



CPRS Task Force on Governance Feedback/Discussion*

*Responses in bold were received from Member Societies

1. Governance structure:

(a) Do you agree, in principle, with the overall statement that CPRS needs a governance model that increases board accountability to the membership (please circle)?

Yes

No

Undecided

- *The substantial disconnect between members and the National Board is exacerbated by the disconnect between the Board and local member societies. It seems to me that the proposed structure and process for recruitment will go a long way to reducing those tensions and introducing a measure of accountability both ways – for the Board to be aware of member issues and for members to have a structure through which to voice their ways.*
- *The reason the Board exists is to run a society for its members, so accountability is critical. Accountability also keeps the Board focused and “above Board” in all its dealings with internal and external stakeholders. I believe that accountability also allows members to see the level and quality of work being done on their behalf.*
- *Bit of a no brainer, this.*
- *More accountability will ensure that the decisions made by the Board have been carefully scrutinized and review prior to approval.*
- *Accountability and transparency of any organization should be seen as a basic operating tenant.*
- *A sense of distance from the National Board over the past several years has increased discontent, mostly through ignorance of current issues and situations. Local issues have frequently distorted national messages to members.*
- *I would not agree that accountability will be any better but the efficiency continuity should be better – thus better decision-making.*



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- *The Society needs a governance model that's efficient and effective, not necessarily more accountable to the membership.*
- *The Board already is accountable and acting thusly.*
- *Not representative.*
- *I agree the governance needs to be streamlined. I am, however, worried about excluding the local Societies, when their activities appear to have the most impact on members.*
- *I have read the documents, concur with the arguments, and support the recommendations.*
- *But what are the consequences to individuals (Board Members) if at the end of the 1st or 2nd year, the Board have not fulfilled its mandate?*
- *I believe what is described as the "perception" that the voice of smaller societies will be lost in an accurate analysis. However, I also believe steps could be taken to minimize the problem.*
- *I completely support the objective of this effort but I do not believe this model will accomplish that objective.*
- *Board requires more structure that ensures more accountability in order to move forward, in a timely fashion, those priority items which at present don't necessarily have priority.*
- *Is there any other reason?*
- ***The current Board structure makes it difficult to manage a focused effort at the National level. Without this focus, the Board isn't accountable to the membership for specific deliverables. This results in less engagement between individual members and the National Society.***
- ***Because it's good like motherhood. Better direction from National to member societies. National Board should be setting national strategic direction in order to ensure accountable to membership.***
- ***It will help promote the profession overall. It will boost the national presence of the organization.***
- ***We feel there is a need for a better process and there needs to be some streamlining. However there is noted concern that the voting pool for the Society***



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and even the Region is very small. We do recognize there would be cash savings to the Society but are not sure about the benefit by way of losing a direct voice.

- **Hard to disagree with motherhood.**

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 32 | 84% |
| No | 2 | 5% |
| Undecided | 4 | 11% |
| No answer | 0 | 0% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

- (b) Do you agree, in principle, with the proposed structure for the CPRS national board which would incorporate a 12 member board, with board members fulfilling a three-year term with a possible renewal of three years (please circle)?**

Yes No Undecided

- *It allows the society to have a financially viable, predictable leadership model with a base membership that can deal with strategic decision-making without having to reintroduce the topic and go over old ground, every time a new board member (or a substitute!) arrives at the table.*
- *I have been an active member of CPRS and served in leadership roles locally and nationally. I have also been a member of other Boards. So I have seen a variety of structures, roles and responsibilities. At the end of the day, I think it's the people that make the difference and a good team can work well within an efficient structure or work around an inefficient one. I honestly don't know this new structure would work, but I am open to trying it. I believe that there is room for adjustments and that members, particularly those who are active in the society, will determine the best structure at the end of the day. I would like to say for the record that even though a large board can be cumbersome, I believe the National Board over the last few years has worked very well as a team, has made some great participatory decisions and has made incredible strides in value to members and operational excellence.*
- *Continuity, effectiveness, the same as why other organizations are doing it.*
- *Board will have some continuity and more time to make sound decisions and act upon them.*
- *The renewal of three years seems like a long time. Chances of burnout leading to apathy are higher. A two-year renewal would seem more realistic.*



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- *Smaller numbers and greater continuity can only make decision-making and other Board actions more effective. We have fewer available to volunteer/hours than ever, and must make the best use of them. The longer commitment doesn't bother me, however. It's my experience that once you're involved you tend to stay involved for at least 3 years, and usually 6 or more. This just turns that involvement into a firmer commitment. Continuity is essential, as those of us know who have seen the wheel re-invented repeatedly over the years.*
- *See response above. I believe it will be hard to find members willing to serve for 3 years, however.*
- *It's sensible and allows for continuity.*
- *There should be a clause that allows for the removal of non-performing members from the Board. The three-year term will allow the Board to set goals and pursue long-term initiatives. However, there ought to be a clause for non-performing members.*
- *Needs mechanism to ensure representation from smaller member societies.*
- *Three year at odds with society presidency. Board should be representative by population.*
- *I agree with all but the provision for a second three years. National Board could become self-perpetuating.*
- *A smaller board will decrease costs, but more importantly, it offers a new structure that will be more representative of the country. Over lapsing membership terms will ensure that knowledge/history is not lost.*
- *CPRS is a small organization, and the current Board size seems inappropriate. My only reservation is a long time for anyone to commit, so I expect that few members will offer for renewal.*
- *Term is too long. It is important to have some consistency but that occurs anyhow through the role of past president. I think there needs to be greater effort to encourage more members to become involved in the society at a national level. Time to stop recycling the same blood. It is almost as though you are taking a corporate approach to governance and applying it to a society. Corporate governance models serve other purposes – not an effective approach for a membership organization. This approach will serve to condense power/authority into the hands of a few and alienate members from getting involved at a national level.*



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- *The current board does not allow for effective governance, particularly with respect to decision making.*
- *This structure makes a stronger connection from National to members. I think societies and members will feel more connected, should also cut down on duplication.*
- ***We expect this will help improve “corporate memory” and make it easier for the Board (and therefore the membership) to see progress on its objectives.***
- ***We agree with a smaller, more accountable Board. However, we recommend that renewal be limited to a one-time only.***
- ***The proposed structure provides for a more effective environment in which the decision-making process will be lighten and where each Board Member will hold specific responsibilities for the affairs of the Society. While ensuring representation from across Canada, the proposed Governance reinforces the national responsibilities of the Board.***
- ***We will see improved continuity and efficiency – the three-year term is good. There are concerns about how a renewal term could compromise regional issues and concerns. 12 members is good, but unsure how 12 members will manager 12 committees and executive positions. Provides a method of succession (new blood). More of a common goal for the Society in general.***
- ***Term is potentially too long. Representation is potentially too limited to the Society under this model.***
- ***Long overdue in my opinion. Twelve is plenty of representation. I am not sure that you should allow more than one per region. You risk having one for some region and three or four from others depending on who you can attract. Why not make it two per region?***

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 30 | 79% |
| No | 5 | 13% |
| Undecided | 1 | 3% |
| No answer | 2 | 5% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |



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(c) Do you agree, in principle, with the newly defined role for the CPRS board?

Yes

No

Undecided

- *At least now the role is defined.*
- *I'd like to know what "accountable to national members in measurable ways" means. I also think there should be a role/responsibility for Board members to communicate with their respective regional members.*
- *Needs stronger role and more accountability in communications and service to member societies.*
- *The National Board is there to serve the individual society to whom the members belong. Membership, from the member's point of view, is individual society oriented, not national. National has no mandate. The members hold their individual societies accountable and "vote" with their continued membership.... or not.*
- *The role of the Board will ensure greater accountability and focus on the strategic direction of the society. I hope that a sound financial structure will not be the no. 1 priority and that regular reports to the membership show us moving forward to meet our objectives on a timely basis.*
- *In areas where the roles of the Board and National Office overlap, I'd like to see a very clear statement of authority. Somewhere the plan must indicate that the purpose of the National Office is to carry out the direction set by the Board.*
- *I do not agree with the composition. The local societies offer all the value and you are diminishing their role.*
- *I especially liked this component of the change – again better tie in between National policy and local implementation.*



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- **Some points need expansion – for example:**
 - **Participate in developing and monitor implementation of strategic, operational and financial plans + and facilitate.**
 - **Oversee management, makes decision with National office input + evaluate and oversee the execution.**
 - **Liaise with proposed Society Council + define how and frequency.**
 - **Accountable to national members in measurable ways – as long as there is strategic plan in place that we can measure against.**

- **The document specifies that the National Board will be “Accountable to national members in measurable ways”. In real terms, what will be the measure of the performance of the new National Board? Will it be from the sound financial management of the Society? Will it be the achievements actually realized in light of the objects set in the annual, or tri-annual strategic plan adopted?**

- **Yes (with caveats). More strategic in work. More efficient, more accountable. We like the idea of no alternates. There should be a specific mention of advocacy for the profession, setting national policies and priorities – communicating those back to Societies. Positive that there would be a go-forward plan and an expectation that the Boards shows progress on plan. This is good. Concern – there must be a mechanism for a region to replace a representative on the even they cannot complete their term (or attend 75% of meetings). What is the professional liability of National Board Members? Concerned that Societies would lose their voice. Issues with regional breakdown.**

- **The proposed model clearly indicates that all board members will be engaged and active with at least one operational committee.**



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- *It formalizes the portfolio responsibilities and gives a real job to each newly elected director. I am not sure how you would have elections for committee chair?? How is that supposed to work. I presume that elected board members can't be also elected chairs of a committee that would place them in conflict. So why have another election process for committee chair? Won't that confuse things? Is the appointment process not working? If a 'public process' for committee chair is required for transparency reasons you could have a call for expressions of interests but I would not force you to go the election route. There is also a practical reason. I presume you could only start an election process once your board and executive are elected. That would delay things even further and would delay a smooth transition. You don't say how the executive will be selected. Is it a secret ballot amongst the newly elected directors? At their first meeting? Or do you also 'declare' your intentions for an executive position while running for a director seat? The paper is not clear on that.*

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 33 | 87% |
| No | 2 | 5% |
| Undecided | 1 | 3% |
| No answer | 2 | 5% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

(d) Do you agree with the proposed role of the National office?

Yes No Undecided

- *We finally have one that is qualified to do it.*
- *If the Executive Director has the skills and experience necessary to provide appropriate feedback to the board on strategic plans, otherwise this may default to high-priced consultants.*
- *With one hesitation: In order to function as the "corporate memory" of the organization, the National Office must be in position long enough. The current arrangement seems at last to be working. I hope it continues for some years.*
- *Communicating with member societies should be a Board responsibility. Where all the administrative functions they currently perform going e.g. support for accreditation, the National Conference, etc. The Society needs management AND administration from its National Office.*



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- *Related to above. How can the National office provide services when it has no enfranchised members/volunteers.*
- *To tell you the truth, it would have been interesting and helpful to have more chats that outlined the differences between current structure and proposed structure, especially for those of us who are relatively new to CPRS. However, I believe the expectations of the National office are fair.*
- *Please see the answer to the previous question.*
- *Too much power and responsibility for the current organization which serves many masters. If you proceed on that basis the person serving in the Executive Director role must be an APR at a minimum. It is also unclear who they are accountable to – I assume the 12 members board which may or may not include someone from my local chapter. That will not work for long.*
- ***We would like to know whether the National Office is responsible for updating the Website. This is a critical role and a key to local societies. A change on National's site means a change at the local site.***
- ***Would like to see timelines attached to points. Some form of a score card for reporting to be included.***
- ***Yes (with caveats). Tracking and identifying issues of importance to the profession (Ex. Issues re: privacy) make recommendation to board re: need for (national) policy. Need more info on enforcing accountability/policy, ensuring member societies provide audited/reviewed financial statements and by-laws.***
- ***We're not seeing anything substantially different than our current working environment. Model appears clear.***

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 29 | 76% |
| No | 3 | 8% |
| Undecided | 3 | 8% |
| No answer | 3 | 8% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |



2. Board Composition:

(a) Do you agree, in principle, with the proposed board composition reflecting a new regional breakdown of Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies, Alberta and BC? (please circle)

| | Yes | No | Undecided |
|--|-----|----|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>I agree in principle, and I agree with the concept of having regions represented (as opposed to member societies) to enhance the ability of those Board members to wear a national hat for those responsibilities. That said, I am grappling with how to ensure that the concerns of large societies (ok Toronto) are not lost or ignored.</i>▪ <i>I think this covers the country well and I have always believed that when you join a national board, you need to represent all members as well as local concerns. I believe the regional representation will support this.</i>▪ <i>My preference is 12 at large, but this should satisfy people who are Toronto phobic.</i>▪ <i>Equal geographic representation is critical to ensure that all societies of a voice on national issues and no one region hijacks the national agenda for the society.</i>▪ <i>Cross country representation is a good thing.</i>▪ <i>Simpler, easier to get representation.</i>▪ <i>Regional representation is becoming part of, not added onto, Board duties. Resulting in a streamlined Board.</i>▪ <i>In principle, I agree although finding fair representation in Ontario among 3 Societies will be a challenge. Even more so if a new society emerges (ie Kingston, Guelph etc).</i>▪ <i>Needs representation from/for smaller member societies.</i>▪ <i>Absolutely not. If it looks like a duck.... etc. This is an organization which owes direct accountability to its members through a democratic process. A national body consisting of representation by population is the only democratic answer. CPRS is a duck by any other name. A democratically elected national body is an essential element of the duck.</i>▪ <i>There may need to be some way to ensure that the most populous societies are not under-represented.</i> | | | |



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- *Both representation at the table.*
- *Proposed structure clearly places smaller societies at a disadvantage.*
- *Each chapter should have a representation. Local chapters provide all the value – should have greater role.*
- *There is only one caveat to my response. I agree with representation from different regions, but would prefer members of the Board to represent in general, not their local geographic.*
- *Board should have a national focus. The change in philosophy is more important than the change in composition. It's a leap of faith really.*
- ***Please note that, while we agree in principle with this breakdown, we feel it would be more practical to group member societies by size than by geographic region. We feel that our concerns as the Manitoba society might have more in common with those of another 60-member society than a society necessarily located in Saskatchewan.***
- ***In theory, yes, but there is concern about whether directors will really be able to separate the individual issues from regional vs. national concerns. If only 6 members designation from the geographic regions, that leaves another 6 elected who could in theory could come from one or two regions, making the board region heavy. Each elected director should have a clearly defined job description, which should help alleviate these concerns.***
- ***According to the formula proposed, it could happen that a member from a particular geographic area could be elected to the National Board with only one vote, potentially his or her own vote. Agreed. What would happen if no-one ran from a particular geographic area? It will be the responsibility of the Nominated Committee to ensure candidates running from office come from all geographic areas of Canada.***
- ***Yes (with caveats). Concerns about societies losing their voice, as well as regional breakdown. However, agree that a streamlined, more focused board will have value.... But we'd like more clarity around the process/communication to gather nominates.... Why is Alberta separate? And where would Nunavut, NWT and Yukon fit in, should they start societies?***



- **Concerned the nomination process slanted to larger centres. These larger centres would control the voting pool.**
- **See above.**

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 31 | 82% |
| No | 4 | 11% |
| Undecided | 2 | 5% |
| No answer | 1 | 3% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

3. Board Elections:

(a) Do you agree, in principle, to the proposal to have a board elected by the membership of CPRS? (please circle)

| Yes | No | Undecided |
|---|--|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>I think it would be great for members to be able to elect the people that they want to represent them. An active, lively election would be a boon for our Society. I am concerned about being able to get enough members to run, as succession has always been difficult. However, perhaps with the new structure, the workload will not be perceived as negatively as it might be right now.</i>▪ <i>Get the 12 best people, not the 23 whose turn it is.</i>▪ <i>Since members won't necessarily know the candidates personally, they'll be looking at their bios to check context. I think most members will be inclined to favour diversity in professional and geographical representation.</i> | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>The whole election procedure, with voting members chosen according to society size, and depending on who's available to attend the annual conference, has been a pain in the neck. The mail-in ballots are a relief – not to mention giving more voice to individual members.</i> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>May be difficult for members from more remote areas or from societies with smaller memberships to get elected. People from smaller societies may not be as well known to all the voters and may be at a disadvantage to candidates from larger societies.</i> | |



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- *But, why does it need to be elected before the AGM? I didn't see the rationale for this. And, was electronic balloting considered rather than mail or fax?*
- *Smaller societies should elect a board member.*
- *Those who present themselves will be motivated to support CPRS mandate. If a member does not attend 75 Board meetings what process will be in place to deal with this?*
- *What other choices are there?*
- *No. No. No. No. Will diminish the likelihood people will participate because of the extra effort. Will reduce voting numbers. We vote for people we know. I like the fact our local society president is on the Board. We know her. She knows the issues. Expect this new approach will increase Board member workload and reduce effectiveness. The whole idea of getting board members who are aware of "national issues" gives you a smaller pool to draw from. CRPS National is so out of touch – recycling the same people will remove you even further from reality.*
- ***Please note that we say "yes" in principle, however it's not yet clear to us how membership across the country will be able to inform themselves sufficiently about the candidates to be able to make an informed vote.***
- ***Accreditation is the flag ship program of CPRS – if we don't require it of our Board, then why bother at all.***
- ***Eligibility criteria for National Board Members include: Accredited, current national members with knowledge of CPRS national affairs and issues.***
- ***What is meant is current members, as there is no national or local membership. "Knowledge of CPRS national affairs and issues" is too broad and should be clarified as CPRS membership for 3?, 5? Years; as well as X years of experience on a CPRS local board, not necessarily immediate experience.***
- ***Proxy process should be there if not attending conference. Do you have to be a member by a specific date? Or a member in good standing? Could members join today and vote tomorrow? There are some concerns about the voting process. What about it works inside? How are the Executive members chosen? There's an element of transparency that's not here yet.***



- See above. **Proxies should be allowed. Why is this not part of the proposal?**

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 34 | 89% |
| No | 2 | 5% |
| Undecided | 1 | 3% |
| No answer | 1 | 3% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

(b) Do you agree to the recommendation that members of the board should be accredited?

Yes **No** **Undecided**

- *I think there should be some percentage of Board members who are accredited and I have no issue with all members of the Executive being accredited members.... as is currently the case. But I think it is important not to lose sight of representing members who for whatever reason have not pursued their accreditation and who should not be made to feel as a second-class member or be disenfranchised and have no voice at the national table. We've been down this road before and I know there are many members who are vigilant in their concerns that CPRS just wants to take their money as members but really doesn't want them to be visible within the society.*
- *I think we might want to think about this requirement for volunteer committee members who are connected to the Board – so we can open the door to students and new members. However, from the Board perspective, I think we want a certain level of experience, knowledge and wisdom – all of which should accompany an accredited member. In addition, I believe it sets the example for our belief in and support of accreditation. As well, it continues to provide “points” for the accreditation maintenance program.*
- *In principle I agree, but I'm not sure the pool is deep enough. Remove the non-active APRs (and you what I mean), and it's a very small group. On the other hand, there are many senior people who have worked very hard for CPRS and are well qualified but for a variety of reasons are not accredited. The issue goes much deeper.*
- *Not essential. Same excellent practitioners are not accredited. We should be able to benefit from their expertise tool.*
- *I think this is critical. Board member should be seasoned, senior professionals with high credibility.*
- *This may eliminate a number of good people who want to serve.*



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- *Yes, Board Members should exemplify the society's objective to build profile for the designation, both to members and externally.*
- *If we want to increase the credibility of the Society, then by definition having members of the Board accredited is one step in that direction.*
- *While I recognize the APR designation marks a level of experience and professionalism, I don't believe it is an exclusive designation. This needlessly, I think, sets a barrier to participation at National Board level.*
- *How can we credibly encourage accreditation if we don't require it of at least our Board members?*
- *Although I do believe that members of the CPRS National Board should be accredited, I know that the pool of potential candidates would be greatly limited if this was a mandatory requirement. As accreditation is a personal, professional development choice, I think we need to continue to focus our efforts on raising awareness and values of accreditation and not potentially penalize the national body with the lack of qualified candidates.*
- *In principle I agree but also feel we will probably be turning away some excellent candidates. Getting an APR doesn't make you any smarter.*
- *If our mandate is to promote professionalism, we must adhere to high professional standards. Requiring our Board members to be accredited is a very visual and symbolic way we can do that.*
- *CPRS is one avenue through which PR professionals can gain experience and as a result pursue accreditation. The pool of candidates to choose from for Board positions will be severely limited if accreditation is a requirement. There are many junior members in CPRS and they should not be prohibited from holding a Board position despite the fact that they are new to the profession.*
- *Adamantly opposed. There are many more important criteria for who should serve on the Board than accreditation. If accredited members are active in supporting the organization then they will be elected, not for whether or not they are accredited.*
- *It should be a condition of board membership that one either has an APR, or is in the process. It would be absurd to eliminate potential, eager, young, bright new members from volunteering as board members of a society because they don't have the experience base to get an APR. Potential board members should be informed that they will be expected to go for their APR when they have met the experience criteria.*



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- *I see this limiting the pool of individuals who have much to offer. I appreciate that CPRS wants to uphold high standards, but could we also include an opportunity for those who are eligible to be accredited i.e. they are already part of the process but have not completed. Also, it would be an opportunity to encourage those who are not accredited to do so.*
- *No one is more rabid a fan of accreditation than I. However, to disqualify all but APRs from running for the Board seems elitist when 75% of members choose to remain unaccredited. In addition, such a requirement effectively excludes having a member under the age of 30 on the Board. In fact, we need “new” practitioners at the National level.*
- ***We have a concern that this will limit CPRS’ access to willing and capable volunteers at the National level.***
- ***The group was split on this issue. The concern how big is the pool to draw from on this regard. If accreditation was mandatory for the membership, this could be the sole criteria. Should the first choice, but other criteria should be considered – perhaps min. 5 years as a member, accreditation from another professional organization.***
- ***Yes in principle. Accreditation is preferred, but may need to give consideration to other senior professionals who meet minimum criteria. Pool of APRS is currently too small. Mandatory accreditation for board members should be phased in over time. Certain board positions however (President, Accreditation council chair) there must be mandatory APR.***
- ***Concerns about restricting voice again with such a low number of CPRS members accredited. Alternate criteria could be a 5 year member in good standing. Will the Board be truly representative if only 30% of CPRS members are accredited? Does this discriminate against young practitioners?***
- ***This requirement reduces the pool of otherwise completely qualified candidates. We feel this could be a preference. We had 10 people at the meeting where we discussed the whole governance document. We voted on this particular issue and came to a tie vote.***



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- ***This is a fundamental leadership issue in my opinion – don't dilute it.***

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 19 | 51% |
| No | 14 | 37% |
| Undecided | 4 | 11% |
| No answer | 1 | 3% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

4. Executive Committee:

- (a) Do you agree, in principle, to the proposed role for the Executive Committee?
(please circle)

| Yes | No | Undecided |
|--|----|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>I think this one will require some adjustment and real-life work to sort out how the Executive works with the elected Board and with the National Office; however, the role appears to make sense on paper.</i>▪ <i>Absolutely. Otherwise there is the Board and then there is the real Board (the Executive Committee). Most Boards are getting rid of them.</i>▪ <i>Is three members enough??</i>▪ <i>Needs stronger role and more accountability in communications and service to member.</i>▪ <i>Although the term accountability appears frequently, the mechanism for accountability and the definition of the term remain unclear.</i>▪ <i>It is dangerous to condense the power in a membership-based organization in this way. I think it will serve to make CPRS even less <u>relevant</u>. I have the idea that the Board would elect the Executive Committee.</i>▪ <i>Needs to add – develop strategic plan for national organization and measurement tools.</i>▪ <i>There appears to be duplication of responsibilities with the VP Treasurer being responsible for <u>legal</u> issues and the VP Corporate Secretary responsible for liaison with the <u>judicial</u> and regulatory chair. This needs to be clarified.</i> | | |



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- ***What is the make-up of Executive Committee? It is inconsistent in the document. More clarity on value and need of Executive Committee, given the smaller size of the Board.***
- ***See above. I think you should allow candidates for directorship to also let their name stand for an executive position. Alternatively, let the board come up with an open process for selecting the executive if no one takes advantage of putting their candidacy for the elected route or if they could not get elected.***

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 35 | 92% |
| No | 1 | 3% |
| Undecided | 1 | 3% |
| No answer | 1 | 3% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

5. Committees and Portfolios:

- (a) Do you agree, in principle, to the new reporting structure being proposed for committees / portfolios, which links ongoing accountability more closely to board decision making?

Yes No Undecided

- *It's about time.*
- *I agree, but I think this is an area requiring some work. I think we have a missing link between our committees, their work and our Board. The Executive liaison approach is a starting point, but committees need budgets, action plans, integration points with the Board, and some method of measure of results. I believe that most "committees" right now are really some chairs who likely don't feel all that connected to the Board or the overall direction of the Society. I am concerned about how much current committee chairs will be represented/accommodated considering the amount of work/dedication they have demonstrated.*
- *It makes sense. It's what other organizations (including our own at the MS level) do to get the work of the organization done.*
- *Less chance of committee work stagnating if there is accountability to specific goals and objectives.*



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- *The education committee should be responsible for more than body of knowledge, students – it should work to establish an accredited curriculum, promote the development of graduate pr programs and work to develop a “research” completion for students.*
- *I would suggest the national conference be included in one of the committees, perhaps education. The conference would benefit significantly with direction from the Board.*
- *There is the issue of the Accreditation Council being at arm’s length from the political decisions of the Board. We’ve seen attempted interference in the past. However, I am willing to believe that with the new direct accountability to the Board, issues could be aired and worked out rather than simply avoided. Also, the same argument for arm’s length operations could be made for other committees. This set-up at least is consistent.*
- *I think it vital to the long-term success of the organization that the business of the society is managed by the Board and that the potential for duplicating efforts or working at across purposes us minimized.*
- *Although I worry about the capacity of our volunteers to be both committee chairs and board members. Some of our committees need full-time chairs. We may also lose our on accessing people that are willing to be committee chairs, but not board members. Does the accountability have to be through the chair?*
- *Just don’t believe this is the National Board’s area of responsibility, conceptually*
- *But there may be too many committees.*
- *With 13 committees it would be equitable for each member to have 1 committee but this may not be realistic.*
- *Please see answer to 4a.*
- ***Proposal indicates thirteen committees, but only twelve listed.***
- ***Question: How and who will assign responsibilities for each Committee/portfolio to various Board Members? Ultimately, he President is responsible for assigning responsibilities. Will this after consultation after the elected Board members?***
- ***An additional Committee should be formed to address issues surrounding the CPRS Annual Conference. An additional Board Member might be even required in order to address this issue. The additional costs could be covered from the Annual Conference budget.***



- **Yes (with caveats). Require clarity on roles of committees and relationships between national committees and society committees/portfolio (administrative vs. strategic)**
- **See above – re my question on the need for another election process for chairs.**

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 32 | 84% |
| No | 2 | 5% |
| Undecided | 3 | 8% |
| No answer | 1 | 3% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

(b) Do you see a role for the recommended Society Council, which is currently proposed as a mechanism to keep Society Presidents' linked to national and to one another (see Appendix E)?

| Yes | No | Undecided |
|--|----|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>I have not been a local president for a long time, so I am not sure how local presidents would view this. They may view it as an opportunity (if clear lines of accountability and reporting to the Board were created) or they may see it as an extra task on top of their already heavy workload. I see a lot of benefit in these individuals sharing information and it could be supported with a special web page dedicated to their efforts. And right now, this “sharing” is being done to a large extent through our Board as many of them are local representatives as well.</i>▪ <i>Good for idea sharing; good for networking (one of the reasons people become involved); helps people get familiar with each other and want to run for National Board.</i>▪ <i>Letting society presidents focus on their role at the local level and using teleconferences rather than meetings to exchange information with the Board and each other may result in more candidates coming forward to help their local societies. Lower financial and time burden associated than existing model.</i>▪ <i>This recommendation reminds of the role of “district councils” in PRSA.</i>▪ <i>May help address concerns raised earlier about lack of representation/input from smaller chapters have difficulty in electing candidates to the Board.</i>▪ <i>It sounds like a very practical way to keep them in touch and involved.</i> | | |



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- *There has been far too little sharing in the past of ideas and procedures across member society boundaries. (Good progress in Accreditation recently, though). If council members will accept this role, we can make progress in a number of areas. This proposal encourages horizontal communication and cooperation rather than vertical one, which has tended to encourage coming to the Board table with demands rather than collaborative proposals. It should also help to position societies as confreres, rather than competitors at the same trough for national concessions. (Now, do you think we can persuade the Canadian government to adopt this same attitude?).*
- *This can only go bad. Creating of a toothless, vulnerable body, ripe for manipulation by those with ideas contrary to the national board and in search of a power base.*
- *The links between the individual member societies and National do not, to me, appear to be strong enough.*
- *As proposed on page 6 of the discussion paper this is good. As this is new, additional roles will evolve, but at the outset it would be an ideal mechanism to share updates on the implementation of the new governance; it certainly allows for another link in the accountability “chain”; idea sharing.*
- *I see potential, but I have concerns that the National Board can choose to ignore the council entirely. Advisory councils are notoriously ineffective in influencing policy, and generally become units with convey the Board line one-way from Board to members.*
- *The local chapters provide all the value – benefits the most members. By meeting only once a year you are diminishing their role and the opportunity for President’s to share information. Sure, you can say that they can do it informally, but people are too busy. It won’t happen.*
- *I believe this provides a valuable link while not encumbering day to day implementation.*
- ***We feel this will provide an excellent resource for local society presidents – great idea.***
- ***We strongly support this Council but recommend it be renamed President’s Council.***



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- ***Should be clearly defined – role, frequency of meetings, measurable, who bear the cost, how they fit with National Board, what if any influence or authority they have with National. Would suggest name of President’s Council. Would like to see the Executive Director included in meetings – how to measure and monitor accountability to board?***
- ***Provides a voice for all Society Presidents, and a safety net role.***
- ***While we agree with this term should the overall governance proposal proceed, we are concerned that there is nothing in the documentation that shows this person would be funded or how any compensation would be considered.***
- ***This is a proper forum for information sharing and networking.***

| | | |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Yes | 30 | 79% |
| No | 1 | 3% |
| Undecided | 6 | 16% |
| No answer | 1 | 3% |
| Total Responses | 38 | 100% |

(c) Do you have any comments, concerns or recommendations to make regarding the proposed Transition Plan (Appendix B)

- *I would like to see a recognition that considerable Orientation will be required for potential national Board members as well as society council members to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities. In my view, the staff in the National Office are admirably positioned to undertake this role, but we cannot underestimate the amount of time it will take.*
- *I think the transition plan will work.*
- *I think its not possible to anticipate every eventuality. Many have been anticipated, the rest will have to be dealt with as they arise.*
- *It is aggressive and doable.*
- *Well thought out.*



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- *I don't like the way the requirements for making bylaw changes is being circumvented. It feels like yet another example of our bylaws being ignored/not adhered to. Doing a mail-in vote on something this significant does not give people an opportunity to discuss and digest that they're being asked to vote on. If you're going with the existing governance structure for one more year, why can't this be voted on at the AGM in June?*
- *Looks great.*
- *The plan appears to be well-conceived and consultative.*
- *No. Looks fine to me.*
- *No. Seems well thought out.*
- ***We have some concern that the timelines will be difficult to achieve, but otherwise, no.***
- ***Speed up the process – strongly feel the timeline is too long, would like to suggest 1 year. It will be challenging to keep the membership interested and engaged in the process with the proposed timeline. Would like to see strategic plan in place to make it happen. What's driving this?***
- ***No, the transition plan proposed seems very sound.***
- ***Our interpretation of the rules means that no member would serve longer than two, three-year terms – we agree with this in order to encourage continuity, yet also to incorporate refreshing new thinking. Is there anything the Grandfather Clause that might mean a person would serve longer than these terms?***
- ***We are concerned about the three-year term. Small society risk a chance of never having representation on the Board due to the size of the potential voting pools.***
- ***Wish it didn't take that long.***



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(d) Do you have any comments, concerns or recommendations to make regarding the proposed nomination process and procedure? (Appendices B and C)

- *I have to admit that this part of the document was very difficult to read so I am only operating from a review of the slide presentation shared with me by the Executive Director. It would be my observation that a very clear explanation of the process should be prominently displayed on the CPRS website and efforts should be made to make sure all members will understand how it is to work.*
- *I think you could refer to the comments I made in the document provided to Colleen about the PRSA assembly. All processes and procedures must be clear and understood by members. The process must be transparent and be seen to be followed by the membership.*
- *The key here is a nominating committee that identifies key industry players and leaders rather than just individuals that will work hard for the society. We need a mix of headliners and hard workers.*
- *We will need to make clear to individual members in all regions the importance of proposing candidates and getting involved, to ensure we have a sufficient number of good candidates from each region. They must not sit back and then complain later that the nominating committee shut people out. Ensuring high involvement of members across the country would also guard against people who are not top-notch being elected more for regional reasons than for capability (At least, I hope so).*
- *I think the bylaws need to clearly articulate how geographic representation will be maintained, and that the six board members that are elected geographically fully understand that their role is to represent the member society as a whole, and not just their geographic region. This needs to be very clear.*
- *It's very thorough and well-thought out. My compliments to all.*
- *OK with me.*
- *No. Looks fine to me.*
- *I don't agree with this whole governance approach. I also do not agree with the idea of grandfathering four Executive Committee members.*
- **No, same as above.**



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- ***Suggest that nominees have signed support from one member of their own local society, plus two others from other societies as suggested. Concern that nomination process fairly onerous. There's a need for communication to foster regional representation, and a need for strong marketing of board positions. An indication of local support is needed. We need more transparency.***
- ***There needs to be assurance of no spam come election time. We have some concerns regarding appointed positions rather than elected positions. We feel the model might need to be adjusted to ensure that smaller societies have an equal chance of election.***
- ***See above – Formula looks quite complicated.***

(e) Would you like to make additional comments on other aspects to the Governance Discussion document?

- *I commend the members of the Task Force for their efforts in bringing this initiative to this stage and I hope the society will take advantage of this opportunity in our evolution and accept their recommendations.*
- *Although I feel my comments will be of value based upon my long-time membership and my active involvement with the leadership of the Society, I am trying to stay at arms length from the process and not be seen to be overly influential. I truly believe that the membership needs to decide our structure. That said, I believe that the members who have been active in the leadership of the Society from either a National or Local level may have the most informed views.*
- *What a fabulous piece of work.*
- *Excellent report and recommendations. The key to implementation and future governance is leadership. The Board should work to develop linkages with senior level practitioners to ensure their input and involvement. This could be the role of the College of Fellows or the Society Council, but we certainly need to build a long-term bridges to these seasoned members.*
- *Very well thought out and thorough recommendations.*



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- *Good features, determining length of Board term by number of votes received; Board being accountable “in measurable ways”; the “no alternates” rule for Board meetings; Board’s “authority to make decisions”; new Finance Committee; reduced travel costs to member societies (which should help counterbalance the perception of less voice at the Board level). A tremendous amount of work has gone into this, and the result should make a huge difference. Congratulations to all involved.*
- *Brilliant. Great piece of work.*
- *As a member, I am concerned that this process may indeed cost us more in dues. For example, don’t etch in stone that there will be four meetings per year – that can get expensive. In business, we cancel meetings when we don’t make budgets.*
- *Kudos to everyone who worked so hard on this process on behalf of all CPRS members.*
- *Please forgive me. I am so grateful to all the fine professionals in CPRS who put so much time and effort into this. I feel like a heel forwarding my thoughts. I also realize my observations could well be based on an incorrect reading of the proposal. Please take these comments as useful or not.*
- *Having witnessed the discussion at the AGM in PEI. This is wonderful to see. I will not lapse my membership as long as the organization seen a tight ship, shows leadership and is accountable to its members. Regular updates on the web will be appreciated.*
- *As requested, here are additional comments and questions to reflect my concerns:*
 1. *How will we ensure limited liability of Board and Committee members?*
 2. *In the event that no candidate offers from a region, on what bases will appointments be made? Similarly, if an elected Board member resigns, dies or is deemed unsuitable to continue, how will a replacement be selected.*
 3. *Why not use this review of governing structure to specify how large and small membership can become before regional units are re-drawn?*
 4. *Can you clarify the size of the Executive – sometimes it looks as if it’s five people, sometime three.*
 5. *How are the Executive and committee appointments chosen? What provisions exist to prevent larger, richer regions from consistently excluding the smaller regions from holding Executive positions?*
 6. *Why does Alberta warrant regional status? To what regional group(s) will the Yukon and the Territories belong?*



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7. *How realistic is the premise that Board members abandon their regional outlook when serving as Board members? If you wish to achieve transparency and accountability, why not regularly publish (on the restricted part of the Web site, within 30 days of each meeting) the results of each motion voted on at the Board and who voted for and against the motion?*
8. *Similarly, why not publish (within 30 days of the vote) the division of votes for electing Board officers, so members can identify unhealthy trends and develop a response in time for the next election?*

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute.

- *I know all the volunteers who have worked on this have the best of intentions. However, I generally feel that CPRS is dying a slow death at a national level. Terrific services and programs are delivered locally while we see an increasingly complex bureaucracy form at a national level. Programs delivered at national conferences are not as good the programs delivered locally in Edmonton. Sometimes it feels as though there is a whole lot of [well intentioned] navel gazing happening at the national level but not a lot of deliverables. I have heard many members say they would leave if it were not for the APR designation. It is time to begin serve the needs of the membership. Provide some value to us. I don't think this will do that.*
- *Only to repeat what I mentioned in the question re Board composition. I would much rather see a board representing my interests as a member in general vs. interests only.*
- ***We congratulate the task force on the work they have done – this was a tremendous amount of work, and clearly a lot of thought and planning has gone into it. Apologies for this feedback having gotten to you late.***



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- ***Feel strongly that a strategic plan need to be in place to drive the governance – if there is one in place, could this be circulated? Has there been any comparison to the governance of other organizations – such as IABC, PRSA – any analysis completed? What’s the strategic plan to recruiting members at the National level? What are we measuring ourselves against? This goes back to the concern of moving forward without a strategic plan. How are we growing the profession with respect to PRSA. Are we looking to have a stronger affiliation? Revisit the idea of partnering with IABC (or PRSA) to make one strong communicator association in NA/Canada. How are they so successful? Is CPRS still relevant? Accountability of the National office to the board is a concern, would like to see clearly that one member of the board is responsible for overseeing the National office or a sub-committee. For a number of members, the Society is becoming a bit irrelevant. We have spent so much time navel gazing that we have stopped adding value in some cases. Say “Board Governance” to a member and their eyes are likely to glaze over. I have no idea how the Board might do this, but the challenge is to engage and excite the membership (through local society or directly) and get them interested in their Society again.***
- ***Review entire governance process after three years to see what should be revised. A thorough and well-done piece of work.***
- ***CPRS needs to plan for periodic review of the implementation of the new Governance. It could be part of the responsibility of the Executive Committee to assess the challenges posed by the adoption of this new governance on an on-going basis. A more formal review should be planned after three or five years of operations under this new Governance scenario.***
- ***Legal liability of National Board Members? There’s a concern about a number of committees. There are more committees than Board Members. Will Executive be responsible for committees? Perhaps collapse PR for PR/Sponsorship/Membership Recruitment and Retention into “Marketing”. Combine Accreditation and College of Fellows. Governance and nominating (transition and sunset). Shouldn’t Education be a function of National Office rather than a Board Committee? Please clarify the role of this committee. There should be regular review of processes... nomination, election, legalities.***



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GENERAL COMMENTS:

- *I support the governance review in principle. I would further support any additional initiatives to ensure that national board expenses are prudently monitored and managed to make the best use of member fees. (For example, measures to ensure that meals for board members attending functions would not be paid twice once within function fee and again if member opts for an alternative meal). While regional representation is important, quantity of members should also be considered. According to these criteria, societies with the largest number of members should be ensured a seat on the national board.*
- *I think a member of the College of Fellows needs to chair the nominating committee and further that the members of the Colleges be used as resources in sources appropriate director candidates. They can also help sell the “new” director position as something worthwhile doing for the Society. I wouldn’t want the National Board to be composed entirely of members who work for large businesses any more than I’d want it composed of members who are sole practitioners or work for governments and their agencies. Representation of as many sectors as is possible, within the constraints of regionalism, is absolutely required. There needs to be a clear and concise job description drafted for the director position including personal qualifications required. This process is really a search for qualified volunteer “employees” to lead the Society and should be approached as such. That may, when I think about it, mean we should find a volunteer head hunter to help draft the criteria and job descriptions.*
- *I have read everything and I’m very impressed with what I see. I am reassured by the proposal for a Member Society Council that local voice will be preserved. I like the regional representation approach as well. Financially, it seems to stand up well but that’s not the chief benefit. I think this model takes a more focused approach to what we are and who we are as a national organization and that we will all be strengthened by it. As well, any future amendments to this specific proposal can certainly be addressed through the dialogue forums planned and through the Member Society Council. I like it and certainly have every confidence that you can work out specific details on behalf of the interests of CPRS Hamilton. Thanks for sharing all of this and for your ongoing contribution. As you know, CPRS is an organization near and dear to my heart. It is willingness to look at new governance models and to put so much thought into this process underlines the value of practitioners to their employers and their communities.*



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- *My only comment would be with the size of the Board. I really like the proposal for only 12 members instead of the present make up. However, I would like to see something in the proposal that ensures that if there is only one Board member from the Prairie Provinces, that at the end of the third year of a member term that the replacement come from another Prairie Society. What I mean by this is that I wouldn't like to see the Board Member come from the Regina society all the time without either Winnipeg, Calgary or Edmonton having a chance to have someone represent the Prairies. I hope you can make some sense of what my concern is.*
- *There was general agreement that the current board structure had a number of problems, including issues of size, effectiveness and disproportional representation.*

There was some concern about the proposal that the executive officers would be chosen by the board rather than by the direct election of members. However, it was felt that holding a national election for the board as opposed to the current election of officers at the annual general meeting would ensure at least as much democratic legitimacy.

There were some practical questions about ensuring regional representation. For example, what would happen if the only board member from a given region were to move to a different region during the course of his / her term. Various scenarios were discussed and participants seemed satisfied that the Governance Task Force and the Bylaws and Regulations Standing Committee were looking into such questions.

Participants felt that the board member(s) from a given region would have some responsibility to represent the national society to the member societies in their region. For example, if the sole Man-Sask representative on the board were from Winnipeg, (s)he would have some responsibility to communicate with the member societies in Regina and Saskatoon. Alternatively, if there happened to be two Man-Sask board members from Regina and Saskatoon, the two of them would have to sort out among themselves who would be responsible to liaise with the member society in Winnipeg. There was some feeling that this responsibility should be reflected in the eventual bylaw amendment.

- *I think that makes a lot of sense. It is sort of reverting to what should not have been changed in the first place. The National Board should be elected by members*



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- *As I understood the decision at the 2003 AGM, the idea was to pass the new governance bylaw at the special general meeting in March / April so that we could elect a national board under the new structure at the 2004 AGM. Your report seems to separate the election of the board from the AGM (not an inherent problem, to my mind), but it also seems to put off implementation until the election of the 2005-2006 board. The way I read your timeline, the 2004 AGM elects the 2004-2005 board under the old structure. This does not seem to be in keeping with the instructions of the 2003 AGM. The reason for holding the extraordinary GM was, in fact, so we could implement in 2004. If we are not implementing until 2005, then there is no point to holding the extra meeting as we can simply pass the necessary amendments at the AGM in 2004 and implement in 2005.*

- *From the start, the SRQ congratulates the committee for the work accomplished. Consultation documents are explicit, well documented and we very much appreciate the insertion of consultation with regular members as well as member societies in the committee's work timeline. Here are our comments:*
 - *Slide 5 of the presentation: "Project Objective: A governance model that will ensure CPRS' long-term operational efficiency, better decision-making and professional and financial viability", we suggest integrating the last item in the "Criteria for Change" (Slide 6 of the PP), because it obviously feels more like an objective: "Ensure increased efficiency and effectiveness of managing CPRS."*

The new wording would then become: "A governance model that will ensure CPRS' long-term operational efficiency, better decision-making and professional viability while ensuring increased efficiency and effectiveness of managing CPRS."

 - *As members of the national Board of Directors will inherit responsibilities on various national committees of the CPRS, the SRQ strongly suggests ensuring the independence of the accreditation process.*

 - *Regional representation is well received, but nothing indicates any possibility of deposition, should members of this region be dissatisfied with their regional representative.*

We suggest that candidates to regional representative positions be first proposed by CPRS member societies through a nominations committee reporting to the Society Council.



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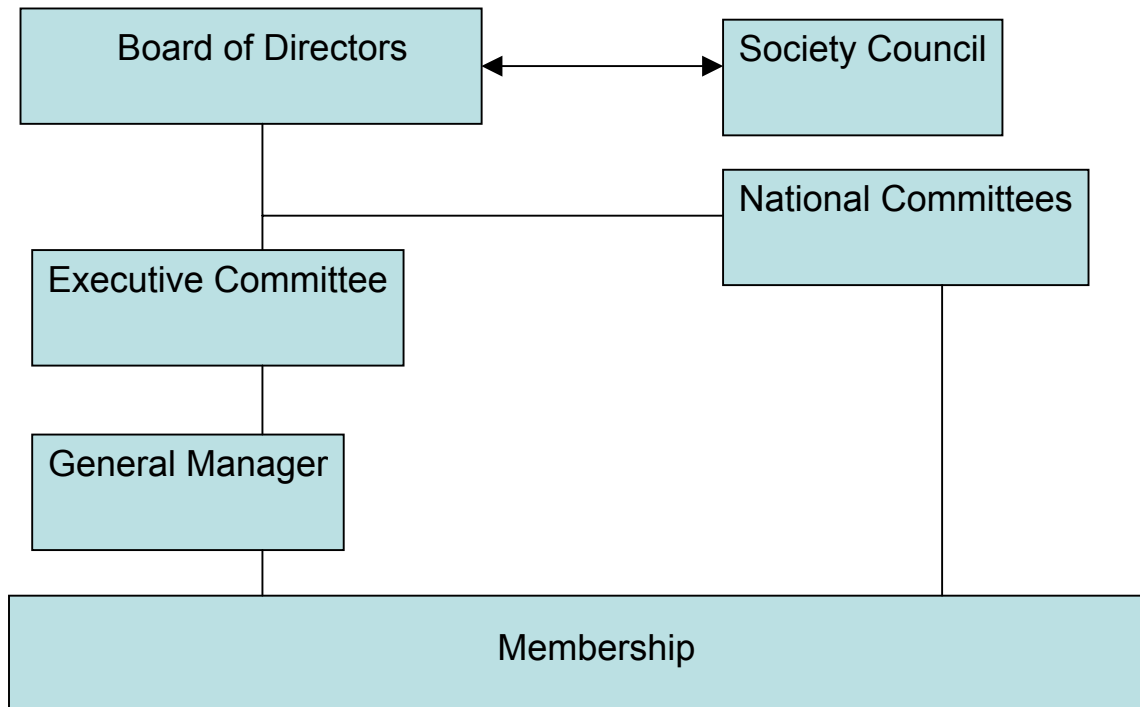
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- *It is believed essential for the SRQ to own a member society right to veto for major decisions such as CPRS membership fees, regulatory and structural changes. Also, decisions requiring approval by members in a general assembly should be approved beforehand by a majority of member societies' presidents. In other words, the SRQ would like to see the advisory role of member societies expanded.*
- *Clarification is needed regarding the responsibilities of national committee presidents, by sorting their responsibilities as presidents from responsibilities as members of the CPRS Board of Administrators. In other words, will Board members become national committee presidents? The SRQ warns the CPRS about focusing too much on CPRS issues; a "check and balance" approach would be optimal here.*
- *One yearly meeting for the Society Council is considered insufficient, despite the possibility of setting up a virtual forum. Perhaps two meetings would be more appropriate.*
- *Considering that Canada is a bilingual country, that the CPRS is a bilingual organisation and that most French-speaking members live in Quebec, we suggest and recommend that the representative for Quebec be bilingual in order to advocate for the region's issues.*
- *On Slide 17, in the national committees list, a board member should be appointed to regulate and ensure the stability of the year's capital event, that is, the CPRS Annual Conference.*
- *In Appendix E, we recommend systematic sharing of best management practice among associations. The moderator for such sessions between the Board of Directors and member societies should be the Past President. This person knows the association's issues and this would allow the future president a better chance for participating in the meetings.*



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Here is a chart illustrating the relations and position of the various components we recommend.



We intend to share our proposal with section Presidents and members of the CPRS Board of Directors. We are convinced that together, we will create a useful and beneficial model for the years to come.