

APAN Task Forces

Draft management framework - v1.1 May 2014

Task Forces

The concept of an APAN Task Force draws on experience with Task Forces in TERENA, amongst others organisations. **Task Forces are groups of individuals tasked with achieving a particular outcome, tackling a particular problem, over a specific period of time.** In effect, they manage a project. They differ from committees in that they do not have an ongoing, possibly administrative role. They differ from working groups in that they are not necessarily targeted at ongoing application or technology community engagement.

Task Forces are given a particular problem to solve, and having done so, are wound up. Task Forces are unlikely to run more than approximately 2 years (four APAN meetings), but may do so in particular circumstances. They should show continuous progress towards their goals, with updates to all interested parties at the APAN meetings.

In the context of APAN, Task Forces are expected to support outcomes in the interests of APAN members and the communities that they support. Some Task Forces may support planning for a particular Working Group, or support the development of a major demonstration/event, while others may tackle more strategic issues for APAN as a whole.

Establishment of a Task Force

Proposals for Task Forces can come from any interested party, and are submitted to Sec@apan.net for processing.

A proposal for a Task Force must provide the following information:

1. A topic/title
2. A brief description, including the scope of activities (or terms of reference)
3. A set of defined, measurable outcomes, including delivery dates
4. A proposed chair
5. A list of the initial participants and who else may be interested/involved.
6. What, if any, support the Task Force may require from APAN or any members

The House Rules require that Council approves the formation of Task Forces, although the Board may form ad hoc task forces as needed, and the Board can appoint interim chairs for later endorsement by Council.

Participation in Task Forces is open to all interested parties who can bring expertise, enthusiasm, resources or other benefits to the Task Force. They do not necessarily need to come from the APAN members, except for the chair. They do not necessarily need to come

from the research, education and NREN community; industry participation is permitted.

The APAN Secretariat will coordinate the review of proposals, involving any Working Group Chairs, Area Directors, and the General Manager as appropriate, and may seek clarification, before presenting them to the Board. If the Board approves the proposal and the proposed chair by resolution, an ad hoc Task Force will be formed immediately. At the next available Council meeting the ad hoc Task Force can be formally endorsed as a formal APAN Task Force, as below.

Operation of a Task Force

Once a Task Force has been established, the chair is responsible for ensuring that it operates effectively and meets its milestones and its reporting obligations. The milestones are defined in the proposal. The Task Force must, during its entire existence, report briefly at each APAN meeting to the Council on their plans, their progress, and any proposed changes, and any requests to extend their terms. The first such report will allow the Council to formally endorse an ad hoc Task Force as a formal Task Force, and endorse the Interim Chair as the Task Force Chair.

Council may require a Task Force to amend its scope and milestones while it is operating.

Task Forces are recommended to meet monthly (virtually) to ensure steady progress, and to invite a Board director or the General Manager to join the meetings as an observer. Meetings should be properly minuted and published on the APAN website. Any changes to the chairmanship must be approved by the Board and endorsed by Council.

Where a Task Force is targeted at a particular Working Group it should present its work during that Working Group session.

Conclusion of a Task Force

A Task Force may wind up on completion of its aims, or earlier if there are issues.

If a Task Force is seen to not be achieving its milestones reliably, the Council can formally advise the Task Force that it faces winding up at the next Council meeting unless improvements are achieved in the meantime. If a Task Force is wound up, it does not prevent a new proposal being made for a Task Force for the same purpose at some future date.

Depending on the nature of the Task Force, its outcomes should be reported at an APAN Council meeting and include recommendations for next steps. The APAN members will assess the recommendations and endorse, amend or reject them as appropriate. Where required, the Task Force itself could be extended or re-established under a new proposal, or lead to the formation of new committees, working groups or other appropriate structures.

Comments on this framework should be sent to general-manager@apan.net