Appendix 2

BRANCH SECRETARY

Classification: *Voluntary (unpaid) – accrues points for NAATI recertification*

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Branch Secretary supports the chair and the committee in their work. Principal duties include scheduling and attending branch meetings, running the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and ensuring that emails in the branch email inbox are answered by the appropriate committee member.

The most helpful way of viewing the Branch Secretary role is as a sort of executive assistant / PA to the Branch Committee (BC), and particularly to the committee chair, to ensure that important administrative actions do not get overlooked, and that the work of the BC runs as smoothly as possible. In this respect, it is a largely 'behind-the-scenes' role (but important nevertheless).

Branch Secretary, as are the rest of the Branch committee members, is not paid for their work, but can claim Professional Development points during their recertification.

THE ROLE

As the AUSIT Branch Secretary you will:

Branch Committee meetings

- Schedule the time and location of meetings for the BC.
- Draw up an agenda for each meeting and send out a reminder.
- Attend committee meetings, take minutes and upload to BC dropbox folder

General Correspondence

- Check the committee inbox and either respond to emails or forward them to relevant committee members.
- Keeps the branch records up-to-date and in a secure place.
- Support the branch chair as needed.

Annual General Meeting

- Organise and run the AGM.
- Write a secretarial report for the AGM.
- Prepare AGM agenda.
- Note attendance at AGM.

Ensure that the minutes of the AGM are written up and circulated to the rest of the BC

THE BENEFITS

As the AUSIT Branch Secretary you can:

- Provide invaluable service by facilitating communication within the committee and between the committee and local members.
- Enable the chair to set the vision for the BC and attract and retain new members.
- Uphold transparency regarding discussions and decisions by drawing up clear meeting minutes.
- Bring together branch members and allows them to participate and have a voice in the BC and National Council's direction through monthly meetings as well as the AGM.
- Support your branch committee and gain points for recertification.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

- A clearly defined role and set of responsibilities to ensure that this volunteer role is manageable alongside family and work commitments.
- Written guidelines from the National Council regarding how to plan and run the AGM.
- Help and advice from fellow committee members.
- A link with the NS – they are on hand to help you in your role.

GLOSSARY

- AGM   Annual General Meeting
- BC   Branch Committee
- BD   Branch Delegate
- NS   National Secretary
- OL   Office Logistics = National Secretariate (Admin)

GUIDANCE FOR BRANCH SECRETARY

1. **After branch AGM**

   • Within one month, ensure that the minutes of the AGM are written up (if there has been a change of secretary, the outgoing secretary should assist with this), circulated to BC members for comment or correction, and the final version filed in a suitable location in the branch Dropbox folder.

2. **On election of new BC**

   • As soon as possible, gather ALL the committee members' names, phone numbers and email addresses and update the Branch Contact List document on Dropbox and email this list to
   - the National Secretary (NS) secretary@ausit.org **and**
   - the National Secretariat (Admin) (admin@ausit.org)

   specifically identifying those holding the positions of:

   + chair

   + secretary

   + treasurer (if applicable)

   + branch delegate

   + membership liaison officer

   + PD coordinator

   + Communication Officer (if applicable)

   If any of these positions are temporarily unfilled or still pending, note this fact on the list.

   ● As early as possible, email a list of all BC members plus their email addresses to the AUSIT Yahoogroups coordinator, David Connor (ausityahoo@optusnet.com.au) so that he can remove members no longer on the BC and invite new members to the BC yahoogroup.

   • As early as possible, draw up a contact list of all BC members (mainly for convenience within the BC) and save it in a suitable location on the branch Dropbox folder so that it is available for all BC members to refer to.

   • As early as possible, send the Welcome Pack to all branch committee members. The Welcome Pack contains these documents as well as the list of locations of the future National Conferences.

   The National Secretariat will then arrange the following access:

Dropbox	All Committee members
Branch IO Group (Secretariat to arrange with IO Group Coordinator, David Connor)	All committee members
AUSIT Database (Wild Apricot) – read-only access	Exec Positions: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, PD Coordinator, Membership Liaison Officer, Communication Officer(and other BC members on request)

This contact list will also be available for all BC members to refer to in your ~~States~~ branch's Dropbox folder

3. Ongoing – composition of BC

- Ensure that any changes to the composition of the BC (resignations, co-option of new members, new holders of positions listed in #2) are emailed as soon as possible to National Secretariat (Admin) admin@ausit.org to enable both the National Contact List to be updated with the relevant access given to Dropbox, AUSIT database and io group.

- Ensure that the BC contact list is kept up-to-date – also including changes of postal address, phone number, or email address. (Suggestion: send the Dropbox document link to BC members to check their details).

4. Ongoing – BC meetings

- About 1 week before each BC meeting, send out a reminder of the meeting.

- If an online meeting, log into the Branch Zoom account and set up the meeting, and copy the invitation details. (Please note that you can't email the groups.io address from Zoom).

- Email the BC IO group with the date, time, and location, and invite them to submit any agenda items; particularly check with the branch chair. Also, check the minutes of the previous meeting for items that were deferred, or items that require follow-up / reporting / further discussion / further action, and include these as 'Business Arising'.

- The reminder should also include:
    - The Zoom link details, meeting number and passcode <u>or</u> location of venue
    - The draft agenda
    - Previous meeting's minutes (for anyone who hasn't already read them).

- As soon as possible thereafter, draw up the agenda for the meeting and place it on Dropbox so all BC members can access it and advise all BC members via the io group.

- Take minutes during the meeting – or arrange for someone else to do so if you will be absent or unavailable. Note apologies as and when people notify you by e-mail.

- Minutes do not need to record everything said during the discussion, or who said what. The important thing is to clearly record what decisions have been taken, who is responsible for implementing them, and any deadlines.

- Within one week after the meeting, write up the minutes, circulate them as a draft to BC members for comment or correction, and place the final version on the branch Dropbox. ('Circulating' them can often best be done by placing a draft version on Dropbox.)

5. Before branch AGM

- A branch AGM should take place **no later than 2 months before the National AGM**, which normally takes place on about the 3rd Saturday in November. (The main reason for this 2-month gap is to allow any new branch delegates elected at the AGM to do a hand-over with the outgoing BDs before the national AGM.) This means the Branch AGMs are generally held in September.

- **2 months** before the branch AGM should take place, remind the BC to start planning the AGM, and in particular to set a date, time and venue.

- As soon as these details are determined, take the following actions:

    + Notify the dates and details of both the AGM and subsequent event to the National Secretary (secretary@ausit.org) and National Secretariat (Admin) admin@ausit.org as soon as possible. The National Secretariat (Admin) will then produce a branch-specific nomination form and

proxy form, and will send these to the branch with a draft Event announcement with an Agenda Template to assist in the drafting of the AGM announcement to Branch Members.

+   At least **5–6 weeks** before the AGM (**late July/early August**), draft/complete the Event Request (Cognito Form https://www.cognitoforms.com/AUSIT/form251eventrequest) that will advise all branch members of the AGM (and any accompanying PD event or guest speaker) and submit it to National Secretariat (Admin) in the normal way. Members need to be given **at least 4 weeks' notice** of a branch AGM. Whether or not attendees will be required to pay, an **Event Request** should be used, rather than just an ordinary eFlash Request, as it obliges people to register online and thus enables more definite numbers for the AGM to be known. If necessary, consult with National Secretariat (admin@ausit.org) about the creation of links to the AUSIT website.

+   The notification to branch members also needs to include a general invitation to nominate for BC, drawing their attention to the Nomination form as well as the Appointment of Proxy Form which will be embedded into the eFlash. All Nomination and Proxy Forms are to be returned to the Branch Secretary so a relevant email address must be nominated for embedding into the eFlash announcement for return of these forms. Note that By-law E now precludes members from self-nominating (although they need to sign to accept their nomination).

+   The Event Announcement should also outline the Agenda.

+   Remind BC members with specific roles (those listed in #2) to write annual reports, to be ready **4 weeks** before the Branch AGM. Documents that need to be ready to go with the AGM eflash are the following. A sample kit is available at the National Secretariat (Admin) on request.

    Branch Report
    Agenda for AGM
    Minutes of Previous AGM
    Nomination Form
    Proxy Form

    + Send the Branch Report (in PDF format) to the Communications Team (communications@ausit.org) so that links to them can be created on the AUSIT website in a timely manner. If desired, also arrange for hard copies of the annual reports to be printed for distribution at the AGM.

+   [we don't have these on the website as far as I can see]

•   You will then need to take the following further actions before the AGM:

+   In consultation with the BC chair, ensure that nomination forms have been submitted for BC members who intend to continue (often, this is conveniently done at a BC meeting, where BC members can nominate and second each other and sign acceptance of their own nomination). The Branch Secretary is to record the return of each of these documents.

+   All returned Nomination and Proxy Forms must be recorded and saved in BC's Dropbox folder by the Branch Secretary.

+   Calls for Nominations should be closed off three (3) working days prior to the AGM – this date should be listed in the eFlash announcement.

+   On closing date of registrations (3 days before the AGM), National Secretariat (Admin) will export a full list of registrations and send through to the Branch Secretary. This list will also show the registrants membership level and status.

6. At branch AGM

- Although an AGM is normally chaired by the BC chair, the Branch Secretary has an important role in the background, to ensure that the meeting is held in a way that is not open to later challenge, and to provide guidance to the chair if an agenda item has been overlooked.

- The Branch Secretary is responsible for ensuring that those attending – especially those in the Member level – are checked off against the membership lists, and from this determining whether a quorum has been achieved (normally 15 members).

- Registration lists sent through from National Secretariat must be checked off as people enter/join via Zoom at the AGM; this is because a completed Attendance List then needs to be sent to National Secretariat following the meeting in order for Certificates of Attendance to be created and sent out to attendees for NAATI PD Certification purposes.

- The Branch Secretary is also responsible for taking minutes during the AGM. An AGM is more formal than a BC meeting, and the minutes should record who moves and seconds motions (eg, to receive the minutes of the previous AGM, or to receive the various reports).

- It is particularly important to minute the election of members to BC.

  + If the number of nominations received (especially for ~~the~~ specific positions ~~of~~ such as chair etc ~~treasurer, secretary, and branch delegate~~) is less than or equal to the number required, there is no need for any vote, and they are 'elected unopposed'.

  + If a position is still open (no nominations), nominations can be taken from the floor. Remember to note the names of anyone who volunteers to be nominated from the floor, and the names of members who second them.   Spare copies of the nomination form should be on hand so that these nominations can be properly proposed and seconded.

  + Members in the Associate level (Associates, Candidates, and Students) are not eligible to be elected to a BC; instead, they can be co-opted. This can be done formally at the AGM, or at the first meeting of the new BC.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Useful resources for branch secretaries

- AUSIT Constitution

  http://ausit.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/AUSIT-Constitution-December-2020.pdf

- By-laws
  + Particularly relevant are By-law E (Nominations – last amended July 2017) and By-law F (Membership Categories and Awards – last amended August 2016)
  + Available at same URL as Constitution

- Membership list downloads (sign-in required)
  + All branch secretaries should have access to these – contact NS to gain access
  + Available on the website at:
    https://ausit.org/AUSIT/Members_Area/Reports/Membership_Report.aspx

- A sample kit is available at the National Secretariat (Admin) on request.
  + Branch Report
  + Agenda for AGM
  + Minutes of Previous AGM
  + Nomination Form
  + Proxy Form