

Operating Procedure for the Formation, Operation and Termination of IWA Specialist Groups

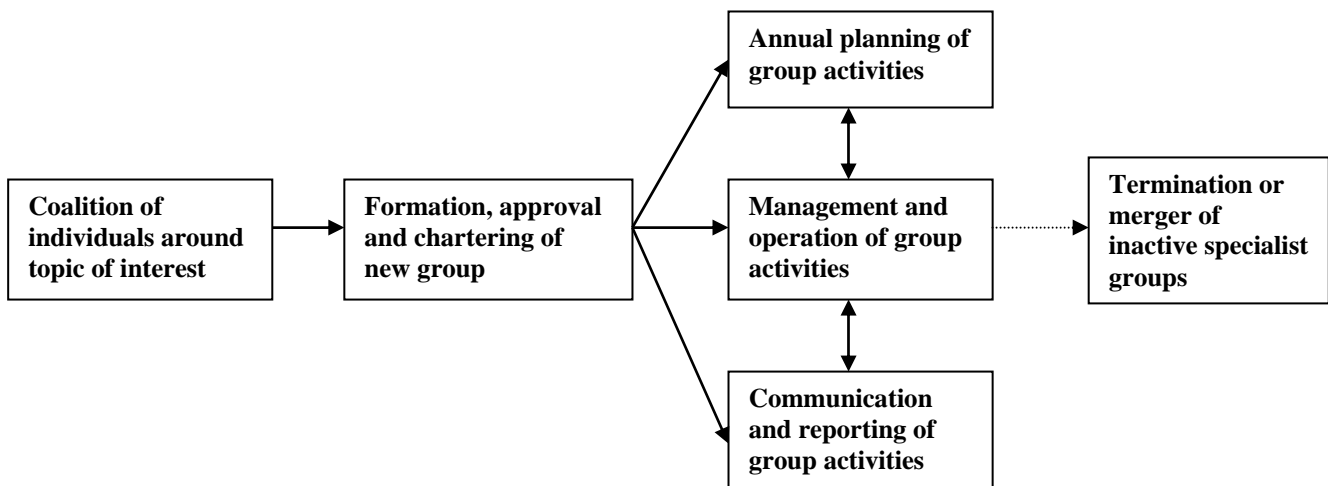
1. Preamble

A key benefit of IWA membership is the ability to join Specialist Groups. These are coalitions of individuals who work in water related topics of common interest. They provide a sound structure for international specialists to network, share knowledge, information and skills, and make good professional and business contacts. The SGs operate across a wide spectrum, in scientific, technical and management sectors. They are active in staging conferences, workshops and seminars and produce scientific and technical reports, manuals of best practice, and develop and publish position papers. As the Groups are self-establishing and self-managed, they typify the bottom-up, member-led nature of IWA.

The IWA Strategic Council (SC) represents the interests of Specialist Groups through a sub-committee created to support Specialist Groups (The Strategic Council sub-committee on Specialist Groups).

This Operating Procedure sets out the steps necessary to establish and wind up a specialist group and should be read in conjunction with two supporting documents: 1. Constitution Template for Specialist Groups; and 2. Partnership Agreement between IWA Specialist Groups and the IWA Office.

2. Overview of the Processes Involved in the Formation, Operation and Management of Specialist Groups



3. Formation and Chartering of Specialist Groups

Membership of Specialist Groups is a benefit of membership and is therefore restricted to IWA members (Individual, Corporate, and Nominated Representatives of Corporate Members). Therefore all Group Officers should be members of IWA either individually or via their employer.

3.1. Chartering a New Group

Successful Specialist Groups have clearly defined management structures, objectives, scope and terms of reference. Specifically,

- 3.1.1. Each group should have a constitution (an example is appended) describing the topics covered and governance structure of the group.
- 3.1.2. Each group should have in place an appropriate management structure (example described in the attached constitution template)
- 3.1.3. Regular elections should be held for the positions available within the Management Committee (example described in the attached constitution template)
- 3.1.4. The scope of the group should not overlap significantly with other groups. The current list of specialist groups and their fields of interest can be found on the IWA website at: www.iwahq.org
- 3.1.5. The group should plan to produce an annual report outlining activities undertaken in the past year and planned for the next 3 years. This report should be completed and submitted to IWA HQ for the purpose of informing the IWA Strategic Council and IWA Programme Committee
- 3.1.6. All outputs from Specialist Group activities (e.g. papers, proceedings, reports, books, ideas programmes, etc) carried out under the auspices of IWA remain the property of IWA or IWA Publishing Ltd. Specific agreements may need to be prepared when a group works with other organisations (The IWA office is happy to advise)

3.2. Forming a new Group

To form a new group a written application should be sent to the IWA Specialist Groups Coordinator at IWA office (Hong Li, hong.li@iwahq.org). The application should clearly state:

- Proposed name of the new Group
- Terms of reference/Constitution
- Description of the topics to be covered
- Names and contact details of the proposed Chairman, Secretary, and members of Management Committee.
- Outline programme of work and activities, time schedule for the first 1 - 2 years of activities and the predicted outcomes if these activities (product)
- Budget proposal

The Specialist Groups Coordinators and members of the SC sub committee will review the proposal taking into account the criteria above. The proposal will then be forwarded to the Chair of the IWA Strategic Council for approval. Following approval, the promoters will be notified, the new Group will be publicised by IWA and members encouraged to join the new group.

4. Operation and Management of Specialist Groups

Group leaders should recognise that most Group members will be relatively passive, content to receive communications and attempt to attend the Group events. Group leaders should however try to encourage their members to use the international networking opportunities that the Groups provide.

5. Winding up of inactive groups

Members who join Specialist Groups expect the groups to provide at minimum activities such as a newsletter or electronic networking and discussion or periodic face-to-face events.

HQ may from time to time provide advice to the Strategic Council or Board of Directors on levels of activity in groups with a view to ensuring continued member service. This would be enhanced by regular communication with HQ through annual reports.

At a minimum the Specialist Group Coordinators will contact group leaders on a quarterly basis to ensure that HQ is responding to the needs of the group.

5.1. Level of Activity

A Specialist Group may become inactive for a number of reasons including: topic no longer relevant, lack of leadership and lack of member interest Specialist Groups' activities will be monitored using the criteria of:

- Conference and workshop frequency

- The frequency of newsletters and publications
- The regularity of Specialist Group management committee/board meetings
- Attendance at SG Leaders Forum (convened periodically by the IWA Office).
- The extent to which the Group is actively planning new activities

The IWA office recognises that no one of these criteria provides evidence of inactivity. Rather, what is looked for is a pattern of inactivity. When inactivity is obvious, the members do not achieve the value from their membership they have a right to expect, and following consultation, steps would be taken to wind up the group. These consultation steps would include:

- Contacting the Group leaders to discuss means by which the group can be reinvigorated
- Requesting the group to submit a programme of future activities
- Assist in setting up elections for a new management committee
- Suggesting additional/new members of the management committee/board
- Drafting new terms of reference
- Suggesting activities to raise interest in the topic area

6. Termination Process

If it is decided that a group should be wound up, either the IWA office of the Management Committee of the group will prepare a submission for the Strategic Council sub-committee on Specialist Groups, detailing:

- The reason the group should be wound up
- Whether a replacement group covering all or part of the field of activity of the group to be wound up should be established as a replacement

This will be submitted firstly to the Executive Director for review. If he gives his approval, the submission will be forwarded to the sub-committee for its endorsement. This can be done out of session. If the sub-committee endorses the winding up of the group, the IWA Office shall notify the members of the group of this decision.