;

Appropriate Governance - Agree;

Legal Compliance - Agree

Q1 - Absolutely. See comment below Q4/Q5 on Professional member grades.

Q2 - ICT is fine – there will always be blurring of scope regardless of what term is used. Digital can mean anything and, terms like AI / Robotics may be too specific, current hotspots and may lose meaning as the Industry evolves.

Q3 - I like the emphasis on 'member', in this statement. Definition of the member grades MACS, FACS to ensure voting is restricted to professional members.

Q4 /Q5

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

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** – ICT managers would satisfy this criteria and would be eligible for Member Grade after a probation period i.e. Professional.

The current R& R restrict membership to those over 16. Provision for future professionals such as **Secondary students should also be recognized**, although an alternative to the 'Associate' term should be found – 'student member?'

Granting membership benefits to tenants of ACS Labs as members is inappropriate and devalues professional qualification.

Further, all members of ACS Governing bodies should be Professional Members.

Q6 – ACS is a 'member' not 'industry' body and membership must meet professional standards. ACS member standards must meet the code of conduct and not serve to commercial gain. **ACS should not be acquiring industry associations and should divest** those that compromise the member ethos.

The ACS entity portfolio needs review as ADMA and ACS Labs/RCL and maybe others that we are unsure of, do not align well in a NFP or with the professional member. The \$1mill+ loss by ADMA in 2019/20 is a further distraction away from the member focus. Further, ADMA members are very different to ACS professional members.

Q7 OK

Q8 While the need to attract revenue is obvious, commercial undertakings such as ACS Labs does 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 business like this does little to create sustainable revenue and carries unwelcome risk. If ACS is to invest in commercial entities, then this should be separated from the core governance portfolio.

Q9 – Benchmarking against the Mission and Purposes statement. The test is 'how does this benefit the member at large?'

Q10 – **Surplus should be invested back into providing member benefit.** All activity should be tested through business case with delegated sign-off extended to BEC.

Q11 – Yes Absolutely and subject to R12.3. Each Branch must be controlled and managed by a Branch Executive Committee constituted as set out in the National Regulations, must be retained and enforced. This is far from the case at the moment. 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. **The BEC is the conduit for members to engage with ACS. The current influence by the CEO and staff is problematic.** [P10]

Q12 – Yes notwithstanding congruence of entity aims see response to Q6 and Q9

Q13 – Any member should be able to stand.

Q14 – Members should have decision making power and visibility over all policy and operational activity. Staff should not determine ACS Policy but should be advising Governing bodies of requirements.

After reading the nine-page document, I think you've got a very sound basis and the process is heading in the direction I would support.

General comments I have:

I think the idea of the ACS (as a professional society) being able to 'spawn' subsidiary commercial organisations that are operated by a separate board (possibly with some common board members) is critical to allow the ACS to continue to operate its money-making ventures without compromising the professional society's ongoing operations. The various ideas suggested about being consistent with the society's principles and surpluses/dividends being directed to support key functions are exactly appropriate. [P04]

I think that the **ACS should continue to allow 'members' who do (yet) meet the 'professional' threshold. They can be labelled Associates, or "Friends" of the Society. They, and the other non-professional grades (e.g. students, retirees), would not have voting rights** in matters concerning the operations of the society but could reasonably expect to participate in (some of) the benefits of membership (access to knowledge resources, access to professional development opportunities, etc). [Q05]

It may be worth considering structuring the Board of the Society along the lines of (say) 5 individuals elected from professional membership and 4 non-executive directors appointed by the Board from anywhere (members or not). That would allow the board **to reinforce its skill matrix** and access experienced board members to support the members who might not have as much experience as is desired. [Dir]

Following on from that, 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 **allow branches to work in synchrony with the national strategies but adapting to local conditions**, which would be made known to national in that committee. Anyway, something like that. [P10]

I hope that this is helpful. I'm happy to draw out more detail on these rough ideas, if you feel that it would be helpful.

Dr Tim Turner, FACS, GAICD
0412 679 881

6. Sheldon King MACS (Snr) CP IP3P – sheldon@sheldonking.com 30 October 2021

I couldn't find a way to sensibly add this to the Groups.io forum for everyone to see, but I'd like it included in deliberations if that's possible.

Due to time constraints, it's not as polished as I would have liked. Please feel free to discard anything that doesn't make sense and excerpt anything that you think might be useful

I'm happy for you to post this somewhere on the groups and tag it if you think that's helpful in any way.

Having reviewed all the responses as they've come in with interest, my observation so far is that everyone seems to be getting bogged down in the details without having actually agreed on the primary aims.

I think the whole Company vs Association discussion is really one that's best had by the lawyers and accountants and for a specific consultation document to be drafted for members to review.

Speaking of which, if I were a lawyer or accountant who wasn't a member of their professional association, would I be getting a gig advising an organisation attempting to rebuild itself after pulling back from the brink of an existential crisis? Of course not! No-one would insure me and no right-minded business-person would hire me.

Having spent a sizeable majority of my ICT career working with professional services organisations of all shapes and sizes, it's my position that 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:

- Setting and maintaining a sufficiently high bar for membership
- Supporting members in maintaining and improving their professional standing
- Shaping the nature of public interest with regard to the profession
- Promoting the profession as interesting, engaging as well as personally and financially rewarding for potential newcomers
- **Designing and supporting pathways that lead from layperson to professional** [Q04]
- Influencing policy, procedure and legislation relating to the industry [Q07]
- Ensuring that those working in a position of professional responsibility is a member and that membership is in good standing

There are dozens, if not hundreds of professional associations all over the world working to support their members, solidifying in the minds of the public expectations of professionalism and competence of their membership and influencing policy and legislation. A concerted effort needs to be made to look at what those other organisations do well and where the shortfalls so that we can avoid reinventing the wheel during this process.

Q1 Should the ACS Continue to be a Professional Society?

Yes. If the ACS isn't in the best position to be the pre-eminent representative of IT professionals in Australia ... who else is?

Q2 Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

Whatever it's called, it has to be readily understood.

I think it's time for the word "Communications" to go - it's well and truly implied and I can't see how a case could be made to keep it.

Lawyer. Accountant. Architect. Teacher. Doctor. Engineer. Valuer. Vet. Pharmacist. Psychologist. Surveyor.

We need to be able to distill ourselves down to a single word (OK, three tops) that everyone understands represents our profession at a high level.

I'm going with **Information Technology Professional** because it seems like that's a catch-all that's difficult to argue with.

(As an aside, should we think about being the Australian Society of Information Technology Professionals??)

Q3 Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

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?

Q4 Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

In a world that changes as often as ours does, this should be a regular occurrence. Professional standing has to be the motivating factor here, not membership numbers.

The point has been well made by others that a professional society should have a high bar to membership. The proprietor of Joe Bloggs Computer Shop who set up because his friends thought he'd be good at computers after a tragic plumbing accident is not a viable candidate for instant Professional membership. The ACS should, however welcome Joe with open arms as an Associate and provide support by way of, recommendations to endorsed educational resources, networking events, peer mentoring and even grants or investment if it's appropriate.

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.

Q5 Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Should the Law Society of NSW, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, embrace paralegals and secretarial staff as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Should the Australian Medical Association, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, embrace orderlies and cleaners as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

Asked another way, would you be happy for a legal secretary with a Cert II in office skills to review the lease for your office, or are you happy having the unqualified wards-person at the hospital change the dressing on a wound?

Of course not.

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 they operate in their own right.

The aim should be to continually raise public expectations of IT professionals ability to deliver and to dramatically reduce the number of high-profile IT projects that "crash and burn" at enormous public and professional expense.

Q6 Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

From my observation, the ACS "acquisition" of seemingly unrelated loss-making industry associations without any kind of consultation or reference to existing membership is where things really started to go wrong.

The settings around conflict of interest would be dependent on how important it is for existing members for the professional recognition and lobbying aims of the Society are. I'd say that aligning with industry associations when there is a mutual benefit is a sound strategy (subject to formal agreement and regular review), but when that benefit is realised or times have moved on, that alignment must be relinquished. 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.

I think the formation of **“Technical Societies” for specialised areas could be a valuable initiative**, and could be a good membership draw-card, **but the type of support would have to be carefully managed**. Support with venues for meetings, promotion internally to the broader membership, break-out sessions at national congress and so forth all seem sensible. [P04]

Q7 Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised?

From the list in the consultation document, I'm inclined to say "all of them!"

Member support seems to be at a particular low, with the number of events (whether virtual or IRL) have plummeted to just about zero, if there are professional advocacy campaigns running it's hard to tell. I realise COVID put paid to a lot of conferences and events, but are ACS staff working towards new initiatives as things open up?

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. [P08]

Q8 Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9) If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

I support the ACS making investments of surplus so long as the choices of investment support the industry at large. 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?

In any event, I'd be more inclined to consider it a side-interest than a key function of the Society, however it may be more plausible for the Society to agree to administer a government-funded program of innovation investment to the benefit of the industry and its membership in general.

Q9 How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

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. If there are doubts or special considerations, the Board should be able to make a sensible, conflict-of-interest free final determination.

Q10 How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

Notwithstanding that the ACS shouldn't really have surplus beyond what is necessary to keep the Society viable, **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. [Q03]

Q11 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?

As a member of ACS who has lived regionally for the last 20 years, I'd be inclined to refer to the Branches as City Branches rather than State Branches. We've been very light on any kind of events during COVID, and prior to that everything is very city centric. Recent changes in worker behaviour find people much more spread out and needing access to networking and education literally all over the country. The current constitution of branch responsibility, reporting and electoral make-up seems unnecessarily complicated and riddled with needless duplication whilst increasingly delivering less and less of member value - particularly outside Sydney. [Ch]

Technology breaks down geography - so it seems almost anachronistic for a this Society to purposely organise itself by location.

Perhaps a better constitution would be to **have Branches that are organised amongst area of interest (Specialist Branches), led by recognised experts in the fields and supported by dedicated administrative staff funded by the ACS.** These Specialist Branches would have national reach, deep and specific engagement with their members and representation at higher levels of the ACS. [P04]

Most IT related issues are national (with Federal government responsible for over-arching IT related legislation), and as a regional dweller, it seems that there is more commonality of IT issues amongst regional areas as a group and metropolitan areas as a group than there would be in Sydney vs Foster. Where there are nonsensical state-by-state treatments of IT issues, workers or infrastructure by government, this might be a good place for the ACS to flex its lobbying muscle.

Q12: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations?

I think the Society as a whole would be better served by specialist groups who were part of the Society itself, rather than separate entities. Creating more entities, more constitutions and more administration doesn't seem to be a sensible way to structure a Professional Society which, in order to be effective in public education, government policy and member representation should be able to present a unified front.

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P05)

Being an IT Professional does not automatically qualifies someone as suitable to sit on a Board, and certainly not one of a large organisation. 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.

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

The appropriate balance of Board oversight and member plebiscite must be found to prevent the ACS from becoming hamstrung by constantly deliberating minor decisions. Once the Membership has agreed the constitution, the Board and ACS staff must be left to execute the strategies this informs. **[P09]**

There must be an opportunity for regular review amongst interested members, and ongoing communication with the membership about significant decisions being made. We are, after all, a Society of Information Professionals so we should surely be able to get this right??! **[P08]**

Australian Computer Society

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Jan Kornweibel – Answers to Questions to the Membership – Round 1

Q1: Should the ACS continue to be a professional society? (Consultation Document, p.1)

Yes

Q2: Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? (p.2)

'ICT' is suitable for today, but could have appending considered 'including, but not limited to aspects as data analytics, AI and robotics'.

Q3: Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered? (p.2)

Generally, they look good (not misleading or dated). However, is it appropriate to include the recognition of First Nations, and Diversity and Inclusion in this section?

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them? (p.3)

I believe so.

Q5: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership? (p.3)

Not sure what is meant by 'professional membership'; my understanding has been all member levels should follow the Code of Ethics, and, in the past, Associates and Member levels could vote and stand for most office bearer roles. Managers of ICT could be appropriate professional members, but Users of ICT is likely to be too wide, especially in the present and future.

Q6: Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

The arrangement adopted by Engineers Australia is an interesting approach, but we should devise a risk-managed way to avoid harm to the ACS and the relevant industry associations. ACS acquiring industry associations can be offered as benefits to its members, but the associations need to be assessed as appropriate to the profession.

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)

The importance of networking and mentoring could be more emphasised (at least in this branch)

... centrally provided events such as Education Across the Nation and International speakers should be continued.

Q8: Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? (pp.4-5,9) If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

I see the Society's business lines as means to an end, not ends in themselves. Prioritisation of the allocation of surpluses from operational activities should reflect the Society's Nature, Mission, Purposes and Key Functions.

Revenue generating activities need to be not inconsistent with ACS' objectives and code of ethics; ACS could have advantage in having a Board with business expertise, though not at the expense of supporting members and objectives and ethics.

Q9: How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

Any ACS activity, including business-lines, should at all times be consistent with, the Society's purposes and values. Could this be ensured through the Code of Ethics?

Q10: How should the ACS allocate available surplus? (P2)

In allocating surplus arising from business-lines, ACS is to prioritise expenditure on the ACS's Key Functions, in particular services to the public and to the membership.

Q11: 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? (P3, P9)

Although ACS Branches should be responsible for activities in their area, centrally provided events such as Education Across the Nation and International speakers should be continued.

Q12: Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations? (P4)

The capability can be included, but assessed and managed in line with Code of Ethics and Mission and Purposes.

Special Interest Groups and specialist associations can be included, for example.

Q13: Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

Professional ACS members should be able to nominate, even if 'training' is required for association or corporate Boards is provided by the ACS. This will include anticipation of legal requirements.

Q14: What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

Members and committees with responsibilities for defining these can create and amend, but members should be informed and encouraged to give feedback as appropriate.

Australian Computer Society
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
Questions to the Membership — Round 1
Version of 18 September 2021

Response from Denis Street FACS HLM

Following comments are offered in response to the consultation papers.

My comments are largely from my background in professional standards and governance. I have not been involved with ACS operations for quite a few years so this has affected my ability to provide a more meaningful response to many of the questions.

My comments are also being offered against a background of many years involvement with ACS governance and the development and maintenance of professional standards. In particular:

- Many years involved with ACS governance and membership application processing, prior to that processing being centralised in National Office.
- Formed the Professional Standards Compliance Group and I was its inaugural chair from 2011 until about 2017. Significant Professional Standards audits were conducted. This group was formed in the professional standards part of the ACS and then moved into the business compliance area.
- National Vice-President for 5 years from 1996-2000
- Member of the ACS Membership Board 2000-2005 (approx)
- Coordinat or of activities for the successful introduction of ACS Towards 2000 project to improve professionalism in the ACS (new membership structure based on the new Core Body of knowledge).
- Long term member of Victoria BEC (1988 – 1999) and branch treasurer. Chair of branch membership processing committee. Prior to that time I was also on the Canberra BEC processing membership applications and serving as treasurer.
- Member of the ACS Governance of ICT Committee in 2004 and contributed to the Australian Standard on ICT Governance

In my non-ACS life I have also had many years experience in senior management and governance positions, both ICT and non-ICT.

Constitutions and all that

I do have a concern with the way that the word constitution is being used in the consultation papers. What I mean is that many of the matters in the consultation papers have little to do with a constitution, and are more to do with business matters related to how the members want to shape and operate the ACS – many of these you would not want to lock into a constitutional document.

When I think of a constitution I think of a very high-level document that outlines the purpose of the organisation and how it is governed, with provision for the governing body/bodies to have authority to carry out a variety of activities within the stated purposes of the organisation. Many items in a constitution are mandated by regulatory authorities. There can then be supporting documents that cover many of the business matters addressed by many of the questions in the papers.

I realize that I am jumping ahead of the process but I think that clarity is necessary to ease the path forward – being the ageing pedantic engineer that I am!

1. **Should the ACS continue to be a professional society? (Consultation Document, (p.1)**

Yes definitely, and only be a professional society. This is its only reason for existence – to recognize, set and maintain professional standards in ICT in the public interest.

As such it is **a society of individuals, not corporations or commercial enterprises** and certainly as far as membership or perceptions of membership are concerned.

2. **Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT? (p.2**

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** over time, but at the professional level of the industry I would suggest that despite the different technologies there are many common professional elements that are relevant to the ACS.

3. **Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered? (p.2)**

I **agree** with the focus on the benefit to society and the suggested Mission and Purpose statements **with the exception of (7). Benefits to the public are critical but not the reference to benefits to members.**

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. **A NFP cannot give benefits to its members,** especially if members are on the governing body’. **Regulatory authorities have a problem with this.** I have had first-hand experience with this and the need to restructure a NFP to accommodate this aspect, causing lots of angst.

This might seem mundane but **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’.** 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.

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,** 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.

4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them? (p.3)

Yes, most definitely, as this is fundamental to the professional standing of the ACS.

I was most concerned to see the word ‘*re-establish*’ in the heading to this question, and to see the statement in Section 3.2 that ‘*the Associate grade has had no threshold requirements*’. Worse still is to see the mention of ‘*affiliation with the ICT profession*’. This clearly is a degradation of professional standards.

I was even more horrified to see on the ACS website, in the governing documents on membership grades, that ‘the Associates grade is an entry level and open grade of membership’. This is a major retrograde step in the professional standing of the ACS.

By way of explanation for my concern, a brief background is necessary. As the saying goes –those who forget history are bound to repeat it!

One of the fundamental components of the ACS Towards 2000 project that I led was the introduction of a Core Body of Knowledge, which articulated the core knowledge expected of an ICT professional.

This led to the ability to accredit courses on the basis of the delivery of the requisite core knowledge. Possession of the CBOK could also be demonstrated by other means, e.g., RPL. **The SFIA skills framework also developed in a similar timeframe and is an important adjunct to the CBOK.**

Turning to the **Associate grade**, as part of the ACS Towards 2000 project, this grade **was intended for applicants who could only demonstrate compliance with part of the CBOK** (and other requirements). **Associates could generally be considered as para-professionals and on their way to full professional status.** This could be students who had graduated from an accredited course but still had no requisite experience, or applicants who could demonstrate only partial compliance with the CBOK by other means. SFIA is also relevant in providing a suitable benchmark. I am out of touch with TAFE qualifications and how they would fit into the CBOK/SFIA frameworks these days.

The benefit of this CBOK approach is that it is not occupation or industry specific.

The ACS Towards 2000 project also, to the disappointment of many, abolished the **Affiliate grade** whereby a person just paid their subscription fee and became a member of the ACS. This grade **was removed as it was seen at the time as not consistent with the professional standing of the ACS. If appears that this aspect has crept back into the ACS under the Associate umbrella. This a significant retrograde step for the professional status of the ACS that must be corrected.**

If there is a wish to have affiliates associated with the ACS then a way needs to be found that does not imply membership of the profession. When the ACS did have an affiliate grade, members of that grade could legitimately claim that they were a member of the ACS, but this caused confusion with the professional grade of Member. The big ‘M’ versus the little ‘m’ question.

5. Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership? (p.3)

Yes, and this is normal. 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. This is the benefit of the CBOK and SFIA frameworks approach.

6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations, or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets? (pp.3-4)

As a professional society the ACS must only be a society of individuals, not corporations or commercial entities. I have no problem with relationships with such entities but it must be in a way that does not have any hint of or imply membership of the ACS.

I don't feel that I can sensibly comment on the approaches suggested at 3.3. Suffice to repeat that any arrangement must not suggest of imply membership of the professional body.

7. Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised? (pp.4,9)

I agree with the key functions at Section 4 and Appendix A, except for the references to Benefits to Members, as stated at Question 3.

Great care is needed with the wording of the third bullet point as there is a big difference between 'the benefits of being a member' and the 'delivery of benefits to members', especially at the constitutional level. An 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 authorities have a problem with this. I have had first-hand experience with this and the need to restructure a NFP to accommodate this aspect, causing lots of angst.

8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus? (pp.4-5,9)

I do not see a need for it to be added as a formal function for the ACS. Without any real understanding of where ACS Labs currently sit within the ACS structure I can see it as a business matter (not constitutional) entered into with consideration of professionalism, ethics, and the public good.

9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values? (Principle 2)

Through risk assessment and consideration of professional standards, ethics, and public good.

10. How should the ACS allocate available surplus? (P2)

This question applies to all funds that should only be allocated in advancing professional standards, ethical standards, and the public good.

11. 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? (P3, P9)

Yes. Branches are the focal point for member activity and should be resourced appropriately.

Branches are also a key training ground for members to gain experience with ACS governance and also be encouraged to nominate for a position in national governance.

12. Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations? (P4)

I have no basis on which to comment on this question, in addition to earlier comments that I have already made. Any arrangement should be with a kindred association, professional (non-trade) in nature, be consistent with ACS ethics, and have no suggestion of membership, other than for individual members of that association who might meet normal ACS membership requirements.

13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director, or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards? (P5)

Yes. Any professional member should be entitled to stand for the membership of the governing body, be it incorporated entity or CLG; governance requirements are not all that dissimilar.

Professional members should constitute the significant majority of the members of the governing body.

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.

For this reason I prefer the collegiate model of selecting board members, rather than direct election, although I would be comfortable with a small number of directly elected members. I have not had a chance to give any thought to non-ACS members serving on the board.

14. What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities? (P9)

This is always a matter of judgment and there can be no definitive answer. Obviously, some fundamental matters, i.e., 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.

Incorporation or CLG

One of the first matters I would suggest that needs to be addressed and put to bed is the question of the legal framework within which the ACS is to operate.

For quite a while now it has been obvious to me that the ACS was on borrowed time as a society incorporated in the ACT, for a number of reasons that I won't go into here (that are covered in the forum), and it is only a matter of time before the ACT Registrar forces a move to a CLG structure. Knowing bureaucracy as I do there will be no warning until a determination has been made and issued.

My view is that it is better to make this change under our own terms and timing rather than have it forced on us.

There are two key governance aspects in my mind that are being confused.

Firstly, there is the question of the legal governance framework within which the ACS would operate. In essence this is the skeleton of the body, i.e., the structural stuff! A lot of the compliance obligations are mandated so there is little discretion.

Secondly, and staying with my body analogy, 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. Much of this is contained in the ACS rules and regulations and business planning documents. My understanding is that the ACS is free to control and shape its destiny in whatever legal framework it operates.

My recommendation is the CLG framework.

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. [#P08] [#P09]

Karl Reed^{1 2}, FACS, HLM ACS, F IEAust, MIEEE, MSc(Monash Research only), ARMIT

KR 2021/11/01/v.02

ACS – Constitutional Reform³

Q1: Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

I agree with AG. *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.*

KR Adds. ICT is has become pervasive and has impact on almost any form of current human activity. It impacts our political social and economic independence. We depend upon ICT for systems that whose failure can cost lives, major economic loss and military defeat. All of this depends upon professional standards in the same way that medicine does.

Hence, there is a need for a national ICT professional society and if ACS does not fill that role, some other body will.

ACS must be the keeper of ICT professional standards and ethics

Q2 Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

I agree with AG *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.*

Q3 Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered

KR's view.. The mission statement needs to be altered to read as follows:-

"to promote the development of Australian information and communications technology resources ensuring that Australia has the capability to guarantee its safe, ethical, socially beneficial and effective application, and, production of the technology in Australia".

The "Secondary Objects" altered to read:

- advancement of professional excellence in ICT;
- furthering ICT study, science and application;
- promotion, development and monitoring of competence in the practice of ICT;
- definition and promotion of the maintenance of standards of knowledge in ICT;
- 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 ;**
- extension of the knowledge and understanding of ICT; and
- promotion of the code of ethics
- **promoting gender balance and social diversity**
- **ensuring that the volunteers are both in control of and are empowered by the organisation**

There seems to be some confusion between the "Secondary Objects" and the "Purposes"

I would add to Purpose (8) so that it reads..

(8) 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

¹ Adj Assoc Prof CS&IT La Trobe University

² My response draw heavily oh those of Ashley Goldsworthy. FACS, AO, OBE and will include his contributions verbatim where appropriate

³ Revision control v.01 4/10/2021

infrastructure resources, promotion of Australian owned creation of ICT products and services, and related matters.

In doing so, recognizing that ICT is a maturing are of human activity with standards of practice and competencies.

Of particular importance are security, safety and the user experience. See KR 204 and KR205

I would also add to Purpose (8)..

ACS must ensure its interactions with its members create “good experiences”. The interaction with the members goes beyond the “value proposition”.

Q4: Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

I agree with AG. *It is important that the ACS be, and be seen to be, governed by members who have achieved a recognised professional level, preferably by accredited or recognised Australian tertiary qualifications (degree or diploma), supported by at least three years appropriate relevant experience. Grades of Member and Fellow are appropriate. Hon Life Member is not a grade, but an honour recognising outstanding service to the profession or the ACS.*

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 threshold requirements otherwise the grade is a nonsense; the ACS could admit housepainters and gardeners. In the light of the widespread use of the technologies these threshold requirements need to be much more than just using the technologies. For example, using a laptop in one’s job is not enough.

Voting should be restricted to professional members.

The ACS should also have a Student grade, for those studying in the field.

I am opposed to granting ‘professional’ status to categories such as ‘manager of ICT professionals’. Just because one manages a group of engineers or accountants does not entitle that person to membership of Engineers Australia or the Australian Society of Certified Public Accountants. The manager of a hospital does not become a member of the AMA. It also flies in the face of the definition of profession as used by the Australian Council of Professions. Encourage them as Associates

KR adds. *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.*

Q5: Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

I agree with AG No, as per answer to Q4, unless they meet professional standards. There must not be any back-door entries. Integrity allows for no compromises.

Q6

I agree with AG, but see my note below. The ACS as a professional association should not be an industry association, the two are completely different concepts. 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.

KR adds. *In 1985, I established as a National SIG, ACS-Software Industry Association. It was an ACS SIG. In retrospect it was probably not a good idea, and I would not suggest this again.*

The ACS should not be acquiring industry associations. That was one of the critical mistakes of the ACS in 2019. It is very clear the management at that time was pursuing a very different purpose, and one that conflicted with and bastardised the core identity of the ACS. The desire to make

money is not a valid reason for the ACS to spend member funds, if so why not buy a bank? Divest of what we bought. That will undoubtedly rankle those with commercial aspirations chasing the dollars. Don't get me wrong- dollars are necessary; it's just how you get them that is important. It is not just about managing risk. It is about the core reason for the existence of the ACS. The problem with such suggestions as operating subsidiaries is the impossibility of separating their activities from the purpose of the ACS, assuming they would have to have some level of independence. The parent entity always carries responsibility. The best way to avoid tensions is not to create them in the first place.

The issue of Technical Societies is an interesting one. As I understand it, Engineers Australia has the following - Australian Cost Engineering; Sustainable Engineering Society; the Society for Building Services Engineers; Australian Geomechanics Society; Australian Shotcrete Society; Australian Tunnelling Society. These societies serve many functions related to the establishment and maintenance of engineering qualifications. My understanding, and I may be wrong, is that these societies were established by individuals in the various fields and were not instigated by Engineers Australia, and hence they are self-driven.

Engineers also has colleges which represent easily defined sub-divisions of engineering such as electrical, chemical, civil, etc.

ACS needs a structure which will attract those working in diverse areas of ICT. It could well replicate, as appropriate, the structures used in IFIP- Technical Committees (TCs) and Working Groups (WGs). The TCs and WGs are-

...

I am not suggesting ACS should have all these, but the structure is important in that these WGs give practitioners the opportunity to work in a meaningful way with their peers in specialised fields. They provide a concrete and constructive reason for joining the ACS. In the past several members of the ACS have played prominent roles in the TCs, e.g., Judy Hammond in TC3, Alan Coulter in TC6, Bill Caelli in TC11, me in TC9, and others. WGs are the professional core of IFIP.

KR adds. Traditionally, ACS provided some funding support for IFIP TC and WG reps. It should do so again. In addition, there is the International Standards Organisation (ISO). And Standards Australia. ISO/IEC JTC 1 Information Technology (see <https://www.iso.org/committee/45020.html>) which has 39 sub-committees, some of which have ten or more working groups. See for example <https://www.iso.org/committee/45316.html> . As Ashley says, perhaps we cannot provide support for all of these, however, a vigorous SIG structure(supported by an appropriate ACS organisational structure, helps ensure that Australia has a voice in these bodies.

Q7: Are any functions of the ACS missing, under-emphasised, or over-emphasised?

KR My suggested improvements are shown below

- **Professional Standards** – including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies. **With special emphasis on ensuring graduates have high-technical and social competence**
- **Professional Development** – including provision of professional education programs and of continuing professional development events, the operation of communities of practice, **SIG's, technical committees etc.**, learned publications, professional publications
- **Benefits for the Public and Members** – including community outreach, networking events, **facilitation of communications among members, through SIGS, State and National Committees which draw on the competence and knowledge of members**, information resources, on career advice, employment assistance, advocacy to governments., in particular, commenting on the feasibility of Professional insurance for members
- **Public Policy** – including public statements, submissions and publications in relation to ICT and information infrastructure resources, their applications, and their implications. **Particular attention will be paid to the quality of public facing systems, their security in the widest sense and their social and economic impact.**

[#MP] [#P02]

- **Development of New Technology**– Support the function and development of National Research Institutions, university and commercial R&D to solve problems facing the Australian economy and society in a manner that generates ICT products and services for domestic use and export.

Comment In the last few years, Australia's economy and hence its sovereignty has been at risk due to our dependence on single export markets, and, upon supply chains focused on one country. Reducing our dependence on external markets for high technology products will also have a positive impact on balance of trade and increase our economic diversity.

• 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.

5. The ACS's Commercial Business Lines

I agree with Ashley... *Commercial activities are the sensitive issue. Fundamentally, they must be entered into for the prime purpose of supporting the professional activities of the ACS, but this reason alone is not enough. It is too broad and opens the door to almost anything, as we have seen. I am not in favour of double negatives and therefore 'not inconsistent' needs to be replaced by the positive requirement 'to be consistent' with the Objects of the Society.*

The suggestion that 'supporting business lines could have the advantage of providing for a Board with business expertise is not only irrelevant but is a worrying window into the thinking of the CRWG. There is and has been many members of the ACS with substantial business experience. People like Brian Finn, former Chairman of IBM Australia; Alan Coulter a former president of ACS and a senior executive in Telstra and the CEO of a broking firm, spring to mind. I myself was the CEO of Australia's largest construction firm, a bank, an insurance company, and the owner and operator of several vocational training companies. Suggesting we have to go outside the Society is unnecessary, and a bit of a red herring.

As a Fellow of CPA Australia, I (Ashley) am well aware that their constitution provides that the Board consists of a maximum of 10 independent non-executive Directors but must have at least two external Directors (who are neither members nor employees). Arguments from example are not necessarily relevant or persuasive, and I still disagree with the need for non-member directors. I recognise differing views on this aspect.

All members of the board of Engineers Australia are professional engineers. Similarly, the Boards of Australian Medical Association are all medicos.

It would be nonsense to suggest the ACS should not support innovation. The issue is how should this be done. To answer the question posed, 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. For example, I think the following offer on their website is completely inappropriate- River City Labs Residents will have free ACS membership which entitles members to significant savings in insurance for business, as well as other additional benefits as follows. It makes a complete mockery of any claim to professionalism on the part of the ACS.

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 d'être for the Society's existence, nor expose the Society to reputational damage or monetary loss.

KR.. The Society engages in a number of activities and relationships that create real and potential Conflicts of Interest.

It has relationships with Government that generate a very substantial cash flow. (It is not alone in this) so large that it makes any other activity almost irrelevant from a financial point of view.

KR200 Additional issues..

KR201 Leveraging the expertise of ACS Committees, boards and members

While ACS has Boards Committees and Task Forces etc. that deal with specific issues, these are encouraged to offer opinions on any matters they consider relevant to the ACS and the IT community in Australia.

ACS should form task forces for situations where a rapid response is required. These should draw from all resources including committees

KR202 ACS Publications Policy Objectivity and Openness

ACS may choose to publish professional journals and news magazines.

KR202.1 professional journals shall adhere to the norms of editorial independence and standards required for such publications.

KR202.2 News Magazines shall be totally editorially independent of ACS and will publish news about ACS as if such Magazines were independent.

KR203 Certification

As part of its role as the keeper of ICT professional standards, ACS may develop professional certification standards. Such Certifications will not rely upon attendance at events but shall require formal study and assessment.

KR204 membership experience

See comments above item Q3

KR205 the Elected and Appointed Official and other Volunteer experience

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.

[#P00] [#P07]

Australian Computer Society
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
Queensland Chapters Event
Thursday 11 November 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10

**Matthew Bulat (Chair, North Queensland Chapter), Bevin Irvine (North Queensland Chapter)
Ann Stevens (Secretary, Gold Coast Chapter), Michael Lane (Vice Chair, Downs and
Southwest Chapter), Holly Bretherton (Qld Branch Manager)**

Apologies: Rockhampton and Bundaberg Chapters

5 participants, all active

Nick Tate as presenter and facilitator, Roger as note-taker, Anthony in support

Q: Matthew: SFIA8 in Sep 2021 is 10% larger than before.
Does that affect ACS evaluations, incl. skills assessment?

Q1: Professional Society

All agreed on that question, a definite Yes.

Yes A professional society is an organisation that comprises and is governed by members of a particular profession with a well defined vision and mission

Q2: 'ICT'

Matthew: ICT isn't well-known by a lot of people. It needs more promotion and explanation.

Bevin: Avoid long lists, 'ICT' will do.

Michael: The more important question is maintenance of the body of knowledge.

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 [#Q07]

Q3: Mission and Purposes

Bevin: There's nothing misleading in there.

Matthew: For CPD, we need 30 hours of new online content p.a.

Holly: There are many webinars, available live and on replay, and a large library.

Michael: That's been improved a lot in the last few years.

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

Q4: Associate Membership Threshold

Bevin: Having more Associates voting than Professional Division members is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Bevin: Could it be time-based, e.g. Associates must upgrade within a given number of years?

Bevin: There should be a threshold for entry to that grade.

Ann: Agreed.

Michael: **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** [#Q07]

Holly: Gratis certification during COVID could be extended to gratis at the time a person joins, to draw far more of the better-qualified Associates into MACS CP from the outset.

And/or that could be combined with occasional special offers.

Budget implications need to be considered of course, but the gratis period this was highly valued, by members who took advantage of it, and employers.

Q5: Managers and Users

Bevin: They should be subject to the same standards as professionals, otherwise it dilutes the quality.

Michael: 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 but there be a requirement that they undertake

certification of ACS CBOK etc to gain full membership and maintain that currency as all full members should during their professional career

Q6: Industry Associations

Bevin: There's risk of conflict of values between professionalism and corporate needs.

Matthew: Have joint events, even joint ventures, but they must be separate organisations.

Michael: Hosting means what? And what's the benefit?

Ann: Prefers the second option: Avoid the tension

Also as a professional society we should better connect and collaborate with other associations where there are natural synergies and communalities for both industry and academia

Q7: Key Functions ('What's Your Top-of-Mind Function that must be performed well?')

Bevin: Supporting the members, especially those remote from the capital cities, and ensuring they're exposed to the latest information.

Matthew: Promote IT, in Canberra.

Ann: New technologies and skills aren't adequately supported by the ACS accreditation process, e.g. old multimedia terms cf. new virtual/augmented reality terms, and that gave their accreditation arrangements difficulties. The rate of change is very fast in such areas.

Matthew: In SFIA 8, does 'Animation Development' work?

Ann: No, e.g. spatial trackers aren't covered at all.

Michael: Maintaining these functions is critical and suggests the following clusters:

- **Professional Standards** – including the Code of Ethics, ICT technical standards, ICT bodies of knowledge, express entry criteria, application assessment, accreditation of educational providers and courses for entry qualifications and for postgraduate and professional studies

- **Professional Development** – including provision of professional education programs and of continuing professional development events, the operation of communities of practice, learned publications, professional publications

- **Benefits for the Public and Members** – including community outreach, networking events, facilitation of communications among members, information resources, professional insurance, career advice, employment assistance, advocacy to governments

- **Public Policy** – including public statements, submissions and publications in relation to ICT and information infrastructure resources, their applications, and their implications

Q8: Innovations / ACS Labs / RCL

Matthew: It would be nice if we knew what they did in there.

How about a monthly newsletter?

Do they run start-up weekends – 2-1/2 day events?

Bevin: Do they generate new members? Do they generate revenue for us?

Is the space provided in return for equity?

Ann: The ACS Lab is out-of-reach even for Gold Coast Chapter.

Is it supporting innovation in education?

Holly: RCL runs Start-up programs, esp. 'River Pitch' annually.

Casual use of the facilities by ACS members is available.

Michael: This is important space for ACS to have a presence and show leadership in ACS Labs Startups/Entrepreneurship but keep ACS membership informed with regular reports on their activities, outcomes and financial status and provide and promote access to these facilities for ACS members and showcase with general public and interested stakeholders such as businesses, government, Universities and Schools

Q11: Branches

Bevin: Branches should continue their primary role.

If they were removed, the Society would be dominated by the larger cities, and there would be nothing for remote members.

Matthew: Agreed, and the States should share more of their events

Holly: Events are recorded, and available

Matthew: How do members know what's going into the archive?

Holly: Fortnightly eNews.

Michael: **Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs**

Chapters recently, plus with face-to-face events, has been critical. Working closely with State Branches has been critical to the success of local chapters, the support in-kind and financial that the Downs and South West Chapter has received from ACS via its Queensland Branch Executive has been outstanding and the stronger we can make our grassroots activities, events and membership the stronger we will be as a professional society ACS [#Ch]

Bevin: Chapters should have enough independence, including some funds control where they've built a reserve. Townsville's \$10,400 pot was confiscated to national

Ann: Definitely responsibility for activities must be with Chapters.

Holly: 110% agreed Branches and Chapters should have that ability.

Q12: Umbrella / Hub

Matthew: Doesn't Brisbane run a few SIGs already?

Bevin: Support for specialisations is important, through whatever channels.

Ann: At the moment there's no specialised group for Virtual Reality / Augmented Reality. Would more emphasis on hosting specialised groups address that?

Michael: **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 [#SIGs]

ACS's Role in Addressing the Big Problems

The other thing on reflection that 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**

[#MP] [#P02] [#Q07]

I remember well Roger Clarke gave an inspirational keynote speech at the Australasian Conference on Information Systems - ACIS2015 at the invite of Professor Andy Koronios from University of South Australia on how the Information Systems Discipline have a blinkered approach to doing research focusing largely on the organisation and business as their core unit of analysis, Roger rightly pointed out that this was a missed opportunity for the discipline of Information Systems / Information Technology etc to be more relevant and have impact by addressing the big problems

B1: National Video Sessions

As at Sun 31 Oct 2021, to 12:00 UT+11

17 scheduled Sessions, of which 15 ran, losing #2 (too few takers) and #17 (Zoom malfunction)

National Discussion Session #01 Mon 11 Oct 2021 12:00 UT+11

**Nick and Roger; Anthony administering;
Lucia Gerrie (NT, Branch Mgr), Amy Tang (Cbr BEC), Tom Worthington (Cbr, ex-Pres)**

A good dry run, with only 3 not 12, and still went the full hour.

Driven mainly from the Questions. Needed to record Chat before it disappeared.

Q: Lucia: Is the process assuming ACS is converting to a CLG? [No, requirements first.]

Q: Amy: How does this relate to the strategy development? Which comes first and informs the other? [They're parallel. Strategy is to be finished in Mar 2021, wef Jun 2021.]

Tom: The strategy is more about what ACS does, and who for, while this consultation I see more about what the organization needs to do it.

Q1: All: Yes, it's a professional society [i.e. has a broad responsibility to the community]

Tom: A business-like professional society, showing efficiency in answering members' problems; and **it needs to find ways to appeal to more than old white guys like me, younger people with a diversity of backgrounds.** There are tensions between service-provision and professionalism ... between members wanting services and wanting to serve

Tom: See the ACS-backed book on ICT ethics, from an almost \$1m research project:
<https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/series/practical-ethics-public-policy/professionalism-information-and-communication>

Amy: To discuss this, members need to understand the other options [Industry association, semi-commercial and fully commercial services organisation, coop, union, political party, ...]

Q2: All: Yes, 'ICT' is still good enough.

Q4: Re Associate-grade and pathways:

Tom: Don't say 'no' to money. Have both basic members and voting members.

The young want a structure that delivers them the experience they need.

We may not be providing them with a helpful process to get the reward they want.

Lucia: That's not a problem she's experienced in NT

Amy: Her cohort on the ADF Cybergap program saw no value in the \$72 to stay on as members when the Dept stopped paying for them. (OTOH, she jumped onto BEC)

Anthony: Amy's nailed **a problem with ACS offerings after people become Associates.**

Tom: Perhaps ACS should engage the services of specialists in **social enterprise principles**, such as Mill House Ventures. In the past ACS has tended to hire consultants who advise for-profit businesses. We don't want ACS to be a profit making business, so perhaps we need different advice: <https://www.millhouseventures.com.au/>

Tom: The Australian Government is very keen to promote more flexible qualifications, and would [might] be open to a proposal from ACS

Q7: All: The Key Functions are okay

Lucia: **Add 'Community building in ICT' / connections**

Lucia: Also ensuring Australia has capacity to meet growing ICT workforce; encouraging young people into tech careers, ensuring diversity in ICT

Q8: Tom: The innovation centres are a bit "East Coast" at the moment. **Can we work with existing centres in other locations?** Places like Canberra Innovation Network (CBRIN)

Q11: Lucia: Branches should continue. **Each area has its own needs and environment, and addresses those needs. The localness is very important.** BEC is important to provide support on strategy, **but it's a challenge to get Committee-members to engage**

Q12: Re ACS as an umbrella organisation:

Tom: ASCILITE [tertiary ed] has very active SIGs, which have kept me sane since COVID-19 struck. **Meetings via Zoom every week, collaborating with people I have never met. ACS could try that.** Also noted that rarity – an active ACS National SIG, in secondary ed

Nick (until 17:30) and Roger; Anthony administering;
Alex Reid (WA), Damien Charles (NT Chair)

Q2: Both: There's no better term available than 'ICT'

Q4: Associate and professional grades

Damien: Acknowledged that CP as an entry qualification for MACS is a big hurdle, and so is CPD hours to maintain it. Recording CP hours can be tricky, needs improvement.

'Affiliate' status is a norm in industry associations, e.g. for foreign companies /- local footprint

Alex: The flip-side is that, to adapt to changes in technology and business, ACS needs to provide members with pathways, and support a sufficiently broad range of specialisations

Q6: Industry Associations

Damien: Are future acquisitions really where we want to go? It seems doubtful.

Alex: Uncomfortable about their involvement, but no depth of analysis behind the feeling.

Q8: Innovation

Damien: The criterion is 'What's the value to members?'. If it generated funds to support mainstream Society activities, that would be an argument. But there are other avenues for start-ups, in tech parks and government-sponsored incubators.

Alex: Also uncomfortable, and agree there has to be a justification, and none is apparent.

Q9: Business-Lines

Damien: 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. [P00] [P01]

Q10: Principles for allocation of surplus

Damien: Branches should always be involved, and the constitution should enable / enshrine that principle. [Q11] [P09] [P10]

Q11: Branches

Damien: Branch control over staff has been taken away by Head Office. Branches are the local presence, and the organisation's key differentiator; so any reduction in emphasis harms the organisation. It also dries up the supply-chain of suitable people serving the Society.

Alex: Agreed on the primacy of Branches in relation to activities; but the COVID era has qualified that, by opening up cross-Branch access to events, and that's been a plus.

Damien: Agreed on cross-leveraging between Branches, and referred to the MSM initiative (coming through one of the Boards?) intended to improve Branch standing in H.O.

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Damien: Need to manage downsides and risks, e.g. would other organisations want us? Noted example of AISA some time back billing itself more broadly than just Security.

Alex: Not appropriate to draw all groups under ACS, but MoUs yes.

Anthony: Note that some processes exist, esp. Nat SIGs, e.g. aSCSa [and ACCE] Also an approach at one stage from a Pacific Island body, seeking (non-voting) Chapterdom and access to qualifications and PD processes; but independent organisational existence.

Damien: That could be a good model in the Pacific.

Damien: Specialist groups might also be a way of spawning additional pathways to CP.

Q13: Nomination as a Director [P05] [P06]

Damien: The Board needs to be elected, left to get on with it, but be effectively accountable. If Congress ceases to have its current power to determine directions and policy, then what??

Alex: Directors' obligations may conflict with the best thing for the members.

Damien: This loops back to 'Who are the Directors and are they representing the members?'

Damien: Supports the Senate model, doesn't want large-State dominance of member input.

Alex: Also supports the Senate model.

[But 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]

Alex: Should Directors have short terms, in order to achieve better control by members?

Q14: Creation and amendment of Key Policies

Alex: Too big for all members to be heard on all issues, so has to be a representative democracy, but **must** also **feature consultative arrangements**. [P08]

A voice through representatives needs to be enshrined in some way.

[Does convenient online voting change that?]

Roger; Anthony administering;
Devin Weerasooriya (Vic), Marilyn Wells (Qld Regional), Sam Horwood (Vic),
Stephen Hardy (NSW), 'Mandelbrot' (audio-only, did not contribute)

An excellent session, with 4 significant contributors, which overran the full hour.
Driven mainly from the Questions.

Q2: 'ICT'

Devin: Needs to be resolved promptly in a principled manner. Maybe cybersecurity is already within-scope, but we need AI, Robotics and Data Analytics defined in as well.
[Would it help to append 'and related technologies'?]

General agreement that 'digital' is too vague and maybe ephemeral.

Stephen: re 'Computer Society', don't get caught with any term or definition <10 years old

Q5: managers, users, thresholds

Devin: Although enough scope is needed, professional membership isn't for just any computer-related person. **Retaining 'core requirements' is essential.**

Stephen: It's an uncomfortable, transitional period, with tech becoming more democratised, and generalisation to higher-level 'machines' is ongoing; but principles, constraints, what constitutes quality, ethical factors, ... are key parts of that core

Marilyn: But this needs to be related to the constitutional question

Sam: With knowledge fragmenting into yet more specialisations, we need some boundaries around what we see as being ICT professionalism and hence within the Society's scope.

A manager can become a professional, but not just by being a manager.

Constitution plus policies and practices must avoid being overly exclusive, and must encourage and funnel members into pathways to professionalism, but in ways that sustain the importance of core knowledge and ethicality, and not by lowering the bar

Q6: industry associations

Sam: Perplexed when he read about the acquisition [of ADMA] in Information Age – the only place he'd heard about it. [P08]

If it were a source of funds for other purposes, and were separated into an ACS Enterprises activity, maybe? But not if it's unprofitable or diverts attention.

Devin: The acquisition was something of a debacle. Due diligence did not occur. Nothing was heard in advance by members, as, at the least, it should have been. [P08]

Marilyn: Perplexed also about multiple associations within one association, because of the potential for conflicts in aims and values, and the large undermining the flexibility of the small. [Q12]

Stephen: **Industry associations are incompatible with a professional society** – there is no grey area [PS]

Q8: innovation

Sam: Appreciate the intent in relation to start-ups, but **it's not related to professional functions. It's corporate enterprise**, supported by governmental stimulation. Such activities need to be separated, and should not absorb funds from members or other business-lines.

Anthony: 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.

Marilyn: She and others prepare students through internships; so why not apply the same idea to entrepreneurship. Don't abandon the idea lightly. [Would grants / commissions to Universities specialising in the area be a better way for ACS to spend less than it does now?]

Stephen: Alignment to the Society's purpose is the test, and it's not clear that this aligns.

P7, P8, P9, P10: Delegations, Accountability & Transparency, Member Involvement, Branches

Devin: Support for all of these

Sam: More accountability to members is crucial. 15 years a member, but **the last 5 years has felt particularly disenfranchised. Controls are needed to better align people at the top with the rank-and-file.** [P08] [P11]

Marilyn: Strong support for these matters

Devin: Ditto

[CLG has inadequate controls over elected directors, and is argued by some people to preclude members from having any control at all over any policies and practices]

Stephen: 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

Roger; Anthony administering;
Susan Sly (Vic, NDIC), Dennis O'Hara (Vic), Erica van der Spuy (Vic), David Air (NT), Sin Yin Tan (NT?)

An excellent session, with 4 significant contributors, which overran the full hour.
Driven primarily from the Questions.

Q: [CLG]

Susan: 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.

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.

Q2: 'ICT'

David: The term is [currently] good, but the rate of change is such that there can be no guarantee it will remain good. So the wording needs to be generic, e.g. "inclusive of ..."

Susan: Intensely dislike the retention of ICT as the, or at least the sole, focus.

ACS professionals are concerned with much more than technology, including its integration into organisations, and organisational change. We want to retain our original coverage of the underlying technology, but we must keep pace with changing cohorts, and their participation in collaborative teams with multiple expertise.

Dennis: Agreed to both of those sets of comments. The scope needs to be **'ICT and its use for the benefit of society as a whole'**.

Q3: Mission and Purpose

Dennis: Avoid the term 'Mission', due to its negative connotations for indigenous people

Q4-5: Associate grade, managers, users, thresholds [Q2]

Susan: **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

Erica: Supported Susan. Wasn't aware of the CP barrier to moving Assoc to Member. 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

Susan: How do we ensure the constitution enables evolution but maintains integrity [Q14]
The scope needs generic definition, with flexibility for extensions. Cohorts change continually.

Q6-11: Key functions, business-lines, surplus allocation

Susan: The financial responsibility aspect is critical. **The financial principles must be clearly defined in the constitution, re revenue-sources, and what is and isn't done with the surplus.** [Q10]

Q13: Directors

Dennis: Openness to all professional members is an important aspect

Susan: Adequacy of background and expertise? What about a skills matrix?

Susan: Diversity of candidates, and of Directors? (On gender, race, etc. lines).
How can this be achieved? Some allocated roles?

Erica: Diversity in gender is important, and it's noteworthy that ZA has done it better.

Q14: Member involvement in key policies

David: **The 2019 corporatisation proposal seriously concerned many members because of the apparent intent to dilute, even remove, member influence on policy, esp. re membership.** [P08]

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.

Susan: 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.** [P08]

Behavioural norms need to be embedded within the process, and responsible and sustainable change must be achieved within the ACS. But some initiatives, such as countermeasures against discrimination, may not be achieved by popular vote.

Dennis: 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.**

Susan: However, what degree of power do members need to have?
[AGM / 75%? Online vote / 50%? Do members Approve? Ratify? Endorse?]

There's tension between representational and direct democracy approaches.

[Under the present Rules, ACS is 3-layered / buffered representational: Members elect BECs; BECs elect Congress Representatives; Congress Reps are 16 of 26+ votes on the electoral college for the Management Committee; at most a couple of score people are qualified to nominate for the 4 office-bearer roles, only 16 people for other 4 elected MC positions, and very few indeed for the Presidency.]

Anthony: 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.** [P08]

Susan: **And then care is needed as to what the topics are that fall within that scope.**

Dennis: **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.**

**Roger; Anthony administering;
Jeffery Phuah (Vic), Jeff Mitchell (Cbr), Jan Kornweibel (WA), Rimas Skeivys (Vic),
Richard Magalad (Vic), Peter (left early), Karl Reed (Vic), Richard Hemsworth (NSW)**

A good session, with 5 significant contributors, which filled the hour with ease.
Driven primarily from the Questions.

- Q: Jan: Needs engagement with younger members as well as the 'mature-aged'
[Needs different language, channels, and venues cf. the 'mature-aged']
Karl: Communicate to younger members the opportunities inherent in discussions about constitutional matters.
- Q: Jeff M: The CRWG process is far sounder than the previous [2018-19] activity. Trust factor.
- Q: Rimas: Needs reference to the new governance Standard ISO 37000
[The Standard appears not to differentiate between for-profit and not-for-profit.]
- Q1: Professional Society
Jeff M: Yes we should remain a professional society
- Q2: 'ICT'
Rimas: Noteworthy that 'ICT' doesn't have 'computer' in it, but the name does.
[Historical (and successful) attempt to gradually enlarge scope over time.]
Jan: **SFIA's a good framework (ICT + surrounds). Where do we include / leverage it?**
Karl: Expressed [unarticulated] reservations about SFIA.
- Q3: Mission and Purpose
Rimas: 'advance [ICT] technology and practice for the benefit of the community'.
Value-generation, for members, for employers, for the community.
What the organisation should and should not be doing,
i.e. key functions, plus business-lines for the generation of surplus to use for key functions.
Strategy derives from the above. Then add oversight.
Karl: Professionalism, maintenance of standards, but not just for the technology and the discipline, also for positive impact on the community
Karl: For engineers, a key member benefit has been eligibility for jobs.
[Many attempts to achieve that by ACS, with CP/CT one move in that direction.]
Karl: Not only member-value, but also member-experience in dealing with the ACS, should be worth boasting about. Too much social distance, secure buildings, are a barrier to that.
- Q6: Industry Associations
Karl: ACS should not be an industry association.
Jeff M: Do we know yet if those business are profitable?
- Q7: Key Functions
Karl: **ACS should express positions on policy issues**.
Karl: Skills assessment should have a major focus on domestic members, not only on visa-applicants.
Richard H: Micro-credential direction has been important for PMI, should be for ACS
Karl: Plumbers seem to have micro credentials I am not sure about it
- Q8: Innovation
Jeff M:
ACS can advocate for innovation without being an owner of a set of innovation labs
- Q9: Business Lines
Jeff M: **There needs to be a transparent and distinct operational and structural separation between the professional and commercial activities of the society** [P08]

Q10: Surplus allocation

Jan: The benefits to members have been disappointing , because **the large surplus seems not to deliver a lot to members**, and is instead used elsewhere. [Q7] [Q6] [Q8]

Richard H: He, and many others, **question the limited benefits offer to members, and lots of money spent elsewhere (Labs, industry associations, high-cost premises)**

Jan: A WA concern has been **a loss of quality in social networking and professional networking events**.

Jeff P: Echo **the criticality of social and professional networking** [P10]

Richard M: A switch to cheaper and less convenient venue reduced attendances. [P10]

Q11: Branches

Jeff: Yes. But they need to be adequately supported, funded and have committed volunteers to make the branch model work

Karl: We need Branches! And they need more autonomy! Including Budget

Karl: As a BEC member (I am speaking personally) I feel we are strangled by bureaucracy and, that was less an issue 40 years ago

Karl: Branches need to able top respond to local politics!

Jeff M: Scope is needed for some risk-taking, but with accountability.

Sufficient alignment with national directions is needed. Note 2019 Cbra paper.

Rimas: Other professional societies have retained Branches even in a corporate structure, and ACS needs to achieve the same.

Richard H: 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

Jan: WA wants to keep 'Education Across the Nation', great for smaller branches

Q13: Directors

Karl: Primacy of elected officials in decision-making, with staff for support and execution
[Dir]

**Roger; Anthony administering;
Rod Dilnutt (Vic), Elizabeth Bromham (Vic), multiple no-shows**

A good session, with 2 significant contributors, which over-ran the hour.
Driven primarily from the Questions.

Q1: Professional Society

Elizabeth: Yes (although the devil's in the details).

Rod: That's the contract – to look after my professional interests.

The professional society has **a distinct and critical role to play, cf. an industry association, a union group, a commercial enterprise.**

Q2: 'ICT'

Elizabeth: The bigger question is: do we have the flexibility to grow the scope, as change occurs. We should review the scope every 5 years, or 10 years, and adjust when needed.

Rod: **Fine for now. There's a risk of following hype-cycles.**

By all means give examples [cf. 'inclusive of ...']

As anchor-points consider reference to the Body of Knowledge, SFIA.

Q3: Mission and Purpose

Rod: No problem with them as proposed in the Consultation Document.

However, there have been issues in relation to their interpretation or application.

Q4-5: Associate grade, pathways, specialisations

Elizabeth: Needs analysis of the member profiles within the Associate group, identification of the barriers, and means to address the barriers confronting the various profiles

Rod: The difference between Affiliate and Associate grades was, and remains, material.

Associates are part of the Society's membership life-cycle, and pathways are vital.

Rod: **We need to prime the pipeline much earlier. We need a 'cadet' (or similar) approach, at Grades 11-12 and even 9-10.**

We need a career-building framework that starts early and carries through, to address the issue of near-graduates joining, and leaving within 1-3 years.

Elizabeth: Associates perceive not much benefit in upgrading to Member.

Elizabeth: Users with relevant expertise and skills need pathways too.

Q6-7: Industry Associations, Key Functions

Elizabeth: ACS needs to **look for synergy with industry associations, but the relationships need to be arms-length**, to avoid harm to ACS's purpose and ACS's reputation.

Rod: **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. And we're paying > \$1m p.a. for the privilege - !? [P08]
ADMA Members do not equate to ACS professional members.

Elizabeth: We need to be clear about what ACS is about [its Key Functions], and **unless industry associations are among the Key Functions, they are not a fit to ACS.**

Q8: Innovation

Rod: **No convincing evidence has been provided of benefits in having labs within ACS. It's a landlord business, and using high-cost premises.** Leave it to industry, govt.

Elizabeth: Flexible office-space is an active market segment. Why is ACS in it?

Elizabeth: **Even if a contribution to innovation is within ACS's key functions, direct grants are far more appropriate than space-rental.** It comes with a rationale and transparency.

Rod: Supported Elizabeth's statement. Different approaches to supporting the start sector can be considered i.e. Angel Investor, sponsorships

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

Q9: Business Lines

Rod: Skills assessment is appropriate, because it's aligned with values and purpose. It would be a channel for recruitment, but retention-rates have been very poor, and action is needed to understand and address that.

Karl: **Proposition of skills assessment for residents as well as visa-applicants**

Rod: Supported.

However, employers' staff education budgets have collapsed since a change in tax concessions some years ago, which affected both PPP participation and the ed market.

Elizabeth: If there's a need, it could improve recruitment. Can it contribute to the costs?

Rod: **Educational offerings have reduced to the portions aligned with PPP and SFIA services to employers. Those are legitimate, but that's far too narrow a range of professional development offerings. ACS is an RTO. It should partner with quality educational bodies,** e.g. PRINCE II, TOGAF.

Elizabeth: The gateway tests are fit with ACS values, appropriateness of approach, and only then business case – and based on contributions to key functions and/or surplus-generation.

Q10: Surplus allocation

Rod, Elizabeth: As above, **the purpose of surplus is support for key functions.**

Rod: Expressed concern about the CEO's use of language that discloses a bias towards membership services as being a subsidised cost-centre that can't pay for itself, rather than the *raison detre* for the Society's operations.

Rod: **Charging members for events,** as has occurred particularly in WA, **is to the serious detriment of member morale,** because it stands in stark contrast to financial waste on premises and loss-making business-lines of marginal relevance to key functions.

Q14: Membership Involvement in Key Policies

Elizabeth: A balancing act is needed between direct democracy [binding referenda or non-binding plebiscites] and ungovernability.

Elizabeth: 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.

Rod: Matters of importance must have member voice. [P08]

Line up with mission, purposes and key functions, and the more important among those must go to the members [for 'approval' / 'ratification' / 'endorsement']

National Discussion Session #08 Fri 15 Oct 2021 17:00 UT+11

**Roger, Nick; Anthony administering;
Graeme Bond (Vic), Prabin Lama, Nasim Akhzari, Peter**

1 significant contributor, with some input from others.
Driven primarily from the Questions.

Q1: Professional Society

Graeme: Yes. But would like to see great activism to look after members' interests, e.g. project managers in engineering earn much more than those in IS/ICT

Q2: 'ICT'

Graeme: Yes, fine. He would be mortified if non-descriptive, fashion terms like 'digital', 'tech' or 'high tech' were used

Q5: Specialisations, e.g. managers, users

Graeme: Barriers need to be drawn. Entry needs to remain tertiary qualification in an ICT discipline. Re users, caution – a good car driver is not a motor vehicle mechanic

Q6: Industry Associations

Graeme: A peculiar arrangement. Where there's a common interest, there should be no hesitation to collaborate. But owning them is very strange.

Q7: Key Functions

Prabin: Events, information, engagement, mentoring

Graeme: ACS took a wrong turn when SIGs were effectively abolished. The (Pods?) idea didn't fly. Lockdown has enabled access to events in other Branches, which has been a great bonding mechanism across borders. Hybrid events have worked. **Professional networking and content at events is the key driver.** [P04] [SIGs]

Q8: Innovation / Labs / Incubators [Also Q14 Membership Involvement in Key Policies]

Graeme: Members' reaction when this was announced was "What the hell's going on?". Suddenly there they were, a fait accompli. He didn't ever see a detailed explanation why. [P08]

Are there any (successful) overseas models, or any known instances of a professional society doing this. Not dogmatically opposed, but members want to know about it in advance, and why. If it were a channel for (adequate) government funding, that could make a difference?

Q: Members' Votes

The current arrangements are at best peculiar, at worst bizarre: All members can do is elect members of a Branch Committee. That acts as an electoral college for 2 representatives who attend occasional Congress meetings, where they seldom get to vote anyway, other than acting annually as an electoral college for the 10 eventually-elected members who do get to vote. The Congress comprises the 16 Branch representatives, plus previous Branch representatives who have been elected to, and still hold, about 10 further positions.

The three layers represent a huge buffer between the members and the governing committee.

[P11] [Dir]

The constitution needs to provide members with direct votes for both governing committee members and Branch committee members.

**Roger; Anthony administering;
David Clemison (NSW)**

1 significant contributor. (3 no-shows).
Driven primarily from the Questions.

Q: Re the number of Directors, the Principle should be about having the right Directors, with coverage of the needed areas of expertise, and who can provide insight and advice

Q1: Professional Society

David: Yes, without a doubt

Q5, Q12: Specialisations, e.g. managers, users; Umbrella organisation

David: 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 – even if that just means a clearing-house for available courses. Current hot-points include electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles

[How many of the long list have ACS-supported or -indicated pathways to achieve them?
<https://www.acs.org.au/content/dam/acs/ACSimages/ACS-Certified-Professional-Pathway-Chart.pdf>]

Q6: Industry Associations

David: Industry associations are very different from a professional society.
The functions need to be separated – and then work together as and when appropriate.

Q7: Key Functions

David: [He'll examine Appendix A of the Consultation Document and send comments.]
When ACS came to him as a CTO, with 40-odd engineers, he could see benefits to the individuals, but not to the organisation.

Events need more than talking-heads. More value-add is needed than that, such as articulation into a coherent course/program, or ACS-member discounts on 3rd party courses.

Q8: Innovation / Labs / Incubators [Also Q14 Membership Involvement in Key Policies]

David: ACS should support innovation, but there are queries about an ACS Labs Division.
ACS should be linked to multiple accelerators, which are operated by government, industry and university, commonly in consortia. **This avoids the competitive aspect, and spreads the ACS branding more widely.**

Rather than landlord / service-provider, focus on grants, e.g. to universities for training, project-work and pre-enterprise R&D, and even accelerator activities. This can be **complemented by mentoring to provide students with industry insights**, while getting some of students' mindshare while they're still studying.

Q9, Q10: Business-Lines / Allocation of Surplus

David: It's an NFP, so the idea is to **use surplus to support key functions plus build a war-chest / reserves for rainy days.**

Roger, Nick, Jacky; Anthony administering;
Peter McGill (NT), John Hurst (Vic), Michelle Beveridge (Vic), Frank Liebeskind (NSW), Anifa Sultana (?)

5 present, 4 significant contributors. (5 no-shows).
Driven primarily from the Questions.

Q: What was the source of the consultation documents? Have other, similar organisations been looked at? [CRWG memebtrs have constitutional expertise, checks have been done of other constitutions, plus consideration of known concerns among members in recent years]

Q: Nature of the consultation process in subsequent rounds – needs ongoing openness. [Similar to the first round, with the Online Forum Round 1 remaining accessible.]

Q: Does the process include education for those members not familiar with constitutions? [Yes, the documents are intended to provide background to support each question]

Q2: 'ICT'

Michelle: That argument has gone around for years. Note the UK government's adoption of 'Digital, Data and Technology Profession' (DDAT) [cf. SFIA]
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/digital-data-and-technology-profession-capability-framework>

John: It's a challenge that technology is increasingly pervasive / embedded / [unnoticed]

Q3, Q7: Mission and Purposes, Key Functions

Frank: Wants to see a strong political lobby group representing people in the industry, and one different from AIIA

Frank, Michelle: It's desirable to achieve requirements of professionalism as a condition of employment in [at least some] ICT roles

John: I joined ACS because of the professionalism and the link from academe to industry. So standards definition is essential.

Accreditation mechanisms for courses and institutions are essential.

In both cases, independence from both governments and suppliers is key.

John: **I was very disappointed that ACS dropped its engagement with education, and its engagement with educational institutions**

Michelle: Need to sustain the scope for entry without [relevant] university degrees, and even in appropriate circumstances without any university degree at all

Q11: Branches and BECs

Peter: 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.

Frank: Branches built fiefdoms. The tail wagged the dog.

Discussion: **Some things are appropriate at Branch level, e.g.**

- **where a State government is particularly active in innovation, e.g. Vic and games**
- **conception of events, acquisition of speakers**
- **some discretionary budget needed for short-term opportunities**

Michelle: Events are entirely a State Office function, nothing to do with BEC.

Michelle: BECs' [sole?] function is to liaise with State government and inform national office of opportunities.

Peter, Jacky: Disagreed fundamentally with Michelle, particularly in the case of small and dispersed Branches with limited staff resource and hence the need for BEC effort

Q12: Umbrella organisation approach

Frank: Supported

Q13: Nomination of Directors

Michelle: Might the inclusion of some independent Directors help?

[But will they actually exercise power? And how do we find them? Does a Nomination Committee, appointed by a governing committee, achieve actual independence?]

Frank: The nomination provisions in the HCF Constitution and associated documents could have relevance to ACS's needs

Michelle: Members' control over the governing committee is and should be solely through the ballot box [i.e. the opportunity to choose which candidates to vote onto the committee]

John: To address the imbalance in Branch sizes, ACS needs to retain some parallelism with the Australian federal solution [i.e. some Directors by universal suffrage, some with a bias in the vote-value to benefit smaller Branches.]

Q14: Member involvement in key policies

Michelle: How much detail should be in the Constitution, and how much elsewhere?

[And is the governing committee to be granted full power over all other documents?]

Michelle: Directors' actions must be in the members' best interests.

[But for a CLG the reference-point is the company, not members; and a professional society has a strong social/community responsibility; and litigation to enforce is almost unknown.]

**Roger, Nick; Anthony administering;
Richard Baecher (NSW)**

1 present, 1 significant contributor. (4 no-shows).

Driven primarily from the Questions, but based on Richard's pre-written notes.

Q: Much of the documentation provided is within acceptable bounds, as part of an ongoing process.

Q1: ACS is and must of course remain as a professional society, for the members.

Q2: 'ICT' is mentioned 31 times in the Consultation Document, but is not defined.

It needs to be defined, and examples are not enough.

This is a brand issue. There's a need to perpetuate the link.

However, no specific proposal was provided, other than to include 'digital' in some context.

The need is not for extension to use, application and implications.

The need is for greater clarity about what information and communications technology means.

Q4: Thresholds for graduation from the Associate grade to the Professional Division must not only be defined but must also be under constant review to keep them relevant.

Q5: Many members have been raised to Fellow on the basis of their contributions to the practice of ICT management, in both commercial areas and the public sector. Why aren't we doing the same thing at the Member level?

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.

However, **only Professional Division members should have the vote, not Associates.**

Q11: Re Branches and BECs, ACS must avoid falling back into BEC fiefdoms and conflicts of interest. In any case, Branch autonomy is unworkable in a CLG.

BECs are only for liaison with members, and to offer comments on strategic initiatives in relation to the membership.

Any powers for Branches / BECs can only work with clear definitions of delegations, roles and responsibilities, because otherwise there is inevitable conflict with Branch staff.

Limited budgetary autonomy can be permitted in the form of a discretionary budget for Branch events, and Head Office must not delete discretionary budget included in budget submissions by Branches, merely on the basis of cost-savings.

There should be requirements that BEC members have qualifications in governance.

Q12: An umbrella organisation approach would create impossible conflicts of interest between the ACS and other associations. There have been ample examples in the past with individuals playing roles in multiple organisations, and seeking to utilise the ACS membership list. Using the MoU approach, it's very difficult to set up a framework for interaction, risk management is almost impossible, and an 'ACS Enterprises' subsidiary wouldn't solve the problem either.

The conflicts-of-interest issue is less of a concern with associations whose focus is on technology, and much more serious with those more concerned with technology use.

In principle, it ought to be possible for ACS to extract enough benefit from co-branding of events, but in practice other organisations take advantage of ACS funding and use of its communication channels to promote its events and brand. Branches end up having to invest effort into other organisations' events. No quantifiable benefits arise, such as new memberships.

Q13: Re who can nominate as a Director, the first question is what the law requires. Although it's an ideal or equitable goal for anyone to become a Director, in practice it doesn't work that way. Few have formal training or significant expertise in corporate governance. ACS should require completion of an appropriate external course such as AICD's, because being required to read through a few documents doesn't deliver. So a disqualification process is needed, based on defined criteria.

However, even AICD course material is all-to-quickly forgotten by some members. One example very apparent in BECs is lack of knowledge of meeting procedure. The motivation for many people is enthusiasm for events, and personal networking.

Associates should not be permitted on BECs, only Professional Division members.

Roger; Anthony administering;
Ashley Maher (NSW BEC, W'gong Chapter), Luke Halliday (Vic), Ali Shariat (NSW), Siddharth
4 present, 2 significant contributors. (3 no-shows).
Driven from the Questions.

Q: How did we come up with the material in the consultation documents?
[Expertise of CRWG members – and displayed the CRWG-membership slide; plus review of activities and constitutions of a few societies, esp. of ACS itself.]

Q1: Professional Society

Ali: Does the turnover mean we have to change? [No, not necessarily, although the requirement for effective governance is much greater with a larger organisation.]

Reminded us of the history of strong Branches and lack of a Head Office as such. Branches retained substantial power and funds for many years, with 'Sydney Office' doing some national functions. That was later converted to a 'National Office' ...

[... and centralisation has been taken a long way further over the last 5 years or so.]

[No-one has argued against strong national functions; but many have expressed concern about the absence of BEC powers and resources, and the intended death of 'local'.]

Ashley: We're no longer a village society, so institutionalisation was necessary. But legal requirements [registration, certification] have not emerged in ICT areas (such as cybersecurity), so professional societies are vital to fill that gap

Ali: Needs a focus on how you help people to deliver benefits from technology.

Q2: 'ICT'

Ashley: An abstract phrase can sustain relevance, so avoid being too technology-specific. Avoid excluding technologies we don't even know of yet.

Ali: Agreed. ICT does cover it, in a broad way.

Q5: Managers, Users

Ali: 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

Ali: OTOH, 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.

Ashley: The 'user' space is challenging, but opportunities arise as ICT becomes as ubiquitous a business function as, say, marketing long has been.

Ashley: Accountancy bodies don't include book-keepers, but they train them. Should ACS look to articulate back somehow into training for categories of employment that use IT?

Ashley: Some effective contributors to open source code collections are hobbyists. (Examples of an airline pilot during his downtime, a child who contributed code to Apple).

Q11: Branches

Ali: The attrition-rate has long been very high, with many people leaving at about the 3-year mark. How do we keep members? / keep members engaged?

Ali: We should spend more effort nurturing new members during their first few years.

Ashley: The longest-running SIG is SA's Curry SIG. Social networking is vital, and the centralisation and bureaucracy has lost track of Branch members as people.

Roger; Anthony administering;

Alan McLeod (NSW), Adrian Porteous (Vic), Christopher Martin (SA), Thomas Wozniak (Qld), Siobhan Casey (Director, ACS Labs), Jeff Smith, Margaret

7 present, 5 significant contributors. (3 no-shows).
Driven from the Questions.

Q1: Professional Society

Alan: cf. an industry society? Only if an industry society is a society of professionals.

Adrian: Believes very strongly that the focus is that of a professional society

But the focus has been blurred over the last decade with the boundary edged towards an industry association.

This has been associated with the growth in funds from sources other than membership fees from a small contribution, to 50-50, to the point where membership fees are 6% of revenue.

Associate members are not taking pathways to professional membership.

The PPP program has been a significant factor in the dilution, because its focus is on industry service, and the emphasis on recruitment of individual professionals has fallen badly away.

Tom: Yes to a professional society.

Q4: Associates, thresholds, pathways

Alan: **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]

Associates should have an obligation in relation to CPD units p.a.

Q6: Industry Associations

Some aspects implied in Qs 1, 9, 10

Q7: Key Functions

Tom: Needs a focus on jobs, wages and conditions for Australian residents

Alan: Needs an ongoing focus on requiring certification for categories of IT work.

Chris: ACS needs a new focus on reducing the cowboy factor, e.g. in web-site dev.

ACS should provide a service to small business. in the form of a register pre-evaluated SME service-providers [in conjunction with State Small Business agencies? Chambers of Commerce?]

Alan: Supports that proposal. Plus:

ACS needs to enable members to deliver voluntary services in support of victims of natural disasters (fire, flood, etc.). This needs a framework / channels / insurance.

The political reality is that importing people, to get gratis access to trained staff, will continue to be attractive to business and hence governments. However, we need to be locally developing talent as well, and encouraging employers to develop existing staff.

Tom: Should ACS have a focus on 'Buy Australian'?

Q8: Innovation

Some aspects implied in Qs 1, 9, 10

Q9: Business Lines

Alan: 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.

There's been too much focus on the 'business' aspect of business-lines.

Adrian: There's been a lack of clarity about ACS's business plan. **A range of acquisitions / initiatives appeared to be inconsistent with the Objects.** [Context: ADMA, ACS Labs.]

Alan: The notion of an operating subsidiary is tenable, but it must not dilute the emphasis on the membership. [cf. manage on an 'ethical investment' basis.]

Q10: Available Surplus

Alan: **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.**

The capacity to generate surplus depends [morally, but also practically] on the organisation continuing to be professional in nature.

Adrian: 15 years ago, the revenue split was 50/50 membership fees and skills assessment.
Where's the clarity of strategy about where the surplus is to go?
Where's the transparency about where it's going?

Siobhan: Although staff need to be encouraged to have more focus on full-fee members and not just PPP, **surplus allocation needs to be to the categories of member services that members demonstrably value** – using metrics (e.g. quanta of hits / downloads)

Q11: Branches

Alan: **Violently opposed to getting rid of State Branches. It assumes all areas are the same. They're not. They're quite diverse. There must be localness.**

Tom: **Branches need to have industry focus relevant to their local circumstances.**

Alan: NSW Branch manager has been hampered in gaining access to people arriving in Australia in order to promote the benefits of ACS membership to them.

Adrian: **BECs should be core to the Society, not under threat. Without that local dialogue, the relationship with members fails [as has been occurring for the last 5 years.]**

Siobhan: There's surely a minimum viable size for a Branch or Chapter to have a staff-member. And video- and hybrid delivery has changed / is changing the economics.

[But the need for localness remains, and delivering Hobart and Launceston from Melbourne is problematic, as is Townsville from Brisbane, and Darwin from (Adelaide?). And surely calculations are needed on the extent of the subsidies involved, and the capacity of the surplus from business-lines to support that subsidy.]

Q12: Umbrella Organisation

Adrian: The debate about specialisations can lead to a 'Chapter' / 'College' model (by whatever name), whether based on, e.g. the IEEE model, SFIA, other.

SIGs enabled this, in a flexible and relatively inexpensive manner. That's all been lost.

Siobhan: **ACS could attract existing and new groups through the establishment of a service-set to support them.** Possibility mentioned of an Augmented Reality / Virtual Reality group that Siobhan's been approached about in her ACS Labs capacity.

[This can be linked with the similar set of specific needs raised by aSCSa.]

Q13: Nomination as an ACS Director / the Board generally

Alan: The Board should be elected by professional members, 50% each by the general membership and the BECs [i.e. a blended HoR / Senate approach.]

Consideration could be given to specified criteria for nomination.

Siobhan: 6-9 Board members, 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.

[But what about member control over a runaway Board?]

**Roger; Anthony administering;
Margaret Turner (Qld), Philip Head (Qld), Kishore Nepal (Cbr), Naren Nepali, Bibek Bhandari,
Dimple Rani**

6 present, 2 significant contributors. (6 no-shows).
Driven from the Questions.

Q: Are the slides available?

[Currently only within the recorded video available on the webpage at crwg.acs.org.au.
[But it takes an unknown length of time to get changes made to the webpage.]

Q: Margaret:

Why is there primacy for the public interest rather than member services, including validation to the public regarding the quality of the services that its members provide?

[A condition of being a professional society.]

Q1: Professional Society

Philip: What else would we want it to be? What else could it be?

Margaret: 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.

Q2: 'ICT'

Margaret: **It's a well-known phrase, and more inclusive than the many other, ephemeral phrases that wouldn't pass the test of time.**

Q3/Q7: Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Anthony: ACS's standards and certification work has been used as a framework for the professional employees' award

Margaret: Expressed disappointment about the failure of ACS to achieve any government regulation or control over the profession, in comparison with engineers and trade organisations

Philip: **National SIGs, or coordination among Branch SIGs, has considerable potential**

Margaret: In the Consultation Document, Appendix 1 (p.9), I would like to see the Professional Standards function separated out into 2 functions:

(1) ICT Technical Standards and Bodies of Knowledge;

(2) Standards for membership, accreditation of courses, educational providers etc.

Q11: Branches

Margaret: If Branches are primary, we need to know the responsibility for budget, and how funded. However, a discretionary budget is needed, and there needs to be power at the grass-roots level, particularly in relation to events.

Attracted to the '2 houses of Parliament' idea.

Philip: 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.

Margaret: Also had very good experiences with SIGs, and the speakers and networking that enabled. Her Branch was very supportive

Q: Philip: From his experience rewriting an association constitution, the early phases are not likely to stimulate much discussion, whereas the process may become more animated later, once it is more structured, and more tangible.

**Nick, Roger, Don; Anthony administering;
Philip Ingerson (SA), Mark Toomey (Qld), David Abulafia (NSW)**

3 present, 3 significant contributors. (3 no-shows).

Driven partly from the Questions, but to a large extent by the participants.

Q: Why does there need to be a change?

Q: Is a CLG necessary in order to limit the liability of each member? The lawyer for another organisation he's involved with said that was the case. [No. That's not necessary.]

Q1: Professional Society

Philip: As a senior executive in a consultancy firm, hiring good people, he seldom saw any who bothered with ACS membership. There's an issue attracting people to join.

[Don: The focus is on ethics and quality, but there's no external, regulatory requirement. Given the rapidity of change, that has been appropriate; and it may stay that way.]

Q2: 'ICT'

Mark: 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.

Q3/Q7: Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Mark: For many years, ACS was irrelevant to the technical work he and his staff were performing, because it was too academic. That changed once standards development became a meaningful part of ACS's contributions. But the focus is narrow and the outlook is backwards not forwards (see Q2). This fails to attract business leaders, even CIOs.

Mark: **The heavyweights need to be engaged, but ACS lacks the conduits to them. Where are the events for CXOs, and for Board Directors?**

ACS has to position itself for relevance to them.

David: In addition to applications, **social impacts of ICT must be addressed**.

Mark: **Agreed! Focus is needed on ICT's impacts on production, on work, and on income distribution** as work becomes less readily available as a conduit for personal income.

Nick: [So it needs more emphasis on public policy and thought leadership?]

Mark: **The demise of the Ec, Legal and Social implications Committee is unsurprising. The policy work doesn't engage the community. Use online virtual fora to do that.**

David: The web-site is a serious embarrassment. One example of poor service is the absence of single-click entry from bookings into individuals' own calendars. Another is the rejection by IT Services of requests for improvements. Another is the bureaucratisation inherent in needing support tickets for the simplest of tasks like changing a distribution-list.

David: ACS should be a leader in applying ICT for effectiveness, efficiency, and agility.

Mark: ACS should also be a leader in applying the ISO 37000 governance Standard, but ACS has long since dropped the ball on Australian-led ICT governance initiatives.

Q9: Business-Lines

Philip: Caution is needed – stick to the knitting. There are many key functions to be performed. Innovation per se isn't one of them, cf. facilitating the sharing of knowledge.

Mark: There are serious dangers in diversion of attention away from professionalism and towards orthodox, commercial managerialism. AIM was once a professional association for managers, but it drifted into just being a training company; and now a new professional association has had to emerge. AICD was shrinking because the emphasis had shifted from member services to making money. CPA Aust had similar travails to the other two.

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Mark: Yes! And attract serious experts to build, and to address, the sub-entity specialities. Australia has those people, but few of them are integral to ACS at present.

Philip: Agreed. But that has to lead to business leaders being interested in ACS members.

Q11: Branches

David: The value of ACS membership has substantially declined. **Charging for events reduced participation-levels and and changed the categories of people attending. Some Branches have ceased to deliver on the vital feature of professional and social networking.**

Philip: **Branches are vital, especially for those outside the SE crescent,** because they're left out. That's not a denial of the importance of national approaches to the many functions that are genuinely national in nature.

Mark: It clearly needs more work to get the balance right. **States are real and necessary, and State Branches are, for the same reason. But regional presence and activities are also vital,** because the days of ICT being a capital-city matter have long since gone.

Mark: The Branch Chair and executive committee have to have responsibility for events. The loss of professional and social networking reflects the absence of a Branch 'feel' for the local community. Being able to harness opportunities for visiting speakers in a local area, and bringing them to the notice of members is dependent on 'capability-based architecture'.

Q: ACS Electoral Structure

Mark: Tried to use the Rule to draw the complex structure of representational democracy, and it's so illogical that it didn't prive possible. It needs a massive overhaul, and a great deal more transparency to the membership. [P11] [P08]

Q: Access to the Views of Prospective Members

Philip: ACS has only ever represented a small proportion of the industry. What steps have been taken to get the views on the ACS constitution of people outside the ACS?

Mark: Use some funds and hire a professional enterprise to get those views. Press entities could also help, particularly Innovation Aus.

Mark: You have to be able to get to people like Mike Cannon-Brookes, who have been critical of both the ICT professional and industry associations.

Philip: ACS needs linkages/associations with the emergent ICT industry association(s), not just the moribund ones like AIIA.

National Discussion Session #16 Mon 25 Oct 2021 20:00 UT+11

**Nick, Roger; Anthony administering; Rupert Grayston (CEO) in attendance
Alison Orr (WA), Richard Cordes (Qld), Andrew K, Shivani Solanki, Sandeep, Kaur**

5 present, 3 significant contributors. (2 no-shows).

Driven initially from a participant's agenda, later by some of the Questions

Q: Richard: Interprets 'Principles' as 'guidelines for the Society's behaviour'.
His submission highlights a number of Principles he proposes be adopted:

1. Branch-centred, nationally supported
2. Customer at centre and forefront
3. Stick to the knitting, at the intersection of passion and natural ability
4. Diversity and inclusion
5. Living Statements of Vision ('what we want to become') and Mission (why we exist')

Q1: Professional Society

Alison: Needs to continue as a professional society, but younger people have discomfort about where it fits in relation to other associations, e.g. WITT

Q2: 'ICT'

Richard: Still quite relevant, because it has the necessary breadth

Q3/Q7: Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Richard: Vision ('what we want to become') and Mission (why we exist') belong in constitution

Richard: Code of Ethics is missing in action (i.e. action by the ACS and as a practical guide to ACS members), esp. diversity and inclusion, customer at centre, integrity of action

Andrew: (Younger than others present). Looking for lobbying governments re benefits for society and members

Alison: The most crucial function is events, esp. educational, which is what ACS is there for

Andrew: Achieve registration requirements to do certain work, esp. cybersecurity

Andrew: Take more advantage of members' effort and expertise.

Committees are barely visible, except when ads are published for new members

Andrew: Absence of information and clarity about the value-proposition for ACS membership

Alison: There needs to be greater primacy of standards and ethics

Q4: Associate grade

Alison: Understanding of standards and ethics is important as a step to membership

Q8: Innovation: Just one among many other relevant matters, not a primary one for ACS

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Richard: Principle 4: Diversity and inclusion

Q11: Branches

Richard: 1: Branch-centred, nationally supported – autonomy, agility, close to customer

Alison: Branch involvement really, really important, to get members involved

A serious disappointment was the closure of a committee she was on – dictated by national

Alison: Too much is done centrally, failure to take advantage of members' capabilities, e.g. a poor ACS website without members even as testers, let alone participants in the design

Alison: Need to distinguish Branch functions from other, genuinely national functions

Richard: Get value from centralised strategy, but then autonomy of execution / delegation

Alison: Locally-discovered guest speaker opportunities need local powers and budget

Q: ACS Electoral Structure

Alison: Leaves a lot to be desired

B2: Sessions Other Than National Video Sessions

As at Sun 31 Oct 2021, to 10:00 UT+11

1. KI Discussion Session aSCSa Wed 13 Oct 2021 18:00 UT+11

Roger Clarke (CRWG)

Derek Reinhardt (Pres), George Nikandros (Treas), Simon Connelly (Sec), Holger Becht, Edmund Kienast, Tim McComb [6 participants]

Australian Safety-Critical Systems Association, operating as an ACS National SIG

<https://www.ascsa.org.au>

<https://www.ascsa.org.au/committee-members>

30 years of existence, annual conference with 50-100 attendees, financially secure

A long-time National SIG that has benefitted from the relationship with the ACS

Key Positives in ACS support:

- Event registration and payments
- Local ACS Branch support for Conference Registration Desk, variable by Branch
- Rights to, and control over, aSCSa funds
- 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:

*** 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)

aSCSa wants to retain the positive elements of the relationship, and improve the situation, and not go backwards as the result of any negative impacts arising from a change in the ACS's form or constitution.

[P04] [SIGs] [Q12]

2. Queensland BEC – 14th October 2021

Brisbane Club – 90 minutes – [8 participants]

**Beau Tydd – Chair, Paul Campbell – Vice-Chair and CRWG, Peter Yeates – Secretary
Bob Tisdall – Treasurer, Matthew Eames, Sharon Singh, Jonny Serrano – Committee
members, Holly Bretherton – Branch Manager
Nick Tate – CRWG**

Nick gave a short presentation based on, but not using, the standard slides

Q1 – Should ACS continue to be a professional society

Unanimous agreement that the ACS is currently a professional society and should remain so.

Q2 – Is ICT still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope?

Some discussion on this but no suggested alternatives to ICT.

Q3 – Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated?

Paul explained the possible implications for ACS's charitable status if there was any substantial change to the objects. Feedback from all participants that charitable status should be maintained.

Q4 Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate Grade?

Bob suggested that the associate grade needs a rethink. Several opinions were expressed that professional division members should remain at the heart of the ACS and that the recent decline in professional grade membership is alarming. [Q07]

Paul expressed the view that the benefits for Professional membership must appeal to the self-interest of the prospective professional member. [Q07]

There was general support for the view that too little had been done to enhance the benefits of professional membership and that this was a contributing factor in its decline. [Q07]

Q5 Should ACS embrace Managers and Users of ICT?

The majority expressed the view that having Managers as members of the ACS enhanced the credibility and standing of the ACS and should be embraced.

Q11 Should ACS Branches continue to have primary responsibility for activities within their geographical area?

This question produced the most debate and discussion of the session.

There was wide support for the view that there should be sufficient autonomy for the branches so that they are in control of their own destiny. [P03]

Bob expressed the view that a professional society needs to support and be supported by local professionals, who in turn need the branch and chapter structure for support. This view was again widely supported across the BEC. [P03]

Other Issues that were raised

Beau expressed the view that undertaking this consultation by members and for members was very important. This was contrasted with the approach to consultation on the strategic plan, which was felt to be more consultant led. [P08] [P09] [Q14]

Bob, Paul and Beau expressed the view that 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 did not necessarily equate to the need for a change to a CLG. [P11] [CLG]

Paul pointed out that the current fad in Governance is for "lean" constitutions, with most things able to be changed by the board. This has both obvious efficiencies and obvious downsides. This would imply the need for a high level of trust in any future board, and this may not be possible. [P08] [Dir]

Bob felt that the pool of eligible candidates for President was too constrained by the current rules and that the eligibility rules for President should be changed as soon as possible. [P11] [Dir]

On hearing that the use of social media was taking longer than expected, several members who are frequent users of social media have offered to "spread the word".

All those present have said that they will contribute to the online forum.

3. Profession Advisory Board – Session 1 of 3 – 13 October 2021

The PAB held three sessions for discussion regarding the Constitutional Review, open to all PAB and Committee members. The following provides a summary of the first of these discussions.

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- ACS should continue to be a professional society providing guidance and support, professional networking and opportunities to continually upskill
- The majority of graduates do not go on to become professional members of the Society. This has been the case for some time. Something needs to change about how the society operates if this is to change in the future.
- Many long-standing members prize the professional society, however, the fixation on the professional society may be preventing the ACS's ability to be dynamic and move forward.
- This is a very important question as discussed in other conversations such as the 5-year strategy development, indicate there are a variety of views on what a professional society is and what a professional society implies. It is important to get this clear and impacts mission and vision. Is this a professional society for ICT professionals/practitioners or the broader range of people involved in IT in any way? Is the focus on professionals or driving growth and higher membership?

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

- At a high level it appears suitable, however, consider whether there is anything in the specialism areas e.g. Cyber security that might fall outside ICT.
- ICT covers it but consider more emphasis on how ICT is used as a lot of ICT decision-making occurs by lawyer, accountants, company directors. Decisions should be made by ICT professionals.
- 'ICT' is appropriate but discussions in other forums indicate that there are diverse views of what ICT is and it is important that it is clear.

Q4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

- There are long-term Associate members who are not necessarily eligible for professional status but who are committed to and contribute to the Society in meaningful ways and have done over a long period of time.
- The reason/s that Associate members do not go through the certification process seems to be the more important issue. Perhaps a better question for discussion is what advantage/s there might be to a more streamlined process.
- 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 others. The recent promotional pricing appears to have attracted more members to go through the Certification process.
- ACS needs something like the old Affiliate grade for members who are not ICT professionals but want to be part of the ACS.
- We need an easy way for eligible Associates to become professionals and to recognise those who are expired professionals.
- All members are required to ascribe to our Code of Ethics, but the 'average' Associate grade member is unaware of this obligation, although they may have 'ticked a box' in their application. We need a way to make sure all members are reminded of this obligation.

Q5. Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

- ACS has a pathway to professional membership for senior managers who have appropriate interest/involvement in ICT but do not have an ICT qualification and this is a good thing. However, it has also been misused and there are members who work in organisations who do some ICT and have gained CP status but are not actually ICT professionals.
- Should we consider the concept of 'practitioner' as opposed to 'professional'?

Q6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations? Or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

(Suggestion to re-word the 2 questions as they appear to be asking the same thing.)

Q8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

- ACS should continue funding market research even if it is at a loss. There are some questions that must be answered and if no one else is funding it, ACS needs to.
- **It is important to fund innovation** as many members would benefit from it **but not if it is at a loss.**
- 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.
- **Until and unless ACS has a demonstrable appoint of difference, we should not be doing this.**

Q11. 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?

- Having grown from a federated model of relatively autonomous states there has been no emphasis on the common issues. IT is now central to many things and potentially **we should delegate things to different states to enable them to deal with things in their own state legislative context. But we also need to emphasise that there are commonalities that we don't currently recognize.** [P03]
- Yes, branches should be able to deal with things specific to their state but there needs to be co-ordination of national input and involvement.

Q13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director? Or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

- Anyone should be able to nominate but only if they are trained.

The work of the CRWG was acknowledged. Thanks was offered for the constructive and inclusive attitude and process being undertaken, keeping the members informed and helping to build rapport among the membership.

4. Profession Advisory Board – Session 2 of 3 – 15 October 2021

The PAB held three sessions for discussion regarding the Constitutional Review, open to all PAB and Committee members. The following provides a summary of the second of these discussions.

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- The alternative to Professional Society might be a transition to quasi-professional society like ACM with no real barriers to entry, more a society of interested parties.

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

- It is a good question - 'ICT' is problematic but it is not clear what should replace it. It puts people off who don't see themselves as 'IT'.
- The scope of what ACS covers is broad and continually evolving (unlike other professions). ICT seems like the best fit at the moment but not the ideal fit for the future.
- Technologies will evolve over time, any attempt to define/qualify what we mean by ICT is likely to need constant changing/updating. Do we need an overarching term that is relevant to today and the future?
- Is there a separate question about actual scope of the audience we are looking at?
In the early days it was easy to define who was in the IT industry but now industries overlap and utilize IT, requiring specialists. Who is ACS including in 'ICT'?

Q4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

- 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.
- What are the compelling reasons to become a member then to become certified? Will it help them get a job, get promoted? We need to make it straight forward but not lower the bar. Employers need to value ACS CP.

Q5. Should the ACS embrace managers and users of ICT, subject to defined thresholds of professionalism, as being within the scope of the Society's professional membership?

- If we define things so the majority of their role involves IT in some way or the technical expertise in their current role is in IT in some way, we need to include them. If we try to be all things to all people, we are no longer a professional society, if this is the decision.
- Regarding CPD – you have to be able to include things that are directly relevant to your role e.g. a course in people management is directly relevant to a CIO. We need to have a nuanced view rather than black and white criteria.

Q6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations? Or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

- Second paragraph is a yes – 'Specify structural separation between ACS as a professional association and the commercial'
- There should be an organisational structure that avoid tensions (especially with regard to appropriate corporate governance)

Q8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

- It is not appropriate - but if it is deemed to be appropriate it needs to be organised in a way that clearly separates/isolates those activities from ACS member functions.
- It poses a risk to the Society - if it's not a core function why are we assuming the risk?
- Innovation is good for the industry - it provides value but shouldn't be a prime focus of the ACS.

Q9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

- 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. We have to give the organisation's Directors sufficient latitude, but they should not to things that are inconsistent with the values members signed up for. [P08]

- **We can't go to the members for everything but there should be something in the strategy which should be taken to members around how such decisions are made**

Q10. How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

- **There should be some parameters around how MC may allocate expenditure of surplus**
- There has to be some reference to materiality – a surplus of \$2,000 is different to one of \$2,000,000

Q11. 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?

- The strategy direction should come from the overall ACS, and branches are there to execute the strategy. Over the years Branches have had too much power to over-rule the strategy.
- Branches should execute the strategy in their state but like membership needs to be coordinated/managed nationally. States should be responsible for local execution of specific programs and activities.
- At national level – provide parameters for the strategy at a broad level. Which speaker to use locally and what topics to have are decisions for Branches at a local level.
- **Branches should have delegation/discretion to spend up to a certain amount, but they also need to be accountable** for how that is spent. For example, Branches may have delegated authority to spend \$XX over 6 months and they have to be accountable for the spend. They should also be able to request additional budget
- It's not just about spending but also changing policy. On the other hand, Branches are the part of the ACS that members interact with most, like local government/council. They provide local services (e.g. rubbish collection) but we don't want local council deciding major policy like which side of the road to drive on. The **boundaries need to be drawn in a reasonable way.**

Q13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director? Or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

- This is a really important question and how the board is constructed is incredibly important. For example, are they representing the Branches? Are there some who are directly elected by members? Good idea to have at least a couple who are directly elected.
- Any new Constitution/Board **should not have the CEO as a Director.** ACS is a not-for-profit charity - the CEO should not be a Board member of a member-servicing, member-based organisation. The CEO has an incredibly important role but from a governance perspective they should not oversee their own work.
- **A Board Charter provides the guardrails – what is the Board allowed to do, what is it not allowed to do, what is its purview, where are its boundaries?**
- 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.

Q14. What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

- Who owns the Code of Ethics? **If such things are 'owned' by the membership, they are subject to majoritarianism/hijack. On the other hand, the Board of Director should not have the power to change the Code of Ethics.** It is not necessarily either/or. We need to build in guard rails e.g. the Code of Ethics can be changed after consultation with x and y.
- Who are the 'members' proposed to be? All members? Members of Congress? The people on the Board?
[Roger clarified that the proposal is that all professional division members and associates would be treated as members as members of the CLG. The law may preclude changes the number of voting members. But it may preclude the removal of voting rights from existing Associates.]
 - Roger invited thoughts on opportunities for guard rails e.g. only after consultation with . . .

5. Profession Advisory Board – Session 3 of 3 – 18 October 2021

The PAB held three sessions for discussion regarding the Constitutional Review, open to all PAB and Committee members. The following provides a summary of the third of these discussions.

Q1. Should the ACS continue to be a professional society?

- 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.
- An industry association could be an activity of the ACS [Q06] [IA]

Q2. Is 'ICT' still a suitable summation of the ACS's scope? Should the breadth of coverage be clarified by including some examples of technologies within ICT?

- ICT is how the commonwealth and state governments refer to it. It is a term that is understood and has currency. Other terms like 'Digital' seem to be fashionable but would be short-lived until the next trendy/marketing change.
- Is ICT only about communications and technology? There are lots of people in the digital world all using computers and technology.
- Historically it was more difficult to be an ACS member. **Over time that has become broader to represent the ICT community. We should keep that broad view.** ICT covers more than IT – we don't want to go back to the prescriptive membership model.
- 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. If people have an interest but are not professional, they should still have the option to participate in the Society's activities.

Q3. Are any of the terms and expressions in the suggested Mission and Purposes misleading or dated? Should any alternative or additional terms or expressions be considered?

- As discussed, the ACS mission should be to represent the ICT professionals in Australia.
- Tension originated because **the driver for the commercial arm of ACS activities came into conflict with the general mission and purpose.** [Q07]

Q4. Does the ACS need to re-establish threshold requirements for the Associate grade, and pathways and support processes to assist current Associates to satisfy them?

- Surprised and concerned that Associate members can vote. Associates should be able to take part in activities but not be able to vote.
- Why would members go from Associate to Professional if they already have voting rights? **Associate is the first stage of membership and there should be pathway to become full (professional) members, and hence gain voting rights.**
- Involvement in activities of the Society might give 'credit' towards full membership but voting should be restricted to full members
- Just because you are a voting member doesn't necessarily make you feel more like a member. We should have categories of both – with most members being professional members who make the decisions in the organisation because we are a profession.

Q6. Should the ACS devise a risk-managed way to host industry associations in order to avoid harm to the professional society and relevant industry associations? Or should the Society devise an organisational structure that avoids tensions between their distinct objectives, stakeholders and value-sets?

- Is it there to generate income or just cover running costs so as not to become a financial drain on the ACS?
- This is a philosophical decision about the ACS. Is the ACS an entity that represents the Australian ICT community under this umbrella or is it that the ACS is leading a family of industry associations as well as itself that represents the ICT community. This was not the aim when the ACS was set up, but **this is the situation we have found ourselves in, given decisions were made that members were not aware of.** In the future we might have more of these satellite entities - is that what the ACS want so to be? [P08]

- **Having lots of satellite entities will take time and resources from the ACS, taking energy and drive from** the broader umbrella of **ACS's focus**.

Q8. Is substantial, direct support for innovation, for example through the ACS Labs Division, a key function of the ACS? If so, to what level should the Society support the activity from its available surplus?

- In favour of the lab view – with the ACS leading by example and supporting innovation, but not the other professional entities
- If their purpose is to generate income, how does this benefit members?

Q9. How should the ACS ensure its business-lines are consistent with the Society's values?

- The Constitution of **acquired industry groups (like IAPA) should align with ACS's** [P04]
- 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

Q10. How should the ACS allocate available surplus?

- 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.
- Activities should be in line with the mission/vision to support the community.

Q11. 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?

- **Branches should have a level of autonomy**
- Need to have Branches that represent the different states e.g. the impact of COVID on the ICT community is different in Victoria to Western Australia.
- Branches are extremely important to represent members of their state
- This also affects our model of federation in terms of **interacting with state and territory governments and dealing with issues at that second tier of government**
- **Branches should have budgets and powers to make decision relevant to their state**
- Branches should have access to the generic pool of resources
- **Needs to be a balance between the local level and the federal level**

Q12. Should the ACS have the constitutional capability to operate as an umbrella organisation or hub, which fosters and administers specialist associations?

- The ACS is the premier professional body for the ICT community and the only way it can do that is being able to reflect the different disciplines under the ICT umbrella.
- ACS is the broadest professional association in the country, and as long as specialisations conform to a core IT Body of Knowledge and values it should represent these as well.
- Yes, an umbrella is **a preferred model, but we want to keep administration simple.**

Q13. Should any professional ACS member be able to nominate as an ACS Director? Or should ACS anticipate future legal requirements and require relevant qualifications, or evidence of prior expertise and experience in the work of association or corporate Boards?

- Anyone professional member should be able to nominate
- They need to be aware of legal implications and risks to becoming a Director
- **Appropriate (professional) training should be offered with the understanding it is completed in a certain amount of time**
- Don't want to turn it into an old boy's club
- Other questions raised: Is it ok that if I can line up 20 mates, I might be able to get onto the Board? Do we need to ensure Board members have appropriate range of skills?

Q14. What member involvement is appropriate for the creation and amendment of key policies that define the ACS's internal structures, processes, norms and priorities?

- **Should have the broadest consultation possible – in line with the importance / magnitude of the decision.**

Members acknowledged the opportunity to have the discussion.

6. Tasmanian Branch – 26 October 2021

Jacky Hartnett; Michael Frankland; Nick Tate and Roger Clarke in attendance
Present: Allan McKinlay, Michael Scott, Min Zheng Huang, Ray Leonard, Gayatri Pandey, Justin Morgan, Tristan Richards
By Video: Adrian Napalan, David Mills, Chris Baker, Johnson Koay, Tulasiram Mettu

14 Branch members present, of 30 registered.
Driven primarily from the Question List.

Q1: Professional Society

Mike: Yes. Compare with Eng Aust, CPA Aust. Qualifications and standards to differentiate professionals from cowboys, plus ethical factors

Justin: Yes. Involves monitoring, disciplinary processes, de-accreditation, indemnity.
Managing risk for the IT-using organisation and for the public.
Crucial to influencing government and business.

Vetting and acknowledging non university obtained credentials enables membership for an experience-base equivalent to formal entry qualifications.

Ray: Being a professional body is crucial. It enables ACS to be of influence to society, government and industry. The constitution will have to carefully specify how people can be come accredited members of our profession.

Q2: 'ICT'

David: Has sought a suitable, up-to-date name for his 35 (bank) staff.
(CBA was 'Enterprise Services', is now 'Technology' – ?!). **'ICT' still works well enough.**

Ray: 'ICT' is too business-aligned, doesn't cover sci / tech / academe.
Need a name that shows how we fit into the entire economy

Michael: Dislikes ICT and prefers 'IT'.
'IT Australia' seems to be a good name.

Alan: What does the public see us as? Distill it down to be publicly understandable.

Tristan: **SFIA's scope is greater than 'ICT', adding in a penumbra of business skills**

Justin: the reality is that there is a big divide in the training and expertise of IT specialists and Business systems specialists and they do and understand different things. We have to determine our boundaries and what we really represent.

Jacky: Data's made a comeback, not as 'data processing', but as 'data mining/analytics'

Alan: **The word 'society' is a problem – sounds secretive and old-fashioned / like a guild**

Chris: **The word 'computer' is a problem. The name should refer to the role not the artefact, e.g. technologist not a particular technology**

Q3/Q7: Mission, Purposes, Key Functions

Alan: What's the value offered to the member?

Justin: Everything flows from this – if the mission and purpose are correct then the rest follows.

Q4: Associate grade

Michael: Thresholds are needed, to enable evaluation of applicants.

Ray: We need continual review of the make-up of the membership as qualifications and skill sets keep evolving. There's a lot of training and certification by vendors. Thresholds need to reflect them

Michael: Need to be inclusive, but need to use levels of membership to signify it

David: Need to be inclusive, but also to keep focus ('5 careers in a worklife')

Q6 & Q8: Industry Associations & Innovation Labs

Alan: ACS shouldn't be trying to pick winners

Ray: The original motivations for the investments were ill-conceived.
It's possible that they could deliver member-value, but not as they've been set up.

Michael: My investments and my professional body are different.

ACS should transition away from those two ventures

Alan: Agreed. **The business case, due diligence and/or risk assessment was flawed. Both were bad decisions.**

Ray: **The ACS has a role to play in supporting innovation, but this isn't it.**

Justin: ACS should support and contribute but not OWN

Alan: The money is going to people not businesses

Justin: There is perhaps an ethical issue around which members are being supported?

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Alan: All **the money disappears to Head Office, and lots is burnt in wildly expensive premises in Sydney and Melbourne. There's insufficient dividend to the Branches.**

Alan: A 'not-for-profit' (which is really a 'not-for-loss' organisation) needs **to build reserves, and otherwise to focus the allocation of its surplus on core functions**

Justin: must specify amount to be held in reserve for future unknowns – not all surplus can be spent

Q11: Branches

Alan: CPA Aust uses employees but engages with local committees of members. **ACS needs a presence in each State**

Justin: Scale can be an issue. Representation of all regions matters, but it's expensive to deliver equivalent services in all relevant locations. In small Branches, BECs must provide labour to support the Branch Manager

Ray: **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**

Jacky: Particularly in small Branches, BEC experience can be useful training for professionals with tightly-defined, limited-scope day-jobs

Michael: This is my experience as a previous BEC member when young.

David: It's critical to have a local Committee, to stay connected with local industry.

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Ray: 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)

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

Tristan: Case of engineering / built environment / CAD, i.e. with strong tech capabilities. Case of an ICT recruiter with limited ICT who's a valuable contributor. **SFIA framework helps with boundaries [Q04] [Q05]**

Ray: People in the creative economy, applying IT.

Diversity and inclusiveness of background and specialisation is important

Justin: Agreed, but there's a question of how peripheral can the association with ICT be

Q13: Board composition

Michael: In addition to Board-members directly elected by the membership, there are **benefits in having some appointed Board-members so that the skills-matrix can be balanced out.**

Alan: It's **important that voting powers of the two main States are constrained in some way, to prevent dominance over the composition and hence over the orientation of the Board.**

7. Canberra BEC – 28 October 2021

Roger Clarke in attendance

Present: Peter O'Halloran (Chair), Kristina Carroll (Vice-Chair), Neil Brittliff, Martin Comans, Grant Hopcroft, Sarah-Louise MacDonald, Eric Nguyen, Amy Tang, Vicki Gardiner (Branch Mgr)

9 BEC members present, for the entire 1 hour 45 minutes.

Driven primarily by participants, complemented by the Question List.

Q: Peter: Where did the background paper and questions come from? They're useful.

Q: Grant: Most of the paper is inward-looking. Are we also looking outward at the market?
Are we comparing ourselves with other professional associations?
And with societies of a similar kind internationally?

Q2: 'ICT'

Peter: Yes, but data needs to be included.

Kristina: Seconded. ICT is not enough:

'Enablement of society through appropriate use of technology'

Peter: ICT is a meaningful term to us, but not to others.

OTOH, people think they understand 'digital', so perhaps project that instead / as well?

Amy: 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.

Q4: Associate grade

Peter: We need to decide what we want to embrace, and then support it.

We definitely need the decision-makers involved [mid-level ICT mgrs, CIOs, ?Boards]

That should be relatively easy to define, whereas many specialised areas are harder.

Vicki: ACS is a Council member of the **SFIA** Foundation. That **should provide a basis for developing pathways for new and emergent categories of professional.** So ACS cannot exclude people who are not "ICT degree professionals" as there are many pathways.
[Reflecting afterwards, the ACS is similar to the RACI in that and ICT professional is hard to define, just like a chemist. In the chemistry world you have biochemists, nanotechnologists, blah blah blah. In fact, if you look at the Nobel Prize for medicine, these are often chemists with a different name. Professional Engineers are quite different because they have a specific degree that is common everywhere.]

Kristina: A teacher shifting to e-Learning Developer can leverage the SFIA framework.

Kristina: There are definitely barriers to membership for some relevant people.

Sarah-Louise: **Pathways for other professionals could leverage micro-credentials.**

Maybe 'science-based ICT professional' / 'health sector ICT professional' / etc.

That could be linked with joint recognition programs with other societies.

Vicki: That could also assist individuals jumping across industry sectors.

[But does that ensure a sufficient core? Or should there be another membership category for professionals in other fields who have a strong second suit in ICT, e.g. 'practitioner'?]

Q7: Key Functions [Framing: 'what are your top-of-mind / most important things to do]

Peter: **Public policy – voice of the profession to government, industry and the public.**

ACS has to have a conscience, and be an advocate for appropriate and against inappropriate technologies and applications of technologies

Sarah-Louise: Policy influence is not done well. We tack on and copy others.

We should **get out in the forefront and address hot button issues.**

Instead we're cautious, too respectful of government views, even partisan.

Issues means where ICT interacts with society. It's not about kit, but problem-solving.

Peter: e.g. when SA proposed a technology-enabled virtual prison for quarantined people (incl. biometrics, always-on geo-location and geo-fencing, 3rd party service, offshore data).

ACS needs to communicate concerns, whether governments like the message or not.

Kristina: When the Child eSafety Commissioner says something, ACS should be offering an opinion [whether it be support, suggestions about enablement, a qualification, or opposition]

Sarah-Louise: **Open nights for concerns / issues. That's more exciting for young tech professionals**

[Old name: 'Infotech politics in the pub'? What should such events be called now?]

[Additional Question posed by CRWG member: MC, CEO and staff work hard to build and protect ACS brand. How do we sustain brand, but have debates, and make submissions?]

Sarah-Louise: We're a members' organisation, and positions/topics should be led by members. Measured opinions by the ACS is separate / separable from the views of members of groups of members.

It's probably appropriate for the CEO to generally be the spokesperson.

Peter: **Universities manage this, by distinguishing individual academics' statements from the University's position**, and keep receiving grants from organisations that academics criticise.

Vicki: **ACS can pull back from / extract / abstract, in order to enunciate agreed principles**. Example of nuclear energy as a polarising issue within IE Aust. Focus the official position on 'solution requires a mix of sources' rather than the specifics of the technology

Grant: Education and certification, in particular externally-imposed licensing cf. CPA Aust

Sarah-Louise: Because of ongoing specialisation/fragmentation, licensing may be a dying art-form?

Martin: We've tried for registration for 50 years, and not got there [even in the most obvious areas, such as safety-critical systems and (current name) cybersecurity]. Is it a forlorn hope?

Vicki: Most Eng Aust members don't need to be chartered, not even all civil, just structural.

Kristina: **The creation of registration schemes follows not just any kind of disaster, but specifically political disasters. People have to perceive ICT, or lack of quality in ICT activities, as being the root cause of a political disaster.**

Sarah-Louise: **We have to achieve a sufficient public policy profile, because otherwise ICT and quality in the application of ICT are not seen as a major risk factor.**

Sarah-Louise: The quality standards associated with migration skills assessment aren't good enough. We need a much more robust mechanism to achieve workforce quality.

Neil: **Opportunities to meet others in the industry**. The altruistic aspect is good; but for some people ready access to public liability insurance matters, and for many members the feeling of a community is paramount – social, as well as CPD events + professional networking

Eric: **The social aspect is missing**. Non-CPD events have a different vibe from CPD ones [The networking inevitably involves a lot of 'talking shop' and vicarious experience]

Amy: **Younger generations have different membership needs and values that need to be understood, articulated and addressed**. For example, the relevance and need for insurance through ACS depends on individuals but is potentially less of a driver for the emerging professional/professional market segment where professional indemnity and liability insurance is covered by their employer. Communicating the benefits of insurance through ACS as part of membership and how it differs to other insurance offerings could be promoted further with relevant ACS market segments. Evolution is important.

Eric: The ACS brand doesn't get enough exposure to young professionals. That's true in both educational institutions and for young people moving to jobs in Canberra.

Vicki: The constitutions she's familiar with include purposes like 'facilitating exchange of ideas', 'information transfer and development'

Sarah-Louise: A focus is needed on new tech, innovation, building eco-systems

Neil: What does, and what should ACS do, about clauses in employment contracts that seek to impose **unreasonable non-disclosure / non-compete / restraint-of-trade clauses**?

Sarah-Louise / Martin / Others ==>> Consensus: ACS must have **a clear and member-supportive policy position**, and should be able to provide background information to a member confronted by the problem, perhaps including a pointer to specialist advisers; but isn't a union and shouldn't provide direct support

Q8: Innovation Labs

Amy: One of the three current Strategy 2017-2022 deliverable categories is 'Catalyst – sparking innovation' through objectives of enhancing domestic clusters and leveraging global IP. **If our current organisational purpose is stated “to promote the development of Australian ICT resources”, shouldn't we be allocating some surplus into sparking innovation?**

[Agreed; 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.]

Vicki: **if the ACS is about skills development in the ICT, then skills development in our professionals' abilities to take digital innovation to market would also fit within the purpose of the organisation.**

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Sarah-Louise: 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]

Peter: **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.** [P08] [P11]

For this to work, however, electoral processes must be effective, not a closed old boys club. [P11] [Dir]

Money-making divisions need to be consistent with the Mission and Purposes, but need not be Key Functions. [Q09]

[Break-even is adequate for Functions that are relevant but not Key Functions.]

Q12: Umbrella organisation

Peter: That's the future of the ACS. [**Inclusiveness** through all of absorption of existing smaller groups, and various kinds of collaboration and MoUs with larger ones.]

Amy: We need to avoid excluding categories because of narrow definitions.

Eric: This is an important conversation. There's rapid change, and the industry is in transition. It's no longer about computers and software, but about **digital transformation.** **We have to move beyond [i.e. add to, rather than abandon] skills with the computer as the tool. Yes, to testers, Fintech, games specialists, etc. We need to refresh and redesign specialisations.**

Australian Computer Society
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
Victorian BEC – Mon 8 Nov 2021 17:30-18:45 UT+11

Nick as presenter and facilitator, Roger as note-taker;
Jo Dalvean (Chair), Rod Dilnutt (Vice-Chair), John Graham, Karl Reed,
Cynthia Lee (17:45-18:15), Charlynn Miller (until 18:00), Susan Sly (from 17:45)
Graeme Bond, Matthew Warren, Maria Markman

7 present of 11 BEC members, including most of the 2022 BEC members
Driven by participants first, then from the Questions

Q1: Professional Society

Karl: YES

This importantly includes independence from government, evident in policy statements

Q7: Key Functions

Karl: Skills assessment as an element

Karl: Design of mission statements is non-trivial

Overcome the negative impact of IT in the community. Public information infrastructure evidences continual failure (CensusFail, RoboDebt, COVIDsafe, ...), and ACS is tarred with that brush rather than being perceived to be an antidote to it. We're not seen as 'the light on the hill' for IT professionals, and have not achieved

Rod: There's been **excessive emphasis on business-lines, too little on member voice.** Jobs, professional development, networks

Jo: **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**

Other groups have a stronger bond with members, e.g. women's groups, value of networking, Branch SIGs

Susan: **Re-investigate who our members are, and especially who they will be. We have a huge issue of irrelevance. Our offerings to members don't sell the Society to them.**

[**More details sought on what's needed, e.g. Social elements in events? Charging for events? Express support for and enablement of Branch SIGs?]**

Q9: Business Lines

There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity

Q10: Allocation of Surplus

Susan: Profit-for-Good principles include 'how you make your profit', and 'what do you use it for'. Those reference-points for decision need to be in the Constitution.

That plays across to management through KPIs.

Boundaries need to be placed, including how much do we need, and what for, for reserves and for delivering value to members

The executive need to not be micro-managed, with their arm tied behind their back

[But what principles will enable members to **macro-manage** the CEO and staff?]

Q11: Branches

Karl: The Society should not be sucked into the mantra that States are not relevant. They've been crucial during the COVID era; they have functions to perform

Karl: Branches need much more autonomy

Jo: Agreed, but at a strategic level, not the amount of the rental

Jo: **Local presence** is important, and Branch structures already exist. Evacuation of CBDs in Melbourne and Sydney were location-specific. **On-the-ground knowledge of circumstances** has to be reflected in Society actions and

Susan: Constitutionally, **we have to be national and local.** Ability to operate both physically and virtually. **Matrixed arrangements are inherent. We need better**

collaboration and sharing. Inclusion is one example where **connections** are lacking. It's hierarchical and it's not at all **collaborative**. We need collaboration at the core of the Constitution
[P03]

Jo: Did it work better when there was **direct Branch involvement in each national Committee**? Would it work better now than the current non-Branch-based approach?

Susan: Election-based appointments alone are limiting. Election-Plus can work better [i.e. based on the expertise matrix, some appointees to complement those available]

Comments on many further factors:

Karl: Large committees can work

Karl: Concerned about the relationship between staff and elected officials and the function of staff to support elected officials [#P00]

Similarly staff should not represent the Society, and staff should not be on Boards

Karl: **The Society has lost its skills at delegation to elected officials, with Boards and Committees tied down in red tape** [#P00] [#P03] [#P07] [#Q11]

Rod: **Vital importance of safeguards existing to prevent the Society being run away with, reducing its member-centricity.** The incorporation form is less vital than that issue
[#Dir] [#P00] [#P02] [#P08] [#P11] [#Q14]

Charlynn: Must be for the members and agreed among the members, and not corporate in its thinking. Member-centricity is critical. [#P00] [#P02] [#P08] [#P11] [#Q14]

Values, Culture, Inclusiveness, not revenue-focussed

Students don't feel the ACS is there for them – and that's the Society's future!

Susan: Focus on members, because so much has changed

John: The vital thing for the Society is that it be of and for its members [#P00]

The organisation needs to be kept simple. The growth and complexity has dragged the Society in the direction of corporatisation, and that harms the membership focus

Jo: Angst in Vic and in NSW Branch about the impact of the strategy project on the constitutional work. May need to delay the strategy work to enable the constitutional work to run effectively

Member-centricity is critical. There may be unintended consequences of acquisitions, resulting in harm to member-centricity [#P00] [#P02]

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

Karl: This process has been an invaluable opening up of engagement with members

Susan: The shared experience in a meeting like this was an effective mechanism for engagement [#P00] [#P08]

Australian Computer Society
CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM
Queensland Chapters Event
Thursday 11 November 2021 18:00-19:00 UT+10

**Matthew Bulat (Chair, North Queensland Chapter), Bevin Irvine (North Queensland Chapter)
Ann Stevens (Secretary, Gold Coast Chapter), Michael Lane (Vice Chair, Downs and
Southwest Chapter), Holly Bretherton (Qld Branch Manager)**

Apologies: Rockhampton and Bundaberg Chapters

5 participants, all active

Nick Tate as presenter and facilitator, Roger as note-taker, Anthony in support

Q: Matthew: SFIA8 in Sep 2021 is 10% larger than before.
Does that affect ACS evaluations, incl. skills assessment?

Q1: Professional Society

All agreed on that question, a definite Yes.

Q2: 'ICT'

Matthew: ICT isn't well-known by a lot of people. It needs more promotion and explanation.

Bevin: Avoid long lists, 'ICT' will do.

Michael: The more important question is maintenance of the body of knowledge.

Q3: Mission and Purposes

Bevin: There's nothing misleading in there.

Q4: Associate Membership Threshold

Bevin: Having more Associates voting than Professional Division members is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Bevin: Could it be time-based, e.g. Associates must upgrade within a given number of years?

Bevin: There should be a threshold for entry to that grade.

Ann: Agreed.

Michael: Pathways are very much needed, to move up from Associate.

Holly: **Gratis certification during COVID could be extended to gratis at the time a person joins**, to draw far more of the better-qualified Associates into MACS CP from the outset. **And/or that could be combined with occasional special offers.**

Budget implications need to be considered of course, but the gratis period this was highly valued, by members who took advantage of it, and employers.

Q5: Managers and Users

Bevin: They should be subject to the same standards as professionals, otherwise it dilutes the quality.

Q6: Industry Associations

Bevin: There's risk of conflict of values between professionalism and corporate needs.

Matthew: Have joint events, even joint ventures, but they must be separate organisations.

Michael: Hosting means what? And what's the benefit?

Ann: Prefers the second option: Avoid the tension

Q7: Key Functions ('What's Your Top-of-Mind Function that must be performed well?')

Matthew: For CPD, we need 30 hours of new online content p.a.

Holly: There are many webinars, available live and on replay, and a large library.

Michael: That's been improved a lot in the last few years.

Bevin: **Supporting the members, especially those remote from the capital cities, and ensuring they're exposed to the latest information.** [#Chapters]

Matthew: Promote IT, in Canberra.

Ann: **New technologies and skills aren't adequately supported by the ACS accreditation process, e.g. old multimedia terms cf. new virtual/augmented reality terms, and that results in accreditation difficulties. The rate of change is very fast in such areas.**

Matthew: In SFIA 8, does 'Animation Development' work?

Ann: No, e.g. spatial trackers aren't covered at all.

Q8: Innovations / ACS Labs / RCL

Matthew: It would be nice if we knew what they did in there.

How about a monthly newsletter?

Do they run start-up weekends – 2-1/2 day events?

Bevin: **Do they generate new members? Do they generate revenue for us?**

Is the space provided in return for equity?

Ann: The ACS Lab is out-of-reach even for Gold Coast Chapter.

[#Chapters]

Is it supporting innovation in education?

Holly: RCL runs Start-up programs, esp. 'River Pitch' annually, and casual use of the

[Branch? ACS Labs?] facilities by ACS members is available.

Q11: Branches

Bevin: **Branches should continue their primary role.**

If they were removed, the Society would be dominated by the larger cities, and there would be nothing for remote members.

[#Chapters]

Matthew: Agreed, and **the States should share more of their events**

Holly: Events are recorded, and available

Matthew: How do members know what's going into the archive?

Holly: Fortnightly eNews.

Michael: **Branch resources and support for the re-launch of the Darling Downs Chapters recently, plus with face-to-face events, has been critical.**

Bevin: **Chapters should have enough independence, including some funds control where they've built a reserve. Townsville's \$10,400 pot was confiscated to national**

Matthew: Supports Bevin's comment.

[#Chapters]

Ann: **Definitely responsibility for activities must be with Chapters.**

Holly: 110% agreed Branches and Chapters should have that ability.

Q12: Umbrella / Hub

Matthew: Doesn't Brisbane run a few SIGs already?

Bevin: Support for specialisations is important, through whatever channels.

Ann: **At the moment there's no specialised group for Virtual Reality / Augmented Reality, Would more emphasis on hosting specialised groups address that?**

Michael: Accommodating special interests is important.