

AAERI 2019 Roadmap

This follows my earlier communication dated 19th January 2018, where the executive team was introduced and I emphasised that AAERI will engage with members who have time and inclination to strengthen the association further. The elected executive team will lead through delegation of tasks and will be empowered to develop a stronger internal structure. Several key areas are under Office Bearers and/or Executives as committee-heads whose committee includes non-executives. The provisions and precedents already exist in AAERI to allow non-elected members to work with elected executives in committees. The elections for the Australia Chapter and Nepal Chapter of AAERI has also been concluded and the teams are in place.

Change is necessary and AAERI finetunes the structure every few years. At the AGM it was agreed that there is a need to deliberate on electoral reforms that will pave way for new contributors from all regions and for regional executives to be able to move to central pool every few years and thus creating a channel for future and ensuring longevity for AAERI. My desire is also that it will empower all office bearers and committee heads and develop them into leaders for our association around their task area. I would seek the inclusion of senior lighthouses in the said committee of non-executives like Mr Sriedharan, Mr Gulshan Kumar, Dr Sheel Nuna along with possibly Mr Manish Jhaveri who is a current member and also a qualified Chartered Accountant. Dr Nuna and Mr Sriedharan have been election officers in the past while Mr Gulshan Kumar is a founder member and has known the association for last 22 years. We are yet to reach out to them and thus this is only indicative at this time. The committee may seek submissions from general members and then study them before making their recommendations that will thereafter be considered at a special General Body Meeting in August.

Another area that needs to be settled within this year is around “entry requirements” for “new members”. The MOA, after the amendment in 2011 changed from accepting memberships from contracted representatives all CRICOS institution and introduced more stringent requirements. It thereafter required the members to be representing at-least two institutions and of which one had to be a University or a TAFE. However, there were members who were focussing their recruitment to University Higher Education but offered by regional University’s privately-run city campuses. This appeared as a grey area where the then President, who happened to be me, used the presidential prerogative in absence of clarity to allow these members to renew their memberships. At the recent AGM this was raised and while in the current term all members (and former members) will be able to renew their memberships if they are representing private providers (University degree providers), a fresh discussion was necessitated around this provision for future years and if “new members” be also admitted under this. Thus, for this purpose, a few non-executive members will work closely with Mr Prasanna Acharya who is the incoming head of the New Applications Committee. The non-executive members being invited on this task are Mr Shashi Singh, Mr Sukant Trivedi and Mr Manish Jhaveri. If the committee decides to recommends a change from the current provision, this too will be tabled before the General Body for approval at the special meeting. While I leave it to the head of the committee, the recommendation is that in the future all new applications are vetted by the committee before being brought to the executive meetings. The executive will continue to have the final say on these new membership applications but will consider the recommendation of the committee.

Mr. Rahul Gandhi, as then President, in mid-January, took up the issues around the decision of the DET to publicly release agent performance data. **AAERI is of the view that while transparency is always welcomed, the current settings tend to penalize the offshore agents for student behaviour onshore where the offshore agent has no or little control.** He has reflected AAERI views to the media and that has been carried on <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/recruitment-agent-data-dump-wont-tell->

whole-story. He will continue to pursue this issue and work jointly with one of AAERI's founder members Ms. Louanne Hancock. Louanne and Rahul will soon release a press release on behalf of AAERI with deficiencies in the current setting. The Government has announced that it is going ahead with the public release of the data. However, the stakeholders must understand that it is incomplete and is not accurately reflecting the work of the offshore agents. I have seen decisions being deferred even at late stages too and subject to how the AAERI release is received, I may recommend that Rahul and Louanne presents before the Minister and Department in Canberra and AAERI also reaches out across agent associations around the world for a consensus in approach. If we do reach that stage, AAERI Australian Chapter President may also join the group. AAERI has in the past taken up with the departments over policies and this is one of the key roles that has differentiated the association as it maintains its autonomy.

The Australia Chapter was launched last year and the first elections has just been concluded. I have been communicated by Mr Rolf Baum, who functioned as the election officer, that the following are the executives. Ms Sonya Singh (President), Mr Rupesh Duggal (Secretary) and Mr Shayaz Khan (Treasurer). Mr Chitresh Dhawan and Mr Robert Dillinger are other executives. As AAERI President, I am also on the executive of the chapter. We look forward to work with the elected executives of the Australia Chapter which functions to reflect/communicate AAERI issues to stakeholders in Australia.

The Nepal Chapter is now up and running. Mr Balaji and Mr Bubbly Johar travelled to Nepal to supervise the elections. Mr Dwiraj Sharma Shiwakoti will be the President of the chapter. (Other Office Bearers: Mahesh Babu Tamalsina as VP, Naren Aryal as Secretary, Buddhi Sagar Aryal as Treasurer and Nabaraj Khatri as PRO) AAERI is guiding professionalism and formation of a similar agent associations in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The associations maybe legally independent but since they leverage on AAERI, it is important for AAERI to have a mentoring role. Mr Rahul Gandhi as Past President and Mr Bubbly Johar as the current Vice President of AAERI will take active interest in mentoring these associations (Nepal and possibly in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) over the next two years. This ties in with the ongoing plans for the INDIAN SUBCONTINENT INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY 2025 RECOMMENDATIONS that AAERI will spearhead. The idea is to make recommendations to the Australian Government on the ways by which the interest of Australian Education can be safeguarded in the region. Rahul and Bubbly will collaborate with an external consultant (AAERI is currently in discussions with Mr Rahul Mankad). AAERI will be open to non-executive inputs throughout and will also collaborate with stakeholders in the Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka including the other agent associations. The aim is to make the report complete and comprehensive so that it is a genuine report on the Indian region.

While AAERI has been pushing for ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP to EDUCATION PROVIDERS, AAERI recognises that the value addition for the education providers has not been sufficient. AAERI activities and webinars has been open to even the non-members. However, AAERI will discuss with the Education Providers Committee on how we can encourage more membership and add value for its members. For the coming year (2019-2020), the renewal fee is being waived for the associate members (who either joined during the last year or had renewed the membership) in acknowledgement of their faith in AAERI. At the same time and before the next executive meeting, the Education Provider committee will be reconstituted and all current associate members are invited to email me their expression in joining the committee. The committee will be of 3-4 members and while we will want continuity, we will also look for a spread of the viewpoints from across the sector.

At the AGM, several committee heads were announced. While as President, I am on all the committees, the intent is to empower the committee-heads and a few non-executives be also added to the committees. **Where the non-executive is not the proprietor, partner or director of the member agency, a letter from the agency that it has nominated that individual as the representative of the company with AAERI is required.**

Visa Committee, headed by Mr Rahul Gandhi, will have Mr Pushpinder Bhatia, Ms Kalpana Zutshi, Mr Vijay Bhaskar Reddy and Mr Gurjeet Walia. I believe they will have a busy calendar ahead that will include online meetings and engagements with the Department of Home Affairs. They will work with AAERI Secretary for organising of the webinar briefings.

Disciplinary Committee, headed by Mr Nirmal Chawla, will have Mr Dewinder Kumar and Ms Vandana Mehra. The role of the disciplinary committee is being expanded to include “keeping an eye out” for advertising and conduct of non-members too and where it is not possible to take disciplinary action, the information will be forwarded to appropriate authorities for any subsequent action. There is another issue currently being debated around conflict of interest where complaints suggest that the earlier agreed firewall (between education recruitment and conduct of English test) is compromised.

Mr Nirmal Chawla as the Head of the Disciplinary Committee and also since appropriately located will head another task group that will engage with the Punjab Government in a bid to explain how AAERI members differ in operations from the travel agents. AAERI members work directly for the Universities and are being paid by them for the services. The students are not being charged a fee (and where there is a fee, it is within a maximum fee limit prescribed by AAERI) and thus technically the clients are Universities and not students. Thus, a case may be made for the members to be exempted from licensing and if licensed, from the annual reporting provisions of the state act on travel agents and job placement agents to curb human smuggling. For this role he will work with experienced members from the region and the names being considered at this time are that of Mr Gulshan Kumar, Ms Ganga Dandapani, Mr Bubbly Johar (on as available basis) and Mr Khilandeep. Mr Rupesh Duggal will provide support to the committee and also join the engagements when he is available in India. *The named can communicate their availability to Mr Nirmal Chawla.*

New Applications Committee has already been detailed earlier in this communication. The renewal process is an administrative process and is normally handled by the General Secretary, Treasurer and Secretary. However, the Head of the New Applications Committee (not the members) will be kept in loop on this too.

Events take sizeable focus at AAERI. The two major events (AAERI Delhi Convention in August and in Australia in October) have attracted sponsors and are looked out for. These initiatives will be handled by Mr Rahul Gandhi and Mr Bubbly Johar. The Australian Chapter of AAERI will also have activities around the Australian event including possibility of a delegation visit to institutions. Australian Chapter will coordinate with Mr Rahul Gandhi and myself on this. Several other activities are being planned including the AAERI Fairs. When these are taken up, the regional elected executives in each of the regions will be involved but we also wish to then have a focussed committee including several non-executives from each region. Mr Rahul Gandhi, Mr Bubbly Johar and Mr Rupesh Duggal will study the feasibility of education fairs. Discussions on sponsors will also be taken up by Mr Rahul Gandhi and myself. Several commitments are already in place for 2019.

There will be no change in the current ongoing discussions on the GST issue where Deloitte is in close contact with Mr Rahul Gandhi. If there is any further development on this front, we will revisit on a need to increase the number of participants from AAERI end.

The role of a Treasurer has become more time consuming with time and now that aspects of GST have also come into reckoning and after discussions with the Treasurer (Mr Kishore Beengi), it has been agreed that Mr Kishore Beengi will be assisted on a need-basis by Mr Manish Jhaveri. Manish is a qualified CA other than being an AAERI member and has volunteered to help out.

Mr Balaji as the incoming General Secretary and Mr Rupesh Patel as the outgoing General Secretary (who takes over as Secretary for this term) are discussing the division of work between themselves. The team work is very positive. We are in the process of taking stock of all the communications and contacts and then their offices will be able to professionally deliver the administrative requirements.

It is also being considered to have an online newsletter which can be frequent and other than giving out AAERI news, it can carry appropriate news times from the industry. **We are seeking volunteers from non-executives who can ably take over this task.** The editor will work with the General Secretary for AAERI inputs and the General Secretary will be responsible for the suitability of the articles.

As indicated in the earlier communications, the regional executives will schedule a regional “tea” get together in their regions at-least once before each executive meeting. The first such get together be planned for March or April 2019. May I suggest to regional executives that branches of agencies located in a region too be kept in loop. The branches of agencies from outside the region may have an active profile and their inputs can be useful.

All the above are indicative and can change as required.

The point of contact for all media releases henceforth and interaction with media will be President and General Secretary. The President may authorise any other executive or non-executive member based on the task. The committee heads will have priority to comment on specific task-oriented activities.

Ravi Lochan Singh, President. (www.ravi@globalreachonline.com)

29 January 2019

AAERI Responsibilities for 2019-2020

Office Bearers:

- Ravi Lochan Singh (**President**), Bubbly Johar (**Vice President**), C Balaji (**General Secretary**), Kishore Beengi (**Treasurer**), Rupesh Patel (**Secretary**)

Other Elected Executives:

- Rahul Gandhi (**Past President**), Rupesh Duggal, Nishidhar Reddy Borra, Nirmal Chawla, Prasanna Acharya

Visa Committee:

- Rahul Gandhi (**Head**), Pushpinder Bhatia, Kalpana Zutshi, Gurjeet Walia, Vijay Bhaskar Reddy

Disciplinary Committee:

- Nirmal Chawla (**Head**), Dewinder Kumar, Vandana Mehra

New Applications Comm:

- Prasanna Acharya (**Head**), Sukant Trivedi, Shashi Singh, Manish Jhaveri

AUSTRALIA Chapter:

- Sonya Singh (**President**), Rupesh Duggal (**Secretary**), Shayaz Khan (**Treasurer**), Robert Dillinger, Chitresh Dhawan

NEPAL Chapter:

- Dwiraj Sharma (**President**), Mahesh Babu (**Vice President**), Naren Aryal (**Secretary**), Buddhi Aryal (**Treasurer**), Nabaraj Khatri (**PRO**)

AAERI President will be on the committees and also on the executive of the Chapters by default.

AAERI Representative with regional chapters (Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) will be coordinated by Mr Rahul Gandhi / Mr Bubbly Johar
Committee to examine the electoral process will be formally announced after consent of the committee holders.

Committee on the exhibitions and fairs will also be finalised later this year by Mr Rahul Gandhi / Mr Bubbly Johar.

Committee on the task to engage with Punjab Government on the issue of licensing will also be announced later by Mr Nirmal Chawla.

Suggested Roadmap 2019

Month	Project	Comments
January	Communication outcome AAERI elections - to Edu providers, AAERI members, AAERI Edu provider on new committee, Nepal, Bangladesh, Australia, AUIDF, UA, Sponsors, NAAER, ECAN, DET, DHA & all stakeholders, media, Deloitte, PWC etc	President & GS to complete.
	Announcement of Indian subcontinent recruitment strategy 2025 - independent report by Mr Rahul Mankad.	President will freeze budget & expectations in discussion with the Committee heads (Rahul and Bubby)
	Committees to have an online meeting between the committee members to set about their own roadmap. They continue to have interactions and based on tasks.	Google or Facebook group chats can be considered for small group meetings.
	Monash Video - ESOS Act	Visa Committee Head to circulate to AAERI members as a way to educate on compliance.
	NOOSR update - Nepal	RG in consultation with Dwiraj
February	Renewal notice - Membership	GS
	Announcement of AAERI fairs (July 2019, 5 cities).	Committee head
	AAERI response to DET decision on releasing Agent Performance report.	Rahul & Louanne
	Visa Committee + RM(for the report) - Visit to AHC	RG (along-with BJ on the report by RM)
	RM travels	Coordinated by the task group of RG and BJ
March	Renewal continues	GS / Prasanna / Secretary / Treasurer
	Webinars (Visa Committee)	Secretary to coordinate
	RM travels	Coordinated by the task group of RG and BJ
April	Reforms discussions - Election, Entry requirements,	
	RM travels	
	AAERI Regional meetings	
May	AAERI executive meeting (early May)	To be in EAST INDIA. Location to be finalised.
July	Indian Subcontinental Strategy Recommendation Report is drafted	RM
	AAERI Fairs (5 cities India & 2 Nepal)	
	AAERI Regional Meetings	
Aug	AAERI convention & release of report - "Indian subcontinent roundtable - Recruitment Strategy" - Venue - New Delhi - Aero City. AUIDF to be invited to speak. (verbal understanding with AUIDF on this.)	This is in Delhi. Date to be fixed and event logistics to be organised by Mr Bubby Johar and he may take active assistance of Delhi non-executives.
	AAERI Exec Meeting + Special General body meeting	
	Acknowledging Mr Gulshan Kumar who after ably serving as executive for 22 years has moved to the advisory role.	
September	EAIE - Helsinki (24th to 27th September)	https://www.eaie.org/helsinki.html
October	Perth AAERI event	Active role of AAERI Australia Chapter.
	Delegation to WA & QLD	Australian Chapter
	Presentation - AUIDF	Ravi and Rahul
November	Possible 2nd AAERI fair (5 cities) And Regional Meetings	
December	AAERI Executive Meeting	Possibly either in Chandigarh or in Vijayawada
	Roadmap 2020 & review of activities	