IEEE
Advancing Technology for Humanity

Regions 1-6
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IEEE Region 8 Committee

An Introductory Guide for Committee Members

Foundation

IEEE is a worldwide, volunteer-led, staff-supported technical and professional membership-organisation. It relies on the unpaid efforts of numerous volunteers, from a wide diversity of places and backgrounds. Essential characteristics are its distributed management, its general avoidance of top-down centralized control, and its democratic character.

Region 8 within IEEE is a large and particularly diverse area which makes a strong contribution to IEEE as a whole, and which has a long tradition of cooperation and collaboration which has set a good example of transnational successes to the rest of IEEE.

R8 Territory

The boundaries of the territory of Region 8 are defined in the R8 Bylaws:

R8-2.1 BOUNDARIES.

Region 8 shall consist of Africa, Europe, Russia, Greenland and all Asian countries West of Pakistan, North and West of Afghanistan and North of Mongolia and China.

The boundaries may not be changed without the agreement of the Region 8 Committee and the approval of MGA Board.

These words provide protection of the boundaries in that they may not be changed without the approval of both the R8 Committee and the Member and Geographic Activities Board (MGAB). IEEE membership is allowed in every part of Region 8, and IEEE does not discriminate on grounds of nationality, race, religion, sex or political affiliation.
The territory as described above is taken from the currently-proposed revision of the R8 Bylaws: the existing Bylaws also refer to Iceland (not needed in the definition now because Iceland is politically part of Europe) and refer to the USSR (rather than FSU).   No territorial change is implied by the change in words.

USA federal law does provide some constraints on IEEE for some countries within these boundaries: for example at the present time formation of Sections and Chapters and Student Branches in Sudan is not allowed, and although Iran has a Section, the formation of Chapters and Student Branches there is forbidden.

'"The **Vision** of Region 8 is to ensure it is an effectively organized, dynamic and influential entity, recognized as a leading and esteemed part of a truly transnational IEEE, with IEEE benefits equally available to all members.

The **Mission** of Region 8 is to serve the needs of the members of the Institute, the profession and society at large, by enhancing and supporting the IEEE's Organizational Units and its activities within Region 8.
To this end, Region 8:
—Provides a platform for coordination, motivation and interaction among R8 entities.
—Provides a link between the region and other IEEE entities.
—Works to achieve smooth and effective operation in different countries, recognizes cultural
    differences, and effectively cooperates with national societies and other organizations.
—Expands IEEE presence and activities to new areas in R8.
—Promotes the transnational nature of IEEE within the Region and the Institute."

*(see May 2004 issue of R8 News: this Vision and Mission was
approved at a meeting of the R8 Committee in Budapest)*

The Role of the R8 Committee in Region 8

(the order in this sequence is not intended to imply anything about relative importance)

1.0   Is the governing Operational Unit of IEEE Region 8

2.0   Provides a forum for Section Chairs to
    2.1 meet face to face and to get to know one-another
    2.2 be motivated and assisted in managing their Sections in a better way
    2.3 have opportunities for activities at the R8 level, and get experience and training that prepares them for opportunities to take other (including higher-level) volunteer roles in R8 and in IEEE as a whole
    2.4 understand more about the overall organization and financing of IEEE
    2.5 initiate or support or implement activities and projects within R8 for the benefit of members and/or to further IEEE's mission of serving humanity through technological progress.

3.0   Creates a well informed "management level" of people in R8 who understand the overall complexity and promise of Region 8, and can convey this understanding to IEEE staff and IEEE volunteers of other Regions and especially at the IEEE Boards: Member and Geographic Activities Board (MGAB), Technical Activities Board (TAB), Educational Activities Board (EAB), etc., and can seize new opportunities for IEEE when they arise.

4.0   Provides enhanced volunteer experience at the R8 level for those with the inclination and aptitude.   For example, positions such as Chapter Coordination Chair, R8 News Editor, etc. provide the groundwork experience from which candidates for R8 Vice Chairs may emerge, and these in turn provide a source of good candidates for Region Directors and for other important positions in IEEE.

5.0   Helps the volunteers in Region 8 to get a better appreciation of features and needs of their Region by the opportunities to travel to and meet in a Section other than their own, and for general international professional networking.

6.0   Spreads awareness and understanding of the IEEE approach to scientific and technological advancement – e.g. peer-reviewed publications, open-access conferences, ethical professional behaviour, democratic decision-processes, open technical-standards, personal networking, meetings generally open to all members.

7.0   Provides a nucleus for the selection and nomination of deserving candidates from the Region for IEEE awards and other forms of professional recognition and for the stimulation of proposals for IEEE History Milestones.

8.0   Helps to encourage IEEE Societies to collaborate with R8 Sections, Chapters, etc. when organizing conferences, educational programs, lecture tours, etc.

9.0   Advises the R8 Director and may request the Director to raise matters at the Board of Directors or in other contexts.

10.0   The main focus of the work of the Committee can be divided into three areas: membership, technical activities, and student activities, as reflected in having an elected Vice Chair for each of these three.

Legal framework

IEEE is incorporated in the USA as a not-for-profit organization. As such, it is constrained by the laws of New York State as well as US Federal Laws. This legal basis gives IEEE substantial taxation benefits and other concessions in USA. If the IEEE staff offices were to be moved outside the USA this legal framework would not change. In Region 8, IEEE has to also operate within various jurisdictions which have their own laws, and IEEE must generally comply with these local laws as well. It is possible that in a few cases, there may be conflicts between a local law and a USA law.

Hierarchy of Documents

The top level is the Not-for-Profit corporate law of New York State. Immediately beneath this comes the IEEE Constitution, then the IEEE Bylaws, then Policies then Practices then Resolutions of the IEEE Board of Directors.

All this comes above the R8 Bylaws, so the R8 Bylaws must conform with all of these, and any clause in the Bylaws which is in conflict with any of the above may not be valid.

Structure of IEEE

IEEE structure involves a Technical dimension, divided into Societies, which are grouped for convenience into ten Divisions, and a Geographic dimension, divided into Societies, which are grouped into ten Regions.

The Technical Dimension is managed via the Technical Activities Board (TAB) and the Geographic dimension is managed via the Member and Geographic Activities Board (MGAB). The staff have corresponding components, having a Technical Activities Department and a Member and Geographic Activities Department. The MGAB replaces the former Regional Activities Board (RAB).

It is intended that MGAB will overcome the 'gulf' which sometimes existed between TAB and RAB.

IEEE is legally a single entity, and so this word should not be used to describe the components of IEEE's structure. Instead, the term Organisational Unit (OU) is used. Thus, Societies, Sections, Chapters, etc. are all OUs.

More details of the structure and components of IEEE can be found via the IEEE website. The Societies are each part of IEEE and are not independent, although they may sometimes give that appearance and act as if they were separate entities.

'Reserved Powers'

In general, IEEE is organized according to the Reserved Powers principle. That is, powers that are not specified as the responsibility of higher-level committees or forbidden to lower-level committees, are reserved to the lower-level committees. This provides for localized governance and authority, and discourages the management of IEEE in a top-down, centralized manner, and also encourages local initiatives and freedom of action by IEEE volunteers, who do not need to seek prior approval for every action.

Status of R8 Bylaws and R8 Committee Operations Manual

The legal basis and formal requirements for the operation of the R8 Committee are defined as far as possible in the R8 Bylaws, and within those Bylaws, the processes for recommending and approving changes are defined. However, as with all documents, there are sometimes difficulties of interpretation and inconsistencies in the Bylaws, and in any case, the Bylaws cannot provide guidance on every possible eventuality. The R8 Operations Manual referred to in the R8 Bylaws is intended to cover operational practice in a less formal and easier-to-change way: the R8 Operations Manual can be changed by majority vote of the R8 Committee, whereas the R8 Bylaw revisions require a two-thirds majority and must also be approved by the MGA Board before taking effect.

This Introductory Guide to the Region 8 Committee is intended to be an easy-to-read, informal description, to provide guidance and help both to new and to experienced volunteers.

Since it does not have the formal legal status of the R8 Bylaw or the R8 Operations Manual, it is intended that it may be revised and improved from time to time, without requiring a vote at the R8 Committee.

It is intended to assist all the R8 Committee members and the R8 Subcommittee members and other volunteers and to make their activities easier and more successful, and to incorporate a description of customary and traditional practices on which the management of Region 8 has been successfully carried out over many years.

Composition of the R8 Committee

The committee consists of elected members and appointed members. The elected members include the Section Chairs (elected by the voting members within their Section), the Director (elected by the whole voting membership of Region 8), and the

R8 Secretary, R8 Treasurer and three Vice Chairs (elected by the R8 Committee). The appointed members include such positions as Region 8 News Editor, Conference Coordination Chair, Chapter Coordination Chair, Region Student Representative, Women in Engineering Coordinator, etc.

The three Vice Chairs are responsible, respectively, for Technical Activities, Member Activities and Student Activities.

A subset of members comprise the R8 OpCom, made up of the Director, Director-Elect, Immediate Past Director, Secretary, Treasurer and the three Vice Chairs.   These are termed the Officers of the Region 8 Committee

Appointments are made by the Director for some positions, and by Vice Chairs for others, as specified in the Bylaws or Operations Manual. All such appointments are made subject to ratification by the R8 Committee.

Frequency and time of meetings

The R8 Committee normally meets twice per year, and must in all circumstances meet at least once per year. Normally the first meeting is in the Spring and the second in the Autumn. These dates may be adjusted to suit the local climate or to synchronise with other events.   The R8 OpCom normally meets approximately half way in time between the meetings of the R8 Committee. Meetings are held over a weekend so as to make it as easy as possible for the members to attend without conflict with their employment or work requirements and also because this often results in much lower air-fares.

Normally the business of the R8 Committee meeting takes two days (e.g. a Saturday and Sunday) with some or all of the preceding day (e.g. Friday) often used for meetings of sub-committees.

At the first meeting of the year, there is usually a greater proportion of newly-elected members, and so it is generally more appropriate than the second meeting for holding additional sub-committee meetings, etc. since this enables more volunteer interaction.   The first meeting may also be more suitable for the proposal of and debate about new ideas, suggestions and activities, with the second meeting as an occasion to receive and discuss follow-up reports and achievements.

Meeting Locations

R8 Committee meeting venues are chosen to enable as many Sections as possible to have an opportunity to host a meeting, subject to the locations being accessible in principle to all Sections, and subject to affordability.

Affordability generally prevents meetings being held near some of the boundaries of the Region. Because of the need to secure suitable hotels at an acceptable price, meeting venues generally have to be chosen well in advance, often before the Director at the time of the meeting has taken office. However, it is usual to take into account invitations from Sections that have not been recently visited, to give some priority to newly formed Sections, and to allow for any general preferences or policies which an incoming Director may have.

Very occasionally R8 Committee meetings may be held outside the Region boundaries for specific reasons (for example, once every three years it has been customary to hold the meeting alongside Sections Congress) and once a meeting was held in New Jersey to enable the members to visit the IEEE Piscataway Office.   Prior approval from the MGA Board is needed to hold a meeting outside the Region.

Meetings of the R8 Opcom are not constrained by hotel size, etc. and the travel costs are less dominant. Therefore either Sections where it is impractical for the whole R8 Committee to meet, or where a future R8 Committee meeting is being planned, may be chosen as venue.   Locations for the R8 OpCom may be chosen for strategic reasons, or to provide an opportunity to investigate Sections encountering problems, or holding important IEEE anniversary events, etc. In all cases, the venue is expected to be chosen so that interaction with local Section volunteers can be included, and with economy of costs taken into account.

The involvement of the R8 Treasurer in the selection of the venue and in the negotiations with hotels and restaurants is normal best-practice, and often where contracts have to be signed, these have to be approved by IEEE Piscataway staff. Usually, the involvement of a local accommodation or travel Agency in the organization is avoided, since this typically results in added and perhaps not easily controlled charges by the Agency.

Authority for Decision making.

Subject to the constitution and bylaws of IEEE, the Region 8 Committee is the authority for making all decisions within its jurisdiction. The R8 OpCom may make recommendations and give advice, but the final responsibility lies with the Region 8 Committee as a whole.

Of course, the Region 8 Committee actions must remain within the scope of IEEE as a non-political, non-religious, non-racist, gender-neutral organization, and the Committee must not make decisions which are in conflict with the laws of the countries in which it operates.

Voting rights of Members of the R8 Committee

As explained above, the committee comprises both voting members and non-voting members. In general, the voting members are those who have been elected (either by the members of their own Section, or by the members of Region 8 or by the voting members of the R8 Committee). The appointed members generally do not have voting rights, although in the past the R8 Committee has sometimes passed a motion to give them temporary voting rights for the duration of a particular meeting. The reason for restricting voting rights to the elected members is a simple democratic one: it prevents a Director or other person from exerting undue influence over the conduct and decisions of the R8 Committee by appointing large numbers of his/her nominees to the Committee.

In the case that a Section Chair is unable to attend a meeting of the R8 Committee, he/she is authorized to nominate an alternative member to attend in his/her place. This alternate may be any voting member from the same Section, although the person normally chosen would be a senior member of the Section Committee. The name and contact details of the alternate need to be notified to the R8 Secretary as soon as possible, and not later than the start of the meeting. The alternate has all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of the absent Section Chair, including full voting rights.

Where a Section Chair cannot attend and is unable to provide an alternate, the Section Chair may inform the R8 Secretary of his opinions on any matters of importance known to be coming to the R8 Committee for a decision, and the Secretary is expected to inform the Committee of these opinions before the debate on these matters is concluded and a vote taken.

Alternates with voting rights are permitted only in the case of absent Section Chairs. No other voting members may have alternates with voting rights assigned to them

An exception to the general voting rights rules is the arrangement for selecting the members of the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee; the elected members are chosen (from categories

defined in the R8 Bylaws) by the Section Chairs only (including their designated alternates, in the case of absence of a Section Chair).

Conduct of meetings

The meetings of the R8 Committee and of the R8 OpCom are normally chaired by the Region 8 Director.

All members of the committee have equal rights to participate and take part in debate, except that non-voting members do not have the right to vote. Thus, non-voting members of the Committee have all the rights and privileges of voting members except the right to vote and so may participate in the discussions, propose and second motions, etc. in the same way as the voting members.

Observers at the meetings who are not Committee members do not have rights to participate, but may be invited to make comments by the Chair.

The Committee has a long-established practice of according equal status to all Section Chairs, and in successfully and harmoniously achieving a sense of unity and collaboration across the whole Region.

There is one vote per Section Chair, regardless of whether the Section represented has a large or a small membership. This prevents the small Sections being marginalized or excessive power being held by a few large Sections.

Formal parts of meetings are normally conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules. However, there are usually substantial parts of the meetings organized in a less formal way (Caucuses, etc.) to encourage free discussion, initiatives and consensus-formation.

Because Robert's Rules are almost unknown in the countries of Region 8, it cannot be assumed that the R8 Committee members have more than a superficial familiarity with these Rules, and this must be allowed for in the conduct of the meetings.

The Chair ensures that an orderly debate takes place on all issues, and allow equal and fair rights to speak to all members of the Committee. During formal debates, the Chair takes a neutral position and may only vote in order to break a tie. On issues where the Chair is not able or is unwilling to take a neutral position, the position of Chair must be temporarily handed to another senior member of the Committee who is able to take a neutral stance until the vote is taken.

In accordance with IEEE practice, voting members who are present but who choose not to vote on any issue are regarded as having voted against the motion (e.g. to pass, the votes in

favour must be greater than the sum of those voting against and those abstaining).   A consequence is that if a member really wishes to have no effect on the outcome, he/she must leave the room at the time of the vote.

The Chair has no vote unless the decision is taken by secret ballot. Any member may request that the decision on a particular motion is by secret ballot, but normally this option is used as little as possible, in order not to impede the progress of the meeting.   The Chair may also vote if it is necessary to break a tied vote.

English is the language used for the conduct of meetings and the associated documentation, although short announcements and statements in another language are not forbidden, subject to an English language translation being provided.

Financial Support for Region 8 Committee meetings and other activities: the Region 8 budget

The principal financial support for the Region 8 Committee comes from a Rebate from USA. The IEEE MGA Board decide by formula how much each Region should have for its operation. At the minimum, this support is required to cover the cost of at least one Committee meeting per year and the cost of communication to the members of the Region.

There are also Region Assessments, whereby the members of a Region pay a supplement to their dues each year, which is used to support Region activities under the control of the Region Committee.   Region 8 has reserves which it is normally allowed to carry from year to year, so providing a cushion against unexpected or large expenses and support for special events (for example, Sections Congesses held every three years)

Cost of meetings and expense claims

Because of the large size of the R8 Committee, and the travel costs of attendance from a geographically-large Region, it is inevitable that the meetings use up a large proportion of the R8 budget.   Given that the members are unpaid for their volunteer work for IEEE, it is usual to choose locations and hotels which provide a comfortable and attractive experience as compensation, and a location likely to be acceptable to spouses and partners is recommended..   Therefore, the need to economise should not be taken so far that the venues are uncomfortable or unappealing (for example hotels at major airport hubs).   The hotels chosen need sufficiently large and adequate meeting room

facilities, which generally limits the choice to the more expensive hotels (except when local university facilities can be used for the meeting.)

Reasonable economies are expected, and those attending should make efforts to book the cheapest available flights and use public transportation wherever this is conveniently available, and also to moderate their meal costs to reasonable levels. Travel and subsistence costs of spouses, partners, and other accompanying persons are not re-imbursed and should not be claimed.   The R8 Treasurer is required to monitor expense claims, and to challenge any which fall outside the guidelines for acceptable expenditures.   If unresolved the details may be sent to the Director for a decision.

Activities, projects and other responsibilities

The R8 Committee takes responsibility for the planning and overall organization of various events and activities within the Region, which include International Conferences specific to the Region such as AFRICON and MELECON, Continuing Education activities, Awards and Recognition, Student Activities such as the R8 Student Branch and GOLD Congress.

By suitable liaisons, the Committee encourages Sections and Societies to collaborate over the technical activities of Societies in the Region (International Conferences, Distinguished Lecturer tours, Short Courses, etc.).

The R8 Committee takes initiatives and establishes projects to further the mission of IEEE within the Region.

Note is taken of the aims of the MGA Board, and followed where these are considered applicable and to the advantage of Region 8.   In some cases, Region 8 may need to adopt different practices, for example because of the differing needs of Region 8 compared particularly to Regions 1-6 (for example, in Regions 1-6, Sections are typically associated with a single city or group of cities, whereas in Region 8 Sections typically comprise a complete country and in a few cases, more than one country).   Regions 1-6 are all parts of a single country using the same currency throughout and to which the same US Federal Laws apply. By contrast, Region 8 covers many separate countries with totally independent legal systems, currencies and languages, and needs to operate harmoniously throughout this diverse environment.

In addition to Sections, there are Sub-Sections within Regions. Generally these come under the jurisdiction of a Section, and the Region Committee then does not have any direct

involvement with them. However, it is possible to have Sub-Sections which are a direct responsibility of the Region, and these must be adequately monitored and cared for by the Region. Inviting the chairs of such Sub-Sections to R8 Committee Meetings has financial implications and each case is decided on its merits by the Officers of the R8 Committee..

Liaison with other units in IEEE (MGAB, TAB, EAB, BoD, etc.)

As explained previously ("Structure of IEEE"), in the hierarchy of IEEE, there is the Member and Geographic Activites Board (derived from the former Regional Activities Board, which no longer exists), the Technical Activities Board, and the Educational Activities Board, all of which have relevance to Region 8.

The MGA Board has direct responsibility for all 10 of the Regions, while TAB is responsible for Societies.

The MGA Operations Manual in particular is an important source of guidance to Region 8.

The Region 8 Director attends all MGAB and Board of Directors meetings and reports back to each meeting of the Region 8 Committee on all matters of interest from these meetings.

All opportunities are taken for others in Region 8 to be appointed to senior positions and committees of IEEE, and particularly the senior members of the R8 Committee (Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Chairs, Sub-Committee Chairs, etc.) are often nominated and may be chosen for positions on higher-level committees, and may also hold positions as officers in IEEE Societies. Subject to finance being available in the R8 budget, occasional visits to events such as the IEEE Board Series meetings may be partly or completely financed for specifically-selected members of the R8 Committee in order for them to gain IEEE experience and knowledge, and/or contribute to the matters under discussion at the events.

Responsibilities of the R8 Director

The R8 Director, being a member of the IEEE Board of Directors, is legally obliged to act within the Board in the interests of IEEE as a whole, and therefore cannot favour the needs of Region 8 in the decision making of the Board meetings. However, he/she may and should bring to the Board expertise and information to help the Board understand the special needs and contributions of Region 8. From time to time the R8 Committee may pass a motion requesting the Region 8 Director take some information to or make some request of the Board of Directors.

Within Region 8, the Director provides leadership and guidance to the R8 Committee, and typically represents IEEE and the Region at relevant ceremonies and special events taking place within the Region. In many cases, other experienced members of the Committee (such as past Directors, Vice Chairs, etc.) may attend such ceremonies and events on behalf of and in place of the Director, in order to relieve the work and travel commitments of the Director.

The Director has the power to choose and appoint individual IEEE members from anywhere in the Region to help or advise him in carrying out his duties. Such individuals do not become members of the R8 Committee or the R8 OpCom, though they may be invited to attend if this is a necessary aspect of the purpose for which they were appointed. The Director may also form Ad Hoc Committees for any reasonable purpose which conforms with the needs of the Region, such committees not being continued past the end of the calendar year unless specifically renewed. In the case that the Director's budget is insufficient to cover the cost of such appointments and Ad Hoc Committees, the approval of appropriate additional expenditure must be agreed with the R8 Treasurer and reported to the next available meeting of the R8 Committee.

The Director is encouraged to make use of all Past Region Directors as an experienced resource for his personal guidance, but other than the immediate Past Director, none of these Past Directors have the status of R8 Committee members, unless elected or appointed to some position carrying R8 Committee membership with it.

Invited guests and observers

The meetings of the R8 Committee are open to all members of IEEE and non-members of IEEE may be invited when it seems appropriate.

In particular, active volunteers from the Section in which the meeting is being held should normally be encouraged to attend as observers.

The invited guests and observers may often include senior IEEE volunteers (including present and past IEEE Presidents, Chairs of major Boards, Directors of other Regions and one or more IEEE staff). Such guests and observers are normally responsible for their own travel and hotel costs (e.g. the R8 Budget pays only for the breakfasts lunches, dinners and social events associated directly with the R8 Committee meeting).

Candidates for R8 Director-Elect, when not already members of the R8 Committee, will normally be invited to attend, and any IEEE Society Presidents resident within the Region should also be informed of the time and place of the meetings and their attendance welcomed.

Representatives of National Engineering Societies covering the Section in which the meeting is held and representatives of prominent local Industrial Companies and Government Organisations may also be invited to observe the meeting and/or to attend associated Social events.

Executive Sessions
Specific items of the agenda may be held in Executive Session: typically these are when election candidates or other matters related to individuals are being discussed and confidentiality is appropriate.   The attendance at Executive Sessions is limited to the members of the R8 Committee and such other persons whose presence is essential for the conduct of the business of the Executive Session (for example, a qualified legal advisor might be required in exceptional circumstances).
All of the voting and non-voting members are expected to attend an Executive Session, though any individual(s) may be asked to leave if they are the subject of the matter under discussion.
The reasons for holding the Executive Session must be made known publicly, but minutes of the Session are not be prepared and released, and the details of discussion must remain confidential. Decisions reached during the Executive Session may need to be announced, but not the reasons for reaching them.

R8 Bylaws
In general the procedures used and the management of the R8 Committee are derived from traditional practices developed over many years, in conjunction with the experience, wisdom and capabilities of its members. In cases of doubt and to resolve uncertainties, the R8 Bylaws provide a resource to guide the Committee membership,   However, as with all such documents, completeness, consistency and correctness cannot be assured, and uncertainties over interpretation of statements in the Bylaws can arise.   Nevertheless the R8 Bylaws provide an important resource for guidance, with a well-defined procedure for making amendments. A Region 8 Operations Manual is referred to in the Bylaws, and has now being prepared.

The Nominations and Appointments Process and Elections
It is a widespread practice in IEEE to have Nominations and Appointments Committees, typically made up of experienced and active IEEE volunteers who can be expected to know many of the candidates proposed for IEEE volunteer positions, and to be able to make wise recommendations when selecting from these candidates.   Care is needed to ensure that this does not lead to the appearance or reality of a 'closed group' of self-perpetuating leaders, keeping out new and talented people.   Amongst the methods used by IEEE to reduce this risk is for some Nominations and Appointments Committees to have sufficient elected members to ensure that appointed and ex-officio members are not in a majority, and to discourage elections where only one candidate is standing (so giving no choice to the electorate beyond voting for the candidate or not voting at all).   For some positions, having only one candidate is effectively forbidden. There are also IEEE rules offering a mechanism for petition candidates.]

Extreme care is needed to ensure that the recommendations of the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee are not only fair, but are perceived to be fair.

Confidentiality of R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee meetings
Unlike almost all other IEEE committees, the meetings of Nominations and Appointments Committees are closed, and the discussions are permanently confidential.   This is to ensure that the members feel free to express their opinions and reveal the information which they have about candidates being discussed, without fear of being interrogated about their opinions or the committee decisions subsequently.   With this confidentiality goes a corresponding level of responsibility for absolute fairness.
It is, of course, permissible for a Nominations and Appointments Committee to hold part of a meeting in an open session, if they wish to discuss or report on general policies and practices, independently of the consideration of specific named candidates.

The R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee
The R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee has the responsibility of making recommendations for appointed and elected

positions within the R8 Committee, which includes positions traditionally appointed by the R8 Director and by R8 Vice Chairs.   It also proposes candidates for the R8 Vice Chairs.   The customary practice has been that in most cases, two or more candidates for each Vice Chair vacancy are proposed in odd-numbered years, and typically those elected are re-elected without opposition in even-numbered years, so that each Vice Chair normally serves for two years. However this is a custom and not an obligation, and the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee is free to recommend and the R8 Committee is free to decide, otherwise.

Of course the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee has no involvement in the election of Section Chairs or Chapter Chairs or other Officers within Sections.   That is entirely a Section responsibility (in the extreme case of a dysfunctional Section, the R8 Committee might need to investigate, assist or give advice on a remedy).

Nomination of Region Director Candidates

A very important responsibility of Region Nominations and Appointments Committees is the nomination of a slate of candidate to be recommended to the IEEE Board of Directors for Region Director-Elect.   The R8 Bylaws currently do not provide much detail on how this is to be done, perhaps because the description in the IEEE Bylaws at the time the Bylaws were formulated was considered sufficient

The description which was in the IEEE Bylaws themselves follows:

Delegate-Elect/Director-Elect.   Each Region and Division through their respective Nominating Committees may propose a Delegate-Elect/Director-Elect slate rather than a Delegate/Director slate. A Delegate-Elect/Director-Elect shall automatically become the Delegate/Director without further election on the expiration of the incumbent Delegate/Director's term or upon vacancy of the office.

That leaves the process of proposing candidates in the hands of the Nominating Committee (e.g. the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee in the case of Region 8) but does not state whether or how the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee should get the approval/endorsement of the Region 8 Committee.

However, that description has now been removed from the IEEE Bylaws and transferred to the MGA Operations Manual, where clause 7.3 states:

Each Region, in accordance with its Region bylaws, shall have a Region Nominations and Appointments Committee. Each Region Nominating Committee shall furnish to the IEEE Board of Directors by 15 March of the Region election year a slate of Region Committee approved candidates for the office of Region Delegate-Elect/Director-Elect. At the same time a copy of the slate shall be submitted to the MGA Nominations and Appointments Committee for information. The slate shall include not fewer than two nor more than three candidates recommended for that office.

The words are almost identical to those formerly in the IEEE Bylaws with one crucial addition: "….a slate of Region Committee approved candidates…"

This indicates that the slate must have the approval of the R8 Committee, and so the R8 N&A Committee must present their proposals to the whole R8 Committee in sufficient time for the R8 Committee to express its opinions and, if necessary, for the N&A Committee to make different proposals with which the R8 Committee can agree.

The MGA wording in clause 7.3 is actually in accordance with the traditional manner in which this was handled in Region 8.

There is also the standard petition route for R8 Director-Elect.   There are about 40000 voting members in R8 and the rule is

"For all positions where the electorate is more then 30,000 voting members, 600 signatures of eligible voters **plus** 1% of the difference between the number of eligible voters and 30,000 shall be required".

Therefore a petitioner wishing to be on the ballot for R8 Director-Elect needs to collect over 700 signatures.

Petitions for election of R8 Officers other than the Director-Elect:

The number of signatures on these petitions for R8 Committee elections cannot use the rule used for the IEEE Regional and Section elections, where the number of voting members is large. Allowing 1% or 2% to be sufficient for a R8 Committee election would make it far too easy to become a petition candidate.

In some similar cases, IEEE uses a 22% rule. The choice of 15 signatures is close to that and having an exact number rather than a percentage is simpler and avoids the need for change if there are small variations in the number of voting members

Sub-Committees

In IEEE practice, there are two classes of sub-committee: standing committees and ad-hoc committees. Standing committees have a continuing existence and are terminated only by special resolution of the responsible body. In many cases their existence is specified in appropriate bylaws. Thus, a number (but not all) of the standing subcommittees of the R8 Committee are described in the Region 8 Bylaws (Conference Coordination Sub-Committee, Chapter Coordination Subcommittee, etc.)

Ad-Hoc Committees are typically created to deal with a temporary situation or to work on a particular task expected to be of limited and predictable duration. For example the Region 8 Director may create an AdHoc Committee at any time, and such a committee automatically ceases to exist at the end of the calendar year in which it is created, unless a specific decision is made to either terminate it before the year-end or to continue it into a subsequent year.

In addition to these formal structures, it is normal practice to have informal 'working groups' to deal with specific activities or requirements. In fact, that is one of the features and strengths of IEEE. The volunteers are encouraged and expected to use their initiatives to do work which they feel benefits IEEE's mission, rather than waiting for instructions from some higher authority in IEEE.

Minutes of meetings

The approved minutes of meetings of the R8 Committee and its subcommittees are available to all members of IEEE, with the exception of any minutes produced by the R8 Nominations and Appointments Committee.

Release outside the R8 Committee of specific items in the minutes may be delayed if a reasoned case for doing so is made and approved by the R8 Committee (for example, this might be to retain a competitive position in the planning of a new conference, etc. where premature release could have unwanted consequences). However, it should be noted that restricting release to **approved** minutes guarantees a normal delay of half a year in any case.

The unapproved minutes should be made available to the R8 Committee members as soon as is reasonably possible after the meeting is held, and should include a list of Action Items as a reminder to individual members. In the interests of efficient conduct of the next following meeting, there should be a process whereby the members can inform the R8 Secretary of mistakes and corrections in time for a list of such amendments to be included with the copy of the minutes which is presented for approval at this next meeting.

Financial Liabilities from Motions

Implementation of the Motions approved by the R8 Committee often involves expenditure of funds (usually deriving from the R8 budget), and for costly items, it may be decided to use funds from the R8 financial reserves. The advice of the R8 Treasurer must be sought on questions of affordability.

In suitable cases, there may be other sources (such as the IEEE foundation) to which funding applications can be sent.

As well as making the list of Action Items after each meeting, it is good practice for the R8 Secretary to ensure that a regularly updated list of approved expenditure is produced and kept readily accessible to all members of the R8 Committee.

Proxy Voting

A voting member of the R8 Committee who is unable to be present when a vote is taken may not authorise any other person to vote on his/her behalf except that appointed alternates for Section Chairs have the full voting rights of the Chair whom they replace (e.g. proxy voting is not permitted). However, any absent voting member may request the Secretary or other member of the Committee to announce his/her opinion to the Committee during the debate and before the vote is taken, and this opinion shall be made known to the voting members before they vote.

Code of Ethics

The members of the Region 8 Committee and its Subcommittees shall adhere to the IEEE Code of Ethics at all times when engaged in IEEE business. Conflicts of interest should be avoided, and if this is not possible, must be declared.

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