

EXECUTIVE POLICIES
DEPARTMENT of the ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT

JOB DESCRIPTION -- ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT 11-98

The Administrative Vice President (AVP) of the NSS is responsible for leading the Society=s activities in four general areas: Cave Management, Cave Conservation, Conventions, and Education. In all, 17 standing Committees, two Commissions, and two to three Convention Committees exist within these general areas. These entities are:

Cave Management: Cave and Karst Acquisition Committee, Land Owner Relations Committee, NSS Cave Preserves Committee (with 10 cave preserves reporting to this Committee Chair), Contemporary Cave Utilization Study Committee (i.e., cave registers), Closed Cave Database Committee, and Cave Conservancies Committee (with five NSS Cave Conservancies reporting to the Committee Chair).

Cave Conservation: Conservation Committee (with four Subcommittees and 17 Conservation Task Forces reporting), Mammoth Cave Restoration Committee, and the Cave Vandalism Deterrence Reward Commission.

Conventions: Convention Development Committee, individual NSS Convention Committees, Convention Registration Software Committee, Junior Speleological Society, the NSS Salon Coordinator, and the Congress of Grottos.

Education: National Cave Rescue Commission, Safety and Techniques Committee, Environmental Education Committee, and Television/Video Production Committee.

In all, about 60 organizational entities, including Subcommittees, Conservation Task Forces, Conservancies, and NSS Cave Preserves, fall within the AVP Department. The goals and functions of each Committee and Commission are described in the NSS Member=s Manual. While some committees consist of only a Chair, others have several members.

The responsibilities of the Administrative Vice President (AVP) regarding each organizational element within the AVP Department are as follows:

Staffing: When Committee Chair vacancies occur, seek the most qualified person to lead the Committee. Advertise the vacancy in the NSS News and on the NSS web site in accordance with Act 40-498. Interview candidates, and upon identification of the most qualified person, request the NSS President to move that person be confirmed at the next NSS Board of Governors meeting. When it appears that a Committee Chair isn=t performing in accordance with the charter of the Committee due to other things in life taking precedence, loss of interest, or general failure to get the work done, the AVP should discuss this with the Chair and try to identify both

the reasons why performance is sub-par and the things that can be done to improve performance. This is something that should be done with great sensitivity since all of us are volunteers, and in the end its only enthusiasm that keeps people motivated. As a last resort, ask the Chair if he/she thinks that turning the Committee over to someone else would be a good thing to do. If all communications fail: e-mails and telephone calls aren't answered, reports and budget requests aren't submitted, etc., then it may be necessary to inform the Committee Chair that a replacement is being sought and that they are being relieved of their responsibilities. This is something that is done infrequently since most Committee Chairs will let you know that they would like to be replaced.

Communicating: Work with Committee and Commission Chairs and other personnel to identify Committee goals and actions that achieve these goals. Maintain frequent communication with Committee chairs, usually via e-mail and also via telephone and personal contacts where possible. Discuss how the Committee's work is going and explore ideas for ways in which the Chair's work can be facilitated. Talk with Committee Chairs about their (and your) ideas for new initiatives and ways to accomplish these things. At NSS Conventions, try to have an AVP Department meeting where a general discussion of Committee work is held and where cross fertilization between Committees can take place. Encourage Committee Chairs to have their own meetings; e.g., the Conservancies Chair with Cave Conservancies, the Cave Preserve Chair with the Cave Preserve managers, the Convention Planning Chair with NSS Convention staffs.

Planning: Think about future Society needs that can be fulfilled within the AVP Department and be proactive in taking actions that can meet these needs. This may require making organizational changes that help meet the Society's goals, e.g., creating new Committees to fulfill unmet needs, modifying the composition or mission of existing Committees where this will increase their effectiveness, or eliminating Committees that no longer serve a need or whose mission has been accomplished.

Outreach: The AVP has responsibilities that go beyond administering the Committees within the Department. These responsibilities include: working and communicating with federal land managers having cave management responsibilities, attending National and other Cave Management Symposia, being an informal representative of the NSS at these meetings, identifying opportunities to enter into agreements and other relationships with government agencies and private groups sharing the NSS' goals in those areas within the AVP's responsibility, encouraging cave conservancies to affiliate with the NSS, writing proposals to implement volunteer agreements involving cave conservation, management, and restoration, writing letters to agencies and organizations that communicate the NSS' position on matters that fall within the AVP Department, and speaking for the NSS on matters that fall within the responsibilities of the AVP.

Executive Committee: The Administrative Vice President is one of five NSS Officers. Together with the other four officers (the NSS President, the Executive Vice President, the Operations Vice President, and the Secretary-Treasurer) and when circumstances permit, the immediate past NSS President, and the President-elect, the AVP is part of an Executive Committee that meets three times a year in addition to Board of Governor meetings. At the EC meetings, the AVP speaks for his/her department, presents a department status report, discusses matters that cross department lines, works cooperatively with the other Officers, discusses matters of interest to the NSS as an organization, and develops a straw man agenda for the next NSS Board meeting (usually 6-8 weeks away).

Budget Preparation: At the winter EC meeting, the AVP represents the AVP Department in preparing the NSS capital and operating budgets for the next fiscal year (starts May 1). This meeting usually takes three to four days, requires serious negotiations between the NSS officers, and is the culmination of a series of activities that begins two to three months earlier. Toward the end of a calendar year and about 60 days prior to the winter EC meeting, the NSS officers send out a request to all of their Committees requesting a budget submission for the upcoming fiscal year. Committee Heads are asked to submit up to three budget requests, along with a justification for each. These requests are for an amount of money sufficient to fund the Committee=s work over the next fiscal year (a Anominal≡ budget), the minimum amount of money needed to accomplish the Committee=s work, and an Aoptimal≡ budget: the amount that the Committee could spend to meet all of its goals and programs if lots of money were available. The AVP submits those Committee budget requests that he/she feels are most appropriate and realistic to the NSS Secretary-Treasurer and following an iterative process in which all of the Officers can comment on the budget requests, the winter EC budget meeting takes place and final budgets are prepared. A key responsibility of the AVP (and all NSS officers) is to communicate with Committee heads and to request their budget inputs and rationale for the requests. Failure to submit a budget request by a Committee Chair may be an indication of a lack of commitment to the position and is a cause for some serious discussions with that person.

Although the AVP Department contains the largest number of organizational entities in the NSS Departments and thus, the largest number of budget requests, the AVP budget is smaller than that of the other officers. The reasons for this are: (a) the major cost centers in the NSS (publications and the NSS office), are the responsibilities of the EVP and OVP respectively, and (b) the largest cost centers within the AVP Department: the NCRC budget and the NSS Convention budgets, are off line items, prepared by NCRC and the individual Convention Committees.

Following the winter EC meeting, the Secretary-Treasurer assembles the agreed upon budget requests for all Departments and at the Spring BOG meeting, the NSS President presents the Capital and Operating budgets to the entire BOG for review, modifications, and approval. Upon approval, the AVP notifies each Committee Chair of what their budgets are for the coming fiscal year. The AVP also reminds them to

periodically submit their requests for expense reimbursements to the NSS Office and to not wait until the end of the Fiscal Year (April 30) to do this.

NSS Board of Governors: The NSS Board of Governors consists of twelve Directors, elected by the membership to three year terms and the five Officers, elected by the Directors to one year terms. The BOG meets three times each year; once at the NSS Convention (in two all-day sessions), once in the fall, and once in the spring.

As a member of the BOG, the AVP has several responsibilities. He/she must keep the rest of the BOG informed of developments in the AVP Department as the year progresses. This is usually done via e-mail and gives the rest of the BOG a heads-up on things that affects the NSS= interests and that may be brought up by the AVP at upcoming BOG meetings: problems within a Committee, opportunities for new initiatives, etc. The AVP represents the Department at BOG meetings and in this capacity, introduces motions that have a bearing on the Department. (As with all BOG members, the AVP can also place any responsible motion on the agenda that he/she feels is germane to the Society=s business). Motions may be written by the AVP or Committee Chairs and others in the AVP Department and submitted to the AVP for placement on the BOG meeting agenda. The AVP in turn, reviews the motions to be submitted for consistency with the NSS Constitution, By-Laws, and Acts and sends the motions to the NSS President in sufficient time to be included in the agenda for the next BOG meeting. At the BOG meeting, the AVP speaks to these motions, votes, contributes to the general debate on all motions, and acts as a proponent for the AVP Department budget.

Sixty days prior to each BOG meeting, the AVP sends a message to all Committees and Commissions in the Department asking for a report on their activities. These reports follow a fairly standardized format in which the progress made (things done) since the last report are described, plans for the future are given, and any problem areas worthy of the Board=s attention are also described. Upon receipt of these Committee reports, the AVP assembles them into an AVP Department report to the BOG, adding whatever comments he/she feels are useful and also including a summary of the AVP=s activities as well. This report is the principal means of communication between each Committee/Commission Chair and the NSS Officers and Directors and all Committee and Commission Chairs are strongly urged to prepare these tri-annual reports. Consistent failure to do so is a serious matter and is a cause for written reminders, telephone conversations, and as a last resort, discussions with the Committee Chairs involved about their commitment to carrying out their responsibilities.

Thirty days prior to the BOG meeting, the AVP sends this report to all BOG members, to all contributing Committee and Commission Chairs, and to the person responsible for placing the report on the NSS web site in order that all NSS members can read it. Finally, at the BOG meeting the AVP is expected to answer questions raised by the other members of the Board about the content of the report.

1. Educational Grant/Loan Program Administration 2-88
This policy was deleted July 2001

2. NSS Convention Registration Nos. 1 & 2 4-93
No. 1 and No. 2 registrations for the upcoming year's NSS Convention shall be auctioned at the previous NSS Auction and the proceeds shall be given to the Convention Committee for the upcoming Convention.