

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

COGSO	Council of Government School Organisations. The Council is made up of all schools affiliated with COGSO.
COGSO Regions	The six Regions of COGSO are: Darwin, Palmerston and Rural, Barkly, Southern, Katherine and East Arnhem.
COGSO Regional Council	Regional Councils are formed by Council affiliate organisations covering such areas as stated for COGSO Regions.
COGSO Executive	The executive is the management body of COGSO. Members are elected annually at the COGSO AGM. Positions include President, Vice President, Treasurer & 6 x Region Representatives to Executive
Region Representative to Executive	Each Region appoints a Region Rep to Executive at the first General Meeting after the AGM. This person can be the Region Chairperson or a separate individual. They are appointed to the Executive Committee and have responsibilities as such.
School COGSO Representative	A person appointed by an affiliated school to represent COGSO in their own school community, at regional meetings and council meetings, and can liaise with the executive.
School COGSO to the AGM who can vote	An officially appointed person from an affiliated school, Delegate at regional council meetings, COGSO AGM's and annual council meetings, for their school community, or organisation.
Affiliate Organisation	Is any school committee, school council, or other organisation connected with any Government school or pre-school in the Northern Territory and so constituted that effective control of the organisation is in the hands of the parent membership, and have paid the annual affiliation fee.
ACSSO	Australian Council of State School Organisations. The national body representing parents and school councils to which NT COGSO is affiliated.
DEET	The Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education & Training
DEST	The Federal Department of Education, Science and Technology

OBJECTIVES OF COUNCIL

The Objectives of the Council as set out in the Constitution are as follows:

- ⇒ to promote parent participation in education;
- ⇒ to work for improvements to the Government education system in the Northern Territory to the benefit of students in that system;
- ⇒ to further the interests of the Government schools of the Territory;
- ⇒ to present and further the views of the members of the Council;
- ⇒ to develop and foster relations or formal links with other bodies or authorities with similar aims;
- ⇒ to liaise with the Northern Territory Government agency responsible for education in Government schools in the Territory;
- ⇒ to carry out and undertake such surveys, studies and investigations relating to education generally in Government schools in the Territory as the Council may from time to time determine;
- ⇒ to be an advocate for Affiliate Organisations;
- ⇒ to do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.

INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Apart from the direct involvement of delegates and members of the Executive in their individual school organisations, the Council is represented on several standing and ad hoc Department Committees, these committees will vary as time goes on. See Committee Representation below.

Also, the regional councils of COGSO provide information forums and training activities for school council's members and parents in general.

COGSO as an organisation represents the views of parents and councils of government schools. COGSO, through its executive, regional councils and individual affiliate organisations, looks at all educational issues within the Territory.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

COGSO, as the parent body of school councils in the NT, has representation on a number of standing committees, working parties and other educational interest groups.

When expressions of interest are called for these bodies it is taken to the Executive who then decide on the representative.

Name of Group	Representative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Council of State School Organisations • Values Education Working Group • NT Teacher Registration Board • Active After School Communities NT Committee • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steve Carter Wendy Pelizzo Steve Carter Heather Banks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Literacy Week Awards Working Group • ASISTM • Asia in Schools National Committee • Asthma Foundation NT Advisory Group • NTCOSS • Middle Schooling Implementation Groups <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reference Group 2. Communications 3. Transport & Infrastructure 4. Curriculum and Transitions 5. Remote Schools • CDU Teacher Re-accreditation Working Group • NT MindMatters reference group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael Duffy Dick Williams Steve Carter Lesley Hosking Lesley Hosking Peter Garrigan Michael Duffy Steve Carter Lesley Hosking TBA Peter Garrigan Steve Carter

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Develop a proactive organization that will:

- ⇒ engender a higher profile for public education
- ⇒ work effectively with parent bodies, School Councils, the Department of Education and the Australian Education Union (AEU-NT)
- ⇒ respond to, and address important educational issues, thereby raising COGSO's professional profile and authority at the regional, system and national levels
- ⇒ reflect on COGSO's Strategic Plan, Mission Statement, Principles, Objectives and Strategies on a regular and ongoing basis

Assist in the smooth running of the organization by:

- ⇒ ensuring all reports are received by the COGSO office by the nominated deadline or advise the office if there is no report
- ⇒ lobbying for realistic timelines to be set for responses to other bodies e.g. ACSSO, DEET
- ⇒ ensuring minutes of Regional Council meetings are forwarded to the COGSO office within 14 days of the meeting
- ⇒ reading all material sent out by the Secretariat (office) as soon as possible
- ⇒ defining the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Executive Member

Develop effective communication habits by:

- ⇒ organizing an informal networking system between Region Reps and members to share progress and developments e.g. group email listings for region members and school representatives
- ⇒ encourage individual members to practice strategies that will assist them to access new knowledge e.g. participate in training / information workshops / seminar sessions, reading the materials provided, organizing notes for easy reference, making time to read reports, utilizing networks to gain information
- ⇒ establishing educational interest groups to take responsibility for items that need to be dealt with by COGSO

Executive members should endeavor to:

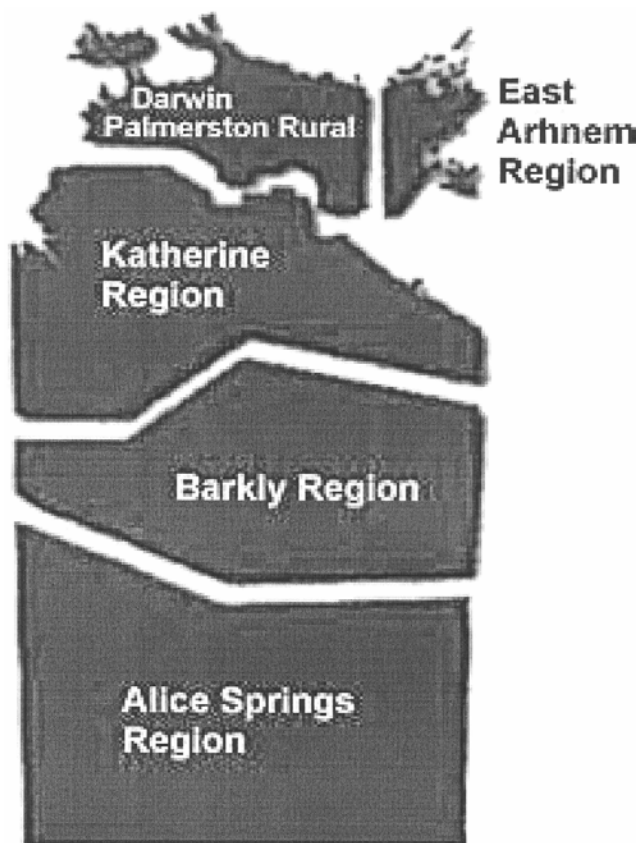
- ⇒ keep their Region informed of relevant matters from local through to national issues
- ⇒ act as a conduit for information to and from their Region and Executive
- ⇒ provide advice and guidance to Region School Council representatives
- ⇒ take a lead in discussing and reviewing the educational needs of that Region
- ⇒ nurture all school representatives and encourage / foster an interest in Executive

REGIONAL OPERATIONS

COGSO divides the Northern Territory into 6 Regions. These are:

- ⇒ Barkly Region 17 schools
- ⇒ Darwin Region 33 schools
- ⇒ East Arnhem Region 13 schools
- ⇒ Katherine Region 23 schools
- ⇒ Palmerston & Rural Region 25 schools
- ⇒ Southern Region 40 schools

Covering a total of 151 Schools



The Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) divides the Northern Territory into 7 Clusters. These Clusters are:

- ⇒ Arnhem
- ⇒ Darwin City
- ⇒ Desert Oaks
- ⇒ Northern Suburbs
- ⇒ Palmerston & Rural
- ⇒ Rivers

For a list of which school is in a particular Cluster, visit the DEET website at http://www.maps.deet.nt.gov.au/school_clusters_map.asp

There are also 4 Group Schools. These are made up of small rural or remote schools that are managed by a Group School Principal and support staff from one main office. The Group Schools are:

- | | |
|--|------------|
| ⇒ Top End Group Schools (TEGS) | 15 schools |
| ⇒ Barkly Group Schools | 12 schools |
| ⇒ Group Schools East (Southern Region) | 11 schools |
| ⇒ Group Schools West (Southern Region) | 13 schools |

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF REGION COUNCILS

The OBJECTS AND AIMS of a Regional Council shall be in accordance with the Constitution:

1. To advise members of the Executive on matters to be considered at meetings of Council and the Executive.
2. To discuss and co-ordinate the educational needs of the region and recommend a course of action to the Executive.
3. To foster community interest in education in the region.
4. To consider and promote the educational needs of the region.
5. To act on matters referred to the Regional Council from time to time by the Executive.

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

1. To advise members of the Executive on matters to be considered at meetings of Council and the Executive:

- ⇒ The Region Rep. will table a Report at all Executive meetings
- ⇒ Region issues and concerns can be addressed
- ⇒ Issues raised can be from one school or from a number of schools.
- ⇒ Regions can also bring issues to the Annual Council Meeting for debate.

2. To discuss and co-ordinate the educational needs of the region and recommend a course of action to the Executive:

- ⇒ Workshops for School Councils members may be needed
- ⇒ Region Rep would take to Executive
- ⇒ Support could take many forms, e.g. financial, administrative or having one of the Executive attend and speak at the workshop
- ⇒ Region may wish to have COGSO advocate on their behalf to the Department of Employment, Education & Training or other body

3. To foster community interest in education in the region:

- ⇒ Fostering support can be done in many different ways;
- ⇒ Attending School Council meetings
- ⇒ Talking to parents when and where you can e.g. the supermarket, coffee shop or at their homes
- ⇒ Generally raising awareness of the issues of the day at opportune moments
- ⇒ Holding a public meeting regarding particular issues.

4. To consider and promote the educational needs of the region:

- ⇒ Discussion of Regional school needs
- ⇒ Taking the issue to all schools in the Region could lead to gaining new resources, taking on new ideas or holding a workshop and generally raising the profile of education issues
- ⇒ Supporting surveys and research for educational issues

5. To act on matters referred to the Regional Council from time to time by the Executive:

- ⇒ Regions may be asked to gather information on a specific issue
- ⇒ Discussion at a Regional and School level will form the basis of an informed response with grounding at an individual level.

GUIDE TO COGSO INVOLVEMENT

Becoming involved in the Council of Government School Organisations is a simple process. Just follow these easy steps:

- 1. School resumes**
 - ⇒ Seek out new members
 - ⇒ Ask old members to resume positions or take on new roles
 - ⇒ Generate interest in the workings of the School Council.

- 2. COGSO Affiliation Invoices are sent to schools**
 - ⇒ School Council's elect to pay the fee
 - ⇒ Fees based on student numbers

- 3. School Council's must have their AGM before this date**
 - ⇒ Date set by the Education Act

- 4. First School Council meeting after the AGM**
 - ⇒ **Select a COGSO Representative** and advise COGSO office of the relevant contact details
 - ⇒ Region Reps take your issues / concerns / questions to the Regional meeting
 - ⇒ Add COGSO Report to future Agenda's

- 5. Attend COGSO Region AGM**
 - ⇒ COGSO Rep's from each school attend this meeting.
 - ⇒ Chairperson etc for the Region is elected
 - ⇒ Regional Representative to Executive is elected.
 - ⇒ Set Meeting dates for the year

- 6. Attend NT COGSO AGM & Council Meeting**
 - ⇒ School Reps and other delegates attend the Annual Council Meeting and AGM.
 - ⇒ Affiliated schools have voting rights at the Council Meeting and Annual General Meeting. This is where you can
 - ⇒ Have input into future directions and Policy for COGSO.

- 7. Keep COGSO Rep updated on all issues**
 - ⇒ Ensure that the views of your School Council are heard
 - ⇒ Issues can be actioned at the Regional meetings

REGION CHAIRPERSON & REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO EXECUTIVE

The Roles of **Region Chairperson** and the **Regional Representative to Executive** can be held by the same person or the responsibilities may be shared by two people.

Regions that share the roles must ensure good channels of communication are established.

- **The Chairperson is voted in during the Election of Office Bearers at the Region Annual General Meeting.**
- **The Regional Representative to Executive is endorsed during the General Business section of a Regional General Meeting.**

Both of these positions have certain responsibilities.

THE CHAIRPERSON WILL NEED TO:

- ⇒ ensure that Notices and Minutes of Meetings are sent out to schools in your Region in a timely manner, or delegate to Region Secretary
- ⇒ chair all meetings of the Region
- ⇒ liaise with school representatives, ensuring they have adequate knowledge and resources to fulfill their role
- ⇒ take a proactive role within the region on educational issues

THE REPRESENTATIVE TO EXECUTIVE WILL NEED TO:

- ⇒ attend all meetings of the Region
- ⇒ table a report to each Executive meeting detailing the issues affecting the region, and any other activity
- ⇒ report back to the Region on any issues that the Executive direct
- ⇒ take a proactive role within the region on educational issues

While these two roles can be done by one person, it may make sense to split them between two people. This will lighten the load for both and make the task easier to take on.

Communication channels need to be made very clear and regular liaison should occur between the two people to ensure that all responsibilities are covered.

The roles and responsibilities of School Council position holders are covered in the COGSO Resource Kit which should be kept on hand for reference. Copies are available from the COGSO office or online at www.ntcogso.org.au

WORKSHOPS

Having a workshop in the Region can promote COGSO as well as providing information and skills to those attending.

Types of workshops are only limited to your imagination and the needs of the Region.

- ⇒ Skills for School Council members regarding Governance or Management issues
- ⇒ Issues of parent or community concern can be addressed
- ⇒ The Region may also take ideas for workshops to the Executive for possible action.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Workshops can be used to provide the skills needed by School Council members.

Parents may not have had any experience of School Councils previous to their becoming a School Council member.

By holding workshops within the Region, parents will be able to gain or expand on the necessary skills that are required by School Council members.

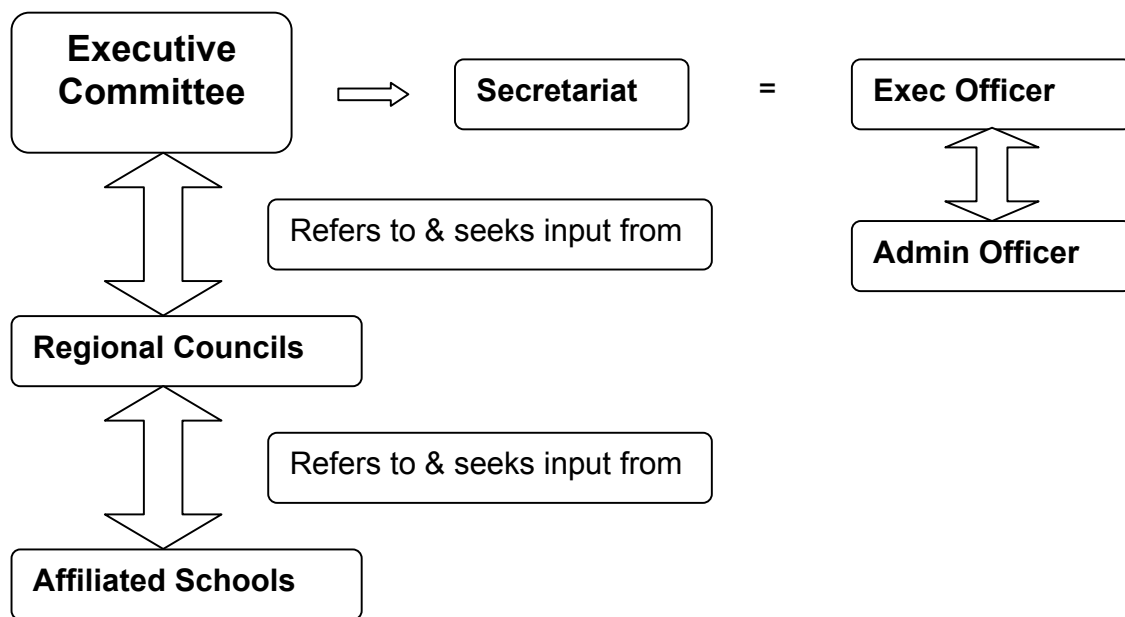
SECRETARIAT

The Executive consists of 9 members; the Business Committee – President, Vice-President and Treasurer – and 6 Regional Representatives.

The whole of Executive meets 5 times a year, with one of those meetings being the Annual General Meeting.

The AMG is usually held in conjunction with a Territory wide Conference.

STRUCTURE:



NEWSLETTER

COGSO publishes a quarterly newsletter titled the '**PareNT**'. This is circulated to all families of children in the public school system. Current circulation is approximately 21 500.

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