

Strategic Planning Subcommittee

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Goals

Most of the work of the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has been focused on the Region realignment initiative at IEEE level. Region realignment tries to adapt the regional IEEE structure to the current membership distribution and improve Board representation of members by changing the way IEEE Regions are defined.

It is an ongoing process whose final outcome is not yet clear. The goal of the SPC has been to provide an analysis of the consequences that such a realignment would have on the current Region 8, and to support the decision-makers at IEEE level with different options that could be considered when defining new regional boundaries or other IEEE structures.

During the months between the first and second wave of the ongoing pandemic, SPC developed initiatives to restart face-to-face events whenever possible with the goal of recruiting new members, given that the recruitment rate all the Region plummeted during most of 2020.

R8 SPC held virtual meetings in May, June, and September 2020.

Progress against goals since the last report

Regarding Region realignment, during the February meeting series a proposal emerged to have a fresh look to the Regional boundaries and hire an external consultant to create alternatives based on actual data. This decision was approved by MGA Board and presented to the BoD.

Singapore-based MCI Group was selected and contracted after June. They started working with the data that MGA provided and added external data (economics, growth/GDP, population/urbanization dynamics, purchasing parity, market maturity and structure, religion, culture, language, time zones, impact based on COVID and MCI's interpretation on necessary new approaches to delivering local member engagement and activities).

An interview was held between MCI specialists and R8 Director and Director-Elect on September 8th. They also had interviews with the rest of Regions leaders. Preliminary findings were presented in October, including Q&As and further input from volunteers. These preliminary findings insisted in the difficulty of finding a good Regional distribution with the constraint of having exactly 10 Regions. However, the report from MCI provided clear signs that the current status with respect to Regions 8 and 10 looks unsustainable given their sizes in terms of members and OUs.

Final report from MCI with two proposed models for realignment is expected on the first week of November.

There will be discussion of these models during November meeting series, with an updated final report to be released on mid-December.

Regarding the initiative on hybrid meetings, few Sections or units applied to the funds available. Four hybrid events took place in the Region under this initiative, all successful and able to recruit new members.

Proposals for improvements

Strategic planning is now more important than ever. We have time until the pandemic is over to think on what will be our response and how we can go back to the normal life and events when that happens.

New initiatives and programs should be developed to cope with the crisis that will affect IEEE and Region 8.

Points of Concern

Membership decrease all over IEEE and in R8 is a big concern. R8 budget income comes primarily from member dues. 2021 MGA Treasurer expects income from dues to fall around 10% for 2021 across all Regions, although this is a number that is continuously revised.

Additionally, there is an IEEE AdHoc looking at ways to reduce member fees. Their recommendations (if any) will not be applicable at least until the 2022 membership cycle. In any case we need to be prepared to see significant decrease in income in the Region.

Conferences line of business has been severely impacted by COVID-19 and we don't know if it will be recovered (or when). Nevertheless, income from conferences represents a small part of R8 budget.

On the plus side, we have healthy reserves and will have a significant surplus at the end of 2020. The Region should try to have increased spending to engage members and potential members again with events, initiatives, and programs.

It is not clear when in-person events and travelling will be again possible. It is also not clear if most people will be willing to travel when allowed. We should be prepared to survive in hybrid scenarios during a significant timeframe.

The pandemic situation can also influence our most valuable asset: volunteers. It is important to avoid burnout of volunteers and keep them motivated throughout these difficult times.

Other Issues to report

None.