

## EDITING EAC: A CLOSER LOOK

September 2010

Thank you to everyone who provided comments over the summer on *Editing EAC*. We began this consultation at our annual general meeting in Montreal, and we're grateful for the feedback received since then. It's been helpful in clarifying the direction and reasons for change.

You can find the initial document posted in Association Issues in Interactive Voice. Here's the link: <http://www.editors.ca/bb/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=1322> .

We're now ready to move on to the next phase, providing more detail of what we're imagining for the association in the coming years: a revitalized association structure to provide better support and services for our membership throughout their professional careers.

Your comments are welcome:

1. At branch meetings in September and October
2. Through Interactive Voice
3. On the email forum
4. By email to [editingeac@editors.ca](mailto:editingeac@editors.ca)

National Executive Council

Editors' Association of Canada/Association canadienne des réviseurs

## A Quick Review of the Problems

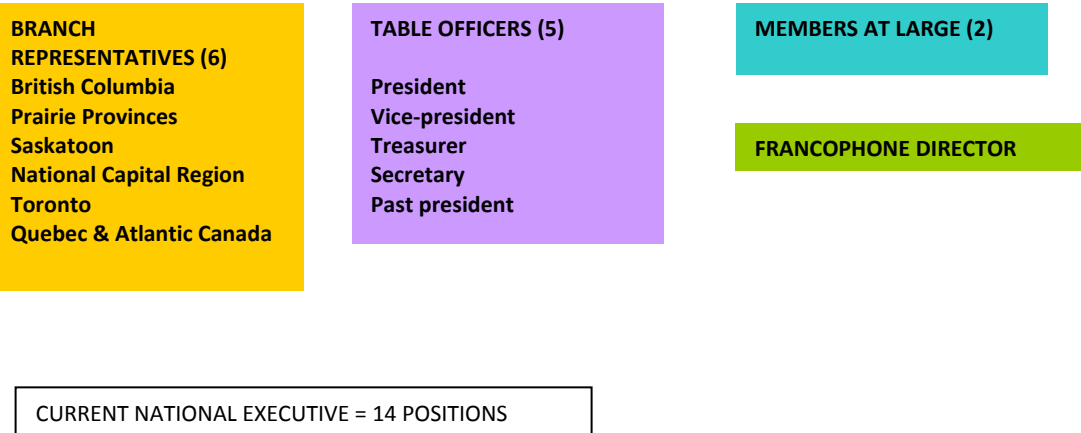
Here's what we had to say in *Editing EAC* about the problems the association faces:

- The committees and the executive aren't communicating very effectively. We want to better represent the interests of our committees at the national executive council (NEC) table, and let the committees know what the NEC is doing.
- The committees are for the most part working in isolation, with too little information on "the big picture." We want to help our committees better understand their role in meeting EAC's strategic goals, and give them more input into the creation and maintenance of those goals.
- Communications between the committees is almost non-existent. We want to help committees with common/overlapping interests make connections and work together.
- We've tried in various ways to meet the needs of "isolated members" – members who don't live near one of the urban centres where our branches are based. One way of doing so is to encourage and support the development of new branches and twigs. The present structure doesn't recognize "twigs" – small groups of members who would like to have local meetings but don't really need the formality of forming a full-fledged branch.
- Our branches don't share their experience often enough, so each branch keeps reinventing the same wheels. We need to find ways to help branches and twigs share ideas and work together.
- We would like to do all of this while maintaining, or even enhancing, accountability.
- We're all volunteers. The association has been almost completely built by volunteers. We need to look at how EAC treats its volunteers and find ways to improve the volunteer experience.
- Although EAC was "almost completely" built by volunteers, we have four paid staff in the national office and several others working for the branches, and the staff currently play a huge role in how the association works. We need to think through which roles the staff should perform, and which ones they shouldn't.

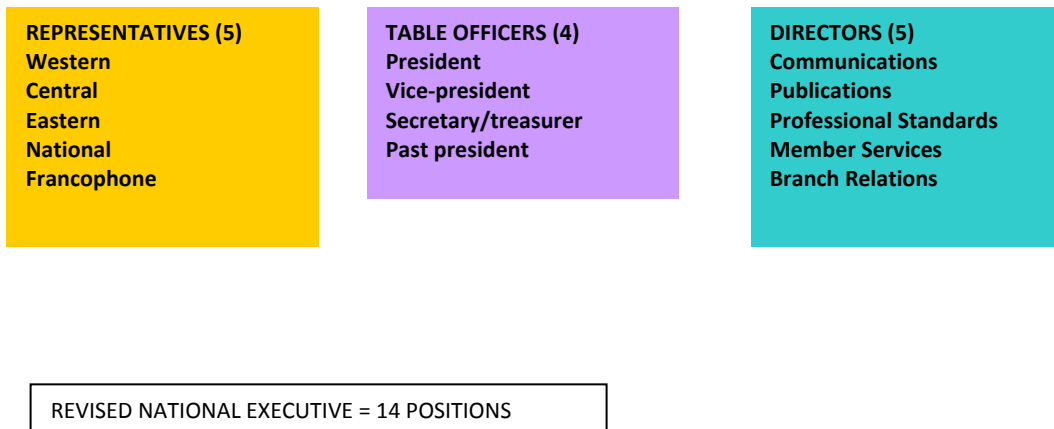
## What We Have in Mind

Here's what we propose as the structure of the national executive council, your association's governing body, to help address some of the problems.

### Now



### In 2012



## Proposed Changes

As noted in *Editing EAC*, we had in mind five major areas of change:

1. Shift the role of the current Members-at-Large.
2. Replace the two MALs with five Directors.
3. Encourage the development of branches and twigs.
4. Change the way we represent branches on the NEC.
5. Find better ways to share our revenue.

Thanks to feedback from members and further discussion among past and present members of the national executive council, we've refined these areas somewhat, and present below an inventory of potential changes.

We've done our best to explain and anticipate the pros and cons related to each proposed change. You may see gaps in our reasoning, unintended consequences, or overlooked areas. That's why we need your feedback: to help us plan for good, orderly development of the association.

Proposed Change	Pros	Cons
Eliminate the role of Member-at-Large.	<p>Since the creation of this role in 2003, it has rarely worked well, and it's been difficult finding suitable candidates.</p> <p>The work is usually too much for two people. There is lots of volunteer burnout.</p>	Has worked to some extent since 2003.
Replace the two MALs with five Directors.	<p>This change could better represent the interests of our many committees at the national level.</p> <p>It could share the work among volunteers and help reduce burnout. It could also increase accountability because the workload would be more manageable.</p> <p>It could also improve communication among committees.</p>	Seems similar to the organizational structure that preceded 2003, which was changed in part because too many at the table for effective decision-making.
Add a Director of Branch Relations as one of the five Directors mentioned above.	<p>A responsible person would provide push and accountability for developing branch relations.</p> <p>Branches do not share their experiences often enough, and some have difficulty with continuity from year to year. This could help eliminate re-inventing the wheel and increase accountability.</p> <p>Could help branches contribute more effectively to long-term, national initiatives for the benefit of members.</p>	Could contribute to red tape.
Propose a National Branch for AGM approval.	<p>This change would gather together "remote" members across the country, including potential twigs (groups of members that don't constitute a branch and have a shared interest or geographic proximity).</p> <p>It addresses a long-standing problem where some members have no close link to an existing branch and no support for</p>	<p>Branches are the logical parts of the organization to support the development of twigs.</p> <p>There would be a financial impact on transfer funds to existing branches.</p>

	<p>developing a “twig” from either the branch or national.</p> <p>Some branches have neither the time nor the ability to help form twigs or develop twigs into branches. Most branches have not been able to support twig development over some 30-odd years.</p> <p>Although the growth of branches is a stated goal of the organization, we have ended up with just six branches after 30 years. A tree with branches of 800-some members and branches of 30-some members needs some pruning to get into shape.</p> <p>Some branches could become more manageable in scale (either larger or smaller) as a result of shifts of members to the National Branch and twigs.</p> <p>The transfer-payment formula would have to be changed. Great!</p> <p>We might see some growth in membership numbers.</p>	<p>Why couldn't the branch or regional reps just be told they're responsible for twigs?</p> <p>Doesn't a “National Branch” have the potential to be huge?</p> <p>The transfer-payment formula would have to be changed. Not great!</p>
Propose a Francophone Branch for AGM approval.	<p>This change would gather together Francophone members across the country.</p> <p>It could lead to re-energizing the francophone part (roughly 10%) of our membership.</p> <p>Under the current branch regulation, additional funding could be allocated to support francophone initiatives within a branch.</p> <p>Perhaps people could belong to more than one branch? So a francophone member could belong to, say, the Francophone Branch and NCR?</p>	<p>This change could “ghettoize” francophone members.</p>
Shift from one branch = one seat in the national executive to regional representation for the branches.	<p>The current branch rep system doesn't always work well.</p> <p>This change could help encourage the development of branches while keeping the national executive at a reasonable size for efficiency and cost-effectiveness</p>	<p>Is West, Central, and East the best way to organize this? Is there a better way to divide things up?</p> <p>Wouldn't this change just increase distance between the branch and national?</p> <p>Who would vote for these regional reps? Just the people in the specific regions?</p>
Change the existing transfer-funding formula to a flat rate for each member established annually in the national budget meeting.	<p>This change would simplify the funding system for branches. Nobody really understands the current arrangement and promptly forgets it once it's explained.</p> <p>It could deal with some inequities where large and small branches receive the most money (proportionately) and mid-size branches receive the least.</p> <p>Because this proposed change could affect branch finances, branches need to provide feedback.</p>	<p>Is there another option than a flat rate?</p> <p>The national executive has the authority to change the funding formula. We don't need to discuss this point here.</p>