



Local Section Revitalization: A 5-year Plan May 2008

Approved June 8, 2008 by LSC

Executive Summary

The American Nuclear Society's Local Sections Committee and other ANS leaders are concerned about the number of Local Sections which become inactive. The Society's Strategic Plan (2006) raised awareness of the challenge to Local Sections and called for development of a 5-year plan to revitalize Local Sections.

In the spring of 2007, the Local Sections Committee (LSC) and ANS staff conducted a survey regarding Local Sections. Results were analyzed and discussed at LSC meetings in June and November of 2007. Some of the biggest challenges facing Local Sections were identified and possible solutions discussed. The LSC concluded that there was no need for significant change in Local Section *structure*. Rather, there is a need for change in the ways Local Sections *function*.

This 5-year plan document provides:

- * additional background information
- * a summary of the most significant challenges identified by the LSC
- * some possible solutions discussed by the LSC
- * a plan of action and a time line for action

The Action Plan includes:

- A. Sponsoring leadership training
- B. Improving communication from Local Sections to potential participants and between Local Sections and ANS
- C. Addressing changes in population clusters of potential Local Section members brought about by changing employment opportunities for nuclear professionals
- D. Identifying opportunities for collaboration between employers and/or ANS Organizational Members and ANS Local Sections, on activities of mutual interest
- E. Instituting updated and realistic metrics for Local Sections
- F. Providing recognition for both active and revitalized sections

Additional staffing and resources will be required to accomplish some portions of this plan. Business Case presentations will be developed with the first submission in the fourth quarter of 2008.

The LSC realizes that the most important key to successful revitalization and continued vitality of Local Sections is a dedicated, committed and energetic group of people in each locality, some of whom are willing to take on a leadership role. The comprehensive plan outlined and detailed in this document is designed to help provide the training, support, encouragement and recognition that will be required by hardworking local leaders.

Background

Inactive Local Sections. Faced with a number of Local Sections where there was no identifiable activity, in 2001 the LSC reviewed a proposed series of steps for handling these groups. In November 2002, after significant discussion in several meetings, the LSC adopted “*Steps Regarding Inactive Local Sections*” with the goal of stimulating and assisting in the reactivation of Local Sections. (Document available as a download at <http://www.ans.org/about/committees/lsc/>)

The “*Steps*” document identified an inactive section as one *lacking one or more of the following*:

- * identifiable or active leadership group (officers)
- * meetings (as required by ANS Bylaws)
- * communication with constituencies (Local Section members or ANS national members in the assigned geographic area). .

LSC Surveys of Individuals in Local Section Areas. The “*Steps*” document provided a procedure for conducting a survey in a Local Section’s geographic area to determine interest in the Local Section. Where it was determined that a group existed with sufficient strength to reactivate, a one year period was allowed for reactivation.

In cases where there was not a sufficient interest or where the interest group was not successful in reactivating within one year, there was a provision for a two year period of dormancy (with specific actions during that period). If reactivation did not occur in that period, the LSC could recommend dissolution of the section.

In June 2003, utilizing this procedural guideline, the LSC authorized surveys of five Local Sections. A survey was prepared and distributed to ANS members in the five Local Section areas in 2004. Subsequently surveys of two additional Local Section areas were authorized and conducted.

In two Local Section areas, response and interest were so limited that the LSC declared them as dormant. In those sections where a group was interested in reactivation, the interested parties were provided with contact information for the other interested individuals so that they could collaborate. An LSC member was offered as a resource to each group. Results were disappointing, as summarized below:

Local Sections Areas surveyed in 2004 - 7

- 2 - were declared dormant immediately due to low interest (Arizona and Iowa)
- 1 - was reactivated promptly (Piedmont NC)
- 3 - were given a one year reactivation period; they were declared dormant after the one year reactivation period passed without identifiable activity (SE Florida, Kansas, Chattanooga)
- 1 - remained inactive briefly before becoming moderately active (Austria)

These results supported the understanding that viability of a Local Section is contingent on a commitment of local people and that a Local Section will not flourish or survive unless the primary energy and motivation comes from local members. Outside support, encouragement, and nurturing is often required by a Local Section. But, without a local desire and commitment to have a functioning section, outside stimulation alone is unlikely produce desired results.

2006 ANS Strategic Plan. Action on a new ANS Strategic Plan began in 2006. The importance of Local Sections was stressed in several Goal areas of the Strategic Plan. A decision was made to address most of the Local Section issues as part of Goal D (Become more proactive in governance, management, and organization). The tasks were: (1) assess the needs at Local Section level, (2) evaluate current structure for Local Sections and analyze possible need to restructure, and (3) develop a five year plan for revitalization.

At that point, further surveys of individual Local Sections were put on hold.

2007 Survey Regarding Local Sections. In March 2007, a survey was designed assess the needs of Local Sections. ANS staff and the LSC leadership began developing content for the survey questions. ANS engaged the professional services of Marketing Assistance & Research Solutions at Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN, to help in preparing the survey and analyzing the results.

Invitations to participate in the survey were sent via electronic communication to all non-student ANS members in the U.S. Those members without email were sent a printed copy of the survey. In addition, the leaders of Local Sections were asked to provide Local Section members with information that enabled them to participate in the survey. (Local Sections may have members who are not national ANS members.)

More than 825 people responded to the “Survey Regarding Local Sections.” Of the respondents, 51% were members at both the national and local levels, 42% were only national members, and about 6% were members only at a Local Section. (2007 Survey results and analysis are available as downloadable attachments to the June 2007 LSC minutes and are found at <http://www.ans.org/about/committees/lsc/>)

In June 2007, the LSC reviewed an analysis of the survey results. Some key findings were:

- * Nearly 2/3 of ANS National members responding to the survey do not participate in Local Sections.
- * Among “all respondents” the most common reasons for not participating in an ANS Local Section were

- “lack of time/conflicting family or work obligations” (42%)
- “not notified of meetings” (36%)
- distance to events (29%)
- “there is no Local Section in my area” (24%)
- No other single response category was chosen by more than 15% of respondents.

- * Actions of Local Sections that were indicated as most likely to secure participation by current non-participants::
- provide quality speakers and information about the industry (71%)
 - provide meetings/opportunities to interact/network with other nuclear professionals (57%)
 - provide technical information at a local level (47%)
 - allow me to participate through email/web-based communication (40%)
 - provide opportunities to do public outreach (39%)
 - provide opportunities to interact with elected officials (37%)
 - more emphasis on local issues impacting nuclear (36%)
 - training about how to impact elected official/decision-makers (28%)
 - all other responses together totaled (14%)

The LSC’s preliminary findings were that nothing in the survey results indicated a need for significant **structural** change to Local Sections. However, the committee requested additional analysis of the data to answer some questions raised during the discussion.

During the June 2007 meeting, the LSC also asked to provide input from the survey to Local Sections on a section-by-section basis. Subsequently, Marketing Assistance & Research Solutions was asked to provide data for each section with 10 or more respondents. Results and summaries were sent to individual Local Sections in November 2007.

Additional Analysis. The focus of additional analysis was on three areas:

- (1) reasons why managerial level people didn’t participate in Local Sections
- (2) whether there was a clear pattern by state or industry among those “not notified of meetings”
- (3) what factors ranked high for securing participation by those not currently participating in a Local Section (this data was to be broken out based on reasons given for not participating).

Analysis was completed by Marketing Assistance and Research Solutions. Data was provided to the LSC prior to the November 2007 meeting and posted on the LSC’s web page.

Factors in non-participation by managers. For the 196 company managers identified in the survey as non-participants in a Local Section, managerial participation was impacted most by:

- * lack of time/conflicting family or work obligations (22.4%)
- * not being notified of meetings or events (15.8%)
- * distance to events (9.7%)
- * no Local Section in area (9.7%)
- * Of other reasons given, all were noted by 5% or less of the respondents

Lack of Meeting Notification. Regarding lack of notification, there was no clear pattern by state, except that “not notified” showed larger percentages of respondents in states with moderately active or some inactive Local Sections.

When analyzed by industry, there was no overwhelming pattern, although service, construction, medical, government agency, not employed, and national lab respondents were all in the 18-28% range for lack of notification.

Involving Non-Participants. The key factors in securing Local Section participation from non-participants varied somewhat depending upon the reasons they had cited for not participating. However, “providing quality speakers and information about the industry” rated highest among ways to secure participation, regardless of the reasons given for not participating. This response was followed in popularity by several others: provide technical information at a local level, opportunities to interact/network with other nuclear professions, allow me to participate through email and web-based communication. The exact rank of each response depended upon the reason given for non-participation. However, the responses noted above were generally chosen by more than 40% of the respondents.

Electronic communication was indicated as being of significant interest by those who are not currently participating in Local Sections. (When analyzed based on each of the 11 reasons offered for not participating, nine of the categories showed 40-53% of the respondents indicated “Allow me to participate through email or web based communication.” Responses from the other two “reasons” categories were 25% and 29%.).

November 2007 LSC Workshop Discussions. Discussion during the November 2007 LSC meeting focused on challenges to the vitality of Local Sections and possible solutions. Results of the 2007 Survey served as background for this discussion. Points raised during the LSC discussion are listed below.

Significant challenges for Local Sections:

- * getting people to make a time commitment (for both participation and leadership)
- * changing patterns of employment due to facility closure, corporate realignments and corporate acquisitions (these circumstances led to the dissolution of the Los Angeles Local Section)
- * demonstrating to potential Local Section members (particularly younger people) the value/benefits of membership

- * encouraging student members to move from Student Section activity to Local Section activity when they graduate and begin work

Possible solutions:

- * finding common purposes with which LS members can identify and commit
- * providing better “know how” to local leaders in planning meetings and running a Local Section
- * help Local Sections with succession planning
- * collaborate with other organizations to draw more people into activity; find ways to get non-nuclear engineers or non-engineers involved in Local Sections
- * help leaders try more creative approaches for meetings (such as brown-bag lunches rather than dinner meetings)
- * on-line participation

Improved communication (particularly electronic communication) was cited as a key element of any revitalization effort.

Conclusions. The LSC concluded that there was no need for significant **structural** change to Local Sections. However, it was agreed that changes in the way the Local Sections **function** will be required. The 2007 *Survey Regarding Local Sections* provided insights that should help every Local Section to function more effectively. The elements of the 5- year plan presented below are a result of those insights.

Proposed 5-year Plan for Revitalizing Local Sections

Revitalizing inactive Local Sections and continuing to invigorate those that are active will be a long term project. No single action is expected to be the solution; rather, a number of actions must be taken. During the next five years, the LSC will focus on increasing interest and participation at the Local Section level by:

- A. Sponsoring leadership training
- B. Improving communication from Local Sections to potential participants and between Local Sections and ANS
- C. Addressing changes in population clusters of potential Local Section members brought about by changing employment opportunities for nuclear professionals
- D. Identifying opportunities for collaboration between employers and/or ANS Organizational Members and ANS Local Sections, on activities of mutual interest
- E. Instituting updated and realistic metrics for Local Sections
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An Action Time Line is attached.

Program Elements

A. Providing Leadership Training

The task of revitalizing an inactive Local Section is expected to be challenging. The work will require support for local leaders in developing old skills and learning new ones.

A.1. Supporting leaders working to revitalize inactive sections. At the November 2007 meeting, the LSC approved a Business Case plan to provide support and encouragement to selected Local Section leaders working to revitalize a local group. Under the plan these leaders will:

- * Attend a national meeting
- * Participate in the LSC meeting
- * Meet with an LSC subcommittee to fine-tune their plans for Local Section/Plant Branch activities in the next year
- * Work with LSC leaders to develop a succession plan to assure that other individuals will be ready to take over the leadership responsibilities in future years

The Business Case proposal was approved by the ANS Finance Committee and the ANS Board of Directors.

The Business Case provides for a waiver of meeting registration fees, in the first year, for a representative from up to two (2) inactive Local Sections and one (1) marginally active Local Section at the June meeting. At the November meeting, a second leader from each of these sections receives a fee waiver to attend.

Participation in the program can be expanded so that in year two there are three (3) inactive sections and one (1) moderately active, and in year three there can be four (4) inactive sections and one (1) moderately active section. The LSC will closely monitor the progress of each participating Local Section and provide consultation as needed.

At the June 2008 meeting, the LSC will be meeting and working with representatives from two local groups. One is from the Wilmington, NC, area, where there is currently no active group. The other is from Vienna, Austria, where the ANS Local Section wants to become more active and to improve succession planning. It is hoped that an additional group can be selected to begin its participation at the November 2008 meeting.

This program will continue through years one, two, and three of the 5-year plan. Any continuation beyond year three will be addressed with a new Business Case.

A.2. Provide Leadership Training. In order to help assure vitality of Local Sections, ANS will offer leadership training for Local Section officers/leaders. It is preferred that this will be accomplished through face-to-face training sessions.

The LSC and ANS staff will work together to determine content for leadership training sessions. Topics will focus on basics of section operation (membership recruitment, program planning, section management, reporting requirements). These sessions will be scheduled in several regions of the U.S., in conjunction with ANS National Meetings and/or Topical Meetings. The number of sessions and locations is to be determined and will require funding for meeting space, materials, travel by staff or other presenters, etc. Cost estimates will be prepared as plans are developed. In November 2008, a Business Case will be presented to the Finance Committee and Board outlining the Leadership Training program and costs.

A.3 Increase Participation by Members of the Local Section Committee

Appointed members of the LSC act as liaisons to Local Sections and play a vital role in exchange of information and in supporting the development of sections.

LSC members will be asked to communicate with their assigned sections on a quarterly basis, to gauge the level of LSC Liaison support required to achieve the goal of maintaining active and vital sections. Their relationships with these sections will be important in helping gauge the success of revitalization efforts via measurements based on metrics (standards).

B. Encourage and Facilitate Improved Communication

Results of the 2007 Survey and subsequent LSC discussions have made it clear that there is a need for better communication from Local Sections to people who are potential participants. ANS staff has also identified the need for better communication from Local Sections to the LSC and ANS Headquarters.

B.1 Improved use of contact information by Local Sections. Some responses in the 2007 Survey Regarding Local Sections indicated that potential members or participants in some Local Sections are not receiving information about scheduled meetings. In most cases, this seems to be because efforts to promote meetings were being limited to people identified as Local Section Members.

Analysis of survey data also revealed that about 2/3 of ANS National member participating in the survey were not participating in a Local Section.

All Local Sections will be urged to alter their promotional efforts and email to both Local Section members and non-members (a significant group may be identified from a listing of ANS national members in the section's ZIP CODE area, a listing provided by ANS Headquarters upon request).

B.2 Utilizing information from Secondary addresses. A second possible explanation for why people do not receive promotional materials for meetings is that their primary address is not within the assigned ZIP CODE areas, even though they may have a secondary address (business or work location, second home, etc.) that is within the section's assigned ZIP CODE areas. We recently determined that in the Washington, DC area, there were 50 individuals who fit this scenario. ANS staff will arrange a way to provide each Local Section with the primary contact information for people whose secondary address may connect them to the section's geographic area.

B.3 Participation at a Distance. Survey results also indicated a significant interest in possibilities for participation "at a distance." ANS Staff and LSC will be monitoring the progress of a new Student Section at Excelsior College, an online institution. This group will operate, for the most part, without the benefit of face-to-face meetings. The experience of this new web-based Student Section will provide ideas and insights about ways to involve people who are not within easy travel distance to a Local Section's meetings.

B.4 Communicating to LSC and ANS Headquarters. Communications from Local Sections to the LSC and ANS Headquarters are also important. Periodic reports, newsletters, or email, provide the LSC and ANS Staff a way to know of the successful activities at an individual Local Section.

ANS Staff and the LSC will work with the ANS Information Technology Department to develop a streamlined way for Local Section Leaders to provide regular reports, updates and information about successful practices to ANS headquarters and subsequently to other Local Sections. A web based system will be developed. If funding is required, a Business Case will be prepared for presentation late in 2008 or in 2009.

C. Address Changes in Population Clusters Due to Changing Employment Opportunities

Conduct Re-examination of ZIP CODE area assignments for Local Sections. Although the LSC believes that no significant structural changes are required for Local Sections, it is aware that changing employment opportunities produce changing concentrations of potential members for Local Sections. Geographic areas assigned to individual Local Sections by ZIP CODE, may need some adjustment.

ANS staff will re-examine ZIP CODE assignments in an effort to identify changes that may be appropriate. For example, the establishment of new corporate entities or new office locations may suggest the need for changing geographic assignments. In other cases, changing patterns of employment may have reduced the population of potential members in an area to the point where there is such limited potential for local membership that it may become necessary to consider dissolving a Local Section.

The findings and recommendations of ANS staff will be brought to the LSC for action to realign geographic assignments to Local Sections, as responsibility for decisions about assigned geographic areas rests with the LSC and the BOD.

D. Identifying Opportunities for Corporate Collaboration/Cooperation

Survey results in 2007 made it clear that employer support for Local Section activity can be a key factor in success. In some instances, potential Local Section members/participants may be reluctant or unable to participate unless employers support and encourage the activity. Corporate support and participation by company managers provides tangible evidence of support for Local Section participation.

D.1 Liaison/Collaboration with Employers and Organizational Members. Local Section leaders will be encouraged to develop relationships with a wide variety of nuclear-related employers in their area in order to secure employer support for individual participation in Local Section activities.

The LSC will ask ANS to encourage organizational members to support and encourage Local Section participation by their employees. In addition, Local Sections will be encouraged to contact ANS Organizational Members, inviting them to attend Local Section meetings or events.

D.2 Utility Integration Efforts. During 2007, ANS President Hintz named a Special Committee on Utility Integration to focus on reintegrating utilities into ANS activities. As a result of the work of this group, the LSC expects to see increased corporate interest in Local Sections in the areas where a utility is a major employer of potential members. The importance of the Utility Integration effort is highlighted by the fact that utility cooperation and participation during a recent Local Section membership recruitment effort helped the Mississippi Local Section add 60 new members, significantly more than prior recruitment efforts there. The LSC will coordinate with the Utility Integration Committee in efforts to revitalize existing Local Sections and establish new Local Sections or Plant Branches

E. Instituting Updated and Realistic Metrics for Local Sections

In assessing the success of a revitalization effort, there must be some measures or targets for achievement. Local Sections need metrics that recognize the unique circumstances in which they operate and help build the groups rather than frustrate them.

Local Sections are required to operate under Standard Bylaws for Sections containing specific requirements. The LSC has guidelines in place based primarily on ANS Bylaws and Rules requirements. The current guidelines for considering a Local Section to be active are the presence of:

- * identifiable and active leadership (elected officers)
- * meetings (as required by ANS bylaws)
- * communication with constituencies

These guidelines for Local Sections will be expanded as noted below (with additions retained in future years). The Annual Report form(s) will be updated to provide template space for reporting as required. Form to be updated by early July 2008.

- * 2008 - by August 31 -
in Annual Report submission - demonstrate evidence of ongoing communication with LSC and/or ANS Headquarters
- * 2008 - by August 31 -
with Annual Report - complete membership recruitment plan, (e.g., including a variety of demographic and occupational groups)
- * 2009 - by Feb 15-
create Rules to accompany Standard Bylaws and submit for review by BRC (if LS Rules are not already in place)
by August 15 -
Adopt approved Rules (report in Annual Report due Aug. 31)
- * 2009 - by August 31 -
submit leadership succession plan, including attention to involving younger members (updates required; guidance to be provided to Local Section chairs regarding content)
- * 2009 - by August 31 -
submit programming plan reaching out for at least one year (updates required annually)
- * 2010 - August 31 - with Annual Report -
provide evidence of collaboration with other professional organizations (ongoing requirement)
- * 2010 - by August 31 - in Annual Report -
provide evidence of outreach activities (ongoing requirement)

Review and evaluation of the above will be done by the LSC or a subcommittee of the LSC.

F. Provide Recognition for Active and Revitalized Local Sections

While the Meritorious Award offers active and dynamic Local Sections an opportunity to

compete for recognition, it will be important, particularly during the revitalization process, to provide some type of recognition for those groups which are making meaningful progress in revitalization. In addition, those Local Sections which are active and have been active for long periods should also receive recognition for their tenacity and good work. The LSC will do the following:

1. Promote through ANS News those Local Sections which are embarking on revitalization activities
2. Publicize through ANS News a list of Local Sections which are in “good standing” for having met established criteria (as metrics change)
3. Continue publishing in ANS News articles about Local Sections which accomplish interesting or outstanding activities (outreach, membership recruitment, etc.)
4. Institute the “Phoenix Certificate” for each Local Section which rises from the ashes of inactivity (more than 2 years) and demonstrates the strength to continue being active (given after success in a two-year period of revitalization); presentation in a public setting such as at an ANS national meeting
5. Provide visibility at ANS National Meetings for information about Local Sections which receive Meritorious Awards, have successful revitalization efforts, etc.
 - Exhibit space
and/or
 - Easel Displays in registration area

Summary: Program Evaluation

- 1) Milestones during the next five years will be based on the Action Timeline
- 2) Success of the Revitalization Plan will be assessed by
 - * number and/or percentage of current Local Sections (and/or their Plant Branches) identified as active
 - * levels of activity in active Local Sections (and/or their Plant Branches)
 - * emergence of new Plant Branches or Local Sections
- 3) The LSC will report on status of the Revitalization effort at each BOD meeting.

Action Timeline

Activity/Action	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
A. Sponsoring Leadership Training	x \$	x \$	x \$	\$	\$
A.1 LS leader attendance at LSC with fee waiver				new Business Case	new Business Case
A.2 Face-to-Face Training Sessions	\$ in Qtr 4	x \$	x \$	x \$	x \$
A.3 Increased LSC Member Participation	Qtr 3 & 4	x	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing
B. Improving Communication	Qtr 3 & 4	x	x	x	x
B.1 Improved use of Contact information by LS					
B.2 Utilizing info from Secondary addresses	Qtr 3 & 4	x	x	x	x
B.3 Participation at a distance			x	x	x
B.4 Communicating to ANS/Report System	Qtr 3 & 4 ?\$	x ?\$	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing
C. Addressing Changing Population Clusters ZIP CODE	Qtr 4	continuing	as needed	as needed	as needed
D. Identifying Opportunities for Collaboration	Qtr 4	x	x	x	x
D.1 Collaboration with employers					
D.2 Utility Integration	Qtr 3 & 4	x	x	x	x
E. Update metrics (gradual increments)	Qtr 3 & 4	x	x	ongoing review	ongoing review
F. Recognition for Active and Revitalized Sections	Qtr 3&4	x	x	ongoing	ongoing
F.1 Promote revitalizing sections in ANS NEWS					
F.2 Promote LS in “good standing” through ANS NEWS	Qtr 3 & 4	x	x	x	x
F.3 Publish news about outstanding performance in ANS NEWS	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing
F.4 Institute “Phoenix Certificate” for revitalized sections			x	x	x
F.5 Provide visibility at ANS National meetings	Qtr 4	x	x	x	x

x=action during this time

\$ = Business Case Submitted or To Be Submitted

?\$ = Business Case MAY be needed