

An Update from the Strategic Challenges Bylaws Review Task Force

Greetings! It has been months since our last *VIEWS* update. Thank you to all who have been following the work of the task force, as posted on the RID Web site and shared through several RID e-NEWS postings. Following an extended period of time for feedback from members (December 19, 2009 through April 22, 2010), the SCBRTF met face-to-face at the national office April 23-25. Staff liaison and Director of Communications, Tina Schultz; Board liaison and Vice President, Rachel Coppelli; and President Cheryl Moose were present for the two and a half day meeting. In addition, Executive Director Clay Nettles, and Director of Certification and Education Phara Rodrigue, made a joint presentation on certification accreditation on the first day of the meeting.

Forums, E-mail and Survey Feedback

Since the task force's creation, the members have worked to gather input from RID members on its work to ensure that the task force is representing the membership. Forums were conducted at regional and state conferences in 2008. Feedback from these forums, as well as from e-mails sent to the task force, led to the revision of preliminary working concepts. These revisions were posted on the RID Web site in July 2009 and a forum was held during the 2009 national conference in Philadelphia, PA. In addition, task force members have had numerous informal discussions with RID members during the past two years. On December 17, 2009, Tina Schultz, created and posted several links to key historical documents and the task force's current working concepts in an effort to provide access to all of the work of the task force in one centralized place. Based on feedback received after these links were provided, the task force developed a member survey. This survey was made available to members March 23-April 22. The results were quickly compiled in preparation for the recent face-to-face meeting beginning on April 23.

The main purpose of the survey was to gather input on the three working concepts developed by the task force. (See http://rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Committees/SCBRTF_concepts_December_2009.pdf) In total, 1,012 members participated in the survey. Additionally, a total of 36 e-mails were received, responding to the three working concepts as posted on the RID Web site since December 17, 2010. Some of the key data is presented here.

Demographics of Survey Participants

The survey asked respondents to provide general background information. Of the 1,012 members who responded, 705 identified as hearing. Only 23 identified as deaf, 13 identified as hard of hearing and one as deaf-blind. Given that the membership is largely made up of non-deaf individuals, this is not surprising. However, it also suggests to the task force that this approach to data collection may not be completely accessible to all members of the organization. If this is the case, as the organization continues to seek input from the membership on the

myriad issues that arise, RID must consider that online English-based surveys may need to be accompanied by ASL versions.

610 members responded to the question of age. The average age of the respondents is 42.5 years. The range is 21 to 71 years of age.

614 members responded to the question about the length of time as a member of the organization. The average number of years of membership in RID is 13.5. The range is 1 to 40 years.

In response to the question of whether or not the respondents hold certification, 594 members hold certification and 133 members do not, for a total response of 727. 619 members responded regarding current category of membership. 495 are certified members, 98 are associate members, 21 are student members and 5 are supporting members.

735 members responded to the question of level of educational achievement. 296 members hold bachelor's degrees. There are a nearly equal number of respondents who hold associate degrees and master's degrees, 166 and 167, respectively. 81 respondents hold a high school diploma or GED. 25 respondents hold a doctoral degree. 747 responded to a question regarding "formal" interpreter education/preparation programs. A majority of those who responded (462) had attended and completed a formal program. Perhaps not surprising, most of those who completed such programs are certified.

Of those who responded (1,009) to whether or not they vote on national issues, a majority (603) said they had. While this might suggest that a large number of members participate in the governance of the organization through the democratic process, it should be understood that it is more likely that the members who vote on national issues are also those who are likely to participate in online surveys such as this one. Furthermore, we need to recognize the data collected here are limited to those members who are savvy computer users and those who would normally participate in providing feedback to the organization. Finally, the respondents were split nearly 50/50 on whether they felt the members' opinions were adequately represented within RID. This was out of a total of 678 respondents.

Concept One: Membership Categories and Voting Rights

http://rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Committees/SCBRTF_concepts_December_2009.pdf

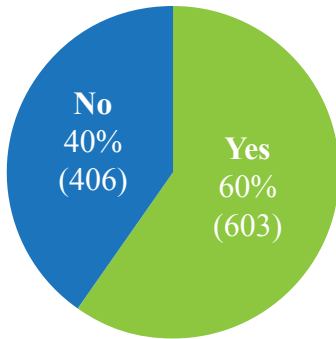
Working Concept One focused on redefining categories of membership and the associated rights and privileges for each category. 773 members responded to the question about whether the voting rights of non-certified members should be limited. Over half (473) felt that non-certified members should have limited voting rights. As a follow-up question, respondents were asked whether there should be a mandatory CEU requirement for non-certified, voting members. Of the 777 people who responded, 585 felt there should be a mandatory CEU requirement for non-certified, voting members.

Sampling of 2010 Membership Survey Results

Note: In total, 1012 RID member participated in this membership feedback survey. The included graphs and figures are for each question and do not take into account how many participants did not respond to the question.

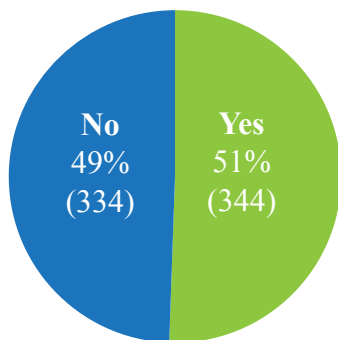
Do you vote on issues at the national level?

Total Responses: 1,009



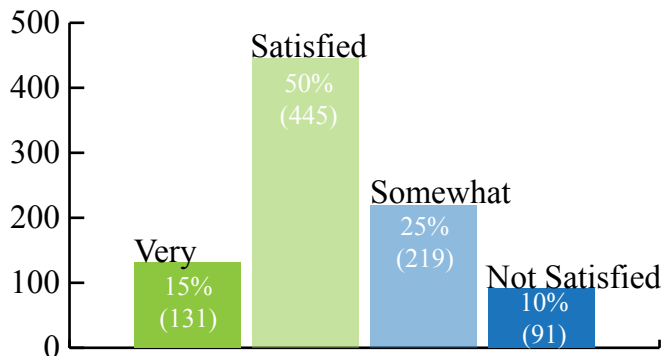
Do you feel members' opinions are adequately represented within RID?

Total Responses: 678



How satisfied are you with the current membership categories and associated rights, responsibilities and privileges as outlined in the RID Bylaws?

Total Responses: 886



Concept Two: Membership vs. Certification Maintenance
http://rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Committees/SCBRTF_concepts_December_2009.pdf

Working Concept Two focused on separating RID membership from certification maintenance. As part of this concept, the task force was endeavoring to determine whether or not members would maintain membership in RID even if that was not a requirement for maintaining certification. 769 members responded to this question. More than two-thirds (606) of those who responded stated they would continue to hold membership. Similarly, in response to a follow up question, 608 out of 741 said that RID should continue to define one's membership based on certification.

However, one piece of feedback that was clear from the survey is that even among the membership, the number of recognized certificates creates significant confusion. Since RID was established over 40 years ago, we have created, discontinued, incorporated and recognized several different certifications. If this confuses RID members, we can only imagine the confusion experienced by our consumers.

Concept Three: Delegate System

http://rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Committees/SCBRTF_concepts_December_2009.pdf

Working Concept Three focused on the creation of a delegate system. Of the 965 people who responded to the question that directly asked whether they wanted a delegate system, nearly two-thirds (475) of the members stated they would not want that.

It is obvious from this survey and from the feedback we have received from e-mails, the forums and our informal discussions with colleagues, that there is no clear consensus, in either support or opposition, for these three concepts, in their entirety.

Based on all of the member feedback, together with feedback from the national office staff and the RID Board of Directors, the SCBRTF has:

- revised Working Concept One;
- is continuing to review Working Concept Two, and
- has discontinued work on Working Concept Three.

New Working Concept: "Active Member" Category

Based on the feedback gathered thus far, the task force is working on a new concept. In this new working concept, the categories of "Certified Member" and "Associate Member" would be removed and a new category, "Active Member," would be created. This category would include "any individual who is actively engaged in the interpretation of American Sign Language and English and/or the transliteration of English." All members in this category would be required to earn CEUs and participate in the Ethical Practices System. In addition to the "Active Member" category, the categories of: Certified; Retired; Certified: Inactive; Student; Supporting; and Organizational/Institutional membership categories would remain as

they currently stand. (See http://rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Bylaws/Bylaws_4-2009/ArticleIII.pdf)

Those members who are currently in the “Associate Member” category would have the option to move into the “Active Member” category in order to retain all current voting rights and privileges, with the added requirement of mandatory participation in a continuing education program (to be developed) or to move into the “Supporting Member” category.

Those who are currently in the “Certified Member” category would have the option to move into the “Active Member” category in order to retain all current voting rights and privileges. Those wishing *not* to be voting members would have the option to move into the “Supporting Member” category but would still be required to participate in the Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) in order to maintain certification. Those “Certified Members” who opt to move into the “Active Member” category would fulfill the eligibility requirement of participation in the mandatory continuing education program by continuing to participate in the CMP.

Conclusion and Next Steps

While survey data are extremely helpful, it must be noted that not all survey instruments present the raw data in the same way. At this time, the survey tools available to RID do not allow for the possibility of determining correlations among variables. The data received was reported in the aggregate for each question, not for each respondent. This limited the ability to determine the extent of the relationships among certain variables. As an example, while the results disclose how many certified, associate, student and supporting members participated in the survey, it is not possible to determine which categories of members, in total or individually, responded to any of the questions. In some instances, this was not necessarily important to know. However, with questions such as, “How satisfied are you with the current membership categories and associated rights, responsibilities and privileges as outlined in the RID Bylaws?” it would have been very helpful to know what the responses to that question were, by membership category.

The task force relied heavily on the narrative, open-ended responses to many questions as a means of gaining a better understanding of the numerical responses.

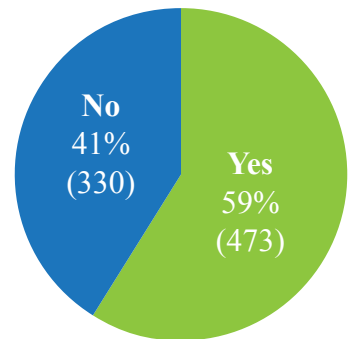
Finally, in reviewing the responses, it became clear to the task force that certain questions were unclear to the members and that others should have had follow-up questions. Notwithstanding these limitations of the survey, the task force has found the information to be very helpful, not only for itself but for other committees, task forces, the RID Board of Directors and the RID staff. Accordingly, much of the information gleaned through the survey has been passed along.

The SCBRTF greatly appreciates all of the feedback received so far. All forms of feedback have been invaluable. Hopefully, the task force has provided enough variety of feedback methods to meet the needs of those members who are not able to attend forums in person; those who are comfortable with self-generated feedback and those who prefer more of a

guided feedback process.

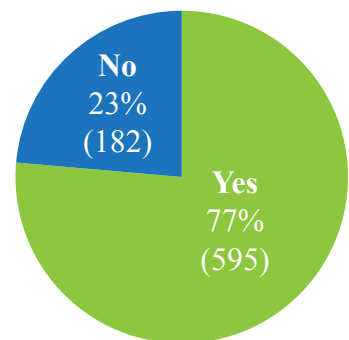
The SCBRTF has been granted time and space to conduct forums at all of the regional conferences this year. During these forums the newest working concepts will be presented, task force representatives will take questions and comments and gather more data. In addition, the task force encourages members to continue to communicate via e-mail at taskforce-feedback@rid.org. Through all of these feedback mechanisms, the task force hopes to be able to truly represent the will of the membership. ■

Should there be a limit to how long a non-certified, working interpreter can be a voting member?



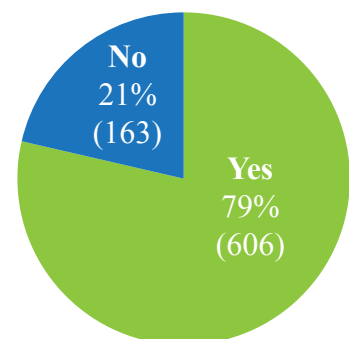
Total Responses: 803

Do you think there should be a mandatory continuing education component for non-certified, voting members?



Total Responses: 777

If membership was not required to maintain your RID certification, would you still be a member of RID?



Total Responses: 769