



University of South Australia



Response to the Recommendations
of the External Review Report

Review of Research - 2005

Division of Education Arts and Social Sciences

Background

A Nominated Review of Research was conducted in the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences in August 2005 to examine the Division's research activities and assess and report on the Division's performance.

The review committee conducted extensive interviews with key researchers, research degree students and resource managers within the Division and tabled a report in late 2005. This report was circulated widely within the Division for comment and discussed at School and Divisional committees.

The review report commended the performance of the Division in the last few years and established that the absolute indicators of research performance and culture had grown significantly. The review committee indicated that with appropriate modifications to governance, performance management, and resource allocation, there was significant potential to further improve research activity, quality, impact and culture in the Division in the coming years. To achieve this, it was suggested that governance structures, the performance management system and resource allocation models would need to anticipate and align with:

- The UniSA strategic research plan presented in 2005 by the PVC (R&I) Professor Ian Davey.
- The emerging changes in the way research activity was to be planned, managed and funded under the proposed national RQF system.

In addition, the review committee made 24 specific recommendations to the Division covering the following areas:

- Planning
- Resourcing
- Organisation and research culture
- Research Education
- Performance and standing

These recommendations are addressed in the following sections.

Recommendations and Responses

Planning

- 1. That the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences re-focus its research planning, priorities and strategies around the immediate 2006 research priorities, and the medium-term priorities, as set out by the PVC (R&I).**

ACCEPTED

The Dean: Research will undertake to re-focus the Divisional Research Committee (DRC) and investigate restructuring the membership to enable more effective strategic planning (see attached Terms of Reference with proposed revised composition).

The short-term focus of the new DRC will be to co-ordinate the research strategy for the remainder of 2006 and for the initial aspects of the RQF implementation plan as developed by the PVC (R&I). The medium-term focus of this group will be to oversee, evaluate, and where necessary, develop and co-ordinate most aspects of research development for all research aggregations across the Division. This will occur in consultation with the people whose positions include responsibility for their areas' research performance – the PVC (EAS), Dean: Research and the relevant Head of School, Institute Director or centre/group leader.

Research Portfolio Leaders (RPLs) will be appointed in each School within the Division. RPLs will be responsible for helping to develop specific research goals in their School,

promoting research culture, mentoring and supporting research staff, and undertaking activities within their School that will help their School achieve research goals.

In addition, an open DRC Research Forum is proposed 2-3 times per year. The DRC Research Forum will be open to all staff with an interest in research policy and strategy. This group will act primarily as a consultative sounding board for the strategies and policy developed by the DRC. Additionally, this forum will be used to discuss the Divisional research plan goals and performance measures. The Forum will help develop strategic research initiatives, specifically ones that are interdisciplinary and collaborative. Divisional research performance will also be reported at these meetings, which will be a half-day to full day and preferably hosted by research institutes on a rotating basis.

2. That the Division develop a coherent strategy to achieve greater integration of research and research training.

ACCEPTED

In the short term, we have shared membership of committees such that the Dean of Research will participate in the Divisional Research Degrees Committee (DRDC) and the Dean of Research Education will participate in the Divisional Research Committee (DRC). Communication and collaboration efforts have been increased by the two Deans. Regular meetings by the Deans will continue with the new Research Development Co-ordinator position (starting September 2006) to act as a further bridge between research and research education. Long term plans on the further integration of these areas are currently being developed by DRC and DRDC.

3. That the Division develop a strategy to collect better evidence regarding existing research collaborations and their impact; and work to develop stronger partnerships and to identify new potential external partners and clients, and promote research linkages by:

ACCEPTED

To further increase research performance across the Division, the Senior Business Development & Marketing Manager (SBDMM) and Dean: Research met with Heads of School in May and June 2006 to identify growth opportunities for contract research and consultancy development. A round of customised presentations by the SBDMM to each research concentration has commenced, promoting strategic planning that gives consideration to developing existing business relationships and potential markets, identifying strategies for growth, and setting targets.

Further improvement has been made by the SBDMM in designing and developing report templates that will better inform the planning and review cycles. The SBDMM reports quarterly to Division Executive on progress against targets and key achievements of the Business Unit and these reports are analysed by the PVC, Divisional Director and Dean: Research.

The staff reporting process to be introduced by the PVC (R&I) will inform the Division on the impact of its research. (See also Recommendation 4).

– increasing its consulting, and contract and collaborative research funded under the ARC Linkage Projects program

The Division plans to increase its research income substantially through a more strategic approach to the grant submission process, with the main focus on improving the quality of its grant submissions. Researchers will be encouraged and supported in investing more time and resources into fewer applications. To achieve this the Division will:

- develop a process for screening grant applications and selecting the best prospects for success

- limit the number of grants to be submitted to those where there is a reasonable likelihood (sector average) of success
- invest significantly in the preparation and assessment of the selected grant applications prior to submission. This will be done by supporting the new ARC Discovery grant development program being run by the PVC (R&I). We will support the initiative with our people and time as mentors in the review stages.
- work collaboratively with the grant support programs developed by the PVC (R&I)

This strategy aims to reduce the overall Divisional time commitment to grant writing yet improve the quality of those applications, increase success rates and subsequent ACG derived research income. The Division aims to increase its funding success rate to the national average.

The screening process is not only aimed at streamlining and coordinating Divisional grant submission activity. It also allows the Division to improve its alignment with the broader UniSA research program proposed by the PVC (R&I).

- **developing a communication strategy to promote its capacity to undertake research of interest to external organisations**

To further build on and promote the Division's research success, the SBDMM is developing a proposal for the trial appointment of a part-time divisional Publicist who will communicate the expertise of Division staff to a local, national and international audience. In consultation with MDU, a divisional publicity plan will be developed to better promote research strengths and activity.

- **building capacity within the Division to meet the requirements of external partners and clients.**

Round table discussions with key industry partners continue to be regularly arranged by the SBDMM. These discussions provide a forum for staff to engage with the needs of our partners, identify areas of common interest and promote their academic interests and expertise in solving problems. Workshops are also being offered by the SBDMM to enhance the skills of staff in responding to external bids.

Earlier this year, the SBDMM conducted a review of support required by academic staff in the HRI. The recommendations of this review are currently in the approval process.

4. That the Division develop new strategies for the collection of evidence related to esteem and impact flowing from collaborative research.

ACCEPTED

This will be managed centrally through PVC (R& I). The University is developing a web-based individual research portfolio to address esteem and impact issues.

5. That, in developing appropriate policies and practices such as those recommended in this report, the Division support a system for ongoing collaboration between research and teaching portfolios at University, Division and School levels.

ACCEPTED

The Division agrees that the better integration of teaching and research – the development of the 'teaching and research nexus' – could provide significant opportunities to promote research culture and enhance research productivity across the Division. The EAS Annual Retreat (August) will address the teaching and research nexus as a priority area. To facilitate this, Heads of School and School Portfolio Leaders for Teaching and Learning and Research will attend the retreat.

The Division will convene a Teaching and Research Nexus Working Party to develop and promote a set of strategies for improving the current nexus and achieving synergies

between the two activities. The purpose of this group will be to recommend to the PVC (EAS):

- how research and teaching could be better integrated within the undergraduate teaching program
- how the post-graduate teaching program could be enhanced to promote a stronger research culture and improved research performance (i.e. better RQF assessment)
- ways in which better integration of research with undergraduate teaching and learning could promote a stronger research culture and better research performance across the division (i.e. better RQF assessment)

6. That the Division develop an internal communication and planning strategy to increase the level of 'RQF-awareness' within the Division.

ACCEPTED

The PVC (R&I) has developed a communication strategy which the Division will support and promote through the Divisional research website with links to the University RQF site. Any Division-specific information will be posted on the EAS site and also passed along to staff via the Division's research newsletter.

As part of its brief, the DRC (see also Recommendation 1) will co-ordinate the Division's research strategy and the RQF implementation plan as developed by the PVC (R&I). Internal communication and consultation about the RQF with Divisional research staff will be undertaken by Research Portfolio Leaders.

7. That the Hawke Research Institute further clarify, tighten and focus its identity, mission and objectives.

ACCEPTED IN PART

Since the review the new Director of the Hawke Research Institute (Professor Alan Mayne) has commenced. In the light of this recommendation the Institute has restructured its governance structures and membership categories, and is developing greater coherence between its established research concentrations by developing synergistic 'innovation clusters' which sit between and across the Institute's research programs. In line with the key recommendations of the review committee, membership of HRI has been separated into two levels with a smaller group of key researchers identified as the core of the HRI. This group will have a formalized requirement to commit at least 30% of their time to HRI. This group of researchers will likely form the basis for constructing the RQF portfolio for the Institute.

In addition to the core membership of HRI, there will also be a new form of membership for a larger group of emerging researchers. This group will consist primarily of supported researchers with emerging research careers or those who have currently placed less emphasis on a research career than the key researchers. Their time commitment to HRI will typically fall between 10-20%.

The Division's only concern with the recommendation is that, following reconsideration, we believe the Institute's mission statement is clear and powerful. The Institute notes that full implementation of the Review Panel's recommendation demands unimpeded cross-disciplinary partnerships, and applauds the Panel's suggestion that 'the University could assist the Institute by ensuring that effective strategies, performance indicators and incentives are in place to foster cross-Divisional research.'

8. That the Hawke Research Institute revise its Strategic Plan so that it 'drills-down' the Research Plans of the University and the Division, and ensures that its 'critical success factors' and its strategies reflect the University's profile in balancing the

quality research with research that has beneficial impact in the broader community.

ACCEPTED

The HRI's plans for research development are framed within the context of the University's research plans, and in particular the HRI has picked up responsibility for leading research activities which will be the core of the University's submission to the RQF in the humanities and social sciences. The Institutes' plan then sets goals for the performance management plans of individual key and other associated researchers in the EAS and BUE, allocating individual responsibility for the achievement of the HRI plan. In this way HRI is positioning itself to play a leadership role in the University's objectives for Research and Research Education, Internationalisation, and Regional, Industry and Community Engagement. HRI has also readied itself for the Research Quality Framework through revisions to its governance structure, by redefining its membership categories, by establishing a cyclical external grant development timetable, and by restructuring its budgetary framework.

- 9. That, in consultation with the Senior Business Development Manager, the Advisory Board assist the Hawke Research Institute to strengthen links with industry, business, government, and the community and set 'stretch targets' for income generation.**

ACCEPTED

Under the Institute's new governance structure, the SBDMM is a member of the Institute's Steering Committee and is involved in setting targets for research income generation. The SBDMM is also a member of the Hawke Researcher Forum and the selection panel for the Institute's Deputy Directors. Resources will be used strategically to initiate and mentor research teams and partnerships which will generate major flows of external research income and result in substantial publications outcomes. The Institute is consolidating its links with the Institute for Sustainable Systems and Technologies in the University and with university research centres elsewhere in Australia and overseas, and with industry, business, government, and the community, which will better position itself with the University's Strategic Plan. Examples include the Institute's partnership in the Australia-India Council's Australian studies fellowships, the ATN's sustainability working group, the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, and the Institute Director's appointment to DEST's Endeavour Programme selection panel. The Institute acknowledges that the Advisory Board can be better used to strengthen such links, and aims to harness the Board's expertise in this regard.

Resourcing

- 10. That the Division, Institute, schools and centres review their funding schemes and strategies to establish a coherent strategic set of mechanisms for meeting research targets and generating greater RQF 'readiness' through a more targeted directing of resources to areas of research strength and potential.**

ACCEPTED

The PVC (R&I) has indicated that centrally allocated Divisional Research Performance Fund (DRPF) and Supported Researcher Status (SRS) funds will be explicitly aligned with the emerging RQF measures to be announced by the federal Government. Allocation of these funds in the Division will necessarily follow these RQF formulae.

Increasingly, central funds are being provided on the basis of 'matching' funds in order to encourage Divisions to commit additional funds to the research effort. This has been seen in the shift to matching arrangements for USAPA research degree scholarships, as well as development and mentoring programs. The PVC (EAS) has indicated that the

Division allocation of supplementary funds will be increased over the next few years as budget capacity can be created.

However, the exact impact of the introduction of the RQF 'assessment' on the overall allocation of funds to the University and their subsequent internal distribution to the Division is difficult to predict. Initial modelling analysis indicates that high performing areas will generally do better than at present but those with poor RQF performance in the quality dimension are at considerable risk of significant declines in Category 1 research income. To mitigate this and improve RQF performance overall, the DRC and DRDC will undertake to make recommendations to the PVC (EAS):

- on the type of initiatives and programs most likely to promote a positive research culture and enhance future RQF measures of research performance
- the most appropriate performance metrics to use in allocating internal Divisional funds

11. That the Division be proactive in anticipating appropriate indicators for quality, peer esteem and impact, noting that productivity measures will continue to provide useful baseline data.

ACCEPTED

The Division will ensure that staff are trained by staff from the University Library on using citation indices, and is investigating with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) proposals for the evaluation of non-text based research in the visual arts, design and architecture.

The Division will also promote the University's on line system for staff to record their research outputs and activities, which will be developed to ensure that the University collects the information required to properly present the research of staff to RQF panels.

The Library is also identifying discipline-specific portfolios of high impact journals, mean impact factors and citation counts. In addition, for those disciplines where bibliometric measures are not appropriate, the Division is working to establish alternative discipline-specific ratings to be used by external panels.

12. That the Division sets targets for its total income and income mix and communicates its funding sources, allocations and strategies clearly within the Division.

ACCEPTED

The SBDMM is engaging with each research concentration to, amongst other aims, promote strategic planning and target setting processes. (See also Recommendation 3).

Further improvement has been made by the SBDMM in designing and developing report templates that will better inform the planning and review cycles. The SBDMM reports quarterly to Division Executive on progress against targets and key achievements of the Business Unit and these reports are analysed by the PVC, Divisional Director and Dean: Research. These reports will be circulated regularly to Heads of School, the Director of the HRI, and leaders of research concentrations. Also, Research Portfolio Leaders will lead discussion of these reports at their School Boards, in consultation with their HOS.

13. That the Senior Business Development and Marketing Manager continue developing her role and assist the Division to implement the recommendations above.

ACCEPTED (see also Recommendation 12)

The SBDMM will continue to assist research concentrations to identify new industry and government partnerships; develop strategies to approach potential partners and build existing relationships.

For improved accountability in attaining research goals and improving performance, the SBDMM will play a key role in contributing to the annual strategic planning process within the Division by:

- facilitating the development of strategic plans which forecast growth opportunities and limitations for business development at Centre, Institute and Division level and facilitating the setting of growth targets.
- reviewing together with the Dean: Research progress against research targets each quarter with the Directors of Centres and Institutes.
- providing quarterly reports to Division Executive showing progress against business targets.
- further developing templates in consultation with Heads of School and Directors of Institutes and Centres to ensure useful information is provided for effective decision-making.

Organisation and research culture

14. That the Division review the position descriptions, work plans, accountabilities and key relationships of Deans, Heads of School, Director of Hawke Research Institute and research centres to ensure that they are complementary and coherent.

ACCEPTED

Recommendation 14 has been addressed directly by the PVC (EAS) as part of the process of appointing new staff to the positions of Dean: Research and Director: HRI, and by developing protocols to ensure that the relevant research leader is consulted by the relevant HOS in negotiating performance management agreements with staff of the School whose research is conducted in a research centre or Institute.

15. That the Division prioritise the building of research capacity by:

- **developing a process of consultation between Heads of Schools, Deans and research concentration leaders when making academic staff appointments and developing work plans of early career researchers and key researchers.**

ACCEPTED

The Division's approval to recruit process now requires HOS to consult with relevant research leaders in determining the position description and selection criteria for new positions. In addition, the DRC has initiated discussions within each of the Schools on how best to promote collective responsibility for research activity and to identify and establish average expectations for staff at each academic level.

As mentioned above, the Division will implement a revised system for research performance management (see also Recommendation 17) under which individual performance plans for all researchers will be developed through consultation between their direct supervisor and relevant research leader (e.g. Institute Director or Research Concentration Leader) where applicable.

- **giving continued support to staff who are currently completing PhDs or equivalent doctorates.**

ACCEPTED

The Division will continue its current practice of allocating some money from the Divisional Research Performance Fund for staff teaching release for the final semester of their PhD, by negotiation with the staff member's HOS.

- **providing a policy whereby academic staff without a PhD can only be appointed with the specific approval of the Pro Vice Chancellor.**

ACCEPTED

Appointments of staff without doctorates at level B and above also require the approval of the Vice Chancellor.

16. That the close relationship between the Deans of Research and Research Degrees be reinforced by more cross-referenced membership and objectives of the Division's Research Committee and Research Degrees Committee.

ACCEPTED

The Division agrees with the committee's view that the separation of these functions along with their governance structures may have contributed to this disjunction. The size of the Division, the number of graduate students and the importance of the Deans retaining an active research profile supports the notion of two appointments. The two positions have been more tightly cross-linked so they can work synergistically through cross membership of the DRC and DRDC. The two areas will also be more closely linked at the School level through encouraging Research Portfolio Leaders and Research Degrees Co-ordinators to increase collaborative work with their respective Head of School.

17. That the Division review the performance management process and consider a mechanism to incorporate input from research leaders and the Director: Hawke Research Institute in the performance management of staff's research performance.

ACCEPTED

To promote better research performance and to ensure greater accountability, research plans and deliverables should be embedded within each staff member's Performance Management Plan and reviewed regularly by the appropriate line manager(s).

The Division will introduce a cascading research performance management system with outputs clearly aligned with RQF criteria. The proposed system foresees individual research performance management plans with quantifiable targets feeding into aggregate research performance plans for research groupings within the Division, which in turn will feed into a Division research performance plan.

Accountability is maintained at each level through consultation and sign-off by relevant managers. For example, individual performance plans would be agreed between the individual staff member and their Head of School or other supervisor, in consultation with the relevant Institute Director or similar where the person has a formal commitment of time to a research concentration.

In addition, Institute Directors and the Dean: Research will undertake a series of workshops directed toward helping each staff member, along with their respective research theme and/or Institute leader to:

- identify and document a research publication goal and strategy as part of developing their Research Performance Plan
- develop Institute writing support groups to parallel the grant workshops proposed by the PVC (R&I)
- work with a DRPF funded external academic coaching consultant to help staff achieve their Research Performance Plan goals.

18. That the University and Division review the existing Early Career Researcher Development Program to ensure it meets the needs of the Division's staff.

ACCEPTED

Recommendation 18 has been addressed by the PVC (R&I) through changes in the Early Career Researcher program that require the Head of School sponsoring the ECR to ensure appropriate workloads prior to staff commencing the program.

- 19. That the Division provide an equivalent level of attachment, support and resourcing to postdoctoral fellows and early career researchers to further its objective to build on its research strengths and focus research activity.**

From 2007, the ECR and ECRL programs will be available to research only and academic staff partially funded by the PVC (R&I) and partially through the Division and staff member's School. The guidelines state an ECR/ECRL cohort member must be attached to a research Institute or concentration.

Research training

- 20. That the Division identify and remove real and or perceived barriers for cross-school and cross-divisional supervision.**

ACCEPTED

The main barriers to cross-School and cross-Divisional supervision are administrative and linked to payments for supervision. The Division will introduce guidelines for School Finance Officers outlining the fees payable across its Schools for cross-School supervision. The Dean: Research Education will seek the approval of the University's Research Degrees Committee to apply similar guidelines across Divisions.

- 21. That, as a matter of priority, the Division develop greater integration of research training and research through such mechanisms as locating postgraduates and postdoctoral fellows in research concentrations.**

PARTIALLY ACCEPTED

Under University policy, HDR students are mainly enrolled in Schools and are part of local research communities. However, the Dean: Research Education will continue to promote HDR student membership of multiple research communities including those at the School, Division and Institute level. The physical location of HDR students will continue to be negotiated by Schools, Institutes and research concentrations.

- 22. That the Division review Divisional Research Education Support Activities to ensure that communication, supervision and resource support is even across the Division, and that more support and more effective forms of support are provided.**

ACCEPTED

The Division will implement further Divisional Research Education Support Activities to complement the University RESA program.

The Dean: Research Education will review School communication processes with HDR students and develop Division guidelines and action flowcharts to ensure the consistent management of resource support, candidature issues, thesis proposals, student grievances, and student progress review processes.

Performance and standing

- 23. That the University establish a new institute through the amalgamation of the Centre for Applied Psychological Research and the Centre for Applied Behavioural Science.**

ACCEPTED

The Division supports the development of an Institute in the School of Psychology. The aggregation of the two existing centres' activity in a single Institute will:

- provide a more focused approach to the promotion of research culture within the School of Psychology

- provide a sound basis for significantly expanding the opportunities and research outcomes for Early Career Researchers and graduate students in the behavioural sciences
- improve delivery of research degree training
- create more stable career paths for post-doctoral fellows within the Centres and better position the School of Psychology as a strong research School in the emerging RQF assessment exercise

Through consultations with the Centres and the School of Psychology, plans for this merger are now being prepared for submission to Research Policy Committee as part of the approval process for new institutes. The Division hopes to see the Institute established before the end of 2007.

24. That the Division now begin to undertake benchmarking activities of groups within the Division rather than the Division as a whole; and that these benchmarks have regard to the new quality and impact criteria of the RQF.

ACCEPTED

Research performance plans for concentrations and individuals will have RQF measures embedded within them. (See Recommendation 17).

Final Comments

The Review of Research has been one of the larger reviews undertaken in the Division and has involved the good work of many committed people. In particular, the Review Panel has been thanked for completing such a thorough job and providing the Division, and University, with high quality analyses and strategic findings in its report. This information will continue to be valuable both in terms of how research is perceived in the Division and how the Division will provide direction and leadership for a successful research future.

Given the concurrent development of the RQF, the Review has indeed been very timely. As it is taking a prolonged time for the RQF to attain a definite shape, there has been some difficulty in responding directly to its challenges. However, the Division does believe the Review has assisted it to be better positioned to respond positively to the RQF.

EAS Divisional Research Committee - Terms of reference

Prescribed by Academic Board

- 1.1 To consider matters referred to it by the Research Policy and Research Degrees Committees.
- 1.2 To consider matters referred to it by the Divisional Board or Pro Vice Chancellor.
- 1.3 To co-ordinate strategy in the Division within the framework of the University's Research Management Plan.
- 1.4 To develop, recommend and implement the Divisional Research Management Plan.
- 1.5 To foster research capability and excellence in the Division, by assisting and encouraging Divisional staff to develop research, research supervisory and consultancy skills.
- 1.6 To analyse the equity reports from school boards and advise the Divisional Board on equity research priorities, and strategies, based on this analysis.
- 1.7 To make recommendations on matters pertaining to research policy and management of research and research degrees.
- 1.8 To oversee operation of the divisional research performance funds.

Prescribed by Divisional Board

- 1.9 To prepare research, research degree, and consultancy management plans for consideration by the Divisional Board.
- 1.10 To promote the Division's research, research degree and consultancy programs.
- 1.11 To monitor and evaluate the research, research degree and consultancy programs.
- 1.12 To oversee operation of Divisional research grants schemes, including divisional research performance funds, and monitor the outcome of research projects supported by those funds.
- 1.13 To support Divisional research concentrations identified in the Divisional Research Plan.
- 1.14 To advise the Divisional Board on matters related to fostering research capability and excellence in the Division.

Staff development

- 1.15 To assist and encourage staff of the Division to develop research, research supervisory and consultancy skills, consistent with the Divisional Research Plan.
- 1.16 To assist and encourage staff of the Division to develop their research output, consistent with the Divisional Research Plan

Reporting

1.17 The Committee reports directly to the Divisional Board, but submits recommendations to the University Research Degrees Committee and the Research Policy Committee on matters pertaining to research management and research degree supervision.

Composition

EXISTING

- 2.1 *Dean (Research) (Chair)*
- 2.2 *Heads of Schools in the Division*
- 2.3 *Leaders of research concentrations identified in the Divisional Research Plan*
- 2.4 *Business Development Managers (Research and Consultancy)*
- 2.5 *One student enrolled for a research degree in the Division*
- 2.6 *Divisional Pro-Vice-Chancellor*
- 2.7 *Research Degree Committee representatives*

PROPOSED

- 2.1 *Dean: Research (Chair)*
- 2.2 *Dean: Research Education*
- 2.3 *Institute Directors*
- 2.4 *Senior Business Development Manager EAS*
- 2.5 *One student enrolled for a research degree in the Division*
- 2.6 *Pro-Vice-Chancellor EAS*
- 2.7 *Research Portfolio Leaders (one from each school)*

In attendance

- 3.1 A Flexible Learning Centre representative
- 3.2 A Library representative
- 3.3 A Research Services representative

Administrative arrangements

- 4.1 The Committee is supported from the office of the Dean, Research.
- 4.2 The Committee normally meets every two months.