

## ***Introduction and Summary***

Groups of American Chemical Society members have organized and attended regional meetings for almost 100 years to report research findings, exchange ideas, introduce young chemists and chemical engineers, and otherwise fulfill the particular professional needs of a locality. The volunteers that provide structure, arrange meetings, and muster support on the regional level are a vital link between the Society and its aims to serve individual member needs. In addition, region boards conduct regional meetings at some financial risk and legal liability, although with the incorporation of the regions, these risks have been minimized.

For these reasons, the Regional Activities Coordination Team (ReACT) has concluded after a yearlong assessment that strengthening the region boards is critical to the mission of high-quality, high-visibility regional meetings for the Society and its members. As an integral part of ACS, regions need support and guidance without interference that would influence the personality of the individual regions. A series of specific recommendations to attain these goals is included in this report.

ReACT received its mandate in December 2004, when the ACS Board Committee on Professional and Member Relations accepted the oral report of the Study Group on Regional Meetings (Chair, Glenn Crosby) and charged the Council Committee on Meetings and Exposition (M&E) to form an "implementation group" to further the study group's work. This ad hoc committee would include representation from each of the Society's ten regions.

During its first meeting, in January 2005, the members changed the group's name to Regional Activities Coordination Team, ReACT, to portray their mission in working with the regions, the local sections who host the regional meetings, and the group of members who form the local organizing committee that plans and executes a particular regional meeting. ReACT's directives from M&E were twofold: to further study the role of regional meetings in the Society, and to disseminate the documents and tools to region boards and local organizing committees that were developed by the study group.

A theme of those documents and tools was the critical importance of region boards in providing oversight, institutional memory, and proper financial backing for regional meetings. Within the framework of volunteer member "owned and operated" regional meetings, the region board is the crucial bridge to maintaining the quality of technical programming, proper financial practices and dissemination of critical information for a regional meeting from year to year.

Each regional meeting reflects its parent region's unique character, but all have several features in common. They are a valuable entry route to ACS membership and training ground for future Society leaders; and they provide networking and mentoring opportunities in a low-key, low-cost setting relative to their national meeting counterparts. Indeed, regional meetings draw groups with mutual interests that otherwise may not meet at or even attend national meetings.

Thus regional meetings, with their combination of high technical quality and tailored focus, reach ACS members, adapt to their needs, and encourage them to participate in the Society via channels unique to the regional level. ReACT has concluded that region boards, many of which have been in existence for 50 years or more, are functioning entities critical to the vision and mission of regional meetings and of the Society at large.

Rather than an added level of bureaucracy within the Society, region boards are underutilized entities of governance within the Society (although not officially recognized within the Constitution and Bylaws of the Society) that can help the Society achieve many of its critical missions.

## ***History of ACS Regional meetings***

### **Location, Location, Location**

In form, regions have evolved from meetings between sections and “meetings-in-miniature” to more formal regional meetings and, finally, to regions governed by boards. In motivation, they have remained the same: regions strive to satisfy the needs of ACS members within a locality. Over the years, regions have proven more adaptive as members’ needs change, while ACS national meetings have responded more slowly.

Each region has its own personality and institutional history based on the members, the educational institutions, and the chemical industries within the region. The financial and technical success of each region is wholly dependent on the interest and time of the volunteer leaders within the region. Originally, and until recently, regions operated independently of ACS, but because of liability issues, they have incorporated to become an official part of the Society. As an integral part of ACS, regions need support and guidance without interfering with the personality of the region. ReACT provided initial support in the form of templates for reports, budgets, and memoranda of understanding to be used in the running of the regions and regional meetings.

Regional meetings of groups of ACS local sections have a long history, although the present structure of such meetings dates only from World War II. Prewar series included fifteen Midwest Regional Meetings (1908-1940), fifteen Northern New York Intersectional Meetings (1923-1936), twelve Ohio-Michigan Regional Meetings (1923-1930), and five Northern New York Intersectional Meetings (1928-1932). World War II brought a hiatus in regional meetings. In 1945, in fact, no national meetings were held because of wartime travel restrictions, and twelve local sections held “meetings-in-miniature” as substitutes. Two such meetings were held in 1946, nine in 1947, six in 1948, and some local sections were still holding them as late as 1975.

In 1944, again because of wartime travel restrictions came the first of the modern series of regional meetings. It took place in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was called the Southwest Regional Meeting, and has been held annually since that time. The spring of 1945 saw the first Northwest Regional Meeting in the Puget Sound Area.

By 1975, the country had been divided into ten regions. Every local section within a region was represented on a regional meeting steering committee so that each could sponsor a regional meeting. The steering committees and host local sections would absorb the profits or losses of the regional meetings, which were held either annually or biennially. As such, the steering committees, though not recognized entities within ACS, existed to ensure that regional meetings were conducted in their respective regions, even though their focus paralleled that of the national Society and national meetings. Host local sections within the regions supplied the volunteers to organize the meeting, solicited corporations to fund it, and contacted the experts to present the programs. Historically, regions received little support from national ACS as compared to the Society’s national meetings support, and at the same time have presented technical meetings with the same quality as national meetings.

As regions met and held regional meetings, each developed its own flavor and personality based on the needs of the regional ACS membership. Their structures and membership can range widely: from the Rocky Mountain Region with seven local sections, to the Southeast Region with thirty-nine; from Northwestern with the local sections of Alaska and Hawaii, to Northeast with many local sections easily accessible to each other; and from Mid-Atlantic with greater than 50 percent of membership in large to very large local sections, to Southwest with greater than 50 percent membership in small to very small-sized local sections. However, the regions also have several features in common, such as unique institutional history and regional meetings run by volunteers. The membership of nine of the ten regions belongs to local sections that fall into the medium to very small categories. All these contribute to the spectrum of regional successes. For instance:

- The Midwest Regional Meeting (MWRM) has meetings planned through 2011, while the Great Lakes Regional Meeting (GLRM) began planning next year’s meeting only after the current meeting was held;
- The Mid-Atlantic Region (MARM) has about \$150,000 in regional assets, while the Northeast Region (NERM) has \$4,000 in regional assets;
- The Central Region has not had a national meeting within its region borders for the last 30 years, whereas the Western Region has a national meeting within its territory nearly every year.

## **The Many, The Dedicated, The Volunteers**

ACS entities on the regional level, and especially regional meetings, are showcases for our claim that the ACS is the “world's largest volunteer professional society.” That said, there are few tasks within the Society that ask more of an ACS volunteer than that of organizing a regional meeting. The commitment usually runs 2.5 to 3 years in duration, and volunteer hours donated to launch a single meeting runs into the thousands. Each meeting frequently requires working with a budget in excess of \$100,000, leaving volunteers walking a thin line between an economic boost for their local section and a multi-thousand dollar disaster.

Staff and committee involvement with the regions and the ACS volunteers who run them has been minimal until recently, even though the Committee on Meetings and Expositions has had a Regional Meetings Subcommittee for many years. In 1999, the Office of Regional meetings (ORM) was created within the Department of Meetings and Expositions. ORM provided ACS volunteers assistance with hotel contracts, abstracts, registrations, and planning for regional meetings. Note: ORM was dissolved in October 2004, and all functions therein are now contained within the Department of Meetings and Exposition Services (DMES).

In 2000, ORM hosted a regional summit meeting to discuss the future challenges for the regions and regional meetings. One discussion focused on the liability issues that regions faced by not being an official component of the ACS, a concern that could largely be addressed by incorporation. In 2004, a presidential assigned task group investigated the viability of regions and the tools needed to be a successful region. The Study Group on Regional Meetings developed several documents to systematize and streamline regional meeting planning and to document region activities. In late 2004, ReACT was created to implement the documents. As of 2006, nine of ten regions have incorporated and are considering using the documents provided for planning regional meetings. Incorporation of all regions is predicted to occur by 2007.

## **The Inevitable Comparison of National to Regional Meetings**

In the last two decades, as national meetings have grown in scope and attendance, fewer and fewer cities have facilities large enough meet the Society's tremendous space requirements. Therefore, national meetings became limited to select cities, located primarily within four regions (Middle Atlantic, Southeast, Southwest, and Western). During the past twenty years, 80% of the national meetings have been held in the four regions mentioned above, while three regions have not had a national meeting held within their territory since at least 1986 (Central, Midwest, and Northwest; Central has never had a national meeting held within its territory since it was formed in 1969). The current projected national meeting schedule through 2014 has nearly 90% of the national meetings occurring in 5 region territories (Great Lakes, Middle Atlantic, Northeast, Southwest, and Western). National meetings are run mainly by staff, while regional meetings are run by member volunteers. Regions are at different stages and different levels of success. Together, these factors pose a challenge to address issues while providing individual ACS members the more tailored benefits that regions can offer.

## ***Current Status of Regional Meetings***

### **The Office of Regional Meetings (ORM), the National Arm of Support**

The ORM summit meeting on regional meetings in 2000, held in Santa Barbara, California, included the first comprehensive review of major financial, legal, and insurance issues associated with regional meetings. As mentioned above, a major outcome of the conference was the realization that regions needed to incorporate to protect member volunteers organizing these meetings and to obtain a minimally uniform governance structure for the regions.

Importantly, ORM helped establish more consistent communication among region boards and the local organizing committees and the various governance units of the ACS. The contributions of the ACS staff continue to lessen the burden of regional meeting planning, particularly in such areas as electronic abstract collection and online registration. Staff administration of these major activities allows local organizing committees to concentrate their efforts on technical and social programming, which together comprise the backbone of a successful meeting. This support has continued as ORM was absorbed into the Department of Meetings and Expositions Services.

### **Incorporation of Regions**

One of the primary objectives set out at the 2000 summit is close at hand, as nine of ten regions are incorporated as of this report. It is expected that the tenth, the Great Lakes Region, will complete incorporation by spring 2007, based on the outcome of a June 2006 meeting of its steering committee. Its members at that meeting passed a resolution to incorporate their region and formed a subcommittee of 3 people to pursue this action.

### **Electronic Abstract Service/CAS**

The content of the oral and poster presentations at regional meetings represents a significant body of technical work. Unfortunately, while titles and abstracts have been included in the regional meeting programs for many years, the archival value of such efforts has not existed until recently. In fall 2004 the Chemical Abstract Service (CAS) began abstracting the technical content, ensuring it will have lasting value to the field. This progress is especially important for undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral students, whose first presentations may occur at regional meetings: The introduction of regional meeting content into CAS allows them to begin building a strong publications base early in their careers. The same can be said for young faculty members, who can use the smaller, more personable regional meetings to build contacts with like-minded colleagues and complementary specialists within their own region of the country.

## ***Regional Meetings Potential and Region Board Issues***

The diversity of the ten regions makes it difficult to quantify the value that regional meetings bring to the Society and its members, but several qualitative factors deserve mention:

1. **Regional meetings are a valuable training ground for future Society leaders.** Regional meetings are run entirely by volunteers. This is both their greatest challenge and greatest strength. Local organizing committees are often populated with inexperienced, overcommitted individuals possessed with boundless enthusiasm and creativity. By not recognizing what is impossible, they manage the impossible—thus gaining precious experience, insights, and demonstrations of achievement as ACS leadership resources.
2. **Regional meetings can evolve to be an important entry route to recruiting and retaining ACS membership.** They are inexpensive and convenient to attend, making them particularly appealing to diverse segments of the chemical community. Special programs for teachers and students at high schools and colleges—community and technical colleges as well as four-year universities—are particularly effective at regional meetings. Topics of local interest benefits tailored to their immediate needs. The regional meeting by nature is a diverse, easily accessible vehicle can also attract the support and active participation of regional businesses and other organizations. While many members respond to the Society's national and international outlook, others look more to through which to appreciate the benefits of membership.
3. **Regional meetings play an important educational role in the scientific development of the Society's youngest members and member candidates.** Regional meetings are a great place for beginning scientists to present their research. Undergraduates have traditionally made up a large percentage of the attendance at regional meetings, since they provide an environment that is of high scientific quality, yet supportive for new scientists. Their "three-dimensional" experience is an excellent complement to other educational efforts such as special programming, and graduate school recruiting.

4. **Regional meetings bring together groups with mutual interests that are unlikely to meet at, or even attend, national meetings.** Regional meetings are a natural vehicle for networking and collaboration within geographical regions. They are ideal for developing interactions between university faculty, between academics and local industries, and between undergraduate students and graduate school recruiters. Joint meetings between the ACS and other societies, other regions, or between regions and ACS Technical Divisions are easily accomplished. In recent years the following divisions were among some of those who have made major contributions to regional meetings: Chemical Education, Organic, Professional Relations, Chemical Health and Safety, Chemistry and the Law, Medicinal Chemistry, Environmental, Analytical, and Polymer Chemistry. The great differences among the regions ensure that every meeting will be unique, while the tradition of local organization means that the needs of smaller subsets of the Society are addressed.
5. **Regional meetings have the potential to be test beds for activities, formats, meeting organization and other features before attempting such efforts on a national scale.** Their smaller venues also offer more flexibility and easier access to feedback with which to modify new meeting ideas before scaling up to national meetings. For example, at the 2006 Southeastern Regional Meeting, as a pilot, attendees received the program on flash drives to see if this would be a viable means of presenting the program.

Region boards evolved in response to need for oversight of regional meeting planning and organization, and continue to do so as members' needs change. Some critical issues facing region boards include:

1. **As with any volunteer organization, region boards face the continuing challenge of bringing in individuals with new perspectives while retaining the insights of experienced veterans.** Region boards are the "institutional memory" of a region and its meetings. Often, the catalog of successful practices and procedures lies in the minds of a handful of individuals.
2. **Significant financial risk accompanies each regional meeting; thus region board members and volunteers need specialized tools and training to anticipate and avoid meeting pitfalls.** This risk is shared by the host local section and the region boards. Incorporation of the regions over the past five years has reduced the risk from liability by bringing them under the ACS insurance umbrella, but other challenges remain. These include economic downturns, natural disasters, and even health problems with key personnel.
3. **Region activities are a logical bridge between local and national activities, and region boards are a natural structure for such activities; yet region boards have limited means by which they can generate funds for their own use.** The development of long term or extra-meeting initiatives is impossible without a source of funding. Such initiatives might include regional awards, multi-region educational activities, travel awards programs and others.
4. **Uncertainty regarding their role in the larger structure of the ACS, along with lack of communication in and among regions themselves, acts negatively on the region boards' value to both the national ACS and individual members.** Region boards typically meet only once a year and representation by the region's local sections (their Board of Directors) at that meeting is highly variable. As region boards take on other important activities, as mentioned just above, these members will naturally be more interested and engaged in their regions. On the other hand, if the only function of the region board members continues to be choice of the site for next year's regional meeting, the boards will continue to find it difficult to attract volunteers and the fresh ideas and energy they bring with them. Exchange between regions is virtually nonexistent, which compounds the problem. While communication with the Society itself is better, it is hampered nonetheless by the poorly defined relationships between the region boards and ACS governance entities.

In short, a wider recognition of the region boards' function and improved channels of communication within the ACS would enhance their effectiveness and value to both Society and members.

The ACS is a large and complex organization with multiple constituencies. The spontaneous creation of geographically organized meetings and their continued success over many decades illustrates the need for, and benefits of, regional administrative structures. The potential of the region boards for advancing the ACS strategic vision and for providing service to the membership has yet to be exploited. Indeed, the fact that they have run for many decades and have been a focal point of dissemination of regional research and member recruitment is a testament to their great importance to the Society.

## ***The Vision for Regions and Its Place in the ACS Strategic Plan***

Over the course of its discussions, ReACT formulated the following vision:

***“A network of empowered region boards will exist to initiate, enhance, and coordinate activities tailored to the needs and strengths of the ACS membership.”***

As previously mentioned, the regional steering committees were incorporated as region boards to address legal issues associated with organization of regional meetings by member volunteers and to provide a common baseline of governance and related practices for regions and regional meetings which enables continuous and predictable development of high quality meetings and events. Other benefits arising from incorporation of the region boards are envisioned as follows:

- Secure financial stability with appropriate reserves
- Encourage participation of all local sections
- Provide a forum for the orderly advanced planning of region activities
- Be a “support network” for each other and local organizing committees
- Offer institutional ACS memory in their regions
- Facilitate communication between and among local sections
- Offer programs and activities at the regional level that coordinate with efforts of the region boards and local organizing committees, such as the Region High School Teacher Awards Program, Regional Service Award, Leadership Development program, and Chemagination
- Be a vital part of a pipeline of future leadership for the Society

The Governance Review Task Force, in 2005, laid out a new visionary framework from within which a “new” ACS might grow. This framework relies more on value-added efforts and innovation rather than activities-by-tradition. Regional meetings meet this standard with minimal reliance on the national ACS staff; the lion's share of meeting organization—initiating, coordinating, and funding—are handled on the local level, and volunteers carry the day. In fact, there is no better example of “bang-for-the-buck” in value-added efforts and innovation than regional meetings. The grassroots membership that can be served by regional meetings can be cumulatively greater than the number served by their larger counterparts, the national meetings.

As we look towards regional meetings of the future, on-line abstracts for people to purchase, Web cast meetings on topics that cross geographical boundaries and other such innovative services are on the horizon. The region boards are the best points of coordination to realize these efforts.

Region boards are not envisioned to be new levels of governance or bureaucracy but rather they should function as the most effective and efficient conduits for successful meetings and member communications at the region level. The successful meeting conduit gives the Society a pipeline for sustained leadership, and the member communications conduit provides a more direct interface that empowers the Society to meet the needs of its members. Therefore, it is vital that there be a solid link between the efforts of regions and the ACS governance structure. Perhaps this link can best be secured through a direct connection between region boards and the Regional Meetings Subcommittee.

ReACT has accomplished its intended mission to help rollout and implement new organizational practices for the regional meetings, addressed issues of communication amongst the various regional meeting constituencies, and has continued to examine the role of regional meetings in the Society. A description of these accomplishments is as follows:

1. **Documents/tools.** ReACT took the documents and tools developed by its forerunner, the Study Group on Regional Meetings, and polished those documents for final distribution and dissemination to region boards and regional meeting officers. The committee developed a few additional documents as well. The tools available to systematize and streamline regional meeting planning and to document region activities currently includes:
  - Bid Guidelines
  - Core Programs
  - Budget Spreadsheet for Regional Meetings
  - Budget Spreadsheet for Regions
  - Final Report Template for Regional Meetings
  - Annual Report for Regions
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which outlines all responsibilities, accountabilities, and authorities for the various organizations responsible for organizing a regional meeting.

For dissemination of more information about regions/regional meetings, the committee also generated a CD containing the full document set and a Web site to encourage communication about the activities of regions and regional meetings.

2. **Vision statement.** ReACT helped formulate the following vision after lengthy discussions with many region/regional meeting constituencies, specifically, "A network of empowered region boards will exist to initiate, enhance, and coordinate activities tailored to the needs and strengths of the ACS membership." It is important to understand the reasoning behind this vision statement. In order to strengthen the organization, management, visibility, and quality of regional meetings, it quickly became clear to the Study Group and to ReACT that engaged and effective region boards were the critical factor in achieving that aim. Region boards maintain "corporate memory" and enforce best practices for operation of the regional meetings. If the only function of the region board members continues to be choice of the site for upcoming regional meetings, the boards will continue to find it difficult to attract volunteers and the fresh ideas and energy they bring with them. Region board members who are actively engaged in important decision making will more enthusiastically participate in the activities of the region. During the next 10 years, the first priority of region boards must be the implementation of organizational and financial measures that ensure successful regional meetings. In the future, the region boards can enhance the interest and participation of members by phasing in other activities in the region. This positive cycle of change will strengthen the regions and the regional meetings and will provide the Society with a new structure for delivering services to meet member needs.
3. **Presentations to Region Boards.** ReACT decided that the most effective means to disseminate the completed documents was a presentation to each region board, and by a person from outside that region. Each board could then discuss and customize the tools according to their needs and characteristics. In addition, members of local organizing committees attending the Regional Meeting Planning Conference (RMPC) were presented with the documents, as well as other stakeholders at the Regional Meeting Roundtables held at the ACS national meetings.
4. **RMPC Involvement.** Members of the Study Group on Regional Meetings and ReACT have fully contributed to the yearly training sessions for organizers of future regional meetings. In particular, they have engaged attendees with in-depth discussions about assembling and executing a noteworthy program, and they have served as expert resources for advice about effective budgeting.
5. **Interfacing with the Regional Meeting Subcommittee.** Given the limited duration of ReACT, committee members realized the necessity to create a strong interface with the M&E Regional Meetings Subcommittee to ensure that ReACT recommendations are carried forward over the longer term. The

subcommittee leadership in turn was eager to carry forward what they saw as valuable work. With a greater emphasis now being placed on oversight of the regional meetings by the region boards, the subcommittee will assume a more active role with the region boards to improve the information flow about best practices, will support the local organizing committees as they face the routine problems associated with running meetings, and will ensure that designated region programs occur from meeting to meeting. The subcommittee will review the annual region report and make recommendations that will help to ensure that region boards are institutionalized within the ACS governance structure.

6. **Presentations to Governance Committees.** At the 2005 Washington National Meeting, several ReACT members made presentations to governance committees—including the Committees on Local Section Activities, Division Activities and Meetings and Expositions, as well as to several Councilor Caucuses—and received their input on ReACT activities. These presentations highlighted the importance of regional meetings in serving the full membership of the Society.
7. **Greater Divisional Involvement.** ReACT has encouraged greater communication between regions and ACS technical divisions. Setting up symposia of specific interest to divisions is attractive at regional meetings because participants can focus more completely when the venue carries fewer competing technical programs than a national meeting. Divisions can also reach out more effectively at regional meetings to undergraduate and graduate students as future members of the division.

Several divisions have designated contact persons to work with liaisons in the various regions to set up such symposia. These contact persons arrange for the appropriate level of division support, such as funding and publicity. ReACT expects that the Regional Meetings Subcommittee will continue to serve an important role in communicating the importance of regional meetings to divisions and ensure that region boards and local organizing committees receive regular updates on division contact persons.

An outstanding example of division coordination with region boards is the Division of Chemical Education High School Teacher Award. This award is being funded by an endowment to which CHED agreed to contribute \$100,000 in matching funds, and is making its first awards available at 2007 regional meetings. Working with the region boards was determined to be the most effective way of handling the program and ensuring its continuation each year. The rebirth of the regional high school teacher award serves as an important example to all divisions of what can be accomplished by working within the regional context. ReACT hopes that other divisions will build from this example and establish their own regional awards program. *It is important to note that CHED has decided that it will work with the region boards for administration of this award, not the individual local organizing committees.* This makes sense as the boards will have the continuity and organizational structure that makes the administration of the award and interface with division officers effective.

8. **Greater Visibility for Regions and Regional Meetings.** Two significant events have occurred within the last three years that demonstrate increasing interest in regional meetings, an interest generated by the volunteers of the Study Group and ReACT. First, as mentioned previously, Chemical Abstract Service is now posting abstracts from regional meetings in their databases. In addition, ACS Publications has initiated a Symposium Series for regional meetings. Topical symposia are frequently organized at regional meetings; and ACS Publications has recognized that such symposia often reach beyond the region, and that their quality is comparable to their national meeting counterparts. Publications has thus invited organizers of topical regional meeting symposia to submit a proposal for publication of presented papers as a ACS Symposium book.
9. **Additional Comments.** While the ReACT document templates have been in circulation for approximately one year, that time frame has not been sufficient to evaluate the true extent to which the 10 regions will embrace their use. All of the regions have been briefed on the content of the document templates and the advantages to their use. However, sufficient regional meeting cycles have not yet passed to ascertain and evaluate how the use of these document templates will evolve. A summary format for region usage of these document templates has been developed for continued monitoring by the Regional Meetings Subcommittee.



1. **GENERAL.** After two years of examining the health of regions and regional meetings, ReACT recommends that the continuation of its charge be carried out as follows.
  - a. The Regional Meetings Subcommittee will take over promotion of ReACT's charge and vision statement regarding the importance of viable, active regions.
  - b. It is recognized that regional meetings are currently the premier activity of regions. Ensuring their continuing success is a responsibility appropriately placed with the Regional Meetings Subcommittee.
2. **SPECIFIC.** In order to accomplish the above general recommendations, the following specific recommendations are suggested. Regional meetings have been operating as autonomous entities, but the current environment of financial exposure, legal liabilities, etc. warrant oversight at the national level. To that effect:

- a. The Regional Meetings Subcommittee shall assign one member as the principal subcommittee liaison to each region. This person will make personal contact with the current year's regional meeting general chair, and review the progress of the upcoming regional meeting. The subcommittee liaison will also be in communication with the executive officer of each region board to discuss the progress of its regional meeting planning. It is expected that all liaisons attend the regional meetings to which they are assigned. Whenever appropriate, the liaison will discuss concerns regarding the viability of an upcoming regional meeting with the ACS Meeting Planning staff member who is the principal contact for that particular regional meeting.
- b. At the spring national meeting, the Regional Meetings Subcommittee shall review the previous year's regional meetings. At the fall national meetings, the Regional Meetings Subcommittee shall review the upcoming year's regional meetings. Each subcommittee liaison and the staff liaison will jointly present an update to the subcommittee.

Region boards are the appropriate entities that coordinate activities at the regional level that include, but are not limited to these areas of responsibility.

- c. Region boards shall oversee the entire process of producing a successful regional meeting, from the bid-to-host by their local sections to submitting a final report.
- d. The liaison from the Regional Meetings Subcommittee shall communicate on a regular basis with the executive officer of their region board regarding the activity level of that region.
- e. Region boards shall coordinate with each other through Region Board Summits to discuss issues pertaining to the success of regional activities.
- f. Region boards may coordinate symposia/themes within their region, among the regions, with divisions, and with non-ACS entities such as AIChE and AAAS, possibly culminating in the publication of the proceedings in the ACS Symposium Series.
- g. The boundaries of regions should be explored by their respective boards, in order to generate a more effective connection with district directors.

3. **IMPLEMENTATION OF DOCUMENTS.** ReACT has produced a set of documents that streamline the process of producing a regional meeting, to be used by the local organizing committee of the host local section. The documents also should help catalyze the oversight role of region boards. These documents are collected in the Appendix of this Report. They will be distributed to the following clientele on a continuing basis.
  - a. Attendees to the Regional Meeting Planning Conference
  - b. Officers of the region boards
  - c. Members of the local organizing committees
  - d. Attendees to the Regional Meeting Roundtable at national meetings
  - e. LSAC and officers of all local sections
  - f. DAC and division officers
  
4. **ACS GOVERNANCE.** ReACT has determined that regional activities constitute a valued component of our Society. It is recommended that the Regional Meetings Subcommittee initiate the exploration of a higher level of ACS Board support (including financial resources) for regional activities.
  - a. It is hoped that reception of this ReACT Report by the P&MR/Board will stimulate discussion at the region board level that will result in an increased prominence of regional meetings and other region activities, as well as formalize the concept of regions.
  - b. Whereas promotion of region activities cannot flourish without adequate staff support, as well as financial resources to regions, it is suggested that the Society examine ways in which this can be accomplished.
  - c. It should be noted that the conclusions/recommendations in this Report are commensurate with the ACS Strategic Plan of 2005.

**Table A1.** Data on Regions.<sup>1</sup> Travel distances to regional meetings are generally significantly less than to the national meetings.

|   | Central | Great Lakes | Middle Atlantic | Midwest | Northeast | Northwest | Rocky Mountain | Southeast | Southwest | Western |
|---|---------|-------------|-----------------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Year Organized  | 1969    | 1969        | 1968            | 1965    | 1972      | 1945      | 1968           | 1948      | 1944      | 1966    |
| Members   | 15,162  | 13,204      | 30,495          | 5,479   | 17,226    | 5,678     | 5,521          | 20,462    | 9,604     | 18,123  |
| <i>Local Section Size, %<sup>2</sup></i>                        |         |             |                 |         |           |           |                |           |           |         |
| Very Large  | 0       | 5 (1)       | 25 (4)          | 0       | 5 (1)     | 0         | 0              | 0         | 0         | 15 (2)  |
| Large   | 8 (2)   | 5 (1)       | 13 (2)          | 6 (1)   | 5 (1)     | 7 (1)     | 14 (1)         | 5 (2)     | 4 (1)     | 15 (2)  |
| Medium Large  | 24 (6)  | 5 (1)       | 19 (3)          | 6 (1)   | 26 (5)    | 0         | 14 (1)         | 13 (5)    | 7. (2)    | 15 (2)  |
| Medium  | 12 (3)  | 24 (5)      | 13 (2)          | 6 (1)   | 21 (4)    | 29 (4)    | 43 (3)         | 33 (13)   | 11 (3)    | 31 (4)  |
| Medium Small  | 12 (3)  | 19 (4)      | 19 (3)          | 35 (6)  | 21 (4)    | 14 (2)    | 0              | 23 (9)    | 19 (5)    | 8 (1)   |
| Small   | 44 (11) | 43 (9)      | 13 (2)          | 47 (8)  | 21 (4)    | 50 (7)    | 29 (2)         | 24 (10)   | 59 (16)   | 15 (2)  |
| Local Sections (Joint) <sup>3</sup>                             | 25      | 21 (1)      | 16              | 17 (2)  | 19        | 14 (3)    | 7 (5)          | 39 (2)    | 27 (3)    | 13 (2)  |
| National Meetings <sup>4</sup>                                  | 0       | 9           | 20              | 2       | 3         | 3         | 2              | 9         | 12        | 19      |
| Distance to a National Meeting (miles, East Coast) <sup>5</sup> | 737     | 931         | 337             | 1422    | 67        | 2257      | 1970           | 1082      | 1550      | 2696    |
| Distance to a National Meeting (miles, West Coast) <sup>6</sup> | 1871    | 1667        | 2286            | 1168    | 2553      | 752       | 611            | 1793      | 1181      | 453     |
| Distance to a Regional Meeting (miles) <sup>7</sup>             | 103     | 164         | 126             | 111     | 307       | 261       | 373            | 490       | 30        | 93      |

- 1) Information derived from the report on *Local Section Activities: A Statistical Review – 2004* and historical information on national and regional meeting sites provided by ACS records.
- 2) The number of local sections that fall in each category is given in parentheses.
- 3) Total number of local sections affiliated with each region, with the number of local sections that are affiliated with an additional region in parentheses.
- 4) The number of national meetings held in a region since the region was organized. The Central region has never had a national meeting in its territory since it was formed in 1969.
- 5) Distance from a city near the approximate geographic center of the region to Boston, MA, site of many national meetings on the east coast. The regional cities used were Cincinnati, OH (Central), Madison, WI (Great Lakes), York, PA (Middle Atlantic), Wichita, KS (Midwest), Concord, NH (Northeast), Boise, ID (Northwest), Durango, CO (Rocky Mountain), Montgomery, AL (Southeast), Dallas, TX (Southwest), and San Francisco, CA (Western). During the past 20 years, approximately 2/3 of the national meetings were held in coastal cities.
- 6) Distance from a city near the approximate geographic center of the region to San Diego, CA, site of many national meetings on the west coast. The regional cities are those listed in note 5.
- 7) Distance between the aforementioned regional cities in note 5 to the location of the 2004 regional meetings: Indianapolis, IN (Central), Peoria, IL (Great Lakes), Piscataway, NJ (Middle Atlantic), Manhattan, KS (Midwest), Rochester, NY (Northeast), Logan, UT (Northwest and /Rocky Mountain Meeting), Durham, NC (Southeast), Fort Worth, TX (Southwest), and Long Beach, CA (Western).

