



ACES COUNCIL 26th April 2024

Item 5a - Secretary's Report

Proposals for Support for National Secretary

Attached as an appendix are the duties of the National Secretary as last agreed in 2022. Whilst many of the duties are inter-related, I have highlighted those parts that might be dealt with by another officer, in liaison with the National Secretary.

The Conference Administration role is one area that feels most readily capable of being performed with little input from the Secretary. When an external party was last brought in to assist with this function, they did not take on the role of invoicing and this was where the bulk of overlap occurred. There should be no reason why an extended outsourcing could not take place, other than possibly cost. *For information and reference, the Conference Manual is attached showing the full extent of tasks and personnel typically employed in achieving a successful conference.*

The "Webmaster" role is also a function in its own right although there is more need to liaise closely with the Secretary and thereby more scope for overlap of duties. There would also be a need for extensive training on the use of the website administration functions. Should this role be taken up by another person, the more technical role involved in liaising with the website owners currently performed by Marcus Macaulay would also need review.

A substantial amount of my time is taken up by invoicing for the membership subscriptions and all that goes with it in terms of initial preparation, checking membership status, setting up and sending out the invoices, following up queries (particularly from local authorities who struggle to recognise a "Professional Society"), maintaining the payment records, and chasing up outstanding payments. A new, single, dedicated, automatic invoicing system would be an enormous help.

It has to be accepted that there will be cost implications in bringing in resources to assist the secretary, even though the plan is to reduce the secretary's time. For example, there will be an element of training of new personnel resulting in a one off

upfront cost. There will also be some unavoidable overlap of duties creating double counting but this should reduce over time with learning and experience. Finally, bringing in new personnel may result in an increase in some work activities where they are not fully addressed by the secretary due to time constraints. Updating and populating the website on a more regular basis would be an example of this.

In terms of presenting the opportunity to members I see two options:

1. Specific roles are created for the Webmaster and Conference Administrator. These could be offered singly or bundled together.
2. An Assistant Secretary role is created with the postholder taking primary responsibility for the Webmaster and Conference Administrator roles but also acting as deputy to the National Secretary and taking on other duties as required.

The position(s) should first be offered to all ACES members as a remunerated role at the current hourly rate. Failing this, consideration should be given to offering work externally.

Members are requested to consider proposals and options and approve next steps.

Trevor Bishop
ACES Secretary
April 2024