



**American Institute of
Aeronautics and Astronautics**

**Policies and Procedures for the
Technical Activities Division (TAD)**

Version 2.0

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Document Change Record

Version	Description of Change	Date
1.0	Reformatted prior version and updated content according to current practices.	February 2024
2.0	Edited to update 3G language	March 2025

1 Technical Activities Division

1.1 Introduction

The AIAA Technical Activities Division (TAD) comprises member-driven technical activities in the Institute through AIAA's Technical Committees (TCs). The Technical Committees (TC) are the strategic infrastructure of AIAA's technical activities. These committees cover all technical interests of the Institute. TAD's role is to help organize and coordinate the efforts of the various TCs to facilitate technical activities in support of AIAA products.

TC responsibilities include managing technical sessions at conferences, managing technical awards to recognize prominent members of the aerospace profession, and providing technical inputs to other Institute activities. TAD and its TCs are responsible for ensuring all technical activities are appropriate to and in the best interests of the AIAA membership and the aerospace industry. TAD and its TCs are also tasked with identifying emerging and next-generation technical areas in an evolving aerospace industry.

TAD has the overall responsibility, subject to the Council of Directors (CoD) and Board of Trustees (BoT) approvals, for management of TC activities including development and recommendations for policies and procedures relating to matters concerning technical activities, recommendations for the formation, merger, or dissolution of technical committees, establishment of technical working groups, and identifying TC members to represent TAD in AIAA activities requiring technical input.

1.2 Organization

TAD is organized by Technical Groups, comprising Technical Committees (TCs) aligned by technical disciplines, and led by Group Directors as specified by Section 3.3 in the AIAA Bylaws. The Group Directors are elected by the AIAA membership for a term of three years. Group Directors may run for a second term, which may or may not be consecutive.

The TAD Chief leads the Group Directors. The TAD Chief serves as TAD's representative to the Council of Directors Steering Committee (CSC). The TAD Chief is elected by the TAD membership (Group Directors and one vote per TC) for one three-year term. The TAD Chief may, at their discretion, assign one of the Group Directors or a previous Group Director to serve in the capacity Deputy TAD Chief. In this capacity, the Deputy TAD Chief will assist the TAD Chief in performing their responsibilities as needed.

As specified by Section 9.1 in the AIAA Bylaws, the Group Directors and TAD Chief are members of the AIAA Council of Directors and are voting members of the TAD and the Council of Directors.

Deputy Directors for the Technical Groups are appointed by the Group Directors on a yearly basis. Each Group Director presents their Deputy Directors annually at the TAD meeting held in the August timeframe. The TAD Chief concurs with the appointment of Deputy Directors and presents the TAD organization chart as an information item to the Council of Directors.

TAD maintains Subcommittees to execute various aspects of technical activities work. Example Subcommittees include the TAD Executive Steering, Technical Integration, and Forums Integration Subcommittees. The TAD Chief may, at their discretion, assign special duties to a TAD member for coordination or development of new activities or initiatives.



TAD maintains Liaisons with the various AIAA standing committees. Liaisons serve to coordinate institute business between TAD and other AIAA standing committees. The TAD Chief, in coordination with the TAD Executive Steering Subcommittee, may identify new liaisons or sunset existing liaisons.

1.3 Operation

The TAD may hold several meetings a year that include the TAD Chief, Group Directors, TC Chairs, Subcommittee Chairs, and TAD Liaisons.

1.3.1 AIAA Forums

AIAA plans, organizes, and operates technical meetings, some in cooperation with other technical and professional societies or government agencies. TC members are responsible for providing and managing the technical program content, including technical papers as well as special sessions (e.g., plenaries, panel discussions, and awards lectures) proposed by TCs through the Call for Content.

1.3.2 Honors and Awards

Technical awards honor significant achievements in specific fields of aerospace technical expertise. Each TC or group of TCs managing a technical award is responsible for maintaining an up-to-date charter describing the scope of the award and the process for naming the awardee. Management of the technical awards and charters is coordinated with AIAA's Honors & Awards Committee (HAC).

The responsibility for administering a technical award resides with one or more specific AIAA TCs as defined in the award charter. TCs are charged with actively maintaining the award in terms of nominations, currency of award scope, and selection process. The TC is responsible for reviewing and selecting the recipient(s) of their award according to the award charter.

The cognizant Group Director is responsible for approving the TC's selected award recipient(s). AIAA staff coordinate the recognition program for Technical Award winners with inputs from TAD and the HAC.

1.3.3 Public Policy

As the world's largest aerospace professional society, the AIAA has an important role in the national public policy debate. AIAA public policy papers are used to convey educational and informational material and may express opinions of and recommendations for action by the government (e.g., the U.S. Congress, executive branch departments/agencies, and state legislatures) to address issues of interest or concern to our members. They are a mechanism by which AIAA members contribute to crafting or implementing government solutions to problems.

Public policy papers may be informational or position papers. Policy papers are developed and approved for distribution to external audiences according to the guidelines set by the Public Policy Committee (PPC) and other applicable Institute stakeholders.

1.3.4 TAD and AIAA Special Initiatives

TAD and AIAA may identify special initiatives requiring the deep technical expertise provided by AIAA's TCs. The TAD Executive Steering Committee is responsible for coordinating any special initiatives with the TCs.

2 TAD Subcommittees

2.1 Executive Steering Subcommittee (ESS)

The TAD Executive Steering Committee (ESS) provides key guidance and continuity of activity for TAD throughout the year. The TAD ESS is referred to colloquially as the “TAD Exec.”

2.1.1 Organization

The TAD ESS is chaired by the TAD Chief. Members of the TAD ESS include the Group Directors, Subcommittee chairs, and the AIAA staff member(s) supporting TAD.

2.1.2 Operation

The TAD ESS meets routinely throughout the year at the discretion of the Chair.

The TAD ESS performs TAD business during periods when the whole of TAD is not convened. TAD ESS responsibilities include oversight of technical activities of the institute, including technical conferences and technical inputs to all other Institute activities.

2.2 Technical Integration Subcommittee (TIS)

The Technical Integration Subcommittee (TIS) provides a forum for the generation, evaluation, and conceptual planning of integration that will improve the AIAA technical activities.

2.2.1 Organization

Members of TIS include at least one Deputy Director from each TAD Group. The TIS is led by the TIS Chair.

The TIS Chair is appointed by the TAD Chief. The TIS Chair’s term ends no later than the end of the TAD Chief’s term but may be renewed by the incoming TAD Chief. A TIS Chair’s term should not exceed six years. A Deputy Chair may be named by the TIS Chair to assist in TIS operations. The TIS Deputy Chair shall act on behalf of the TIS Chair at their request.

The TIS Chair may establish subcommittees to conduct TIS business. Other TAD members, including TAD Group Deputy Directors, TC Chairs, and TC members, may serve on TIS subcommittees.

2.2.2 Operation

The TIS is primarily responsible for collecting and cultivating ideas to improve AIAA technical activities.

The TIS should annually review and update (as needed) TAD policies and procedures documents (including this manual), TC Chair training material, TAD Group Director/Deputy Director training material, and other documents as requested by the TAD ESS.

The TIS should review TAD organization, including group composition, TC charters, and recommend changes (as needed).

The TIS should also cultivate and facilitate the establishment of new technical activities that expand the Institute’s activities. This may include, but is not limited to, recommending new TCs to address emerging technical topics and disciplines, recommending elimination or combination of existing TCs, and facilitating the process for formation and approval of new TCs, new working groups, alliances with other societies, and new product areas. The TIS is responsible for facilitating the process for forming and

approving new TCs (the process for establishing a new TC can be found in the TC Chairs Manual, Appendix 5 “Starting a New Committee”).

The TIS is also responsible for assessing TAD health including the following:

- Assist the TAD Chief and Group Directors in addressing issues and establishing processes related to the oversight and general health of existing TCs.
- Aid in establishing new TCs from working groups and Communities of Interest (CoI).
- Helping ailing TCs at the request of the cognizant Group Director.
- Recommend to TAD elimination of TCs or relegation of TCs to CoIs when appropriate.

The TIS may address special projects, as requested by the TAD Chief.

The TIS Chair shall make a report at each TAD meeting.

2.3 Forums Integration Subcommittee (FIS)

The FIS will facilitate integration and coordination between TAD, AIAA staff, and Forum Guiding Coalitions on all aspects of AIAA Forums.

- The FIS will develop recommendations regarding Forum content, program structure, attendee experience, Forum planning and execution processes, and assist TAD in “speaking with one voice” on Forum matters.
- The FIS will advocate on behalf of TAD’s membership to ensure Forum content best reflects desires of the volunteer leadership and constituents.
- The FIS will improve TAD’s Forum support infrastructure including Forum Technical Chair (FTC) and Technical Discipline Chair (TDC) training.
- The FIS will develop talking points and/or briefing material for TAD to communicate matters of interest to TAD related to Forum planning. For example, this could include information about Forum venue selection, Forum themes, and rationale for deadlines.

The charter and organization of FIS will be reviewed annually by the TAD ESS.

2.3.1 Membership and Organization

The members of the FIS include one Deputy Director from each TAD Group. FIS members are appointed by their Group Directors. For those TAD Groups with a Deputy Director for Forums, that Deputy Director is recommended to serve on the FIS.

The FIS Chair will be appointed by the TAD Chief and serves at the discretion of the TAD Chief. The FIS Chair also serves as a member of the TAD ESS. The FIS Chair may be one of the Deputy Directors appointed to serve on FIS or may be identified separately from the appointed Deputy Directors at the discretion of the TAD Chief.

The FIS Chair is empowered to create working groups on specific tasks that are forum-related issues of importance and staff them with additional TAD members that may be comprised of current or former Forum Technical Chairs, Technical Discipline Chairs, or Technical Committee members.

2.3.2 Operation

This FIS should perform special forum-related projects, as requested by the TAD Chief.

The FIS Chair shall make a report at each TAD meeting.

The FIS should aggregate post-forum feedback via a variety of inputs, including survey results; Guiding Coalition, FTC/TDC, and TC discussions; and TC round table discussions.

- The FIS should aim to reach consensus on areas for improvement. However, consensus may not always be achievable. In that case, the TAD majority opinion should form the basis for recommendations to AIAA staff. FIS is empowered to identify the best way to achieve consensus or majority opinion; for example, FIS may use surveys, interviews, or meetings to assess whether proposed recommendations reflect consensus or majority opinion.
- The FIS should provide clear and actionable feedback to AIAA staff.
- The FIS should track how recommendations to AIAA staff are implemented.

The FIS should develop best practices documentation for FTCs and TDCs.

- This documentation should include best practices and procedures for abstract review, forum technical session acceptance rates, and sessioning practices.
- This documentation should clearly identify roles and responsibilities for FTCs and TDCs, timelines, and best practices for a high-quality technical program.
- The FIS should work with AIAA staff to develop a calendar for each AIAA Forum as part of the FTC and TDC best practices documentation. The calendar should identify key activities and deadlines.
- The FIS should evaluate whether additional positions are needed for developing and planning the Forum technical program. For example, they may identify if additional positions are needed to review the technical program layout and identify when TCs should be coordinating technical tracks on similar topics.

The FIS should develop training and best practices documentation for Session Chairs to ensure a high-quality technical program.

- The FIS should communicate opportunities to develop technical content to the TCs (e.g., providing guidance on using the Call for Content to propose Plenary and Forum 360 topics and speakers)
- The FIS should help TCs coordinate new ideas about Technical Program content types (e.g., poster sessions) with AIAA staff.
- The FIS should be the primary Forum coordination body within TAD with which AIAA staff propose new Forum ideas.
- The FIS should solicit feedback on new Forum ideas from TAD Group Directors and TC Chairs and members and provide aggregated feedback to AIAA staff.

3 Technical Committees

3.1 Introduction

AIAA Technical Committees (TC) represent aerospace technical disciplines of interest to the Institute and its members. TCs assist the Institute in developing programs for meetings, products, and other technical communications in specialized areas of professional interest. The TCs provide the Institute with



authoritative opinion on specialized subjects in their prescribed areas of expertise. TCs are responsible for the scope, organization, and technical content of the meetings within their areas of expertise.

The TCs shall strive to serve the AIAA members who have a special interest or professional stake in the TC's scope of discipline, technology, and/or systems.

TC members are volunteers from their professional sector.

3.2 Organization

3.2.1 Technical Committee Membership

TAD and the TC Chairs must strive to maintain a reasonable balance in representation:

- from industry, education, and government
- specialties covered in the TC scope
- geographical region (e.g., U.S. and international locations)
- across career stage (e.g., student, young, mid-career, and late-career professionals), generation, gender, and under-represented communities.

Membership of a TC should be limited to 50 total members unless an increase is approved by the cognizant Group Director. By January 31 of each year, the TC Chair must submit a roster of TC members to the AIAA staff liaison and their Group Director. TC membership is from May 1, following the submission of the roster to AIAA staff, to April 30 of the following year.

TC members are appointed for a yearly term, as approved by the TC Chair and Group Director. Members may serve three consecutive, one-year terms (note: once on the roster, TC members do not need to re-apply through the application portal). TC members may continue beyond the three-year term of membership at the discretion of the TC Chair when any of the following apply:

- The individual remains an active member of the TC per that TC's definition of an "active member" (see Appendix A for the TIS definition of an Active TC Member);
- The individual possesses a particular expertise critical to the TC's operation;
- The individual is working on a TC subcommittee assignment that requires the individual's knowledge and/or background; and
- The individual is serving as Chair-elect or is serving as TC Chair.

It is important that TC membership remain vibrant with normal rotation of members per the guidelines.

Membership in AIAA is mandatory for all TC members and if they are not currently members of AIAA when they are accepted for TC membership, they have 45 days to join after they are notified of their acceptance. If they do not join within 45 days, they must be removed from the TC roster. If they are AIAA members already, their membership must be in good standing.¹

The rostered members are the only voting members of the TC.

¹ Membership in "good standing" means a member is current on dues to the Institute and is compliant with the AIAA Code of Ethics.

3.2.2 Technical Committee Chairs

TC Chairs are elected by the TC membership. Their term of office is limited to two years and one consecutive term as specified in Section 3.3.1 in the AIAA Bylaws. Most TCs elect a Vice Chair prior to the end of the current TC Chair's term. This allows the Vice Chair to work with the current TC Chair prior to beginning their term. It is a best practice to elect the Vice Chair in the same calendar year as the year the TC Chair began their term. The outgoing TC Chair should notify their Group Director when a new TC Chair (Vice Chair) has been elected.

On rare occasions, it may be in the best interest of the Institute to remove elected TC Chairs (or other leaders) from office. This decision may result from *conduct* violating AIAA's ethics and anti-harassment policies and/or *performance* related to failing to perform required TC Chair duties. The exact removal process is given in Appendix B.

If a TC is struggling to fulfill its chartered role, the Group Director will work with the TC Chair and existing membership to address the issue. Should this intervention be unsuccessful, or if the chartered role of the TC is no longer viable, the Group Director may recommend to TAD that the TC be eliminated or transitioned to a Col. TAD recommendations for dissolution of a TC are forwarded to the AIAA Board of Trustees for final approval. TIS assists the TAD ESS in reviewing TC health and recommends necessary actions. The TC de-chartering process is given in Appendix C.

3.3 Operation

TCs should hold at least two TC meetings during the AIAA year (May 1 to April 30). These meetings may be conducted in conjunction with an AIAA-sponsored conference, at AIAA Headquarters, virtually, or at alternate facilities provided by the TC.

TCs must maintain a charter describing the overall objective for the TC, its membership and organization, and operational expectations. Charters must be reviewed annually by TC leadership to verify they are consistent with current organization and operation of the TC. See the [TC Chair Handbook](#) for a sample charter.

TCs may be active in a wide range of activities including such as:

- Technical programming for AIAA Forums or external conferences
- Honors and Awards
- Developing technical Processes, best practices, and standards
- Publications
- Education and outreach activities
- Developing public policy or position papers



Appendix A Active TC Member Definition

TIS developed a definition for an active TC member. TC Chairs may use this definition to communicate expectations to their TC members.

TC members must be AIAA members (i.e., annual membership dues must be paid).

TC members must stay in communication with their TC Chair by:

- Attending TC and subcommittee meetings
- Notifying TC and subcommittee chairs if you are unable to attend
- Notifying the TC Secretary of changes in your phone number, email, and organization
- Attending the AIAA Forums or conferences your TC supports
- Being responsive to TC leadership communications

TC members must be advocates and champions for AIAA within their organizations.

TC members must participate and contribute substantively. Substantive contributions may be made, for example, by:

- Serving on at least two subcommittees/working groups or conferences
- Being a major contributor/leader of at least one of these activities

TC members “in name only” will be at risk of losing their membership spot in favor of active members

Examples of substantive contributions include serving as:

- Forum Technical Chair or Deputy Chair (or equivalent for AIAA co-sponsored conferences)
- Conference Session Chair (or equivalent for AIAA co-sponsored conferences)
- Abstract Reviewer
- Paper Reviewer for Best Paper/Student Awards
- Contributor to Aerospace America Highlights article
- Contributor to TC products (e.g., standards, policy and position papers)
- Liaison to other organizations (e.g., other AIAA TCs/ICs, other professional societies)

When the opportunity arises, TC members should:

- Submit nominations for new TC members
- Submit nominations for awards and member grade elevations

Appendix B Process for Removing a TC Chair

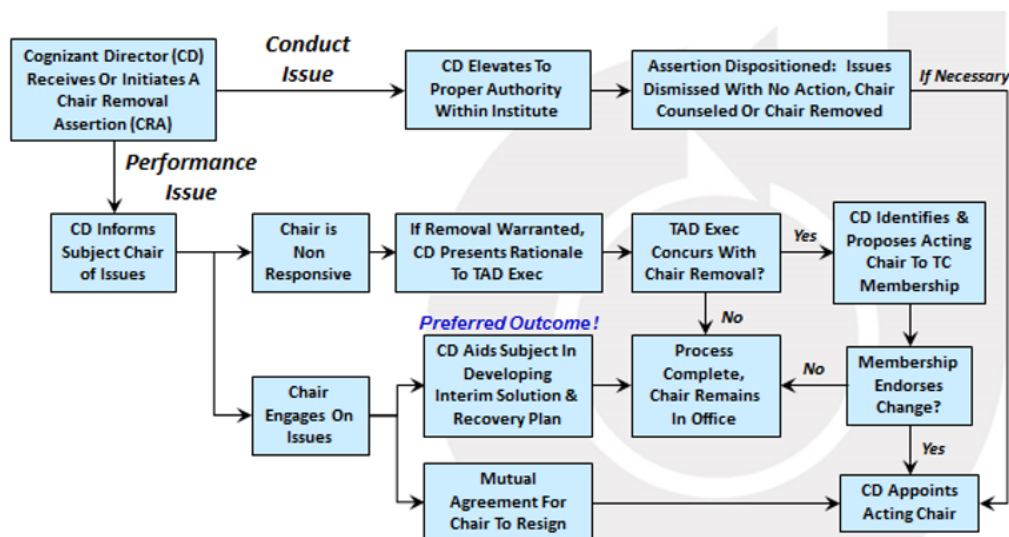
A proposal to remove a TC Chair may originate from TAD leadership (e.g., Group Director), TC committee members, or other vested parties.

The TC’s Group Director is the cognizant authority for dispositioning any issues and must take clear action in response to any assertion. Conduct issues are taken seriously with immediate referral to the appropriate body within AIAA.

Performance issues should first be addressed with counseling and measured improvement. However, if issues cannot be resolved and TC Chair removal is warranted, the following steps should be taken:

- TAD Executive concurrence (“Do you agree with this change...”)
- TC Membership concurrence (“Do you object to this change...”)
- If the TC Chair is removed, the Group Director appoints an acting TC Chair for the remainder of the Chair’s term or until a normal TC election process can be employed.

The process for TC Chair removal is illustrated in the flowchart.



- CD, Cognizant Director: Director for TC Leader in question.
- CRA, Chair Removal Assertion: Any written or verbal communication implying that a TC Chair is not performing the responsibilities of the position or is acting in a fashion detrimental to the Institute.
- Acting Chair: Appointed by CD to complete Chair’s term or until TC can hold a Chair Election

Appendix C Process for De-Chartering a TC

1. The Group Director and TC chair (or a TC representative if the Chair is vacant) assess the situation to see if the current TC can be re-scoped, renamed, or merged with another TC.
2. If the Group Director and TC representative decide that the TC should be de-chartered, they evaluate the TC charter for any continuing need for/interest in this represented discipline, or any part of it. This evaluation should include input from the other TCs in the Group, relevant TCs in other Groups, and relevant committees in IOD.
3. The TC representative completes the “AIAA Technical Committee Application to De-Charter”.
4. The TC representative provides the Group Director with an accounting of its assets and a recommendation for the distribution of those assets. If the TC manages or has input to an AIAA award, the recommendation will include how the award will be handled if the TC is de-chartered.
5. The Group Director and TC representative communicate to all members of the TC about the proposed de-chartering (including information about other relevant TCs) to ensure members are aware and can express interest in joining another TC if desired. The creation of a community of interest around the topic area is also a possibility.
6. A public post to TC Chairs is made on Engage about the proposed de-chartering so all TC Chairs can provide input within three weeks.
7. The Group Director and TC representative present the recommendation to de-charter to the TAD Executive Subcommittee (TAD Exec).
 - a. The TAD Executive Committee may request additional information before rendering a decision, including a discussion of options other than de-chartering that may not have been recognized/considered.
8. If TAD Exec approves de-chartering the TC, the TAD Chief presents the recommendation to de-charter to the Council of Directors.
9. The TC is inactive immediately upon approval by the Council of Directors. If the Council of Directors does not approve the de-chartering, the Group Director and TC Representative will work with TAD Exec to determine the next steps.
10. A communication is sent to members of all TCs about the de-chartering for information purposes.



AIAA Technical Committee Application to De-Charter

General Information

- TC Name / Group Affiliation
- Point of Contact: Name, Email, Phone
- Reason for de-chartering (e.g., insufficient membership, topic/scope no longer relevant)
- Current TC Roster [Upload]
- TC charter [Upload]

TC Focus & Activities

- Please provide the existing approved TC Scope
- Is there any part of the TC scope/focus of ongoing value/relevancy that could be absorbed into a different TC or other AIAA committee or be the basis of a new community of interest?
 - If yes, please provide details.
- Are there TC activities that would be of value to AIAA and the community to continue (e.g., conference sessions, short courses, STEM outreach, award oversight)?
 - If so, please describe.
- Does the TC have any outstanding commitments (e.g., to outside organizations or to other parts of AIAA) that they might be disrupted or inconvenienced by the de-chartering?
 - If so, please describe.

TC Assets

- Does the TC have any funds in a custodial or other account?
 - If yes, what is the amount?
- Does the TC administer any awards?
 - If yes, please list awards.
- Does the TC have any other assets (e.g., equipment, brochures, works in progress, etc.)? (If the TC is de-chartered, the TC should provide the Group Director with a recommendation in terms of the distribution of its assets to relevant TC and/or IC.)

- If yes, please describe.

Submitted by (TC Chair/Representative)	Date	Received by (Group Director)	Date