

Some COMMENTS ON MODEL 2 – Matters/issues for consideration with this and any model

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| <p>Solid foundations for growth</p> | <p>To create a climate allowing for flexibility and organic growth (An expressed opinion in the OWG) there still need to be firm foundations, clearly articulated understandings, policies and a commitment from all sectors to processes that will help it to work, first and foremost for the benefit of the group’s stated objectives but also for the group and the people in it.</p> |
| <p>Name Central group</p> | <p>The major decision making body of MASG we recommend be called the Coordination Group (CoG).</p> |
| <p>6 Members of CoG elected by member forum</p> | <p>Membership of the CoOrdination Group We suggest that in addition to the representatives from staff and the various Working Groups (which may be minimal at first and also fluctuate as bubbles and their members come and go) a further 6 people be elected by the members at a members forum, to be part of the CoG. Inferred in this is that these 6 could become the legally responsible group in MASG as required under our Articles of Incorporation. The Requirement is for a minimum of 6 and maximum of 9. This would be known as “The Accountability Group”</p> |
| <p>Role of CoG Elected 6</p> | <p>Would be responsible for the externally required tasks as listed on the model. The elected 6 would be part of the CoOrdination Group in terms of organizational/operational decision making.</p> |
| <p>Sustainability of the CoG given Scope/complexity</p> | <p>Will reps from activity groups want to spend time dealing with such matters? The possibility of huge amounts of prior reading for meetings is high if its members want to truly understand what they are deciding. This enhances the recommendation for 6 elected members as above.</p> |
| <p>Ephemeral CoG Reps & getting the boring unpopular stuff done.</p> | <p>Membership of Bubbles/Working Groups/Forums Looking at the model , it is likely that few people may want to be part of, nor find much passion for groups like fundraising.</p> <p>In the model so far there are some 19 activity centers with more potentially. (Groupings of people around issues or tasks) 2 of these are currently staffed bubbles (Administration, Advocacy), and 1 is a fixed term staff Project (Comfy Homes). Some of the other groupings exist in some form and are active for various periods of time. This means that CoG representation from these will fluctuate. The CoG needs to take account of possible fluctuating membership which has implications for the workloads which may be left to fewer people in a smaller CoG This is one of the weaknesses of the model.</p> |
| <p>Can organization cope with potential demand? Pressure points in Model</p> | <p>The pressure on administration support could be very high depending on the level of support envisaged. any additional demands would need to be very clearly understood. There would need to be rules around what individual bubbles could demand or expect from administration.</p> <p>I can see that the COG could become a pressure point given the range and depth of the tasks it might need to involve itself in. Whilst it is true to say that more people make it easier to spread the load, it is also true to say that sometimes this can make the task harder especially if it does not contain the skills required to make it so.</p> |

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| How will time taken for central role impact on staff work time? | Staff could potentially have additional tasks as a result of COG participation. How would this impact on capacity to do own work and also on time off in lieu meaning absence from work. Needs to be clearly worked through. |
| What is worth keeping? | LEARNING FROM THE PAST There has been an expressed desire to learn from things that didn't work/were not liked. Do we need to also learn from the things that did work or could be made to work better with a tweak? Do we abandon everything from the past and reinvent from scratch? What are the things that still hold value/hold true? How much of the baby do we throw out with the bathwater? (Much of what was expressed in surveys/workshops echoes some of what is already the case. In reading all the material my view would be that most people have more concerns with the CULTURE and not necessarily the STRUCTURE as such and we should keep this in mind apropos of the model we finally recommend. |
| Codes of Responsibility | Some code about attendance/responsibility/commitment/behaviour would be needed so that the organisation functions effectively, safely, where applicable confidentially etc. For example, It would be bad to have reps drifting in and out leaving the burden to those who attended regularly, bad also in terms of the interruption of flows of information between the CoG and the groups/activity centres which might impact on information required for decision making. Training may be needed to cover this area. |

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| Liability | Members of the CoG will need to have a good understanding of Their liability. |
| Consensus and overriding blocks | Decision making A preference for consensus decision making has been expressed. There is no mechanism in this model for breaking a deadlock in this process nor for dealing with a "blocker". This model (the one with most dots from workshop) is a FOE one, but that organisation has a Board and if two attempts at consensus are not successful it steps in to decide. This model does not have such a grouping. Consensus takes time and it takes more time with more people. This model would need to recommend a tight process or meetings could go on forever. |
| Options | 2 options on methods will be explained by Dean. Training workshop recommended on selected mode. |
| Managing Meetings & Facilitation | Recommend that training workshop provide for CoG members and others interested and that facilitation then be mostly voluntary but perhaps professional for training purposes and conflict resolution. |

THE ACTION GROUPS AND STAFFED ACTIVITY CENTRES

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| What Does Autonomy really Mean in the Model context | Autonomy of Activity Groups It has been mentioned that activity groups would be autonomous What do we mean by "autonomy" – is it total or is it conditional. What sorts of conditions might need to apply to protect the organization or its objectives as a whole from any negative impacts |
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| Staff & Autonomy | <p>What does autonomy mean when it applies to a bubble which is essentially a Staff position based on an issue/activity? Again what sorts of conditions apply to this autonomy for the good of the organization as a whole? Staff usually have contracts and Position Descriptions which spell out their responsibilities and rights and in effect limit autonomy.</p> <p>Is 'autonomy' the right word?</p> <p>We recommend that the words to describe working or action groups be "self generating, self directing but with agreed codes of responsibility and behaviour to the organization".</p> |
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| Should there be Boundaries and parameters even "rules" | <p>What sorts of conditions/codes should apply to voluntary and employed people/groups for the benefit of the organization as a whole?</p> |
| How independent are working groups? | <p>Do individual activity groups prepare and monitor/manage their own budgets or are their costs incorporated into cost centres in the main MASG budget (autonomy) Do they acquit their own funded activities if they have them?</p> <p>It has been suggested that individual groups develop projects, seek funds (approved by CoG re strategic/priority) and employ staff. This raises some questions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the employer? • What process needs to be in place for employing • How do groups deal with any individual's sense of "rights to a job" because they propose it? How do we ensure transparent/fair employment practice? • Where would an employee be located • What role for MASG Administration - it has been suggested that 20% of funds raised go to MASG to cover administration. This may or may not cover costs it is certainly less than provided in the non NGO world. • Does the Bubble supervise the employee? • What progress/performance monitoring/reporting needs to be in place and how is it done? • What triggers the SPIC/legal entity to step in if necessary? |

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| <p>Train who and for what and who pays?</p> | <p>TRAINING. There is a training suggestions on the model 3 illustration and it is referred to in the workshop notes. I think it would be good if this group (OWG) identified the sorts of training required and for whom. We are charged with costing the model so will need to know this to meet that charge. OWG has recommended training in the following: Meeting Facilitation Consensus Decision Making Code of Responsibility Possibly in Project Development and Costing</p> |
| <p>Costing Model</p> | <p>The OWG has been charged with costing the model it recommends. A rough estimate has been made for the additional cost in one year to implement the new staffing positions in the model. It does not include any training costs as it envisages this could be done on a voluntary basis. \$148,000</p> <p><i>A suggestion was made that first priority should be the Business Manager indicated on the model which could then focus on the task of funding for other positions and activities in the model.</i></p> |
| <p>Members Forums</p> | <p>The model introduces an activity centre called Members Forums as the members are at the heart of the organization and have a role in direction setting, providing feedback, reflecting and reviewing the organisation’s performance as a whole in the model.</p> |
| <p>External Obligations Incorporation</p> | <p>The Rules of the Incorporated Association require that A Committee of Management or similar legal entity be in place with a minimum of 6 members. There are further rules which guide/govern what that CoM needs to do. Changes require approval from Consumer Affairs Victoria. The recommended model retains a legal entity called “The Accountability Group” which resides within the larger representational Coordinating Group. (COG)</p> |
| <p>Taxation and Public Fund</p> | <p>MASG has a Public Fund for the purpose of receiving monies and there are further requirements for its management. It requires a separate Committee of Management of 3 or more persons to administer it. The 3 must be “responsible persons” as defined by Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations. Currently the three are Heather Barrett, Derek Devrieze and Gordon Bannon. Changes must be approved. Need to be considered in any changes. Whilst not indicated on the Model Map, the OWG recommends retaining this grouping.</p> |
| <p>What can we fund</p> | <p>FINANCING THE MODEL It is suggested in Model 2 that separate activity groups find their own funds to undertake whatever and/or to employ staff and that 20% of any funds for any bubble is allocated to MASG to cover administration costs. In the model the proposed applications go to the COG where they are assessed in the light of their strategic value to the organization goals, compared with other group/staff bids, assessed for clashes or synergies with other proposals and prioritized accordingly. It is worth noting that:</p> |

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| <p>No Group in Models for Fundraising</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tied Grants contribute to outcomes but not necessarily to real costs • Very few granting bodies will fund for administration • 20% is a notional figure and may or may not cover admin costs to MASG depending on the level of support envisaged. • MASG currently has a monthly spend of approximately \$10,000. This represents a fairly low level of funded activity (3 Staff (one on tied grant) and organizational costs) compared to the outline of Model 2 activity which signals further potential organization staff as well as costs to service more staff engaged via bubbles and other costs associated with bubble functions. There will no doubt also be costs re the implementation of review recommendations & changes.. • It is possible/likely that bubbles may need training and assistance in preparing funding applications and budgets and unless provided by volunteers will possibly be a cost to the organization too. • None of the models contained a fundraising bubble/group yet this is a crucial role though not a popular passion. • There has been a fluctuating interest (read little by a small number of people) in fundraising, donor servicing in past year or so. Unpredictable Grants and membership alone will probably not keep the group moving forward. Will there be some obligation on groups to do this for their own passions? Needs to be coordinated approach I believe. |
| <p>Timing</p> | <p>Introduction of a recommended structure model will see the current COM replaced by a Coordinating Group (COG) with a 6 member Accountability Group within it. Timing of introduction of changes will be a matter for the COM in the first instance and COG later.</p> |
| <p>Resolving people problems</p> | <p>What arrangements could be part of a model to deal with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointments/anger when ideas or projects from the bubbles or groupings are not seen as a priority by the central strategic grouping. • Nutters • Breaches of trust, obligations • Poor performance • Chronic time wasters • Responding to external misinformation/unreasonable criticism and publicity <p>Do we even need to consider such things in recommending a model? The OWG considers it should. The OWG recommends that the Current COM deal with such matters until the COG is in place and following its introduction perhaps 2 COG members be nominated to deal with them.</p> |

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| <p>Recognizing voluntary contribution to the organization's achievements</p> | <p>RECOGNIZING THAT THIS IS CULTURE NOT STRUCTURE, NEVERTHELESS THE OWG RECOMMENDS</p> <p>Should a model, and if yes, how could a model, build in some way of recognizing the enormous contribution of invisible voluntary effort which contributes hugely to MASG successes and which currently is not recognized nor celebrated in a way that others can see it.</p> <p>OWG recommends that rather than “ non specific thanks”, recognition clearly details the task/s, actions undertaken by a volunteer/s and how it/they have contributed to an outcome.</p> |
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Additional Queries (5th November, 2010)

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| <p>Privacy and Confidentiality in dealings regarding different aspects of organization.</p> | <p>How will the organization (MASG) be able to discuss matters which would ordinarily not be public when all decision making is undertaken in the CoG with whoever happens to be present. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matters related to contractual dealings which might usually be conducted privately between employer and employee and which either party might prefer to remain private and/or confidential. • Matters associated with complaints or performance issues which might normally be raised between an employee and employer raised by either party concerning the other. • Matters which address concerns about particular individuals within the organization relating to views about appropriate behaviour etc. • In and new “open and transparent” paradigm, what rules apply to the passing on of MASG matters/discussions beyond the particular arm of the group. <p>As it stands, the whole of the CoG could be involved and it could be said to involve public humiliation/criticism? What provision if any, will the model make for limiting the knowledge/discussion and who/which group will be involved and how will privacy and confidentiality be incorporated when requested/required? <i>(Note: There are Privacy Laws which must be paid heed to).</i></p> |
| <p>Accountability (Reporting, dealing with problems in staff or members of CoG)</p> | <p>What accountability is there between staff and MASG especially in a model which may involve people being employed in the activity groups? Who do staff report to if at all? If they don't, is their work performance able to be assessed by the MASG (MASG equaling its members) or not.</p> <p>What if MASG or one of the activity groups hires a crap person and it creates problems – how is this dealt with?</p> <p>What if a CoG member is crap and creates problems. How does the CoG deal with this?</p> <p>Are such difficulties dealt with by whoever happens to be present at CoG or what? The current COM may need to address this.</p> |

