

Real Diaper Industry Association Volunteer Group Definitions

The success and experience gained with RDIA's volunteer groups has prompted the development of more formal roles and responsibilities, and structure and governance, for the various types of volunteer groups, including:

- Advisory Group
- Committee
 - Committee of the Board
 - Advisory Committee
- Working Group
- Task Force
- Special Interest Group

There was also seen to be a need to better distinguish the purpose and activities of the various RDIA volunteer groups.

The purpose of these definitions is to define the structure of new volunteer groups as they are formed. It is expected that new groups may (1) be formed under an initial structure/category that fulfills the needs of RDIA and its members both short- and long-term or (2) evolve through one or more structures as the group matures.

It may be beneficial to review the purpose, composition, and activities of existing volunteer groups to determine if one of the group definitions outlined here is more suitable to the group's purpose and mode of operation than its current structure.

Advisory Group

Created/dissolved by the Chair or by a majority vote of the board of directors

Purpose

- Provide input and strategic direction to staff- or volunteer-led initiatives
- Be the conduit for Board requests to associated volunteer group(s)
- Develop recommendations for the RDIA Board regarding strategic issues

Composition/Membership

- Board Liaison, appointed/confirmed annually by the Chair
- Board members
- Volunteer members
- Staff

Advisory Groups are generally expected to have membership requirements structured for specific purposes. See guidelines for each AG for specifics.

Governance/Administration

- No standardized governance structure for this volunteer category has been developed
- It is expected that as other groups in this category are formed, standardized governance will be developed.
- There is no need to develop business plans or budget.
- Administrator, if any, is assigned by the Chair

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Meet at least twice each year
- Respond to Board, staff or volunteer requests for feedback, input on pertinent topic areas when requested
- Hold conference calls as needed to address emerging trends and issues
- Participate in review process as requested
- Regularly report activities to the RDIA Board

Committee of the Board

Created/dissolved by majority vote of the Board according to the bylaws. Exceptions to powers outlined are detailed in the bylaws. Rules for meeting notice, quorum, and electronic transmission apply according to the bylaws.

Article V. Committees

Section 1. Committees of the Board. The Board may create one or more "committees of the Board", each consisting of two or more directors and *no persons who are not directors*, to serve at the pleasure of the Board. Appointments to committees of the Board shall be by a majority vote of the Board.

Purpose

- Focus on a core projects of the board
- Develop, or sponsor the development of, products (e.g. policies or guidelines) and services to meet the needs of RDIA members and the cloth diaper industry.

Committee Webpage

Composition/Membership

- Chair appointed/confirmed annually by the Chair
- Committee members appointed by Chair or majority vote of board of directors

Governance/Administration

- Project plans as requested
- Admin assigned by Chair as requested

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Use email discussion group, email, or other electronic tools to distribute pertinent information
- Meet at least once each year
- Respond to RDIA requests for feedback, input on pertinent topic areas when requested (e.g., proposed legislation, revisions to standards)
- Participate in review process as requested
- Review and update group web page at least annually
- Develop and maintain relationship and communication with other RDIA volunteer groups to identify areas of collaboration for development of products and services

Advisory Committee

Created and dissolved by the Board according to the bylaws.

Article V. Committees

Section 5. Advisory Committees. The Board may also establish advisory committees composed of any number of directors and non-directors. Advisory committees shall provide advice and recommendations to the Board but shall not have the authority of the Board or any final decision making authority.

Purpose

- Focus on a core technical expertise
- Develop, or sponsor the development of, products (e.g. policies or guidelines) and services to meet the needs of RDIA members and the cloth diaper industry.

Advisory Committee Webpage

Composition/Membership

- All Committees start with a Chair
- Larger committees may also form, at the pleasure of the Chair, a Steering Group comprised of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Project Team Leaders, and Past Chair
- Project teams comprised of regular members, who must represent current RDIA members. The member of record for any member business may also request that another representative of that member business be welcomed to join.
- Corresponding members

Governance/Administration

- Project proposals and action plans required
- Project budget as approved in project proposals
- Board Liaison, appointed/confirmed annually by the Chair
- Administrator as assigned by the Chair

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Use email discussion group, email, or other electronic tools to distribute pertinent information
- Meet at least once every quarter by conference call
- Respond to RDIA requests for feedback, input on pertinent topic areas when requested (e.g., proposed legislation, revisions to standards, marketing opportunities)
- When officers are present, conduct elections and maintain governance per RDIA policy
- Complete budget, action plan, and annual report annually
- Participate in review process as requested
- Participate in annual meeting sessions as requested
- Review and update group web page at least annually, more frequently for active committees
- Develop and maintain relationship and communication with other RDIA volunteer groups to identify areas of collaboration for development of products and services

Working Group

Created/dissolved by the Chair; reconfirmed annually or dissolved

Purpose

- Multidisciplinary/cross-functional group brought together to address an emerging issue
- Can be vertical (e.g., industry-based) or horizontal (e.g., hazard or technology based) focus

Working Groups Webpage

Composition/Membership

- Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary
- Project teams comprised of RDIA and non-RDIA members

Governance/Administration

- Initiated by staff (or appointed member) in response to Board or member request or identified need; if proves to be viable/needed, staff (or appointed member) contacts the Chair and requests a Board Liaison to be appointed
- Develops project teams and project plans to address areas of concern regarding lack of products, services or collaborations
- Develop action plan and budget as necessary
- Staff liaison/project coordinator assigned by the Chair
- Board Liaison, appointed/confirmed annually by the Chair

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Use all of RDIA's available electronic tools to distribute pertinent information (e.g., enewsletter, web page, emails, online communities)
- Respond to RDIA requests for feedback, input on pertinent topic areas when requested (e.g., proposed legislation, revisions to standards)
- Develop and implement project plan(s)
- Hold at least four (4) conference calls annually for updates on projects and activities
- Develop and maintain relationship and communication with other RDIA volunteer groups to identify areas of collaboration for development of products and services

Task Force

Created by the Chair; dissolved at end of annual meeting unless reconfirmed by the Chair

Purpose

Commissioned by the Chair to address a critical, strategic issue, which can be technical or administrative in nature, in a short period of time with a high level of activity and commitment

Task Forces Webpage

Composition/Membership

- RDIA Board members
- Staff
- Volunteer members
- Generally expected to have smaller membership (3-7 members)

Governance/Administration

- Admin assigned by the Chair
- Board Liaison appointed/confirmed annually by the Chair
- Sunsets at end of annual meeting unless renewed by the Chair
- Charter developed and approved by the Chair and Board
- Budget generally approved in conjunction with formation

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Face-to-face meetings and/or conference calls on a frequent basis
- Final report to the Chair and Board consisting of recommendations for mitigation and/or action

Special Interest Group

Created by petition to the Chair, provisional formation by the board, dissolved by the board

SIGs Webpage

Composition/Membership

- Chair
- Minimum of XXX members at inception, no cap on membership
- Must be members of RDIA

Governance/Administration

- Need to develop rules of operation; officer required
- Staff liaison/project coordinator assigned by the Chair
- Board Liason, appointed/confirmed annually by the Chair
- Cannot duplicate focus of another existing volunteer group
- Separate membership fee of \$XXX/year applies

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Use email discussion group, email, or other electronic tools to distribute pertinent information
- Meet each year at annual meeting
- Develop and maintain relationship and communication with other RDIA volunteer groups to identify areas of collaboration for development of products and services

Real Diaper Advisory Council

Created/dissolved by a majority vote of current board of directors

Purpose

- The association benefits from the inside knowledge and organizational memory of former board members through their continued involvement on the Advisory Council.
- Develop recommendations for the RDIA Board regarding strategic issues, providing background for board decisions, furnishing pros and cons for issues, and even listing questions that are appropriate for the situation. Minutes should reflect minority opinions. Advice does not have to be followed but it needs to be recognized if proper respect and consideration is given to the members.

Composition/Membership

- Former board members are elected/invited by a majority vote of the Advisory Council. Former board members are eligible even if they are no longer members of RDIA.
- Original members of Advisory Council are invited by majority vote of current board or of Executive Committee if requested by Chair
- A nominee must agree to continuing service.
- Advisory Council members have no legal or formal responsibilities like those of governing board members.
- They have no vested right to serve; no immunity from removal; and no right to renewal or appointment.
- No current board member may be a member of the Advisory Council

Governance/Administration

- Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary elected by Advisory Council members according to RDIA
- Conduct elections and maintain governance per RDIA policy
- There is no need to develop business plans or budget.
- Chair of the governing board serves as Board Liaison to the Advisory Council
- Administrator, if any, is assigned by the Chair

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Meet at annual meeting (this may be a working meeting or a social gathering)
- Annual project or direction determined by majority vote of current members. Board Chair may make requests for help in certain areas (recruiting, retention, fundraising, marketing)
- Respond to Board, staff or volunteer requests for feedback, input on pertinent topic areas when requested
- Hold conference calls as needed to address emerging trends and issues
- Participate in review process as requested
- Regularly report activities to the RDIA Board

Emeritus Board Member

Elected by a majority of current board members

Purpose

- When a board wants to invite a retiring board member to continue service, they may invited a former board member invited to stay on board as a non-voting member in an advisory capacity. This is an honorific title in recognition of the member's active participation, financial contribution, or continuing strong interest in the organization.
- There should be no expectation of invitation to outgoing board members. Recognition and thanks for the service is always necessary and appropriate. For the special status to remain special, honorary titles and positions need to be handed out sparingly. Retiring board members should not automatically be Emeritus Board Members; the title should be earned.

Composition/Membership

- Former board members are eligible even if they are no longer members of RDIA.
- Emeritus board members may also be members of the Real Diaper Advisory Council
- Except in extreme cases, "Emeritus Board Member" is an appointment for life. The governing board can remove emeritus status by 3/4 vote in extreme cases, but this should be done with great hesitation.
- A nominee must agree to continuing service.

Governance/Administration

- Emeritus board members have no vote on the board of directors
- Only the presence of voting members is counted for a quorum.
- When discussing confidential matters, it may be necessary to ask non-voting members to be absent. Executive sessions also may exclude former board members.

Duties/Minimum Expectations

- Meet with the board at least four (4) times a year and when requested.
- Respond to Board, staff or volunteer requests for feedback, input on pertinent topic areas when requested
- Participate in review process as requested