



WESTERN

PROFESSIONAL SKI INSTRUCTORS OF AMERICA  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SNOWBOARD INSTRUCTORS

### REVIEW OF RELEVANCE & ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

#### Terms of Reference:

Develop 3-5 strategic short term actionable items that are within scope and influence of PSIA that will:

- Increase Engagement (all demographics)
- Increase Relevance (20-30 demographic)

PROPOSAL	RESPONSE
Raise the professional level and effectiveness of our Ed Staff. Provide Mentors for our Ed Staff. Ed Staff need to have access to mentors within the region to assist them in preparing clinics for our membership. Ed Staff will prepare their subjects for the Educational Program and present them to a Regional Mentor for review and input. Regional Mentors will provide performance feedback on the technical content, methodology, communication skills, and terrain selection.	Agreed and already in progress. Raising the level of professionalism and effectiveness of Ed Staff is a critical activity. The region instituted an all-staff annual review and accountability process in 2022 for that reason. Ed Staff are provided regional mentorship by Task Force Chairs. New examiners are paired with the most senior examiners and overstudies in their onboarding and training to provide performance feedback across the LCM.
Get the Ed Staff to Interski, open their eyes and minds. Get them to National Academies to see our Teams.	Agreed and already in progress. Two examiners were sent to Interski on scholarships. Seven examiners were sent to National Academy on scholarship this year, five last year.
Do more mandatory training where they don't have to volunteer all their time and take days/money away from work at home.	Ed Staff were paid for five days of mandatory training this season, up from three the previous year. Seven days scheduled for 24/25.
Require feedback sheets to be filled out at the event, not some generic online check the box feedback.	Online feedback forms are well used (>75% response rate) and allow us to track trends in member feedback across event types (such as frequencies of specific issues and comparative NPS scores for examiners) with no additional manual tracking and data management.
Use our tryout team to give education clinics. Call the team our 'Western Team' like we used to do. Members will want to ski with them if we market them. We do not see the national team here often enough so let's make our own celebrities.	Efforts to relaunch the Western Development Team started several months ago and will include education clinics for the membership. This is distinct and separate from the group of people who were endorsed to try out for the National Team in 2024.



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Bring in national team members more often.	Three National Team members came to the Western Region to give member clinics and provide Ed Staff training (Mike Hafer, Geoff Krill, and Zeke Fashingbauer). Up from one the prior season.
Raise the pay level of Western Ed Staff to ensure we can recruit and retain sufficient staff to fill the spots on the calendar and lower numbers on clinic stand-by lists.	Ed Staff are the only employees of the Western Region to have received a pay raise in the last five years and the only employees of the region being paid well over the state and federal wage recommendations. Western Region Ed Staff wages are competitive in the industry, highly competitive comparative to other regions and include ample benefits beyond their hourly rate. Staffing levels are not the cause of waitlists for events. Waitlists are most frequently generated by late-stage event sign-ups (members attempting to register for events less than seven days prior to the event). This season, over 3,200 individual event registrations were processed, 72 individuals were put on waitlists, and 17 of those were unable to be resolved. This suggests that waitlists are a relatively small problem comparative to overall registrations.
Pure educational events that are not associated with evaluations, accreditations or exams are needed to keep certified members growing, interested and involved.	Agreed and already in progress. In the 22/23 Season, 56 out of 203 events were non-exam focused education (27%). In the 23/24 Season, 80/272 events were non-exam focused (29%), with eight brand new education programs added. Six additional new education series are slated for the 24/25 season, 100% of them came from Ed Staff suggestions.
<p>Create a Hybrid Solution for the way we design and schedule our Educational Program Calendar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our tradition is for regional staff to develop the subjects, dates, times and venues for educational events, and then recruit clinicians to staff them.</li> </ul> <p>Our proposal would turn this process on its head by encouraging and allowing Ed Staff to create their own subjects, formats, locations and dates. Ed Staff Members would then have staff publicize the product.</p>	<p>Ed Staff are regularly tasked with creating clinic content (ex; Blair McLeod developed the incredibly popular Snowboard Masters Series launched this season). Ed Staff develop 100% of clinic topics for all premier events.</p> <p>In order for a team of 2.5 people to manage 270+ events, event management has to happen in line with standard operating procedures for planning, calendaring, staffing, marketing, and logistics. Single point oversight is the only way to maintain a high degree of event integrity and is in service of providing a premier member experience.</p>
• Complete the calendar by the end of October.	23/24 Calendar was live on the website Sept 1, 2023.



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<p>Learning has to be a lifelong hobby. We need to make our Educational Program events pertinent to different demographic groups, young and old, male and female, ski and snowboard, experienced and inexperienced.</p>	<p>Agreed and already in progress. Our most popular new education events this season were developed for specific membership cohorts (ex: Masters Series for L3's, Kids + Families Clinics for parents of school aged kids). All new education events for 24/25 target underserved member cohorts.</p>
<p>Indoor/online topics also need to hit the membership with what they want and find interesting. Kids, women, park and pipe indoor, video analysis, video coaching sessions, physics, biomechanics, ski design, boot alignment, seniors, ski tuning, racing, big mountain, creativity, dry land, and so on. Have the ed staff submit and find guest speakers.</p>	<p>Agreed and already in progress. All webinar content was developed specific to member feedback this year, had the highest NPS webinar scores on record, and were well attended. Indoor sessions this year included biomechanics, ski design, senior kinetics, dry land training, and boot alignment. Ed Staff do submit suggestions for indoor speakers.</p>
<p>Zoom Boom calls. Free specific topic calls open to all members. Training, education, interaction. Certainly not as great as meeting in a room with some beers and chips with a good presenter, but it's the product of the times.</p>	<p>Three (free) on-line training forums for member cohorts are hosted every other week for the entire season. They are well attended. Free event for new members launching in the 24/25 season.</p>
<p>Involve video feedback in many more events.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Create positive consequences for completing Continuing Education Units. a) Some gains have occurred in this area and we have much more we can accomplish. b) Continuing Education Units (CEU) seem to be obligations members have to attend and we seem to rely on negative consequences to drive attendance at CEU events. c) If members felt a more compelling self interest in wanting to attend because the subjects and presenters were exciting and inspiring, we would have dramatically improved participation.</p>	<p>Members are asked to complete one day of professional development per season. It is one of the lowest bars for maintaining a professional credential comparative to other outdoor and professional sports or athletic certifications. Events are well attended with more registered participants in the 23/24 season than any other season on record. The cohort least compelled to maintain their CEU's are long-time inactive members (members who have not completed a single day of PD for more than 6 seasons). If those members were not compelled or inspired to complete mandatory training for more than six season, their self-interest in personal development may be beyond our influence.</p>
<p>d) Take a hard look at the entire concept of CEU compliance. If members take a break from teaching and yet remain members, why is it critical they remain current in CEU's? Why do we put up such formidable barriers to previous members re-joining the organization?</p>	<p>These are national policies agreed to by every region in the country. There are multiple avenues for folks looking to take a break from teaching, 200 individual emails were sent to people who did not renew in 23/24 to provide them options for a leave of absence.</p>



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	Reinstatement was created specifically to support members returning, was agreed to by every region in the country and only asks that re-joining members earn a portion of the CEU's for the years of membership they want credit for.
e) Consider creating financial rewards for those who maintain their CEU status: discounts on events, dues.	Dues represents the regions sole source of operational income and per our operational agreement, dues cannot be discounted. Events are charged at a standard agreed upon rate to cover event expenses.
4) Create a Leadership Seminar. a) Many instructors strive to make a bit more money and eventually reach a leadership level in their schools. Some have other experiences or education that prepares them for these roles, but some do not. We can create a three-day seminar for instructors aspiring to supervisor, manager or director roles.	Agreed and already achieved. PSIA-AASI West ran two leadership seminars this season, Choosing to Lead and The Why and How of Leadership. These were developed in collaboration with two other regions and resort leadership and were incredibly well received.
5) On Board with the American Interski in 2027. a) The Interski in Vail in the Spring of 2027 will be a fantastic event and we should involve our membership in the significance of it as much as possible. b) Our national teams will devote a lot of energy into developing content for the event and our Ed Staff needs to be up to speed and involved with this as much as possible. c) We should be supporting the Educational Foundation in raising funds to assist as many of our members as possible in attending.	Agreed and already in progress. We are working with several stakeholder groups to create avenues to engage as many members as possible in Interski 2027.
1) (A Top Recommendation) Create a vigorous culture of shared occupational ideology among members. Most of the Western Region emails to members are advertisements for events we are trying to sell to our members.	Members report in both regional and national surveys that the monthly newsletter is their preferred and primary platform to learn about new and upcoming events. Highlighting upcoming events in the newsletter is done in direct response to member feedback.
There is a very low proportion of effective and interesting articles about what's going on, how are we doing, what's coming up next and what are our educators and board members are thinking about and working on.	32 Degrees is the appropriate platform for effective and interesting articles, and we support more regional stakeholders representing the western viewpoint on that platform. The Board looks forward to providing more content in the regional newsletters.
2) Find out who our 20–30-year-olds are, ask them what they want, and figure out how to give it to them with perfect implementation.	Agreed and already in progress. Conducted outreach and interviews with the 30 youngest members of the organization in



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<p>a) Recruit 20–30-year-olds on a series of Zoom Meetings. Who do you get? Look at some recent exam results and ask the top scoring candidates from a regionally dispersed sample to take part. North of Tahoe, Western Slope, Southern California, Eastern (Mammoth and June, Lee Canyon). Ask a group of low scoring people as well.</p>	<p>2023. Conducted an online stakeholder forum for an under 35 cohort in February 2024.</p>
<p>Footnote on questionnaires: One of our favorite sayings is often attributed to Henry Ford, when surveys and questionnaires were suggested to him: “If I asked what the people wanted, they would have said, faster horses”. Can’t we look back to see what “sold” the most? Where did the members put their money? If we as board members had our ears open in our locker rooms and line ups at our home areas and on the road at events, wouldn’t we know what people wanted? Have we asked our Ed Staff what they want to present to membership?</p>	<p>Agreed and already in progress. All master calendar decision in 23/24 and 24/25 were made in direct response to seeing “what sold the most” and how it aligned with member feedback.</p> <p>Member feedback suggests there is no one single member need or unified member voice. All board members are engaged in listening to stakeholder groups at their home resorts and within their personal networks giving the leadership a broader understanding of the diversity of member needs.</p>
<p>Goal: Create an awareness of the value, work, effort and achievement that goes into becoming a Certified Member of PSIA-AASI. Sub Committee Recognition proposals: 1) Collaborate with PSIA-AASI National to create a student focused website that talks to our students about lessons and instructors.</p>	<p>Agreed and already in progress. The Western leadership sits on multiple national committees designed to create awareness on the value, work, effort and impact of becoming a certified member.</p>
<p>Design the most impressive one-page document on the benefits of PSIA-AASI membership ever created! We all need this and it’s hard to find a really good list in one place that is comprehensive and that compellingly answers the question “Why should I join?”</p>	<p><a href="https://thesnowpros.org/ufaq/why-should-i-join/">https://thesnowpros.org/ufaq/why-should-i-join/</a> <a href="https://thesnowpros.org/membership/">https://thesnowpros.org/membership/</a></p>
<p>Therefore, we propose the following tactics: Governance Goals:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase engagement of all members in Western region governance.</li> <li>• Increase participation in the election process.</li> <li>• Increase the active, intentional dialogue between members and the board.</li> <li>• Creating stronger feelings of confidence and respect between the board, staff and membership.</li> </ul> </p>	<p>In interviews and youth stakeholder forums, members report no interest in participating in governance or the election process. Communication and marketing for the election process has increased three-fold over the last three years with no impact on participation rates, suggesting that members are aware, but not interested in participating. Member Forum tripled the touch points for members to interact with the board.</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Board culture that supports leadership based on outstanding experience and expertise in professional ski and snowboard instruction to operate a professional instructors association.</li> </ul>	<p>Mutual respect between members and the board, and members and staff would be highly beneficial and much appreciated.</p> <p>The board already supports leadership based on outstanding experience and professional expertise.</p>
<p>1) (A Top Recommendation) Allow Education Team members to be elected to the Board.</p>	<p>The opinion on revisiting and undoing the by-law change approved by the membership has been noted from previous feedback.</p>
<p>2) (A Top Recommendation) Consider the benefits of instituting term limits for Regional Board membership.</p>	<p>Members vote in who they want in leadership, if they are voting in people who have served previous terms, they do not appear in favor of term limits.</p>
<p>3) Acknowledge: The Western Region Board might consider acknowledging to the membership they got it wrong with the slate of bylaw proposals in December. It would be refreshing for the Board to say “Hey folks, we got it wrong and misjudged the mood of the membership in respect to the appointment of non-members to the board of directors. We did not mean to imply that our membership lacked the skills for the board to govern effectively. We need to listen closer to your opinions and pay better attention to your needs in the future.”</p>	<p>The opinion on how the board should respond to the bylaw vote has been noted from previous feedback.</p>
<p>4) Apologize: The Officer, or at least the Board as a whole, might consider apologizing to the board members of 20 years ago and reassure them their efforts were appreciated and in fact helped the Western Region grow from 2500 members to 3500.</p>	<p>The opinion on who should apologize to whom has been noted from previous feedback.</p>
<p>5) Provide more information to members voting for Board positions. Include certification status, full time or part time status, and years in the profession of candidates in addition to the categories provided for the 2024 election. When information on candidates is presented to the membership, the Region should also present the same information on current board members who are not up for election. This will allow voters to see the overall composition of the board and potentially make informed decisions to balance skills, abilities and backgrounds on the board.</p>	<p>The region has committed to hosting a candidate town hall to provide more comprehensive information on potential board candidates.</p>



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6) Create a distinct and easy to locate segment on our website that informs our membership about our governance system and Board. Right now, it's hard to find. Members need quick and convenient access to minutes, budgets, biographies, officer reports and staff reports. Links should include access to similar PSIA-AASI National materials as well.

<https://psia-w.org/home/about/#tab-id-4>

psia-w.org → About Us → Board Meetings or via the “Board Meetings” button on home page.

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