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The Complete Governance Handbook

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Legal Stuff

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While the authors have used their best efforts in preparing this handbook and the resources contained within it, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of this document.

The advice and strategies contained herein are of a general nature and may not be suitable for your specific circumstances. You should consult with a professional where appropriate. The authors shall not be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential or other damages.

Due to the dynamic nature of the internet, certain links and website information contained in this publication may have changed. The authors make no representations to the current accuracy of the web information shared.

In Queensland, as an incorporated association, most organisations will be subject to the Associations Incorporations Act and its Regulations. The relevant Government regulator is known as the Office of Fair Trading. There is substantial information available on their website about the legal aspects of both the Act and its Regulations and during the service of this guide, it is possible that some information may change to reflect changes in the legislation. We have added some important links here for you to easily remain up to date.

HELPFUL LINKS

Incorporated Associations Smart Business Guide
(A must for your association, on the laws and how they apply to you in simple to understand terms)
Associations Incorporations Act 1981 (For rules about running an association)
Office of Fair Trading Queensland (For information about your responsibilities)

Australian Charities & Not-for-profits Commission (For those who are registered charities)
Australian Taxation Office (To keep up to date with changes in tax law)

Department of Justice OFT Fundraising (For information on raffles & donations)
Australian Consumer Law (What claims you make in advertising and to "sell" membership & activities)

Workplace Health & Safety Queensland (For your obligations to members, staff & volunteers)
Fair Work Ombudsman (When volunteers are bullied)

Introduction

Good Governance - two little words full of meaning that should be at the heart of all the work undertaken by your board/committee and your subcommittees.

The Good Governance Health Check guides users through the essential concepts, principles and activities needed to ensure a healthy and productive organisation.

Most incorporated Associations are small, volunteer-driven organisations, with limited resources and in need of practical guidance to meet the many challenges of the modern not-for-profit environment.

The Health Check contained within this Handbook will give you a snapshot of your Association's governance health status and will identify areas where improvement is needed. Levels of understanding and familiarity will vary amongst your board members according to the purpose, structure, scale and sophistication of your organisation, but the Health Check can be applied to any incorporated entity.

And - to help you work smarter not harder - we've included a Toolbox full of simple tips, techniques, templates and examples to help your organisation on its governance journey.

How does it work?

It's simple. The Handbook is divided into 11 sections, starting with the big picture and moving through the detail of specific areas of operation. Each section contains Questions and Toolbox tips, techniques and examples.

Carefully read each question and the explanation. If you can confidently answer "yes", then tick the box. If the answer is "no" or you don't know, then leave it blank for now. You'll get most value from the Good Governance Health Check if you're completely honest. Most questions are objective - they ask for evidence of something factual or tangible.

When the question asks if you have a particular plan or policy or procedure, only say yes if you can actually put your hands on an example or on the finished item. Some questions are subjective - they ask for an opinion or perception. Glossing over problem areas puts your organisation at further risk and means you miss out on important opportunities to diagnose issues and work out solutions. And - hey - it means you're wasting your time and your money - and that's never smart. Honesty is the best policy!

After you've answered all the questions for that section, review your answers. If you find blank check boxes then you have the start of your Good Governance To Do list. It's simple! Good Governance is complex, but the step-by-step Health Check breaks it down into bite size chunks and makes it do-able.

At the end of each section you'll find the Toolbox. It contains tips, techniques and examples relevant to that particular topic. You can work through the Checklist and Toolbox one section at a time or you can come back to the Toolbox after you've answered all the questions in all sections.

Work through all of the sections. You can do this at your own pace - take all the days, weeks or months that you need. The speed isn't important - but achieving continued forward progress is. It's all about having a strategy and the right tools to achieve genuine continuous improvement.

Good luck and good governing!

SECTIO N 1
Constitution

All incorporated associations have a Constitution that provides the framework for how the organisation operates. The Constitution will list the purpose of the Association (the "Objects"); provide for the election of a Committee; define Committee and Association powers; identify how and when General Meetings are convened; and what happens should the Association wind up, amongst other things.

Constitution Checklist

Is your Constitution written in plain English?	*The Constitution is the document that establishes the way your association operates and the reasons for which it was established. All Incorporated Associations must have one and to make it effective and useful it should be clear and simple to read and understand.*	☐
Is it reviewed regularly?	*Like anything else, a Constitution can become out of date so needs to be reviewed regularly. Changes in the way you do things, the environment within which you operate and new technologies should be taken into account*	☐
Do the objects listed in your Constitution reflect current aims and priorities?	*The "Objects" are the aims of the Association as written in the Constitution. They would have been written when the Association was first formed, but over the years your purpose and priorities may have shifted to meet changing needs.*	☐
Does every Committee member have a copy of the Constitution?	*Providing a copy of the Constitution as part of the Committee induction package is good practice and ensures that all members are able to reference it should any issues or questions arise.*	☐
Do you have an Organisational Charter?	*As a Constitution is difficult to change, many Associations keep the detail in the Constitutions to a minimum and adopt an Organisational Charter to govern the way the Committee operates and how the affairs of the Association are regulated. This can also be called a Committee or Board Charter.*	☐
Is your Organisational Charter consistent with your Constitution?	*If you do have an Organisational Charter, it must not contain any provisions that are in conflict with your Constitution.*	☐

SECTIO N 1
Tips & Techniques

Constitution

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Constitution

Your Constitution (sometimes called Rules) is the founding document for your organisation and all Associations are required to have one under the Associations Incorporation Act. It provides the written rules and legal structure within which your organisation operates.

While there are some essential requirements, there is considerable flexibility in how the rules are set and what they require. All Constitutions should be simple, easy to read and in plain English. As the process for changing a Constitution can be difficult and time-consuming, it's best to include only the detail you need and retain as much flexibility as possible. Additional detail on what you do and how you do it may be included in your policies and procedures. Office of Fair Trading has provided a template for services to use free of charge to start you off on the right foot.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS
The following are some of the essential elements required in a Constitution

1. The name of the Association

2. The Objects (aims) of the Association
These are the reasons for which the Association was established—the overarching objectives of the organisation. Remember to include a 'catch-all' clause such as "and such other objects as shall be decided by the Committee from time to time" in case you want to add objects down the track.

3. Membership of the Association
Who are the core group for whom the Association was formed? Are there any eligibility criteria?
Are there different classes of membership? Try and keep classes of membership to a minimum and eligibility as simple as possible. Again, include a 'catch- all' clause such as "and such other classes of membership as shall be decided by the Committee from time to time".

4. The composition of the Committee and how they are elected
What are your minimum and maximum number of Committee members? How are Committee members elected? Will you reserve some Committee positions for skills-based members? These are the sort of questions that should be answered in this section.

5. The powers of the Association, how and by whom they can be exercised
There's a standard list of powers that can be exercised by the Association and these can be found in the sample Constitutions made available by the Government department that administers the Associations Incorporation Act in each State (links following). In writing your Constitution, however, you need to decide which of these powers must be exercised by the members in general meeting and which may be exercised by the Committee or individual office-bearers.

6. The powers and duties of the Committee
What the Committee can and can't do, and what obligations they have to the association.

7. How you will appoint an Auditor
Not every Association will need to be audited as the requirement for this depends on your turnover and assets reaching a particular level. However, the process for appointing an auditor should be included in your Constitution in any case.

8. Appointment of a Public Officer

All Associations are required to have a Public Officer and this role is often held by the Secretary or the senior Staff Officer if you have staff.

9. The start and finish dates of your Financial Year

If you have an annual calendar of events/activity, it's a good idea to set your financial year to your calendar year. This makes budgeting easier and avoids having to account for significant events across two financial years.

10. How you call General Meetings including Annual General Meetings

There will need to be a procedure for how you call general meetings of members including notice periods and information that needs to be provided.

11. How General Meetings are run and how decisions are made

Certain procedures for general meetings should be specified, including the minimum number of members that must be in attendance for the meeting to be legal (the quorum) and how members vote to make decisions.

12. Winding Up

It is a requirement of all not-for-profit organisations that should you wind up at any time, the assets of the Association be transferred to another organisation with similar objects and not distributed among members.

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING YOUR CONSTITUTION

Reading, reviewing or developing a Constitution from scratch can be an intimidating task. Often Constitutions seem to be full of 'legalese' and it can be hard to get past this to the essence of the document. One tip you might consider is to ignore the language and the clause structure and just sit down with the headings. As a Committee or in a smaller working group then put down dot points about how you want the Association to operate under each heading. For example, under Committee you might decide:

- the Committee should be 6—10 members
- each Committee member should serve 2 years with half the committee retiring eachyear
- committee members should serve a maximum of 4 consecutive terms
- the Committee should elect a President, Treasurer and Secretary
- the Committee will have at least 5 elected positions & a max. of 3 skills-based appointed positions
- the Committee should meet no less than once a quarter and preferably once a month.

This provides a clear indication of how you want your Association to operate. You can then 'convert' your dot points into a format appropriate for a Constitution, either by using a Model Constitution as a guide or by engaging a professional to write it for you.

MODEL CONSTITUTIONS

The regulatory authorities in each State and Territory publish a set of Model Rules that are a great start for your Constitution. Type "model rules" and your state/territory into your search engine or use the hotlinks at the front of this guide!

WHEN TO REVIEW

It's always a good idea to review your constitution every five years or so to see if it still works for you, especially the sections that talk about how many should serve on your management committee and that may affect a quorum. You should also keep an eye out for changes to the legislation that affect your association. It's natural that changes may be necessary to your own rules to reflect changes to the law.

Proxies are commonly included in constitutions as a mechanism to allow members who cannot attend general meetings to have their say.

Proxy voting has been a "norm" of community organisations for many years and has been encouraged to allow members who cannot attend a meeting to have a voice. Unfortunately this is not the way proxies are commonly used and they bring increased risks that the voices of members are not accurately represented.

Firstly, there is a real risk that one activated (or angry) member will approach all the less interested members and ask for the power of their proxy so they can force through their own objectives or protect their own position. This isn't an exercise in democracy, since members can find it very confronting to refuse someone who is asking for their proxy. It is much more common to see one person arrive at a general meeting holding multiple proxies, rather than to see individual members who can't attend a meeting award a proxy to a friend.

If you choose to keep the wording in Office of Fair Trading's Model Rules you will be obliged to ensure that proxy forms are made available prior to each general meeting (even if that is every month). Even if you don't receive any proxy forms before the meeting, you cannot address new business or vote on any matter you haven't previously advised.

This can bring a huge amount of work to your Secretary & Treasurer prior to the meeting and your Chairperson at the meeting. There are new provisions in the model rules that allow your members to attend meetings in other ways through the use of technology.

Let's use a typical example and go clause by clause to develop an understanding ..

Proxies (1) An instrument appointing a proxy must be in writing and be in the following or similar form— [*Name of association*]: I, of , being a member of the association, appoint of as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the (annual) general meeting of the association, to be held on the day of ..... 20 .... and at any adjournment of the meeting. Signed this day of 20 . Signature	Prior to the meeting you must advise members of their right to appoint a proxy (and be able to prove you did). Each of the resolutions on which members will be asked to vote (see clause 7) have to be included as well, so they can decide if they want to give their whole vote to someone or if they want to vote for or against each resolution.
(2) The instrument appointing a proxy must— (a) if the appointor is an individual—be signed by the appointor or the appointor's attorney properly authorised in writing; or (b) if the appointor is a corporation— (i) be under seal; or (ii) be signed by a properly authorised officer or attorney of the corporation.	Secretaries must check that the proxy was properly appointed.
(3) A proxy may be a member of the association or another person.	This clause allows any person, member or not to be a member's proxy.
(4) The instrument appointing a proxy is taken to confer authority to demand or join in demanding a secret ballot.	

(5) Each instrument appointing a proxy must be given to the secretary before the start of the meeting or adjourned meeting at which the person named in the instrument proposes to vote.	If someone arrives with many proxies, this means a huge amount of work under pressure for your team.
(6) Unless otherwise instructed by the appointor, the proxy may vote as the proxy considers appropriate.	
(7) If a member wants a proxy to vote for or against a resolution, the instrument appointing the proxy must be in the following or similar form— [*Name of association*]: I, of , being a member of the association, appoint of as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the (annual) general meeting of the association, to be held on the day of 20 and at any adjournment of the meeting. Signed this day of 20 . Signature This form is to be used *in favour of/*against [*strike out whichever is not wanted*] the following resolutions— [*List relevant resolutions*]	This clause in practice means that you must list each of the resolutions you will be voting on and allow members the opportunity to vote in favour or against each of them.
THE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	
Happily, there are at least a couple of alternatives that any association should consider when updating their constitutions.	
40 Proxies (1) The association does not allow proxy voting.	This requires no additional work or compliance by the Secretary. Members who feel strongly can still attend the meeting via telephone, mobile, computer link or in person. Discussion of new business, amendments to wording etc can all go ahead in the moment.
40 Proxies (Keep all the clauses but change ..) (3) A proxy ~~may~~ must be a member of the association ~~or another person~~.	Let's make sure only members are able to vote at our general meetings!
(2) The instrument appointing a proxy must— (a) if the appointor is an individual—be signed by the appointor or the appointor's attorney properly authorised in writing; or (b) if the appointor is a corporation— (i) be under seal; or (ii) be signed by a properly authorised officer or attorney of the corporation. (c) any member may only be appointed as a proxy for one other member.	If your association feels it must keep the ability to allow proxy votes, at least move to limit them, so they really do represent the opinion of someone who cannot attend, rather than take the risk of any one member taking power by arriving with multiple proxies.

SECTIO N 2
Committees

The Committee (or Board) is the governing body of the Association and takes on the responsibility of managing its affairs. This is no small task so all Committee members should be prepared to make a significant commitment and fully understand their role. The Committee is accountable to members for the good governance of the organisation.

Committee Checklist

Are all the office bearer roles contained in the Constitution filled?	*Office Bearers are the Committee members holding positions required by the Constitution. These are generally President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, but may vary from organisation to organisation.*	☐
Were all office bearers appointed in accordance with the Constitution?	*Your Constitution will specify the way Office Bearers are appointed or elected and this process must be adhered to for the appointments to be valid. These requirements will vary from association to association so check your Constitution!*	☐
Do you have a Public Officer?	*All incorporated associations are required to have a Public Officer under the Act. The Public Officer is responsible for communicating with the regulatory authority in your state, amongst other things. (Secretary in Qld)*	☐
Does the Committee's collective experience and competence meet organisational needs?	*The Committee needs to "add value" to the association so Committee members collectively should represent a broad range of skills and experience.*	☐
Do you encourage and actively promote diversity in your Committee?	*A broad range of skills and experience are desirable for your Committee, but there is also evidence that diversity, particularly gender diversity, leads to better Committee outcomes.*	☐
Do the Committee members have a good understanding of their role?	*All Committee members should have a good understanding of their role, including their obligations to the organisation, to each other and in shaping the culture of the organisation.*	☐
Does the Committee have a good understanding of their legal responsibilities?	*All Committee members should have a good understanding of their legal responsibilities under the Associations Incorporation Act and also at common law.*	☐

Cont…

Do you have written 'job descriptions' for Committee positions?	*People perform better if they know exactly what is expected of them! The same is true for volunteer Committee members so it's good practice to identify the requirements of Office Bearer and other Committee positions. These would include President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, but may also include members holding Portfolio or other Sub- Committee leadership roles.*	☐
Do you have a written 'job description' for the Committee as a whole?	*Just as individuals perform better if they know what's expected of them, so does your Committee! You can develop a simple 'job description' for your Committee. This should include a Purpose Statement; key responsibilities both to the organisation and to the group; and what you believe your members and stakeholders expect of you. Having a 'job description' allows you to measure Committee performance and sets the 'tone from the top' for your organisation.*	☐
Do you have a statement of Committee Protocols or a Code of Conduct for the Committee?	*The Committee has a duty to act in good faith and for a proper purpose. Members must take care and display due diligence in managing the affairs of the Association. A statement of Committee Protocols or Code of Conduct identifies what is acceptable behaviour for Committee members.*	☐
Do you have Committee performance measures in place?	*How do you know if you're doing a good job? Simple performance measures allow you to assess how well you're performing as a Committee.* ***TIP!*** *Use your Committee 'job description' as the basis of a simple, self-assessment review.*	☐
Do you have an induction procedure for new Committee members?	*Joining a Committee can be a daunting experience for new members! That's why an induction process to provide them the information they need and an introduction to the 'culture' of your association can be of great benefit and have them 'up to speed' as quickly as possible.*	☐
Do you have a succession plan for your Committee?	*A well-rounded Committee with a broad range of skills and experience is highly desirable - but doesn't happen just by wishful thinking! As members approach the end of their term or indicate that they will be retiring, the Committee should consider how they will be replaced and by whom. What skills do you need? What type of person will you want to attract? Succession planning means giving consideration to these questions and coming up with an appropriate strategy.*	☐

SECTION 2
Tips & Techniques

Role of the Committee
Job Descriptions
Committee Job Description
Code of Conduct
Performance Review
Induction

Network U3A Queensland

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Role Of the Committee

Committees exist to govern the Association on behalf of members, within the law and making the best use of available resources. So what does this mean?

Committees are as individual as the Associations they govern and will vary in number, composition and focus. However, there are some basic principles that all Committees need to understand to properly fulfil their role.

THE COMMITTEE IS A TEAM

Your Association's Committee is a group of individuals, (usually) elected by the members and entrusted by them to achieve the aims of the organisation. While the Committee is a collection of individuals, those individuals do not govern. Only the Committee, as a single entity, speaking with one voice, has the authority to legitimately make decisions.

Not all Committee members are going to think the same way on all issues. In fact, it's a good thing for the Committee to represent a range of views, skills and experience.

The Boardroom should be a safe space for Committee members to express their views and to engage in vigorous debate on a range of issues. BUT, once a decision is made, every Committee member must publicly support the decision, show a united front and speak with one voice. The tone of your organisation is set from the top and factional divisions within the Committee are likely to be reflected throughout the membership.

What goes on in the Boardroom, stays in the Boardroom!

ORGANISATIONAL ROLE

The Committee has a responsibility to the Association to manage its affairs in a responsible, efficient and ethical manner. Duties of the Committee in relation to the organisation include:

- meeting legal requirements
- meeting governance requirements
- working towards organisational goals
- effectively using resources
- having a clear organisational structure
- having appropriate decision-making strategies
- having effective communication processes
- having up-to-date and relevant policies
- having short and long term plans
- having problem solving strategies
- having clear internal and external reporting strategies
- having transparency and accountability
- having appropriate links with other organisations.

Organisational responsibilities are all about meeting objectives effectively and responsibly. These are generally things that can be identified and measured, but the Committee has other responsibilities that may be less easy to quantify.

CULTURAL ROLE

Creating a healthy Association culture is also an important role for the Committee. Organisational culture is about the behaviour of people and is influenced by vision, values, norms, systems, language, assumptions, beliefs and habits.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Role of the Committee

The Committee must lead by example in creating or maintaining a healthy culture which includes:

- abiding by the code of ethics/conduct
- demonstrating strong and relevant values
- being committed to the Association's vision
- avoiding conflicts of Interest
- maintaining confidentiality
- ensuring fairness and equity
- conforming with organisational policy.

The Committee cannot just pay lip service to these things—individually and collectively the Committee must embody these principles and inspire others to meet their standards.

GROUP ROLE

The way Committee members behave and interact with each other is another important aspect of their role. This includes:

- timely attendance at Committee meetings
- paying attention & putting down the mobile
- participation in Sub-Committee and Working Groups as required
- being prepared for meetings
- reading agenda papers and reports; and preparing them as required
- participating in debate
- being courteous to all members
- listening to the views of others
- maintaining Committee confidentiality.

The Committee can't effectively manage the affairs of the Association if they can't work together. Creating and maintaining good and productive relationships within the Boardroom will allow all members to focus on the task at hand rather than petty squabbles, dissension or time-wasting.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Being an Association leader and serving on the Committee is not something that should be taken lightly. All Committee members have an important role and significant responsibilities to the organisation, to its culture and to each other. Anyone who can't commit to the role and all it entails should think carefully before nominating (or re-nominating) for the Committee!

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Office Bearer Job Descriptions

All Committee members have a job to do and this is especially the case for Office Bearers. Creating 'job descriptions' for members holding leadership positions in your organisation is highly recommended.

Everyone performs better when they know what is expected of them, and this is true for your volunteer leadership also. Job descriptions will vary from association to association to meet individual needs, but here are some of the general elements to be included:

PRESIDENT/CHAIRPERSON
The President has a dual role - as Chairperson of committee meetings and as the Leader/Public Face of the organisation.

The Chairman's role at a meeting is to ensure that:

- the agenda is prepared, usually with the help of the Secretary
- the meeting starts and finishes on time
- attendees, apologies and minutes are recorded accurately and in sufficient detail
- meeting rules are followed
- everyone gets a chance to speak on each topic
- business is conducted in an orderly manner
- discussion is focused on the agenda item of the moment
- discussion is courteous at all times
- the views of all members are respected
- decisions are made according to the rules of the organisation
- tasks are delegated appropriately and fairly
- all guests are welcomed and understand their rights at the meeting
- minutes are signed as a true and correct record.

The President's role as a Leader includes to:

- act as the leader of the Association and embody its principles and values
- be the primary spokesperson for the Association
- be the public face of the Association
- be an Ambassador for the Association
- ensure that the Association is pursuing its strategic goals
- ensure that the Association is achieving good governance practice.

VICE-PRESIDENT
The Vice-President is the person who stands in for the President when they are unavailable as Chairperson or leader and is often regarded as the 'next in line' in terms of succession planning.

Other than this, the role of the Vice-President is too often limited or unclear. It's a good idea to give the Vice-President some other substantive role (such a Portfolio Chair) so that they have the opportunity to contribute and also gain experience in chairing and leadership.

TREASURER

The role of Treasurer is extremely important for your organisation. The Treasurer is the person that ensures that members' money is being spent wisely and for a proper purpose. Activities include ensuring that:

- the finances of the organisation are managed appropriately
- financial reports are prepared for the Committee
- budgets are prepared and approved
- recommendations are made to the Committee about income and expenditure, investments and debts
- records are kept of all incoming and outgoing payments
- audit requirements under the Associations Incorporation Act are met

Note that the Treasurer is not necessarily the person actually preparing the accounts and reports. Your organisation may have staff or contract bookkeeping professionals to do this. However, the Treasurer is the person responsible for bringing this information to the committee table to ensure that financial obligations are met.

SECRETARY

Secretary is a somewhat old-fashioned term but is still used in most associations to describe this important role. Activities include ensuring that:

- records of the organisation are kept
- incoming and outgoing correspondence is managed
- meetings are called in accordance with the Constitution
- agendas are prepared (in conjunction with the Chairman) and circulated
- formal minutes of all meetings of the Board are kept.

The Secretary is often also the Public Officer of the organisation as required by the Associations Incorporation Act. As governance practice has evolved, it is the Secretary who has often become the person most responsible for the governance activities of the organisation. Often, they will be the Chair of the Risk and Governance Committee and so take on a great deal of responsibility within your association.

PORTFOLIOS

As is the case in Government, Committee members can take on responsibility for particular areas of interest. These are usually determined by the priorities identified in the Strategic and Operational Plans.

Portfolio Chairs oversee and report on activities relevant to their portfolio area and are particularly recommended for Committees without significant staff resource.

WORKING GROUPS AND SUBCOMMITTEES

From time to time every Board needs to have a small 'Brains Trust' to work on a special project or task (e.g. conducting the biennial performance review of your Executive Director, reviewing a problematic policy, or overseeing the construction of a new oval). The Committee should give the small group a name and also make clear what they want it to do, when it should be done and any special powers it may have. Just like every person needs a Job Description, every group of people need to know what is expected of them.

Groups that are formed for a short time only are usually called a Working Group or Steering Committee – their name indicates that a temporary group has been established to get a particular job done. For example, the Performance Review Group, Membership Policy Review Group or the Oval Redevelopment Steering Committee. Members can be time poor, so Working Groups with a clear charter and time frame can be a great way of getting people involved.

While some people might be reluctant to put their hand up for an ongoing and open-ended commitment, they may be quite happy to contribute to a particular task for a defined period.

An ongoing sub-group of your main decision-making body should be given a name which shows it is continuous – if your governing body is called a Committee the subgroup is usually called a Subcommittee. If your governing body is called the Board, the subgroup can be a Committee or Subcommittee – either term is acceptable and easily understood. The ongoing subcommittees are sometimes referred to as 'Standing Committees'.

For example, the small group which meets on a regular basis to assess and approve (or reject) membership applications would be called the Membership Subcommittee or the Membership Standing Committee.

Your Committee gives the group its purpose and powers. This can be done by approving Terms of Reference for Working Groups and Subcommittees. Terms of Reference give detail about who will be on the working group/subcommittee, what it will do, when it will meet, how it will make decisions, what other powers it will have, how and when it will report to the Board etc. Having these things defined up front will save you headaches down the track!

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Committee Job Descriptions

Just as job descriptions for Office Bearers are important, so is a 'job' description for the Committee as a whole.

Everyone performs better when they know what is expected of them, and the same applies to your Committee. Developing a Job or Role description for the Committee as you start each year is a great way to reflect on your purpose, the things you want to achieve as a group and the expectations placed upon you. This is quite different to understanding your legal and general responsibilities as Committee members. Instead, it should be an annual process that focusses the group on their tasks for the year and also ties in with any Committee performance review process.

ELEMENTS OF A JOB DESCRIPTION

The Committee job description does not need to be long or complicated, it's just a simple statement that can include the following:

Purpose - a short statement that sets out what you believe is the purpose of your Committee for the year.
Key Responsibilities - responsibilities to both the organisation and to the Committee group itself.
Expectations - those that you have as a Committee of yourselves and those that you believe your members and stakeholders have of you.

TIMING

Developing a Committee Job description is something that should be done at the first meeting after your Annual General Meeting/Committee elections - your induction meeting. This allows you to look forward to the year ahead, discuss and develop a shared understanding of what you want to achieve. It also gives new Committee members a great opportunity to gain a better understanding of what's in store and the dynamic of the group. Here's an example Committee Job Description:

Purpose: **The purpose of the Committee is to lead the organisation with integrity, diligence, responsible governance and decision making; to work towards our vision and goals with forward-thinking, creativity and innovation; and to represent the best interests of our members at all times.**
Key Responsibilities:
To the organisation: • **Develop and implement the strategic direction of the Association in accordance with our Objects, Vision and Strategic Plan** • **Ensure a healthy and productive Organisational culture** • **Lead by example in terms of values, ethics and integrity** • **Ensure fiduciary and legal obligations are met** • **Plan, monitor and evaluate performance and the effectiveness of programs and projects** • **Cultivate appropriate networks and listen to the views of stakeholders**
To the group: • **Act in good faith, respect confidentiality and declare conflicts of interest** • **Participate constructively in all Committee debates, promote robust conversations and respect the views of others** • **Be courageous - make the hard decisions and question accepted realities** • **Be informed and prepared for all meetings** • **Be a proud ambassador**
Expectations: **Relevant, contemporary and representative leadership; to act at all times in accordance with the aims, principles and values of the organisation; to communicate plans and priorities to members; to advocate on their behalf on a range of issues; to be accountable and transparent; to deliver appropriate services and activities; to listen to members and give them the opportunity to be heard.**

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Code of Conduct

Committees set the "tone from the top". What they do and how they behave reflects on the Association, so it is important that Committee members understand what is expected of them. A Code of Conduct provides that guidance.

Many Associations will already have a Code of Conduct (or Code of Ethics). Like the Constitution, it's one of those things that was probably drafted when the Association was formed - and just as likely to have been sitting in a drawer gathering dust ever since.

Like everything else, the Code of Conduct needs to be a 'living document' that is simple, relevant and used or referenced regularly. It also needs to be reviewed to maintain currency and scheduling the review of your Code every three years along with your Constitutional review is a good idea.

MAKE IT REAL!
The biggest danger with a Code of Conduct is that it can be a list of nice words and phrases that don't really mean anything. Like your organisational values, your Code should be developed in the context of your Associations objects and goals so it's relevant and meaningful to the people who are expected to abide by it.

Ask yourself questions like:

- what is the fundamental purpose of our Association?
- what is important to us and our members?
- what makes us proud to be involved?
- what would disappoint us?

Reference your Vision and Values and think about what principles would support them. For example, if one of your values is 'integrity', what Committee behaviours does that require?

Your Code of Conduct should comprise two elements - Guiding Principles and Behaviours.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
These are the statements or ideals that set the context for your Code of Conduct. They are the things that are important to you as an organisation and that should be upheld in the actions, decisions and behaviours of Committee members. For example, if you are a junior football club, your guiding principles may be:

- We believe that having fun and active participation are the primary aims of junior sport and will pave the way for social development and good health in future years.
- We believe that every child should have the opportunity to participate, regardless of skill or ability, and should be encouraged to fulfil their potential.
- We embrace diversity and encourage acceptance among players, officials and parents.
- We hold paramount the physical, mental and emotional safety and well-being of our players.

Guiding principles may also be used to communicate the ideals of your organisation and you may also want to include them in your strategic plan, on your website and in promotional materials.

BEHAVIOURS

Behaviours are how Committee members should act in support of the Association's vision, values and guiding principles. They may include:

- committee members will uphold and act in accordance with the Guiding Principles of the Association at all times
- committee members will act with honesty, integrity and in the best interest of the Association.
- decisions will be made fairly and impartially
- committee members will respect the confidentiality of meetings
- committee members will exercise due care, diligence and skill in fulfilling their role
- committee members will focus on issues rather than people or positions
- committee members will use the resources of the Association for a proper purpose
- committee members will be independent in judgement
- committee members will fully participate in debate and deliberations
- committee members will avoid conflicts of interest and where this is not possible, will declare them as soon as possible.

These are just a few examples - you need to make the list of behaviours expected of your committee members relevant to your situation. Don't just include items for the sake of it. It's better to have a short list of behaviours that you truly expect than a long list of meaningless platitudes.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Performance Review

All Committees want to do a good job, but how do you know how well you're performing?

The idea of a performance review can be confronting for many Committee members. But a simple and constructive process can yield results that will be beneficial for the Association and provide significant insight for the Committee as a whole.

WHAT TO MEASURE?

The first thing you need to decide when embarking on a performance review process is what you want to measure. A good place to start is with your Committee Job Description. This is where you've considered and agreed a purpose statement for the whole Committee; defined your key responsibilities to both the organisation and your leadership group; and explored the expectations placed on you. As your Committee year draws to an end, it presents a good opportunity to reflect on how well you've met these measures. Your Strategic and Operational Plans are also a good place to go to work out what to measure. Your Operational Plan in particular has indicators and targets that can be used to measure how well the committee has performed on an operational level.

HOW FAR DO YOU GO?

Board performance reviews can be anything from simple self-reflection to a facilitated 360 degree review process. How far you want to take your Committee performance review process will depend on your preference and budget.

For many smaller Associations a simple three part process can be quite adequate and may include:

- an anonymous and confidential Committee survey
- a quiet chat with the President
- a private self-reflection.

SURVEY

It is a fairly simple matter to turn your Committee Job description as decided at the beginning of the year into a survey form. You just take the elements of that job description and ask how well you've met those measures on a scale from 'poor' to 'excellent'. A five-point scale will generally be sufficient although you can choose to have more options if you wish.

The survey can be anonymous and is likely to generate a more honest response if it is. Committee members can be cautious about how they respond if everyone is going to know what they've said, so maintaining the confidentiality of the process is important. You may consider hiring an independent person to collect and collate Committee member responses, or you can entrust the President to undertake this role. It would therefore be one of the duties of the President to keep this information confidential.

Results of the survey are then collated and an average score for each measure calculated. For example, if there are 10 Committee members all giving a score from 1 to 5 you would simply add all the scores together and divide by 10 to calculate your average. These scores can then be tabled and discussed at your next Committee meeting and appropriate action developed for lower scoring areas.

A sample survey based on the example Committee Job description in that Toolbox item follows.

Committee Performance Survey Sample

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent
	1	2	3	4	5
Purpose:					
How well has the Committee demonstrated leadership?					
How well has the Committee achieved responsible governance?					
How sound is the Committee's decision making process?					
How well has the Committee represented member interests?					
Organisation:					
How well has the Committee developed and implemented the strategic direction of the Association?					
How well has the Committee ensured a healthy and productive culture?					
How well has the Committee led by example?					
How well has the Committee met its legal and fiduciary obligations?					
How well has the Committee planned its programs and projects?					
How well has the Committee monitored performance?					
How well has the Committee cultivated appropriate networks?					
How well has the Committee listened to the views of members?					
Committee:					
How well has the Committee dealt with issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest?					
How well has the Committee encouraged constructive debate?					
How well has the Committee respected diverse views?					
How well has the Committee displayed courage in their questions and decisions?					
How well has the Committee been informed and prepared for meetings?					
How well has the Committee filled the role of Ambassadors for the Association?					
Expectations:					
How well has the Committee acted in accordance with the aims, principles and values of the Association?					
How well have plans and priorities been communicated to members?					
How well has the Committee advocated on behalf of members?					
How would you rate accountability and transparency?					
How well have services and activities met the needs of members?					
Additional Comments:					

MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT

Once the survey is completed and average scores tabled, it's a good idea for the President to make time to have a private meeting with all Committee members. This should be an informal get-together, perhaps over a cup of coffee, to discuss each individual Committee members' reaction to the survey results, any suggestions for how performance can be improved and any concerns that member may have.

It's also a good opportunity to discuss each member's plans for the future. Do they intend to re-nominate for a Committee position? Are they interested in standing for a Leadership Role? Do they feel that they have made their contribution and are ready to move on? This information can assist with the succession planning process and provide additional insights for the President.

Again, the President must keep these conversations confidential!

SELF REFLECTION

A Committee performance review also provides all members with the opportunity for some private self-reflection. How have you found your Committee experience? Has it met your expectations? Do you feel that you have made a contribution? Do you think that you could offer or do more? Do you feel that you have been encouraged to participate? How can you improve your personal contribution to the committee?

Committee membership is a journey and it often takes individual members a while to 'settle in' and feel confident around the table. The first year is often about learning how the Committee works, what it does and what is expected of them. As members become more comfortable, they will tend to participate more in debate and contribute more by taking on subcommittee or other roles.

At any one time there'll be new members just starting out on this journey and 'old hands' who have almost come to the end of theirs. It's part of what makes a good Committee dynamic and members shouldn't be too hard on themselves if they think they've not done as much as they could in their first term.

It is also important for more experienced Committee members to reflect on whether they have more to contribute or whether they should stand down and let others have their opportunity. Experience on a Committee is great, but there always comes a time to let go and it's really good if you can recognise this before someone has to tell you.

SUMMARY

There are many different ways to engage in Committee performance review and this is just one suggestion on how to go about it.

The main thing is to decide to embark on the process, decide what it is that you want to measure and find a method that will suit your organisation.

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES
Induction

Newly elected Committee members have a lot to learn in a short period of time. A good induction process gives new members the help they need to become a contributing Committee member as quickly as possible.

MORE THAN A MANUAL

A common mistake made by Committees is to give new members an 'Induction Manual' to read in the false belief that this provides an effective introduction to the organisation. It does not.

Certainly a manual containing relevant information is important, but it does nothing to build relationships or introduce new members to your culture and values and what you expect of Committee members.

BEFORE THE ELECTION

The induction process can start even before new Committee members are elected or appointed. Your nomination package should contain information about Committee membership, what it means and the commitment required. A simple checklist is a good idea and will encourage potential candidates to do some research before deciding to nominate. The checklist could include questions such as:

- Have you reviewed the organisation's Constitution and are you happy to work within it?
- Have you reviewed the organisation's Strategic Plan?
- Do you know what is required of Committee members?
- Are you willing to contribute the time and skills necessary to meet those requirements?
- Are you aware of your legal, fiduciary and ethical responsibilities?
- Have you read the organisation's most recent Annual Reports and other publications?
- Are you satisfied with the achievements of the organisation and the direction it's heading?
- Would you be proud to have your name associated with the organisation?

This gives candidates something to think about and will also point them to some of the essential information needed by incoming Committee members.

DOCUMENTATION

After the election, the first thing you should do is write a letter of welcome to new Committee members. This should come from the President and be sent or given with the Induction Manual.

The Induction Manual should include:

- a copy of the Constitution, plus any by-laws or rules if you have them.
- a copy of the Association's Strategic Plan
- a copy of the Code of Conduct
- a copy of the current Committee Role Description
- a copy of current governance policies
- minutes of the last several meetings
- the last Annual Report including financial statements
- committee contact list
- committee meeting schedule.

There may be other items relevant to your organisation that need to be included, so you should develop your own list for future reference.

SECTIO N 3
Meetings

Meetings are the lifeblood of any Association. It's where the Committee gets together to discuss issues and strategy and to make decisions on behalf of the members. Most people are time poor and while volunteer Committee members are happy to donate their time, they don't want it wasted! Ensuring effective and constructive meetings where everyone's time is well spent is important for all involved.

Meetings Checklist

Do you have an annual schedule of Committee meetings?	*Your Constitution will generally provide for the minimum number of Committee meetings to be held each year. Meeting dates should be scheduled well in advance so that all members can ensure regular attendance.*	☐
Are agendas distributed well in advance of each meeting date?	*Committee members have a responsibility to be fully prepared for each meeting. This can only be done if agendas are distributed with enough time for Committee members to read and understand the issues to be discussed.*	☐
Are written reports on specific issues or areas of responsibility distributed with the agenda?	*It is not enough for the agenda alone to be distributed well in advance of the meeting. There will be a number of standing reports, such as the financial report, and a number of issue based or functional reports that must also be distributed. Good meeting preparation is a fundamental responsibility of all Committee members!*	☐
Do you know the minimum number of Committee members that need to be present for the meeting to be valid?	*The minimum number needed for a meeting to be held is called the quorum. A quorum MUST be present for the decisions of any meeting to be valid.*	☐
Are all decisions made by vote and/or in the manner required by your Constitution or Rules?	*Your Constitution will most likely call for decisions to be made by a show of hands or, if it's a contentious issue, by a poll. The Chairman may also have a second or casting vote in the case of a tied vote so it's important to know how decisions should be made.*	☐
Do all Committee members understand the principles of ethical decision making?	*The Committee makes decisions on behalf of the members, so must understand and abide by principles of ethical decision making.*	☐

Cont …

Are minutes recorded for each meeting and then confirmed at the commencement of the following meeting?	*Minutes are the official record of your meetings. They must contain a record of who was present, what was discussed and the decisions made. They should also contain an action list of items to be completed before the next meeting. One of the first items of business at each meeting is to confirm the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and correct record. Once confirmed, the minutes must be signed by the person Chairing that meeting.*	☐
Are the minutes of each meeting distributed to Committee members in a timely fashion?	*The minutes provide a record of the meeting and will also identify the actions to be taken after the meeting. As people need to be given some time to do complete their action items, the minutes need to be distributed with enough time for them to do so.*	☐
Are signed copies of all minutes kept in a central place?	*It is a legal requirement that a signed copy of all minutes be kept in a safe and central place. This will be your office if you have one, otherwise the Secretary will generally take on the responsibility of keeping the minutes safe and accessible.*	☐

Section 3
Tips & Techniques

The Agenda
Committee Reports
Decision Making
Minutes

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Agenda

The Agenda is the simplest and most powerful tool you have at your disposal to embed good governance into your Association. A well prepared and well-structured agenda will guide your meetings and ensure that you are discussing all the essential items required to run a healthy organisation. Your agenda should be divided into four distinct sections:

SECTION 1 - THE FORMALITIES
This section includes four items:

Welcome and Apologies - where the Chair formally welcomes all members to the meeting and records any apologies. **TIP** - if a member simply doesn't show up and has not notified the President or Secretary that they will not be there they should not be noted as an apology, but rather as ABSENT.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting - where the minutes of the previous meeting are approved by the Committee. This is the place where any amendments to the minutes can be raised and, if agreed, the minutes can be approved subject to those amendments. Minutes of the previous meeting should be distributed with the agenda so that they can be reviewed prior to the meeting. TIP - members should be encouraged to advise minor typographical errors to the President or Secretary prior to the meeting so that these small changes can be made out of session.

Matters Arising from the Minutes - every set of minutes should contain an list of items to be actioned by individuals, subcommittees or working groups. This agenda items allows the action list to be reviewed, completed items noted and an update received on items that are not yet complete. These items are carried forward to the next action list.

Declarations of Interest - it is good practice to give members an opportunity to declare an interest they may have in any of the items to be discussed at the meetings. Conflicts of Interest will be dealt with in accordance with your organisation's policy.

SECTION 2 - STRATEGIC DISCUSSION
All Committees should understand the difference between strategy and operations. As a Committee in a small organisation you may need to deal with both aspects of the organisation, but you must clearly separate your strategic and operational discussions. This section can be broken into three parts:

Current Issues Update - being issues of immediate importance and having arisen or developed since the agenda was distributed. Agendas should be distributed 5 working days prior to the meeting, so this allows members to discuss important updates.

Matters for Discussion/Decision - involve discussions on the strategic direction of the Association and any new or important items requiring decision. Items here may come from current issues of significance, your Strategic Plan or may be extracted from operational reports. For example, one of your strategic goals may be to advocate on behalf of your members. This would be the place to discuss your position on a particular matter and your approach to government and/or the media.

Subcommittee/Portfolio reports may include items requiring decision from the Committee so, again, this is the place to put that discussion.

For example, your fundraising report may note a sponsorship proposal that has the potential to be controversial. A decision would be required from the Committee on whether to proceed given the possible reputational risk. This item is for matters of strategic importance and should not be confused with your operational discussions.

Governance - this is where various governance items can be discussed, often in reference to your Compliance Calendar. Over the course of the year there will be a variety of governance items for review or discussion. These can include policy review, review of the risk register, review of your Constitution and other items. Time at each meeting should be set aside for these items so that you are not faced with a huge governance agenda at a single meeting or, worse, don't have the time to address these important issues at all!

SECTION 3 -REPORTS

Written reports, including the financial reports, should be distributed with the agenda well in advance of the meeting. These reports provide the Committee with the information and updates on issues, programs and activities necessary for them to have a good understanding of what the Association is doing.

It is the responsibility of all Committee members to READ the reports prior to the meeting. It is therefore not necessary for reports to be read or summarised at the meeting - the Chair should ask only for questions or points of clarification. With the exception of these, reports should be for noting ONLY. Items for discussion or decision arising from the reports will have already been identified and put elsewhere in the agenda.

It is a common mistake made by Committee to spend far too much time receiving and regurgitating the contents of reports. Committee members are happy to give their time but are usually not so happy to have their time wasted. It is certainly not the best use of time to go over written reports everyone has already read. For this to work, however, two things must happen:

1. all Committee members must have read the reports prior to the meeting as part of their preparation
2. the person writing the report must highlight important issues or matters requiring decision so they can be dealt with under Strategic or Management Items as appropriate.

SECTION 4 -MANAGEMENT ITEMS

As a Management Committee you may not have the luxury of focusing solely on the strategic and broader issues of your Association. You also actually have to do the work! This section of the meeting is where you can discuss current activity, allocate tasks and report on progress.

This part of the meeting can be far more informal and you can, in fact, close the formal Committee Meeting prior to your management discussions if you want. This means that you could take notes rather than formal minutes and release any members not directly involved in the projects being discussed.

FINAL NOTE - OTHER BUSINESS

Other business should be confined to urgent matters that have arisen since the agenda was distributed. Otherwise, they should already be there! **TIP**: Chairs, be tough on Other Business! If it is neither urgent nor important, then hold it over and put it on the agenda for the next meeting. This is also a good opportunity to ask members if there are items they want to include on future agendas.

Sample Agenda

A MEETING OF THE [NAME OF ASSOCIATION] COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD ON [DAY], [DATE] AT [LOCATION] COMMENCING AT [TIME]

All the details of the meeting including date, time and venue should be included here

1. Welcome and Apologies

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
Minutes of the meeting held on [LAST MEETING DATE] for approval

Each set of minutes should contain an action list of items. The meeting only needs to note completed items and be advised he status of incomplete actions that will then roll over to the next action list.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes/Action List

4. Declarations of Interest STRATEGIC ITEMS

Members must declare any Conflicts of interest.

5. Matters for discussion/decision
5.1 Current Issues Update
5.2 Items arising from the Strategic Plan
5.3 Items for discussion/decision arising from reports

Ample time should be given to the discussion of strategic items and any matters requiring decision from the Committee. Often these will be extracted from the reports that can otherwise be or note only.

6. Governance
Items referenced from the Compliance Calendar

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

7. Financial Reports

8. Reports (for noting)
8.1 Sub-Committee/Activity Report 1
8.2 Sub-Committee/Activity Report 2
8.1 Sub-Committee/Activity Report 3

At each meeting there will be items from the Compliance Calendar to be addressed.

Reports are distributed with the agenda and should be read by all members in advance of the meeting. Only questions or points of clarification should be raised. Substantive or strategic items will have been dealt with in the strategic section of the meeting.

MANAGEMENT ITEMS

9. Management Item 1
10. Management Item 2
11. Management Item 3

As you are a management committee, there will be management items for discussion. This where you can work through current activity, allocate tasks and report on progress. This section of the meeting can be far less formal.

12. Other Business and Future Agenda Items

Other business should be limited to items that have arisen since the agenda was distributed. This is also an opportunity to raise discussion items for the next or future meetings

13 **Meeting close and next meeting**
Date and time of the next meeting

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Committee Reports

Committee reports are an integral part of the meeting process. They provide all members with the information they need to make effective decisions. Having a standard reporting format can make the process of reading and understanding reports easier and more efficient.

Reports provide the information every Committee needs to keep up-to-date with programs and projects and to make decisions on issues of importance. All reports should be distributed with the agenda and form part of the 'Meeting Package' that members need to read and understand prior to each meeting. This can add up to a lot of reading, but it will save a lot of time at your meeting!

STANDARD REPORTING FORMAT

Reports are written by different people, including Office-bearers, Portfolio or subcommittee Chairs and staff if you have them. This means that there will likely be significant differences in style between the various report writers and this can lead to some confusion amongst readers.

Having a standard template for reporting can overcome these problems and ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of the key issues.

A good way to approach this is to have a standard cover page for reports that contains the following:

- Date of the meeting, name of the report and the person who wrote it
- An indication of whether the report is for information or for action
- Overview/context
- Key messages
- Recommendations

All of this information should fit on one page, with additional information included as attachments. A sample Committee Report follows.

NOTES ON REPORTS

Distribution:

All reports should be finalised and distributed with the agenda. Best practice would be to have the Meeting Package out to members at least 5 working days prior to the meeting to give everyone a chance to read it. Three working days should be an absolute minimum.

Presenting:

As discussed in the Agenda worksheet, a lot of time can be wasted at meetings if members are invited to 'speak to their report'. There's no need to do this as everyone will have read the report before the meeting. Instead, the Chair should only invite points of clarification or questions from the meeting.

Information or Action?

A lot of reports will be for information only, meaning that no decisions or discussion is required by the meeting. Unless there are questions, these reports can simply be 'taken as read'. Reports requiring action will be discussed and decisions made on the key recommendations.

Verbal Reports:

The only circumstances in which a verbal report should be allowed are when the matter is urgent and has arisen since the agenda was circulated, or if the issues to be discussed are so sensitive that a verbal update is necessary.

Sample Report

XYZ Association

Meeting Date: **28th March, 2015**

Meeting date at which the report is to be discussed.

Report: **Annual Fun Run**
Prepared by: **Sue Smith**

Name of the Report and the person who prepared it.

Report for: **Information** ☐

Action X

Whether the report is for information or action.

Overview:
The Annual Fun Run is our major fundraising event for the year. As per our Operational Plan, we are aiming for 150 participants and 10 sponsors to ensure the success of the event. We are also aiming to gain media support and coverage by inviting some celebrities to become involved.

A brief overview and back-ground for the report.

Key Messages:

The key points of the report

- Planning is on track and preparations are running smoothly
- Printed and on-line registration packages are being prepared and will be available no later than 30th June
- An information page has been added to our website
- The database of participants from previous years has been updated and will be
- used for a direct mailing campaign
- The Events Committee has discussed suitable 'celebrity' participants and arrived at the following short list:
    - Matt Shervington Cathy Freeman State Premier Local football stars
- The Committee understands that an appearance fee may be requested by some high profile sporting figures

Recommendations:

Recommendations for the Committee to discuss. It's a good idea to put these in the form of motions so they can be put to the meeting or amended as required.

1 **THAT** the Committee agree that we not pay appearance fees for celebrity endorsement and that this decision be included in our Events Policy.
2 **THAT** we approach Mr Shervington and Ms Freeman requesting participation on a 'no fee' basis.
3 **THAT** we approach the Premier and the local football club requesting participation.

Attachment/s:
Event Committee minutes of the last meeting Draft registration package

Supporting documentation for the information of the Committee.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Decision Making

A fundamental role of the Committee is to make decisions on behalf of the members and in the best interests of the Association.

The best governance in the world can't completely 'error-proof' your Association. While you will always aim to make the right decisions, every once in a while things may not work out. It's at times like these that the Committee may come under increased scrutiny and having confidence in your decision making processes becomes even more important.

PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING
There are five principles of good decision making that the Committee should abide by at all times. You should ask yourselves these questions:

- Did you take reasonable care?
- Did you act in good faith and for a proper purpose?
- Were you not influenced by personal interest?
- Did you make reasonable enquiry?
- Did you rationally believe that the decision was in the best interests of theAssociation?

If you can confidently answer "yes" to all these questions then you have made a responsible decision - whether or not it turns out to have been the right one.

WHAT IS 'REASONABLE'?
There are a number of references here to the concept of 'reasonable'. The 'reasonable person' test is fairly well known. Basically it it poses the question of what a reasonable person, given the same circumstances, would do or decide. This allows the test of reasonableness to evolve over time, taking into account circumstances and the expectations of society. After all, there are many things that were considered reasonable a decade or more ago that are completely unacceptable now!

WHAT IS REASONABLE ENQUIRY?
Of all the principles of decision making it is the one about 'reasonable enquiry' that can be the most difficult for Committees. Not having all of the necessary information can adversely affect decision making and many bad decisions have been caused by what the Committee **didn't** know.

It is essential that the Committee exercise due diligence in decision making and make appropriate enquiry to inform the process. So how much enquiry is 'reasonable'?

This will depend on the context and significance of the decision. If you have a small or simple decision that is routine or for which the issues are well known then little additional enquiry may be required. However if you are faced with a complex decision that could have significant consequence for the organisation, a far greater level of enquiry will be expected.

The main thing to remember here is that can't assume that you already have all the information you need to make important decisions. You need to ask the tough questions and identify any gaps in your knowledge so you can be satisfied that your decision making is robust and will stand up to scrutiny.

TIP! Make sure you record the reasons for your decisions in your minutes and include supporting documentation as appropriate.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Minutes

Minutes are the official record of your meetings so must give an accurate overview of what was discussed and decided.

FORMALITY

As the official record of proceedings, the minutes should be prepared with a degree of formality. Names should be recorded in full in the attendance record and members should be referred to with title and surname throughout. Mr Smith and Ms Jones is appropriate—Bob and Sally is not!

HOW MUCH OR HOW LITTLE?

One of the biggest challenges in writing minutes is to decide how much detail to include. Minutes should not be verbatim records of everything that was said, but should not be so brief that no-one can follow what was discussed and decided. The trick is to give enough detail to provide a background and context for decisions and action items so that the minutes make sense to anyone reading them, even if they didn't attend the meeting. It is also good practice to avoid attributing comments or questions to individual committee members where possible. Here's and example of how to do it:

There were questions raised regarding the [current issue]. Some members were concerned that insufficient information had been made available. It was suggested that further enquiry be made and agreed that Mr Smith would source additional information and report to the next meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

All decisions made at each meeting must be recorded in the minutes. A suggested format for resolutions is as follows:
THAT the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a true and correct record.
MOVED: R Smith **SEONDED**: J Brown CARRIED

All resolutions must include the name of the person that moved the motion and should also include the name of the seconder. Motions should be framed as a proposition and should start with the word "THAT". Whether the resolution was carried or not carried must be recorded. That the motion was carried by a particular margin (e.g. unanimously) or the names of members voting against or abstaining from the vote may be included on the request of the meeting or the members concerned.

SIGNING AND RECORD KEEPING

Every set of minutes must be signed by the Chairman at the following meeting after they have been approved. Once signed, the minutes can be entered into the minute book. A minute book (or folder) must be kept with a hard copy of every signed set of minutes and it is generally the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure this is done. Electronic storage alone is not acceptable!

ACTION LIST

It is recommended that an action list be prepared and included with each set of minutes. This can be done as a separate list at the end of the minutes, or by including a column to the right and including the name or initials of the person assigned to each action as recorded.

DISTRIBUTION

Make sure that minutes are prepared immediately after the meeting and distributed promptly. Within five working days of the meeting is recommended to allow members time to read and action items as necessary. A sample set of minutes follows.

Sample Minutes

MINUTES OF A [INSERT TYPE OF MEETING] COMMITTEE OF THE [NAME OF ORGANISATION] HELD AT [ADDDRESS] ON THE [DATE] COMMENCING AT [TIME]

PRESENT: David Smith (Chairman) Carmen Garcia John Brown Mari Leu Leonie Field Chris Lenarcik

APOLOGIES: Jason Richards Helena Golding

IN ATTENDANCE: Karen Campbell (Executive Officer) James Jeffries (Guest)

1. Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

MOVED: S Garcia **SECONDED:** L Field

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on [previous meeting date] be approved as a true and correct record

CARRIED

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

All matters included on the action list had been completed or are included on this agenda.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

STRATEGIC ITEMS

5. Matters for discussion/decision

5.1 Current Issues

Ms Leu reported on recent advice that the State Government would be reviewing current regulations with regard to child protection. The meeting agreed that this review could have a significant impact on current practices and that a position statement should be developed, together with a media and member communication strategy. Mr Lenarcik offered to draft a position statement for review at the next meeting. Ms Campbell will draft the media and member communication materials for approval at the next meeting.

5.2 Strategic Plan

The meeting discussed progress towards Goal 1.1 from the Strategic Plan. It was generally agreed that while the goal remains achievable, some additional resource should be applied to several projects to ensure the association remains on track. It was agreed that these projects would be closely monitored over the coming months with regular reports provided to the Committee.

All the details of the meeting must be included at the top of the minutes.

The names of all Committee members present must be recorded, together with members who have tendered their apologies. If apologies are not received, then a member should be noted as "Absent". If you have a staff member or guest present they should be noted as "in attendance" rather than present.

Minutes of the previous meeting can be approved subject to amendments agreed at the meeting as long as those amendments are minuted in this section. However, it's good practice to distribute the minutes with plenty of time for amendments to be notified prior to the meeting so an amended set can be circulated with the agenda.

Members must be given the opportunity to declare any conflicts of interest they may have in reference to particular agenda items.

This is the area where strategic items are discussed and should comprise the bulk of your meeting.

Sample Minutes (Cont.)

5.3 Matters for Decision arising from Reports

The Treasurer spoke to the Delegations Policy as previously distributed with the financial reports. He reported that the policy would give certainty to the Association on spending protocols and limits and invited questions from the meeting. After some further discussion it was:

MOVED: C Garcia SECONDED: J Brown
THAT the Delegations Policy be adopted and a 12 month review date established.
CARRIED

Matters requiring decision should be extracted from the reports and discussed in this section of the meeting. This allows issues of strategic importance to be clearly separated from the rest of the operational information for noting in the reports.

Motions include details of the mover and seconder, the proposition being decided and the result.

6. Governance

The meeting reviewed the current risk management policy and register as scheduled in the Compliance Calendar. It was noted that no critical incidents had been reported and no new issues had arisen for inclusion. Current controls were reviewed and a number of suggestions for improvement noted. Ms Campbell will incorporate new controls as a matter of urgency and update the register as agreed.

Your compliance calendar will allocate one or more governance items for review at each meeting.

OPERATIONAL REPORTS

7. Financial Reports

The Treasurer noted the financial reports as previously distributed and invited questions from the meeting. A question was raised about the treatment of membership pre-payments and the Treasurer clarified that they would be taken up as income in the new financial year. There being no further questions it was:

MOVED: J Brown **SECONDED**: M Leu
THAT the financial reports be accepted.
CARRIED

As reports are distributed with the agenda and well in advance of the meeting, there is no need to do more than invite questions or points of clarification. This will save a lot of meeting time for more important discussions.

8. Reports for noting

The Chairman noted the operational reports as previously distributed and invited questions from the meeting. There being no questions, the reports were taken as read.

If there are no questions, all reports can be taken as read

MANAGEMENT ITEMS

9. State Conference

Ms Garcia gave a brief update on conference registrations and confirmed speakers. She outlined a number of tasks requiring attention and these were allocated to a number of committee members. Ms Garcia will distribute an action plan and task list by the end of the week.

This is the section of the meeting where the Committee can discuss management or operational issues, report on progress and allocate tasks.

Sample Minutes (Cont)

10. Juniors' Program

Mr Lenarcik reported on progress with the new Juniors' Program and noted that response to date had exceeded expectations. He ran through the program details and the meeting discussed the availability of members to attend the registration desk. He will prepare a roster and distribute to all members.

11. Other Business and Future Agenda Items

There were no other items of business raised. Ms Garcia suggested that the potential for a strategic alliance with several regional clubs be put on the agenda for the next meeting and undertook to write a discussion paper on the issue.

Other business should be discouraged as members will not have time to prepare for discussion. Only urgent & important items that have arisen since the agenda was distributed should be considered. Items for strategic discussion at the next meeting can be nominated.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on [date] at [venue].

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked all for attending and declared the meeting closed at [time].

Signed as a true and correct record,

Minutes are signed at the next meeting after they are accepted by the meeting, with or without amendment.

_____ _____

Chairman Date

ACTION LIST

	Action Item	**Who**	**When**
5.1	Draft position statement	CL	Next Meeting
5.1	Draft media and member communication strategy	KC	Next Meeting
6	Incorporate new controls in Risk Register	KC	Immediately
9	State Conference action plan	CG	By [date]
10	Junior's program roster	CL	By [date]
11	Put strategic alliance proposal on next agenda	DS	Next Meeting

The action list details all the tasks allocated to members over the course of the meeting. It should include details of the action item, who is doing it and when completion is expected.

SECTIO N 4
Finance

Proper financial management is an essential aspect of good governance for your organisation. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that financial systems are accurate, processes are transparent and decisions are made in the best interests of the members and in accordance with the aims and priorities of the Association.

Finance Checklist

Do all Committee members understand what the term 'not for profit' really means?	*There is a common misconception that not-for-profit means that your Association should not make a profit. This is absolutely not the case. Not-for-profit simply means that profits, or surpluses, are not distributed to individuals but are retained for the benefit of the Association. It also means that on winding up, any assets are applied to another organisation with similar Objects, not to individuals.*	☐
Do you have a transparent procedure for recording all income and expenditure?	*The Committee is the custodian of Association finances on behalf of members, so there is an obligation to manage those finances responsibly and openly.*	☐
Is all money received banked promptly?	*It's good practice to bank all money received promptly and record it in your bookkeeping system. This is especially important for cash received from functions, products or events!*	☐
Do you have credit card and/or EFT facilities?	*Members will generally expect you to to have credit card facilities, or at least the ability for funds to be transferred electronically into your bank account.*	☐
Do you have a petty cash/ reimbursement system?	*Petty cash/reimbursement systems are for small purchases made by individuals. An effective system should be simple and ensure that people are not out of pocket any longer than necessary.*	☐
Do you have a system for approving expenditure?	*It's good practice to have a clear understanding of who is authorised to spend what. Major expenditure may need the approval of the entire Committee, while minor expenditure may be approved simply by the President or Treasurer. A distinction should also be made between budgeted and unbudgeted expenditure.*	☐

Cont …

Do you use accrual rather than cash accounting?	*Cash accounting is the simplest way to keep your books, but it is not the best way for an Association to manage its funds. Accrual accounting recognises income only when it's been earned and expenditures as they're incurred rather than when they're paid. It gives you a much more accurate picture of your financial position.*	☐
Do you keep a clear paper trail for all financial transactions and records?	*Computer based accounting packages are great, but they don't remove the need for you to keep and organise your paper records. These include bank statements, purchase orders, receipts and financial correspondence. Make sure you backup your computer files and keep them in a safe place as well!*	☐
Do you have a standard financial reporting system?	*Ensuring the proper financial management of your Association is a fundamental responsibility of the Committee. Having adequate financial reporting on a monthly or other regular basis is an important part of good governance.*	☐
Can all Committee members read and understand your financial reports to an adequate level?	*Not every Committee member is an accountant and some may find reading and understanding the monthly financial reports challenging. Giving some advice and assistance to those members on what to look for in a report is recommended.*	☐
Do you have a register of assets, updated regularly?	*A simple register of assets must be compiled and maintained to form part of your financial records and will be needed for audit purposes.*	☐
Do you have a budget?	*Budgeting should be part of your annual planning process. It is an important part of the Committee's role to prepare and review the annual budget; to ask the difficult questions and ensure that income and expenditure figures are realistic and achievable.*	☐
Do you have a financial plan?	*A financial plan is not a budget. It's a longer term financial strategy to allow your Association to reach its goals. Where do you want to be in 3 - 5 years' time? Do you want to grow, stay relatively stable, or pursue a niche strategy? What aspects of your business do you need to develop to achieve your aims? What level of reserves would you feel comfortable with? A financial plan will guide you in this process.*	☐

SECTIO N 4
Tips & Techniques

Financial Reports
Cash vs Accrual
Budget
Asset Register

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

It's unlikely that everyone on your Committee will be an accountant or have a sophisticated understanding of financial reports. However it is important that all Committee members are able to grasp the basics and identify areas of concern. So here are some tips ...

The three most important financial reports for Committee members to understand are the Balance Sheet, the Profit and Loss Report and the Cash Flow Report.

BALANCE SHEET (STATEMENT OF ASSETS & LIABILITIES)
The Balance Sheet can also be called the Statement of Financial Position as it provides a snapshot of what your Association is worth at a particular point in time. Key elements of the Balance Sheet are:

Assets - what you have

There are two types of assets shown on a balance sheet - current assets and non-current assets.

Current assets are those things that you use every day and intend to dispose of (spend) within the next 12 months. Current assets include:

- money in the bank
- cash
- money owed to you
- items that you intend to sell or give away within the next 12 months
- (such as stock).

Non-current assets, or fixed assets, are those things you have that you intend to keep over a longer period of time. These include real estate, vehicles, computers, furniture and other tangible items. They also include long term investments.

For a number of your assets, wear and tear means that the value of your asset will decline over time. For example, a vehicle will lose value the longer you own it. The amount of this reduction in value is called **depreciation** and it is recorded as an expense in the Profit & Loss Report.

Liabilities - what you owe

Liabilities are also divided into two types - current and non-current.

Current liabilities are those things that need to be paid in the near future like current bills, short term loans or financial leases, payments to employees including tax and superannuation, GST collected etc. Current liabilities also include payments received in advance for future services, such as grants or service agreements.

Non-current liabilities are those things that are not due to be paid within the next 12 months. This might include long-term loans or financial leases.

Equity - what you're worth

Equity is what your organisation would be worth if it was wound it up today. Equity is simply the difference between your assets and your liabilities. As a mathematical equation, **Equity = Assets - Liabilities**.

In a for-profit company, it's termed as "Owner's Equity" and is what the company owner would have left over if the company was wound up. The difference with a not-for-profit organisation is that any equity remaining after assets are realised and obligations are met may not be applied to any individual including members.
Instead it would be applied to another not-for-profit organisation with similar objects or goals. A sample Balance Sheet follows.

PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT (STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE)
The Profit and Loss Report can also be called the Statement of Financial Performance as it provides information on how well your Association is operating at a particular point in time. The Profit and Loss Report shows two things:

Income - what you earn
Operating income is what you receive and includes membership fees, sales, fundraising, event/conference registration, entry fees etc.

Expenditure - what you spend
Operating expenses are the Association's everyday costs and includes costs associated with income items, utilities, rent, employment expenses, printing, postage, small equipment (generally <$300 as any purchase of a greater value will be regarded as an asset), accounting/audit fees etc.

At a minimum your monthly Profit and Loss Report must show the income and expenditure for the month. However, this doesn't give much context, so it is recommended that you also include a comparison with the budget for the month and the difference between the two (variance); your income and expenditure for the Year to Date and a comparison to budget for the period; and the Annual Budget so you can see what percentage of this has been received/spent in the year to date.

A sample Profit and Loss Report follows.

CASH FLOW REPORT
The Cash Flow Report tells you how much money has gone in and out of the Association each month, regardless of what it was for. So both operating items and capital items are included in cash flow. The cash flow report can be very simple and just divided into:

- cash received (and spent) in operating activities
- cash received (and spent) in investment activities (property and equipment)
- cash received (and spent) in financing activities (loans, overdrafts etc.)

The Cash Flow Report will tell you the difference in your cash position at the end of the reporting period. The information you need for your cash flow report can be found in your bank statements so it's important to do a bank reconciliation each month.

A sample cash flow report follows.

THREE FINANCE ESSENTIALS
Out of all this information, there are three things that you should look for each month to ensure that your organisation is not in financial trouble:

1. **your total assets are more than your total liabilities**
2. **your current assets are more than your current liabilities**
3. **your equity is equivalent to at least three months of operating costs**

What this tells you is that your net worth is in the black; that your bills can be paid; and that if some sort of disaster occurred and your organisation lost all its income, you could still operate for at least three months while you either fixed the problems or took steps to wind up.

Sample Profit & Loss Report

XYZ Association Budget 2019

Income	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	October	November	December	Total
Membership Fees	10,000	30,000	5,000	1,000	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	**50,000**
Conference													
Registrations	-	500	2,000	6,000	10,000	1,000	500	-	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
Sponsorship	-	-	5,000	10,000	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
Grants	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**15,000**
Fundraising	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	20,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	**40,000**
Events	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	-	**6,000**
Professional Development	-	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	**15,000**
Sales	200	300	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	300	200	**5,000**
Sundry	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	**1,500**
Total Income	**26,325**	**35,925**	**16,125**	**21,125**	**21,125**	**23,625**	**5,125**	**6,125**	**4,625**	**4,625**	**5,925**	**1,825**	**172,500**
Expenditure													
Accounting/Audit	-	-	-	1,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1,500**
Advertising & Promotion	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	**2,400**
Conference													**-**
Venue/Food & Bev	2,000	-	-	-	-	-	18,000	-	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
Equipment & Staging	-	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	8,000	-	-	-	-	-	**10,000**
Registration materials	-	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1,200**
Cost of Sales	100	150	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	150	100	**2,500**
Grants	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**12,000**
Fundraising	500	500	500	2,500	2,500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	**10,000**
Events	100	600	-	-	600	-	-	600	-	-	600	-	**2,500**
Professional Development	-	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	-	**7,500**
IT Expenses	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	**1,500**
Rent	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	**18,000**
Utilities	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	**6,000**
Employment Expenses	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	**60,000**
General Expenses	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	**1,500**
Printing & Postage	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	**3,000**
Telephone	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	**2,160**
Total Expenditure	**11,580**	**12,080**	**10,380**	**13,880**	**13,980**	**11,380**	**36,380**	**10,980**	**10,380**	**10,380**	**10,880**	**9,480**	**161,760**
Surplus/Deficit	**14,745**	**23,845**	**5,745**	**7,245**	**7,145**	**12,245**	**- 31,255**	**- 4,855**	**- 5,755**	**- 5,755**	**- 4,955**	**- 7,655**	**10,740**

The cash flow budget gives an indication of monthly performance and allows you to plan your expenditure

The final column is your total annual budget

Sample Balance Sheet

XYZ Association Inc. Balance Sheet for the Period Ended [DATE]

	This Year	Last Year
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash	25,452	21,689
Investments	120,000	120,000
Receivables	12,550	14,520
Inventories	1,250	1,680
Prepayments	600	0
Total Current Assets	**159,852**	**157,889**
Non Current Assets		
Property, Plant & Equipment	18,500	23,500
Total Non-Current Assets	**18,500**	**23,500**
TOTAL ASSETS	**178,352**	**181,389**
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Payables	2,450	7,580
Unearned Income	28,000	28,000
Provision for Annual Leave	6,600	6,300
Other Current Liabilities	0	2,500
Total Current Liabilities	**37,050**	**44,380**
Non Current Liabilities		
Provision for Long Service Leave	14,000	12,000
Total Non Current Liabilities	**14,000**	**12,000**
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**51,050**	**56,380**
NET ASSETS	**127,302**	**125,009**
EQUITY		
Reserves	52,950	52,289
Retained Surplus	74,352	72,720
TOTAL EQUITY	**127,302**	**125,009**

Current Assets are the things you own that are available to dispose of within the next 12 months.

Non Current Assets are things you own that are not available for disposal in the next 12 months.

If Total Assets are greater than Total Liabilities, that's a sign your Association is in good shape.

Current Liabilities are things you owe that are payable within the next 12 months.

Non Current Liabilities are things you owe that are not payable within the next 12 months.

Total Assets and Total Liabilities. A healthy Association will have a result in the black!

Equity comprises Reserves, being accumulated surpluses from previous years, and Retained Surplus being the Surplus for the current Year to Date. This should match up with the figure from your Profit & Loss Report. Total Equity and Total Assets should be the same figure. A healthy Association should have reserves at least equivalent to 3 months operating costs as a buffer against a serious problem

Sample Cash Flow

XYZ Association Inc. Cash Flow Report for the Period Ended [DATE]

	Month	Year to Date
Operating Activities		
Operating Income	21,356	151,300
Operating Expenditure	(11,220)	(65,290)
Interest Received	500	3,000
Net Operating Cash	**10,636**	**89,010**
Investing/Financing Activities		
Income from long term investment	0	0
Property, Plant & Equipment	(1,500)	(9,000)
Net Investing/Financing Cash	**(1,500)**	**(9,000)**
NET CHANGE IN CASH	**9,136**	**80,010**

This records all the cash received and spent in operating activities for the period and year to date.

This records non-operating cash in and out for the period and year to date such as long-term investments and financed leases.

This represents the total change in your cash position.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Cash Vs Accrual

There are two ways to account for income and expenditure - cash and accrual accounting. Cash accounting may be the simplest form, but to get a true picture of your Association finances accrual accounting is generally a better option.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?
The main difference between cash and accrual accounting is timing. In a Cash system you track income and expenditure as if it were cash. Income is recorded when your receive it and expenditure is recorded when you pay it. It's simple, straightforward and easy to understand by non-accountants.

In an Accrual system income is recorded when you earn it and expenditure when it's incurred. This means that if you invoice for a service today, you record the income today even though you may not actually receive the payment for some time. Similarly, if you receive a bill today it's recorded as expenditure today, not
when you actually pay the bill and the money leaves your account. Using an accrual system requires a more sophisticated understanding of accounting and is not as intuitive for non-accountants, but there are significant advantages in using this system.

THE ACCRUAL ADVANTAGE
The greatest benefit of accrual accounting is that it gives a much truer picture of your Association's performance. This is particularly important if you are receiving money today that has an associated obligation down the track.

The most obvious examples of this are grants, service agreements and sponsorships - any income with 'strings attached'.

Say you receive a grant for $15,000 in January. Great! However, nobody gives you a grant for nothing. Every grant carries with it an obligation to do something and that will generally cost money. For example, your
$15,000 grant may have been awarded to support a junior sports program. You've estimated the actual costs of the project to be $12,000 spread over the course of the year. So while you've received $15,000, you've also incurred expenses of around $1,000 per month.

An accrual accounting system deals with this by not recording all $15,000 as income received in January. Instead you would record income equivalent to one twelfth of the total grant ($1,250) each month with the remainder sitting in the Balance Sheet as a current liability. So each month $1,250 is recorded as income and the current liability account is reduced by the same amount - so at the end of the year your books show all $15,000 as income and there's nothing left in your current liability account. At the same time, costs of $1,000 per month are recorded as expenditure, giving you a monthly surplus of $250 on the grant income that will total $3,000 at the end of the year.

Accrual accounting spreads the income over the course of the year so you're not getting the skewed results of a cash accounting system which records the $15,000 as January income, leaving nothing to offset your monthly expenses and making it look like you're performing badly for the rest of the year.

MAKE YOUR CHOICE!
Whatever system you decide on, stick to it! Cash and Accrual accounting each have their advantages and disadvantages, but the worst thing you can possibly do is mix up the two. Make sure the Committee knows which system is being used and why. Some training in reading either cash or accrual financial reports would also be useful. Otherwise you may end up with Committee members thinking the cash accounts are accrual or vice versa leading to some unfortunate misunderstandings.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Budget

Preparing a budget is one of the essential Committee tasks each year. Many associations have limited reserves making an operating loss a potential disaster. Having a robust budgeting process that confidently predicts financial outcomes for the coming year with some confidence is an absolute necessity.

Budgeting is essentially a planning activity that anticipates how much income the organisation will achieve and how much it will spend in a financial year. Generally, the Treasurer will take responsibility for the budgeting process, but it is not an activity that can be done by the Treasurer alone. Every member of the management committee and senior staff (if you have them) will also need to contribute.

PREDICTING THE FUTURE

Budgeting is the process of predicting future income and expenditure as accurately as possible. So how do you go about it?

Arguably the best indicator of future income and expenditure is the past. Using results from previous years as a baseline and then adjusting for variables such as inflation, changes in prices and volumes, and changes in circumstances is a good approach for income and expenditure that is repeated from year to year and relatively easy to predict. This is called historic or incremental budgeting.

However, there will be other budget items that are new or volatile and for these a 'zero-based' approach may be more useful. This means starting from scratch and thoroughly evaluating or re-evaluating every income and expenditure item. This is a more time-consuming process but may be worth the effort with some items. But which ones?

OVERHEADS VS ACTIVITIES

It's a good strategy to separate out operational/overhead items from those associated with specific activities and projects. In terms of expenditure, this means separating out the costs of simply existing (overheads) from the specific costs of activities.

Overheads include items such as rent, telecommunications, utilities, general printing and postage etc. Taking an historic budgeting approach is appropriate as the previous years' results provide a good indicator of future costs.

You can also use an historic budgeting approach for established and well-understood activities. However, new or volatile activities may need a zero-based approach with predictions based on evidence as far as is possible. For completely new activities be very conservative in your budget predictions. There's no reason not to set ambitious or 'stretch' targets for your activities and aim to achieve good results, but don't rely on un-tried income to make ends meet!

UNDERSTANDING TRENDS

Looking at last year as an indicator of this year's income and expenditure is good, but you should also look further back to establish whether there are any longer term trends that need to be taken into account. One way of doing this is to look at the ratios, or proportions, of one important number to another important number over time.

The most important ratio to look at is **Assets to Liabilities**. This tells you how your bottom line is trending. If it's trending down you need to look at what you can do to reverse the trend. To do this, look at two figures in your Balance Sheet - total assets and total liabilities.

If you look at the figures from 5 years ago and note that your Assets were $300,000 and your Liabilities were $50,000 this gives you a ratio of 300,000:50,000 or 6:1 (300,000 divided by 50,000) which is pretty good.

Move forward to last year and have a look at the figures again. Say your Assets are now $150,000 and your Liabilities are $75,000. This gives you a ratio of 150,000:75,000 or 2:1. This means that your Assets : Liabilities ratio has slipped from 6:1 to 2:1 which should be of considerable concern to the Committee!

Ratios can be applied to any key financial performance area to give you an idea of trends over time. This information is important when framing your annual budget to correct trends that are slipping and capitalise on trends that are gaining.

The other trends you should look at are those in your environment. The most obvious one of recent times is the Global Financial Crisis. External factors such as these can have a significant impact on your forecasts. If the community in general is nervous or has less money to spend then it would be prudent to budget for a decrease in donations or subscriptions. Look at what's happening in your world. What's the trend in your demographic, are there likely to be changes in regulation or legislation that will impact on what you do, how is your industry, interest or sector performing? As with all your planning, these environmental trends must be taken into account.

IT'S ALL PART OF THE PLAN

Your budget is an integral part of your planning process and should be closely linked to your Strategic Plan, your Operational Plan and your Financial Plan.

Your Strategic Plan looks at the big picture, goals and strategies for a 3 - 5 year period. Your Financial Plan looks at a similar or even longer period and identifies the financial strategy needed to achieve strategic goals and ensure the long term viability of the organisation. These longer term goals should also be reflected in your annual budget. For example, if you are contemplating a growth strategy and want to make your organisation larger and stronger, then your annual budget should be a building block towards this goal.

Your Operational Plan has details of the programs and projects you will be undertaking each year. Each project or activity will have indicators and targets, including financial indicators and targets, and these should be directly linked to your budget. For example, if you have a development program and expect to make a $5,000 surplus from those activities, that $5,000 must be reflected in the budget.

Your annual budget should link directly to your Operational Plan, and should contribute towards your longer term strategic and financial goals.

CASH FLOW BUDGET

While it is perfectly acceptable to create a budget that identifies your total income and expenditure forecasts for the year, it can be very useful to plot your budget over the year taking into account the timing of your expected income and expenditure. Some items, including most of your overheads, will be fairly consistent from month to month, but others may be linked to activity that occurs at specific times. These could be your membership renewal period, your conference or annual appeal.

Forecasting when your income and expenditure is likely to occur gives you information on months when you can expect a significant surplus and those where a deficit may occur, allowing you to ensure that you have sufficient money in the bank to cover expenses at all time.

An example of a cash flow budget follows.

TOOLBOX

Sample Budget

XYZ Association Budget 2019

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	October	November	December	Total
Income													
Membership Fees	10,000	30,000	5,000	1,000	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	**50,000**
Conference													
Registrations	-	500	2,000	6,000	10,000	1,000	500	-	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
Sponsorship	-	-	5,000	10,000	5,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
Grants	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**15,000**
Fundraising	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	20,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	**40,000**
Events	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	-	-	1,500	-	**6,000**
Professional Development	-	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	**15,000**
Sales	200	300	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	300	200	**5,000**
Sundry	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	**1,500**
Total Income	**26,325**	**35,925**	**16,125**	**21,125**	**21,125**	**23,625**	**5,125**	**6,125**	**4,625**	**4,625**	**5,925**	**1,825**	**172,500**
Expenditure													
Accounting/Audit	-	-	-	1,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1,500**
Advertising & Promotion	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	**2,400**
Conference													**-**
Venue/Food & Bev	2,000	-	-	-	-	-	18,000	-	-	-	-	-	**20,000**
Equipment & Staging	-	-	-	-	1,000	1,000	8,000	-	-	-	-	-	**10,000**
Registration materials	-	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1,200**
Cost of Sales Grants	100	150	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	150	100	**2,500**
Fundraising Events	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	**12,000**
Professional Development	500	500	500	2,500	2,500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	**10,000**
IT Expenses	100	600	-	-	600	-	-	600	-	-	600	-	**2,500**
Rent Utilities	-	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	-	**7,500**
Employment Expenses	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	**1,500**
General Expenses	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	**18,000**
Printing & Postage	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	**6,000**
Telephone	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	**60,000**
Total Expenditure	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	**1,500**
	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	**3,000**
	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	**2,160**
	11,580	**12,080**	**10,380**	**13,880**	**13,980**	**11,380**	**36,380**	**10,980**	**10,380**	**10,380**	**10,880**	**9,480**	**161,760**
Surplus/Deficit	**14,745**	**23,845**	**5,745**	**7,245**	**7,145**	**12,245**	**- 31,255**	**- 4,855**	**- 5,755**	**- 5,755**	**- 4,955**	**- 7,655**	**10,740**

The cash flow budget gives an indication of monthly performance, plan your resources and ensure that there are sufficient funds available. Monthly budget figures are shown against actuals in your P & L.

The final column are your total annual budget amounts.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Asset Register

Assets are the things you own. Keeping track of your assets and what they're worth is an important part of the financial management for your Association.

Even the smallest of Associations will have some assets and they can include:

- office and other equipment
- motor vehicles
- furniture
- computers.

Things you lease can also be assets as long as you have control over the item. All assets should be recorded in an assets register when they are purchased or acquired and this register should be updated annually to meet your financial and audit requirements.

WHY HAVE A REGISTER?

The asset register is where you keep all the information on your assets and what you do with them. It's an important part of proper financial record keeping and gives your Committee information that will assist with financial planning. Most assets lose value over time, so the assets register also allows you or your accountant/ auditor to calculate the amount of this loss - called depreciation - for your financial reports.

It's also the place where you record disposal of assets. If you sell, give away or discard an asset you should record the date, what you did with it and what amount (if any) you received for the item. While depreciation stops at the time you dispose of an asset you should keep it on the register until the end of the financial year as this information is still necessary for your end of year financial statements.

Leased items are also considered to be assets and should be included in the register. Leases are either finance leases or operating leases. The main difference between the two is that in a finance lease ownership of the item changes hands, but in an operating lease it does not. For example, if you arrange a finance lease to buy a car you will generally have monthly repayments for a fixed term and a residual amount to pay at the end, after which the car belongs to you. With an operating lease, you enter into an agreement to pay a monthly fee for, say, a photocopier, and at the end of the lease period you give it back so the arrangement is more like a rental.

Items on a financial lease are regarded as assets and should be included on the balance sheet and in the assets register. Items on operating leases are treated as expenses so do not have to be included in the register.

Your assets register is also a great place to store product information such as model and serial numbers, and is generally far easier to access than turning your computer upside down or searching for original invoices!

TREATING ASSETS

Most physical assets are recorded as non-current assets in your Balance Sheet, meaning that they are items you intend to keep for more than one year. Depreciation is recorded as an expense in the P&L and the total value of your assets will go down by the same amount as the depreciation amount goes up each month.

Replacing assets should be treated as a maintenance cost. Getting rid of assets is a disposal and the amount (if any) you get for the item should be included in your financial records as well as your assets register.

A sample Assets Register follows:

Sample Assets Register

Information to be included in your Assets Register is quite simple and straight-forward and it should not be hard to update and maintain if done regularly.

This is the area where you describe each item, giving as much detail as possible.

Model of the item.

How much you paid for the item. If the item was a gift or you don't know, put in what it would cost to purchase a similar item at current market rates.

Where the item is kept/located.

The date the asset was sold/disposed of.

What you were paid for the asset (if anything).

Item No.	Description	Model No.	Serial No.	Purchase price	Purchase date	Current value	Location	Disposal date	Disposal method	Disposal price
1.	Canon photocopier, B & W, laser cartridge	CA4896-3	4763902FJ	$3,500	01/02/2010	$1,200	Print room	30/03/2014	Sale	$800
2.	HP Pavillion Notebook, 4GB memory, celeron processor, 15" screen.	HP OA41175	ZX83496 PF78A4	$1,298	30/09/2012	$433	Kate's office and home			
3.	Canon multi-function printer, scanner, photocopier, colour laser cartridge	CA7839-2	8395274SZ	$2,500	01/04/2014	$2,100	Print room			
More...										

Serial number of the item

The date you purchased or acquired the item

How much the item is currently worth – purchase price less depreciation

How you disposed of the item (sale or giveaway)

SECTIO N 5
Planning

If you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you arrive? Planning for your Association's immediate and longer term future is an essential Committee responsibility. It provides clarity of purpose, activity and expectation and certainty of the who, what and when of your programs and projects.

Planning Checklist

Do you have a Vision for your Association?	*Your Vision Statement identifies what you aspire to as an organisation. It looks at the big picture, is forward thinking, values driven and externally directed. It should be short, memorable and realistically aspirational. In short, your Vision lets people know where you aim to be.*	☐
Do you have a Mission/Purpose for your Association?	*While the Vision is about what you want to be, your Mission or Purpose is about how you're going to get there. It talks about the present leading to the future and defines the key measures of organisational success.*	☐
Do you have a Strategic Plan?	*Strategic Planning considers the longer term direction of the Association, looking 3 to 5 years into the future. It looks at the big picture, defining strategic goals and priorities.*	☐
Do you have a statement of core values?	*Defining the values of your Association is another important part of the planning process. But make sure you don't just have a list of nice words. Values should be given context and tested regularly to ensure they really are a part of your organisational culture.*	☐
Do you have an Operational Plan?	*If the Strategic Plan is the big picture 'what', the Operational Plan (or Business Plan if you prefer) is the 'how'. The Operational Plan is short term (1 year), looks at the mechanics and defines activities, roles, responsibilities and outcomes.*	☐
Have you defined targets and indicators in your Operational Plan?	*An Operational Plan is not just a summary of your Association activity - it should also include targets and indicators so that you can measure your success.*	☐
Are your Strategic and Operational Plans clearly linked?	*Like yin and yang, the Strategic and Operational Plans go together and neither is effective without the other. Every activity within your Operational Plan should be linked to the Goals and Strategies defined in your Strategic Plan. This will ensure that your goals and strategies are being actioned and allows you to identify any activity that does not fit with your broader strategies.*	☐

SECTIO N 5
Tips & Techniques

Strategic Planning
O perational Planning

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Strategic Planning

If you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you've arrived?

WHY PLANNING?

Planning is fundamental to the success of your organisation. It provides clarity of purpose, activity and expectation. It provides certainty in terms of what, when, who and how. It can be used as both a management and communication tool. Good planning allows everyone at every level of your organisation to work with confidence!

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING

Like yin and yang, strategic and operational planning go together, although they serve very different purposes.

Strategic Planning		Operational Planning
Strategic Planning is the 'what'. Looks at the big picture. Looks at the medium term (3 years). Defines organisational goals and strategies.		Operational Planning is the 'how'. Looks at the mechanics. Looks at the short term (1 year). Defines roles, responsibilities and outcomes.

Neither can be effective without the other. Here we are going to look at Strategic Planning but there's another toolbox item on Operational Planning.

GETTING STARTED - VISION

The first step in the Strategic Planning process is to define a Vision for your Association. Your Vision is what you aspire to as an organisation. It is 'big picture', forward thinking, values driven and externally focused. It answers the question "where do you want to be?". It should be clear, hopeful, memorable, inspiring and realistically aspirational. Here are a couple of examples—good and bad!

Vision Nightmares	What's wrong with them?
In three to five years XXXXX will be the pre-eminent professional association in the sector, delivering compelling and tangible value to a large, highly engaged membership base. This will be achieved through the consistent provision of high quality events, regular research-driven strategic insights and the facilitation of meaningful connections between stakeholders in the sector. We will grow its influence to such a point that it will be the recognised voice of the sector.	It's too long! It mixes up the 'what' and the 'how'. Visions should be all about the 'what' - what are we aiming to achieve? The 'how' is how you will get to where you want to be. This is the role of the Mission [Purpose] statement. It's not clear or memorable
To help make every brand more inspiring and the world more intelligent.	This looks like a good Vision statement, until you find out whose it is. It's the company that makes sticky labels. With the best will in the world, sticky labels are never going to make the world more intelligent. This Vision has very little to do with the organisation and is really just a collection of words that mean nothing.
Good Vision!	**What's right with it?**
To organise the world's information and make it universally useful and accessible.	Google's vision statement is short, clear and memorable. It clearly states the 'what' of the company. You will note that it doesn't mention IT, computers, search engines or any other mechanics. All of that is the 'how' and belongs in the mission/purpose statement.

Two words that should be avoided in crafting your Vision are 'by' and 'through'. These words are used to link the 'what' and the 'how' and can ruin a good vision statement. For example —

"To organise the world's information and make it universally useful and accessible ***through use of information technology and state of the art search engines."***

Adding the words after 'through' has destroyed a good vision by adding the 'how' and therefore limiting the scope of the Vision.

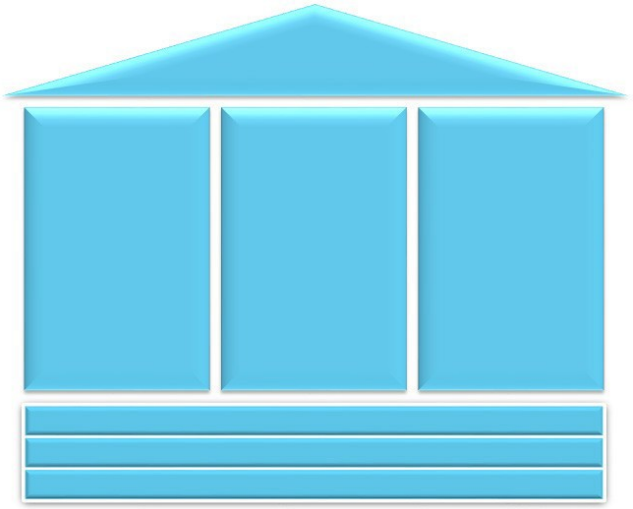
TIP! Don't spend too much time 'word-smithing' your Vision at your Strategic Planning session. If you can identify the key words and/or phrases that you want to include, someone can craft the Vision Statement later!

ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGIC PLAN

The look and feel of Strategic Plans can be very different. Some are short, some are long, some have lots of text and others are full of pictures depending on the expectations of your stakeholders and the various purposes for which the Plan is being created. However, every Strategic Plan should contain certain common elements and the essence of the Plan should fit on one page. Whatever your Plan ends up looking like, while you're in development think of it like this:

Building a house...

This simple graphic is something that everyone can relate to and can be very useful for your Strategic Planning session. Let's go through it!



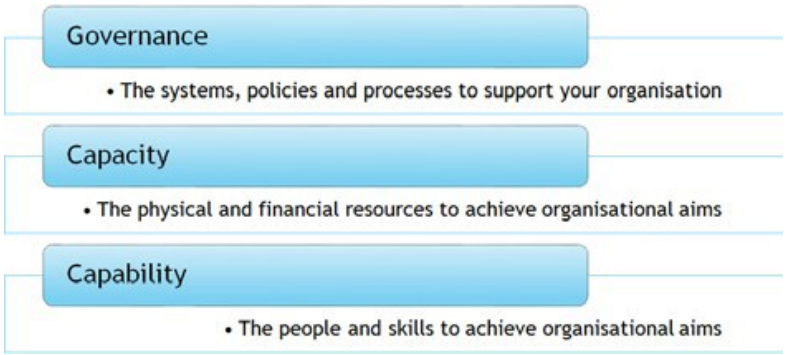
Foundations

Every house is built on solid foundations, and your organisation is no different. These are the things that underpin everything you do, affect the whole organisation and are broad in scope. They are quite distinct from your functional activities and are basically the same for every organisation:

The foundations of every organisation are:

Governance
Capacity
Capability

These are the systems, policies and processes to support your organisation; the physical and financial resources; and the people and skills required to achieve your organisational aims.



Strategic Pillars

This can be the most challenging part of the process. You need to define the three broad categories areas that encapsulate everything that your Association does. All of your activity should fit comfortably within these categories. Here are some examples:

Intervention - Prevention - Influence
Our People - Our Assets - Our Community Individuals - Families - Communities Teaching - Learning - Leadership
People - Places - Possibilities

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (home of the Oscars) defines its Strategic Pillars as to:

Preserve the Past—Honour the Present—Shape the Future

Whatever you choose must reflect the key priorities of your organisation. Don't worry if you don't get them right first try! As you work through the rest of the process you can go back and revise your initial categories until you hit the right combination. You'll know when you get it just right!

Goals

Once you've identified your Strategic Pillars, you need to set a Goal for each area. These should be broad but specific, functional, ambitious but realistic and should answer the question "what are we trying to achieve?".

Strategies

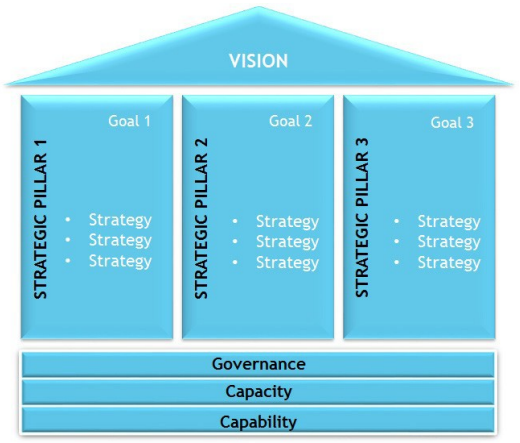
For each goal you will develop a number of strategies. Strategies are the approach you take to achieving your goals—they are not activities! For example—'reducing our carbon footprint' is a strategy, 'installing solar panels' is an activity. 'Facilitating connections between members' is a strategy, 'holding a conference' is an activity.

You don't need to have a lot of strategies. You may only have two or three under each goal and that's fine. Remember, these are the approaches you're taking to achieve your goals, not the activities you'll develop later.

Strategies belong in your Strategic Plan—activities do not! Activities are the basis for your Operational Plan and it's important to recognise the difference. Once of the major mistakes that a lot of organisations make is to allow their strategic plan to drift into operations, blurring the boundaries between governance and management and reducing the impact and usefulness of their Strategic Plan.

So your Strategic Plan will end up looking something like this:

Your foundations of Governance, Capacity and Capability supporting your Strategic Pillars which in turn support your Vision.



MISSION OR PURPOSE

Once you have your Vision, Foundations, Strategic Pillars, Goals and Strategies you can craft your Mission or Purpose statement. The two mean the same thing, so use the terminology you prefer. Unlike your Vision, your Mission/Purpose will be about the 'how' leading to the 'what'. It's about how you're going to get to where you want to be. Your Mission/Purpose can be a paragraph that simply summarises what you've developed in your Strategic Plan and, again, can be finalised after the Strategic Planning session.

VALUES

The final step in your Strategic Planning process is to develop or review your organisational values. It's very easy to just compile a list of nice words, but your values need to be genuine and true to what you are as an Association.

Give your Values context by writing a sentence or two about what each value means to you. And test them! Values should stand up to scrutiny, so try to do this—find a recent example of when your Association displayed that particular value. If you can't think of an example, perhaps you need to re- examine your commitment to that particular value!

THE END PRODUCT

You now have a simple, one page Strategic Plan that encapsulates your strategies and goals for the next three years. However, your Committee, stakeholders and members may expect to see something a bit more substantial, so you should feel free to 'deconstruct' your house; add more text on additional pages such as messages from the President and others; and add pictures and summaries of specific programs if you so wish. You may find a different graphic representation that works better for you and more closely reflects the purpose of your Association.

But keep your 'house' handy and even use it as a 'Strategic Plan Summary' at the beginning of a more extensive document. Pin it to your wall and bring it to meetings as a reminder of what you are aiming to achieve as an organisation.

Whether you hire a facilitator to assist in the development of your Strategic Plan or do it yourself, keep these elements in mind and you'll end up with a workable Plan that will position your organisation for the future.

The following page gives an example of a Strategic Plan with all the elements in place.

Sample Strategic Plan

Our Vision

Leadership in science education: quality in science learning and teaching.

Our Purpose

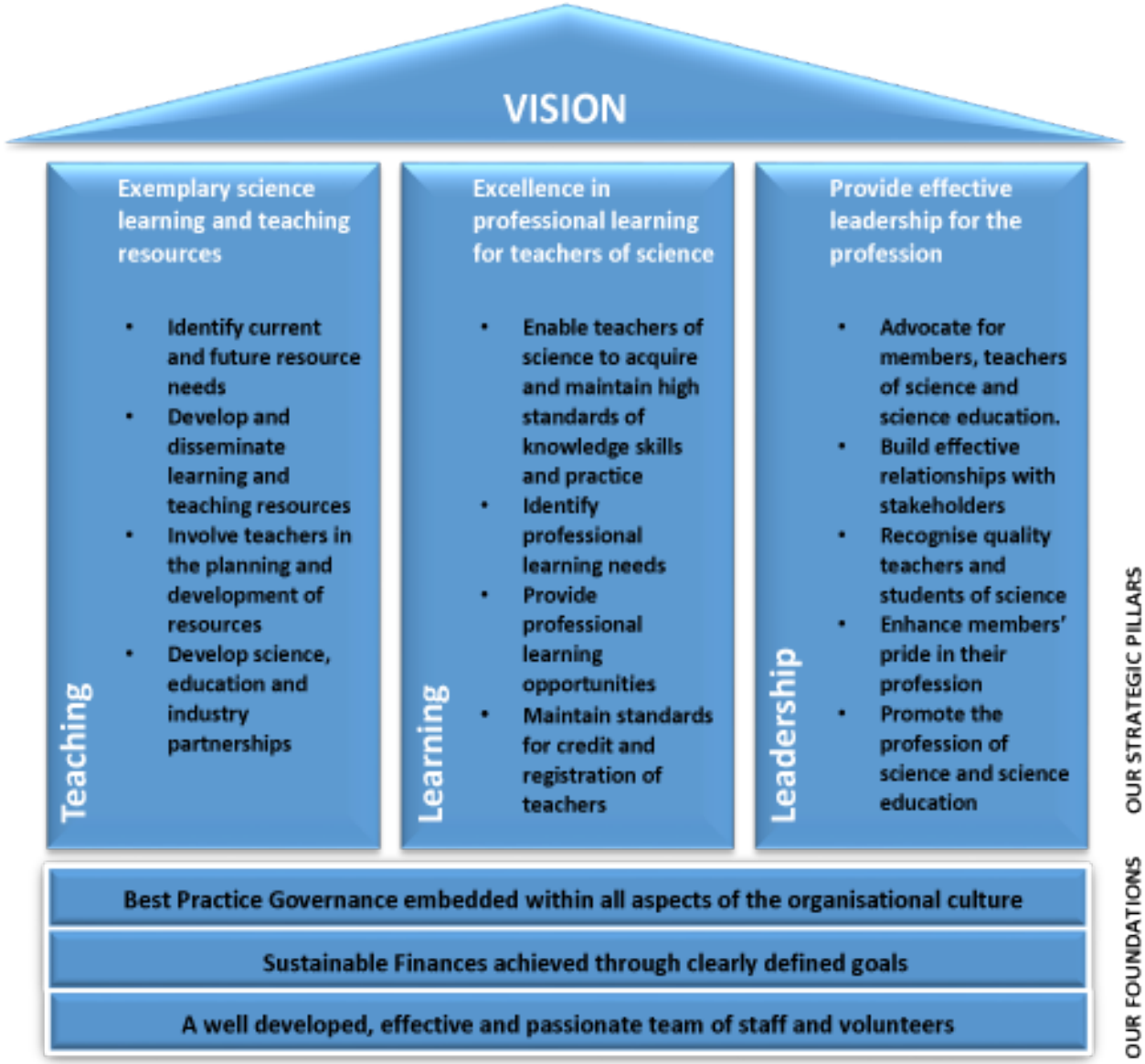
To achieve excellence in science learning and teaching, support high professional standards and provide effective leadership for the profession of science education.

Contact Us

To learn more about our Association, contact us at:

Address
Address

Phone:
Web:
Email:



Our Values

Excellence

We strive to achieve excellence within our organisation and, by example, promote high professional standards to science teachers.

Credibility

We aim to improve the credibility of our organisation and our profession by earning the respect of our peers and recognition of our quality resources and services

Integrity

Applying the highest standards of ethical behaviour and professional integrity

Learning

Commitment to being a learning organisation, promoting knowledge management and a continuous learning culture to improve what we do

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Operational Planning

If you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you've arrived?

WHY PLANNING?
Planning is fundamental to the success of your organisation. It provides clarity of purpose, activity and expectation. It provides certainty in terms of what, when, who and how. It can be used as both a management and communication tool. Good planning allows everyone at every level of your organisation to work with confidence!

STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING
Like yin and yang, strategic and operational planning go together, although they serve very different purposes.

Strategic Planning		Operational Planning
Strategic Planning is the 'what' Looks at the big picture Looks at the medium term (3 years) Defines organisational goals and strategies		Operational Planning is the 'how' Looks at the mechanics Looks at the short term (1 year) Defines roles, responsibilities and outcomes

Neither can be effective without the other. Here we are going to look at Operational Planning but there's another toolbox item on Strategic Planning.

A BOTTOM UP APPROACH
Unlike your Strategic Plan that takes a 'top down' approach, your Operational Plan starts with the building blocks of your organisation—your projects and activities. These projects/activities are then grouped into Programs or Business Units and that are linked to the goals and strategies of your Strategic Plan. TIP! Every organisational activity must link directly to a goal or strategy in your Strategic Plan. If you have an activity that doesn't fit comfortably with your Strategic Plan you should ask yourself "why are we doing this?".

PROJECT PLANS
The basis of your Operational Plan are your Project Plans. These detail every project/activity, what it is, why you're doing it, who's responsible and what you expect to achieve. It also details indicators and targets and should link with your annual budget. Each project plan should contain:

- Name of project
- Project Leader and who they report to
- Links to Strategic Goals
- Links to Funding Agreements (if applicable)
- Resource requirements
- Rationale (reason for the project)
- Project overview
- Outcomes
- Indicators & Targets.

A sample follows that you can use or adapt for your Association:

PROGRAM SUMMARIES
Most projects or activities will be grouped together as part of a larger program. For example, you may have a Sustainable Finances program that includes projects such as the Annual Fun Run, Event Based Fundraising, Direct Fundraising, Bequests, Sponsorship and Grants.

Your Program Summary may include:

- Name of Program
- Program Leader / Manager
- Links to Strategic Goals
- Links to Funding Agreements (if applicable)
- Overview of the Program
- Continuing Projects
- New Projects
- "Blue Sky" Projects

A sample Program Summary follows.

QUARTERLY REVIEW

Plans are good, but results are better! Once your Plan is complete you will use it as a guide and management tool for your Association, but you also need to ensure you are reviewing your Plan regularly and reporting to the Committee on progress and any variance. Generally a quarterly review is sufficient.

Your Project Plan template only needs a minor variation to become a Project Review. **TIP!** Use the 'save as' function in Word!

Similarly, your Program Summary template can be slightly modified to provide review information to your Committee. Using a 'dashboard' can provide a quick, visual overview for the Committee—green means all is OK and going to plan; yellow means that there have been some issues but targets are still likely to be met; and red means that there are some major problems and the project may need attention. Generally only the Program Review summary and more detailed information on 'red' projects need be tabled for the Committee.

EVALUATION

At the end of your Plan period, all Programs and Projects should be evaluated to assist in the preparation of your next Operational Plan. Again, only a minor modification of the original template is required. A preliminary evaluation can generally be done after the end of the third quarter. By this stage, you can predict final outcomes fairly confidently.

Evaluation information is used to determine which projects should continue, which should be modified and which should be dropped from your program. Sample Review and Evaluation summaries follow.

A RECORD OF ACTIVITY

One of the great things about the Operational Plan and the Project Plans in particular, is that they form part of a record of activity for your organisational memory. Committees change from year to year so it's good to have a complete record of how projects have been managed in the past.

You can collate all the project materials together with the Project Plan to achieve this. Using the example of the Annual Fun Run, you might keep a copy of all promotional materials, registration information, fundraising information, media stories, print-outs of social media activity, project financial reports etc. so that the next person organising the event is not starting with a blank page. If you do this for all projects you'll have a complete record of activity for the year for reference.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Operational Planning

WHERE TO START?
If you haven't done one before, putting together your Operational Plan can seem a daunting task. Here are some steps you might take to get your first Operational Plan off the ground:

Step 1
Draw up a Big Strategic Plan on butcher's paper or on a white board. Include the main headings but don't worry about all the detail.

Step 2
Get three different coloured pads of sticky notes. Write everything you currently do on sticky notes of one colour and stick them onto the Big Strategic Plan where you think they best fit. Some of your current projects/ activities will cross over strategic areas and that's fine. Just put them where they make the most sense and you can include reference to other strategic areas in your plan.

Once you have everything you currently do placed on your Big Strategic Plan, go through the same process on a different coloured sticky note for those things you're not doing now, but MUST do in the coming year.

Once these are placed on your Big Strategic Plan, you can take your last coloured sticky notes and write down all the things you are not currently doing but would LIKE to do in the coming year.

All the things written on your sticky notes are your **PROJECTS**.

Step 3
Have a look at the sticky notes and see which ones belong together. While you may have some stand-alone projects that don't fit with anything else, you'll find that the majority of projects can form groups of related activity.

These groups of projects are your **PROGRAMS**.

Step 4
Assign responsibility for each of the Programs you've identified. Some of them will sit comfortably within the scope of existing subcommittees. Some may need you to form a new subcommittee or working group or may be added to the role of an existing subcommittee. Any stand-alone Projects should also be allocated to a sub- committee or working group.

Step 5
The subcommittees or working groups responsible for each Program area should then decide who is going to take ownership of each Project. It's not good enough to just say the Project is the responsibility of the subcommittee as a whole. You must nominate individuals to be Project Leaders so that there is clear accountability.

Step 6
Project Leaders use the templates provided to write up a first draft of each Project Plan. Give a reasonable timeline for this to be done, but make sure there's a clear date for all drafts to be completed. The Subcommittee can then review, amend and sign off on each Project Plan and prepare a Program Summary using the template provided.

Step 7
All of the Program Summaries and Project Plans are presented to the Committee for final review and endorsement.

And there you have it! Your first Operational Plan!

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Operational Planning

FINISHING TOUCHES

This collection of Program Summaries and Project Plans forms the essence of your Operational Plan. However, there are a few extra things you will want to add to bring it all together.

- Cover Page - with your organisation's name and logo and the period of the Operational Plan.
- Index - for ease of reference (a sample index is included below).
- Short Summary - that outlines how and why you have developed your Plan
- Strategic Plan - your one page strategic plan should be included for reference
- Organisational Chart - to show the structure of your organisation.
- Program Summaries and Project Plans - the bulk of your Operational Plan
- Budget - as your Operational Plan is liked to your budget this should also be included

Sample Operational Plan

XYZ ORGANISATION OPERATIONAL PLAN	
Index	
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Summary	3
XYZ Strategic Plan	4
XYZ Organisational Chart	5
PROGRAM 1	6
Project 1	7
Project 2	8
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PROGRAM 2	10
Project 1	11
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Project 4	14
PROGRAM 3	15
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FOUNDATIONS*	18
Governance	19
Capacity	20
Capability	21
Budget	22

* Note that there may be a number of specific projects being undertaken in your foundation areas. Just add these as required.

Sample Project Plan

ANNUAL FUN RUN

Name of the project.

Project Leader		Sue Smith
Reports to		Events Subcommittee
Contributing to Strategy		Sustainable Finances; Community Awareness; Member Engagement
Contributing to Funding Agreement		Nil
Resources	Funding	Income generating
	Physical	0.2 FTE, Volunteers

Name of the person responsible for the project and who they report to.

Goals/strategies from your Strategic Plan and funding agreements (if applicable).

Whether the project is income generating/self-supporting/cost centre; and any grant funding; any specific physical resources (eg car / computer); and the HR requirements.

Rationale

Our annual Fun Run raises funds for the Association while also raising community awareness and engaging our members in a popular activity.

Just a short statement giving the reason for the project.

Overview

The Fun Run will be held this year on Saturday 21st September along the banks of the Torrens River over a distance of 5 kilometres. Participants can run or walk the course and will raise money for each kilometer completed from friends, family and supporters. Participants must register by Friday 13th September to participate. There will be a barbeque and picnic held at the completion of the Fun Run in Rymill Park for participants, family and friends with significant sponsorship achieved for both the Fun Run and picnic. We aim to attract significant media attention and will encourage high profile participation to maximise publicity.

A short overview of the project explaining what it is, who will be involved, what will be happening. Include enough details so that someone reading it will get a good sense of what the project is all about.

Outcomes

This year we are aiming for 150 participants to raise $10,000 through direct or online donations and to get TV coverage from all the major networks, plus state and local press and social media coverage. We aim to achieve a further $10,000 through sponsorship.

A brief statement summarising the expected outcomes of the project.

Indicators	Targets
Registration packages printed and distributed to members	by 30th June
Online registration and donation facility live	by 30th June
Social media presence established	by 31st May
All permits secured	by 31st March
Number of participants	150
Amount raised by participants	$10,000
Number of Sponsors	10
Amount raised through sponsorship	$10,000
Number of media stories	4 TV; 4 Press; 500 social media
Feedback rating of 4 or better	90%

Targets should be either dates, numbers, dollars or percentages. Targets must be specific and quantifiable. Dollar amounts will be reflected in your annual budget.

Indicators are all the things that you need to achieve for your project to be a success. They must be specific and quantifiable because they are the performance measures against which the success of the project will be assessed. Remember to be conservative! There's no reason you can't have higher 'stretch' or management targets, but make sure the indicators and targets in your Plan are realistic and achievable.

ANNUAL FUN RUN - Q2 REVIEW

All details in the section remain the same as the original project plan.

Project Leader	Sue Smith
Reports to	Event Subcommittee
Contributing to Strategy	Sustainable Finances; Community Awareness; Member Engagement
Contributing to Funding Agreement	Nil

Resources	Funding	Income generating
	Physical	Nil
	Human	0.2 FTE, Volunteers

Remove the "Rationale" section as it isn't required for the review.

The project overview becomes a Progress Report that gives a short summary of how the project is coming along.

With 4 weeks to go before the event we are tracking well. All preparations are complete and participant numbers are increasing steadily. We expect a big jump in registrations in the week before the event. We have already received some donations but do not expect to see the majority of this income until after the event. Most pleasing are our Sponsorship results to date. While we have not yet reached our target numbers, we have already exceeded our financial target due to a key partnership with a major+ supporter.

Two high profile participants have been secured and media releases about their involvement will be distributed in the week prior to the event to maximise interest.

Note any changes to the expected outcomes.

Outcomes

We expect that we will reach all targets and may well exceed our financial targets for the event.

Indicators and targets remain the same, but an additional column is added to the right with actual results for the quarter. These should be cumulative for the life of the project.

Indicators	Targets	Q2 Results
Registration packages printed and distributed to members	by 30th June	Complete
On-line registration and donation facility live	by 30th June	Complete
Social media presence established	by 31st May	Complete
All permits secured	by 31st March	Complete
Number of participants	150	104
Amount raised by participants	$10,000	$1,830
Number of Sponsors	10	6
Amount raised through sponsorship	$10,000	$12,000
Number of media stories	4 TV; 4 Press	Pending
Feedback rating of 4 or better	90%	Pending

Sample Project Evaluation

ANNUAL FUN RUN - EVALUATION

Project Leader		Sue Smith
Reports to		Events Committee
Contributing to Strategy		Sustainable Finances; Community Awareness: Member Engagement
Contributing to Funding Agreement		Nil
Resources	Funding	Income generating
	Physical	Nil
	Human	0.2 FTE, Volunteers

Project Evaluation

The Annual Fun Run was a great success this year. Participation exceeded expectations, as did fundraising results. Sponsorship was also ahead of targets. Participant feedback was very positive and everyone enjoyed the event.

We managed to get stories on 3 networks, plus State and Local newspaper coverage and significant social media activity.

Outcomes

172 participants raised $13,420. 10 Sponsors donated $15,000. Total fundraising results were $8,420 ahead of budget. Media coverage was positive.

Indicators	Targets	Final Results
Registration packages printed and distributed to members	by 30th June	Complete
On-line registration and donation facility live	by 30th June	Complete
Social media presence established	by 31st May	Complete
All permits secured	by 31st March	Complete
Number of participants	150	172
Amount raised by participants	$10,000	$13,420
Number of Sponsors	10	10
Amount raised through sponsorship	$10,000	$15,000
Number of media stories	4 TV; 4 Press	3 TV; 6 Press
Feedback rating of 4 or better	90%	92%

Recommendation

The event was a success and should continue next year. No major revision required.

Add “evaluation” to the project title.

All details in the section remain the same as the

Note final outcomes.

Indicators and targets remain the same, but progress results become final results.

You should include a recommendation on whether the project should continue, needs review or should be

Sample Project Summary

SUSTAINABLE FINANCES

Name of the Program.

Program Manager	Jenny Jones

Name of the person responsible for the program.

Contributing to Goals	Sustainable Finances
	Community Awareness
	Member Engagement
Grant/Service Agreements	Nil

Goals/strategies from your Strategic Plan and funding agreements (if applicable).

Overview

An overview of the Program, what it is for and what it hopes to achieve.

We recognise that Sustainable Finances are essential to the viability of our Association. With limited Government and other Grant funding, we must look to members, supporters and sponsors to contribute to the financial well-being of the organisation.

This can be achieved through major and small event based fundraising, our Sponsorship program and pursuing appropriate grant funding for specific projects.

This year we are also going to put resources into direct/online fundraising through sites such as Everyday Hero and MyCause and through direct giving campaigns.

Should resources become available, we are also planning to start development of a bequests program.

Continuing Projects	Annual Fun Run
	Event Based Fundraising
	Sponsorship
	Grants

A list of projects you've run in previous years that are continuing this year.

New Projects	Direct/Online Fundraising
Blue Sky Projects	Bequests

Use a separate section to list new projects that are being undertaken for the first time this year.

For most Associations there are always more things that you'd like to do than you have the resources to do in any particular year. Blue Sky projects are just that - the things you'd like to do but can't afford to do just yet. Including a few of these in your Operational Plan flags future directions and also means that should circumstances change, you have some projects ready to go!

Sample Program Review

SUSTAINABLE FINANCES - PROGRESS REVIEW

Program Manager	Jenny Jones

Contributing to Goals	Sustainable Finances
	Community Awareness
	Member Engagement

Grant/Service Agreements	Nil

Progress

Most projects are progressing well and are expected to achieve target. Our Event Based fund-raising got off to a slow start, but has gained momentum and is expected to recover sufficiently to reach target. However, our Grants project is not performing as hoped. Several grants that we were expecting to secure have not been awarded and new grant opportunities are limited.

However, better than expected results from our Annual Fun Run and Sponsorship project will make up some of this shortfall, as will the direct/online fundraising project. This new project has attracted a lot of interest and better than expected results are likely.

Continuing Projects	Annual Fun Run	
	Event Based Fundraising	
	Sponsorship	
	Grants	
New Projects	Direct/Online Fundraising	
Blue Sky Projects	Bequests	

Add "Progress Review" to the name of the Program.

All details in this section remain the same as the original program summary.

The Program Overview becomes a Progress Report where the status of all projects are noted.

Add a column and use the green, yellow and red colours of the dashboard to indicate which projects are on track and which are not.

SECTIO N 6
Risk Management

Identifying and managing risk is another important aspect of Good Governance. No organisation or environment is risk free, but it's your responsibility as a Committee to identify risks, categorise them in terms of likelihood and consequence, and implement control measures to manage, avoid or mitigate those risks.

Risk Management Checklist

Does your Committee have a solid understanding of Risk Management?	*Risk Management is one of your fundamental governance activities. It is an ongoing process of organising, identifying, analysing, treating and controlling the risks facing your Association. Having a good understanding of what it is and how it works is important for all Committee members.*	☐
Have you organised risk so that it is clearly linked to key areas of activity and makes sense in the context of your Association?	*Risk Management is a big task and can seem overwhelming if all you have is a blank page! Finding a way to organise your risk in a logical manner is a big first step and using your key areas of activity as defined in your Strategic and Operational Plans gives you a great place to start.*	☐
Have you identified risk categories and the risks you need to consider?	*There are a number of types of risk and identifying these categories will help in the risk management process. Common categories include: Environmental, Operational, Financial, People, Regulatory and Reputational risks.*	☐
Have you assessed risk as to likelihood and consequence?	*Not all risks are equal, so once you've identified and categorised your risk you need to consider how likely the risk event might be and how severe the consequences might be if the risk occurs.*	☐
Do you have a current risk matrix?	*As your risks are assessed in terms of likelihood and consequence, they can be plotted on a risk matrix that will determine the overall severity of the risk. Any risk event that is highly likely and would have severe consequences would be catastrophic, while an unlikely risk with minor consequences may be insignificant.*	☐
Have you identified how you want to treat your risks?	*There are 4 different ways to treat risk - eliminate it, manage it, transfer it or accept it. For each of your identified risks, you need to determine the most appropriate way to treat it.*	☐

Cont …

Have you identified risk response protocols?	*Your risk policy should identify your risk response protocols. This means that you should consider how you respond to risk events should they occur and who is authorised to act. Defining response protocols at the same time as you work out your risk ratings is a good idea and can save time.*	☐
Is there a shared understanding of your organisation's risk tolerance?	*Risk management does not mean risk avoidance. There is always some measure of risk associated with doing anything and if an organisation is to be active and thrive it must take some risks. The question is whether your Committee has a shared understanding of your risk tolerance, or indeed has discussed it at all?*	☐

SECTIO N 6
Tips & Techniques

Risk Management
O rganising Risk
Identifying Risk
Analysing Risk
Treating Risk
Controlling Risk
Risk Register
Risk Tolerance

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Risk Management

Risk Management is one of the fundamental Governance responsibilities for your Association. The process of identifying and managing risk allows the Committee to protect the Association from events or losses that would prevent it from achieving its goals.

Risk management is the process of thinking about all the things that could go wrong and taking reasonable action to prevent them from happening, reduce their impact or deal with the fallout should a risk event occur.

Managing risk does not mean avoiding risk altogether. Taking a 'no-risk' strategy can limit your ability to pursue innovative projects or plans and seldom achieves ambitious goals and growth. Risk management means making reasonable decisions based on appropriate information and realistic assessment.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

There are a number of steps to take in the risk management process.

Risk management is an ongoing process. It requires continuous communication and consultation to ensure that the risk profile remains current and continuous monitoring and review to ensure that it remains effective.

This can seem a daunting task to many Committees, but if you take it one step at a time you will be able to create an effective risk management program for your organisation. This will include a comprehensive Risk Register that will become the tool for your Committee to review on a regular basis. There are items in our Toolbox for each step of the process to assist you in your risk management journey.

Before getting into the specifics, there are a few general tips on the next page for effective risk management in your Association.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Risk Management

RISK MANAGEMENT IS EVERYONE'S JOB

Effective risk management is not something that an individual or a group can do in isolation. While it is a good idea to allocate responsibility in this area to a Risk Committee, it's essential that everyone in the organisation understands what it is and why it's important. Let it be known that your priority is to protect the safety of everyone involved in or connected with your Association, shield it from legal liability and safeguard its reputation. Doing so may effect what you do and how you do it at every level of the organisation, so it's important that you strive for a culture that takes risk seriously and includes people at all levels in the process.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Good risk management is far more than simply having lists of rules or policies and procedures for people to follow. It's a continuing process of identifying, organising, analysing, treating and controlling risk and for it to work there must be effective communication at all levels.

Say you're a football club that runs a junior league competition. Who are the people best placed in the organisation to provide information about potential risks and hazards? That would likely be the players, the umpires, the coaches and the parents - not necessarily the people sitting around the Boardroom table.

Establishing a feedback loop where everyone has the opportunity to identify areas of potential risk, express their concerns and advise whether risk strategies are useful and effective is a very important part of the process. Similarly, people respond better to rules and regulations if they understand where they're coming from and why they're important. Communication is only communication if it goes two ways - otherwise it's just instruction and unlikely to be effective in embedding risk management in your organisation's culture.

WRITE IT DOWN!

Another important aspect of risk management is good documentation. The best indicator of what could go wrong in the future is what has gone wrong in the past, or the 'near misses' where a major problem was narrowly avoided. Having reports for these incidents provides critical information to your risk management committee and allows you to take the appropriate action.

Record keeping through all steps of the risk management process means that your Committee and others can refer back to what has taken place and forms an evidence base for your risk decisions.

COMMON SENSE RULES!

In risk management, as in many aspects of good governance, you'll come across the test of 'reasonableness'. Risk management is about taking reasonable steps to avoid or reduce risks that you could reasonably foresee. Which means using common sense in your approach. For example, a football club in Adelaide probably doesn't need to worry too much about being hit by a cyclone, but for a housing association in North Queensland, cyclones could be a very real risk!

Remember that you don't need to include any risks over which you have no control. For example, some organisations include items such as 'civil disturbance' in their risk register. However, as you are unlikely to have any control over people rioting in the street it does NOT need to be included!

When you're starting out on your risk management journey, begin with the obvious. Ask yourself about the things that could go wrong most often and would have a significant negative impact on your organisation and the people involved in it. Start with these and then work through less obvious, less frequent or less critical risks as you progress.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Organising Risk

The first step in the Risk Management process is to organise risk. This means sorting and categorising risk in a way that makes sense in the context of your organisation.

SORTING RISK

So where do you start? Every Association is different and will face different challenges and risks. An extreme sports club is going to have a very different risk profile to a local bridge club, so risk needs to be considered within the context of your organisational needs. It makes sense to start sorting risks according to your Association's aims, structure, membership, activities and methods of operation.

Internal

These are **operational** or **internal** risks and you can start by asking yourself some basic questions:

What are the goals and strategies of our Association? Who are the people involved in our Association? What are our core activities? Where do our activities take place?

Your Strategic and Operational Plans are a good place to go for the answers to these questions. Your Strategic Plan details your goals and strategies within your key functional and foundation areas. Your Operational Plan details what you do and how you do it, and everything you do has some form of associated risk. So linking Risk to your Strategic and Operational plans can be a solid basis for your risk framework.

External

In addition to the operational risks, you should look at risks associated with your **external environment**. Start by asking some of these questions:

What laws, regulations and standards apply to our Association?
What relationships do we have, who are they with and how important are they?
What is our common law duty of care in minimising the potential for harm and are we able to meet it? What does the broader community expect of us?
What is the demographic in which we operate and how is it changing?

The answers to these questions might not be quite as easy to find and may require a bit of research, but it is important to have a good understanding of the norms, trends and requirements of your external environment. Community expectations are constantly changing and are reflected in laws, regulations and standards. What might have been acceptable behaviour or practice a decade ago may no longer be tolerated so it is essential to keep abreast of community trends and modify your approach accordingly.

CATEGORISING RISK

Once you've worked out a basis to organise your operational risk in reference to your Strategic Plan and Operational plans or key areas of activity, and the risks associated with the external environment, you can start looking at the types of risk you should consider. These can be categorised in a number of ways to suit your particular needs, but here are some fairly standard categories to begin with:

Hazard Risks - those things that present a threat to health and safety
Financial Risks - those things that could adversely affect your financial position
People Risks - those risks associated with staff, volunteers, members and others
Regulatory Risks - risks associated with regulations, laws and standards
Reputational Risks - those things that could adversely affect your community standing and the way people think about

you.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Organising Risk

Give special consideration to reputational risk. As a not-for-profit organisation, your reputation and the goodwill of stakeholders is extremely important. Anything that could damage your reputation should be taken very seriously.

RISK FRAMEWORK

Systematically going through the process of sorting and categorising your risk will give you a risk framework to work with. So for each risk you identify, you can determine where it goes (sorting) and what type of risk it is (categorising). This gets your Risk Management process off to a good start!

A sample Risk Framework could be as follows:

Risk Type	Risk Area	Risk Description	Risk Category
Operational			
Goals & Strategies (Reference your Strategic Plan)	Goal 1	Risk 1	Type?
		Risk 2	Type? ...
		Risk 3	
	Goal 2	Risk 1	
		Risk 2	
		Risk 3	
	Goal 3	Risk 1	
		Risk 2	
		Risk 3	
	More ...		
Who's involved? (Reference your Stakeholder Analysis)	Members	Risk 1	
		Risk 2	
		Risk 3	
	Supporters	Risk 1	
		Risk 2	
		Risk 3	
	Sponsors	Risk 1	
		Risk 2	
		Risk 3	
	More ...		
Activities (Reference your Operational Plan)	Events	Risks ...	
	Fundraising	Risks ...	
	Professional Development	Risks ...	
	More ...	Risks ...	

Risk Type	Risk Area	Risk Description	Risk Category
Venues/Facilities (Reference your Operational Plan)	Office	Risk ...	
	Clubrooms	Risk ...	
	Playing Field	Risk ...	
	More ...		
Environmental			
Legal and Regulatory (Reference your Compliance Register)	Legislation	Risk ...	Type?
	Regulation	Risk ...	Type? ...
	Standards	Risk ...	
	More ...		
Relationships (Reference your Stakeholder Analysis)	Federation/Peak body	Risk ...	
	Government	Risk ...	
	Allied Organisations	Risk ...	
	More ...		
Duty of Care	Physical Harm	Risk ...	
	Economic Loss	Risk ...	
	Psychological Trauma	Risk ...	
	More ...		
Community Expectation	Demographics	Risk ...	
	Social Trends	Risk ...	
	Inclusivity	Risk ...	
	More ...		

The next step in the process is risk identification. Through this you may find risks that don't comfortably fit within your initial framework or for which you don't have a category. That's fine - just add onto your framework as you progress through the process to meet your particular organisational context and needs.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Identifying Risk

So you've worked out a risk framework that works in the context of your Association. Now you have to identify your risks which can then be sorted and categorised according to your framework.

IDENTIFYING RISK

There are two main ways to identify risks:

- Looking back—what has gone wrong and why?
- Looking forward—what could go wrong and why?

What has gone wrong and why

Past events are the best place to start in identifying risks. What has gone wrong in the past and why did it go wrong? So how do you get this information?

Obviously you can look at your organisation's recent history and identify problems that have occurred. **TIP!** Make sure that you have a system of Incident Reporting! Committees change and knowledge of problems can be lost if they are not written down. Incident reports should also include near misses! A sample Incident Report follows— make sure you file them somewhere they can be easily accessed!

You can also look at similar or allied Associations and identify where they've had problems that could easily happen to you. Your Federation, peak or national body may well have an incident register that you can access to get information on problems that have occurred. If not, suggest that they create one!

What can go wrong and why

This is where you have to use your imagination and brainstorm as a Committee or Working Group the problems that could occur in a particular area, program or event. For example, say that you're planning to hold a fundraising event like a Fun Run. What could go wrong? Using your risk framework and you might identify risks like:

Risk Type	Risk Area	Risk Description	Risk Category
Activity (Reference Operational Plan)	Annual Fun Run	Trip or fall injury	Hazard
		Fail to secure sponsors	Financial
		Fail to secure permits	Regulatory
		Bad weather	Hazard/Financial
		Volunteers fail to perform duties correctly	People
		High level of complaints	Reputational
		More ...	

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Identifying Risk

OTHER STRATEGIES

There are some additional strategies you can use to compile your list of potential risks. Some of these include:

Walks around - if you have facilities that you own, rent or use it can be worthwhile having a periodic walk around to look for potential risks and problems. Being familiar with your environment limits your ability to see clearly, so try to use the walk around as an opportunity to look with fresh eyes, or even bring along someone unfamiliar with the office, club or facility to assist in the process.

Interviews - talk to your members, users and other stakeholders to get their views on potential risks. Bring in some experts and ask them what they think. Talk to other organisations with a similar risk profile to see what they have to say. The more input you can get, the better!

Scenarios - set up scenarios and work through a series of 'what ifs' with your Committee or Risk Management group. Make sure your scenarios are realistic and relevant to your Association activities and let your imaginations run wild!

ONE STEP AT A TIME...

Establishing a comprehensive list of potential risks takes time. You can't be expected to think of everything at once and this is why you should establish a regular review process—at least every 6 months but more often if you're just starting out on the process.

Start with obvious and major risks and the risks associated with current and important events or programs. Review and add to the list over time, perhaps concentrating on one particular risk area each time you review.

Establish a Risk and Governance Subcommittee to more regularly review risk and report back to the Committee with recommendations.

An Incident Report template follows later in this chapter.

Not all risks are equal, so in this step of the process you will analyse your identified risks in terms of how bad it will be (consequence) and how often it might happen (probability).

RISK MATRIX

Risk consequence and probability can be plotted on a Risk Matrix.

Consequence					
	Severe	Moderate	High	Very High	Catastrophic
	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very High
	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
	Minor	Insignificant	Low	Moderate	Moderate
		Rare	Occasional	Likely	Frequent
		Probability			

To make the Risk Matrix meaningful for your Association, you need to define what you mean by both the probability and consequence scale.

Probability

On this matrix, probability is given four levels—rare, occasional, likely and frequent. So how would you define the levels for your Association? Here's an example:

Level	Definition	Frequency
4	Frequent	More than once a year
3	Likely	Once every 1 - 3 years
2	Occasional	Once every 3 - 10 years
1	Rare	Less than once every 10 years

You need to decide how often is frequent, likely etc. in terms of your Association and what you do.

Consequence

You must make similar decisions in defining your consequence scale. The example below looks at consequence in terms of both financial loss and business interruption and you need to work out what this means for you. For example, for a huge organisation like BHP a loss of $50,000 may be insignificant but for you it may be catastrophic. It depends on your size and the nature of your activities. The last item to include here is the response protocol for each level of event. This only comes into play should the event occur, but it defines up front who needs to respond and how.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Risk Analysis

When a problem occurs it tends to happen quickly and may need an immediate response. There may be no time to convene a meeting and make decisions about what to do—if everyone is aware of the response protocol you're better positioned to deal with whatever occurs.

Level	Definition	Financial Impact	Business Interruption	Response Protocol
4	Severe	Loss > $XX,XXX	Lost time > XX days	High impact/long term issue requiring President and Committee intervention.
3	Major	Loss between $X,XXX and $XX,XXX	Lost time between XX and XX days	High impact requiring President intervention and Committee notification.
2	Moderate	Loss between $X,XXX and $XX,XXX	Lost time between X and XX days	Moderate impact requiring Portfolio intervention and Committee notification
1	Minor	Loss < $X,XXX	Lost time < X days	Low impact requiring Program/Portfolio management.

Once you have defined your Probability and Consequence scales, you can confidently plot your defined risks on your Risk Matrix.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Treating Risk

The next step in the Risk Management process is to decide how to treat your risks. There are four available options—eliminate, reduce, transfer and accept.

ELIMINATE THE RISK
It is seldom possible to eliminate a risk altogether. You should also keep in mind that eliminating a risk can create a new risk. For example, you may think that holding an outdoor event is too risky due to the potential for inclement weather and decide to cancel. However, this may create the risk of not meeting your budget, of disappointing your members and damaging your reputation etc.

REDUCE THE RISK
This is how you will deal with the majority of risks facing your organisation. What you are aiming to do is reduce the probability of the risk, reduce the consequence of the risk, or both. Basically you're trying to move your risks as far as possible towards the bottom left corner of your Risk Matrix! This is done by exercising 'Controls' and we'll be examining these more closely in the next section.

TRANSFER THE RISK
Transferring risk occurs when you pass the risk along to another party—the best known of these being your insurance company. Risk can also be transferred through contracting with a third party. For example, you may be organising an event and decide to contract out the catering to an external provider. This means that you take no risk for the success of the catering or any adverse effects on consumers (e.g. food poisoning).

However, remember that that there may still be some residual risk. As in the previous example, if everyone became sick from some dodgy sausage offered by caterers at your event, you could still suffer a reputational loss as a result.

Other ways of transferring risk can be through waiver - where you ask people to sign a waiver before they participate in a particular activity, and disclaimer - where you make a statement about what responsibility you are or are not accepting. Waivers and disclaimers have their limits. They do not absolve you of your duty of care and you still have to exercise due care and diligence so as not to cause harm to members or participants.

ACCEPT THE RISK
Sometimes it is worth simply accepting the risk. You will do this if the costs or consequences of the other options are unacceptable. Either the risk is acceptable / manageable, or the alternatives are worse!

FINDING BALANCE
When you are deciding how to treat the various risks facing your association you should always aim to find balance. This is a balance between risk and benefit and a balance between risk and cost/convenience. The test for risk is 'reasonableness' and you should use your common sense in this area.

For example; you are faced with a sponsorship proposal that would provide you with the funds to implement an important project. However, the sponsor company engages in practices that do not fully align with your values and could be criticised by members. Is the benefit of the project funding greater than the potential for reputational risk? Whatever decision you make, it needs to be reasonable and backed up by solid arguments.

Another example; you identify a risk to health and safety and find that an optimal solution is available but will cost $20,000 to implement. If you turnover only $100,000 per annum, is it reasonable to invest in this solution, or are there other, cheaper options that will also reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Risk Controls

Risk Controls are the measures you take to manage your risks. Controls can reduce the probability or consequence of the risk, or both. The idea is to reduce each risk from a higher category on your Risk Matrix to a lower risk category.

Risk Controls are basically just the things you do to mitigate your risks. Once you've organised, identified and analysed your risk, you should examine these controls to assess whether they are adequate or whether they could be improved.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Risk can be described as an 'uncertain event'. It's uncertain because it may or may not happen - our analysis gives us an idea of how likely and how severe the event might be. Every risk event is sandwiched between two things:
Source/cause and **effect/consequence**

The aim of risk controls is to examine the source/cause of the risk to see if it can be eliminated or reduced and the effect/consequence to see if it can be minimised or avoided.

BREAKING DOWN THE RISK

Risk events are generally the result of a chain of circumstances. For example; someone trips over a power cord at a seminar and breaks their ankle. What were the circumstances that led to the accident? These include:

- the area was accessible
- the person was walking there at the time
- the power cord was in that space
- the cord was not marked or taped down.

If any one of those circumstances were removed, the accident may not have occurred. The risk can be controlled by removing one or more of these factors; such as roping off the area, removing or relocating the cord, or taping the cord to the floor.

For Associations there are more than just health and safety risks. There are financial, regulatory, reputational risks and more and these can be a little harder to break down.

For example, the success of a program or event may depend on sponsorship. So losing key sponsorships is a potential risk event. How could it occur? Reasons could include:

- The sponsor is not engaged and feels neglected by the Association
- The sponsor does not feel they are getting value for money

These reasons could be addressed by having an effective engagement strategy and regular communication; by reviewing contracts on a regular basis and identifying value add propositions.

SYSTEMISING THE RESPONSE

Taking the tripping example above, there are a number of actions that can be taken to remove the risk. However, these actions will not be effective unless they are applied EVERY time the potential risk occurs. The best controls are systems or processes that address potential risks on an ongoing basis.

Protocols can be established where the person or people responsible ensure that hazardous areas are roped off to unauthorised personnel; that electrical equipment is positioned so as to avoid the need for power cords in walkways so far as is possible; and where not possible, that power cords are securely taped to the floor so they cannot be tripped over. Checklists can be created to assist people to minimise risks.

EVALUATING THE CONTROLS

Controls are the measures taken to minimise the likelihood or consequence of the risk event. Taking our sponsorship example, risk controls could be identified is as follows:

Risk	Controls
Loss of key sponsorships	• Sponsorship engagement strategy • Regular contact with all sponsors • Regular review of sponsorship contracts and the value of what is being delivered • Identification of 'value add' opportunities

Controls should be evaluated as to their effectiveness and can be rated as follows:

Strong

Controls are strong if the risk is well understood and all economically feasible measures (addressing both probability and consequence) have been implemented. Controls are robust, to a high standard, consistently applied and monitored on a regular basis.

Moderate

Aspects of the risk are controlled, but additional controls are available and feasible. Controls are not completely reliable and could be more consistently applied and monitored.

Weak

Much greater control of the risk is feasible. Controls are unreliable, inconsistent and not effectively monitored. Once you've evaluated your risk controls, your table might look like this:

Risk	Controls	Control Rating
Loss of key sponsorships	• Sponsorship engagement strategy	STRONG
	• Regular review of sponsorship contracts and what is being delivered	MODERATE
	• Regular contact with all sponsors	STRONG
	• Identification of 'value add' opportunities	WEAK

You can then look at improving those risk controls that need work and/or identifying further controls to manage your risks.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Risk Tolerance

An important decision for your Committee is to identify your risk tolerance. This means determining the amount of risk you're comfortable taking or believe is necessary for you to achieve your goals.

How much risk is too much? This is a question that the Committee should consider each year in terms of the organisation as a whole, the types of risk you are faced with and particular programs or activities.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RISK TOLERANCE

The amount of risk you're prepared to take will depend on a number of factors, including:

Age/Development Stage

A new Association may be prepared to take more risks than an older, established organisation. If you're just starting out, or if you've decided to change focus, re-position or re-brand your Association, you may decide that some risks are necessary to establish or re-establish your market position.

Membership/Participation Trends

If you are faced with a declining membership or participation you may need to make some changes to the way you do things and/or your Association offering and this may involve taking some risks with new strategies and programs. An Association with a stable or growing membership/participation base may be less likely to take these risks.

Financial Position

If you have a secure income base and/or money in the bank, you may be prepared to make reasonable investment in strategies and programs that carry a higher level of financial risk. If your financial position is less secure you may be less likely to pursue activities that could result in financial losses.

Strategic Plan

What does your Strategic Plan say? Are you pursuing a growth strategy? Is innovation one of your goals? Or are you consolidating your position and taking a 'steady as she goes' approach? The goals and strategies in your strategic plan will have an effect on your risk tolerance.

Member/Stakeholder Expectations

What do your members expect of you? Are you known for innovation and creativity, or are you seen as a more stable, established organisation that values reliability? The expectations of your members and stakeholders can have an influence on your organisational strategies and their associated risk.

Capacity to Manage Risk

Even if you were inclined to pursue some riskier strategies and programs, do you have the ability to effectively manage them and adequately respond to risk events?

TOLERANCE MAY VARY BETWEEN RISK CATEGORIES

Depending on your association's profile and goals, you may be prepared to take more risks in some areas than others. For example, an established organisation with significant reserves may be comfortable with taking some financial risks, but maintain a 'zero tolerance' policy to reputational risk. A new organisation may be less concerned with reputational risk, but may take a more conservative approach in areas that may adversely affect limited resources.

Determining your risk tolerance is an important aspect of risk management and a conversation on risk tolerance should be held every time your review your Register.

Sample Incident Report

Details of the incident/near miss:

Short description:

Where did the incident/near miss occur?

Date of incident/near miss: Time of incident/near miss:

Name of injured person (if relevant):

Injury sustained (if relevant):

Name of person reporting the incident: Date of report:

Email: Telephone:

Name of witness (if relevant): Telephone:

Full description of events:
(Briefly describe what happened including the sequence of events, scene of the incident, who was involved, what was involved, what activity (if any) was taking place prior and at the time of the incident. Were there any hazards that contributed to the incident occurring?) Attach photos/video if available:

Comments/Recommendations

Signed:_____

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Risk Management

Risk Management is one of the fundamental Governance responsibilities for your Association. The process of identifying and managing risk allows the Committee to protect the Association from events or losses that would prevent it from achieving its goals.

Risk management is the process of thinking about all the things that could go wrong and taking reasonable action to prevent them from happening, reduce their impact or deal with the fallout should a risk event occur.

Managing risk does not mean avoiding risk altogether. Taking a 'no-risk' strategy can limit your ability to pursue innovative projects or plans and seldom achieves ambitious goals and growth. Risk management means making reasonable decisions based on appropriate information and realistic assessment.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

There are a number of steps to take in the risk management process.

Risk management is an ongoing process. It requires continuous communication and consultation to ensure that the risk profile remains current and continuous monitoring and review to ensure that it remains effective.

This can seem a daunting task to many Committees, but if you take it one step at a time you will be able to create an effective risk management program for your organisation. This will include a comprehensive Risk Register that will become the tool for your Committee to review on a regular basis.

There are items in our Toolbox for each step of the process to assist you in your risk management journey.

Before getting into the specifics, there are a few general tips on the next page for effective risk management in your Association:

RISK MANAGEMENT IS EVERYONE'S JOB

Effective risk management is not something that an individual or a group can do in isolation. While it is a good idea to allocate responsibility in this area to a Risk Committee, it's essential that everyone in the organisation understands what it is and why it's important. Let it be known that your priority is to protect the safety of everyone involved in or connected with your organisation.

Sample Risk Register

All the work you've put into organizing, identifying, analyzing, treating and controlling risks comes together in a Risk Register. This is the tool you'll use and review regularly. It's an extension of the table created to organise and identify risk and simply adds to it.

Area within which you've organised your risk

Type of risk

Severity of risk

Your approach to this risk

Effectiveness of current controls

Effectiveness of proposed controls

Risk Area	Risk Description	Risk Type	Probability	Consequence	Risk Rating	Risk Treatment	Current Controls	Control Rating	Proposed Controls	New Control Rating	Revised Risk Rating
Activity	Loss of key sponsorships	Financial	2	3	Mod	Reduce	Sponsorship engagement strategy	Strong	Sponsorship engagement strategy	Strong	Low
							Regular review of sponsor-ship contracts	Mod	Sponsorship review schedule	Strong	
							Regular contact with all sponsors	Strong	Regular contact with all sponsors	Strong	
							Identification of 'value add' opportunities	Weak	Creation of additional value add opportunities	Mod	
									Seek additional sponsors	Mod	
More...											

A description of the identified risk

Likelihood of the risk

Overall risk rating

How you are currently controlling the risk

How you are proposing to control the risk

Any change to the risk rating

SECTIO N 7
Policy

Good policy makes good sense for your Association. Policies define 'the way we do things around here' and provide a degree of certainty about how you will respond to various situations. Policy is an essential guide to decision-making and helps shape your organisational culture.

Policy Checklist

Have you identified the essential policies for your organisation?	*Policy creates a framework for action and decision-making within your organisation. Policies are the big-picture guidelines that set out, in clear language, the boundaries within which you operate. The 'must have' policies required by your organisation will be determined by the things you do.*	☐
Are you clear on the difference between policy and procedure?	*Policies describe the big picture and Procedures provide the step-by-step instructions on how to put them into practice. Often policy and procedure are combined in a single document, but it is essential to make sure the two are clearly defined and that your document has a logical flow that people can follow.*	☐
Are all your policies kept together and are they easily accessible?	*Policies are only useful if people can find them! It's good practice to keep all your policies together in one place. Often your website or intranet will have a section for policies, but it's also a good idea to keep at least one hard copy of all your policies in a central location.*	☐
Do you have a policy development framework?	*You should have a standard process for developing policy, and also a policy template so that there's consistency in your documentation.*	☐
Are your policies written in plain English and are they easy to understand?	*For policies to be useful, they need to be clear, unambiguous and written in plain English. They need to contain enough information to give the appropriate guidance but shouldn't be longer or more complicated than absolutely necessary.*	☐
Are your policies living documents (used and reviewed regularly)?	*Policies are tools designed to provide guidance in a range of circumstances. They are not designed to collect dust on a shelf. While it is certainly the case that some policies will be used more often than others, they should all be 'living documents' that serve a purpose. They must be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain current and relevant.*	☐
Do you know when to review your policies?	*There should be a review date included in your policy template. However, there may also be triggers for review as your environment or circumstances change. An incident, legislative change, or new information or technology can trigger a policy review.*	☐

SECTIO N 7
Tips & Techniques

Identifying Policy
Developing Policy

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
What Policies You Need

Policies, Procedures, SWMS, SOP… what is what? And where do they fit with laws and standards?

Policies and Procedures provide information about "the way we do things around here".

Policy - is a clear and definite statement of the organisation's views on a particular matter or of its intent to act in a certain way (the 'what').

Procedure - is a step-by-step sequence of activities or course of action that must be followed to implement a Policy (the 'how').

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – is a set of written instructions that document a routine or repetitive activity. SOPsshouldprovideenoughdetailsothatsomeonewithlimitedexperienceor knowledge of the procedure, but with a basic understanding, can successfully reproduce the procedure when unsupervised. SOPs need to be readily accessible in the work areas of those individuals actually performing the activity. Where they pay particular attention to meeting Health and Safety requirements SOPs can be called **Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS).**

Every organisation needs policies:

- to provide the ethical framework for everything the organisation does
- to set boundaries (generally - what's in is ok , what's out is not!)
- to meet legal requirements
- to help manage risks
- to increase accountability
- to meet requirements of funding / registering bodies
- so that everyone has the same 'authoritative' information
- so everyone knows what they can expect from the organisation
- so that similar treatment is applied to similar circumstances
- to give ability and flexibility where circumstances vary
- to avoid or minimise confusion, disagreement, disruption and disputes
- to save time, cost, delays and effort
- to improve your organisation's image and reputation
- to improve your organisation's internal and external performance.

At the end of this worksheet you'll find a diagram that illustrates the hierarchy or authority, starting with legislation (eg Health and Safety Act) at the top as the highest authority. Most organisations divide their policies into two categories – ***governance and operations.***

GOVERNANCE POLICIES
These are the 'higher order' policies which relate directly to the work of the Board/Committee (eg. meeting procedure, conflict of interest, sponsorship).

There is no definitive list of Governance Policies, but here are some you might consider:

- meeting attendance policy
- grievance policy
- meeting procedure policy
- committee member induction policy
- confidentiality policy
- legislative compliance policy
- risk management policy

Delegations Policy

One of the 'must have' governance policies for any organisation is a Delegations Policy. This is the document that defines who within your organisation has the authority to do what. In particular it will define spending and decision making authorities and limits. It also defines those matters reserved for consideration and decision by the Committee.

Committee Charter

Organisations can choose to combine their governance policies into a single document, often called a 'Committee Charter'. This allows you to keep governance policies together and ensures that they are a useful reference for all Committee members.

OPERATIONAL POLICIES

These are the policies that relate to the 'front-line activities' of the organisation (eg. volunteer screening, food handling, use of logo).

Your organisation's list of 'Must Have' policies is dependent on your range of activities. Unless you are a unique 'start up' organisation, the best place to understand which policies you must have is to talk to similar organisations. You should also check with your peak body. The common policy themes are:

- Managing People (staff, volunteers, members)
- Managing Money
- Managing Facilities
- Managing Risk
- Managing Equipment
- Managing Contracts
- Managing Relationships (funders, partners, sponsors, donors)

Once you've developed and approved your 'Must Have' policies, you can start on the 'Should Have' list.

DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL

As a general rule, the Committee develops and approves Governance policies and the 'subject experts' (the people on the ground) develop and approve Operational policies. You need to decide what works best for your organisation, taking into account its purpose, structure and range of activities. Some organisations decide that the Committee should be responsible for approving all Policies.

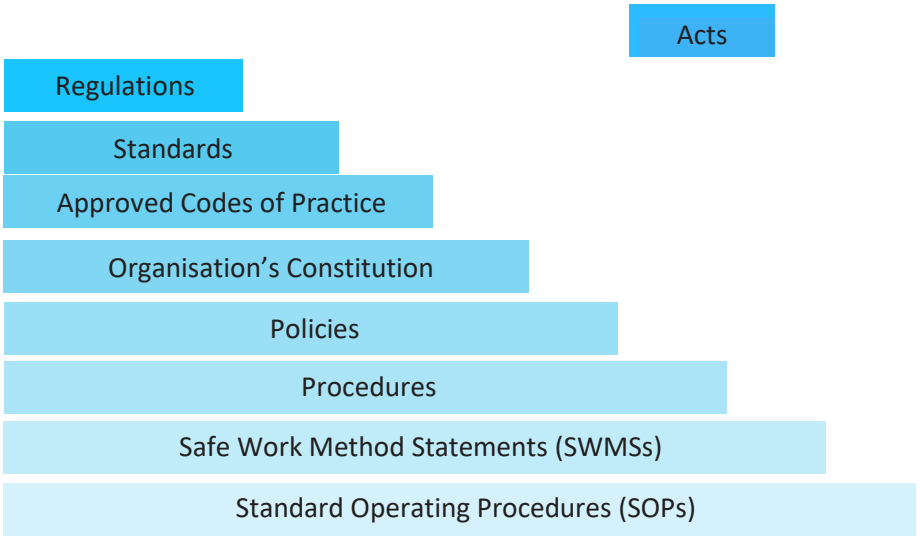
As a general rule, Procedures are developed by the people who are performing the task and are approved by their manager or responsible Committee member.

As a general rule, Safe Work Method Statements and Standard Operating Procedures are developed by the people who are performing the task and are approved by their supervisor. Equipment operating instructions and Materials Safety Data Sheets are often used as the basis for developing SWMSs and SOPs.

Policies, Procedures, SWMSs and SOPs must always be accessible to the people who need to use them.

HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY

This diagram illustrates the hierarchy or authority, starting with legislation (eg Health and Safety Act) at the top as the highest authority.



TIPS & TECHNIQUES
How To Develop Policy

Developing a set of policies for your organisation can seem a daunting task. But if you have a clear idea of what you want to achieve, follow some simple processes and use a consistent template you can make the task relatively painless.

A **Policy** is a clear and definite statement of the organisation's views on a particular matter or of its intent to act in a certain way (the what).

A **Procedure** is a step-by-step sequence of activities or course of action that must be followed to implement a Policy (the 'how').

Common triggers for developing (or changing) a policy (and/or procedure) include:

- changes to the external operating environment
- changes to legislation, codes or standards
- changes to funding arrangements
- new information
- new opportunities
- an incident
- review of your strategic direction
- new initiatives within the organisation
- need to better align policies… The process goes like this:

Identify a need * Research * Consult and test * Refine * Approve

The Committee, a Subcommittee, members, clients, staff or volunteers can identify the need for a policy or for the revision of an existing policy. The Committee will then identify someone to take responsibility for writing the draft (the author).

The author/s should consult with internal and external 'experts' and people who may be affected by a change. Then they'll write the first draft of the policy.

All policy and procedure documents should use a standard policy template so they will have the same "look and feel" across your organisation.

The format of the policy template should like something like this:

HEADING	DEFINITION
Policy Name	A few words that describe the general subject matter of the policy
Purpose	A short statement about what the policy seeks to achieve
Responsibilities	Person or position responsible for the day-to-day implementation of policy and procedure
Principles	A short statement about beliefs that underpin the policy
Definitions	A short explanation of key terms

Policy	The actual content of the policy, being the position taken by the organisation on the topic. A policy document may include several sub- headings under this topic depending on how complex it needs to be.
Procedures	These might be in a separate document. If included in the Policy document the procedures outline how the policy is implemented on a day-to-day basis.
References	Identifies any other documents that are relevant or important to the policy. While all written material within the organisation are related in one way or another, there will often be particular documents that should be read in conjunction with the policy. Examples may include legislation, Codes, Standards, your Constitution and other policies. Not all policies need to have references.
Forms or Attachments	Documents that are directly connected to the implementation of the policy.
Approving Authority	Identifies who approves the policy and who approves the procedure. This could be the Committee, a sub-committee or the individual responsible for a particular policy area.
Approval Date	The date that the policy or procedure was approved by the Approving Authority.
Next Review Due Date	The date set for review of the policy and procedure. How often the policy needs to be reviewed will depend on the nature and volatility of the policy area. For example, a policy on the reimbursement of expenses may need less frequent review than, say, your Social Media policy. Two years is the default period.

Well crafted policies:

- use the standard template
- have content that is reliable (ie the content has been checked against legislative requirements, standards etc.)
- have content that is consistent with your other documents
- have short sentences using everyday language
- contain enough information, but not too much
- are free from misinterpretation or ambiguity
- have proper version control

When the author is satisfied that the key information is included, the draft policy should be circulated to interested people and relevant stakeholders for 'testing' and feedback.

The author/s will consider the feedback and write the next draft for presentation to the Committee. (For complex or controversial matters it might require a number of drafts before the policy is ready to be put to the Committee or other Approving Authority.)

The Approving Authority will have the opportunity to provide feedback and suggest amendments BUT this should only happen once. Otherwise you run the risk of your policy entering an endless loop of draft and amendment without a final policy ever being approved! There will be another opportunity for comment and amendment at the next review period.

Use of Images

The name of the Policy that describes what it is about.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to explain what images can be captured on the Club's premises and during Club activities and under what circumstances those images can be used.

A short statement that explains the purpose of the Policy.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Club's Committee to ensure that this policy is implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Club's Manager to ensure that the procedures are implemented.

Identifying who takes responsibility for the policy &

3. Principles

The Club aims to achieve a sensible balance between protecting children, vulnerable people and Club members, employees, officials, players and volunteers from exploitation for sexual, commercial or other purposes and avoiding undue restrictions on the taking of images by the Club and by supporters, parents, guardians, carers, family and friends.

This is where the underlying principles can be explained.

4. Definitions

The Privacy Act protects personal information that is held, or collected for inclusion, in a 'record'. A 'record' is defined to include a photograph or other pictorial representation of a person.

Definitions explain any terms or references that appear in the policy.

5. Policy

An image is not covered by the Privacy Act if it was taken by an individual who is acting in their private capacity.

If an individual's identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from a video or photograph or other image, then the use and disclosure of that image may be covered by the Privacy Act.

This is where the policy itself is stated and can be divided into sub-headings if necessary.

However, the Club has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable people in relation to issues of child protection, consent and data protection.

The Club also acknowledges that everyone is comfortable with having their photo- graph taken.

This policy applies to all forms of publications using photographs and moving pictures, including all forms or media, DVDs and websites.

All contractors, organisations or individuals providing services or activities at the Club are required to comply with this policy.

Committee members, employees, team managers, coaches, officials, volunteers and players will be asked to sign a consent form which gives permission to publish photographs in public places (including websites).

Sample Policy (Cont)

Parents, guardians or carers of children or vulnerable people attending Club activities will be asked to sign a consent form which gives permission to publish photographs in public places (including websites). If parents/guardians/carers disagree over consent for their child or for a vulnerable person, it will be treated as if consent has not been given. Only images of children and vulnerable people suitably dressed will be allowed to reduce the risk of images being used inappropriately.

The taking of images when anyone is dressing or changing clothes will not be permitted.

Every effort will be made by the Club to prevent capturing of the image of any child or adult who should not be identified.

Every effort will be made to ensure that images which may be perceived as offensive, demeaning or indecent are not captured.

Where images are likely to be used again they will be stored securely and only accessed by those people authorised to do so.

Mobile phones (MMS Multi-media messaging service, video phones etc) and other devices can take and transmit images and the same rules apply as for other forms of photography. Any images taken at the Club other than professionals brought in for that purpose are for personal use only.

Parents, carers, supporters and others must follow guidance from employees, officials and coaches as to when photography and videoing is permitted and where to position themselves in order to minimise disruption to activities.

People with no obvious connection to the Club will not be allowed to take photographs – employees, coaches or officials are expected to question anyone they do not recognise who is using a camera or other recording device at Club events and activities.

The media operate under their own Code of Ethics. If media are invited into the Club for publicity purposes, adults who must not be identified or parents or carers of children who must not be identified must be informed beforehand.

The Club will not use the personal details or full names (which means first name and **family name) of any child or adult in a photograph on its website or in any of other printed publications without consent.**

The Club will only use images which are true and accurate. Any manipulation likely to mislead must be disclosed.

The Policy should clearly state what people involved in the organisation should and should not do. Short sentences and clear language make it accessible and easy to understand

6. Procedures

The Club will produce, provide, collect and securely store an Images Consent Form which will contain wording such as:

Occasionally, we may take photographs, or make video recordings of people at the Club. We may use these images on displays around the Club, in printed publications that we produce or on our website.

The Club may also agree to the use of photographs to promote activities in publications and publicity material produced by the State or National Association or other bodies.

Sometimes the media (print, radio, television or digital) may visit our Club and interview Committee members, employees, officials, coaches and players and may take photographs, videos or sound recordings of these interviews. These images may then be used in the local, state or national programs and publications.

Please answer the questions below, then sign and date the form where shown, and return the completed form to Reception as soon as possible.

Please circle

1. Do you agree to your photograph being taken when you are taking part in Club activities? Yes / No

2. Do you agree to having your photograph published in the media? Yes / No

3. Do you agree to having your photograph recorded on video? Yes / No

4. Do you agree to having your photograph published in publications or publicity materials produced by the Club, including on our website or our social media pages? Yes / No

5. Do you agree to having your photograph published in publications or publicity materials produced by affiliated bodies, including on its website or social media pages? Yes / No

This form is valid for the time you are registered with the Club plus one year after you have left, to enable us to publicise the activities of the Club. We will not re-use any images after this time. We will not include personal email or postal addresses, or telephone or fax numbers on video, on our website or in printed publications.

Depending on their length and complexity, Procedures can be included in the policy document or put into a separate document and referred to in the Policy.

Procedures give detailed instructions on how to implement the Policy on a day-to-day basis and can include templates and forms to be used in situations covered by the Policy.

7. References

- Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

References should include any legislation, Codes, Standards or other Policies referred to in the document.

8. Forms or Attachments

- Images Consent Form

9. Approvals

	Policy	Procedure
Approving Authority	Committee	Club Manager
Approval Date	21/01/2019	28/01/2019
Next Review Date	21/01/2021	28/01/2021

Details who approves the policy and procedure, when it was approved and when it should be reviewed.

SECTIO N 8
Stakeholders

Stakeholders are the people or bodies whose decisions affect you, or who are affected by your decisions. This includes your members, supporters, sponsors, peak bodies, allied organisation's, funders, regulators, clients etc. Recognising and managing these stakeholder relationships is an important part of the business of your organisation.

Stakeholders Checklist

Have your key stakeholders been identified?	*It's very important for you to know who your stakeholders are and what interest they have in your Association. A register identifying stakeholders (who they are; the nature of their relationship with you; what, if any, commitments have been made; and an idea of mutual expectations) is good practice.*	☐
Is there a documented plan/ approach to stakeholder management?	*Stakeholder management is all about relationships and making sure those relationships are healthy and productive. This includes expectations (behaviour), objectives (outcomes) and commitments (actions). Your approach to stakeholders should be guided by your organisation's principles and values.*	☐
Do you have a stakeholder engagement strategy and communications plan?	*One of the biggest mistakes made by Associations is to put a lot of time and effort into securing a stakeholder, and then failing to follow up with a solid engagement plan. Stakeholders can become raving fans of your organisation if they are happy with the relationship and how you handle it or they can become your most vocal critics! Understanding your stakeholders and having a robust engagement strategy is a most valuable tool for your Association.*	☐
Do you have a complaints handling policy and procedure?	*If you are offering services and activities it is inevitable that there will be the occasional complaint. Handling these complaints quickly and fairly has the potential to turn a critic into a supporter, so having a robust complaints handling policy and procedure is essential.*	☐
Is there a policy framework within which funding agreements are negotiated?	*Many programs and activities would be impossible without the support of sponsors or other funders. Having a policy framework that sets the parameters of any funding agreements allows Committee members to negotiate with confidence. Documenting all funding agreements is essential.*	☐
Do you have a register of funding agreements?	*It is good practice to keep a register of all funding agreements. This should include who the agreements are with, the terms and duration of each agreement and all obligations to be met.*	☐

SECTIO N 8
Tips & Techniques

Stakeholder Management
Stakeholder Engagement
Complaints Handling

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Stakeholder Management

Stakeholder management is all about creating and building healthy relationships with the people and organisations that you are involved with. The right relationships with the right people can have a significant impact on the success of your activities.

Before moving on to stakeholder analysis and engagement strategies, it's prudent to establish a policy framework for your interactions.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Your policy framework should set out the 'Rules of Engagement' for stakeholders to identify what you value and how you intend to act in your dealings with others.

There is no definitive list, but here are some suggestions for your policy framework.

- **Integrity**

Your commitment to honesty and fairness in all your dealings with stakeholders

- **Transparency**

Your commitment to open and unambiguous processes

- **Consultation**

Your commitment to consult with stakeholders on issues that may affect them or your relationship with them

- **Collaboration**

Your commitment to take a collaborative approach to projects and activities so far as is possible

- **Delivery**

Your commitment to do all the things you say you are going to do

- **Timeliness**

Your commitment to communicate and act in a prompt manner on all issues affecting the relationship

As a rule of thumb, think about how you would like to be treated by others and that will give you a good start in developing guiding principles on how your organisation should act.

ALIGNING VALUES

Another important element in your policy framework is to consider the alignment of your organisational values with those of the organisations you deal with. While you don't have a choice about some of your stakeholders, there are others where the relationship is discretionary (such as sponsors and other partners). You should set some guidelines for the types of organisations you'd be comfortable dealing with and those you would not. For example, if you are a junior sports club then you may not be prepared to form a relationship with companies involved in the production or sale of tobacco or alcohol. Perhaps you are a health promotion association in which case you may hesitate before entering into a sponsorship arrangement with a fast food chain.

In your policy framework you should identify a list of potential partners/stakeholders and/or industries that you will NOT consider forming relationships with under any circumstances. You might then have a further list of those with which you would only proceed with caution and a risk assessment on a case by case basis.

DECISION MAKING

Your policy framework should also clearly specify who makes the decisions about entering or managing stakeholder relationships. For example, the management of minor or routine relationships may be delegated to staff or a Subcommittee, but decisions on major relationships may be reserved for the Committee or Board.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Identifying Stakeholders

Everything you do is influenced by the people and organisations you interact with. These are stakeholders and identifying the stakeholders in your organisation is an important activity for the Committee.

WHO OR WHAT ARE STAKEHOLDERS?

Stakeholders can broadly be defined as the people and organisations that fall into two categories:

- those whose are affected by your decisions and actions
- those whose decisions and actions affect you.

Identifying your stakeholders is the first step in developing a plan for managing your stakeholder relationships. To start this process think about all the people and/or organisations that are affected by your work, who have influence or power over it or have an interest in your successful or unsuccessful outcomes.

Here are some common stakeholder categories to consider:

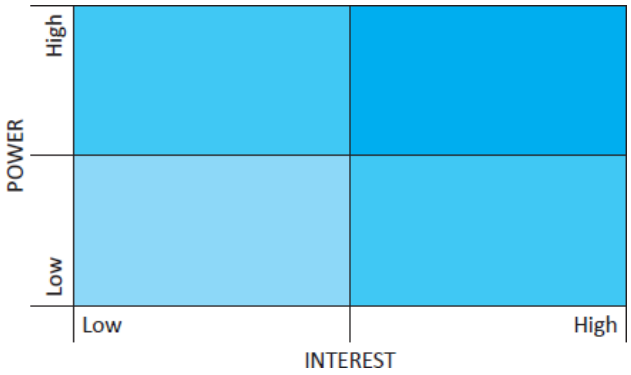
Members	**Clients**	**Staff**
Suppliers	**Sponsors**	**Funders**
Government	**Regulators**	**Allied Organisations**
Interest Groups	**The Media**	**The Public**

Once you have these key categories, start compiling your stakeholder register by populating these categories with details of the individuals, companies or organisations you deal with; the nature of your relationship with them; and commitments made.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Not all stakeholders are equal and its important that you understand the impact of your stakeholders to the organisation overall and to key programs or projects. This will allow you to prioritise stakeholders and put the greatest effort into those that have the greatest influence.

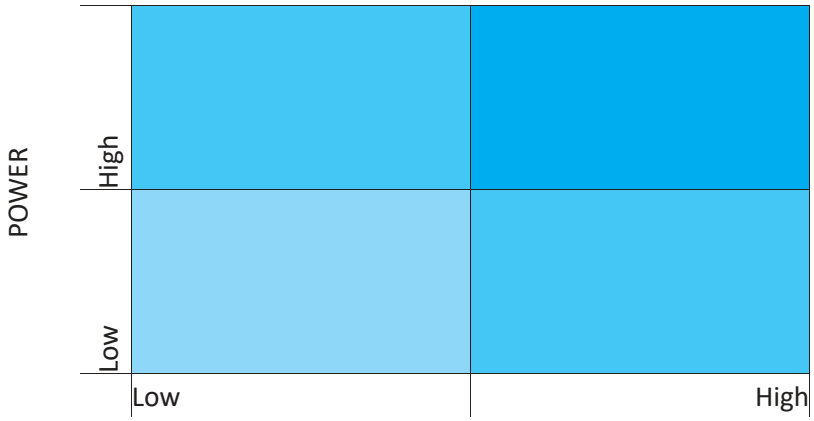
To do this you can plot your stakeholders on a simple grid that looks at their interest in and power over your organisation. Those with both interest and power are your most important stakeholders and should be given the most effort and attention. Those with low interest and low power are less important and the effort put into these relationships should be reduced accordingly. We will look at further development of this chart when we look at stakeholder engagement strategies.



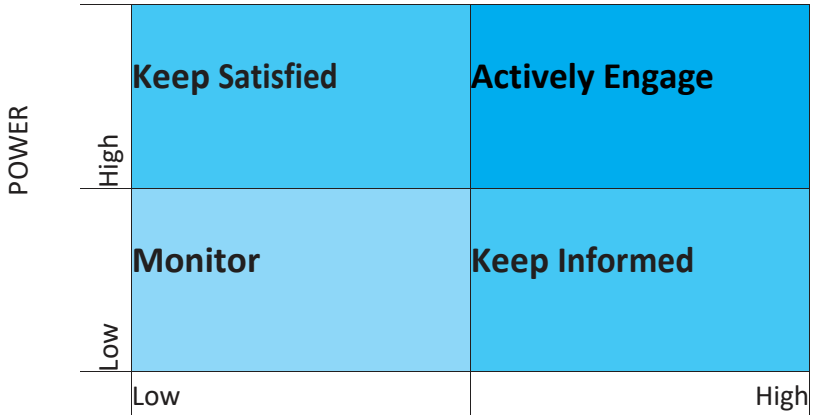
TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Stakeholder Engagement

A lot of time and effort can be spent on managing stakeholder relationships - and rightly so! However, you need to make sure that your efforts are targeted, effective and an appropriate use of resources. Squeaky wheels can demand a lot of attention but, you have to make sure you're not dealing with them at the expense of more important relationships!

The relative importance of stakeholders can be defined in terms of their power and interest.



Plotting your various stakeholders within this chart gives you a good idea of where they sit and how you might manage your engagement with them.



- **High Power, High Interest** - these are the stakeholders that must be fully engaged and you should spend the most time and effort on.
- **High Power, Less Interest** - need to be satisfied but do not need to be bombarded with information and messages. Your engagement should be tailored to suit their requirements.
- **Lower Power, High Interest** - these people want to be kept informed and may like the opportunity to have a say about what you're doing. Individual members often fall into this category. Remember that while individually a single member doesn't have a lot of power over the organisation, collectively they do so don't treat them like mushrooms!
- **Lower Power, Less Interest** - monitor these stakeholders and provide them with an appropriate level of information and activity. Don't bore them with excessive communication but ensure that they have the information they need.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Stakeholder Engagement

Also note that while you may plot a Stakeholder map for the organisation in general, you may need to repeat the exercise for specific activities or projects.

For example, if you are holding a conference you may find that a stakeholder who previously fell in the 'keep informed' quadrant may need to be promoted to 'actively engage' for that particular project. You may also have new stakeholders that are interested only in that particular event.

Like most things in associations, your stakeholder map or maps are not static and need review on a regular basis.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

Whichever category they fall into, you should make the effort to understand your stakeholders. Why are they involved with you? How are they likely to feel and react to your activities? Some key questions you might ask include:

- What financial or emotional interest do they have in your work? Is it positive or negative?
- What motivates them?
- What information do they want from you?
- How do they want to receive information from you? What is the best way of communicating your message?
- What is their current opinion of your organisation? Is it based on good information?
- Who influences their opinions generally and who influences their opinion of you?
- If they are not being positive about you or your activities, what could win them around?
- If you don't think you can win them around, how can you manage their opposition?
- Who might they influence - either positively or negatively?

The more you know about your Stakeholders, the better you can develop your engagement strategy and ensure that it 'fits' their needs and your resources!

STAKEHOLDERS ARE ALWAYS PEOPLE

It's really important to remember that stakeholders are people. That may seem obvious in the case of individual members etc. but can sometimes get lost when the Stakeholder is a corporate supporter or government agency. While your contract or agreement may be with a corporate or government body, remember that it's the individual, or series of individuals, within that entity with whom you form your relationships.

STAKEHOLDER STATUS

Another thing you should consider is where your stakeholders currently stand in their attitudes towards your organisation as a whole and/or a particular project or activity. Stakeholders can be:

Blockers * Critics * Neutral * Supporters * Raving Fans

Obviously the aim for any organisation is to move your stakeholders along this path so that they all become raving fans of you and your activities. While this may be unrealistic, you can certainly make efforts towards this goal.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Stakeholder Engagement

Here are some suggestions on how:

- Always do what you say you're going to do.
- Recognise the individual needs and motivations of your stakeholders and tailor your engagement strategy to suit.
- Under promise and over deliver - not the other way around!
- Go the extra mile to turn satisfaction into delight!
- Don't just talk to your stakeholders - make sure you listen as well.
- Fulfill all contractual or agreed obligations promptly and efficiently.
- Remember that stakeholders are people too.
- Put as much effort into managing and engaging your stakeholders as you did in finding and recruiting them.

Sound like common sense? It is! Think about how you would like to be treated in a relationship and pay it forward to those you deal with. You may not win them all, but you'll certainly come out ahead!

On the next page you'll find a sample Stakeholder Engagement Worksheet that you can use or adapt for your particular needs.

Sample Stakeholder Communication Worksheet

Preparing a summary on how you intend to communicate with major stakeholders makes sure that you are not leaving important relationships to chance and provides a guide for everyone in the organisation. The summary can be prepared for relationships with the organisation as a whole or for specific projects.

Stakeholder name and/or type

From your stakeholder map

Motivating forces

Blockers, critics, neutral, supporters or raving fans

What you want the stakeholder to do

The messages you need to get through

The actions you need to take to get your messages across

Stakeholder	Contact Name/s	Approach	Key issues and interests	Current Status	Desired Actions	Messages Needed	Action
Members	As per member register	Keep Informed	Member benefits Advocacy Peer support Information	Supporters	Membership renewal Participation	Benefits of membership Advocacy updates Opportunities for interaction Information Hub	Monthly email bulletin Up-to-date and informative website Social media pages Special Interest Group hubs Email alerts
XYZ Company (Major Sponsor)	Brian Jones Susan Smith	Actively Engage	Brand promotion to members Brand alignment Sales results	Supporter	Sponsorship renewal Influence others positively	Benefits of partnership Member engagement with brand Continuing brand alignment Opportunities for further engagement	Quarterly reports Face-to-face meetings monthly Further proposals as appropriate
Government (Project funder)	Zeke Allan Jessica Brown	Keep Satisfied	Alignment with State Strategic Plan Positive results	Neutral	Funding renewal Funding for additional projects	Effectiveness of project Appropriate use of funds Benefits arising from project contributing to State strategic goals	Reporting as per funding agreement Face-to-face meetings every 6 months Further submissions as appropriate

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Handling Complaints

The only organisations that never get complaints are those that don't do anything! In any active association, complaints will arise from time to time but how you deal with them can make all the difference.

All organisations should have a Complaints Handling policy and procedure that sets guidelines for how complaints are received, processed and resolved. Dealing with complaints quickly, fairly and constructively can turn critics into supporters and enhance the reputation of your organisation. Complaints that are not handled effectively can turn into disputes that may take a lot more time and effort to resolve.

NATURAL JUSTICE/PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS

In developing your Complaints Handling policy and procedure you should always comply with principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. These are really two terms for the same thing - natural justice being the term used in common law and procedural fairness in administrative matters. Principles of natural justice include:

- Providing information to those involved in the complaint on the main points of any allegations or grounds for negative comment made against them.
- Providing people with a reasonable opportunity to put their case.
- Making reasonable inquiries or investigations before making a decision. A decision that will negatively affect a person should not be based merely on suspicion, gossip or rumour. There must be facts or information to support any negative findings.
- Only taking into account relevant information.
- Acting fairly and without bias and taking into account all credible, relevant and disputed issues.
- Dealing with the complaint without unnecessary delay.
- Ensuring that a full record of the complaint and its outcome has been made.

There are a number of steps in the Complaints Handling process. How you deal with each one should be considered and documented in your policy and procedure and should be appropriate to your organisational circumstances.

RECEIVING THE COMPLAINT

The worst thing you can do when receiving a complaint is to dismiss it. Even if the complaint, on the face of it, seems frivolous or petty it should be taken seriously. After all, the person making the complaint feels strongly enough about the issue to bring it to your attention and this in itself is valuable feedback. So here are some steps to consider:

1. ***Listen to the complaint***. Ensure that you understand exactly what the problem is and take ownership of it.
2. ***Apologise***. Sometimes a simple apology is enough to satisfy someone making a complaint and it costs you nothing to acknowledge their issue and apologise for whatever has caused it.
3. ***Don't take it personally***. Remember that in most cases the complaint isn't about you, it is about the actions or decisions of the organisation. If someone is letting off steam just keep in mind that it's not directed at you personally and you don't need to get defensive about it.
4. ***Be understanding***. Take the time to feed back to the person making the complaint your understanding of the issues to ensure that you have it right and sympathise with their point of view - even if you don't agree with it! Be calm, courteous and helpful at all times.
5. ***Take ownership.*** Let the person complaining know that you will take responsibility for ensuring that their issues are resolved.
6. ***Find out what is needed to resolve the issue***. Make sure you're clear on what specific actions the complainant wants taken to remedy the situation.
7. ***Record the complaint***. Detail the complaint so that you and others know exactly what the problem is and leave space to record the actions taken to resolve it. Keeping these records and reviewing them from time to time allow you to see any patterns that are forming. If there's a pattern of complaint there may be additional action required to avoid further problems.
8. ***Check that you have all the facts***. Ensure that you understand all the details while the person is making the complaint and ask questions if necessary to clarify. This will also let them know that you are taking their complaint seriously.

INVESTIGATING THE COMPLAINT

Quite often a complaint can be resolved in the initial contact whether over the phone, in writing or face- to- face. The complaint may have arisen from a misunderstanding that can be explained to the satisfaction of the person complaining, or a sincere apology may be enough. Sometimes people making a complaint simply want to be heard and will be happy to have made their point.

However, there will be times when the complaint is of a more serious nature and further investigation is required. Here is where you follow the rules of natural justice and ensure that all parties involved have a chance to give their point of view and that any evidence or documentation is considered fairly and impartially.

In your policy you will need to identify who it is who handles these more significant complaints. It may be a specific Committee member or even the President who takes responsibility for resolving the complaint. Whoever it is, they should be familiar with your policy, have the authority to make decisions and the ability to be fair and impartial.

Make sure that you document every step of the process. You will have the record of complaint taken by the person receiving it, but you may require the complainant to also put something in writing and should seek a written response from the person or people being complained about. A record of verbal interactions should also be taken. Often this can be a simple as a diary note or an email to the person you've been talking to confirming that the discussion took place and the main points covered.

RESOLVING THE COMPLAINT

So far the complaint has been received and all the relevant information obtained. You have found out what the complainant wants to happen and, if this is more significant than an apology or other action that can be taken immediately, the complaint has been investigated; all parties heard and all evidence considered.

The person responsible for resolving the complaint will need to decide whether the grievance has merit and consider options for fixing the problem. If it is determined that the complaint has no merit then this needs to be carefully and sensitively communicated to the complainant. Verbal notification of the outcome should be followed up with a written confirmation of the decision and reasons for it.

If it is determined that the complaint has merit then a proposal for resolution should be communicated to all parties involved, discussed with them and then confirmed in writing.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Handling Complaints

Some additional points to consider:

1. ***Keep your promises.*** Don't offer anything that can't be delivered or is outside the scope of individual authority.
2. ***Be quick***. The more timely the response, the more likely it is that the matter can be successfully resolved. Matters that linger can fester and escalate.
3. ***Follow up***. Make sure you contact the complainant after the event to find out whether they were happy with how the matter was handled and to give them feedback on any actions being taken to avoid the problem in future.

CONSISTENCY

One of the most important aspects of complaints handling is to ensure consistency. The way you deal with one complaint should be the way you deal with them all. Nothing is more likely to undermine your efforts or damage your reputation than if people feel they have been discriminated against.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is essential that identifying details of the complaint are kept confidential. Names, dates and other details should remain confidential to the people directly involved in the complaint resolution.

However, the requirement of confidentiality has to be balanced against the need for transparency.

Non-identifying details of the complaint, a summary of the issues and the actions taken to resolve the issue in general terms should be available so that everyone in the organisation can learn from the experience and it can be demonstrated that the process was fair and thorough.

DISPUTES

In some cases a complaint can't be resolved by this process and it may escalate to a formal dispute that will need to be handled in accordance with your organisation's dispute resolution policy, or by involving a third party, a mediation, administrative or legal process.

THE CUSTOMER IS (NOT) ALWAYS RIGHT...

Not all complaints have merit. Just because someone makes a complaint it does not necessarily mean that the organisation, its volunteers or staff have done anything wrong. Complaints can be petty, frivolous or even malicious so it should not be instantly assumed that just because someone is 'not happy' any action needs to be taken.

If it is decided, after investigation, that there is no basis for the grievance then the complainant should be informed of this politely but firmly.

Develop your policy, make sure it is consistent, fair and transparent and then stick to it!

SECTIO N 9
Compliance

Compliance is one of the major elements of Good Governance for your Association. It involves being aware of and complying with all the legislation and regulation that applies to your organisation, and also any requirements of your Federation or other Governing body. The Committee is accountable for monitoring the Association's structures, systems and processes to ensure compliance.

Compliance Checklist

Is there a documented approach or plan that covers how compliance is identified, monitored and reviewed?	*Ensuring compliance can seem a daunting task for Committee members! Having a plan or system that covers how compliance is identified, monitored and reviewed can break this down into a more manageable process.*	☐
Do you have a compliance register of relevant legislation and regulation?	*To create a compliance register you must identify the legislation and regulation that applies to your organisation, and what you have to do to remain compliant. As this can be a large and time-consuming task, you should plan to start with the most important legislation/regulation and those that impact on frequent activity.*	☐
Do you link your compliance list with your risk register?	*Failure to comply represents a risk to your Association so should be included in your risk register. Doing so can also combine the two tasks to avoid double handling and using risk measures means you can also prioritise your compliance activities.*	☐
Do you have a compliance calendar?	*Once you have a compliance strategy and register, you can plot key dates and activities into a calendar. Add to this internal compliance, such as review dates for your Constitution, policies, plans etc. and you can spread the load of your compliance activities throughout the year.*	☐
Do you have a register of Governance activities?	*Along with your legislative and regulatory compliance, you should also have a list of governance activities to be undertaken on a regular basis.*	☐

SECTIO N 9
Tips & Techniques

Compliance
Compliance Calendar
Governance Register

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Compliance Register

Compliance means making sure all the legal, regulatory, reporting and governance requirements of your Association are met. Basically, it means making sure that everything that should be done, is done!

There are two major elements required to ensure that your Association is compliant.
Compliance Register—what you need to comply with **Compliance Calendar—when you need to do it.**

COMPLIANCE REGISTER
The first step in Compliance is making sure that you know all the things you have to comply with. This means compiling a list of all the laws, rules and regulations your organisation is subject to and what you need to do to fulfil your obligations. So where do you start? A good approach is to work out compliance categories based around two things— what you are and what you do.

What you are
As an Incorporated Association you are subject to the Associations Incorporation Act in your State. If you're a Company Limited by Guarantee, then you are subject to the Corporations Act. You need to identify the requirements of the relevant Act and list them in your Register. These will generally include appointing a public officer, holding annual meetings and submitting annual reports. If you turn over more than a specified amount, you will also need to be audited annually.

As an organisation you are also subject to certain general laws that include (but are not limited to);

- **Health & Safety**—for employees if you have them, and certainly for volunteers (including yourselves!)
- **Anti-Discrimination**—including recruitment, employment, service delivery and public statements
- **Privacy**— the way you deal with personal information (which is particularly important with regard to member and donor information)
- **Taxation**—as a not-for-profit organisation you may be exempt in whole or in part from income tax, but what are your reporting requirements and what about FBT and GST?
- **Financial probity**—including dealing with conflicts of interest, safeguards against trading while insolvent, dealing at arm's length etc.
- **Australian Charity and Not-for-profits Commission** - if you are a charity there will be obligations to the ACNC. Your Federation, peak or national or state body may be able to assist you in identifying a complete list.

What you do
You also need to identify compliance requirements associated with what you do. Do you raise funds? Then you need to comply with fundraising legislation and regulation. Do you or your volunteers work with children? Then there will be criminal history checks required for individuals. Do you hold events? Then you may need permits from Council. Want to post pictures from your events on your Facebook page? Then you might need to look at copyright and privacy laws. Look at the things you do, and then start putting together your compliance list! A Compliance Register template follows with a few indicative sample items included.

WHO IS LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE?
The association itself holds the responsibility to meet the legislative requirements that relate to its activities and provided it is incorporated, it is the legal entity that will ultimately be held accountable to meet its obligations. This offers the volunteers themselves who are managing the association considerable but not total legal protection.

WHAT OTHER PROTECTIONS ARE IN PLACE?
Aside from incorporation, in Queensland there is considerable protection for volunteers under the Civil Liabilities Act which provides that when you are volunteering in any capacity you are exempt from personal legal action, however there are four important instances when you could lose that protection! If you are intoxicated, working outside your allocated tasks or contrary to instructions, you fail to exercise due care or you do something criminal, you may not be covered. So, slow down, make careful decisions based on good information, in consultation with others, pay particular attention to people's safety and you should be fine.

Sample Compliance Register

COMPLIANCE REGISTER					
Class	**Legislation / Requirement**	**Obligation**	**Compliance Activity**	**Evidence of Compliance**	**Review**
Association	Associations Incorporation Act	Annual General Meeting	Hold Annual General Meeting	Notice and minutes of AGM	Annual
		Public Officer	Appoint Public Officer	Letter of confirmation	
		Annual Return	Submit Annual Return	Notice of receipt Financial	
		Audit	Complete Annual Audit	Report and Auditor's Report	
More...					
General	Privacy	Collection	Collecting personal information for a proper purpose	Notice to users detailing purpose of collection	Annual
		Use and disclosure	Using for a proper purpose and non-disclosure to 3rd parties	Training in proper use and policy on non-dis- closure	
		Data security	Passwords and access	Secure Database and regulated access	
		Access and correction	User access to view and correct personal information	User logins and access to data	
More...					
Activity	Fundraising	Registration	Register the fundraiser	Registration certificate	Annual
		Permits	Application for permits for specific activities	Permits granted	
	Events	Insurance Permits	Review current insurances	Insurance certificates	Annual
			Apply for necessary permits	Permits granted	
More...					

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Compliance Calendar

Now that you have the "what" with your Compliance Register, you need to know the "when". That's where you Compliance Calendar comes in!

There are two major elements required to ensure that your Association is compliant, they are:

Compliance Register—what you need to comply with and
Compliance Calendar—when you need to do it.

COMPLIANCE CALENDAR
A Compliance Calendar plots your legal and governance compliance requirements over time to ensure that you can deal with compliance a bit at a time, rather than being overwhelmed with a huge backlog of work.

Your Compliance Calendar should run over 3 years. While there are some things that need to be done annually—and some more often!—there are other items that only need periodic review or attention. For example, usually your Constitution only needs to be reviewed once every three years, as does your Strategic Plan. Policies you use all the time or that cover volatile subjects (such as social media) should be reviewed often, but others can be left for longer periods between reviews.

Using an Excel spreadsheet is recommended. You can then have tabs for year 1, year 2 and year 3 and work through your compliance tasks as required.

A sample Compliance Calendar follows on the following pages.

SAVING TIME AND MINIMISING RISK
Creating your Compliance Register and Compliance Calendar may seem like an overwhelming task to begin with, but it will save you time in the long run! Once you have your calendar in place you can work through a few items at each Committee meeting, rather than being faced with missed deadlines that will inevitably result in more paperwork and sometimes fines and penalties.

Compliance is also an important part of risk management, and you can actually combine your risk and compliance registers to avoid doubling up if you wish.

The most important thing is to organise your compliance requirements within the context of your Association and what you do.

Sample Compliance Calendar

COMPLIANCE CALENDAR - YEAR 1												
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Legislation												
Assoc. Incorp. Act								X				
Privacy Act		X										
More...												
Activities												
Fundraising	X											
Events		X										
More...												
Governance												
Constitution					X							
Risk Register			X						X			
Strategic Plan										X		
Operational Plan											X	
More...												
Policy												
Code of Conduct				X								
Social Media						X						X
Complaints Handling							X					
More...												

COMPLIANCE CALENDAR - YEAR 2												
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Legislation												
Assoc. Incorp. Act								X				
Privacy Act		X										
More...												
Activities												
Fundraising	X											
Events		X										
More...												
Governance												
Constitution												
Risk Register			X						X			
Strategic Plan												
Operational Plan											X	
More...												
Policy												
Code of Conduct												
Social Media						X						X
Complaints Handling							X					
More...												

Sample Compliance Calendar (Cont)

COMPLAINCE CALENDAR - YEAR 3												
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Legislation												
Assoc. Incorp. Act								X				
Privacy Act		X										
More...												
Activities												
Fundraising	X											
Events		X										
More...												
Governance												
Constitution												
Risk Register			X						X			
Strategic Plan												
Operational Plan											X	
More...												
Policy												
Code of Conduct												
Social Media						X						X
Complaints Handling							X					
More...												

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Governance Register

A compliance register for your legislative and regulatory requirements is essential. But it's also good practice to compile a similar Register for your governance activities!

GOVERNANCE REGISTER

As you have seen through your use of the Good Governance App, there are a number of Governance activities that need to occur on a regular basis to ensure you have a healthy and productive organisation. It's a good idea to create a list, or register, of regular governance tasks so that you can be confident that you're not missing anything.

GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES

Governance activities can be broken down into categories including:

1. constitution
2. committee
3. meetings
4. members
5. finances
6. fundraising
7. planning
8. risk management
9. compliance
10. stakeholders
11. volunteers
12. staff (if applicable).

Within each of the categories, you can define the various items for action and for review, and also work out your review schedule to plot into your Compliance Calendar.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Developing and reviewing policy is also a significant governance task - so much so that it's a good idea to compile and maintain a separate Policy Register. This should include a list of current policies with their review schedule and policies you have identified but not yet developed.

Again, these should be plotted into your Compliance Calendar.

COMPLIANCE CALENDAR

The Compliance Calendar is where you plot your legislative, governance and policy activities so that you can spread your tasks over time. A separate worksheet and sample Compliance Calendar is included in the Toolbox.

Sample Governance Register

GOVERNANCE REGISTER			
Item	**Activity**	**Completion Date**	**Review**
Constitution	Review		Every 3 years
Committee	Skills Matrix Review		Annual
	Office Bearer Job Description Review		Annual
	Develop Committee Job Description	30th June	Annual
	More...		
Members	Hold AGM	By end November	
	Prepare Annual Report	By end October	
	Develop Member Engagement Strategy	31st March	Annual
	More...		
Finances	Develop Financial Strategy	30th September	Annual
	Prepare Budget	30th November	Annual
	Review reporting systems		Annual
More...	More...		

POLICY REGISTER			
Category	**Policy**	**Completion Date**	**Review**
Governance	Board Attendance		Every 3 years
	Confidentiality		Every 3 years
	Delegations		Annual
	More...		
Values	Code of Conduct		Every 3 years
	Anti-Discrimination		Annual
	Diversity	30th June	Annual
	More...		
Financial	Investment	31st December	Every 3 years
	Sponsorship		Annual
	Ethical Fundraising	31st March	Annual
	More		
Volunteers	Volunteer Management		Annual
	Volunteer Development	31th September	Annual
	More...		
More...			

SECTIO N 10 Members

For many Associations, members are the reason they exist. People with a profession or trade in common, people with a cause in common, people with an interest in common come together and form Associations to do collectively what they can't do alone. So members and their needs must remain central to the purpose and activity of your organisation for it to remain vibrant and relevant.

Members Checklist

Do you have an up-to-date register of members?	*It is another requirement of the Act that accurate records of members be kept. Generally, this is the responsibility of the Secretary and modern databases make keeping records of members and their contact details relatively simple. Membership renewal or other member mailouts are good opportunities to ensure records are updated. A more sophisticated database may also include other information such as activity or interest and this can be very useful as you plan and develop programs and services.*	☐
Are different classes of membership clearly defined and relevant to the organisation?	*Associations will often have various categories of membership. These may include ordinary members, life members, student members and corporate members. The rights and requirements of each category of membership should be clearly defined and reviewed regularly to ensure all categories remain relevant.*	☐
Is an Annual General Meeting held each year?	*It is a requirement of the Act that all Associations hold an Annual General Meeting and both the Act and your Constitution will specify the business to be transacted at that meeting. This will generally include receiving the Annual Report (including audited financial statements) and appointment of auditor. The election of the governing body may also be held at the meeting or prior to the meeting and results announced.*	☐
Are all members provided with a notice of the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the Constitution?	*The Annual General Meeting is often the only opportunity for all members to attend an Association meeting each year. Not only must all members receive notice of the meeting and the business to be discussed (agenda) in accordance with the notice requirements of your Constitution, it's a great opportunity to engage with your membership; celebrate your achievements; and, where appropriate, ask for guidance.*	☐

Cont…

Do you know the minimum number of members required for the meeting to be valid?	*Your Annual General Meeting will require a minimum number of members attending - the quorum - to be valid. Often this minimum number is either in person or by proxy so it's important to distribute proxy forms as required by your Constitution in addition to the notice of meeting.*	☐
Are you clear on the election procedure for Committee members?	*Your Constitution will specify the process for electing Committee members. If you receive more nominations than there are positions available, then an election will be held. If not, the vacant positions can be simply declared at the Annual General Meeting to have been filled.*	☐
Do you publish an Annual Report?	*Your Constitution and the Act require a number of reports to be provided to members at the AGM, including the financial report. An Annual Report will contain all the required reports in a single document that can also be used to promote your association and its activities to your members and other stakeholders.*	☐
Do you have a member engagement strategy?	*Knowing what your members want and need and engaging effectively with them is essential for a member-based organisation. But sometimes a division (either real or perceived) can develop between the Committee leading the Association and its members. Recognising the importance of member engagement and developing strategies to ensure that your organisation remains relevant and effective is essential.*	☐

SECTION 10
Tips & Techniques

Membership Register
Classes of Membership
What Members Need To Know
Engaging Members

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Membership Register

Every organisation needs to know who its members are and how to contact them for all sorts of reasons. The relevant Act requires Secretaries to keep certain information. In Queensland you must keep a register of members.

(1) The management committee must keep a register of members of the association.
(2) The register must include the following particulars for each member—
(a) the full name of the member;
(b) the postal or residential address of the member;
(c) the date of admission as a member;
(d) the date of death or time of resignation of the member;
(e) details about the termination or reinstatement of membership;
(f) any other particulars the management committee or the members at a general meeting decide.
(3) The register must be open for inspection by members of the association at all reasonable times.
(4) A member must contact the secretary to arrange an inspection of the register.
(5) However, the management committee may, on the application of a member of the association, withhold information about the member (other than the members full name) from the register available for inspection if the management committee has reasonable grounds for believing the disclosure of the information would put the member at risk of harm.

There's always some limitations on how you can share information about your members with others. Most non profit organisations in Australia that are purely volunteer based will not meet the financial limits for Privacy Act complications (for those organisations that deal with people's health information you need to be even more careful about what information you may and will share!).

For most groups though, you have permission to communicate with your members but not pass their information on to others without their express approval.

(1) A member of the association must not—
(a) use information obtained from the register of members of the association to contact, or send material to, another member of the association for the purpose of advertising for political, religious, charitable or commercial purposes; or
(b) disclose information obtained from the register to someone else, knowing that the information is likely to be used to contact, or send material to, another member of the association for the purpose of advertising for political, religious, charitable or commercial purposes.
(2) Subrule (1) does not apply if the use or disclosure of the information is approved by the association.

Membership registers can include only the information required by law, however this is the perfect opportunity to increase your chances of securing volunteers by asking relevant information when members join and by taking the chance to talk to them about your expectations around volunteering!

There's many different examples of online or computer based systems that you can use to help you keep track of members and communicate with them. Known as CRM's or Customer Relationship Managers, some of these systems have a free to use option with limited versions that can still make your life much easier. If your organisation has access to Office 365 or other document suits, they probably also contain Access Databases or similar that you can use to keep membership information up to date.

There's no reason now why organisations should be keeping hard copy membership lists, either in the office or on a non-networked, stand alone computer. All cloud based services have a free option with limited storage where membership records can be securely and safely kept.

Sample Membership Register

First Name	Last Name	Organisation (If applicable)	Postal Address	Phone	Email	Membership Type	Date Joined	Date Resigned	Details of termination	Other Particulars

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Classes of Members

For many organisations who have incorporated with a constitution based on the "model rules" or a template from another source, the various classes of members and their voting rights may not be clear. It's vital to understand exactly who can vote, when and how many times.

There will be a range of clauses in your constitution that relate to members. For those who state only "ordinary" members, it can become complicated. For example and ordinary member over 18 can vote, where an ordinary member under 18 cannot. The best solution is to include a clear outline in your rules about how your members are defined and what their rights are.

Membership categories may need to be included for both individuals and corporations. While this examples shows some members may vote and others may not, your own constitution should define who you wish to vote.

Classes of Members
The membership of the association consists of ordinary members in the following categories:

Membership Category	Definition	Voting Rights At General Meeting
Caregiver Member	A nominated representative of each family who has other family members involved with or serviced by the association.	Yes
Representative Member	A person representing an organisation with an interest in the activities and services of the association.	No
Active Life Members	A person who has been accepted at an AGM under the conditions of the current By-Laws and who has volunteered or attended a general meeting in the past two years.	Yes
Non Active Life Members	A person has been accepted at an AGM under the conditions of the current By-Laws and who has not volunteered or attended a general meeting in the past two years.	No
Honorary Member	Person or organisation invited to membership by the management committee in the interest of the association for such a period as may be deemed.	No
Volunteer Member	A member of the management committee or a volunteer working with the association (must be over 18 years of age)	Yes

Remember also that while your constitution will certainly say something about a member's financial status in relation to whether they can maintain their rights, the moment of membership is not when they apply, nor when they pay membership. A member does not become a member until they have been formally accepted through the process outlined in your constitution. A typical clause would say …

Admission and rejection of new members
(1) The management committee must consider an application for membership at the next committee meeting held after it receives—
(a) the application for membership; and
(b) the appropriate membership fee for the application.

This means that it is not possible for anyone to join your organisation at the AGM or any other general

meeting and claim their right to vote.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
What Members Need To Know

There's usually a lot of things you would like your members to know about what your organisation is doing, how they can be involved and if you need help. There's also sometimes when you must advise your members and other times when you may not have to but should.

On Joining
Members must be advised of the level of public liability (broadform) insurance that is held by the association. The relevant Act will prescribe what level the association must meet. In Queensland, based on the assets or turnover of the association (whichever is greater) …

Level	Annual Turnover or Assets	Public Liability
3	Under $20,000	Not required
2	$20,000 - $100,00	Not required
1	$100,000 & Over	Mandatory

Of course your membership information should also include key contact information, organisational information and anything else they will need.

On Meeting
Members have to be advised (usually by the Secretary) of dates and times for general meetings. Some constitutions may even prescribe the amount of notice. Either way, you want your members to come to your general meetings, so the more time you can give them, the better.

If you decide to keep the right to proxy voting in your constitution, don't forget you must send a proxy form to each member (or make one available to them) prior to every general meeting.

During Participation
While not formally required by law, it's a good idea (and a key part of your risk management) to advise your members of any insurance that covers them and any conditions on that insurance that may make them ineligible to access it (Eg some insurers define "volunteers" quite narrowly or relate it to age). Since most senior volunteers will also be workers, it will be important for them to understand any risks they take if injured.

Training that is job related is also a vital thing to let your members know about. Workplace Health & Safety legislation around Australia now covers volunteers and places further responsibilities on those organisations with employees to include volunteers and members in their induction and training programs.

Of course there are certain things that only the members can decide on or ratify at a general meeting. Usually any decision that has been made by the membership can only be reviewed or changed by the membership, even if they really weren't required to vote on it.

On Elections
Most relevant legislation now requires the association to notify members running for election to the management committee of the amount of public liability insurance currently held (see above).

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Engaging Members

If it feels like 90% of your membership don't care about what you are doing, who is doing it or would you need from them, it's statistically correct! Engaging members in the activities of the association it becoming more difficult and success in getting your messages out and hearing their responses has become a bit of a science.

It might be helpful to consider different strategies for different kinds of members. There's really no "one size fits all" and while email blasts or mobile texts work some of the time, the best outcomes will be where you've identified what type of members you have and developed a system to engage them all.

The Seemingly Disengaged
They come to you, but it's hard to get them to engage with other members. These members are also not likely to participate in a Q&A or share their opinions in a group setting, but they obviously support the cause because they keep attending your events, rain or shine.

How to Engage Them
It's important to remember that shy people are not necessarily introverts. Shy people may really want to engage with others, they just experience anxiety thinking about taking the first steps. This is where you can help in planning smaller, low-key introductions to help bring them out of their shells. Here are three great ways I've seen work well to engage shy members:

- Try kicking off some of your events a little earlier than planned with networking ice-breakers — fewer people in the room present could help your more reserved members feel more confident about opening up.
- If you are hosting a discussion, try breaking people into smaller groups. This allows individuals who may feel uncomfortable with public speaking interact with a handful of people right across the table from them.
- Pull the shy member aside and ask for a one-on-one, informal meeting to discuss a specific area that you know they are interested in. It's possible you may find a trove of remote volunteer power or a behind-the-scenes professional—like an accountant or computer programmer—willing to do some heavy lifting outside of a collaborative work group.

Remote Members
They can't or won't attend any events. You have never met them face-to-face, so you may not feel like they are as important as your local members. On top of this, if they are feeling disconnected, they are unlikely to let you know.

How to Engage Them
The key to keeping them hooked is through providing a platform for effective communication — e-newsletters, webinars, a private Facebook group, and online meeting or updates are just a few ways you can increase the number of touchpoints with remote non-profit members. In some ways, you may think about these members as "busy" people who don't have time to join you in person — so how can you make sure they feel included? It all comes back to how much effort you put into communicating with them. Here are five ways to increase communication with your remote members:

- In your online newsletter include info from members around the area, not just those who participate.
- Offer an online member directory and forum so they can stay engaged with other members (this is something you can easily do with social media).
- Personalize your website and social media so remote members can stay connected there as well. You could allow members to write blog posts, lead your Facebook page for a week, or submit ideas through online surveys. Engagement is a two-way street, so if you can get them to engage you, you're winning!
- Ask for input. Compelling content can encourage members to act wherever they are — whether that's by retweeting a post from your event or asking questions to get them to respond in the comments. Just because they can't engage in person doesn't mean they won't feel like they are part of the organization.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Engaging Members

Younger Members

Your events tend to be a sea of salt and pepper hair, but you know you have younger members hiding somewhere... Unfortunately many organizations focus on offering services geared towards their mature members, since they are their bread and butter, while neglecting the needs of their younger members.

How to Engage Them

Even if they aren't coming to your events or volunteering now younger members tend to be very active online. Check out the post The Ultimate Guide to Connecting With And Recruiting Younger Members for a wide range of tips to help better engage the 20-35 set. While these members may not seem as vital to your organisation now, they are your future volunteers or donors, and you should be engaging strongly with those on the upper end of that age bracket — perhaps even including them on your management committee — to help your organization avoid a generation gap.

- Stay active on social media — Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and even Snapchat. Use pictures, tell real stories from your members, and share live video of what you are doing. To help keep your feeds current, utilize a program like Hootsuite or Social Oomph that will help you schedule posts. Another idea that can work well is to create a special group for younger members to interact with each other.
- Survey them to find out what topics they are most passionate about.
- Many organizations use a mentorship program to help bridge the gap between their older and younger members.
- Socials work well to engage people of all ages to get people more engaged and understanding of what you do.

Older Members

If you've updated your membership processes, you might have heard things from some of your older members like, "I don't want to have a Facebook account," or, "I don't want to pay online." What's happening is that updating processes creates a lot of change for your members who are used to doing things a certain way for a long time. It can cause them to feel disconnected with what's going on.

How to Engage Them

The good news is that many organisations update processes and still appease their older members, and even get them to take part. Here are some of the things they do:

- Whenever you update a process, take a few extra moments to explain why you're doing it. For example, does the change save your organisation more time or money? Does it create a way for your organisation to grow, or communicate faster? Explaining the reasoning can help your older members feel more comfortable with accepting or making the change themselves.
- Make a list of all the concerns from your older members. Categorise them into groups and bring them up as an item of discussion at your next meeting. Ask the room for suggestions on how your organisation should operate. Sometimes people just have the need to know their voice is being heard and this is one great way to do so. Another benefit from this is that it gives your older and younger members a chance to voice their opinions about a topic and see both sides of the coin.
- Keep live events a priority. Since older members are more likely to have the time to attend and volunteer, have them take the lead in engaging with one another to help share information. Since live events also take a lot of work, ask some of these members to volunteer by taking minutes, organizing snacks, or setting up chairs.
- It can be easy to get caught up in the daily tasks of managing members, and sometimes long-time members can become forgotten. To solve this, simply create a VIP membership level, awarded to those members who've been at your organization for five years, ten years, or however long you determine. What this does is create a way to continuously recognize these members for their loyalty and service to your organization. Some organisations give their VIP members small perks like early access to purchasing event tickets, or special rewards and acknowledgements for service.
- One thing to remember — this age group is likely to be your most prominent financial backers, so do not let them slip through the cracks!

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Engaging Members

The Already Super-Engaged Member

This member is already super-engaged, so there is no problem. They're showing up to events, responding to messages, volunteering when they can, engaging with other members, and advocating for the organization. These are the members you wish all your members would be like.

How to Engage Them

You don't need to do anything extra to engage these members, but there may be some ways they can help engage your other members, or even find new members. Here are six:

- Find out what made them super-engaged in the first place and do more of it. This will help turn more of your current members into the super-engaged members these people are.
- Find out where they came from. You may notice some commonalities in how these members found your organization. With this information, you can devote more resources into finding more members like these.
- Use them to build your 'ideal member' profile. This profile is a list of traits that your super-engaged members have which can help everyone in the organisation understand who to be on the lookout for. Then, when you see a new member who fits the profile, give them a special push to make a greater connection with the organisation.
- Pair them with volunteer opportunities they are excited about and check in regularly to see if they're ready for a change so you avoid burnout or boredom.
- You may also want to consider offering your biggest team player a spot on your board. They are already super committed to advocating on your behalf, why not make use of their excitement?
- Don't skip on the member/volunteer awards recognition ceremonies and gifts. These rockstars need to see how much they matter to the organisation, so be sure to show them!

One Last Thing to Keep in Mind

When thinking about member profiles, the most important thing to keep in mind is that there is never a "one size fits all" approach when it comes to keeping your members engaged. Take the time to dig deep into your members' motivators, opportunities, barriers, and characteristics to tailor your engagement strategies for success.

Make It Personal

Most of us are so inundated with information from so many sources, it is impossible to read everything we are sent and so incredibly difficult for organisations to get their message through, even when their members love them. Surprisingly, the most effective way to communicate is still to have a human conversation. That may be difficult when you have hundreds or thousands of members but wherever you can find an opportunity or technical solution, such as Youtube or Facebook streaming, try to take the time to speak directly to your members, giving them the messages you want to share and asking them to feedback to you as well.

SECTIO N 11
Volunteers

Many Associations rely on Volunteers for their activities and services. The Committee themselves are usually volunteers, donating their time and expertise to lead and govern the organisation. Recognising the importance of Volunteers and managing and rewarding them for their efforts is essential if you want to maintain a strong and committed Volunteer base.

Volunteers Checklist

Do you have written job descriptions for volunteers?	*Volunteers should be managed in much the same way as you would paid staff. Job descriptions are a fundamental tool in developing an effective volunteer workforce.*	☐
Do you provide training and supervision for volunteers?	*Like staff, volunteers will need training and supervision to be able to do their jobs effectively. How much training and supervision is required will depend on the task at hand and the skill level of the volunteers involved.*	☐
Have you made adequate provision for volunteer programs and management in your budget?	*Volunteers donate their time and skills, but that doesn't mean that there are no costs associated with your volunteer programs! Ensuring that these programs are adequately resourced will give them the best chance of success.*	☐
Do you have appropriate policies for your volunteer workforce?	*In many ways, volunteers must be treated in the same way as paid staff, so an appropriate set of policies are required. In particular, make sure that Work Health & Safety issues are addressed.*	☐

SECTION 11
Tips & Techniques

Volunteer Policy
Volunteer Job Description

Network U3A Queensland

GOOD GOVERNANCE Health Check

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Volunteer's Policy

If your organisation has (or is planning to have) volunteers, then you should have a Volunteers Policy (and supporting Procedures) so that everyone who is part of your organisation (or has any dealings with it, or is considering becoming a volunteer or referring potential volunteers) understands your views on managing volunteers.

The Principles in your Volunteer Policy should set out why you have volunteers and what value they add to your organisation. The Definition should include a statement along the lines of:

A volunteer is someone who:

- benefits the community and themselves by participating in our volunteer program
- provides their services of their own free will
- does not receive any monetary reward (out of pocket expenses are not regarded as monetary reward)
- complements, but does not replace or threaten the livelihood of paid workers or contractors.

The Policy should make reference to the National Standards for Volunteers developed by Volunteering Australia. It should outline the rights and responsibilities of people volunteering with your organisation. For example:

Our volunteers have the right to:

- be made aware of our Code of Conduct and our policies and procedures
- a healthy and safe working environment
- be covered by personal accident and public liability insurance
- be recognised and included as a valued team member
- have a clearly written job description
- receive proper training, initially and on an ongoing basis
- know whom to turn to with difficulties and problems
- know to whom they are accountable
- be supported and supervised in their role
- say no if feeling exploited or if the task is inappropriate to the volunteer
- be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses
- be informed and consulted on matters which directly or indirectly affect their work
- have confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with privacy legislation and the organisation's Privacy Policy.

Our volunteers have the responsibility to:

- abide by our Code of Conduct and our policies and procedures (which include working in a safe manner in regard to themselves and others, and to maintaining the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of the people and organisations that we work with)
- work within the framework established by our values/goals
- be reliable and notify an appropriate person if unavailable or running late
- value, support and respect the rights of other volunteers and paid staff
- respect confidentiality
- give feedback which will assist the development of our activities, programs and services
- work to the job description
- accept feedback and direction from their supervisor in relation to their performance
- respect, acknowledge and act on decisions made by colleagues and the Board of
- Management
- address areas of concern with the appropriate person
- undertake training when requested
- exercise a Duty of Care in areas of Health and Safety, including informing others of potential or actual hazards
- ask for support when needed

- care for our equipment and property & carry out their agreed role responsibly and ethically.

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

You should also outline your organisation's responsibilities. For example:

Our organisation has the responsibility to:

- maintain appropriate Public Liability and Personal Accident Insurance cover for our volunteers
- have a budget allocation for volunteer management (including training)
- ensure that paid or unpaid staff who manage volunteers will be allowed sufficient time and resources and given relevant training and recognition to enable them to appropriately carry out their responsibilities
- ensure that each volunteer has:
    - an up-to-date job description which clearly describes their role
    - an appropriate induction, including being given a copy of the our Code of Conduct and ready access to our policies and procedures
    - a safe workplace with the necessary space, tools and equipment to safely fulfill their role
    - appropriate training and development to meet the needs of the role
    - the opportunity to participate in meetings, planning and in consultation and decision making appropriate to their role and responsibilities
    - on-going support and supervision.

ELIGIBILITY

Clear delineation needs to be made between volunteering, work experience, work or rehabilitation placements and Job Services Australia requirements. There are subtle differences between each one so your policy should make it clear about who is eligible to be a volunteer.

AGE LIMITATIONS

The social benefits of volunteering are important for healthy ageing, and many volunteers will be able to continue volunteering with modifications to their role and duties as they age.

Personal accident insurance for volunteers is available up to 90 years of age, however a volunteer does not need to stop volunteering provided they are able to properly and safely fulfil their role. You may need to include a statement about older volunteers, and equally, younger volunteers, especially those under 18 years of age.

COORDINATION

Your policy should make statements about how who will have responsibility for the overall management of your volunteer program including:

- developing procedures
- designing job descriptions
- promoting volunteering opportunities
- recruiting, selection and placement of volunteers
- monitoring the work performed by volunteers
- organising training opportunities for volunteers
- recognising the effort and contribution of volunteers
- maintaining up to date, accurate records of all volunteers
- identifying and responding to issues that are
- raised by or impact on volunteers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Under your local Work Health and Safety legislation, your organisation is responsible for providing a safe working environment for volunteers. Any breaches of your duty of care towards volunteers are treated as seriously as if the person were a paid employee. Your policy needs to make this clear.

BUDGET

Even though volunteers are not paid for their labour there are costs involved in successfully managing a volunteer program (for example recruitment costs, name tags, training, uniforms and protective equipment, reimbursement etc.). Your policy should make it clear that you recognise this and will make funds available.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Job Description tells an important story about your organisation – it shows that you are organised, systematic and professional in your approach to managing people. It tells anyone looking at your organisation that you have carefully considered where how best to involve volunteers and that you value and respect their contributions. Your policy should make it clear that every volunteer will have a job description. Refer to the Job Descriptions Tool.

RECRUITMENT, SCREENING, INDUCTION, REVIEW AND RECOGNITION

Your policy should summarise the process your organisation will use to find, screen and select new volunteers. How complex this process is will depend on what you want the volunteers to do, and what risks needs to be managed. You will need to spell out, in broad terms (because the detail of 'how' will be in the Volunteer Procedures) how you will screen and select (or reject) potential volunteers. You will also need to include some broad statements about your organisation's commitment to inducting, training, reviewing and recognising your volunteers – the key components of a good volunteer management system.

REIMBURSEMENT

Although volunteers offer their skills and time for no remuneration, volunteers are entitled to reimbursement of pre-approved out of pocket expenses. It is important to identify situations in advance where the volunteer will be considerably out of pocket to minimise confusion and embarrassment for both parties and to describe what (if any) reimbursements are available.

TRAINING

There are two purposes for volunteer training. The first is to manage risk and health and safety responsibilities, ensuring that you have equipped volunteers with the skills and knowledge they need to perform their role. The second is to provide volunteers with personal development. Your policy should include training.

MANAGING POOR PERFORMANCE AND UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Your organisation has a responsibility to ensure that its volunteers maintain high standards of conduct and performance. Unsatisfactory performance or unacceptable behaviour must be managed in a fair, reasonable and timely manner. Your policy should outline what behaviour is unacceptable and what will be done to address the situation.

INSURANCE

You should seek advice from your peak body or insurance broker about what insurance policies your organisation should hold to ensure that volunteers are provided with the right mix of protections. You policy should include a statement about this.

IMPROVING AND DEVELOPING

Your policy should include a statement about how your organisation appreciates volunteers making suggestions for improvement and innovation and welcomes formal and informal involvement by volunteers in decision making that affects their volunteer roles.

REVIEW

Like all policies, your Volunteer Policy should be reviewed regularly.

Volunteering Australia has a range of resources and tools to assist organisations find direction and develop structures and systems to manage volunteers.

http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Each state or territory has its own state or local volunteer resource centres who can help you and local councils are often able to provide assistance. You can search for them from Volunteering Australia website's front page.

Your peak body will have expertise in managing volunteers in your particular area of activity.

TIPS & TECHNIQUES
Volunteer's Job Description

Every (smart) organisation wants to make the most of what their volunteers bring to the organisation's strategic goals and day-to-day work. This is even more so for those organisations who have no paid staff.

The Job Description tells an important story about your organisation – it shows that you are organised, systematic and professional in your approach to managing people. It tells anyone looking at your organisation that you have carefully considered where and how best to involve volunteers and that you value and respect their contributions. For some roles you will design Volunteer Job Descriptions and then recruit to fill the positions. For other roles you might customise an existing Job Description to suit the particular skills or circumstances of an individual volunteer.

A good Volunteer Job Description sets out the responsibilities and supervision or support arrangements for a volunteer. It helps everyone to be clear about what is expected of the volunteer and its helps the volunteer to feel confident in their role.

Volunteering Australia's Job Description Tool Kit and Victoria's Volunteering Portal will help you work through some of the more complex questions about designing Job Descriptions.

http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/manage-your-volunteers/planning-volunteer-programs/writing-position- descriptions

http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/Volunteering_Australia_Volunteer_Roles_ Toolkit+1-1.pdf

A good Job Description is more than a list of tasks viewed is isolation from the other roles. For most positions it's more productive to set out the responsibilities of the position – the meaningful contribution the volunteer makes to the organisation by highlighting what the work actually achieves.

For example, instead of saying 'prepare financial reports' you might say 'Is responsible for ensuring that financial records are kept and that members have the information they need to make informed decisions about the organisation's financial affairs.

If you do decide to list Key Tasks make sure that each task (the how) links to the Key Responsibilities (the what).

Sample Volunteer's Job Description

You can provide information and describe expectations using the following headings:

Name of the Organisation	
Team/Program/Unit	
Title of Supervisor	
Title of Volunteer Position	
Weeks Required	
Days Required	
Hours Required	
Key Responsibilities	
Key Tasks (optional)	
Essential Skills	
Essential Attributes	
Essential Experience	
Requirements Prior to Start	Medical Check [ ] Police Check [ ] Other [ ] Other [ ] Other [ ]
Training Requirements Prior to Start	
Future Training Requirements	
Special Conditions or Considerations	
Induction Date	
Reimbursements or Allowances	
Performance Review Due Date	
Volunteer's Name	
Date:	Signature:
Volunteer Coordinator's Name	
Date:	Signature:
Job Description Review Due Date	

Congratulations

You've worked the whole way through the Good Governance Health Check. Take a bow!

It doesn't matter how long it took you to get here - the important point is that you've taken the time and put in the effort to carefully consider how well your Association is performing.

By now you'll have a plan for continuous improvement (Organisation Development Plan - call it whatever you like, we're plain and simple so we like 'To Do List' - but whatever works for your Committee is fine by us).

You'll also have developed a much greater understanding of what good governance really means - in practice, not just in theory and we're confident you'll have a much greater appreciation of its value to any organisation.

If you ever need assistance you can contact us:

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About Us

The original concept and development The Good Governance Handbook and the online Good Governance Health Check are the result of an original collaboration between Kate Hartwig and Kate Reynolds. Leisa Donlan & Adrian Hart from www.goodgovernanceconsultants.com.au have tailored this guide & updated the content specifically for your organisation and the regulatory framework you work in and added a few templates and other information.

We've all been working in the not-for-profit sector for most of our working lives (hooley dooley, that's about 120 years between us!) and we know what works and what doesn't. Our approach - as you can see with this Handbook - is plain and simple - we provide no-nonsense, proven, practical assistance with governance and organisational development.

We've pooled our good, bad and ugly experiences and some of the many publications, tools, tips and techniques we've developed over the years into one, easy to access Handbook. We hope you've found it useful.