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October 27, 2009

Dear WAPOR Member,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Past-President of WAPOR with regard to my responsibilities for elections.

During my time as President – and with the full support of the Council – WAPOR supported a variety of activities to stimulate regional associations. This was prompted by a number of interests, including growing our membership; taking into account the costs of attending the annual conference, especially for young professionals; and our interest in promoting data quality standards wherever public opinion research is conducted. One regional association is now in the process of organizing itself in Latin America, and in communications with the WAPOR Council we realized that we had no formal mechanism for recognizing them and making their responsibilities clear. With the full support of the WAPOR Council, we are proposing an amendment to the WAPOR Constitution to provide a mechanism for the organization of regional chapters.

One year ago, the Council appointed a committee that I chaired and that included Marita Carballo and Alejandro Moreno to investigate what formal administrative procedures WAPOR should adopt. We searched for relevant guidance from other organizations, and we found a very good model in the By-Laws of the American Association for Public Opinion Research. The committee modified the AAPOR language to take into account the circumstances of WAPOR, and at its September Council meeting the language was considered and adopted as a proposal for amending our constitution.

What are the key proposed changes? The language formalizes an arrangement at the instigation of a regional association. It requires that the officers be members of WAPOR but does not require that other members join. It requires an annual report of activities to the WAPOR Council through the Liaison member, and it constrains the ability of the regional association to act in the name of WAPOR.

If this amendment is adopted, the WAPOR Council expects to receive at least one request for recognition almost immediately; and we believe that others may follow in the future. I urge you to support this revision and return your vote by December 15. The Council hopes you will support the proposed amendment, which will be the basis for WAPOR's growth in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Michael Traugott
WAPOR Past President

Proposal for a Change of the WAPOR Constitution:

New Article VII - Regional Chapters

Section 1: Upon application to and approval of the WAPOR Council, members of WAPOR may organize into regional (countries or groups of countries) chapters with the aim of furthering the general purposes of WAPOR and shall be given recognition by WAPOR. There cannot be more than one local chapter per area (as determined by Executive Council). The Executive Council may at any time, in its sole discretion, revoke such recognition.

Section 2: All chapters will have by-laws and other organizational documents that are reasonably consistent with the WAPOR's goals and objectives as determined by the WAPOR Council. WAPOR shall grant to Chapters a conditional, revocable, non-exclusive license to use the name "WAPOR".

Chapters are recognized by WAPOR but are not part of it. As such, WAPOR bears no liability for actions of Regional Chapters or their obligations or liabilities, and each Regional Chapter shall waive, release and indemnify and hold WAPOR harmless from and against any and all loss, claim or liability that might arise in connection with its existence and activities.

Section 3: Officers in officially recognized Regional Chapters must be paid-up members of WAPOR. Regional Chapter members need not be members of WAPOR.

Section 4: All WAPOR Chapter members must adopt the WAPOR Code of Ethics as a condition of Chapter membership.

Section 5: Each Regional chapter shall submit a written report annually to the WAPOR Council via the Liaison member of the WAPOR Council. The regional chapter report will contain:

- * a report on membership
- * a list of activities for the year;
- * a certification stating that membership dues and any other funds provided by WAPOR to the regional chapter are being collected, recorded and used in accordance with the WAPOR Constitution and standard accounting principles.

Section 6: Regional Chapters shall not, except with the express approval of the WAPOR Council, make any public statement or enter into any contracts on behalf of WAPOR or in any manner represent, obligate or legally bind WAPOR. Regional Chapters shall not take any action contrary to the policies and purposes of WAPOR.

Old Article VII - Languages - will become New Article VIII.

Old Article VIII - Amendments - will become New Article IX.

Old Article IX - Establishment and Termination - will become New Article X.