

Overview of the AICPA Volunteer Environment

History of AICPA

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and its predecessors have a history dating back to 1887, when the American Association of Public Accountants (AAPA) was formed. In 1916, the American Association was succeeded by the Institute of Public Accountants, when there was a membership of 1,150. The name was changed to the American Institute of Accountants in 1917 and remained so until 1957, when it changed to its current name of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The American Society of Certified Public Accountants was formed in 1921 and acted as a federation of state societies. The Society was merged into the Institute in 1936 and, at that time, the Institute agreed to restrict its future members to CPAs.

History of Committees

The use of committees began even before the AAPA was formed in 1887. At the first meeting of what would become the AAPA on December 22, 1886, those present authorized the appointment of a committee to draft rules and regulations. In addition to this first preliminary committee, the first Bylaws of the AAPA in 1897 established three committees: Finance and Audit Committee; Committee on Elections, Qualifications and Examinations; and the Committee on Bylaws. The number of committees grew continually over the years. In the 1940s there were 34 committees. By 1960 there were 89, and by 1970, the number had grown to 109. In 1999 the nearly 120 existing committees underwent a re-organization with approximately half of the standing committees being replaced with a volunteer group model that placed an increased emphasis on the use of task forces. The increased use of task forces allowed for more targeted efforts with the task forces being given a specific assignment then disbanding upon completion of that assignment. Also, in 1999 the first tracking and management of task forces began. Collectively, more than 2,000 volunteers contribute to the AICPA's fulfilling its mission.

Need for Volunteer Groups

The AICPA organization consists of volunteer groups and staff working together to achieve the Institute's objectives. Volunteer Groups help present the interests, needs' and attitudes of the membership; and assist the Institute in maintaining high standards of professional practice, promoting the interest of CPAs, serving as a spokesperson for the profession, and providing appropriate services to members. An effective volunteer group structure can generate sound group judgment, provide continuity of thinking, and help bring together a cross section of member knowledge and experience. It also provides for leaders of the profession. The most important reason for organizing a volunteer group is the need for member guidance and representation.

Volunteering for Service

Prospective volunteers can apply for service on a volunteer group via the [Volunteer Central website](#). State Societies, firms, firm associations or other members of the AICPA often recommend candidates for volunteer service. New volunteers should be aware of the time commitment volunteer group service entails. Considering attendance at volunteer group meetings, travel, and time for assignments and other meetings, members can expect to spend

about 60-80 hours on volunteer work during the first year. Of course, the amount of time each volunteer member spends on volunteer group activities varies; with each year of service, a member's time commitment often increases. By accepting appointment to the volunteer group, a volunteer member shows his or her willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to volunteer work.

Term of Appointment

In most cases, a volunteer is appointed for a one-year term, which can be extended to three years. Each year, the chairperson and the staff evaluate each member's contribution to their volunteer group. Usually, a member cannot be reappointed for a fourth term unless he or she is appointed as chairperson of the volunteer group.

Appointing Volunteers

The appointment of volunteers can be divided into three main categories. The first appointment category includes all committees, subcommittees, expert panels, resource panels, boards and centers, whereby appointment to one of these groups are made during an annual appointments meeting held in February. The second appointment category includes the Board of Directors, Council, Joint Trial Board and Peer Review Board – appointments being made typically in December. The third and last appointment category includes all task force members in which appointment to a task force can occur at any time throughout the year as needed.

Volunteer Year

The AICPA Volunteer Year runs from May through May of the following year. The beginning of the Volunteer Year "officially" begins immediately following the AICPA Spring Meeting of Council.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEER GROUPS

All members of the Council, Boards, Committees, Subcommittees, Panels, Centers and Task Forces (hereinafter "volunteer groups")

Advisory Group

An advisory group is not responsible for policy-setting as are regular committees the purpose of an advisory group is typically to capture the views of membership groups or sections. There are currently six advisory groups, these groups usually meet virtually via conference calls although they may on occasion meet in person.

Audit Quality Center

The objectives of the Audit Quality Center include:

- Enhance the quality of member firms' audit practices in the specialized area.
- Provide a forum for member firms to address technical and regulatory matters involving the specialized area of audit practice.

- Develop relationships with, act as a liaison to, and communicate issues to regulators and others for the purpose of representing the auditing profession's views relating to the specialized area of audit practice.
- Advocate solutions and positions to regulators and standards-setters on behalf of member firms in the specialized area.

Board

Based on the Bylaws of the AICPA, the term Board is used in conjunction with the following bodies:

- Board of Directors
- Board of Examiners
- Joint Trial Board
- Peer Review Board

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors acts as the executive committee of Council, directing Institute activities between Council meetings. The Board meets four times a year and is responsible for reporting to the Council as least semiannually.

The Board of Director consists of:

- Chairman of the Board of Directors
- Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors
- Immediate Past Chair of the Board of Directors
- Regular Members of the Board of Directors (members of the AICPA)
- Public Members of the Board of Directors (non-AICPA members)

Board Committees

Board committees are comprised of members of the Board of Directors. The Chair of the Board and the President are Ex Officio Members of all Board committees. The following committees are classified as Board Committees:

- *Accounting Research Association* – Controls and manages the affairs and funds of the ARA, which is the vehicle through which the Institute seeks financial support from the accounting profession for the Government Accounting Standards Board. The officers and trustees meet as required to carry out the mission of the ARA.
- Note: The ARA is no longer active due to the change in funding of FASB under SOX.
- *Political Action Committee* – provides financial support for election campaigns of candidates for federal elective office whose views are consistent with AICPA goals.
- *Audit and Finance Committee* – Reviews with the Institute's independent auditors, their examination of the financial statements. The committee meets regularly with the Institute's internal auditor and at the time of each Board meeting.
- *Remuneration & Talent Committee* – The Remuneration & Talent Committee establishes and monitors compliance with compensation policies for the Association and its Professional Units' employees. The Committee reports to, and assists, the Association Board of Directors in carrying out its responsibilities with respect to matters relating to compensation, succession planning, employee benefit and retirement programs,

organizational goal setting and performance evaluation on delivery of the annual strategic plan.

Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners (BOE) is responsible for the supervision and preparation of the uniform CPA examination which may be adopted by state Boards of Accountancies for examining candidates for the certified public accountant certification. The BOE is also responsible for the conduct of the grading service offered by the Institute. The BOE forms the necessary rules and regulations for the conduct of its work, but all such rules and regulations may be amended, suspended, or revoked by the Board of Directors. The BOE may delegate to members of the Institute's staff or other duly qualified persons the preparation of examination questions and the operation of the grading service conducted by the Institute.

Council

Council is the governing body of the AICPA and is comprised of approximately 265 members and representatives from every state and U.S. Territory. The Council may exercise all powers necessary for the purposes of the Institute, not inconsistent with the AICPA Bylaws or with duly enacted resolutions of the membership, including but not limited to the authority to prescribe the policies and procedures of the Institute and to enact resolutions binding upon the Board of Directors', the officers, volunteer groups, and staff.

The Council consists of the following members:

- At-Large Members of Council
- Board of Directors
- Designated Representatives of each state
- Elected Members of Council
- Ex-Officio Members (past Chairs of the Board)

Expert Panel

Following the AICPA's volunteer group restructuring effort in 1999, the Board of Directors' approved the establishment of Expert Panels that focus on identifying industry-specific business reporting issues with an emphasis on audit and accounting. Expert Panels have been established in areas in which the membership and the public have a high stake, and in which the AICPA can add significant value. The Expert Panels enable standards setters such as Accounting Standards Executive Committee, Auditing Standards Board, Financial Accounting Standard Board (FASB), and the General Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and to continue to leverage the AICPA membership's industry expertise, as well as provide a means for the profession to liaise with outside groups, such as regulators.

Current Expert Panels include:

- Depository Institutions Expert Panel
- Employee Benefits Plans Expert Panel
- Health Care Expert Panel
- Insurance (Life and P&L) Expert Panel
- Investment Companies Expert Panel
- Not-for-Profit Organizations Expert Panel

- State & Local Government Expert Panel
- Stockbrokerage and Investment Banking Expert Panel

Joint Trial Board

The Joint Trial Board consist of 36 members elected for a three-year term by the Nominations Committee and ratified by Council. The Joint Trial Board provides for uniform enforcement of professional standards by adjudicating disciplinary charges against state society and AICPA members. Its decisions affect both AICPA and state society memberships.

Nominations Committee

As outlined in the Bylaws of the Institute, the Nominations Committee is to be chaired by the immediate past chairman of the Institute's Board and shall consist of seven additional members serving two-year terms, elected by the Council in such manner as the Council shall prescribe. The responsibility of the Nominations Committee is to make nominations for the following:

- At-Large Members of Council
- Board of Directors
- Peer Review Board
- Joint Trial Board

Peer Review Board

The Peer Review Board is the senior technical committee governing the Peer Review Program. The primary activities of the PRB are to establish and conduct, in cooperation with state CPA societies, a Program for AICPA members engaged in the practice of public accounting.

Senior & Executive Committees and Boards

An executive committee is the standing parent group responsible for policy-setting in an area of activity.

Senior and Executive Committees are as follows: (* denotes Senior Committees)

- Accounting and Review Services Committee ^{*} ₋
- Financial Reporting Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- Assurance Services Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- Auditing Standards Board ^{*} ₋
- Board of Examiners
- Center for Audit Quality Governing Board ^{*} ₋
- Employee Benefits Audit Quality Center Executive Committee
- Forensic and Valuation Services Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- Governmental Audit Quality Center Executive Committee
- National Accreditation Commission
- Peer Review Board ^{*} ₋
- Personal Financial Planning Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- PCPS Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- Professional Ethics Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- Professional Practice Executive Committee
- Tax Executive Committee ^{*} ₋
- Women's Initiatives Executive Committee

Note: * Indicates a senior committee authorized to make statements without clearance with the Council or the Board of Directors in matters related to its area of practice.

Subcommittee

A subcommittee is a standing group which may be entirely or partially composed of some of the members of the related executive committee or may be composed entirely of other persons. The work of a subcommittee is subject to overall review by its related committee or executive committee.

Task Force

Since the Volunteer Group restructuring effort that took place in the fall of 1999 there has been an increased emphasis on task forces rather than formal “standing” committees, panels or boards. Also, beginning in 1999 the Volunteer Services Team began tracking and maintaining information on task forces. Task forces are intended to be fast paced groups that focus on a single issue or project.

Since the definition of what constitutes a task force has varied greatly, the following definition is provided:

Task forces are working groups that typically focus on a single issue or project. They operate in support of and under the auspices of another volunteer group (committee, panel or board). While the duration of task forces may vary considerably, they should be organized to have relatively short lives, accomplishing their objectives on single issues or projects rapidly, and then being disbanded. Also, for purposes of definition the Volunteer Services Team will only track a task force with an intended working life of over three months and if the task force meets separately from the volunteer group the task force supports.

Since task forces do not follow the Volunteer appointments process the basic information on a task force must be provided to the Volunteer Services Team by the Staff Liaison as soon as the task force is created, members are added or removed, and notification must be provided when a task force disbands.

Tax Technical Resource Panel

Tax Technical Resource Panels (TRP's) act as a primary resource to the Tax Executive Committee (TEC) in representing members and the public interest by identifying issues, in developing technical and policy recommendations on those issues, and in suggesting or developing related practice aids to assist members in complying with the law; to recommend formation of task forces and assist the TEC and its constituent committees in monitoring task forces activities; and to maintain appropriate liaisons with government, industry and other professional organizations. TRP's are intended to be small and proactive, with members who are current and knowledgeable in the assigned technical areas.

Current Tax Technical Resource Panels:

- Corporations and Shareholders Taxation
- Employee Benefits Taxation
- Exempt Organizations Taxation
- Individual Income Taxation
- International Taxation

- Partnership Taxation
- S Corporation Taxation
- State and Local Taxation
- Tax Methods and Periods
- Trust, Estate and Gift Taxation

Volunteer Group

The term Volunteer Group is used as a general term to include the following types of groups; Committee, Subcommittee, Expert Panel, Technical Resource Panel, Board, Advisory Group and even Task Force (refer to their respective definitions for actual differences). The most important reason for organizing a volunteer group is the need for member guidance and representation. Volunteer groups may be needed because staff do not have the authority for actions in a given area or may be formed to ensure that appropriate member interests are represented on a given issue or activity.

Virtual Group

In some cases, members may serve on a volunteer group in a virtual capacity (i.e. never meeting in-person, but rather conducting their work within an online internet / email based environment). One type of virtual member participation has entailed the online support to one or more specific volunteer group. A second form of virtual participation involves the online participation in various online surveys to provide targeted feedback in specialized areas.

PUBLIC STATEMENT AUTHORIZATION

Most of the AICPPs Volunteer Groups are composed of Institute members, appointed by the chair of the board, for a term of one year (reappointments may bring service total to three years). Of these Volunteer Groups, 17 have been designated as Senior Committees (appointments must be approved by the Board of Directors), and 12 of these 17 (known as Technical Committees) have the authority to make public statements on matters related to their areas of practice without clearance from the Council or the Board.

The Senior Committees are as follows:

Committee Name:	YES	NO
Accounting and Review Services Committee	X	
Assurance Services Executive Committee	X	
Auditing Standards Board	X	
Board of Examiners		X
Center for Audit Quality Governing Board	X	
Employee Benefits Plans Audit Quality Center Executive Committee		X
Financial Reporting Executive Committee	X	
Forensic and Valuation Services Executive Committee	X	
Government Audit Quality Center Executive Committee		X
National Accreditation Commission		X

PCPS Executive Committee		X
Peer Review Board	X	
Personal Financial Planning Executive Committee	X	
Professional Ethics Executive Committee	X	
Tax Executive Committee	X	

DEFINITIONS OF VOLUNTEER ROLES

There are currently 35 volunteer roles available within the Volunteer System as shown below. In some cases, a particular role, such as Treasurer should be self-explanatory, and therefore, no definition is provided—where appropriate details on the functions of each role are provided.

Current Roles

Administrative Support	Executive Director	Secretary
Alternate	General Counsel and Secretary	Secretary-Treasurer
Alternate Chair	Immediate Past Chair	Senior Vice President
Assist. Treasurer	Member	Staff Liaison
Board Chair	Member At Large	State Reps
Board Liaison	Non-Member	Technical Advisor
Chair	Observer	Technical Secretary
Chairman	Past Chair	Treasurer
Co-Chair	President	Unknown
Director	Primary Contact	Vice Chair
Elected Members	Project Manager	Vice President
Ex Officio	Public Member	

Board Chair

The Chairman of the Board of Directors presides at key meetings of members of the Institute, the Council, and the Board of Directors. The chairman is responsible to appoint volunteer group members as provided for in the Bylaws. The Chairman also acts as a spokesperson for the Institute and appears on its behalf before other organizations. The Vice Chair of the Board is normally appointed to be Chair of the Board during the annual meeting of the Nominations Committee (usually held in February).

Board Liaison

Acts as the ears of the Board of Directors to certain volunteer groups.

Chair

The Chair of a Volunteer Group is responsible for presiding over the meetings of the group and to provide direction over the activities of the group. With the exception of task forces, the Chair is also responsible to recommend individuals for succeeding years, evaluate members of the group, and communicate any changes in the objectives or membership of the group to the Volunteer Services Team.

Elected Members

Elected Members are members of Council who are directly elected by the membership in their respective states. The number of Elected Members is allocated in two ways, somewhat analogous to the allocation of senators and congressmen for each state whereby the first is a fixed amount and the second is based on population. First, each state by default is allowed to recommend one Elected Member of Council. Second, each state is allowed to recommend additional Elected Members, the number being based on the proportion of Institute members enrolled from each state. This second category of Elected Members based on proportion of AICPA members is set at 85 members, however the allocation of the seats is reevaluated and adjusted, if necessary, every five years.

Ex-Officio

Past Chairs of the Board of Directors and Past Presidents of the AICPA.

Member-At-Large

Seven Institute members, without regard to the states in which they reside are elected annually by the Nominations Committee to serve as Members-At-Large to serve on Council.

Member

The term member is often used in a general sense to reflect any participant on a volunteer group.

President

The president of the AICPA has the responsibility for the execution of the policies and programs of the Institute, act as a spokesperson for the Institute, and perform such other services as may be assigned to the President by the Council and the Board of Directors

Public Members

Public Members are non-CPA volunteers who sit on the Board of Directors and various other volunteer groups.

Secretary of Institute

The secretary of the Institute has the usual duties of a corporate secretary and performs such other related duties as may be assigned by the president

Staff Liaison

The staff liaison is an AICPA staff member who fully assists the volunteer group at each meeting by researching and providing background information. This includes: providing appropriate reference materials for each meeting; identifying the elements of a problem; listing the questions that need answering; participating in the discussion; endeavoring tactfully to persuade members to adopt a sound decision; alerting the volunteer group when it is deviating from AICPA policy or exceeding its authority; and accepting whatever final decision is reached unless the issue is so important that a higher authority should be consulted.

The staff liaison is responsible for preparing the agenda, drafting the minutes or highlights (including attendance), as appropriate, with review and approval by the volunteer group chair. The staff liaison is also responsible for coordinating volunteer group activities and sharing information with other AICPA volunteer groups and staff as appropriate. The staff liaison may also be called on to help the volunteer group identify goals, for us on major issues, create new programs, draft reports, and organize and implement activities approved by the volunteer group. The staff liaison should play an active role and can lead the volunteer group in the form of guidance and assistance toward a desired end.

State Rep

Each state society designates a single Institute member to represent it on the Council for a term of one year. A Designate Representative (state rep) can be reappointed each year for a combined term of service not to exceed six consecutive years.

Vice Chairman of the Board

The Vice Chairman of the Board shall be chairman- nominee of the Board of Directors and presides in the absence of the chairman at meetings of the Institute, the Council, and the Board of Directors. The Vice Chairman is currently assigned the responsibility to recommend appointments to all volunteer groups. These recommended appointments are subject to ratification during the annual Fall Council meeting. The Vice Chair is selected during the annual meeting of the Nominations Committee, usually held in February each year. Although there are no specific requirements to become the Vice Chair normally this individual will have been a member of the Board of Directors.
