

PES Region Representative Asia Pacific speaks
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I had been the IEEE Delhi Section Treasurer, Vice Chair, & Chair before assuming the position of Chapter Chair way back 1999. Spell followed 6 years of holding, out of which latter 4 years also as a Chapter Representative of the concerned area of Asia Pacific Region. Subsequently it saw further 6 years of leading the Asia Pacific Region as its Representative in the Governing Board of Power & Energy Society (PES). Besides this, as a great opportunity of interaction, I was privileged to serve a three-year period (2007-09) IEEE TAB SRC (Society Review Committee) that helped me to compare where PES stands with respect to other large as well as small Societies vis-à-vis Councils so far as representation of Regions are concerned in dealing with the matter of Society as a whole. Going through such exposure I take the opportunity of sharing my experience and thought which may be unique in one aspect or other that may help future leadership of PES. Connectivity for communicability amongst various entities, and individuals, activities vis-à-vis performance of Chapters, growth of membership to serve society at large, are the key issues that I will address.

To serve members is our foremost duty. How do we serve them from various levels? Local Chapter leadership is the very first point of contact for the vast mass of members scattered in the area under the jurisdiction of Chapter. With the advent of technology we have moved much from the era of postal means of communication and landline telephone system to faster and efficient means of e-mails to individuals and if need be to the group vis-à-vis display through web that is expected to draw attention of members who are target in the instant case. Similarly lies the means to establish contact through one's cell-phone at any time and at any place. Of course too much use of means of mailing may be irritating; so is the cell-phone connectivity. Hence web-based information, updated regularly and occasionally contacting members through e-mail drawing attention to the concerned web-link could fructify the purpose. Similarly communicating basically through e-mail from Chapter Representative of area to chapter Chairs, from Region Representative to Chapter Representatives, and if need be, to Chapter Chairs is extremely important. Accordingly to our good old friend Luis T. Gandia, who also served PES Governing Board as Latin America Region Representative for 6 years and once nominated even as candidate for IEEE President-Elect, 'contact, contact, contact to maintain connectivity and to be successful in delivering goods to members' is therefore an important objective.

However all these efforts at various levels certainly require updating database of members for which primarily they are responsible individually by going to myIEEE, for doing the needful and then outgoing Chapter Chair submitting officer data whenever such eventuality arises, with endorsement to Chapter Representative of the concerned area & Region Representative. While dealing with e-mail means of communication, as at various level groups have already been formed, it is emphasized that judiciously and effectively these can be used. At the same time, when someone is responding, be a member or a Chapter Chair, 'Reply All' should be avoided by all means to avoid annoying others unnecessarily.

Establishment of communication being a primary objective, the means can be utilized for various purposes, such as, dissemination of knowledge, directly or indirectly through holding of tutorial / workshop / seminar / conference as growth of membership, etc. At Chapter level one of the important and attractive resources is the Distinguished Lecturer Program (DLP) run by PES. It is a fact that majority of Distinguished Lecturers (DL) are from North America. Due to comparatively shorter distance of travel by these Lecturers, PES can definitely allow even to cover a single Chapter at a go by a DL of its choice. However it is not valid when a Lecturer goes all the way from North America to various Chapters of a distant Region, for instance in Asia Pacific Region. That's why this Region right from the beginning of this decade has shown the way by clubbing the requirement of Chapters and fulfilling the same on a single go by a DL. In this process by proper coordination it has been possible to have more than a DL covering a particular Chapter, of course the limitation being availability of time with the DL as well as finance to host in terms of boarding, lodging and local transportation as supposed to be provided by the Chapter. DLP on the other hand also provides opportunity to raise fund by the Chapter by levying admission charge for tutorial or workshop, if conducted. Due to pro-activeness of the Asia Pacific Region in the first few years of this decade, it used even 40 to 50% of the entire budget on account of DLP. What does it mean? Though in total more number of PES Chapters exist in Region 1 to 6, cost of travel on one hand is obviously low, but on the other hand it is also a fact that majority of them were not utilizing DLP. In fact non-utilization of fund by these Chapters as well as those outside North America, forced few years back to reduce budget to 50%. Asia Pacific Region tinkered the system as a challenge and showed effectiveness vis-à-vis power of DLP which has been amply reflected through the performance of vast number of Chapters not only in this Region but also in Latin America (Region 9). Receipt of grant under HPCP (High Performing Chapter Program) of PES by the majority of Chapters from Asia Pacific & Latin America Region is a testimony of this.

On the growth of membership of PES in general and in particular at macro-level under Chapter depends lot on pro-activeness of Chapter as evidenced through their 'quality' activities. Though it is particularly there to serve the members under its jurisdiction, opportunity needs to be used during such event to recruit new members when non-members too attend. In fact for large Conference, concession or rebate available to an IEEE / PES member may lead to differential amount covering almost membership for a year. By providing a suitable platform to share experience, a non-member expert invited may too join IEEE vis-à-vis PES. In the modus operandi, examples are there where for a cluster of Chapters, PES HQ. has provided fund to cover international travel, while local Chapter as host besides taking care of local expenses, has catered for inter-Chapter travel also. However in the extreme case, due to the condition of Society being unable to provide fund, with Chapter Representative of the concerned area coordinating DL, Chapters together have borne the total financial burden. With PES in Asia Pacific Region showing the way, Societies like, Industry Applications, Computer, Communications, etc. have appreciated the idea and it has become a common practice that a cluster of their Chapters coordinate to see that on a single visit of a DL all of them are covered.

However in the growth of membership of PES in the Region at least, which may be valid for other Regions as well as for other Societies too, hindrance has been observed on account of various relevant factors. To the academia that patronizes through major contribution of research

papers being published in transactions and magazines have very often shown interest to retain membership of IEEE only and not of the Societies. Reason in this case is basically the availability of literature of Society online through piped network provided by the Institutes / Universities they serve. However for the practicing engineers story is often different. PES published literature is viewed as highly theoretical one while on the contrary participation in the bodies, like, CIGRE (translated to English as International Council on Large Electric Systems) and access to the literature published by them gives more practical flavor and help the practicing engineers to solve their problems in field. No doubt IEEE Power & Energy magazine of PES to a great extent is an answer to the issue, in terms of easy digestibility of information for the practicing engineers, who can upgrade their knowledge in the relevant field. But it cannot draw their attention with a view to focus on the general problems they face. IEEE Standards provide means being ideal and futuristic in some sense. However, they are again far from solving present day problem for them. As for instance CIGRE Working Group on any area takes the lead by providing forum to share knowledge and experience so that it is improved in terms of design, manufacture, installation, and operating practices. In this context contribution of PES is very much futuristic mostly, if not always. All these factors have significant influence on growth of membership.

After all we should not forget about our mission for fostering technological innovation and excellence for the benefit of humanity. To have a deep penetration to the society at large it requires continuous updating and upgrading of knowledge and skills of power engineers. This in turn requires concerted effort for the benefit of PES members as well as others belonging to the fraternity and working for the common cause, dissemination of knowledge continuously. PES as a whole and through its Chapters locally at grass-root level has a great role in it. In this background as I have felt, duties and responsibilities of IEEE PES Region Representatives of various regions may be summarized as under.

1. Regional Representatives shall keep the PES Governing Board informed of the needs and concerns of the PES Membership in their respective Regions
2. Regional Representatives are responsible to maintain constant communication with Chapters Representatives and Chapters Chairs in their Region, informing about events, news, etc, that may be happening in the Society.
3. Regional Representatives are responsible to train other PES volunteers, normally Chapter Representatives, in the duties of a Regional Representative to provide continuity at the regional level.
4. The Regional Representative with the approval of the Vice President Chapters selects and appoints Chapter Representatives.
5. As exception, Regional Representatives may cover more than one region, especially in Regions 1-7.
6. The Regional Representatives who are members of the PES Governing Board, must participate in two annual Board meetings normally being held, the first one at the beginning of the year and the second one at middle of the year, with PES covering expenses for the participation in the PES Board Meetings for the Regional Representatives who are members of the Board.

7. Regional Representatives, acting together with the Vice President Chapters, are responsible for the organization of Chapter Chairs Meetings / Retreats and / or Training Sessions. In Regions 1-7 the Chapter Chairs Training Sessions are held annually and normally during the PES General Meeting. In Regions 8, 9 and 10 the Meetings are held every two years, preferably during a major technical event in the corresponding Region. Expenses of Regional and Chapter Representatives participating in these Training Sessions are covered by the event budget.
8. Regional Representatives will be asked to suggest Volunteers for Committee positions such as Awards & Resources, Electronic Communications and Distinguished Lecturer Coordinator.
9. Regional Representatives are responsible to encourage Chapter Representatives and Chapters Chairs to submit reports timely, use programs, contests, awards, and utilize all PES benefits.
10. Regional Representatives are responsible for maintaining the database of Chapter Chairs and Chapter Representatives and if possible, for the entire PES members of the region with the help of SAMIEEE or other appropriate tools.
11. Regional Representatives and Chapter Representatives must provide assistance to PES Volunteers for the starting of new Chapters in their respective areas where potential exists.
12. Regional Representatives must encourage enlistment of new Distinguished Lecturers from the Region in the PES DLP.
13. Regional Representatives must coordinate to hold PES sponsored or cosponsored regional conferences periodically, including T & D expositions.
14. Acting with Chapter Representatives and/or Chapter Chairs, Regional Representatives must promote conferences technically sponsored or cosponsored by PES.
15. Regional Representatives must act as an *ex-officio* Executive Committee Member of the concerned IEEE Region (*subject to IEEE MGA Board agreeing*).
16. Regional representatives shall interact with other members of the Board especially with Vice President Industry Relations, Vice President Education, Vice President Meetings, Vice President Technical Activities, Vice President Membership & Image and Vice President New Initiatives in order to take advantage of different programs, activities or opportunities these Vice Presidents can offer to the membership, and also to address the particular needs of the membership in their Region.