



Handbook for  
**TECHNICAL GROUP CHAIRS**

Prepared by the Council of Technical Groups

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## Preface

Congratulations on your election to the position of HFES Technical Group chair! We hope you enjoy your term. This handbook will help you become familiar with the details of your role and those of your TG's other officers.

Suggestions for changes to this edition, as well as questions and comments, may be sent to the HFES central office (see Appendix A).

## Role of the Council of Technical Groups

As the chair of your TG, you are automatically a member of the Council of Technical Groups, the body that oversees technical groups and makes recommendations to the HFES Executive Council in matters regarding policy and governance. The COTG supports the Technical Groups by providing counsel to existing groups, encouraging and assisting groups in formation, and overseeing the expenditure of TG and COTG funds for special purposes. Operating Rules describing the COTG in detail may be found in Appendix B (Section 16.5).

The COTG convenes an annual meeting of TG chairs during the HFES Annual Meeting in order to discuss policy matters, solve problems, and distribute information. On occasion the COTG will contact TG chairs on a variety of matters.

## Roles of TG Officers

Although there is some variation among groups, TG offices typically consist of those roles listed in the following section. Note that the HFES Operating Rules require that there be at least a chair, a program chair, program chair-elect, and a newsletter editor (See Appendix B). The duties of each position are listed in OR 16.4.1.

Each group may wish to assign additional duties to these positions. To ensure continuity over time, it is strongly recommended that you document these additional roles in your TG archives. See "Transition and TG Archives" later in this guide.

Some TGs assign special, continuing offices for a variety of purposes, such as social activities chair, special events chair, or Webmaster. Again, to ensure continuity, it's best to document these roles and the duties assigned to each one.

If an officer other than the chair is unable to continue his or her term, the TG chair should appoint a new officer to serve the unexpired term unless there is an "elect" position, in which case the officer-elect would replace that person.

**Note: Technical Group officers: TG chair, annual meeting program chair, and annual meeting program chair designate, must be Full Members of HFES and members of the technical group.** Newsletter editors, webmasters, or any other officers may be associate, affiliate, transitional, or student members of HFES and members of the technical group. When you solicit nominations for TG officers, please remind the membership that nominees must be Full Members. Prospective nominees who are not can log in into their record in the HFES Web site and click on "request a change in membership category" or contact HFES Member Services department for assistance.

**Chair** The TG chair has overall responsibility to ensure that the group meets its minimum requirements. The chair works with the HFES executive director

in scheduling the TG's annual business meeting and arranging other events; with the newsletter editor regarding timing, content, distribution method, and cost of newsletters; and with other officers to ensure that TG activities are being carried out. **The chair also represents the TG as a member of the Council of Technical Groups.**

#### **Chair-Elect**

The chair-elect usually assist the current chair, though ultimate responsibility for the TG's operation lies with the current chair.

#### **Secretary-Treasurer**

In some groups, these offices are separated: one person is secretary and another is treasurer. Although the secretary-treasurer may be responsible for the TG's finances, the Operating Rules stipulate that this is ultimately the chair's responsibility. Therefore, close coordination between these offices is essential. All financial records (checkbook, bank statements, etc.) for TGs are held in the HFES central office. Invoices should be sent to Lynn Strother at the central office for payment.

#### **Program Chair**

In some TGs the chair appoints this position; in others, the program chair is elected. The program chair is responsible for overseeing the technical review of proposals submitted for the HFES Annual Meeting. A Handbook for program chairs is made available online each year.

#### **Program Chair-Elect**

The program chair-elect may assist the program chair with the technical review of papers for the annual meeting.

#### **Newsletter Editor**

The newsletter editor is responsible for producing at least two newsletters per year and distributing them to TG members. The newsletter is the vital link between a TG's officers and its members, and its quality and frequency are often associated with members' level of satisfaction with their TG affiliation. TGs that do not produce newsletters are subject to disaffiliation from HFES.

This position may be appointed or elected. In some cases, two or more persons, one of who may be newsletter editor-elect, share the editorship.

#### **Webmaster**

The Webmaster is responsible for maintaining and updating the TG's Web site. For detailed guidelines request the handbook for newsletter editors and webmasters.

### **Calendar of TG Events**

Although there is some variation, **TGs generally should begin their election process in the spring.** The newsletter and listserv are the main vehicles for soliciting nominations, so the chair should coordinate this effort with the newsletter editor. For the purposes of annual meeting planning and production of the *Directory and Yearbook*, **it is best to complete the nomination and election process prior to the annual meeting.** This enables the new officers to take full advantage of planning and coordination opportunities at the annual meeting. Nominees must be Full Members of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. If a nominee is not a Full Member, and is qualified to be one, the TG chair should immediately ask him or her to log in to their record in the HFES Web site and click

on “request a change in membership category” or contact the HFES Member Services department for assistance. If the nominee is not an HFES member, encourage the nonmember nominee to submit an electronic application promptly.

### **Elections**

The process for conducting TG elections is described in Operating Rule 16.4. The election must be conducted via the newsletter, other postal mailing, or the listserv. It is permissible to receive votes via e-mail, assuming that votes can be verified. Members benefit from the opportunity to learn about each candidate through a biographical statement or other description, the parameters of which may be established by the chair.

Be sure to include space for a write-in candidate, especially in the case of only one nominee for a vacant office.

Please notify the HFES central office staff immediately upon receiving the election results so that records may be updated.

### **Annual Meeting Program**

The Society's annual meeting is usually held in late September to mid-October. The planning process begins after the conclusion of the prior year's meeting, usually in November or December. As soon as the program chair is elected or appointed, the HFES central office staff begins work on the call for proposals, mailed in December or January. Proposals are generally due in February or March, and the chair may be asked to assist with paper review, either personally or through helping to identify reviewers from among the membership.

### **Annual TG Business Meeting**

Each TG is required to conduct an annual business meeting at the HFES annual meeting. These meetings are often combined with social events (i.e., receptions or meals). Some TGs with closely related technical interests, such as the Environmental Design and Macroergonomics groups, organize joint business meetings.

Each summer, the HFES executive director asks TG chairs to choose among several available time slots for their meetings. Groups with similar technical interests—and therefore members in common—should try to avoid scheduling concurring meetings. Chairs of TGs with overlapping interests are encouraged to discuss business-meeting scheduling.

Groups that wish to provide food and/or drinks as part of their receptions may make those arrangements with the executive director at this time. HFES Operating Rules 16.8.1 and 16.8.2 give specific guidance pertaining to Technical Group expenditures.

The TG chair officiates at business meetings and may wish to solicit agenda items from the TG membership via a newsletter or listserv message. Typically, the agenda consists of a financial report, a report on the TG's annual meeting sessions, a report from the newsletter editor, and discussion of new or existing activities and programs, such as awards, meetings, membership building, and the TG's mission. Because most TGs have a surplus, a typical discussion item concerns ways to make use of TG funds. Be sure to consult the Operating Rules for guidelines regarding the use of such funds. Note that voting for officers or other required votes may not be conducted at the business meeting. All matters to be put to the vote of the TG must be done using a mail ballot.

The chair should see that minutes are recorded and then published in the newsletter, as most members do not attend.

## **Reporting**

### **Financial Report**

TG funds and accounting are maintained at the HFES central office under the direction of the executive director. Reports on TG account activity (expenditures and current balance) are sent to TG chairs shortly after the end of the year and on request in late summer (around August 30). The Operating Rules require that TGs publish a financial report once each year in the newsletter. Updates may be requested at other times by contacting the executive director (lynn@hfes.org)

### **Directory and Yearbook Activities Report**

The HFES *Directory and Yearbook* contains descriptions of each TG, including a current officer list, purpose statement, summary of the group's activities during the past year, and the current chair's contact information. Requests for this information come from the HFES Communications Department in early December, and reports are due during the first week in January.

## **TG Newsletters**

### **Content and Finances**

Prior to publication of each newsletter, the TG chair should be given the opportunity to review its contents.

TG newsletters may be sent as a PDF file through the TG listserv. If a paper newsletter is mailed, the TG newsletter editor must obtain the TG chair's consent on the budget for each issue's production. The editor will later submit receipts and a reimbursement request for approval by the TG chair prior to sending this information to the executive director for payment. Alternatively, the newsletter editor may request an advance against expenses, which also requires the chair's approval.

### **TG Chair's Column**

One of the privileges of the TG chair is to provide a chair's column for each issue of the newsletter. These columns may address technical issues, events and trends in the field, items of potential concern to members, and similar topics, at the chair's discretion.

## **Web Sites and List Servers**

As a current TG chair, you have been added to the HFES TG Chairs' listserv, maintained by the membership department. The list facilitates communication among the TG chairs, COTG, and the HFES staff. If your e-mail address should change at any time, please contact the membership department and ask that the TG listserv be updated with your new e-mail address.

A number of TGs have established Websites and listservs to improve communication among members and to promote themselves to nonmembers.

HFES offers all TGs the use of its web server. TGs can access this web server via an FTP address. Each TG has a username and password. Usernames and passwords have been created for each TG and are available from HFES.

If a TG elects to have its Website hosted by another entity, the TG needs to provide the URL address so it can be linked to the HFES website. Please contact HFES if your site is not linked to the HFES site.

A TG wishing to set-up a listserv for its group must contact HFES. HFES Member Services populates a TG listserv and updates it quarterly.

Any TG that establishes a Web site or listserv is required to abide by the guidelines found on Appendix C to ensure that HFES policies, as well as laws concerning copyright and decency, Appendix D, are observed.

### **Special TG Activities**

The Society's Operating Rules encourage TGs to engage in special activities (see section 16.3.2 in Appendix B). Below are some examples of activities that have proved informative and successful for TGs in the past.

TG chairs are encouraged to share ideas for special activities by communicating with other chairs individually (see Appendix B) or via the listserv.

#### **Conferences**

Occasionally, TGs will team with other associations to sponsor a conference, workshop, seminar, or other technical gathering.

Arrangements for each event are usually worked out between the sponsors; however, before making an agreement with another association to participate in interorganizational activities, consult the HFES executive director for guidelines concerning such temporary affiliations.

TG officers are not permitted to enter into any type of agreement with an association, hotel, caterer, or other vendor or supplier in connection with special meetings, mailings, or other activities. If such a meeting is approved by the COTG and/or Executive Council, the executive director will make such arrangements on the TG's behalf.

Be sure to give the executive director plenty of advance notice if your TG is thinking of planning a special conference or meeting, especially if affiliations with other associations are considered. Joint conferences may not be scheduled at times that conflict or compete with the HFES Annual Meeting without permission of the Executive Council.

See OR 16.8.1 for guidelines concerning TG expenditures for conferences not associated with the HFES Annual Meeting.

#### **Special Annual Meeting Programs**

Over the years a number of TGs have organized special sessions at HFES annual meetings. For example, the Forensics Professional Group has developed mock trial panels that spanned two 90-minute sessions and videotaped them. This effort is likely to result not only in more interest in the FPG but also in a new HFES videotape product.

The Safety Technical Group established an annual invited address, which is given by a prominent professional from the human factors or other field. The addresses have been produced as videotapes and sold to benefit the TG. A number of TGs make arrangements for an invited speaker, some of whose expenses may be covered by TG funds.

### **Membership Surveys**

Periodic surveying of a technical group's membership may reveal important information about members' satisfaction with the group and their changing needs for information delivery and other services.

After the survey has been distributed and data collected, be sure to (a) discuss the results among the officers and (b) share the information with members in a subsequent issue of the newsletter. A sample of a member survey conducted by the Health-Care Systems TG (formerly Medical Systems and Rehabilitation) is provided in Appendix D.

### **Membership Drives**

Not all HFES members affiliate with a technical group, which means there is always potential for membership building.

The Membership Services department in the central office can assist a TG that would like to recruit members by providing mailing lists. The list can be segmented to target particular subsets of the membership (though there may be limitations) so the TG doesn't have to incur the cost of mailing to all members. Contact the membership department for more details.

### **Developing Publications (Lois to update)**

The technical groups represent a potentially vast mine of technical publications for the Society. The HFES Scientific Communications Publications Domain and COTG are particularly interested in developing state-of-the-art reports and monographs from input provided by the TGs. TG chairs are encouraged to explore these possibilities with their officers and members.

TGs may also be asked for feedback about new book proposals submitted to the Society or to conduct technical review of materials submitted for publication.

### **Awards**

Some groups honor their members via TG awards, such as for the best student paper published in the newsletter or presented at the Annual Meeting. To inquire about instituting a new award, contact the COTG chair (see Appendix B, OR 16.13).

### **Promotional Brochures**

Continuing an effort instituted in the 1980s by Steven M. Casey, each TG has developed a brief, informative brochure that may be used to promote the group. These brochures are sent to meetings at which the Society exhibits and to the HFES Annual Meeting, and they are mailed to those who make inquiries via the central office.

TGs are encouraged to make use of them as well—for example, at local events such as science fairs or career days, at meetings and conferences of related associations, and in membership drives. Brochures are available on request from the HFES central office. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery, especially if you need large quantities for displaying at meetings and events. The cost of reproducing these brochures is charged to the TG fund by the Central Office staff.

### **Transition of Officers and TG Archives**

The ability of incoming officers to make a successful transition to office depends to a large extent on the information he or she receives from the outgoing officer. Each TG officer should retain copies of correspondence and materials for his or her successor, and each successor should add to that archive.

Although to some extent the existence of handbooks for the offices of chair, program chair, and newsletter editor helps to ensure continuity, there is always something to pass along to the incoming officer, such as unpublished news items, lists of annual meeting proposal reviewers, and correspondence with the COTG.

## APPENDIX A

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### HFES CENTRAL OFFICE RESOURCES

Following are the names and contact addresses for the administrative staff at the HFES central office:

***Executive Director:***

Lynn Strother  
lynn@hfes.org

Susan Marschner  
Administrative Assistant  
Susan@hfes.org

**Communications Department**

***Communications Director:***

Lois Smith  
lois@hfes.org

Scott McDonald  
Managing Editor  
scott@hfes.org

Andrea Tomcsanyi  
Editorial Review Coordinator  
journal@hfes.org

**Member Services**

***Director of Member Services:***

Carlos de Falla  
carlos@hfes.org

Stefanie Alexander  
Member Services Coordinator  
stefanie@hfes.org

**Mailing Addresses**

***HFES address for US Postal Service mail:***

P.O. Box 1369  
Santa Monica, CA 90406-1369

***HFES physical address for most overnight delivery services (NOT US Postal Service Express Mail):***

1124 Montana Ave., Suite B  
Santa Monica, CA 90403-1617

**HFES Website:**

<http://hfes.org>

## APPENDIX B

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### TECHNICAL GROUP OPERATING RULES

#### Chapter 16. TECHNICAL GROUPS

##### RELEVANT BYLAWS

##### ARTICLE IV – Affiliations

###### Section 5.

The Executive Council may authorize the establishment of Technical Groups subject to any conditions adopted by the Council. The Chair of a Technical Group shall be a Full Member of the Society.

The Council of Technical Groups shall assist in the formation, development, and operation of Technical Groups. The Council of Technical Groups shall be composed of a representative from each Technical Group, with a chair elected by the representatives.

##### 16.1 Purpose of Technical Groups

The objectives of a technical group ("TG") are to consider issues in the field of interest and to analyze the implications of these issues from a human factors perspective; to clarify the need for and to encourage human factors research, application, and education in the field of interest; to provide opportunities for technical interchange among professionals in the field of interest; to disseminate information from the field of interest to members of the technical group, the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (the "Society"), and the public; to provide leadership in the field of interest by, for example, establishing cooperative efforts with professional and technical organizations outside the Society; and to promote opportunities for growth in professional skills and knowledge of Society members within the field of interest.

##### 16.2 Technical Group Membership

All interested persons, regardless of Society membership, are eligible for membership in any technical group. Persons who are not members of the Society may join a technical group through the Society, without applying for Society membership. All technical group memberships shall be on a calendar-year basis.

Technical group membership shall be at least 150 individuals, and at least half of the technical group members shall be Society members. Technical groups falling below the required membership levels may petition the Council of Technical Groups Executive Committee (the "COTG-EC") for an extension to meet such levels. The technical group shall have two years from the date on which the extension is granted to attain the required membership level. At the time of reevaluation, the criterion values used shall be the previous year's Society and/or technical group membership,

and not the levels existent at the time of the extension request. It is the responsibility of the COTG-EC to monitor that these requirements are met (see Section 16.5.4.1).

### **16.3 Technical Group Activities**

#### **16.3.1 Requirements**

Each technical group shall publish at least two, although preferably more than two, newsletters per calendar year. Each technical group can determine whether these newsletters should be distributed electronically or by mail, or both. Publications consisting primarily of the technical group membership list shall not be included in this total. A technical group shall actively participate in each Society annual meeting by, at a minimum, conducting a business meeting, refereeing papers in its field of interest, and conducting at least one technical session.

In undertaking these activities, the technical group is expected to involve its members as broadly as possible, to take considerable initiative with respect to its own technical program organization, to satisfy the normal schedule and reporting requirements of the Technical Program Committee (the "TPC") (see Section 16.5.4.1.1), and to ensure that all activities comply with relevant Society Operating Rules (see Section 16.4.1).

Failure to meet these requirements shall be handled in accordance with the procedures specified in Section 16.7. At any time, a technical group may petition the COTG-EC for a one-year waiver of any of these requirements due to extenuating circumstances. Waiver periods may not be extended nor may successive waivers be granted.

#### **16.3.2 Other Activities**

Technical groups are encouraged to conduct other activities consistent with the goals and the regulations of the Society. These include solicitation of nominations for Society awards, sponsorship of annual meeting social events, conduct of special technical sessions, interaction and cooperation with other organizations having human factors interests, conduct of separate conferences, and publication of conference proceedings and special reports.

When special activities are conducted in conjunction with the Society annual meeting, they shall be subject to the approval and/or scheduling requirements of the Technical Program Committee. Technical groups are encouraged, within the limits of their resources, to sponsor symposia, workshops, or invited speakers at the annual meeting of the Society. Arrangements for these activities are to be made through the standard channels.

When proposed activities are to be held independently of the Society annual meeting, then the COTG-EC shall review the planned activities. Proposed contractual agreements with individuals, groups, agencies, or organizations outside the Society shall be submitted to the COTG-EC and the Society's executive director for review and approval. The primary criteria for evaluation of requests to conduct activities apart from the annual meeting will be the benefit accruing to the entire membership of the technical group and the potential for financial or other liability incurred by the technical group or the Society. When expenditures are

anticipated for these activities, a technical group budget approval request form shall be submitted in accordance with Section 16.8 and Chapter 19-- Cosponsored Technical Meetings.

#### **16.4 Technical Group Officers and Terms of Office**

Technical groups shall have, as a minimum, a chair, a Society annual meeting program chair, an annual meeting program chair designate, each of whom shall be a Full Member of the Society and a member of the technical group. A newsletter editor, Webmaster and/or listmaster, or any other officer, may also be appointed or elected, who shall also be a member of HFES and a member of the technical group. Each technical group may elect or appoint such other officers as it considers desirable for effective operation. Although not encouraged, multiple offices may be held by one individual in the same or in different technical groups, and multiple terms of office are permitted.

The term of office for the technical group chair shall be two years, while the terms for all other officers shall be determined by the technical group. Approximately one-half of the technical group chairs shall begin their terms of office starting in even-numbered years and the other half in odd-numbered years as designated by the COTG Executive Committee. In the event that a technical group chair is elected as COTG chair-elect, that person shall resign as chair of the technical group and shall appoint a new representative to serve the unexpired term of office.

Notification of all election results shall be sent to the Society executive director and the COTG within one month before the annual meeting.

##### **16.4.1 Technical Group Officer Duties**

As chief executive officer, the technical group chair is responsible for conducting TG activities in accordance with Society Bylaws and Operating Rules, and is responsible for TG finances. It is the responsibility of the technical group chair to ensure that the technical group account at all times has sufficient funds to support required activities such as those specified in Section 16.3. The chair shall determine the technical group membership dues rate for the following calendar year, and will notify the Society executive director of this rate prior to or during the Society annual meeting. The chair will prepare the agenda for the annual business meeting, preside over the meeting, and ensure that the minutes or a summary report of this meeting are distributed to the TG membership. Proper and timely conduct of the technical group officer nomination and voting procedures as well as other TG balloting processes are also the responsibility of the chair. Each chair will report the technical group's approved to the COTG chair annually.

The technical group chair is also the primary conduit for information exchange between the technical group and the COTG, and is expected to participate in COTG affairs and to ensure that the other technical group officers and membership are apprised of COTG activities and issues.

The annual meeting program chair is responsible for development of the TG's technical program through solicitation and review of technical paper submittals and symposia/panel discussion proposals. These activities shall be carried out by a committee comprising the program chair and at

least two additional technical group members, one of who shall be the program chair designate.

The annual meeting program chair designate is understudy to the program chair and becomes the program chair when the current program chair's term of office expires. Ordinarily, the program chair and program chair designate will be different people.

The newsletter editor is responsible for the collection of information relevant to the field of interest, and for the preparation and distribution of not less than two newsletters per year.

In the case of an inactive technical group officer, or for other serious causes, the COTG-EC may appoint officers to serve in place of, or in addition to, those elected by any technical group.

#### **16.4.2 Technical Group Elections**

Every member of the technical group shall be afforded the opportunity to nominate officers and to vote for those nominated. Attendance at the technical group's annual business meeting shall not be required for participation in these election processes. Accordingly, technical groups are encouraged to conduct mail ballots and to distribute the requisite Call for Nominations and technical group officer ballots as part of the technical group newsletters, although alternative balloting procedures that meet these requirements and all reporting requirements may be developed and implemented (see Section 16.4.) Each technical group may determine whether it wants to handle such communications, and the actual vote either electronically, by mail or both.

#### **16.4.3 Technical Group Balloting**

Each technical group may determine whether it wants to handle balloting electronically, by mail or both. The technical group chair shall solicit and include on each ballot arguments in favor of and in opposition to the proposal under consideration. The time limit for the return of ballots shall not be less than three weeks from the posted date of ballot distribution. A simple majority of those technical group members voting shall be used to approve or disapprove items under consideration.

#### **16.5 Council of Technical Groups**

The COTG is the coordinating body for the technical groups. Its objectives and requirements are: to provide guidance, counsel, and financial or other support to the technical groups; to serve as the Society's focus for technical issues; to identify new areas of technical interest; to establish policies regarding, and to authorize activities of, the technical groups; to encourage and aid the formation of new technical groups as warranted; to advise the Society Executive Council on matters of policy that involve technical considerations; and to conduct a business meeting at the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society annual meeting. The COTG will conduct activities relevant to the technical life of the Society.

### **16.5.1 COTG Officers and Terms of Office**

The COTG consists of three officers, (chair, chair-elect, and past chair), and the chair of each technical group. Each COTG member except the chair shall have one vote in matters placed before the COTG. On these matters, the chair shall cast a ballot only in the event of a tie vote among the COTG membership. The chair does vote on matters placed before the COTG Executive Committee (see Section 16.5.4.1). The Director of Member Services shall be a nonvoting, ex officio member of the COTG.

All COTG officers shall have served one full year as a technical group chair, and must be a Full Member in good standing of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. The COTG chair may not concurrently serve as an officer in any technical group. The terms of office for the COTG chair-elect, chair, and past chair shall start and finish at the annual COTG business meeting.

### **16.5.2 COTG Officer Duties**

As chief executive officer of the COTG, the chair shall supervise the conduct of routine business, present policies and procedures to the COTG and/or COTG-EC for ratification, and ensure that COTG activities are conducted in accordance with Society Bylaws and Operating Rules. The chair shall represent the technical groups and the COTG to the Society Executive Council in all matters related to the technical groups. The chair shall prepare the agenda for the annual business meeting, preside over the meeting, and ensure that the minutes of this meeting are distributed to the Council and executive director. Proper and timely conduct of the COTG chair-elect election procedures and other COTG balloting processes are also the responsibility of the chair. The COTG chair has ultimate responsibility for COTG finances.

The chair-elect will act as the understudy to the chair in order to become acquainted with the business and operation of the COTG in preparation for assuming the duties of the chair. In the event that the chair does not serve a full term, the chair-elect will succeed to the remainder thereof and continue through his/her own term. The COTG chair-elect will also serve as the chair of the COTG Budget and Finance Committee and, as such, is responsible for the day-to-day handling of COTG finances.

The past chair (immediate) will provide advice and counsel to the COTG chair.

### **16.5.3 COTG Elections**

A call for nominations for COTG chair-elect shall be distributed to the COTG by mail not less than four months prior to the annual COTG business meeting. Self-nominations and the names of other individuals who consent to nomination shall be returned to the COTG chair not later than four weeks from the posted date of the Call for Nominations. At least two individuals so nominated shall be required to hold an election. If more than three qualified individuals accept nominations, only the three most frequently nominated shall be included on the chair-elect ballot. Ties for the third position on the ballot shall be resolved by random selection. Election ties shall be resolved by a vote at the COTG business meeting.

Chair-elect ballots shall be distributed to the COTG not less than two months prior to the annual COTG business meeting. These ballots shall include nominee-supplied biographical sketches and, if desired by a nominee, a brief position statement. The time limit for return of election ballots shall not be less than three weeks from the posted date of ballot distribution. The chair-elect will be elected by a simple majority of the COTG members casting ballots.

#### **16.5.4 COTG Committees**

##### **16.5.4.1 COTG Executive Committee**

A COTG Executive Committee shall be formed and shall consist of the COTG chair, the chair-elect, the past chair, and not less than two technical group chairs appointed by the COTG chair. The service of these TG chairs to the COTG-EC shall be limited to one-year terms. In addition, the designated Executive Council Liaison to the Council of Technical Groups shall serve on the COTG-EC as a nonvoting, ex officio member.

The COTG-EC, chaired by the COTG chair, is responsible for routine administrative actions and day-to-day business matters relating to the Council of Technical Groups. It is also responsible for monitoring technical group compliance with relevant Society regulations, and for selection of COTG representatives to other organizations as specified in Section 16.5.4.1.1. On matters to be placed before the full COTG for consideration, the COTG-EC will review each matter, make recommendations regarding any COTG action, and provide a rationale for such recommendations.

##### **16.5.4.1.1 COTG Liaison to the TPC**

Each year, the COTG-EC shall nominate an individual to serve as the COTG liaison to the Technical Program Committee. Upon acceptance of this nomination by the TPC chair, the liaison will serve as the representative of the technical groups in addressing such Society annual meeting issues as technical paper review procedures, session allocations, procedures and deadlines for calls for papers, and review of submittal acceptance/rejection ratios (see Section 20.5.5.3). The COTG liaison to the TPC shall see that each TG is informed of the normal schedule and reporting requirements of the TPC (see Section 16.3.1).

##### **16.5.4.2 COTG Budget and Finance Committee**

A COTG Budget and Finance Committee ("BFC") shall be formed, chaired by the COTG chair-elect, and composed of the COTG chair and not less than one COTG representative appointed by the BFC chair. The designated Executive Council Liaison shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the BFC.

The BFC shall be responsible for the preparation and oversight of the COTG's annual budget. This Committee shall also be responsible for the review and approval of technical group budget approval request form submittals as specified in Sections 16.3.2 and 16.8.2.

#### **16.5.4.3 Other COTG Committees**

Additional committees, including ad hoc committees, may be created by the COTG chair as necessary to ensure effective COTG functioning.

#### **16.5.5 COTG Meetings**

The COTG will hold an open business meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Society. The COTG chair will publish and distribute an agenda to each technical group chair at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

#### **16.5.6 COTG Ballots**

Mail ballots may be used to conduct COTG business. The chair will solicit and include on each ballot arguments in favor of and in opposition to the proposal under consideration. The time limit for the return of ballots shall not be less than three weeks from the posted date of ballot distribution. For votes taken at the annual business meeting, a quorum shall be composed of two-thirds of the COTG members or their designated proxies. Proxy designations shall be made by the technical group chair to the COTG chair prior to the COTG annual business meeting.

A simple majority of those COTG members voting will be used to approve or disapprove items other than technical group formation and dissolution, which require a two-thirds majority as specified in Section 16.6 and Section 16.7.

#### **16.5.7 COTG Finances**

As specified in Section 16.5.4.2, Council of Technical Group financial matters shall be handled by the COTG Budget and Finance Committee and overseen by the COTG chair, who has the ultimate responsibility for COTG finances. The Budget and Finance Committee shall ensure that COTG finances are managed in accordance with the relevant Society Operating Rules, such as those detailed in Chapter 8--Finances.

At each COTG annual meeting, the newly installed COTG chair, who is also the past chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, shall present the COTG budget for his/her term of office for approval by the COTG. Proposed expenses may include, but are not limited to, normal operating expenses such as telephone, postage, stationery, and officer travel to the Council midyear meeting in accordance with Society Operating Rules.

#### **16.5.8 Loans to Technical Groups**

When there are insufficient resources within the technical group for such purposes as sponsorship of symposia or other special projects, technical groups may request the loan of COTG funds. Such requests shall include a completed technical group budget approval request form detailing the amount required and proposed repayment schedule, and shall be submitted for approvals in accordance with the specifications of Section 16.8.1 and Section 16.8.2 and, as appropriate, with Chapter 19--Cosponsored Technical Meetings. COTG funds so approved for use by a technical group will be returned on a mutually agreed-upon schedule. No surplus from the use of COTG funds or loss of COTG funds is expected. The COTG shall be the first funding source to be reimbursed by the technical group.

## **16.6 Technical Group Formation**

Members of the Society interested in forming a new technical group shall file a petition with the COTG. This petition shall indicate the proposed name of the technical group; its purpose, objectives, and specific area of interest; a list of officers including, at a minimum, a chair, a Society annual meeting program chair and program chair designate, and newsletter editor; and a list containing the names of individuals interested in joining the proposed group. At least half of such individuals shall be Society members, and there must be at least 150 names on the list. The technical group chair, and Society annual meeting program chair, and the newsletter editor shall be Society Full Members.

The COTG will consider whether establishment of the proposed group is justified and not in conflict with existing technical groups. Following such consideration, the COTG will vote on the proposal and will forward the results of the vote, along with a recommendation, to the HFES Executive Council, which, in turn, will vote on approval or disapproval. The new technical group may begin functioning immediately upon Executive Council approval, and the COTG will contribute up to \$1000 to the new technical group to cover actual initial operating expenses (e.g., newsletter expenses). No repayment of this contribution is expected. If the proposed group is not recommended by the COTG, the COTG chair will provide the group with the reasons for the negative recommendation. The proposed group may include changes or other responses to the COTG's recommendation as part of the proposal package sent to the Executive Council.

## **16.7 Technical Group Dissolution**

At the request of the membership of a technical group through its officers, on the recommendation of a two-thirds majority of the COTG, or on its own initiative, Executive Council may dissolve any technical group. In the latter case, it is expected that Executive Council will solicit and consider the recommendation of the COTG before taking action, and that any action will be for cause. Cause may be the repeated failure of a technical group to meet the requirements specified in Section 16.2 or Section 16.3.

Failure to meet technical group requirements shall be met with increasing levels of remedial intervention. For the first instance of an unfulfilled requirement, the COTG chair will notify the technical group chair and they will work together to seek an effective solution. Should the technical group fail a second time within a three-year period to fulfill a specific requirement, Executive Council shall issue a warning to the technical group, and the COTG chair, the technical group chair, and the Executive Council liaison to the COTG shall develop and submit to Executive Council a plan that details proposed corrective action and a strategy for precluding any further reoccurrence of the problem. Upon the third failure to meet this same requirement within five years of the first instance, the COTG chair shall place before the COTG a recommendation to dissolve the technical group. Results of this COTG ballot will be conveyed to Executive Council for consideration as part of their review of the viability of this technical group in determining whether to dissolve the technical group.

## **16.8 Technical Group Finances**

Technical group finances shall be managed in accordance with the relevant Society Operating Rules, including those detailed in Chapter 8--

Finances. It is the responsibility of the technical group chair to ensure that the technical group account at all times has sufficient funds to support required activities such as those associated with newsletter production and distribution, balloting processes, and administrative functions.

All funds will be held in accounts maintained and supervised by the Society executive director. The Society Central Office ("Central Office") will provide, at no cost to the technical group, basic membership and financial administrative services including member-billing processes, membership list maintenance, and account balance tabulation. Upon request, the Central Office will prepare and supply, at cost, mailing lists for distribution of technical group materials.

The budget approved by the technical group chair and a detail of actual expenditures will be published each year in the technical group newsletter and shall be presented at the annual business meeting of the technical group. These data shall be distributed for information purposes to Council and to the COTG Budget and Finance Committee twice yearly at times specified by the Society executive director. Should material changes in the budget be necessary throughout the year, such changes will be considered by the COTG.

#### **16.8.1 Categories of Technical Group Expenditures**

Three general categories of technical group expenditures are distinguished. The appropriate category for expenditures that do not clearly fit into one of these three categories shall be determined by the technical group chair and the COTG-EC. Regardless of category or level of expenditure, proposed contractual agreements with individuals, groups, agencies, or organizations outside the Society shall be submitted to the COTG-EC for review and approval.

*Category A--Technical group operating expenses.* These include items such as telephone, postage, stationery, and newsletter printing. Such expenditures shall be authorized by the appropriate technical group officer, and the Society executive director shall require suitable documentation prior to distribution or reimbursement of funds.

*Category B--Expenses associated with technical group activities held in conjunction with the Society annual meeting.* Technical groups may, with the approval of the Technical Program Committee, sponsor symposia, special sessions, or invited speakers at the annual meeting. Such activities shall comply with the relevant Society Operating Rules such as those detailed in Chapter 6--Annual Meeting, Chapter 8--Finances, and Chapter 11--Awards. Expenses associated with such activities shall be authorized per the specifications detailed in Section 16.8.2.

*Category C--Expenses associated with technical group activities held apart from the Society annual meeting.* Technical groups may sponsor conferences, symposia, and workshops, with the approval of the Council. Such activities shall comply with the relevant Society Operating Rules such as those detailed in Chapter 8--Finances, Chapter 11--Awards, and Chapter 19--Cosponsored Technical Meetings. Reduced registration or other fees for technical group members attending such activities are encouraged as a benefit to members of the sponsoring technical group. Expenses associated with such activities shall be authorized per the specifications detailed in Section 16.8.2.

### **16.8.2 Expenditure Approvals**

For Category B and Category C expenditures as described in Section 16.8.1, four levels of approval are distinguished:

*Level 1*--The proposed expenditure represents less than 33% of the current balance in the technical group account. Approval of the technical group chair is required.

*Level 2*--The proposed expenditure represents between 33% and 66% of the current balance in the technical group account. In addition to the approval associated with Level 1 expenditures, the full technical group membership shall be given the opportunity to vote on the proposed expenditure (see Section 16.4.3).

*Level 3*--The proposed expenditure represents more than 66% of the current balance in the technical group account or a loan of up to \$3000 in COTG funds is requested. In addition to the approvals associated with Level 2 expenditures, the COTG Budget and Finance Committee shall approve the proposed expenditure.

*Level 4*--The proposed expenditure includes a request for the loan of Society funds or the loan of more than \$3000 of COTG funds. In addition to the approvals associated with Level 3 expenditures, such COTG loans shall be approved by the COTG and the loan of Society funds shall be approved by the Council.

### **16.9 Technical Group Operating Rules**

Technical groups may, at their own discretion, develop operating procedures through which to specify and guide TG operations. Such operating procedures shall neither conflict with nor supersede Society Bylaws or Society Operating Rules, and shall be updated in timely fashion in response to changes in these regulations.

### **16.10 Exchange of Information**

The Central Office will provide mailing lists of individuals to whom copies of all technical group newsletters, announcements, etc., are to be distributed. Ordinarily, this list will include Council members, the Central Office, members of the COTG, and editors of Society and technical group publications.

### **16.11 Consultant Listings**

Listings of consultants published by technical groups must indicate that the Society does not endorse or certify the competence of those listed.

### **16.12 Council of Technical Groups Awards**

The COTG may sponsor an annual competition for technical group newsletters. The awards given provide formal recognition to technical group newsletter editors in two categories: best single issue and best overall newsletter for a calendar year.

Calls for participation in each year's competition are issued by the COTG Newsletter Editor Awards Committee. A technical group must have published a minimum of two newsletters in the calendar year in order to be eligible.

### **16.13 Technical Group Awards**

Each technical group may, with the concurrence of the COTG-EC, provide awards within their area of interest. Such awards provide formal recognition to persons who have made outstanding contributions to the technical group's area of interest.

#### **16.13.1 Award Approval Procedure**

Proposals for technical group awards must contain a written description of the award that includes the purpose of the award, qualifications for the award, award nomination procedures, award criteria, and budget allocations for the award. The proposed award must be approved by a majority of the TG members casting ballots and submitted to the COTG-EC for approval.

#### **16.13.2 Award Budget Allowances**

The total budget for a technical group award may not exceed the costs of a certificate or plaque, award administration costs, and a monetary award not to exceed \$500. Proposed monetary awards larger than \$500 shall be approved by the COTG-EC. As specified in Chapter 6--Annual Meeting, hotel, meal, and award luncheon ticket expenses may be paid by the technical group for award recipients who are neither technical group nor Society members. When the proposed total expenditures for any award exceed \$1000 the expenditures shall be submitted to the entire membership of the technical group for approval, and may require additional approvals per the specifications of Section 16.8.2.

If the award is to be presented at a conference other than the Society annual meeting, the technical group may also pay registration fees for the recipient to the meeting where the award is presented. Registration fees for the Society annual meeting may not be part of the budget unless the recipient is neither a Society nor a technical group member.

#### **16.13.3 Award Reporting Requirements**

The status of technical group award activity, including the names of recipients, shall be published annually in the newsletter of the sponsoring technical group. This information, along with the number of award nominees and the judges for each award, shall be sent to the Council, the COTG chair, and the Society Awards Committee twice yearly at times specified by the Society executive director.

## APPENDIX C

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### HFES POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR TECHNICAL GROUP WEBSITES

#### Policies

The following items must appear on all HFES Technical Groups and local and student chapters:

1. HFES logo, which you can obtain (tiff format, black and white only) from HFES



or



**Note:** If you would like to modify the logo or incorporate it into your own logo or other graphic element, please send the Communications Department a copy before you post your graphic on your site.

2. The group's name must include "HFES" or "Human Factors and Ergonomics Society," such as "Aerospace Systems Technical Group of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society", "Arizona Chapter of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society", or "HFES Old Dominion University Student Chapter"

3. A link to the HFES Web site (<http://hfes.org>) must appear on the home page.

#### Guidelines

1. If your Web site is not hosted by HFES, send the Communications Department the URL for your site. The HFES Web site contains links to all active TG and chapter Web sites.
2. Be sure to notify the central office whenever your Web site URL changes.
3. Test all the links throughout your site regularly to ensure they are still active; update as needed.

## APPENDIX D

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### **A GUIDE FOR HFES-AFFILIATED GROUPS: Copyright, Decency, and Information Dissemination**

The following brief guidelines are intended to assist groups affiliated with the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, such as chapters and technical groups, with the task of responsible information dissemination.

Growth, particularly in the area of electronic information dissemination, has raised concerns about protection of intellectual property rights and issues involving suitability, appropriateness, and decency. These guidelines address such issues in regard to the distribution of information in print or by electronic means (e.g., E-mail, bulletin boards, list servers, World Wide Web).

#### **Copyright**

Unless the author of information presented in print or electronic form explicitly states otherwise, he or she owns the information, and anyone wishing to use or redistribute it must first obtain the author's permission. Whether or not a statement such as "Copyright 2006 by John Jones" appears in the document, it must be assumed to be copyrighted. (Simply stating that a document is copyrighted establishes the ownership; it need not be formally registered with the Copyright Office.) Reuse of even a small portion of the work without permission may violate the author's copyright.

If you intend to reuse, redistribute, or upload information, you must first obtain permission unless an explicit license for reuse is included in the document. In addition, if you are redistributing or reprinting the document, the copyright owner may require that you obtain the permission of others (the author, for instance) and/or that you include a specific acknowledgment of the original source as conditions of reuse.

The Human Factors and Ergonomics Society requires that anyone wishing to reuse HFES-copyrighted material must obtain permission from the Society as well as the senior author (even if the requester is the senior author). Acknowledgment of the original source is also required.

By their nature, messages posted to publicly accessible news groups are assumed to be copyable without the need to obtain the author's permission. This is referred to as "implied license" to reuse the work. However, there are very few other instances of implied license allowing reuse of another's work without permission.

According to the Society's legal counsel, "the courts have determined that bulletin board operators having knowledge that unauthorized copies of materials may be made in connection with the operation of the bulletin board can be held liable for copyright infringement, as well as for trademark infringement, unfair competition, and otherwise."

## **Antitrust and Defamation**

Issues of confidentiality, privacy, antitrust, and libel can arise in electronic communication media such as bulletin boards. According to the Society's legal counsel, "antitrust violations such as 'statements that could be construed as price-fixing, boycotting of certain supplier companies or firms, or even allocation of markets among suppliers'] have been considered per se antitrust violations in certain circumstances." In addition, "bulletin board operators can be held liable as publishers of defamatory comments when controlling the content of online information. Potentially defamatory, obscene, or other improper communications can be problematic."

HFES advises that the system operator state clearly that "the system will not be monitored for defamatory, obscene, or illegal statements but that users can be terminated in the event of making such comments online."

With regard to privacy and confidentiality, "anything placed online (including E-mail) should be considered permanent and accessible and discoverable in litigation."

## **References**

Glassie, J. C. (1996, May 21). Memorandum from the Law Offices of Jenner & Block, Washington, DC.

Lessig, L., Post, D., & Volokh, E. (1996). Cyberspace law for non-lawyers (<http://www.lessig.org/content/articles/works/cyberlessons/index.html>)  
(August 1996)