

# U.S. Masters Swimming, Governance Committee

## Volunteer Roles

### **Preamble**

USMS is a volunteer-governed and staff managed organization. USMS has evolved to this point – and continues to evolve – after spending its first 37 years as a volunteer governed and managed organization. Although USMS has changed over time, particularly with the professionalization of management with a national staff, many of the committees and the committee structure that existed in the days when USMS was volunteer managed have persisted.

The Volunteers Task Force (VTF) spent 2018-19 with a mission to optimize volunteer resources. The VTF assessed committees and roles individually, evaluating their necessity, and reimagining (where appropriate) their function. The VTF's work was presented in several ways, including to the Board of Directors, at the 2019 LMSC Leadership Summit, and in a workshop in conjunction with the 2019 USMS Annual Meeting. Some of the VTF's proposals were accepted and some were met with resistance at the 2019 Annual Meeting.

Believing that it is still worthwhile to examine the roles of volunteers in USMS, the Governance Committee has taken the approach here of articulating at a more abstract and general level what work is best done by operating committees, ad hoc committees, volunteers and staff. We anticipate that this articulation of roles can be merged with the work of the VTF to determine optimal volunteer roles and structures going forward. Beyond this immediate augmentation of the VTF outputs, we believe it is important to assess the function, make-up, and continued existence of operating committees on a regular basis. USMS and the external environment will continue to change, so committees should be examined periodically to ensure they align with USMS and how it functions.

This document first identifies work that is best done respectively by staff and volunteers. It then defines volunteer structures at the national level of USMS. The document then provides a general framework describing types of work best suited for operating committees, ad hoc committees, and individual contributors, followed by examples of these types of work. The document concludes with a note about the formation and continuation of ad hoc committees.

### **Work that Should be Done or Managed by USMS Staff**

Generally: management of the business of the organization.

- Management or coordination of large events (national championships, ePostals, annual meeting, etc.) that are core products of the organization and that either require, or would be optimized through, a full-time focus
- Tasks of high priority to the organization that may include high levels of interaction, require quick turnarounds, and have an accountability requirement
- Work that calls for business acumen necessary for management of a large national organization (e.g. management of finances; marketing; sales; sponsor relations; communications; program development and management; fundraising; human resources; national volunteer relations; member services)
- Work that requires engagement or coordination with multiple internal and external stakeholders, since the staff has that broad access and perspective

### **Work That Should be Done by Volunteers**

- Work that requires locally-delivered involvement with clubs, coaches, facilities, and members
- Work that involves governance of the organization and its rules
- Tasks for which the professional staff does not have sufficient resources or that is not critical to the business function of the organization requiring dedication of paid staff time
- Work that could benefit from volunteer contributions based on knowledge of local operations, geographic breadth, or representation of diverse perspectives

### **National Volunteer Structures – Defined**

- Operating Committee – A committee of a semi-permanent nature that has ongoing responsibilities. Such committees are currently formed with the approval of the House of Delegates. This definition includes both Permanent Committees of the Board and Standing Committees, set forth in Rules 506.7 and 507.1, respectively.
- Ad Hoc Committee – A temporary committee assigned by the president that is formed for a specific purpose. The committee is to be dissolved after accomplishment of that purpose. This definition includes temporary committees, working groups, and task forces.
- Individual Contributor – An individual volunteer who is assigned to provide expertise or other volunteer work at the request of the president. This definition includes special assignments, appointments, and liaisons. An individual contributor serves temporarily at the pleasure of the president.

### **What Volunteer Work Should be Done by Operating Committees, Ad Hoc Committees, and Individual Contributors**

All or some of the items below may be conducted by the committees for which they are listed.

- Operating committees
  - Ongoing or recurring volunteer tasks that call for continuity and consistency over time
  - Work that is necessary on an ongoing basis, but which is not of a priority to justify paid staff time
  - Work on an ongoing core product of USMS that supports staff management of that core product
  - Work that is an ongoing priority but for which the national office does not have sufficient staff or resources
- Ad hoc committees
  - Work that is short-term and finite, with stated goals and deliverables
  - Work that requires multiple volunteers to spread the responsibilities or to collaborate for the best outcomes
- Individual contributors
  - Work that requires subject matter expertise that staff doesn't have (e.g. legal; medical)
  - Consulting from persons who may have a unique perspective about local operations, clubs, members or in-depth experience on such topics
  - Roles that are set forth in Rule 507.3

### **Examples of Work that Calls for Operating Committees**

- Tasks that relate to the governance responsibilities given to the House of Delegates or the Board of Directors (e.g. financial oversight, including budget review; election management; amending the *Code of Regulations and Rules of Competition*)
- Work traditionally under the purview of a non-profit board of directors and for which committees can devote deeper time and expertise (e.g. investments; governance; compensation/benefits)
- Work that requires ongoing liaison with priority constituencies across all localities (e.g. recruitment and support for coaches; support and standard setting for LMSCs; recruitment and development of officials; recognition of volunteers)
- Work to support and advise the national office on key USMS products (e.g. championships; long distance) where a local connection is desired and/or specific subject matter expertise acquired over many years' experience is required
- Work that is in developmental stages for the organization and requires ongoing input from volunteers in such development (e.g. diversity and inclusion)
- Work where a high number of individual inputs is key to task efficacy and success

### **Examples of Work that Calls for Ad Hoc Committees or Individual Contributors**

- Strategic planning on a periodic basis
- CEO searches
- Input and planning for major capital expenditures
- As-needed input on technical issues (e.g. changing IT infrastructure)
- In-depth short-term analysis of key issues

### **Formation and Continuation of Ad Hoc Committees**

If the knowledge base of a particular area is not within the expertise of the professional staff or requires short-term input from a collaborative group, the professional staff or USMS President may request a volunteer ad hoc committee to form. The President has ultimate responsibility for appointing ad hoc committees. This is the single mechanism set in place to create an ad hoc committee and also a point of difference between a standing committee and an ad hoc committee. It is presumed that ad hoc committees should not exist for more than one year. If they do, such committees should be re-evaluated, with input from the Board of Directors.