

October 1, 2011
SETA 67 Assembly

Ad-Hoc Committee on Standing Committee Protocol - Report to Area Committee

Chair: Marvin W, Panel: Lloyd G Jr., Randy B & Robert J

Scope and Purpose: This Ad Hoc Committee (AHC) was formed in July 2011 for the purpose of studying and recommending a protocol for attendance & participation in Area 67 Assembly Standing Committee (SC) meetings. This assignment was caused by concerns of some assembly members over the refusal of admission to a certain SC meeting during the April-11 Assembly.

Each member of this committee had an equal voice & vote. There is no ranking authority or subject matter expert. Our goal was to make the best determination & disposition of the task we had been assigned. The committee, under all circumstances, retained the right & responsibility to formulate recommendations to the Area Committee (**AC**), as it deemed appropriate based on its findings.

Process: The AHC conducted a survey by personal interview and email that, if answered, would provide data needed to resolve this issue. That survey or questionnaire, detailed in our Scope and Purpose document, is summarized as follows:

1. Should SC meetings at the assembly be "open" to any AA member or just committee members?
2. If "open" to all who should be allowed to participate in discussions?
3. If "open" who should be allowed to vote?
4. Is there any guide in any approved AA material to indicate either "open" or "closed" SC meetings?

Results: The AHC contacted approximately 100 AA members associated with the assembly in some manner. The results are:

- ✓ Of the 12 SC chairs funded by the Assembly only 3 responded to our questionnaire. CFC, TFC and Literature. These are the SC directly affected by the issue at hand. SCAP is listed as the 13th SC but isn't funded by the Assembly. SCAP was sent the inquiry and the Chair graciously responded.
- ✓ Being very disappointed with the poor 25% showing but not deterred, we called on all 10 of the Assembly funded Area Officers and Alternates. The results were further disappointing with only 3 responses by the AC, Alt Treasurer and Delegate. That's 30% for those keeping score.
- ✓ The AHC was determined to get feedback so we went out to past DCMs and past SC Chairs with a resounding response of over 95%.
- ✓ Finally we talked to members to whom this AC is accountable: the at-large member, which included many current GSRs. Not only did we get their thoughts about the protocol, we got their wonderment about why this ever became an issue in the non-secretive fellowship of AA.

Compiling all the responses provided us, we derived the following statistics:

- ✓ All respondents believed that the SC meetings in question should be open to all members of AA. Anything different would discourage involvement and growth. One exception out of all responses thought FC should be closed due its work.
- ✓ 85% believed that participation in discussion should be limited to committed members of that committee and visitors should listen and learn. The remaining 15% believed that discussion should be open to all attending.
- ✓ Who should be allowed to vote came in with 90% for SC members only voting and 10% for anyone attending can vote.

* Side note: "Anyone can vote" is somewhat contrary to AA's "One Group-One Vote" Principle and seems to fly in the face of an informed conscience as a voting guideline. However, it wasn't our task to critique the outcome, just analyze and report it.

Recommendations: Based on the above data this AH Committee recommends the following to the Area Committee:

1. That the AC Chair present to the Assembly a proposal for a straight up-or-down vote on whether all SC meetings in SETA should be open.
2. Regardless of that outcome we strongly recommend that the AC Chair assign each SC Chair the responsible duty to write their specific committee protocol guidelines for participation and voting. These guidelines must be posted on each individual SC webpage and available to visitors at each meeting. Since no committee action in AA should be binding on the next Panel of SC Chairs they can be changed if it is believed absolutely necessary.

Conclusions: After some discussion most members of this AHC believe that this issue should have been resolved by the AC itself. It should have been taken off the assembly floor in April and with a sense of duty, ironed out by those elected to do the work. The use of AH Committees to do this work and thus avoid face-to-face Principles over Personalities should always be avoided for the good of AA and those members trying to follow us.

These are our results, recommendations and conclusions based on 3 months of research. This AHC considers it has fulfilled its duty and is now dissolved.