

Section:	GO-2 Governance	Approval Date:	9/25/2015
Policy:	GO-2.7 Regions	Latest Revision:	4/4/2025

GO-2.7 Regions

2.7.1 Purpose

As a result of the 1993 strategic planning process known as Vision 2000, the Association modified its governance structure from one that was arranged by sections, which were based on the legislative acts that created water agencies, to a regional-based configuration. To accomplish greater efficiency and improve member involvement, Vision 2000 established ten regions to provide geographic balance and to group agencies with similar interests for the purpose of providing grassroots support to advance the Association's legislative and regulatory agenda.

2.7.2 Duties and Authorities

The duties and authority of the region boards are as follows:

1. Provide a structure where agencies can come together to resolve issues of mutual concern and interest and based on that interaction provide input to the Board.
2. Assist with building the local grassroots support for the Association's Outreach Program in order to advance the legislative and regulatory priorities as determined by the Board and the State Legislative, Federal Affairs, or other policy committees.
3. Provide a forum to educate region members on the Association's priorities and issues of local and statewide concern.
4. Assist staff and the Membership Committee with membership recruitment at the regional level, as needed.
5. Recommend specific actions to the Board on local, regional, state, and federal issues as well as recommend endorsement for various government offices and positions. Individual regions cannot take positions, actions, or disseminate communication on issues and endorsements without going through the Board structure.
6. Conduct meetings at both spring and fall conferences and at such other times and places as may be determined by the region chairs to conduct region business.

2.7.2.1 Committee Recommendations and Representation

All regions will be given equal opportunities to recommend representatives of the region for appointment to the Association's committees. If a region fails to provide full representation on all Association committees for their respective region, those committee slots will be left open for the

remainder of the term or until such time as the region designates a representative to complete the remainder of the term.

At the first region board or membership meeting of the new term, regions will designate a representative to serve on each committee as the official reporters to and from the committee on behalf of the region to facilitate input and communication.

2.7.2.2 Finance Committee Service by Region Chairs/Vice Chairs

At the time of making committee recommendations, each region will designate either the chair or the vice chair to serve as its official region representative to the Finance Committee.

2.7.2.3 Endorsements

As a statewide organization, the Association encourages the endorsement of candidates on boards or commissions who have the potential for impacting member agencies or the way they do business. The region boards will make recommendations to the Board for the endorsement of candidates for various local, regional, or statewide boards or commissions. The Board will take action on the regions' endorsement recommendations.

- For local positions, endorsement recommendations should be sent to the region in which the local board or commissions is located.
- For regional positions, endorsement recommendations should be sent to each region that has a position within the geographic boundaries of the position under consideration.
- For statewide positions, endorsement recommendations should be sent to the region from which the individual being recommended resides and to all other Association regions. Relevant committees will be notified regarding an endorsement that pertains to its assigned area of responsibility. Committees need to make their thoughts known to the recommending region in a timely manner.

2.7.3 Region Chair and Vice Chair Roles

The region chairs and vice chairs, with support from their region boards, provide regional leadership to fulfill the roles of the region. The region chair will schedule region meetings at both spring and fall conference and at other such times and places deemed necessary to conduct business.

Each region chair and vice chair will serve as a member of the Board at its bimonthly meetings and at other such times and places as the Board may determine.

The region chairs will make recommendations to the President regarding appointments to committees.

The region chairs and vice chairs will serve as an Outreach Ambassador in the Association's Outreach Program. The region chairs will appoint an Outreach Captain or multiple captains for the term.

The region chairs will appoint committee reporters, from the existing committee members, for the term.

The region chairs may appoint work groups as needed.

2.7.3.1 Alternates

At the beginning of the term, the region boards will appoint an alternate for each of the region chair and vice chair positions. The role of an alternate is to attend Board meetings in the event the chair or vice chair cannot attend. The alternates will serve in their appointed positions for the designated term.

2.7.4 Meetings

The region membership meetings will be held at both the spring and fall conferences and at such other times and places as may be determined by the region chair. Any region board meeting, regular or special, may be conducted, in whole or in part, by telephone, electronic transmission, or by electronic video screen communication. A region board member will be deemed present in person at the meeting if the following apply:

1. Each region board member participating in the meeting can communicate concurrently with all other committee members.
2. Each region board member is provided the means of participating in all matters before the committee, including the capacity to propose, or to interpose an objection to, a specific action to be taken by the region board.

2.7.4.1 Quorum

Representatives of five or more members of the Association from the region present at any region meeting will constitute a quorum for purposes of conducting the business of the region.

2.7.5 Attendance

Regular attendance by region board members at region activities, such as board meetings, business meetings, planning meetings, tours, programs, and other events is required to ensure effective region governance. If a region board member has three consecutive unexcused absences from region board or general membership meetings, the region board will convene to discuss options for removal of the inactive member.

2.7.6 Region Board Elections

The region boards will consist of a chair, vice chair, and three to five board members who will be elected by the respective regions in each odd-numbered year. A region may maintain a board of fewer than five but not less than three members as provided in the region's rules and regulations. The officers of the region board will take office on January 1 of the calendar year following the election and will hold office for two years, or until their successors take office.

2.7.6.1 Election by Written Ballot

The Association's region boards will be elected by written ballot in each odd-numbered year. Association staff will verify legitimacy of the ballot.

2.7.6.1.1 Voting

Each member of the Association in good standing at the time a vote is cast is entitled to one vote for the election of its respective region board that must be cast by its authorized representative by written ballot. An agency can only cast a vote within its own region. At the beginning of each election cycle,

members must designate their authorized representative by the established deadline as set forth in Board Policy 2.3.5.1.

2.7.6.2 Ballot

All solicitations of votes by written ballot will: (1) include the names of region nominating committee's recommended slate; and (2) include the names of all qualifying candidates interested in being included on the ballot.

2.7.6.3 Run-off Election

In the event a nominee does not receive a majority of the votes for a region board position in the first ballot round, a run-off election will be held for the office or offices for which a majority of the votes have not been received. The run-off election will only involve the nominees who received the two highest amounts of votes. The run-off election shall be conducted in the same manner as the initial election. In the event the run-off election results in a tie vote, the successful candidate will be chosen by drawing straws. The Region Nominating Committee Chair will oversee this process.

2.7.6.4 Candidates

Region board members will be an officer, employee, or member of the governing body of a member agency of the Association, or other representative duly designated by a member agency of the Association to represent that member at the time of the appointment. A duly designated representative will not have access to member benefits unless they are affiliated with a member agency, associate, or affiliate of the Association.

A resolution of support from each sponsoring member agency will accompany all nominations for the positions of region chair, vice chair, and board member. An authorized signatory of the member agency's Board of Directors will sign said resolution.

Member agencies are required to notify Association staff in writing in the event the agency rescinds its resolution of support for a region board member. If an individual loses his/her qualifying status to serve on a region board by no longer being employed or serving in an elected capacity to his/her supporting agency, the agency may continue its support of the individual's region board status as a duly designated representative by submitting written notice of its continued support to staff.

Each member agency may nominate only one individual to run for election to its respective region board.

An individual cannot simultaneously hold seats on more than one region board.

Region boards may adopt more stringent criteria for board member qualifications as part of their rules and regulations.

2.7.6.5 Nominating Committees

There will be a nominating committee for each region consisting of three or more designees, each representing a member of the Association located within the region, which will be appointed by the

chair of the region and approved by the region board. Nominating committees will be formed by February 28 of each odd-numbered year.

The region chairs will consider the following criteria when selecting the nominating committee:

- Geographic diversity of region
- Rotation of the composition and individual member's service on prior nominating committees
- Current agency representation on the region board

If the region chair does not appoint a nominating committee by the February 28 deadline, the Association's Vice President may appoint a nominating committee for the region.

Nominating committee members may not run for the region board during the time they are serving on the committee.

Agencies with representatives serving on the region nominating committees will strive not to submit nominations for the region board from their agency.

The Association will offer training for nominating committee members during the spring of the election year.

2.7.7 Region Board Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of any region board position is deemed to exist when a region board member: (1) resigns the office; (2) is no longer an officer, employee, or member of the governing body of the supporting member agency, or other representative duly designated by a supporting member agency of the Association to represent that member; or (3) is otherwise removed by a member agency of the Association. In the event a vacancy occurs before the end of the term, the following process will apply:

1. The remaining members of the region board will decide whether or not to fill the position based on the criteria established in the Bylaws and the given region's rules and regulations.
2. The region board will issue a call for candidates to members if it decides to fill the vacancy.
3. The region board will appoint a candidate to fill the vacant position from the results of the call for candidates process.
4. If the vacancy occurs in the chair or vice chair position, the existing region board may appoint from within the current board consistent with its region rules and regulations and can backfill the board member vacancy with a call for candidates.
5. Region board vacancies will not be filled after the region election call for candidates is issued during a region election year.

2.7.8 Rules and Regulations

Each region will adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of its meetings and business affairs consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. The general membership of each region may revise the region rules and regulations by a vote of its membership.

Each region will abide by Policy GO-2.1.10.2, Code of Conduct, adopted by the Board.

2.7.9 Region Event Policies

Region boards may host meetings, programs and/or tours in their region. A region board may decide to serve as the planning group for the event or appoint a work group, which must have at least one representative from the region board.

The work group will determine program content, venue, and logistics with input from the Association staff and others as appropriate.

Region events are considered “Association events” and will follow the Association’s standard contractual process. All regional events requiring vendor or accommodation contracts are subject to the Association’s review and approval process.

The work group, with guidance from the Association, is responsible for keeping the costs associated with the event within the regional budget.

The work group should reach out to contacts who are Association members and/or potential members to attend the event. The Association will develop marketing materials and promote the event to members.

2.7.9.1 Region Tour Policy

As part of a membership service, the Association may develop and conduct various tours for the regions or other groups.

All tour attendees must sign a “release and waiver” to attend any and all region tours. Attendees are responsible for reviewing all trip information provided by the Association, and understand as thoroughly as possible the physical and mental demands of the tour or event, as well as the possible risks.

Attendees are also responsible for properly equipping themselves in accordance with recommendations of Association staff which will be provided in advance to the attendees in the event marketing materials.

Attendees agree to follow environmental guidelines and regulations in accordance with direction from Association staff, and will respect the rights and privacy of other attendees.

2.7.10 Region Financial Policies

Region fundraising is encouraged to cover costs for activities, which may include charging for meals, meeting costs, or other event costs. Any funds remaining from registration fees, once event costs are covered, will be carried over to subsequent years.

Allocation of region sponsorship funds and event registration fees may be used to offset the event costs for venue fees, catering, no-host reception or meal, audio/visual equipment, transportation (e.g., bus,

boats, vans, etc.), meeting materials (e.g., handouts, badges, stickers, folders, etc.), printed signs, brochures, materials, shipping, or other event/meeting costs. Region boards may authorize use of region funds for speakers' expenses to participate in region events consistent with the conference speakers' expense policy in the Section 5, Non-Dues Revenue.

Individual region boards may opt to create a region scholarship funded by their specific region carryover funds. These scholarships are to be distributed to members within the region who apply to the region board and used for Association events only.

Funds raised through sponsorships must be expensed for the specific agreed upon event, product, or activity and cannot be carried over to other events.

2.7.10.1 Region Event Registration Fees

A \$25 minimum registration fee per person, per each day of the event, must be charged for each region event to offset costs. The region board will have discretion to waive the registration fee for any event if the circumstances warrant a waiver and if the costs of the event are covered by the region carryover funds and/or sponsorship contributions.

The region board may offer complimentary registration to sponsors, speakers, potential members, or others when doing so is in the interest of the Association. This policy does not apply to spouses or companions/guests of Association members.

Region event registration fees will include non-member pricing at one and one-half times the member price, consistent with the Association's conference policy.

2.7.10.2 Region Event Sponsorships

The Association encourages the region boards to use carryover funds prior to soliciting sponsorships to offset registration fees for region events. Association staff will work with the region boards to coordinate the sponsorship solicitation during the event planning process. Use of local sponsors will be encouraged as much as possible so as not to over burden statewide Association sponsors (Friends of ACWA). Use of local, non-Association member sponsors will be allowed if the majority of their business is conducted within the region of the event. A sponsorship contribution of at least \$250 for a single event is recommended to cover administrative costs.

Region event sponsors may receive the following for their sponsorship:

- Billing as event sponsor on all promotional materials
- Mention as a sponsor in *ACWA News* and e-News when covering the event
- Appropriate signs and recognition at the event
- Ability to provide handout materials or table top materials at event (if event format allows)
- Enrollment into the Association's annual statewide sponsorship program (Association members only)

2.7.10.3 Use of Association Funds for Adult Beverages

Region sponsorship funds, event registrations, or region event general fund allocations cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages. These funds can be used to provide the necessary equipment for a “no-host” environment (i.e., the physical bar and licensed bartender).

2.7.10.4 “In Conjunction With” (ICW) Events

The regions may decide to allow “In Conjunction With” (ICW) events to occur within the duration of the region event. An ICW event is an event (i.e., a reception, a hospitality suite, etc.) hosted/sponsored by an independent entity. The ICW host must make all arrangements for the event and assume financial responsibility for the ICW event. The ICW event must be open to all Association members attending the coinciding region event. ICW events are not recognized as an Association-sponsored event; however, the Association may disseminate information regarding details of the ICW event to its membership. ICW events do not qualify for the Association’s annual sponsorship program. This is standard practice for all Association general workshops, seminars, and conferences.

2.7.10.5 General Fund Allocations for the Regions

The Association budgets for staff support services for the regions based on historical use. These line item budget amounts include region support of normal operating expenses such as staff travel and other staff expenses. Any amounts remaining at year-end will not carry over to subsequent years.

2.7.11 Request for Members to Change Regions

The Membership Committee will evaluate change of region requests from Association members and make a recommendation to the Board for final action. The committee will use the following criteria to evaluate requests for change of region status:

1. Whether the agency has a portion of its service area in the region to which it’s requesting a change;
2. Proximity to the region being requested;
3. Numerical balances among regions;
4. Commonality of agency functions within region;
5. Commonality of issues within region;
6. Opinion of chairs from both regions affected;
7. Reasons set forth for request by agency; and
8. Other factors considered relevant.

References:

Bylaws, Article 5; Previous Board Policy G.16. and P; Role of the Regions, ACWA Planning Guidelines for Regional Event; and ACWA's Financial Guideline for ACWA Region Events

See Administrative Procedure: *To be determined*

Revision History:

Revision Date	Description of Changes	Requested By
7/31/2015	Initial Release	ACWA Staff and Governance Workgroup
9/28/2018	Revised Policy 2.7.6.1 to add clarifying language stating that a duly designated representative will not have access to member benefits unless they are affiliated with a member agency, associate, or affiliate of the Association	Business Development Committee and ACWA Board
5/31/2019	Revised Policy 2.7.10, Region Financial Policies, to allow regions to create and administer a region scholarship program, if they choose, utilizing their region carryover funds.	Region Working Group
2/3/2023	Revised Policy GO-2.7 Regions to incorporate revisions resulting from amendments to ACWA's Bylaws, specifically related to California Corporations Code provisions allowing meetings to be held by electronic communications and the Region Board elections.	Amended & Restated Bylaws as approved by the members on 11/30/22
7/26/2024	Revised Policy GO-2.7.10 Region Financial Policies to provide the regions greater flexibility to fund scholarships for members within the regions to attend Association events.	ACWA Staff
4/4/2025	Revised Policy GO-2.7.6 Region Board Elections to create consistency between the Board Officer and Region Election Policies and to establish a run-off process should a tie occur in the region elections.	ACWA Staff