

**Report from the Strategic Planning Working Group  
to the  
ARRL Board of Officers, Directors, and Vice Directors  
July 2015**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is our pleasure to provide this Report to you from the Strategic Planning Working Group.

From the January 2015 Annual Meeting minutes of the ARRL Board of Directors, Item 32 states:

“Mr. Widin moved, seconded by Mr. Pace that the ARRL form a Strategic Planning Working Group to create a high-level strategic plan during 2015 to be presented to the Board for approval at its meeting in January 2016. The membership of the Working Group should be up to seven (7) people appointed by the President from among Directors, Vice Directors, Officers and staff. “ The Working Group was also tasked to provide periodic updates as to our progress to the Board.

In January 2015, President Craigie polled the Board to solicit potential volunteers to serve on this working group. In early February 2015, members of the Working Group were selected from those interested. Those asked to join this team all had Strategic Planning experience in their professional careers, and include:

Second Vice President Jim Fenstermaker, K9JF, Chair  
Dakota Division Director Greg Widin K0GW  
Chief Operating Officer Harold Kramer WJ1B  
Marketing Manager Bob Inderbitzen NQ1R  
Central Division Vice Director Kermit Carlson W9XA  
Midwest Division Vice Director Art Zygielbaum K0AIZ  
Northwestern Division Vice Director Bonnie Altus AB7ZQ

The first meeting of the Working Group was on February 10, 2015. This was a calibration meeting and a discussion of our “charge” and various ways of reviewing methodologies and the history of strategic planning processes at the ARRL. In order to get a sense of the situation surrounding the ARRL, the group members engaged in researching a number of common Strategic Planning tools to further its evaluation and discovery. Opinions were solicited from working group members, the ODV, and others

outside the Board. After combining the responses, clear patterns appeared. This input established the foundation for our next tasks.

During the next 3 months, we determined the hierarchical structure of our task, set ourselves to work through this structure, and create meaningful scenarios using the discussion and framework described in the earlier structure.

During this time, we changed our conferencing platform from the ARRL Telephone Bridge to the online GoToMeeting platform. This change significantly increased our ability to communicate as we could now use both audio and visual tools to create and show examples of the various elements of our plan hierarchy.

During the span of our meetings, updates and commentary were communicated via the ODV reflector to the entire Board in approximate 4-6 week increments. This was done to both inform ODV of our progress and to solicit information and input from outside the Working Group.

After the our initial evaluation and discovery phase, our next task was to review the existing Strategic Plan (created in 2009) in order to glean information and thinking from past processes and to review strategic plans from other organizations.

We then reviewed the existing Mission Statement of the ARRL, and the Vision Statement. The team could not locate a Values Statement and determined this element of a new plan must be created in order to have a complete package.

Additionally, Chair Fenstermaker reached out to the Section Managers for their opinion and feedback. Those that replied were enthusiastic that they were able to provide feedback and ideas. Additionally, membership was asked to comment in articles in February QST by CEO Dave Sumner and in June QST in in the Inside HQ column by COO Harold Kramer. Chair Fenstermaker was asked to meet and present the Working Group activities with Section Managers at their informal session at the Marriott Hotel during Dayton Hamvention in May. The SM's were very appreciative to have this conversation and, more importantly, the dialogue continues.

The outcome of the work done through July 7, 2015 is a slightly revised Mission Statement, a revised Vision Statement, and an entirely new Values Statement. A copy of these are attached. These three initial elements of a Strategic Plan are being used to formulate the next part of the plan – the definition of Strategic Plan (Goals) for the ARRL. The Working Group has begun to formulate a set of preliminary Goals and related Initiatives.

Prior to the July Board meeting, we will present these elements of the plan and solicit comments and questions regarding our methodology and conclusions. During the Board

Meeting we will ask for approval of the Mission, Vision, and Values Statements in order that we may robustly manage the next elements of our task.

The next steps are where the “rubber will meet the road”. Committing a set of Goals given from input our stakeholders and from corresponding analysis from the Working Group is a process where we can envision “what ” the ARRL should accomplish and the resulting “need or what to do” and “how to do” during the next 5-10 years. The specifics of what will happen during the latter 5 years of this timeline are quite dependent on the situations and changing conditions at the time or review of the Plan review. The environment will change. However, if we do our job and think “out of the box”, the ARRL can position itself to robustly manage those situations rather than react to exogenous variables and internal influences. As we see it, one of our prime drivers is to avoid the weak linkage between “how’s” and “what’s” in the last plan and to firmly establish appropriate and meaningful measurements and feedback mechanisms.

Many ideas were expressed from outside our Working Group regarding “what we should do” to position ourselves for continuous improvement and service. Our (the ARRL) challenge is to identify, prioritize, and fund those programs that add value to members and stakeholders. Then, the process to create measurements and reporting elements is critical for the Board to establish corrective changes and modifications to the plan. It is extremely important to be flexible as we implement new directions as there is generally an impact across many segments of the organization. Hard decisions will have to be made. The reason for these changes and program modifications must be facilitated through the Strategic Plan. This is the guiding document for managing our future.

Thanks for identifying a skilled and experienced group of collegial participants to take part in this Working Group. We are confident that, working with the Board, field leadership, members, and other stakeholders we will develop a document that can and will be an operating model for the ARRL and a great communication device for our members and stakeholders. Serving our members, for whom the ARRL exists, will be the “what” and “how” of our future.

We welcome the opportunity to complete our work. The members of the Working Group believe you will be pleased with our results and recommendations to be presented in January 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Strategic Planning Working Group

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