Acute Cardiovascular Care Association of the ESC

Constitution

April 2014
1. Introduction

The Constitution of the Association on Acute Cardiovascular Care (ACCA) aims to outline the principles of governance of a transparent and democratic organisation with a strong collective leadership within the European Society of Cardiology (ESC).

2. Establishment

The Acute Cardiovascular Care Association (ACCA) is a registered branch and legally represented by the ESC. Its creation was approved by voting at the General Assembly of the ESC during ESC Congress 2012 in Munich, Germany (September 2012).

3. Purpose and objectives

3.1. Mission statement

The ACCA mission: To improve the quality of care and outcomes of patients with acute cardiovascular diseases

The ESC mission: To reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease in Europe

3.2. Purpose

The aim of the ACCA is to fulfil its mission by focusing on the development of diagnostic and therapeutic techniques and strategies, systems of care, and organisational aspects for the best management of acute cardiovascular diseases.

It addresses all professionals involved in acute cardiovascular care or its organisation, healthcare professionals, scientists, managers, decision-makers, politicians, media, allied societies.

3.3. Objectives

- To promote dialogue, exchange and dissemination of knowledge.
- To bridge/link specialists of different levels and backgrounds.
- To facilitate education.
- To implement quality improvement initiatives.
- To foster research.
- To deliver recommendations.
- To lead a certification process (for individuals & ICCUs/CCUs).

3.4. Within the framework of the European Society of Cardiology, the ACCA objectives are:

- To participate in the Board and committees of the ESC.
- To advice the Board of the ESC on the scientific, educational and organizational needs related to acute cardiovascular care in Europe.
4. Membership

Membership is open to all professionals involved in the field of acute cardiovascular care that supports the mission and objectives of the ACCA regardless of their background or origin.

All eligible members (a member is considered eligible after six (6) months of membership) have voting rights to elect ACCA Committees and Board positions.

Membership is individual on the basis of a subscription which can be free or at a fee determined by the Board. Adjustments in the membership fees can be determined by a two third (2/3) majority vote by the Board.

In its membership strategy, the ACCA will ensure to:

- Encourage and promote an active participation of its members.
- Establish methods and facilitate communication between members.
- Facilitate educational, training and scientific opportunities on acute cardiovascular care for members.
5. Structure of ACCA

ACCA Board
Committees / Study Groups
EHJ - ACVC journal
Nominating Committee
Membership

6. Structure of the ACCA Board
7. Organisation & responsibilities

The administration of the ACCA is conducted by a Board composed of voting members who are elected by eligible membership and who assume responsibility for the management of ACCA including, but not limited to, the organisation, activities and developments.

The ACCA Board is formed by twelve (12) voting members and the executive Board has five (5) members. The other seven (7) are the elected Board members without executive functions.

Ex-officio Board members can be invited to attend Board meeting on an ad-hoc basis.

7.1. The ACCA Board

7.1.1. The executive Board

- The President
- The President Elect
- The immediate Past President
- The Secretary
- The Treasurer

Executive Board members are responsible for:

- Overall strategy and management of the ACCA, subject to final decision by the entire Board.
- Prepares Board discussions and oversees the implementation of the Board’s decisions.
- Ensures liaison with ESC Staff within Specialty Centre.
- Ensures liaison with ESC Board, Committees and Constituent Bodies via the president.
- Propose to the Board the appointment of ex-officio Board members according to the needs and priorities of ACCA.

Executive Board members are elected for a two years period.

The executive Board is collectively responsible for fundraising activities and approval of expenditures above three thousand Euros (3000 €)

The President

Definition:

The President is the highest ACCA authority and holds the principal responsibility and representation of ACCA.

Election/Nomination:
The President-Elect becomes automatically President when the current president finishes his/her two (2)-years term, usually during the General Assembly held at the annual ACC Congress.

Responsibilities:
- Represents ACCA in ESC Board.
- Chairs the ordinary and extra-ordinary general assemblies.
- May delegate authority and signature to the President Elect or to any other member of the executive Board if needed.
- In collaboration with the Board, determines strategy and related objectives of the Association and supervises all the organizational structure and initiatives.
- Prepares the agendas and conducts the Board Meetings and General Assemblies in collaboration with the ACCA executive Board and the ACCA Head of department.
- Appoints chairpersons of the ACCA Committees.
- Remains in the ACCA Executive Board for two (2) years as Immediate Past President.

**The President-Elect**

Definition:
The President-Elect is the second level of authority and representation in the ACCA Board. In absence of the President, he/she automatically assumes the role of President acting on his/her behalf when needed.

Election/Nomination:
The President-Elect is elected by the ACCA eligible voting members to become the next ACCA President for two years

Responsibilities:
- Works in close cooperation with the President with the aim to create continuity in strategies once he assumes the Presidential position.
- Manages assignments given by the President and assumes the office of President should the President become unable to perform his duties.
- Supervises activities of relevant Association initiatives.

**The Past-President**

Definition/ Election/Nomination:
It is the automatic position within the Executive Board held by the President as voting member when his/her two-year presidential term is over.

Responsibilities:
- Provides historical information and background.
- Ensures the continuity in the activities and initiatives of the Association.
• Is by default Chair of the ACCA Nominating Committee.

**The Secretary**

**Definition:**
The secretary provides support to President and President-Elect for organisational matters and may have additional responsibilities assigned by the President.

**Election/Nomination:**
The secretary is elected by the ACCA eligible voting members for two (2) years.

**Responsibilities:**
• Maintenance of record of activities (writing and validation of minutes).
• Keeps track of issues to be discussed at meetings, and ensures follow-up.
• Manages assignments (scientific or administrative) given by the president.

**The Treasurer**

**Definition:**
The treasurer is responsible for supervising ACCA finances, ensuring the follow-up of the accounts and reporting to the ACCA Board.

**Election/Nomination:**
The treasurer is elected by the ACCA eligible voting members for two (2) years.

**Responsibilities:**
• Works with the ACCA head of department, ESC Specialty Centre director and ESC finance department of the EHH to prepare a three-years rolling business plan to be presented to the ACCA Board for approval and validation.
• Approves with the President all unbudgeted expenses inferior to three thousands Euros (3000 €). For unbudgeted expenses above three thousands Euros (3000 €), approval of the Executive Board is required.
• Is responsible for relation with industry.
• Acts as a link between the ACCA Head of Department and the ACCA Board on finance related issues.
• Ensures full transparency of all transactions thereon, including donations, sponsorship and grants to the ESC concerning acute cardiovascular care.
• Manages assignments given by the President.
• Presents and reports on financial matters of the Association at the General Assembly.
7.1.2. The regular ACCA Board members

Definition:
ACCA members who are elected to be Board members in the regular elections who do not hold executive positions in the Board.

Election/Nomination:
Are elected directly by the ACCA members in the corresponding elections for a two year term

Responsibilities:
- To attend all ACCA meetings.
- To participate in all Board discussions and decisions with word and vote.
- To work actively to reach the ACCA Board objectives and ensure delivery of the assigned tasks.
- Regular Board members may, or may not take specific responsibilities within the Board, such as leading one of the ACCA Committees or Study Groups, according to the ACCA needs. their level of expertise, interest,…

7.1.3. The Ex-officio Board members (non-voting)

Ex-officio members are non-elected and non-voting Board members who are appointed by the President to fulfil specific function according the needs and priorities of ACCA:

The Editor in Chief

Definition:
The Editor in Chief is the person responsible for handling the European Heart Journal – Acute Cardiovascular Care, the official journal of ACCA.
The Editor-in-Chief must have a strategic vision for the future of the journal and be totally comfortable working with an electronic-only manuscript handling system.

Election/Nomination:
The Editor in Chief is elected by the Board in a selection process that must include at least two candidates.
The term of office for the Editor in Chief of EHJ-ACVC Journal is three (3) years, with the possibility to extend the term for a maximum of two (2) periods of two (2) years, i.e. a maximum total term of seven (7) years.
Renewal must be notified twelve (12) months before end of terms.

Responsibilities:
He/She should
- Be open to the idea of administrative staff working remotely from a Virtual Editorial Office.
- Should appoint one or more Associate Editor(s).
• Should consider that peers undertaking editorial and review work do not have to be in the same institution, especially with existing collaborative solutions allowing teamwork over great distances.

• Manage relationship with Publisher.

• Organize & chair editorial Board meetings.

The high recognition that the role of Editor-in-Chief commands, warrants applications from dynamic, energetic and above all, highly motivated actors in the field of ACC.

**The CEO of the ESC**

According to the ESC governance, the CEO of the ESC is de facto ex-officio member of all ESC associations.

### 7.2. The ACCA Committees

The ACCA committees are created by the Board to establish a dedicated group with specific functions to support the ACCA strategy. Committees are in charge of the implementation of the strategic plan by developing and measuring results of specific activities.

**The Committee chairs**

**Definition:**
Committee chairs are responsible for setting objectives, proposing activities and operational plan aligned with the mission and the strategy of the association.

Any activity must be validated by the Board prior to implementation.

**Election/Nomination:**
Committee Chairs are initially selected among the elected ACCA Board members, striving to accommodate ACCA needs followed by personal preferences/professional profile.

Committee chairmanship(s) that remain vacant after this selection will be appointed by the president with the approval of the Executive Board. Those chairs will function as Ex-officio non-voting members in the Board for the duration of their chairmanship. Ex officio Committee chairs who are not elected can be invited to attend Board meetings on an ad hoc basis.

The duration of these positions is two years and can be renewed for another two (2) years, for both elected and appointed ex-officio chairs, if supported by more than fifty percent (50%) of the Board and approved by the executive Board.

**Responsibilities:**

• Is responsible for meeting the objectives and ensuring delivery of the initiatives of the committee.

• Acts as a link between the ACCA Board and the committee members.
• Manages assignments given by the President.
• Reports on his/her committee activity at each ACCA Board meeting.
• Recruits, with the advice of the President, the members of his/her committee, proceeding as follows:
  Each committee chair will define recruiting criteria according to predefined strategy & projects to develop and implement. Based on those profiles, each committee chair will proceed with a short-list of potential candidates per position that will be presented to all voting members of ACCA for election (online voting).
• Committee chairpersons may invite committee members to step down, if they remain inactive and do not participate in the committee activities. This decision should be:
  ✓ based on defined criteria (less than fifty percent (50%) meeting attendance, lack of compliance with timelines)
  ✓ taken collegially with the other committee members (with a two-third (2/3) majority required).
  ✓ approved by the executive Board
  In this case, the committee chair has two possibilities:
  ✓ the candidate who obtained the second-highest number of votes in the previous members’ elections will automatically be elected. OR
  ✓ a new candidate can be nominated by the committee chair.

If a new member enters the committee at mid-term, he will be able to reapply.

The Committee Members

Definition:
They are ACCA members with a specific interest or skill appointed or elected to function in one of the ACCA committees.

Election/Nomination:
Committee membership is open to all ACCA members being eligible for such position.

Each committee has four (4) members, except for the larger Education committee having six (6). In all committees fifty percent (50%) of members are nominated for a two (2) years period by the committee chair & fifty percent (50%) are elected by ACCA voting membership (election should take place right after new chair’s elected), fifty percent (50%) others will be nominated - It is foreseen that for continuity, a committee chair can appoint his/her predecessor to stay in the committee as a regular member for another mandate (two years)

Responsibilities:
• To actively participate in committee meetings and calls
• To contribute and invest time/effort in committee initiatives
• To deliver timely the tasks assigned by the committee chair
7.3. The ACCA Study Groups

Study groups aim at advancing the science in selected fields of acute cardiovascular care in order to increase ACCA leadership position in those fields. Each study group is under the supervision of the ACCA Scientific Committee and has freedom to propose to the Board, potential members/participants and activities.

Study groups should deliver consensus papers, position papers, research proposals, surveys...

The Study Group chairs

Definition: Study groups chairs are the leading persons of the study group appointed by the ACCA Board to develop the specific objectives proposed for that particular study group.

He/she is responsible for setting objectives, proposing activities and operational plan aligned with the Board decisions when creating the study group.

Nomination: He/She is appointed by the Board according to expertise and/or scientific interest in the field. He/She is usually well involved in ACCA activities.

Responsibilities:
- Set a delivery plan (with milestones) of the study group including the expected output agreed with the Board
- Organize regular meetings and conference calls with its members to ensure progress and advancing of projects

The Study Group members

Definition: They are ACCA members with a specific interest or skill appointed to function in one of the ACCA Study groups

Nomination: Study group membership is nominated by the study group chair. It should not exceed 10 people recognised as experts in the field.

Responsibilities:
- Actively participate in meetings and calls
- Participate in writing/reviewing position papers, setting scientific programme of study group initiatives, speaking at sessions or webinars
- Participate in seeking funding for the study group

7.4. The ACCA Nominating Committee

Definition:
It is a group of five (5) relevant ACCA members designated to evaluate the volunteer candidates to apply to for Board executive positions in every ACCA election and select the most appropriate
final candidates. It is chaired by the immediate Past President and co-chaired by the previous Past President who takes over by default in case the chair is unable to lead.

**Election/Nomination**
- Immediate Past-President and Previous Past-President are automatic members.
- Third member is appointed by Past-President and Previous Past-President in agreement.
- The other two members are appointed by the ACCA Board.

The term of office of the Nominating Committee is two (2) years.

Members of the ACCA Nominating Committee will only be eligible as candidates for election to either the Board, or to a future Nominating Committee, after a period of four years following expiry of their term of office as a member of the Nominating Committee

**Responsibilities:**
- To evaluate CV, personal characteristics, willingness to participate, dedication and any feature that may positively or negatively influence in future ACCA responsibilities of all volunteers applying for ACCA Board executive positions (President Elect, Secretary and Treasurer).
- To identify, select, and propose to the ACCA membership for its vote, at least two candidates for each of the executive positions.
- To ensures a geographical balance of candidates with required experience from ESC Member countries.
- To put forward names of members for the subsequent Nominating Committee that will be approved by members of the ACCA holding voting rights

**8. Administrative Officers**

The administrative officers of the ACCA (Head of Department, Administrator, Officers) are appointed by the Director of the Speciality Centre with prior approval of the ESC chief executive officer. They are an integrated part of the ESC Specialty Centre and are located within the European Heart House. Their main tasks are:

- Conduct ACCA activities by liaising with European Heart House business units and support functions
- Ensure the organization of ACCA activities as directed by the Board
- Maintain membership list
- Supervise organization of the electronic election process
- Consolidate Yearly business plan (including budget) preparation & follow-up
9. Terms of Office & Renewal

- The term of office is two years for the immediate Past President, President, and President Elect (presidential trio), who may not be renewed in the same role.

- Secretary and Treasurer may continue without re-election for one term of two years, unless he/she has already reached 4 years of serving at any Board position, after recommendation by the presidential trio and Board approval with a two third (2/3) majority.

- After the first two (2)-years term, Board members (except Treasurer and Secretary which are described above) can only be renewed once upon Board approval with a two third (2/3) majority, serving a maximum of four years unless elected President-Elect.

- The immediate past president – once his/her mandate is over, finishes his term and cannot reapply to any Board position for a period of 4 years (2 terms).

- Board members who step out can re-enter the Board after a period of four (4) years (two election terms).

- If a member enters at mid-term, the end of his/her first term will be considered at the end of the regular term. He can be renewed by Board decision for a period of two more years but never to exceed four years.

- Representatives from industry companies may not be eligible to ACCA Board positions.

- The renewal of the whole ACCA Board will include up to one third of the members, every two years. However, there will be two exceptional election processes during the 2014 and 2016 elections to ensure the continuity of the first Board (Appendix 1).

Resignation and special situation

- In case of resignation of a Board member, an extra-ordinary election can be organised at any time of the year. The new Board member will start his mandate immediately but his length of term will have to fit with the one in progress (usually from October year N to October year N+2).

- Should a Board member wishes to hold an executive position concurrently (President, Vice President, President Elect) in a National Society or in the European Society of Cardiology, he will need the approval of the executive Board.
10. Procedure for Elections

ACCA aims to be a transparent and democratic organization whose leadership has the support and endorsement of its members for their activities. To reflect this, the most important positions in the Association are filled by election from the eligible voting membership.

All members of the ACCA having at least six (6) month of membership subscription are entitled to vote.

Elections will be conducted via electronic means, organized under the responsibility of the Nominating Committee and administered by the Heart House staff.

10.1. Election process and timeline for Board positions:

- Call for candidate: The Board will notify members of the election procedures no less than 90 days in advance of the annual General Assembly at ACC congress.
- Any member of the Association holding voting rights may put his/her name forward for any Board positions including executive positions (namely President-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary). Candidacies/Nominations must be received by the Secretary no less than sixty (60) days before the General Assembly.
- Candidacies/Nominations for the position of President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer will be submitted to the Nominating Committee who will proceed with a short list of minimum two (2) members per open positions.
- Candidacies/Nominations for the position of committee chairs will be reviewed by the executive Board who will proceed same way.
- The Secretary will notify the membership of the candidates for election no less than thirty (30) days before the General Assembly. The name of the candidates and a brief summary (maximum hundred words as provided by the candidate) outlining the candidate’s credentials and letter of motivation will be circulated.
- All ACCA members holding voting rights have the right to vote. Elections will be conducted via electronic means, organized under the responsibility of the Nominating Committee and administrated by the Heart House staff. Votes for officers will be casted electronically. These votes cannot be transferred to other persons.
- Election results will be announced prior the General Assembly (for committee chairs) and at the General Assembly (for executive officers) of the ACC Congress in every even year.
- All mandates will be effective at the end of ACC Congress.
10.2. Rules for candidates

- Candidates must be members of ACCA with eligibility rights to apply-
- All Board members (those stepping down and those staying in the Board) can apply for President-Elect position excluding the President and the Past President
  - If one regular Board member is elected for a Board executive position, his/her position will be covered by one of the candidates voted for new Board member in that election. If needed, the immediate most voted candidate elected for a regular Board position will be selected.
  - If one regular Board member who applies is not elected for an executive position, he/she can stay in his/her current Board position unless he/she has reached his/her maximum term of 4 years.
- ACCA members not working in the ACCA Board can apply simultaneously to one executive Board position and to one regular Board member position.
  - If the candidate is elected for both positions, he/she will take only the responsibility for the Executive Board position he/she applied to. His/her candidacy for regular Board member position will not be considered and the position will be adjudicated to the next immediate voted candidate.
  - If the candidate is elected only for the regular Board position, he/she will take that responsibility.
- Before opening the call for elections, the Secretary and Treasurer will communicate whether they wish to become candidates for President Elect or wish to be renewed in their current position (provided they have not reached 4 years in the Board).
  - If the Secretary or Treasurer become candidate for President-Elect his/her position will be released and a call for candidates to cover that position will be open.

11. Board meetings and General Assembly

11.1. ACCA Board meetings

Regular ordinary Board meetings will be held during the year, preferably coinciding with major meetings (eg. the ESC Annual Congress, the annual ACC Congress and the ACCA Summit) with usually one additional yearly strategic meeting in January/February. Extraordinary meetings may be organised, and other particular stand alone Board meeting when required and funds permitting.
11.2. ACCA General Assemblies

- The General Assembly (GA) is the open meeting performed at least annually between the ACCA Board and the members, usually during the ACCA Congress or the ESC Congress.
- Attendance at an ACCA GA is open to all current Board and to all members of the Association. Only eligible voting members have the right to vote (when relevant, votes must be cast in person and cannot be transferred through other persons.)
- Notification of a General Assembly must be given no less than thirty (30) days in advance to the members.
- The agenda of the GA will be drawn up by the Board and circulated to members no less than thirty (30) days in advance.
- Only those items appearing on the agenda of the GA will be discussed and voted on.
- Each member may submit in writing to the Secretary of the Board any issue or proposal not governed by these Statutes, no less than four (4) months before the next GA so as to include it in the agenda for discussion and vote by the GA.
- The President of ACCA presides over the GA and is responsible for all procedures related to the preparation and conduct of the GA.
- If the President is unable to perform these tasks, these may be conducted by a member of the Board designated by the Board to this effect.
- The secretarial duties are performed by the Secretary of the Board or by another member of the Board on her/his absence.
- The resolutions of the GA will be recorded in minutes signed by the President and Secretary of the meeting and kept in a register.

12. European Heart Journal - Acute Cardiovascular Care

The European Heart Journal – Acute Cardiovascular Care (EHJ-ACVC journal) is the official journal of the ACCA and provides an avenue of communication of scientific data, new developments and teaching between the ACCA members.
It publishes original articles, editorials, reviews, case reports, etc..

The Editor in chief is nominated by the Board - The term of office for the Editor in Chief of EHJ-ACVC Journal is three (3) years, with the possibility to extend the term for a maximum of two (2) more periods of two (2) years, i.e. a maximum total term of seven (7) years.

The publisher is nominated by the Board in collaboration with the publication department after a tender process, and subject to a specific contract.

The Editor has the sole responsibility for the running of the Journal. The Board has the power to discontinue the term of the Editor if this is deemed necessary.
13. **Resources**

The sources of revenue for the ACCA will include:

- Membership dues paid by the members directly to the ACCA, when or if a paying membership is introduced.
- Registration fees, subscription fees or grants for the various activities carried out by or on behalf of the ACCA (congress registration, Journal subscription, ESCel platform, educational activities/products, certification services).
- Revenues from property, companies and securities owned by the ACCA.
- Donations / Sponsorship in compliance with actual regulations.

The ACCA Board has authority to seek financial assistance to cover the necessary expenditures for the activities of the ACCA.

No re-distribution of profit to the members is contemplated. However, the ACCA may award scholarships, awards or grants for education, training or research in its area of interest if agreed by the Board in advance.

No honoraria can be perceived by volunteers for their active contributions to ESC / ACCA, which is in essence made on a voluntary basis, including Board, committee, study group or scientific activities.

14. **Financial Control**

The Treasurer will oversee the Association’s funds held by the European Society of Cardiology in a dedicated ACCA account and will work in collaboration with the ACCA Head of Department and the finance department to ensure full transparency for all transactions thereon, including donations, sponsorships and grants to the ESC concerning ACCA. The accounting period shall start on the first of April and end of the thirty first of March of any given year, which corresponds to the ESC financial year.

15. **Changes to the Constitution**

Proposals for changes in the constitution can come from:

- The ACCA Board (after being approved by two third (2/3) of the Board voting members) or
- Members, supported by a minimum number of fifty (50) ACCA voting members

Proposals coming from a group of at least fifty (50) members should be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the ACCA at least four (4) months prior to the General Assembly.
Proposed changes must be circulated to all members at least three (3) months before the General Assembly. The Board shall have the right to comment in writing on any validated proposal and may circulate such comments together with the proposed wording to all members prior to the General Assembly.

The proposals will be voted in the General Assembly and should be approved by at least two third (2/3) of attending membership, in order to be endorsed.

16. Dissolution – Liquidation

ACCA can be dissolved by recommendation of the ACCA General Assembly to the ESC Board. In this situation, the ESC Board must accept this decision and propose it to the ESC Annual General Assembly. The General Assembly will have the final decision on the matter.
APPENDIX 1: Election process for years 2014 & 2016

In 2012, when the Working Group on Acute Cardiac Care became the ACCA, the ESC board approved an exceptional extension of the terms of all members of the Nucleus as to become the members of the ACCA board. For this reason, at the time of board renewal in 2014, almost all members have reached or exceeded the limit time 4 years serving in the ACC WG nucleus and ACCA board (see Table).

<table>
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<th>BOARD MEMBER</th>
<th>Date of entry in WG Nucleus</th>
<th>Date of entry in ACCA</th>
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<tr>
<td>Zahger Doron</td>
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<td>2012</td>
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<td>Vrints Christiaan J.M.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Price Susanna</td>
<td>2006</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beygui Fazin</td>
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According to ESC rules for turnover, most ACCA board members should step out in 2014. As such situation would negatively affect the continuity of ACCA’s leadership and a number of projects, a unique transition process was approved unanimously by the ACCA board during the ACCA board meeting held in Brussels on February 20th, 2014.

The transition process consists in the renewal of 5 positions in 2014 and 6 positions in 2016. The election of the 5 first members to be renewed is based first on the entry date in the Nucleus of the Working Group on ACC. According to this rule, 4 members elected before 2010 should step out (5 members but the one remaining as Past-President). The fifth renewal will be selected from those who entered in 2010. Firstly, the opportunity to volunteer will be offered. If there is no volunteer, a system to select one candidate will have to be put in place by agreement of the board. In 2016, all members elected in 2010 will step out unless holding the positions of President-Elect, President or incoming Past President.