



Governance Task Force Summary October 2019

The IRWA Governance Task Force finalized its report on September 11, 2019. The Report was a result of the Task Force's review of the Governance Project process and all pertinent documents produced by the Governance Project. The Task Force worked with this project information, as well as poll and survey data from the members, and discussions within the Governance Task Force group on issues in their own Chapters and Regions, to formulate the Governance Task Force Report Recommendations.

Governance Task Force Chair Sharon Slauenwhite presented the Report to the International Governing Council on September 13, 2019.

The International Governing Council voted to receive the completed report and thanked all the task force members for their service.

The following is a summary of the report's recommendations:

RE: Final Phase of the Governance Project

1) The Governance Task Force recommends that the International Governing Council cancel the final phase of the Governance Project and instead take steps to implement changes that will satisfy the goals of the project but will not dramatically alter the existing structure of the organization at this time.

RE: Improving Communications

2) The Governance Task Force recommends the creation of a simple manual that outlines available IRWA communication resources, as well as suggested methods and practices to build and maintain effective communication skills.

3) The Governance Task Force recommends the International Governing Council consider the creation of a governance policy that would be added to the Association's Policies and Procedures to encourage IRWA staff and leaders at all levels of the Association to meet transparency expectations by ensuring reliable, clear and relevant information is readily available.

RE: Full and Fair Representation

4) The Governance Task Force recommends the International Governing Council take steps to identify a means for bringing an International Chapter President on to the International Governing Council as an elected representative of the International membership outside the United State and Canada.

5) The Governance Task Force recommends in one year's time (September 2020), the International Governing Council evaluate the level of engagement of the International Committees and the Communities of Practice to determine if a formal change to provide that group a voice and vote on the Board of Directors merits further consideration.

6) The Governance Task Force recommends in one year's time (September 2020), the International Governing Council evaluate the appropriate number of International Directors on the Board of Directors, and to specifically consider the positive and negative impacts a reduced number of International Directors would have on the fiscal and administrative needs of Chapters, Regions, and the Association as a whole.

RE: Competency-Based Leadership

7) The Governance Task Force recommends the creation of a targeted training program that supports new and existing leaders, and identifies potential future leaders throughout all levels of the Association. The Governance Task Force further recommends that targeted training be available for the various levels of IRWA leaders; specifically new and emerging leaders, chapter leaders, region leaders, international leaders, and senior leaders. In addition, IRWA staff should be encouraged to participate in training, and at all levels of the training, leadership partnership between staff leaders and volunteer leaders would promote trust, accountability, collaboration, and mutual respect.

8) The Governance Task Force recommends a review of existing IRWA leadership training materials and resources to be completed to determine what could be retained and incorporated into a new leadership training program (if approved by the International Governing Council).

9) The Governance Task Force recommends any leadership training for the Association must place emphasis and priority on building and improving effective communication skills and such training must be an ongoing investment in our volunteers.

10) The Governance Task Force recommends that the International Governing Council consider establishing a new tool for identifying volunteers who are interested in serving the Association, such as an online volunteer 'bank' that members can join and provide information on their leadership skills and competencies, and volunteer and work experience.

11) The Governance Task Force recommends that acceptance and approval of any of the Governance Task Force's recommendations should include a provision that it is subject to consultation with staff to determine what impact implementation will have on Association resources (funds, equipment, staff workload, etc.)

By a motion at the September 13th, 2019 meeting, the International Governing Council voted unanimously to cancel the final phase of the Governance Project, as was recommended by the Governance Task Force (Recommendation #1).

It is anticipated that following a review by the Regions at their respective fall 2019 forums, the International Governing Council will meet in February 2020 to determine how to address the Governance Task Force Report's remaining recommendations (#2 - #11).