4. Committees/Task Forces

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The board may establish or abolish standing or special committees as necessary.

**Committee purpose**
As part of the defined decision-making process of the AmCham, it will be the purpose of any committee appointed by the Chamber Board to surface issues of concern and value to the membership.

**Task Force purpose**
Task force is an ad hoc working group established to work on a single defined task or activity – business issue that concerns AmCham membership. After the set goal is achieved (event/project/position paper) the task force is dissolved.

**Committee/Task Force authority**
Any committee/task force established by the board will have only the powers specifically delegated to it by the board. Functions of each committee/task force will be in writing as part of board policy or recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the committee/task force was established.

**Committee accountability**
Committees are the operational and expert advisory to the board, and will be expected to report their work to the full board on a regular basis. Each committee will be expected to make recommendations to the board for action, such recommendations to be made by a member of the committee in the form of a motion at a full board meeting. The Chamber board will annually review the work of each committee and determine which committees will be re-appointed and which committees will be abandoned as no longer necessary.

**Committee By-Laws**
Standing committees may, if they choose, adopt by-laws for the operation of the committee. These By-Laws must be approved by the Board of Governors.
4.1 Communication with Board & Executive Office

Membership

Participation on Committees is jointly promoted by the Board, Executive Office and the Committee Chairs. Membership begins only after a Membership sign-up sheet is submitted to the Executive Office and approved by the Committee. All Committees have a final decision to accept or reject new members by majority vote.

Committee Members are solicited from the AmCham membership (in good-standing) or outside of the membership by special request of the Committee Chair, but limited to international and government institutions and cannot be solicited from non-member companies. The inclusion of committee members outside of the AmCham membership must be requested to the Board for approval, by Executive Director and Committee Chair, explaining the reason for external participation of particular individual in AmCham Committee activities. Non-AmCham Committee members are considered to be ex-officio committee members and will not have voting privileges.

a) Duties of the Executive Office regarding Committees and Committee Membership. The Executive Office shall:

- Provide Committee sign-up sheets to all new members and include such sheets in membership packets provided to renewing members.
- Encourage AmCham members to contact Committee Chairs regarding Committee membership and activities.
- Maintain a separate e-mail list of all members of each Committee, which shall only include AmCham members for whom the Executive Office has received sign-up sheets, with guest members, guest speakers, government guests, NGO guests, and other non-members listed in the minutes of committee meeting.
- Process all Committee sign-up sheets by advising the Committee Chair of the new member and, after committee's approval, adding any new member to the list of Committee Members.
- At the beginning of each calendar year, the Executive Office will send an e-mail to all AmCham members describing the Committees, providing them with contact information for Committee Chairs, and asking them to contact Committee Chairs if they are interested in joining. At the request of a Committee Chair, the Executive Office may send similar notices at other times during the year to seek additional membership.
- The Executive Director is encouraged to attend, or delegate an Executive Office representative to attend, all AmCham committees meetings. He or she should be available and prepared to offer consultancy and activity coordination to all committees.
- **Staff Resources** - Executive Director shall attempt to adequately staff all committees consistent with the resources available.

b) Duties of Committee Chairs / Members regarding Committee Membership.

Committee Members shall:
- Encourage and invite AmCham members to join committees.
- Ensure that all new members of their committee submit a sign-up sheet to the Executive Office for processing, or submit the sign-up sheet directly on behalf of the member.
- Notify the Executive Office in writing (by e-mail or letter) whenever a member resigns or is terminated from membership.
- At the beginning of each calendar year, each Committee Chair shall ask all Committee Members whether they wish to serve for the coming year and provide the Executive Office with the names of those who agree to continue serving.

c) Duties of committee members of individual board committees will vary, but certain basic committee member responsibilities remain the same for all committees. Those responsibilities include:
- Should attend all meetings of the committee to which the board member is assigned.
- Prepare for committee meetings by studying the agenda and researching issues to be discussed at committee meetings
- Actively participate in discussions at committee meetings.
- Follow through promptly on any assignments for the committee.
- Support committee recommendations before the full board
- With respect to the standing committees, attendance by all members at scheduled meetings is especially important to the necessary work of these committees. Acceptance of membership on one of these committees implies recognition of the value of its work and a willingness to make every effort to attend its scheduled meetings. Failure to attend half of yearly meetings either in person or by an approved substitute, will be construed as an indication of inability or unwillingness to participate in the work of the committee and may become the basis for replacement on the committee, by the Chairperson and/or the President of the Board of Governors and/or the Board of Governors.

d) Duties of Board members serving on committees:

Board Participation. Every member of the Board must serve on at least one Committee.
- Attend meetings of the committee to which the board member is assigned.
- Prepare for committee meetings by studying the agenda and researching issues to be discussed at committee meetings
- Actively participate in discussions at committee meetings.
- Follow through promptly on any assignments for the committee.
- Work with the chairperson to support committee recommendations before the full board.

If the Board member, in the opinion of the chairperson, is unwilling to participate or an inactive committee member, the chairperson may present the issue to the Board of Governors.

**Meetings/Activities**

Meeting Structure - Standing committees will organize their own meeting structures. Meeting structures should be submitted to the Executive Director when time permits. Dates of meetings are subject to review and approval of the Executive Director, to prevent meeting conflict.
Committee Chairs shall determine the dates and times of Committee meetings and coordinate with the Executive Office to ensure that there are no conflicts in scheduling events or facilities. Committees should meet as often as needed to accomplish their goals and are encouraged to communicate by e-mail and bulletin boards between meetings. Committee meetings may be in person, by conference call, internet chat or other techniques that permit all members to take part in discussions and decisions. When necessary, Committees may make decisions through exchange of e-mails or bulletin boards.

Committee is responsible for holding a minimum number of committee meetings per annum, with 4 considered to be a reasonable minimum. Committees are responsible for the initiation and organization of at least 1 yearly event/activity/project/position paper, providing added value to AmCham and the AmCham membership. Non-compliance with these requirements will mean automatic cancellation of the committee, which will be determined at the Board's annual review.

Upon request of a Committee Chair, the Executive will send out notices of meetings one week in advance and reminders two days in advance. Committee Chairs may opt to provide such notice themselves, but shall send copies to the Executive Office and the President.

Committee Chair shall keep the minutes of all meetings or some form or record of meeting content/subject. This duty may be delegated to a Committee member or, if available and willing, to the representative of the Executive Office attending the meeting. In that case, draft minutes or presentation material shall be sent to the Chair for approval within one week of the meeting. The Committee Chair shall then forward the minutes to all committee members and the Executive Office within one week of receipt.

The Executive Office is requested to attend all Committee meetings.

Committee policy work and closed AmCham events are considered confidential unless publicly announced by AmCham.

Communications Procedure

Reports to the Executive Director - The Executive Director is an ex officio member of all AmCham committees and is responsible for coordinating their activities, receiving copies of the committee correspondence to be kept advised of the operations and activities. All AmCham committees must report to the Board of Governors in the manner designated and copies of all reports shall be provided to the Executive Director.

Signatures: All correspondence on behalf of AmCham to Government officials, at the level of Minister, Member of Parliament or above, shall be sent on AmCham letterhead and signed by the President or Executive Director, and copied to Executive Office. Facsimile signatures may be used only with the express permission of the individual entitled to sign. A chronological file of all such correspondence shall be maintained by the Executive Office and available to the Board for inspection.

Any Committee Chair or Board Member writing to Government officials regarding preliminary issues prior to an invitation (such as possible availability for an event) or to set up meetings on behalf of a Committee for purposes of briefing the official
Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs

All Committee Chairs must be approved by the Board. A Committee Chair may resign at any time with thirty days notice to the Board. Upon notice of resignation, the Committee Chair shall request from the Committee members their recommendations for a new Chair. If more than one person is recommended, the Committee shall vote and the nominee with the greatest number of votes shall become the new Chair, subject to Board approval. If only one nominee is named, that nominee shall become the new Chair, subject to Board approval. Only AmCham members can be nominated for the Chair and Vice Chair positions.

Committee Vice Chair: All Committees must have at least one Vice Chair, who is recommended and approved by all Committee members. The Vice Chair assumes the duties of a Chair in his/her absence.

If a Committee Chairs are not operating effectively, the Board may vote to remove and replace the Committee Chair or, if appropriate, to disband the Committee. Prior to voting, the Chair shall be entitled to present arguments to the Board about why he or she should not be removed.

Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs elections or confirmations every two years.

Reports

Committee Chairs shall regularly report on activities of their Committees to the Board, either through attendance at the Board Meeting (by invitation), or in writing. Each Committee shall submit a written Annual Report to the Board, copying the Executive Office, one month prior to the Annual General Meeting for distribution at the Annual General Meeting. The report shall detail the activities and achievements of the Committee for the prior year, including Chair, Vice Chair and members list.

To the extent specifically prepared for AmCham purposes, all materials, documents, etc. developed by the member or member's company for committee activities or projects, while still shared material, are donated to AmCham without consideration of compensation, unless authorized by the Board of Governors, and it is considered to be AmCham’s property. Also, all initiatives and/or ideas for activities developed within the committee are considered AmCham’s intellectual property.

Establishing New Committees

Any AmCham member may propose establishing a new committee by submitting to the Board of Governors a detailed written concept of the committee, backed by at least five AmCham members willing to participate in its work (in writing).
AmCham Croatia Position Statements Approval Process

**Timeframe Action Responsible**

AmCham Lobbying/Advocacy efforts are generally speaking the work of the AmCham Committees. AmCham Policy indicates the level at which co-signatures and approvals are required. That is, letters and/or AmCham positions sent to Ministers and above must be co-signed by the Committee Chair, Board President and/or Executive Director. AmCham policy also dictates regular review of Committee work by the AmCham Board of Governors. Any and all Lobbying/Advocacy efforts that grow above and beyond the work of the Committee, i.e. any positions either initiated within or without a Committee that wish to be presented publicly, especially through the media, as an official position of the American Chamber of Commerce, must follow these guidelines:

Definition: Member refers to AmCham member in-good-standing who initiates position statement

**Stage 1 (Pre-Draft) (1 Working Day)**
Chair or Board President and Member set timeframe for first circulation in the Committee or Board. This stage can be skipped. Identification of suggested messages, main points, timing required and external audiences, which will be expanded into an Advocacy Plan, developed by Chair or Board President and Member. Bullet points allowed. Chair or Board President and Executive Director.

**Stage 2 (First Draft) (5-10 Working Days)**
5-10 working days, decided by Chair or President and Member. Additional revised first drafts can be circulated for comments to pursue consensus. Circulate first draft together with Advocacy Plan to relevant Committees, Board, AmCham Croatia membership to inform, encourage opinions, and solicit support. Announcement of position statement initiative to be circulated to membership through e-bulletin and first draft available on members-only website. All Members. Members’ written comments are sent to the Executive Director and Chair or President.

**Stage 3 (Final Draft) (5 Working Days)**
Circulate to relevant Committees, Board and AmCham Croatia membership for a minimum of 5 working days. Timeframe decided by the Chair or President and Member. Review comments made during Stage 2. Preference for minor adjustments, although further changes to the content can be made. Stage can be repeated until a general agreement is achieved. All Members. Members’ written comments are sent to the Executive Director and Chair or President.

**Stage 4 (Internal) (2 Working Days)**
“Internal” 48 hours or less to Check quality, style and consistency, with a mandatory legal review. Chair, Executive Director, Approval by Board – Review of Position Statement and Advocacy Plan (including the legislative timeframe, distribution list, press strategy, follow-up actions)

**Stage 5 (Released)**
Final document sent to all members and to external audiences indicated in the Advocacy Plan. Position Statements should be signed by the President or Secretary Treasurer or Executive Director of AmCham Croatia, the relevant Committee Chair, or a combination thereof.

**TOTAL LENGTH OF PROCEDURE (MINIMUM) = 13 Working Days**
**Timing Circumstances Lead/Involvement**

Fast-Track Procedure Regardless of the overall time frame at least two working days (48 hours) must be allowed at the end of the process for review of the final document to ensure transparency. Exceptional cases only when the normal procedure does not allow for sufficiently speedy response.

- Needs support, in writing, of at least five member businesses.
- Should build on existing AmCham Croatia position.
- Strong and demonstrable evidence of majority consensus on position statement. Committee Chair approaches President or Vice-President of the Board for advice and decision. Report at the following Board meeting. In cases of disagreement, the President or Vice-President or Chair may choose to go to the complete Board for a final decision.

**TOTAL LENGTH OF FAST-TRACK PROCEDURE (MINIMUM) = 48 HOURS**

**8 General Guiding Principles for Drafting Position Statements**

- Get support of at least five Patron and/or corporate members
- Identify the impact on business
- Assess chances of influencing the outcome
- Maximize the impact of policy statements by drafting an Advocacy Plan
- Ensure transparency of drafting process
- Manage divergences of opinion
- Position Statements should represent the consensus view of member companies
- Respect deadlines