

The Role, Remit and Membership of PACTS Working Parties

Updated July 2017

1. Structure

The work of the PACTS Board and Secretariat is supported by technical working parties which address transport safety in aviation, rail and road. There are currently five working parties:

- Aviation Safety
- Rail Safety
- Road Environment
- Road User Behaviour
- Vehicle Design.

The working parties normally meet three times a year. A report of their discussions is circulated to each of the PACTS Members meetings (also three times a year) in order to inform members. A report from each of the working parties on the year is also included in the Annual Review sent to all members and used to inform potential members and others about PACTS' work.

Joint meetings of working parties are held when the occasion arises. Since 2013 the three road safety working parties have met on the same day in the same location, preceded or followed by a joint "themed" meeting. Meetings may, however, be held separately.

Meetings normally include

- a talk and discussion led by a member or guest with specialist knowledge
- a business section (see below).

Where appropriate, working party discussions are conducted on the Chatham House rule – i.e. statements and conclusions may be recorded but are not attributed to individuals. This is unusual.

2. Role and remit

Members of the working parties act in a voluntary capacity, bringing expertise and knowledge to inform PACTS' policy statements and responses to consultations. The meetings also provide an opportunity for those involved to keep abreast of policy developments at a national level. In particular, to assist PACTS with:

- identifying priorities for PACTS to focus on
- responding to consultations
- producing policy statements and technical notes.

PACTS secretariat will endeavour to update working party members on PACTS' activities and news from Parliament and Government.

The working parties require a significant effort from members and PACTS staff. It is therefore important that they are productive.

3. Chair

The intention is that the working parties will be chaired by an independent figure of standing within the transport safety sector. Generally speaking, this is likely to be someone from an academic or professional background or retired civil servant.

The Working Party (WP) Chairs are the main link between PACTS and the Membership and aim to make the work of the WPs relevant to both PACTS and the Membership. The Chair will normally decide the agenda for the WP meetings in consultation with the Executive Director. The agenda will often include new relevant research or a topic of current interest. The meetings will also gather the Membership's view about current issues of interest to PACTS.

4. Membership

Membership of the working parties is by application and invitation. It is important that the working parties reflect the broad nature of PACTS' membership and are not over-represented by specific sectors or interests.

Anyone wishing to join a working party is asked to apply to the Executive Director, outlining what they will bring to the meetings. This is then discussed with the chair of the working party and the application endorsed or rejected.

It is also important that working parties do not become so big that the proceedings of the meeting become unmanageable. It may, therefore, on some occasions be necessary to restrict membership to ensure that this does not occur.

Membership of a working party is a benefit of PACTS membership and only organisations or individuals in membership of PACTS can apply to join a working party. Prospective members of PACTS may be invited to attend a working party meeting in order to see how PACTS works and what it offers.

The chair and PACTS retain the right to co-opt non-members on a permanent or temporary basis if there is a gap in knowledge or practice within the working party when an issue is under consideration. They may also invite observers where this is of benefit to PACTS.

Government departments or agencies may also be invited to attend the working party meetings on an observer basis. Again this may be on a one-off or permanent arrangement.

PACTS trustees / non-executive directors may attend working party meetings.

The chairs of the working parties are ex-officio members of the PACTS Policy & Research Committee. This is to ensure coordination of the policy and technical activities, and a link for reporting to/from the Board.

5. Aviation Safety Working Party

The Aviation Safety Working Party operates differently to the others. Under a Memorandum of Understanding, members of the Air Safety Group (an independent body) meet at Westminster under the auspices of the PACTS Aviation Safety Working Party. These meetings are typically open meetings to which MPs, peers and other experts in aviation safety are invited.