

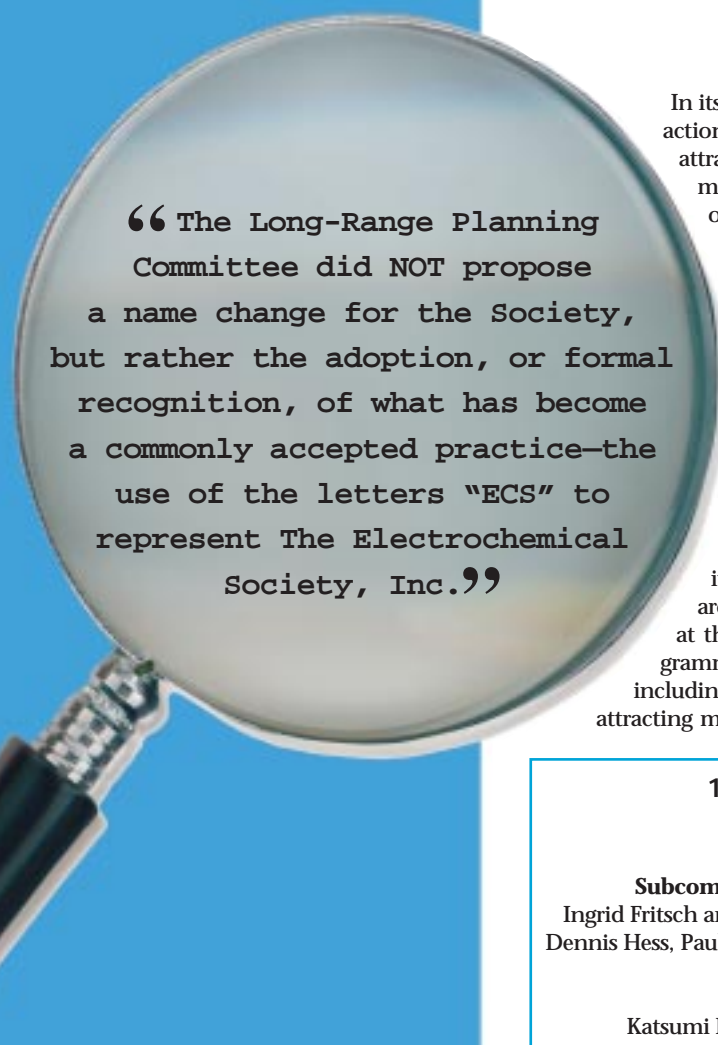
Looking at Another Century of Society Success

There's a lot of talk about the 21st century, but regardless of when it really begins, the Society will reach soon its very own century mark in the year 2002. To prepare the Society for its next century of success, an ad hoc long range planning committee was established in 1996 by then-president Dennis Hess. This Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC) was chaired by Wayne L. Worrell, and its work has been accomplished primarily through three subcommittees (see box below). This past fall, these various subcommittees submitted their final reports. In keeping with our "crystal ball" theme, we thought we'd take a look at their work, with a view to what might be in store for the Society in the near future.

Society Structure and External Interactions

In its report, the Subcommittee on Society Structure and External Interactions remarked that, in order for the Society to remain vital, it must attract and retain new members and run well-attended international meetings. Both goals are becoming more difficult to achieve as new organizations with profit-focused motives enter the arena of offering technical meetings and compete with the Society for its "customers." Effective competition in this new environment hinges upon external perceptions of the Society, and upon the topical areas and quality of its symposia. This subcommittee addressed three key issues that bear directly upon these goals: the health of Divisions and Groups, internal committee structure, and the representative identity of the Society.

The last goal served as the basis for the first major recommendation of the LRPC: that a more representative working identity be created for The Electrochemical Society. The LRPC affirmed the notion that the Society's name doesn't sufficiently represent the breadth of scientific and technological interests and the diversity of its members. Those who are most directly affected by this problem are the members in solid-state science and technology, and members at the interface of solid-state and electrochemical science. Many programmatic activities have been impeded because of the current name, including the planning and carrying out of symposia in solid-state areas, attracting manuscripts from all technical areas the Society actually represents,



“The Long-Range Planning Committee did NOT propose a name change for the Society, but rather the adoption, or formal recognition, of what has become a commonly accepted practice—the use of the letters “ECS” to represent The Electrochemical Society, Inc.”

1996-99 Ad Hoc Long-Range Planning Committee

Wayne L. Worrell, chairman

Subcommittee on Society Structure and External Interactions

Ingrid Fritsch and Antonio J. Ricco, co-chairs Alison Davenport, Larry Faulkner, Dennis Hess, Paul Kohl, Johna Leddy, Thomas Shaffner, Russ Wong, Jerry Woodall

Subcommittee on International Relations

Katsumi Niki, chair; Kathryn Bullock, interim chair Masuo Aizawa, D. Noel Buckley, John P. Dismukes, Barry R. Mac Dougall, Bruno Scrosati

Subcommittee on Member Benefits

Donald Deal and Dennis Hess, co-chairs Paul Kohl, Steve Nelson

attendance at meetings, interactions with other societies for joint meetings, and attracting and retaining new members.

The subcommittee recommended, and the LRPC concurred, that the Society adopt the use of an acronym and a descriptive tagline. The subcommittee, and the LRPC, did NOT propose a name change for the Society, but rather the adoption, or formal recognition, of what has become a commonly accepted practice, the use of the letters "ECS" to represent The Electrochemical Society, Inc. The current recommendation is to use: ECS, The Society for Solid State and Electrochemical Science and Technology. (The committee also considered whether the word "international" should be included in the tagline and concluded that this was already implicit.) This working identity would be used on meeting announcements, stationery, the web site, meeting programs, phone directories, and other mailings. It should be noted that a similar tagline is already used on the cover of the *Journal of The Electrochemical Society* for the same reason it is being proposed for the Society in general—to draw attention to the "dry" side of the house.

Society Divisions, Groups, and various standing committees of the Society conducted serious discussions on this topic during the Society's meeting in Hawaii this past October. It was recommended that additional discussion and publicity be carried out

before the Toronto Meeting this coming May, when the ECS

Board of Directors will be asked to vote on a by-law change that would allow the Society to officially use the acronym and service mark.

The LRPC also recommended a second proposal from this subcommittee, that each Society Division or Group draft and implement a

five-year plan to be sent to the Technical Affairs Committee. The

goal of a five-year plan is twofold: to help each Division respond to changing member demog-

raphics; and to provide a written document of the Division health that can be used to inform and update Division members, new officers, and other interested members. To aid each Division in planning for their future, this subcommittee designed a Division Five-Year Plan form. The

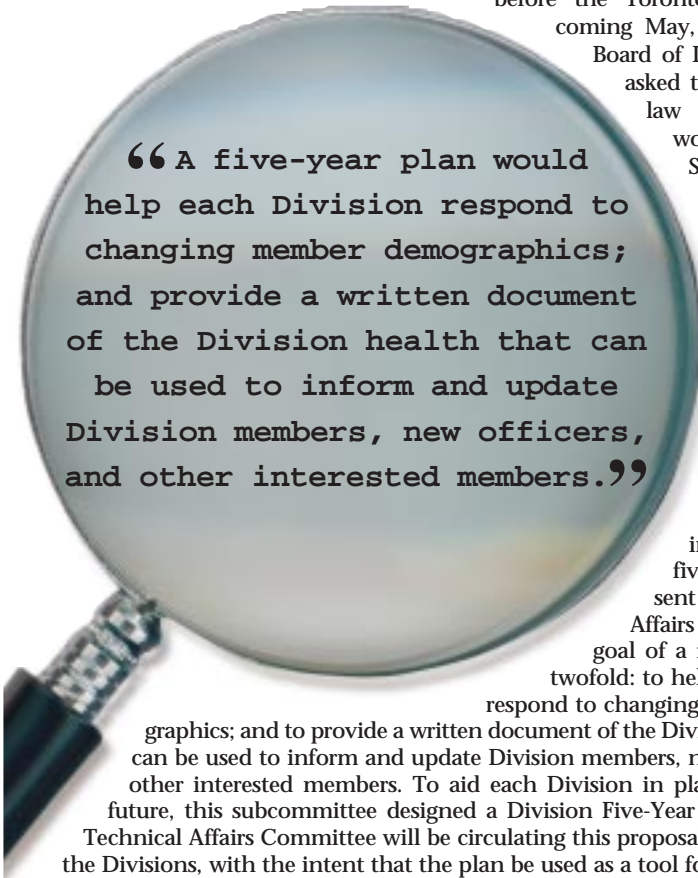
Technical Affairs Committee will be circulating this proposal for feedback to the Divisions, with the intent that the plan be used as a tool for the Divisional

Advisors.

The third major proposal originating in this subcommittee, and recommended by the LRPC, was a Committee Health Update form to be used by other Society committees. This form is analogous to the Division Five-Year Plan form and will allow the Society's leadership to assess committee performance and identify problems in the committee process. The ECS Ways and Means Committee has accepted this recommendation and the first committees to be evaluated include Individual Membership and Technical Affairs.

International Relations

The Subcommittee on International Relations was tasked to: (1) suggest ways for ECS to represent the interests of its international members; (2) identify ways for ECS members outside of North America to become involved with the Society through committee work, symposia organization, etc.; (3) make recommendations for the establishment of links with other scientific societies; and (4) increase the Society's international profile while maintaining its high scientific standards. The subcommittee solicited advice on a number of fronts. It sent a questionnaire to non-North American members after the 1997 meeting in Paris, and a questionnaire was also sent to the members of the European Local Section. (ECS members may find the original questions and results of these surveys at: <http://www.electrochem.org/members/msurvey.html>, <http://www.electrochem.org/members/imsurvey.html>, and <http://www.electrochem.org/eurosurvey.html>.) This subcommittee also gathered information from leaders of many of the world's electrochemical societies, who were invited to present a summary of the international activities of their societies as part of the Luigi Galvani anniversary meeting in September 1998, in Bologna, Italy.




“A five-year plan would help each Division respond to changing member demographics; and provide a written document of the Division health that can be used to inform and update Division members, new officers, and other interested members.”

As part of its work, the subcommittee developed a mission statement as it pertains to international relations, and suggested that it be considered for incorporation into the Society's mission statement:

The Electrochemical Society, Inc., as an international organization, seeks to effectively serve and represent all of its members and to ensure that all Society members have an opportunity to participate at all levels of the Society, and that the Society is representative of and responsive to the broad international community that it represents.

The LRPC endorsed five recommendations proposed by this subcommittee. The first recommendation was that ECS seriously explore co-sponsorship of the next meeting in Paris with the International Society of Electrochemistry (ISE). The first joint meeting between ECS and ISE, in Paris (fall 1997), was highly successful, and European members have expressed a strong desire to continue these jointly-sponsored meetings.

ECS and ISE are well into the planning of the next joint meeting, scheduled for spring 2001 in San Francisco. These two organizations will work together again in 2003, for the planning of an ECS meeting in Paris in the spring of 2003. Because ISE will hold its annual meeting that fall, Paris will not be a "joint" meeting, but there will be many areas in which ISE and ECS will collaborate to accomplish many of the goals of a joint meeting arrangement.



“ European members have expressed a strong desire to continue these jointly-sponsored meetings. ECS and ISE are well into the planning of the next joint meeting, scheduled for spring 2001 in San Francisco. ”

Based on the wishes of ECS members from in Europe and Asia, this subcommittee also recommended that the term "Local Section" be changed to "Section." Because the Society is faced with this proposed change, and a number of other proposed changes affecting the constitution and by-laws, the Society has undertaken a substantive review of these documents. The Ways and Means Committee will prepare a comprehensive plan for putting the required changes into place.

This subcommittee also recommended that the Society continue to increase the representation on the Society's committees of members from outside North America, as well as on Division executive committees. The Society's officers strongly concur, and a number of appointments of members from outside of North America have already been made.

Finally, this subcommittee recommended that the Society continue its development of electronic publishing to facilitate timely delivery of the *Journal*, *Letters*, and other ECS publications to members outside of North America. As Society members know, ECS's two peer-reviewed journals are available online to all members (*Letters* since 1998 and the *Journal* since 1999); the new CD-ROM of the ECS journals is now available; and there are more changes coming.

Member Benefits

The Subcommittee on Member Benefits conducted an e-mail survey about how the changing demographics of membership might affect member needs. According to the survey (which had an 8% response rate), the respondents identified the primary benefit of membership to be: the *Journal* (59%), meetings (28%), networking (5%), and *Interface* (4%). This subcommittee summarized some of the specifics: members want scientific content, information availability, research and industry trends, networking, employment opportunities, and database access. Discussion of the survey answers resulted in

several recommendations from this subcommittee.

One recommendation was to project Society member demographics over the next 5-10 years. The fastest growing membership segment is from outside North America. The subcommittee recommended that the Executive, Technical Affairs, and Individual Membership committees address the issue of ensuring the internationalization of Society leadership and operations.

This subcommittee also questioned how the Society could provide industrial firms with the networking and technical training (e.g., short courses) that they require. It was suggested that the Education and Contributing Membership committees seek ways to survey ECS Affiliates to learn of their needs in this area. Likewise, via the Education Committee, and the Divisions and Groups, input is needed to design short course offerings that are more attractive to a wider audience of members. It was also recommended that tutorials be made a part of Society symposia, with the possibility of publishing the results in book-form as well. Further in the educational vein, it was recommended that the Society expand its professional skills workshops to include topics such as career planning and management.

Looking Ahead

President Dale Hall, in accepting the report of this Long-Range Planning Committee, commented on the tremendous amount of work that was reflected in this very valuable document. He noted that many of the recommendations were well underway, and others were being taken up with a sense of enthusiasm and a view to the future that was to be lauded. Not only will Society members be able to look back on its first century with pride, but will be able to look forward with a sense of renewed ownership and a feeling that they belong to a very vibrant and dynamic organization. ■

Ed. Note: This article was compiled by Mary Yess, Interface's Managing Editor, based on reports from all the LRP subcommittees. Additional input was received from ECS President Dale Hall and ECS Executive Director Roque Calvo.