National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
12615 West Keystone Drive
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Proposed NCUTCD Bylaws Change Regarding
Vice Chair of Research

Approved by NCUTCD Council Jan. 5, 2017

Discussion

During the 35 year history of the National Committee eight individuals have served as Vice-Chair for Research. Those who have served are Sam Hochstein, Paul Fowler, Jim Pline, Jonathan Upchurch, Dave McKee, Jeff Bagdade, Ken Kobetsky, and Paul Carlson.

All of these individuals have served well as Vice-Chair for Research, but at the same time it can also be said that an individual with a research background in traffic control devices can bring a perspective and experience to this office that may allow them to be especially effective in this role. Thus, if possible, it is desirable to have a Vice-Chair for Research who has a research background.

Under the current By-Laws provisions, the Vice-Chair for Research must be a Member of the National Committee. Historically, the number of Members appointed by sponsoring organizations who have a research background has been quite small. This is largely due to the interest areas of the sponsoring organizations, the interest areas of the individuals who are active in the sponsoring organizations (and who the sponsor would consider appointing to the NC), and the fact that 16 of the sponsoring organizations appoint only one Member each. Another factor is that the four remaining sponsoring organizations – those that appoint three or eight Members each, and consisting of AASHTO, ITE, APWA and NACE – have a strong tendency to appoint Members who work for state, county and municipal highway agencies and who have the legal responsibility of administering public highway programs. Researchers tend not to be appointed.

The sponsoring organizations which are more likely to appoint individuals who have a background in research to their delegation are ITE and Human Factors Resources. In ITE’s delegation, individuals join the delegation as Associate Members and it may take several years to advance to a Member position on the delegation. The bottom line is that many factors “conspire” to limit the number of individuals with a research background who are also a Member of the National Committee.
The National Committee should select the best available person to serve as Vice-Chair for Research. However, the best available person may not be a Member of the National Committee.

To enlarge the pool of individuals who could serve as Vice-Chair for Research, this proposal suggests that the By-Laws be revised to allow an Associate Member to serve as Vice-Chair for Research. The changes to the By-Laws that would be needed to accomplish this are shown below.

These proposed bylaws changes were approved unanimously by the NCUTCD Executive Board June 8, 2016 and will be considered by the NCUTCD Council at their January 2017 meeting.

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4.2 Members and Associate Members. Members and Associate Members shall be appointed by the Sponsoring Organizations and shall be equally entitled to all privileges of the National Committee with the exception that only Members shall be eligible to hold the following positions: Chair, Vice-Chair for Programs, Vice-Chair for Research, Treasurer, and voting member of the Executive Board….

7.1 Officers. The officers of the National Committee are the Chair, Vice Chair for Programs, Vice-Chair for Research and Treasurer. Each officer must be a Member of the Council. The Chair, Vice Chair for Programs and the Treasurer must be a Member of the Council. The Vice Chair for Research must be either a Member or an Associate Member.

7.3 Election and Terms. The Chair, the two Vice-Chairs, and the Treasurer of the National Committee shall be elected by the Council from among its Members during the Annual Meeting in even-numbered years….

7.4 Vacancies. If the office of the Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair for Programs becomes the Chair for the unexpired term. If the office of the Vice-Chair for Programs, the Vice-Chair for Research, or the Treasurer becomes vacant, the Executive Board by majority vote shall elect a successor to fill the unexpired term. The successor for the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair for Programs, and Treasurer must be a Member of the Council. The successor for the office of Vice-Chair for Research must be either a Member or an Associate Member of the Council.