

Abstract

ETHOS AND COOPERATIVE BEHAVIOR: AN EXPLORATION OF THE  
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AN ORGANIZATION'S IDENTITY AND ITS  
COLLABORATIVE REVIEW PROCESSES

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This dissertation explores the ways in which organizational identity actually functions within the day-to-day processes of an organization, showing how organizational identity trickles down into collaborative writing processes and what the effects of this trickle-down are, in terms of the document being produced, the workgroup producing the document, and the organization as a whole. Specifically, the dissertation examines the organizational identity of the Employees Association of the State and discovers how identity traits or characteristics influence the collaborative review process of EAS's newsletter. First I examine the public-sector labor association to discover its organizational identity through the perceptions of its employees. I then examine the review and revise processes of the writing group which produces the organization's member-directed newsletter. Finally, I make visible any connections that exist between the organization's identity and its review processes, focusing especially on the effects on EAS's ethos and on the cooperative behaviors of its employees.

*Keywords:* organizational identity, collaborative writing, organization studies



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This dissertation sets out to discover what connections can be drawn between an organization's identity and its writing processes. Specifically, I examine a public labor association, the Employees Association of the State<sup>1</sup> (EAS), to discover its organizational identity through the perceptions of its employees. I then examine the review and revise process<sup>2</sup> of the writing group which produces the organization's member-directed newsletter. Finally, I make visible any connections and/or disconnections that exist between the organization's identity and its review process, focusing especially on the effects on EAS's ethos and on the cooperative behaviors of its employees.

When I first entered the doctoral program, I was interested in studying how group or organizational identity was established, sustained, and grown through electronic media. As my interest in workplace writing studies and collaborative writing grew, my approach to studying identity's role in discourse began to change. While doing the required reading for my comprehensive exams, I read a collection of essays edited by Rachel Spilka (1993). The collection, Writing in the Workplace: New Research Perspectives, contains chapters by Geoffrey Cross and Susan Kleimann; each writer looks at the process by which an organization collaboratively creates a document. Cross's work examines the process of a Midwestern insurance corporation's creation of an Executive Letter to accompany its annual report. Cross identifies several factors that affected the corporate writing group's process, particularly in the review and revision stages. Kleimann studies two divisions within the U.S. General Accounting Office (now called the Government Accountability Office) to compare the two divisions'

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this dissertation, pseudonyms are used for the organization, the publication, and the individuals being studied.

<sup>2</sup> Lowry et al define reviewing as "[h]aving a participant or an editor read and annotate document draft sections for content, grammar, and style improvements (Galegher & Kraut, 1994)" (Lowry et al, 82). Revising is "[r]esponding to review comments by making changes in the draft that reflect the review comments (Galegher and Kraut, 1994)" (Lowry et al, 82).

cultures and their cultures' effects on their review processes. Kleimann characterizes each division's culture as having hierarchical characteristics or collaborative characteristics.

Later I read Cross's (1994) book Collaboration and Conflict: A Contextual Exploration of Group Writing and Positive Emphasis, which is based on his own dissertation. In his "Need for Further Research" section, Cross wonders if the factors identified in his study – factors that include hierarchy within the writing group, suppression of conflict, and serial communication among reviewers – "have the same effects in other collaborations" (p. 144). In addition, Cross asserts that "researchers need to investigate further the influence of culture on group writing," and asks "[t]o what extent does knowledge of an organization's cultural expectations determine the success of writing groups?" (p. 144). This dissertation is an attempt to answer Cross's call for additional research into how different types of organizations, displaying different kinds of cultures, allow their processes to be influenced by their identity (and perhaps vice versa). When I began to consider EAS's purpose(s) as an organization<sup>3</sup>, which seem quite different from an insurance corporation's purpose, I hypothesized there would in fact be differences between how EAS employees engage in collaborative writing and how Cross's insurance company employees engaged in collaborative writing. After all, I thought, rhetorical purpose is an important part of writing, so it stands to reason that organizational writing could be affected by the organization's purpose. Further, I hypothesized that a reason for these differences would lie mainly in the differences between the two organizations' identities. Between Cross's study and Kleimann's

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<sup>3</sup> According to Article II of EAS's Bylaws, its purposes are, "1.1. to promote the best interests and welfare of current, retired and future employees of the [state], 1.2. to provide information to the membership, 1.3. to provide a forum for the discussion of ideas and problems, 1.4. to facilitate communication among employees of the [state]..., 1.5. to promote the professionalism of the employees of the [state]...in order to provide effective and efficient programs and services to the citizens of [the state]. In the accomplishment of the above purposes, [EAS], with the approval of the Convention, shall be able to affiliate with like-minded organizations."

research indicating that workgroup culture affects the review process, my curiosity was piqued regarding whether / how writing processes and organizational identity are related.

Being a practical woman, I wondered how organizational identity actually plays out in workplace writing processes. Does organizational identity work its way into the everyday processes of an organization? More specifically, how would traits or features of organizational identity trickle down into collaborative writing processes? What might be the effects on the workgroup producing the document, or on the organization as a whole?

The organizations studied by Cross and Kleimann represent the for-profit corporate sector (large insurance corporation) and the government sector (U.S. General Accounting Office). However, I found no examples of studies of this type that focus specifically on public sector labor organizations, or on the connections between writing processes and organizational identity. This study is a contribution toward filling this gap in research by examining the Employees Association of the State, its identity, and its writing process. As Edgar Schein (1996) notes, “[o]rganizations both in the public and private sector have discovered that they are not efficient enough, given the levels of global competition and shrinking resources” (p. 235). Assuming Schein is correct, more research into public sector organizations needs to be done in order to assist these organizations, and the workers they represent, to become more efficient and more competitive. Such research may also help scholars better understand how the type of organization (for-profit, non-profit, government, labor, etc.) influences the writing processes undertaken in the workplace.

In terms of organizational studies, this study is not unique. However, previous studies of organizational identity have focused on the theoretical treatment of determining identity. As lamented by scholars like Philip Aust (2004), very few studies examine how organizational

identity actually functions within the everyday processes of the organization. None of the studies in a workplace that is a labor association. Schein (1996) argues that in order for researchers to provide the necessary practical assistance to organizations to help them become more efficient and competitive, research must be derived from “concrete observations of real behavior in real organizations” (p. 231). As suggested by Cross (1994), studying the writing processes of various types of organizations may provide insights into subtle differences in how organizational identity functions within those different organizations.

One of the linchpins of organizational identity, as will be discussed at length in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, is an organization’s history, or its temporal continuity. Before continuing with my study, allow me to provide some background information about the history of EAS. During the 1940s, when EAS was created, labor unions had begun to increase in popularity due partly to the enactment of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act. At the time, most unions or labor associations were private sector rather than public sector. Public sector unions, which represent public sector employees like police, firefighters, and prison staff, are regulated through municipal, county, state, or federal legislation. As of 2009, 7.9 million American public sector workers belong to a workplace union; this number represents 37.4% of all public sector workers (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010).

The Employees Association of the State was the nation’s largest independent state employees association, with 34 employees and more than 55,000 members, until its 2008 affiliation with the enormous Service Employees International Union. The association has evidently arisen organically from the desire of state workers to gain some political influence over their working situations. Around 1940, some highway and prison employees began to loosely organize in order to voice their needs to the state’s legislative body, the General Assembly; by

1945, an engineer was chosen as the first official leader of EAS. By 1946, EAS had approximately 3,600 members and had expanded from highway and prison employees to other state departments, including the Employment Security Commission and the State Treasurer's Office. The first EAS convention was held in January 1947 in the state's capital. The next several decades saw EAS working to voice the needs and opinions of state employees to the General Assembly, which legislates state employees' salaries and benefits.

According to EAS's official website, the organization claims many victories throughout the rest of the century. In the 1950s, state employees saw a 26% increase in salaries, the addition of five state holidays, and an increase in annual leave days. The 1960s saw another 28% increase in salaries and the advent of longevity pay. In the 1970s, salaries increased by 50%. Additionally, a state health plan was created, and there was a 30-year retirement and formula increase. EAS awarded its first scholarship and began its still-popular member discount program. In the 1980s, salaries were increased by 60%, longevity pay was enhanced, and the EAS scholarship program was strengthened. The 1990s saw another 20% increase in salaries and the newly-created Employees Political Action Committee's (EMPAC) first candidate endorsement. In the late 90s, EAS had an important legal victory, when an EAS-backed lawsuit resulted in the overturning of a law that had allowed the taxation of state retirees' pension benefits.

In the new millennium, EAS became more politically-minded. In addition to salary increases and an increase in the cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for retirees, EAS sued the state's governor to regain more than \$130 million of escrowed retirement funds. In response to a huge state budget deficit in 2001, the governor diverted money from the retirement system employer contributions to help balance the budget. EAS filed a lawsuit to prevent the governor

from using these retirement funds for any purpose other than retirement benefits and administration costs; the lawsuit demanded full repayment of the funds, plus interest. Six years later, in 2007, a judge ruled that the governor had violated state and federal constitutions. When the General Assembly paid back the entire \$130 million – but not the interest – EAS filed an appeal to get back the lost interest.

Other EAS milestones in the 2000s include the creation of the Member Action Team (MAT), the creation of the first Retiree Director, the rise of EMPAC, and the affiliation with SEIU. MAT started in 2005. The Member Action Department, which houses MAT, sends EAS employees into districts to train EAS members in leadership skills, lobbying techniques, and recruiting. MAT also organizes state-wide “lobby days,” when EAS members go the General Assembly building and meet with state legislators personally. The first Retiree Director position was created in order to focus efforts specifically on retirees, who most EAS employees view as a valuable constituency within EAS. EAS’s EMPAC increased its ranking from the nation’s 276<sup>th</sup> most-powerful political action committee in 2002 to the 11<sup>th</sup> most-powerful in 2008. Also in 2008, a huge majority – nearly 80% - of EAS delegates voted to affiliate with the large and powerful SEIU. It is around this time, in Spring of 2008, that this study began.

The history of EAS provides a backdrop for the rest of this dissertation. The main focus of the research project is the processes used by the members of the EAS Communications Department to review the organization’s newsletter. The newsletter created by the review and revise group, The Informer, is a 16-page, full-color semi-glossy published every other month. The audience for the newsletter is the membership of EAS, though according to the organization’s Communications Director the review and revise group considers the retired members to be one of the most important segments of the newsletter’s audience. The newsletter



contains several regular features, including a front-page piece on the issue of the moment, such as collective bargaining rights, lawsuits filed by EAS, and election-related issues. Other regular features are columns written by the Executive Director, the legal counsel, and the current President of EAS, who is a rank-and-file member of EAS elected by the membership to serve a two-year term. The newsletter contains articles written by the EAS employees and members, as well as photos of district events, such as employee award ceremonies, employee barbecues, and fundraising events.

The subsequent chapters of this dissertation will examine how the organizational identity of EAS has what Kleimann (1993) might call a “reciprocal relationship” with the review and revise process of the EAS newsletter, The Informer. Chapter 2 provides an overview of both organizational identity studies and collaborative workplace writing studies in order to situate my study in the ongoing conversations of those disciplines. In particular, the review of scholarship shows the evolution of the concept of identity from personal to organizational. Additionally, the review provides definitions of collaborative writing in the workplace and a discussion of the roles social context, including workgroup culture, plays in workplace writing. Chapter 3 describes the methods utilized for data collection and analysis, as well as detailing the types of data which were collected. Chapters 4 and 5 each present the actual data collected, as well as discussions and interpretation of the data. Chapter 4 establishes the organizational identity of EAS by presenting the results from an online survey of EAS employees, an analysis of the previous year’s Informer topics and their rhetorical purposes, official documents of EAS, and structured interviews with three randomly-chosen EAS employees. Chapter 5 examines the review processes for the newsletter, including my field observations, and characterizes the culture of the review and revise group. Chapter 6 analyzes the results presented in Chapters 4

and 5 to make visible the connections between EAS's organizational identity and the review and revise processes undertaken in the production of its newsletter. In particular, the chapter looks at the implications of these connections in terms of the organization's ethos and the cooperative behaviors of its employees. A sort of postscript concludes the study by proposing avenues of future research in the rich and fertile area of inquiry surrounding issues of organizational identity and writing processes.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP

### *Introduction*

Organizational identity and collaborative writing encompass fields as diverse as business communication, composition studies, management studies, social psychology, organizational behavior, discourse studies, and more. This dissertation draws from many of these fields in order to examine the relationship between an organization's collaborative writing and its organizational identity. Engagement with scholarship and research from a variety of fields illustrates the complex natures of both organizational identity and collaborative workplace writing processes. In particular, this project builds on the scholarship of Susan Kleimann (1993), whose work "The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review" attempts to "situate" workplace review in "a particular setting" (p. 57) and on the foundational Albert and Whetten (1985) article, "Organizational Identity." The primary purpose of this review of scholarship is to provide an overview of issues in both workplace collaborative writing and organizational identity in order to contextualize this dissertation's unique attempt to identify the interconnections between organizational identity, culture, and collaborative writing.

### *Organizational Identity*

Stuart Albert and David A. Whetten's foundational 1985 article, "Organizational Identity," was originally published in Research in Organizational Behavior. Reprinted several times since, the article is one of the earliest efforts at defining identity in the context of an organization. The authors attempt to produce both a concept to be used for self-reflection by the organization, and a "scientifically tractable" (p. 263) theory of organizational identity gathered from a nebula of previous scholarly work in, among others, the disciplines of sociology and social psychology.

Albert and Whetten (1985) characterize an organization's identity as "a self-reflective question" (p. 264) asked and answered by its members. They point out that organizations usually assume, rather than articulate, their identities until some force – a merger, a budget shortfall, a major policy shift, etc. – pushes them to answer "the question of identity" (p. 264). The authors assert that in order to answer the question of identity, an organization should use a tripartite set of classification criteria. The answer to "Who are we as an organization?" must fulfill all criteria:

1. The answer points to features that are somehow seen as the essence of the organization: *the criterion of claimed central character*.
2. The answer points to features that distinguish the organization from others with which it may be compared: *the criterion of claimed distinctiveness*.
3. The answer points to features that exhibit some degree of sameness or continuity over time: *the criterion of claimed temporal continuity*. (pp. 264-265, italics in original)

Subsequent scholars shortened the definition to CED – central, enduring, and distinctive. Albert and Whetten's definition is used in most theoretical treatments of organizational identity, and serves as the definition of organizational identity used in this dissertation, with one slight modification centered on the criterion of claimed temporal continuity; this modification is discussed later in this section.

More than a decade before Albert and Whetten's landmark article appeared, social psychologists were examining different levels of identity to explore intragroup relations, or relations between an individual's identity and his or her group identities. The general belief among social psychologists at the time was that by studying the psychology of an individual, they could also understand the group(s) to which the individual belonged. However, in 1979

Henri Tajfel and John Turner (2004) introduce a new theory of social identification (SIT), proposing that group identity is social and asserting that in addition to personal or individual identity, a separate and distinct collective psychology exists for members of a group. Tajfel and Turner (2004) see the definition of a group, in part, as “a collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category,” (p. 40) which can include religious affiliation, level of education, gender, and socioeconomic status.

In their article “Social Identity Theory and the Organization,” Blake E. Ashforth and Fred Mael (1989) introduce the application of Tajfel and Turner’s social categorization – a collection of individuals who see themselves as belonging to the same social category – to the study of organizational identity, marking an early link between individual levels of analysis and organizational levels of analysis. Ashforth and Mael argue that Tajfel and Turner’s concept of group membership requires the individual to have a frame of reference, namely a collective or organizational identity that exists outside of the individual, yet has characteristics desirable for that individual. Their definition of organizational identity is founded on this “psychological reality [which exists] beyond its membership” (p. 26). Ashforth and Mael’s concept is supported by Albert and Whetten’s (1985) notion that an organization can endure throughout time as an independent entity, rather than a temporally-restricted organization of particular individuals. Individual members may come and go, but the organization remains, if not stable, then at least continuous.

Subsequent scholars continue to examine the complex connections between individual or personal identity and group, including organizational, identity. Social psychologists Marilyn B. Brewer and Wendi Gardner (1996), in their article “Who is this ‘We’? Levels of Collective Identity and Self Representations,” further refine the distinction between the personal and the

social by introducing three levels of self: Personal, Relational, and Collective. According to the writers,

At the individual level, the *personal self* is the differentiated, individuated self-concept most characteristic of studies of the self in Western psychology... At the interpersonal level, the *relational self* is the self-concept derived from connections and role relationships with significant others.... Finally, at the group level is the *collective self*, which corresponds to the concept of social identity as represented in social identity theory.” (p. 85, italics in original)

The collective self-view can be further refined. Serena Chen, Karen Chen, and Lindsay Shaw (2004) refer to a *collective self-view* as personal qualities that are associated with group membership, like conservative Republican or, I would argue, dedicated state employee. Edward P. Lemay, Jr. and Richard D. Ashmore (2004) refer to *group identities* as characteristics of a group that may or may not be applied to an individual member of that group. For instance, an American could acknowledge that one characteristic of being an American citizen is voting, but that she herself never votes, or an EAS employee might acknowledge that one characteristic of being a part of the EAS organization is training members to lobby legislators, but that he himself does not like to talk to politicians. While Tajfel and Turner (2004) and Ashforth and Mael (1989) assert that the group must exist as an entity outside of and separate from the individual, other scholars (Brewer and Gardner, 1996; Chen, Chen, and Shaw, 2004; Lemay and Ashmore, 2004) see a complex meshing of the identities of the individual and the organization, in which personal qualities of an individual are associated with organizational identity and vice versa, even when some of the group characteristics are not applied to the individual (or vice versa). In other words, the connections between personal and organizational identities are dynamic and yet

somehow stable. These dynamic complexities may help explain why EAS's organizational identity is not seen as a stable, non-moving entity by its employees. As will be shown in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, individual employees bring their own perceptions and identities to the workplace; these individual traits influence workplace processes – like collaborative writing – and influence employees' perceptions of EAS's organizational identity.

The complex (dynamic, multilayered) nature of organizational identity is highlighted by “Organizational Identity, Image, and Adaptive Instability,” in which Dennis A Gioia, Majken Schultz, and Kevin G. Corley (2000) state that Albert and Whetten's (1985) CED definition of organizational identity has a weakness centered on the criterion of claimed temporal continuity. Instead, the trio argues, organizational identity is always changing and is instable. They offer the idea of *adaptive identities*, which allow an organization's identity to evolve with time. Gioia, Schultz, and Corley point to the example of a technology company: What it means to be a tech company will change over the next decades, so the company's identity must adapt to those changes in meaning if the company is to survive. Similarly, EAS's organizational identity – though still centered on enhancing the welfare of state employees – has adapted over the years in response to changes in, among other things, the meanings of “enhancing” and “welfare” and even “state employees,” focusing more on retirement issues and on gaining and wielding political influence.

The concept of organizational image referred to in the title of Gioia et al.'s article is utilized by Mats Alvesson (1990) in his article, “Organization: From Substance to Image?,” in which he introduces the idea of organizational image to the field of organizational identity studies. Alvesson defines organizational image as an “impression held by a particular [external] group towards a corporation [or organization], partly as a result of information processing

(sense-making) carried out by the group's members...[and] the fabricated and projected picture of [the organization] itself" (p. 376). Organizational image, he writes, is external and mediated, "through mass media, public appearances, from second-hand sources etc., not through our own direct, lasting experiences and perceptions" (p. 376); on the other hand, organizational identity is internal and is characterized by the perceptions of organizational members. Before Alvesson's article, it was generally assumed that by maintaining a strong, external organizational identity (e.g., Tajfel and Turner, 2004 and Ashforth and Mael, 1989), the identities and identifications of individual organizational members would naturally follow; in other words, image and identity were unwittingly conflated by scholars. Alvesson argues that this unwitting assumption is problematic; to counteract the problem, he proposes a distinction between organizational identity (internally-perceived) and organizational image (externally-perceived), facilitating the study of the relationship between the two. For instance, the now-visible distinction allows for the study of how an organization's external image can cause the organization to alter or adapt its actions or processes, actions which in part help define the organization's internally-perceived identity. The resulting organizational identity would be what Gioia et al. call an adaptive identity.

Jane E. Dutton and Janet M. Dukerich (1991), in their influential article "Keeping an Eye on the Mirror: Image and Identity in Organizational Adaptation," use a case study of the New York and New Jersey Port Authority as a platform from which to explore organizational image and its effects on organizational identity by looking at "the processes by which environments and organizations are related over time" (p. 517). The article is credited (Hatch and Schultz, 2004) as offering the first empirical evidence of how organizational identity actually works in a natural context. Dutton and Dukerich find that the negative image of the Port Authority held by the public – for instance, that the bus terminals were always filled with sleeping homeless people –



affected not only how the Authority acted, but how its internal stakeholders, like employees, perceived its identity as an organization. Once the Authority took actions to clean up its organizational image, in part by literally cleaning up its terminals, the employees' perceptions of the Authority's organizational identity began to change for the better. Importantly, Dutton and Dukerich claim that “[p]atterns of actions in response to issues over time create patterns of organizational action that in turn modify an organization's environment” (p. 518). For instance, the organizational identity of EAS depends heavily on its membership, who in turn exert a strong influence over the processes and actions taken by EAS in order to “enhance the welfare” of its membership / state employees. One of these influenced actions and processes is the collaborative review process of the writing group responsible for producing EAS's newsletter.

These very complicated (and complicating) concepts of identity – individual, group, and organizational – can be used to understand how the identity(ies) of small workgroups interact with, influence, and are influenced by the organization as a whole. Now that issues of identity have been clarified a bit, we will try to understand more about collaborative writing in the workplace. As in organizational identity, social context and interpersonal interaction play important roles in the process of collaborative writing in the workplace.

### *Collaborative Writing*

What is meant by the term “collaborative writing”? Collaborative writing (CW) is not limited to more than one person drafting text. CW encompasses a number of stages or steps, which can include planning, revising, editing, and reviewing, in addition to drafting, but not necessarily in that order and not necessarily neatly. For instance, in my study of the EAS review and revise group, I did not examine the drafting of articles; instead, I focused on the messy and recursive review process of the organization's newsletter. Because collaborative writing is used

in so many different disciplines, and consequently must be studied by disciplines which utilize various research methodologies, some composition scholars have suggested that a “common taxonomy” (Forman, 2004) should be created so that scholars from all disciplines can talk and write about collaborative writing more clearly.

In her introduction to a 2004 special edition of the Journal of Business Communication focused on collaborative writing scholarship, Janis Forman asserts that a common taxonomy is crucial for advancing multi/interdisciplinary research on collaborative writing. In the same edition of JBC, Paul Lowry, Aaron Curtis, and Michelle Lowry’s (2004) article “Building a Taxonomy and Nomenclature of Collaborative Writing to Improve Interdisciplinary Research and Practice” “engages in a dynamically negotiated process with representatives of the other disciplines interested in collaborative writing” (qtd. in Forman, p. 34). Lowry et al.’s purpose is to establish a taxonomy so that these strands of thought can speak the same language. They liken the current situation in CW research to cancer researchers from different disciplines (like medicine, biology, dietetics, etc.) trying to use different terms – the result “would certainly impair the interdisciplinary cancer research community’s ability to collaboratively discuss and treat cancer problems” (p. 68). So, they write, “Much can be gained by building on the strengths of each area, through a common discourse, to create interdisciplinary solutions to pressing CW issues” (p. 69). Because this dissertation could be considered a multidisciplinary study, and in light of the many possible definitions of collaborative writing, I will provide an overview of some of these possible definitions, paying particular attention to the types of collaborative writing relevant to this study.

For the purposes of this particular research situation, Lowry et al.’s and Jolene Galegher and Robert E. Kraut’s (1994) definitions are used. These scholars offer solid definitions for the

main activities undertaken by the review and revise group at EAS: reviewing and revising.

Lowry et al. define reviewing as “[h]aving a participant or an editor read and annotate document draft sections for content, grammar, and style improvements (Galegher & Kraut, 1994)” (qtd. in Lowry et al., p. 82). Revising is “[r]esponding to review comments by making changes in the draft that reflect the review comments (Galegher and Kraut, 1994). Revising is used over editing to distinguish this activity more clearly from copyediting and from the editorial process of reviewing” (qtd. in Lowry et al., p. 82). Both of these activities – reviewing and revising – are performed by the EAS review and revise group during the study.

Allen, Atkinson, Morgan, Moore, and Snow’s (1987) article, “What Experienced Collaborators Say About Collaborative Writing,” is one of the earliest and most influential survey studies in collaborative writing. The group undertook their study of collaborative writers as a response to what they perceived as the lack of research specifically focused on collaborative writing in the workplace; previous studies, they say – studies which include Lester Faigley and Thomas Miller’s (1982) survey of professionals who write and Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami’s (1985) oft-cited collection Writing in Nonacademic Settings – only resulted in “fragmentary and unfocused” (p. 70) information about collaborative writing.

Allen et al.’s (1987) study finds that forms of collaboration vary by group: all the groups they studied reported that planning was done collaboratively, as were revision and editing. The majority of groups – 10 out of 14 – reported that drafting was always done individually; “[s]ome respondents reported that attempts at group drafting produced only frustration” (p. 77). The most common approach to drafting, Allen et al. find, was for groups to split up drafting tasks according to areas of expertise or familiarity. Another common approach involved one primary draft writer whose draft was produced as a result of group planning; the draft was then reviewed

by the other individuals in the group, then revised and edited collaboratively. Had Allen et al. studied the review and revise group at EAS, they would have found a similar collaborative process: group planning, individual drafting, individual and group copyediting, individual review, and group revision and review, with various duties divided by expertise or familiarity.

Many other scholars examine the various stages and incarnations of CW. For instance, Odell (1985) studies the “collaborative planning of a document that is drafted and revised by an individual” (p. 250); Stephen Doheny-Farina (1986) looks at “individual planning and drafting of a document that is revised collaboratively” (p. 159); James Paradis, David Dobrin, and Roger Miller (1985) study “a supervisor’s assignment of a document that is researched and drafted by a staff member, but carefully edited by the supervisor” (p. 282). Rodney Rice and John Huguley, Jr. (1994) define collaboration as “any writing performed collectively by more than one person that is used to produce a single text; and...writing as any activity that leads to a completed document, including brainstorming or idea generating, gathering research, planning and organizing, drafting, revision, and editing” (p. 163). Rather than approaching collaborative writing holistically, each of these studies considers different stages of the whole process – collaborations in invention, planning, drafting, revision, and editing – any of which can be used as a locus for study. Using a word like “stage” does not imply, however, that collaborative writing is a step-by-step process; it is recursive, and each stage bleeds into others at different times.

Not all collaborative writing is performed in writing, however. Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford’s landmark Singular Texts/Plural Authors (1990) provides further evidence that group writing could – and does – take place in different writing stages (like brainstorming, planning, and editing). The pair define group writing as “any writing done in collaboration with one or

more persons”; by “writing” they mean “*any of the activities that lead to a completed written document* [including] written and spoken brainstorming, outlining, note-taking, organizational planning, drafting, revising, and editing” (p. 14, italics mine). These additions of non-written text as part of CW are important, because studies have consistently shown that much collaboration is done orally (Dobrin, 1985; Kleimann, 1993; Selzer, 1983; Spilka, 1990). This was the case with the EAS review and revise group. In fact, orality plays a large and pivotal role in most collaborative writing, as will be discussed further in a few paragraphs.

Some definitions of collaborative writing emphasize a role the group takes or performs. For instance, Deborah Bosley (1989) defines collaborative writing as “two or more people working together to produce one written document in a situation in which a group *takes responsibility* for having produced the document” (p. 6, italics mine). Allen et al. (1987) describe collaborative writing as “collaborators producing a shared document, engaging in *substantive interaction* about that document, and sharing *decision-making power and responsibility* for it” (p. 70, italics mine). Galegher and Kraut (1994) characterize collaborative writing by “negotiation,” “consensus,” “division of labor,” “coordination,” and “resolution of questions” (p. 113). These definitions take into consideration not only the actual writing processes, but the human interactions as well. Collaboration is not just that two or more people write or produce a document; true collaboration includes an interweaving of individuals marked by interaction and shared responsibility.

When a group works together over a period of time, particularly when the group members must interact with each other often and share responsibility for a work product (like a text), a distinct workgroup culture develops. Edgar Schein (1996) defines organizational culture as “the set of shared, taken-for-granted implicit assumptions that a group holds and that

determines how it perceives, thinks about, and reacts to its various environments” (p. 236). Social scientists Terrence E. Deal and Allan A. Kennedy (1983) define culture as “internalized values, attitudes, knowledge, and ways of acting that are shared” (p. 499). Lee Odell (1985) defines culture as “widely shared attitudes, knowledge, and ways of operating” (p. 250). As will be shown later in this dissertation, these shared assumptions, attitudes, knowledge, and ways of operating help tie together processes and identity. The processes of the group – its ways of operating or acting – reflect its culture; in turn, workgroup culture reflects the organization’s values, attitudes, knowledge, and ways of acting/operating. Schein (2004) argues that a group’s culture actually defines that group, and “once we achieve a sense of group identity, [culture] is our major stabilizing force” (p. 14). Therefore, it seems, a sense of organizational or group identity is first established, and the workgroup culture which then develops offers the group a way of securing that organizational identity.

Such is not always the case, however. Kleimann’s (1993) “The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review” focuses on the review process in two departments of the United States General Accounting Office (GAO). Though located in the same office building in Washington, D.C., each department displayed a distinctly different culture, which Kleimann concludes affected each department’s review process. While Kleimann does not attempt to connect departmental review processes with the GAO’s organizational identity, it seems counterintuitive to think that two departments with completely different cultures could both reflect organizational identity. However, the GAO is an enormous government bureaucracy which most likely displays a complex identity; perhaps both workgroup cultures do reflect this complex identity. Bart Victor and John Cullen (1988) point out that, “[t]o the extent that different subgroups within organizations have identifiably different climates, such climates likely

indicate the existence of organizational subcultures” (p. 104). An organization as large and complex as the GAO is likely to support the existence of many subcultures within it. EAS is considerably smaller – fewer than 30 employees actually work together in the office building – and so probably cannot support a great number of subcultures<sup>4</sup>.

At any rate, Kleimann’s (1993) study does offer evidence that the culture of a workgroup affects the processes and the products of the group. Kleimann identifies three main aspects of the review process that are influenced by a review group’s culture: “[T]he different cultures of individual divisions [in an organization] affect every aspect of the review process, from the structure of the process to the way reviewers frame their written comments to the number of written comments” (57). Three broad features characterize what Kleimann calls a collaborative culture. According to her case study of two divisions at the GAO, collaborative cultures

- Structure their review process using concurrent review, a flattened hierarchy, widely available written guidance, and stipulated deadlines;
- Conduct face-to-face meetings to consolidate and/or reconcile comments; and
- Use statements and questions in comments nearly half the time, emphasizing the negotiative aspects of revision / review (pp. 62-67).

As will become clearer in later chapters of this dissertation, these workgroup features can in fact be linked to organizational identity.

Social context has long been acknowledged by composition scholars as being influential for writing situations, particularly in collaborative workplace writing (Cross, 1994; Ede and Lunsford, 1990; Faigley, 1985; Kleimann, 1993; Odell, 1985; Paradis, Dobrin, Miller, 1985, among others). Geoffrey Cross’s (1994) work Conflict and Collaboration: A Contextual

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<sup>4</sup> That being said, later in this dissertation an interviewee named Tyler makes comments about the differences between the climates of the different departments within EAS.

Exploration of Group Writing and Positive Emphasis is based on his study of the collaborative writing processes of a Midwestern insurance corporation, to which he gives the name Auldouest. Cross's study focuses on the review and revise process – emphasizing the social context of the process – for an executive letter to accompany the corporation's annual report. He finds the CW process to be flawed, resulting in a rhetorically flawed document, due in large part to the strict hierarchical power structure of Auldouest and the silencing of voices from some group members. Cross identifies several factors, including many social factors, which contribute either positively or negatively to the review and revise process of the corporation's executive letter.

Like Kleimann (1993) found at the GAO, Cross (1994) finds that social context affects the review and revise process of the Auldouest insurance corporation. Many of the factors which make up the social context of the CW process seem to be related to the organizational identity of the corporation. For instance, Auldouest utilized a strict hierarchical structure in the corporation as a whole, as well as in the smaller writing group. This hierarchy was evident even in the physical layout of the building which housed the corporation; the three lowest ranking members of the writing group, including the sole professional writer, were housed on the third floor of the building, while the five highest ranking members, including the CEO, were on the thirty-third (the top) floor. The physical separation of the members of the group did not contribute positively to the collaborative writing process. In fact, the hierarchical structure and the separation of the group members made it difficult for the group to engage in the necessary social interactions which help construct writing.

The idea that writing is socially constructed is not new. Gregory Clark (1990), in Dialogue, Dialectic, and Conversation: A Social Perspective on the Function of Writing, characterizes the collaboration between readers and writers as “coparticipants in the perpetual



process of constructing the common knowledge that will support their collective life” (p. 10). Communication itself is a collaboration that makes meaning which can be collectively held; in fact, Clark asserts, “writers and readers use their ongoing exchange of texts collaboratively to construct their collectivity” (pp. 10-11). He believes that “embedded in the acts of reading and writing are fundamental human interactions, interactions that determine the direction of our common experience” (p. 6). Charles Bazerman and James Paradis (1991), in the introduction to their book Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Writing in Professional Communities, go even further than Clark. Writing is not only a socially constructed action, but is actually a socially constructive one; “[t]exts are causal dynamic entities” (p. 7), implying that texts help “cause” social context. “Textual Dynamics” refers to the idea that written discourse is produced by a complex of social, cognitive, material, and rhetorical activities. In other words, interactions between group members and between group members and the text (that is, collaboration) help produce social knowledge. Collaboration helps create a collective life.

By definition, collaborative writing requires that group members interact with each other, often in a variety of ways. For instance, while the members of the EAS review and revise group did interact through written text, like margin comments, the bulk of their process used spoken text, or what I refer to as “oral exchanges.” Many scholars have found that interaction among writers comes in different forms. Jack Selzer (1983) uses the term “communal brainstorming” (p. 178) to name the “formal and informal conversations” which take place during all phases of collaborative writing, but especially during planning. Faigley and Miller’s (1982) survey research indicates that “some sort of human interaction may be important to the production of a written text” (qtd. in Odell, 1985, p. 250). Clark (1990) characterizes the process of “discursive

exchange” with the terms “dialogue,” “dialectic,” and “conversation.” My observation of EAS’s review and revise group indicates that in their case at least, near-constant interaction between the core group members, usually in the form of oral exchanges, was crucial for their process. These interactions make up a large and important part of this study.

Rachel Spilka, with a nod to Walter Ong, names these oral exchanges with a general term, “orality.” In her article “Orality and Literacy in the Workplace,” Spilka (1990) defines orality as conversation and spoken messages, as well as written forms which resemble speech (like emails or comments made in the margins of documents); literacy refers to written materials (like drafts). She found that in the most rhetorically successful situations she observed, orality played at least four significant roles in the collaborative composing process: Orality was the central means of analyzing multiple audiences, adapting discourse to multiple audiences, fulfilling rhetorical and social goals, and building and sustaining corporate culture. Overall, Spilka comments that not orally soliciting and listening to others’ viewpoints made documents weak in terms of purpose, audience, and cultural contexts. The EAS review and revise group used orality, or oral exchanges, to negotiate with each other to resolve revision suggestions. Additionally, their oral exchanges seemed to provide a mechanism for flattening the hierarchy between group members. Many of their exchanges were based on soliciting advice from other group members and from written guidance like dictionaries or style guides. As will be discussed in a later chapter, their oral exchanges provide insights into how the group’s culture is manifested in group actions.

### *Chapter Conclusion*

Three important, and useful, insights arise from the review of scholarship in the areas of collaborative writing and organizational identity. First, collaborative writing in the workplace is

a fact of life and happens at different types of workplaces, including academic, governmental, and corporate. Second, collaborative workplace writing occurs within a social context; this context influences both writing and writer. The third important insight I gained from reviewing the existent literature is the realization that while connections have been made between workgroup culture and writing group processes, connections between collaborative workplace writing and organizational identity have not previously been made. In my study, I show how organizational identity trickles down into collaborative writing processes and what the effects of this trickle-down are, in terms of the document being produced, the workgroup producing the document, and the organization as a whole.

In the next chapter, I describe my methods of collecting and analyzing evidence related to organizational identity and collaborative workplace writing processes. The data were collected to discover how these elements were at work in EAS and the EAS review and revise group.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

### *Introduction*

As noted in the previous chapter, the goal of this study is to gain insight into the connections or relationships between organizational identity and collaborative workplace writing processes. In particular, the study examines the relationships or connections between EAS employees' perceptions of EAS's organizational identity and the EAS review and revise group's review process and its culture. Because of the many disciplines encompassed by this study – composition studies, rhetoric, organizational behavior, and social psychology to name a few – I borrowed methods from several areas. The primary purpose of this Methods chapter is to explain what data were collected and why, as well as to explain how and why the data were analyzed to provide evidence related to EAS's organizational identity and its collaborative workplace writing processes. Materials associated with the IRB approval of this study are included in Appendix A.

Specifically, the data described in this chapter were gathered to answer the following focused research questions:

- What is EAS's organizational identity? What traits or features characterize EAS's identity?
- What values does EAS communicate through its official documents?
- Do EAS employees perceive those communicated values as characteristic features of EAS's organizational identity?
- In what ways do EAS's communicated values relate to the review and revise group's review processes?

- In what ways do the review and revise group, and its processes, contribute to EAS's identity?

### *Description of Study Participants*

The participants for this study were employees of the Employees' Association of the State (EAS)<sup>5</sup>. An important distinction exists between the members of EAS and its employees. For this study, I was not concerned with the 55,000 members of the association but rather with the paid staff and management who were employed by EAS, most of whom were located in one office building in the state capital. A total of 34 people, including both staff and management, were employed by EAS at the time of this study. Within the larger group designated as employees, I focused on the smaller group of six employees who were involved in reviewing and revising the organization's newsletter, The Informer; for this study, the smaller group is referred to as the review and revise group. I focused on the review of the newsletter rather than, say, a memo or a letter, because it was not a one-day process; rather, the review processes for The Informer were complicated enough to allow for interesting data to be gathered. Also, the newsletter is a dynamic official document which is continuously written and re-written, as compared to a more stable official document like the mission statement or Bylaws. Thus, studying the review processes for the newsletter allowed me to see the effects of EAS's organizational identity on the document and on the workgroup producing the document.

The main focus of my field research at EAS was the study of the review and revise group and its processes. Observation of review and revise sessions, including the study of the revisions themselves, form the basis of the case study presented in this dissertation. The review and revise group was comprised of four core members who did the bulk of the work and two other

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<sup>5</sup> Pseudonyms are used for the names of the organization, its newsletter, and its employees.

members. The core members of the review and revise group consisted of two people whose jobs as editor-in-chief and managing editor made them directly responsible for the newsletter, and two associate editors who supported the two other core members with tasks like copyediting and fact-checking. The other two group members were the organization's legal counsel, who reviewed and approved article content from a legal perspective "so we don't get sued," and EAS's executive director, who had little direct input in revising or reviewing, but whose opinion, as the editor-in-chief stated, "always matters." The role of each member of the review and revise group will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5: Presentation of Data and Discussion of the Review and Revise Group's Culture.

The members of the review and revise group did not self-identify as such; rather, the boundaries of the review and revise group membership were created by me, the researcher. The editor-in-chief and managing editor were obvious choices for participants, as were the two associate editors. The other two members – the executive director and the legal counsel – were not as obvious. Only after some preliminary observations did the value of their contributions become apparent. The major contribution of the executive director's came toward the beginning of the production cycle of the newsletter. During a meeting in his office, the executive director met with the editor-in-chief and the managing editor to discuss the content list for the upcoming edition of The Informer. (Details regarding the content list and its creation are included in the next section.) Though the content list was created by the managing editor with input from the editor-in-chief, the list had to be approved by the executive director, thereby making his influence strongly felt before reviewing and revising even began. In addition to approving the content list, the executive director also contributes a column, "From the Desk of the Executive Director," to each edition of the newsletter. EAS's legal counsel also contributes a column,

“Counselor’s Comments,” to each edition of the newsletter. The counselor’s major contribution to the review of The Informer regarded legal issues in terms of article content and word choices; for instance, the counselor was consulted regarding whether “senior” or “Medicare-eligible” was a better term for older or retired state employees.

The core members of the review and revise group, who also make up the Communications Department, have a variety of professional and education backgrounds. Terri, the Editor-in-Chief of the newsletter, has an undergraduate degree in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia and a Masters degree in Government from Johns Hopkins University. Before coming to work for EAS five years prior to this study, she spent many years in military and government service. The Managing Editor of the newsletter, Elaine, has an undergraduate degree from a Midwestern university, and had experience in journalism and communications before joining EAS seven years prior to this study. Melissa, the newsletter’s Advertising Manager, and Cassie, its Associate Editor, both have undergraduate degrees from local universities. Melissa served as an intern for EAS before she was hired permanently, just a couple of years before this study. Cassie had experience in communications, and of the four core members of the review and revise group, had been employed by EAS the longest – about nine and a half years.

#### *Data Collection and Rationale*

Several types of data were gathered. Below is a list of what was collected, followed by more detailed descriptions of the data, the data collection process, and the rationale for collecting the data.

- All hard copy and electronic margin comments made by the members of the review and revise group (text-only content and designed proofs) to The Informer articles;
- one year's worth of The Informer article topics;
- “peripheral” documents, including past and current content lists, the publication schedule for The Informer, a review cover sheet used in the review process, a publication review guideline sheet, and EAS's mission statement, bylaws<sup>6</sup>, and official history as provided on its website;
- survey data regarding EAS employees' perceptions of EAS's organizational identity, using an online survey program;
- observations of review and revise sessions, including digital audio recordings and my handwritten field notes;
- observation of content list<sup>7</sup> review meeting, including digital audio recording and my handwritten field notes;
- structured interviews<sup>8</sup> to follow-up the online survey, including digital audio recordings and my handwritten field notes; and
- informal interviews, in person and on the telephone, with members of the review and revise group, including digital audio recordings and my handwritten field notes.

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<sup>6</sup> Copies of the review cover sheet and the publication review guideline sheet are included in Appendices B and C, respectively.

<sup>7</sup> An example of a content list is included in Appendix D.

<sup>8</sup> The interview protocol is included in Appendix E.



### *Hard Copy and Electronic Margin Comments*

Documents in various stages of reviewing and revision were collected to allow for the study of the types of revisions made to the newsletter articles. The majority of articles for the newsletter were written individually by the members of the review and revise group; the members were guided by a content list, which is described in detail later in this chapter. The remaining articles were written by other members of EAS according to their interests and expertise. For example, one article about the state health plan was written by the EAS member who is the state health plan network operations manager. The first set of documents to be reviewed and revised were drafts of text-only article content for The Informer, in both hard copy and electronic format. All four core members of the review and revise group – the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, and both associate editors – reviewed the content and made revision suggestions on the drafts; throughout this dissertation, I refer to these comments as “margin comments.” Each of the core members individually revised the text of all the articles during the first round of review and revision. The reviewers brought their edited copies to the second round of reviewing, which was done face-to-face, with group members consulting each other regarding revisions. Two rounds were completed using only text. After the second round, the editor-in-chief and the managing editor got together to reconcile all edits, resulting in a single document ready to be sent to the designer in order to create a designed proof.

The managing editor sent the document containing the reconciled revisions to the designer, whose services were outsourced. The initial designed proof took a few days for the designer to create, after which it was returned via email to the managing editor. The managing editor then printed out the proof and distributed the hard copies to the other core members of the review and revise group and to the legal counsel. All members of the group, excepting the

executive director, made more margin comments on the proof, often after consulting with one or more of the other group members. Two more face-to-face group review and revision sessions took place after that, during which all four core members of the group worked collaboratively on revision and review; the legal counsel participated in one of these face-to-face review and revision sessions. Three designed proofs were revised and reviewed. In total, five rounds of review and revise sessions were held.

### *The Informer Article Topics and Rhetorical Purposes*

I coded and analyzed the topics of previously published editions of The Informer, describing the types of stories published over the previous year. Looking at the year's topics and the rhetorical purposes of the news items indicated what issues are important to EAS and helped give me a sense of what I might be looking for in later observations. The point was to explore whether the rhetorical purposes of the news items put forth in The Informer, one of EAS's official documents, would reveal the values of EAS in practice, not only in employee perceptions. The insights gained helped me craft survey questions to ascertain whether what EAS as an organization seemed to value – as indicated by the types of articles published in its official newsletter – is similar to what employees perceived as valuable – as indicated by the survey results. For instance, if The Informer contained many articles that indicated its responsiveness to the needs of the EAS membership, then one should be able to assume that the EAS membership is valuable to the organization. EAS's values as communicated through an official document, such as its newsletter, can be used to help determine its organizational identity. I categorized the article topics into five general categories according to the rhetorical purposes of each article. A more detailed discussion is provided in the next chapter.

### *Peripheral Documents*

One of the first steps in the process of publishing The Informer was creating the content list, which is a guide for the editors regarding the articles and advertisements for the upcoming edition of the newsletter. The content list was drawn up by the managing editor of The Informer, with limited input from the newsletter's editor-in-chief. After the content list met their approval, the managing editor and editor-in-chief brought the list to the executive director for a discussion of each potential article. While the creation and approval of the content list may not be a strictly collaborative process, the creation – indeed, the very existence – of the content list affects the rest of the process and so had to be considered. All of the content for the newsletter, from articles to advertisements to scholarship announcements, is decided on during the content list meeting. The meeting at which the content list was discussed and presented to the executive director for approval was digitally audio recorded; the recording was later transcribed for analysis.

Other peripheral documents were collected, including the publication schedule for The Informer, a review cover sheet, the publication review guideline sheet, and online documents containing EAS's mission statement, bylaws, and history. The publication schedule is usually about 4-5 weeks from beginning to end; for instance, work on the May 2008 issue began March 24 and ended April 23. The short turn-around indicates the time-sensitive nature of the articles in the newsletter. Examining the review cover sheet, which is simply a cover sheet affixed to the draft being reviewed and revised, and the publication review guideline sheet, a set of instructions detailing how the review process works, gave insights into some of the processes that occur during the review and revise sessions, though I did not use these documents directly in my study. The publication review guidelines were not used by the review and revise group during this

study, because the group seemed to have followed the same procedures for so long that they simply knew what to do. Only one person in the review and revise group used the review cover sheet – the legal counsel, Tim, who affixed the cover sheet to the final set of revisions he made to a proof of the newsletter. Even though the group did not need to refer to these publication review documents during this study, the fact that written guidance is available to all review and revise group members is a characteristic common among collaborative writing groups; this knowledge – that the group may have collaborative characteristics – provided some context for my later inquiries into the culture of the EAS review and revise group.

The content of EAS’s mission statement, bylaws, and self-published history provided not only insight into EAS’s organizational identity, but also helped me shape questions for the online survey. As with the analysis of newsletter topics and rhetorical purposes, the point was to explore whether what was put forth in some of EAS’s official documents would shed light on the values of EAS. The insights gained helped me craft survey questions to ascertain whether what EAS as an organization seemed to value – as indicated by its mission statement, bylaws, and history – is similar to what employees perceived as valuable – as indicated by the survey results. For instance, if its bylaws state that communication between EAS staff and EAS membership is one of EAS’s purposes, then one should be able to assume that communication is important and valuable to EAS employees. In turn, the knowledge of what EAS employees value can be used to help determine EAS’s organizational identity.

### *Online Survey*

To ascertain how its employees perceive EAS’s organizational identity, an online survey program called Survey Monkey was used to create a password-protected electronic survey. After a pilot test of the survey was performed, the final survey was administered to all 34 EAS

employees; 19 surveys were completed. Scholarly recommendations regarding a required number of participants for survey research varies. Researcher Michael Patton (1990) goes so far as to state that in qualitative inquiry, “there are no rules for sample size” (p. 184), though most researchers say that a fifty percent response rate is acceptable (Babbie, 2001). The response rate for this survey was 56%. With the permission of the communications director, who is also the editor-in-chief of The Informer, I obtained the email addresses of employees from the EAS website. The communications director sent an email to employees telling them about the research study and asking employees to participate in the online survey. Two days later, I sent a follow-up email to employees stating who I am and why I was emailing them, and that the survey was completely confidential; the email included a link to the survey and a password to access it. The survey remained open for three weeks; over the course of the three weeks I sent a total of three emails to the EAS employees to encourage them to participate in the survey and to thank them for their participation.

The survey questions were constructed to elicit responses regarding the employees’ perceptions of EAS’s organizational identity. As discussed in Chapter 2: Review of Scholarship, Albert and Whetten (1985) center their definition on the perceptions, or “claims,” of organizational members. The writers assert that “an adequate statement of organizational identity” will satisfy three main criteria: “claimed central character,” “claimed distinctiveness,” and “claimed temporal continuity” (p. 90); subsequent scholars refer to the list of criteria as CED – Central, Enduring, and Distinctive characteristics or attributes of organizational identity. The entire survey instrument can be found in Appendix F.

The survey was organized into four general categories: demographic information, questions based on EAS’s bylaws, questions based on article topics from previous editions of

The Informer, and questions which directly addressed the concepts of central, enduring, and distinctive attributes of EAS.

The process of crafting the non-demographic survey questions began with the above definition of organizational identity. Using Albert and Whetten's (1985) CED as a frame of reference, I examined EAS's mission statement and bylaws to find out what attributes EAS assigned to itself; I also analyzed the previous year's Informer to find out the rhetorical purposes of articles EAS published. Details of these analyses are included in Chapter 4: Presentation of Data and Discussion of the Organizational Identity of EAS. The information gathered from these three sources enabled the formulation of questions which would test whether, and to what degree, the employee perceived EAS actually demonstrates the stated attributes. For example, Question 4 of the survey asked, "[EAS's] bylaws make statements about the purposes of [EAS]. In your opinion, how well does [EAS] accomplish these purposes?" Each statement made in the bylaws regarding EAS's purposes was listed, and the respondent was asked to judge EAS's performance on a 5-point scale ranging from "Very Poorly" to "Very Well." A "Don't Know" option was offered, as was a space for optional comments from the respondent. Questions 5-8 were based on the analysis of The Informer article topics. For example, Question 6 of the survey asked, "As an organization, how consistently does [EAS] encourage [EAS] members, staff, and/or management to feel like owners of [EAS]?" Each of these categories (member, staff, management) was listed, and the respondent was asked to judge EAS's performance on a 5-point scale ranging from "Never" to "Always." A "Don't Know" option was provided, as was a space for optional comments from the respondent.

The final question of the survey directly addressed the concept of CED attributes; it reads, "For the final question, I'd like to know your perception of different attributes or

characteristics of [EAS] as an organization. As well as you can, please provide a word or phrase which, in your opinion, best answers the following:” These open-ended questions were, “What is the central characteristic which helps define [EAS]? (In other words, if you took away [blank], [EAS] would not be [EAS].)”; “What characteristic of [EAS] has endured since [EAS’s] beginning and will continue into the future?”; and, “What characteristic of [EAS] is unique? (In other words, what distinguishes [EAS] from other organizations?)”. Each question provided a blank space for the respondent to enter the word or phrase of his or her choice.

#### *Observation of Content List Review Meeting*

I observed the sole content list review meeting; the observation included a digital audio recording, recorded with the participants’ permission, and handwritten field notes. In contrast to the review and revise sessions, the content list review meeting was neat and orderly. The managing editor, the editor-in-chief, and the executive director were the only attendees of this meeting, which took place in the office of the executive director. To help minimize my presence at the meeting, so as not to impact the normal processes, I placed myself on a sofa along the wall of the executive director’s office, out of the direct line-of-sight of the participants. The meeting was held to discuss the content of the upcoming edition of The Informer and to solicit the approval of the executive director. The data collected from the meeting were used to observe the process of approving the content list and the interaction among the three group members. In particular, I wanted to see if the opinions and expertise of the editors were seriously considered by the executive director. The observation was particularly important because of the limited role of the executive director in the review and revise sessions.

### *Observations of Review and Revise Sessions*

Five separate review and revise sessions were observed; the observations included making digital audio recordings, recorded with the participants' permission, and handwritten field notes. These sessions were, in a word, messy. At no time did the entire review and revise group meet in a single room for any period of time; rather, the offices of either the editor-in-chief or the managing editor served as the home base for the session, supplemented by phone calls or emails to other group members, or by the other group members popping into the office where the reviewing was taking place. For example, the first day of review and revision took place in the office of the editor-in-chief and was broken into two separate sessions. The first session included the four core group members – the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, and the two associate editors; the second session included the editor-in-chief and the managing editor, with a brief visit from one of the associate editors to clarify details of an article she had written. Using the field notes and transcribed recordings, I produced a text which I divided into segments. Each segment was analyzed in order to characterize the types of actions which took place during the review and revise sessions. The segments were used to find evidence categorized into negotiation/discussion, advice-seeking, agreement/no discussion, and sharing organizational knowledge and experience. A more detailed discussion of these categories is included in a later section of this chapter.

### *Interviews*

Both structured and non-structured interviews were performed. Non-structured interviews were done with the core members of the review and revise group, most often during the review and revise sessions. For example, if during a session one of the members suggested a change for a reason which was not immediately clear to me, I simply asked the reviewer for her



reason(s) and noted her response. Occasionally after re-reading my observation field notes, I would find I had questions about a procedure, a revision, or some other event which occurred during the session. In those cases, I would telephone either the managing editor or the editor-in-chief to clarify.

Structured interviews were performed at EAS headquarters with three randomly-selected employees. After arranging with their supervisors for their time, I met individually with each employee in a conference room. The interviews were digitally audio recorded and were supplemented by handwritten notes. The questions were designed to probe a little further into the data collected from the survey. For example, one question designed to explore an “enduring” element of EAS was, “Has (or how has) [EAS] changed over the time you have been here? What has not changed? How do you feel about that? Is that consistent with other things you see at [EAS]? Could you elaborate on that?” A full list of interview questions is included in Appendix E.

### *Data Analysis*

The following sections explain how the collected data were analyzed. These data include information gathered from an online survey, designed to measure EAS employees’ perception of EAS’s organizational identity; the modes, frequencies, and content of margin comments written during review and revision sessions; the topics from the previous year’s Informer; and transcripts of oral exchanges between group members during face-to-face meetings.

### *Survey*

The electronic survey program provided options for filtering survey responses in order to find patterns in the data. Survey responses were provided as both percentages and frequencies; for instance, 44.4% of respondents (8 people) expressed that EAS does “Well” regarding the

endorsement and election of politicians who are supportive of state employees. Open-ended questions which allowed respondents to provide their own word or phrase in response to a question were analyzed using both percentages and frequencies; for instance, 72% of respondents (13 people) used the word “members” or the phrase “state employees” to describe the central characteristics of EAS. The program also provided options for downloading results into different formats; for this project, an Excel spreadsheet was used to organize the data. The program also provided options for expressing data results in graph form. These graphs are used to present data in Chapter 4.

#### *Margin Comments*

To analyze the reviewing and revision comments written on the articles, I utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a widely-used statistical software package. SPSS helped create a cross-index of measures. Each comment was identified by

- Round Number: Informer articles underwent five separate rounds of review; the number of the review round indicated which round the particular article fell under;
- Reviewer: a code number indicated the name of the review and revise group member responsible for the comments on the particular draft; these numbers were based on the member’s hierarchical position within the review and revise group;
- Draft Number: each article was assigned a unique identifying code number;
- Writer: the writer of each article was assigned an identifying code number, based when appropriate on the writer’s hierarchical position within the review and revise group; and,

- Comment Modes: each margin comment written on the draft was noted; comment modes were Statement, Question, Direct Change, and Non-Word Symbol.

For this project, “comment” is defined as any mark written on the draft by a reviewer.

My categorization of modes was verified by a third-party rater to provide inter-rater reliability.

The modes are based on the work of Susan Kleimann (1993) in her study “The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review.” Using SPSS, I was able to detect patterns such as which reviewer made the most comments, how many edits were direct changes, and other questions. Such information, according to Kleimann, provides an indication of the influence of social context, including organizational identity, on the process of review.

### *Oral Exchanges*

To analyze the content of oral exchanges made during the review and revise process, I created categories to organize the transcribed data from my observations of the content list review meeting and the five review and revise sessions. Some categories were suggested by my initial analysis of the topics from the previous year’s Informer. The data collected from the review and revise sessions were used to find evidence of negotiation / discussion, advice-seeking, agreement / no discussion, and sharing organizational knowledge and experience. As Kleimann (1993) suggests, these categories represent characteristics of a collaborative review process (pp. 65-68). Negotiation and discussion are an outgrowth of frequent meetings among group members (Kleimann, 1993); advice-seeking is a form of respect; agreement / no discussion illustrates where the group members mutually understand what changes should be made; sharing organizational knowledge and experience is termed by Kleimann as “contributory expertise,” which she defines as “the individual’s knowledge of some aspect of the assignment...[or] previous experiences” (p. 68).

To analyze the transcripts of the oral exchanges, I divided the text into what I term “segments.” The parameters of a segment are determined by a topic being raised, discussed, then resolved in some way. For instance, a segment may begin with one group member asking for another’s opinion on a word choice. The person responds with his or her opinion, the asker accepts the answer, and the speakers move on to another topic. A third-party rater was used to help provide inter-rater reliability. The purpose of each segment was determined and categorized into one of the following:

- Negotiation / Discussion: discussion among members of the review and revise group in which different options were expressed, the pros and cons were discussed, and a best solution was chosen by the group members;
- Advice-Seeking: advice was sought by a member of the review and revise group; often, the advice was sought on the basis of specialized expertise, like an understanding of legal issues or a knowledge of grammar; sometimes the asker simply needed a second opinion on a minor issue (“Does this look right?”);
- Agreement / No Discussion: group members agreed with no discussion or negotiation, or an option was chosen (usually by the higher-ranking member) with no discussion of different options; and,
- Sharing Organizational Knowledge or Experience: group members used their knowledge of the organization (EAS) or past experience with the organization to solve a problem, or a group member specifically asked to learn something about the organization.

### *Chapter Conclusion*

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the data collection and analysis were designed to provide insight into what I might call, borrowing from Kleimann (1993), the “reciprocal relationship” between organizational identity and workplace writing processes. To further explore these relationships, in Chapter 4 I establish the characteristic features of EAS’s identity and the values that EAS communicates through its official documents. I also explore EAS employees’ perceptions of those communicated values as characteristic features of EAS’s identity. In Chapter 5 I look at the ways in which EAS’s communicated values and its organizational identity relate to the review and revise group’s review processes, and I examine the ways in which the review and revise group and its culture contribute to EAS’s identity.

## CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF EAS'S ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

### *Introduction*

This chapter discusses the organizational identity of the Employees' Association of the State (EAS). The driving question of this chapter is, "What is EAS's organizational identity, and how can it be characterized?" A two-pronged approach was used to understand the organizational identity of EAS: employees' perceived organizational identity and communicated values in the form of official documents. An examination of two official EAS documents – the organization's bylaws and mission statement – was conducted, as was an analysis of previous editions of the newsletter The Informer. An online survey was administered to the organization's employees to ascertain their perceptions of various aspects of the organization; in addition, structured interviews with three EAS employees were conducted. Establishing EAS's organizational identity is the first step in making visible the connections between the organization's identity and the ways in which EAS's organizational identity influences or otherwise relates to the processes of the collaborative review of its newsletter, The Informer.

### *An Important Distinction – Members and Employees*

In the study of organizational identity, organizational members are the internal stakeholders of identity; in this study of EAS, its organizational members are its employees. To avoid confusion between the terms "organizational member" and "a person who is a member of EAS," I make a distinction between the *membership* of EAS and its *employees* or *organizational members*. More than 55,000 members belong to EAS, making it the largest independent public employees' association in the nation. As a labor association, EAS relies heavily on the unpaid, voluntary work its membership performs on behalf of the organization, work which includes

everything from serving hot dogs at an employee appreciation picnic to meeting with state legislators on the opening day of the General Assembly.

This study is not directly concerned with the *membership* of EAS but rather with the staff who are *employed* by EAS; the study of EAS's organizational identity focuses on the perceptions of those paid employees of EAS. When I refer to the "membership" of EAS, I am referring to the dues-paying state employees who have joined the association; the organizational members of EAS are referred to as "employees."

*What is "Organizational Identity"?*

As noted in Chapter 2, the definition of organizational identity I am using is the foundational one offered by Stuart Albert and David A. Whetten (1985). Their definition is based on the idea of claimed features of central character, distinctiveness, and temporal continuity. The concept is usually referred to as CED: central, enduring, and distinctive features of organizational identity. The answer to "Who are we as an organization?" must fulfill all three criteria (pp. 264-265). In the discussion that follows, I use Albert and Whetten's concepts of CED to identify and examine the characteristics of EAS's organizational identity as manifested in its official documents (mission statement, bylaws, newsletter) and the perceptions of EAS employees.

#### *EAS History, Mission Statement, and Bylaws*

To begin answering the question, "Who is EAS as an organization?," I first looked at its history, its mission statement, and its bylaws. The history of an organization can, obviously, provide insight into what characteristics have endured over time. A set of bylaws provides an organization with rules to govern its internal affairs; bylaws reflect the unique values of an organization. An organization's mission statement is also unique. A mission statement can

provide information about an organization, information which provides insights into central, enduring, and distinctive characteristics of the organization. A mission statement can “reflect an organization’s purpose, function, and primary reason for existing...build and communicate company values over periods of time...[and] distinguish an organization from others of the same type” (Alred, Brusaw, Oliu, 2003, p. 332). The following sections further examine these elements – EAS’s history, bylaws, and mission statement – offering some context for the survey questions.

### *Highlights<sup>9</sup> from EAS History*

EAS’s current executive director has served in his position for nearly ten years, and has focused much of his effort on making EAS more politically effective. For instance, according to the EAS website, in 2005 EAS began its Member Action Team (MAT) in “an effort to empower members for lobbying, leadership and recruitment. MAT activities include lobby day and grassroots lobbying efforts such as phone calls and letters to legislators.” In 2006 the Association’s longtime focus on retired state employees yielded its first Retiree Director. In 2008 the Association’s political action committee – called EMPAC for Employees Political Action Committee – became the 11<sup>th</sup> most-powerful PAC in the nation.

The history of EAS points to several important enduring traits at the heart of the organization. For instance, the development of the MAT suggests that both political activism and member involvement are essential to the values of the organization. The strengthening of EMPAC also indicates that political influence, an important reason for the founding of the organization, has become even more important to EAS over time. The organization’s focus on its membership has remained steady since its inception, but a concentrated effort to attend to

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<sup>9</sup> For a more thorough treatment of EAS history, please refer back to Chapter 1.



retirees' needs and interests is reflected in the fact that EAS created a position for a Retiree Director.

### *Mission Statement and Bylaws*

EAS's mission statement reads as follows: "[EAS] is committed to protecting and enhancing the rights and benefits of current, retired and future state employees." As with any organizational mission statement, EAS's purpose, function, and primary reason for existing are expressed. EAS's stated reason to exist is to work for not just EAS members, but all state employees. The statement succinctly expresses that EAS values state employees.

The concepts in its mission statement are central to the organizational identity of EAS. Though when asked, none of the employees surveyed or interviewed had the mission statement memorized, many of the participants' comments seem to capture the flavor of the statement. It seems they captured this flavor by reflecting on what seemed pervasive throughout their experience with EAS, rather than having specific knowledge of the mission statement. As I observed during my time at the EAS headquarters, the idea that the EAS membership is important is something that is actually talked about in the EAS offices; it is genuinely a part of the work culture at EAS.

Article II of EAS's Bylaws reads as follows:

Article II: Purpose. The purposes of [EAS] are: 1.1 to promote the best interests and welfare of current, retired and future employees of the State of [xx], 1.2 to provide information to the membership, 1.3 to provide a forum for the discussion of ideas and problems, 1.4 to facilitate communication among employees of the State of [xx], 1.5 to promote the professionalism of the employees of the State of [xx] in order to provide effective and efficient programs and services to the citizens of [xx]. In the

accomplishment of the above purposes, [EAS], with the approval of the Convention, shall be able to affiliate with like-minded organizations.

This Article is only part of the EAS bylaws, chosen because it specifically addresses the purposes of EAS. Its own official rules require EAS to work for all state employees, not only EAS membership, including promoting their best interests and promoting professionalism, and require EAS to communicate with state employees and its membership, including providing information and providing a forum for discussion. The responses of EAS employees to the survey questions based on the EAS mission statement and bylaws help show whether the organization has successfully, in the eyes of its employees, met the goals and purposes laid out in these two official documents. As will become clear in Chapter 6: Analysis, it is important for the strength of the organization that employees buy-in to the organization's communicated values as put forth in these official documents.

#### *Focus of Informer Topics*

Another official publication of EAS is its membership-directed newsletter. As with any news publication, the topics of the EAS newsletter offer insight into what the organization values. An analysis of the previous year's publications revealed that the topics and rhetorical purposes of news items in The Informer could be broken into different categories, which I coded as ELECT, INNER, NEEDS, OWNER, and PUB POL.

- ELECT: Trying to get employee-friendly political candidates elected to the state General Assembly and to the federal Congress (Bipartisan)

Example: The article "EMPAC Endorsements Announced: Vote in Five [EAS] Members on Nov. 7" announces the candidacies of five EAS members for state congressional offices and endorses all five candidates.

- INNER: Informing members about the inner workings of EAS (i.e., what leaders/employees are doing, what types of events EAS leaders are attending, contact information for EAS leaders/staff)

Example: The article “Staff Aligned for Member Action, Stronger [EAS] Operations” says that in response to EO 105<sup>10</sup>, the EAS Executive Director rearranged some EAS staff and created the Member Action Department (a combination of what were formerly called the Membership Services Department and the Political Department).

- NEEDS: Illustrating EAS’s responsiveness to the needs of state employees and EAS members (i.e., information about healthcare, retirement, members discounts, state employee pay)

Example: In his article “‘Temporary’ Solution Needed,” EAS’s legal counsel discusses aspects of a case in which temporary state employees argue they should have gotten the same benefits as permanent state employees because they worked for the state longer than a year; EAS’s legal counsel supports the employees, saying that temp workers who work long-term should get the same benefits as permanent employees.

- OWNER: Encouraging a sense of member ownership and loyalty (i.e., transparency in EAS decisions and leadership, soliciting ideas and feedback from

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<sup>10</sup> Executive Order 105 was issued in response to a vetoed Senate bill. The bill read in part, “All State institutions, departments, bureaus, agencies, or commissions, shall permit representatives of a domiciled employees’ association that has at least 40,000 members, the majority of whom are current State employees, reasonable access to its facilities and employees for the purposes of membership recruitment, member consultation, and to offer member benefits, including insurance products.” The bill passed both houses overwhelmingly (House: 84 ayes / 12 nos; Senate: 46 ayes / 1 no), but the governor vetoed it. He later issued Executive Order 105, which reduced the required number of members to 2,000 with at least 500 state employees. This decision strengthened EAS’s chances to engage in collective bargaining with the state, but increased EAS’s competition among public sector labor organizations.

members, highlighting members' and districts' accomplishments and activities, showing appreciation for members)

Example: The item "[EAS] Salutes Awards for Excellence Employees" provides photos and brief bios of state employees who received the Award for Excellence.

- PUB POL: Illustrating EAS's effectiveness in influencing public policy and state laws

Example: The article "Executive Order 105: Collective Bargaining's First Step" explains why EAS supports EO 105, specifying that "Paragraph three of the order contains 'meet and confer' language allowing state employee associations with 2,000 members, 500 of whom are state employees, the right to 'meet annually with representatives of the Governor regarding issues of mutual concern prior to the annual convening of the General Assembly.'" EAS had fought for years to secure the right of state employee associations to meet and confer with state officials.

Items which were analyzed included articles, photos with cutlines, and member-service announcements (member discounts for theme park tickets or insurance, scholarship opportunities, district fundraisers, contact information for EAS and state leaders, etc.); advertisements were not analyzed. Because some rhetorical overlap occurred, some items were coded with two categories. See Table 1: Frequency of Topics in The Informer, 2006-2007, below, for details on the breakdown of topics.

Table 1: Frequency of Topics in The Informer, 2006-2007

<b>Topic Category</b>	<b># of Items</b>
ELECT	11
INNER	62
NEEDS	53
OWNER	126
PUB POL	49

The analysis was based on five editions of The Informer published during the 2006-2007 schedule, corresponding to the state’s General Assembly schedule. The labeled sections of each individual edition varied depending on the time of year. As can be seen below in Table 2: Number of Articles per Section, aside from the unlabeled front page sections, which obviously appear in every edition, only 3 sections appear in every single edition: Columns (containing articles), Member Action (containing 30% articles and 70% photos with cutlines), and Retirement (containing articles). The fact that these sections appear consistently seems to indicate that member action (political activism, participation of members, etc.) and retirees are important values to EAS. The columns are written by the management (the executive director and legal counsel) and leadership (the President of EAS, who is a rank-and-file member elected by the EAS membership) of EAS, highlighting the importance of informing newsletter readers about the inner workings and decision processes of the EAS organization. Other sections appear during appropriate times of the year; for instance, the legislative resource section appears just before an election in order to inform readers of important issues. The annual convention section appears just before and just after the EAS convention in order to let members know what the agenda is for the upcoming convention, and to publish details of what was accomplished at the convention. The appearance of these sections seems to indicate that member participation is a central value to the organization.

Table 2: Number of Articles per Section

<b>Section (In # of Editions)</b>	<b>Total # of Articles</b>
Front Page (5)	10
Member Action (5)	89
Public Policy (3)	19
Retirement (5)	26
Health Care (3)	9
Columns (5)	37
Legislative Resource (1)	3
Annual Convention (2)	14
General Assembly Session (1)	3

The fact that articles focused on OWNER, or encouraging member ownership and loyalty, appeared twice as often as articles in the second most frequent category (INNER) illustrates how the organization tries to make the participation of members a central characteristic. Articles focused on INNER, or informing members about the inner workings of EAS, and articles focused on NEEDS, or illustrating EAS’s responsiveness to the needs of members, also indicate the central importance of the EAS membership. Only slightly fewer articles focused on PUB POL (illustrating EAS’s effectiveness in influencing public policy) which seems to indicate that political influence is also central to EAS’s identity. The smaller number of articles focused on ELECT (trying to get employee-friendly candidates elected) could indicate a lower interest in political action, but these types of articles actually appear in fewer editions of the newsletter because of its publication cycle, which in turn is dependent on the cyclical nature of elections. (In other words, ELECT articles appear only when an election is eminent.)

### *Survey Results*

The analysis of EAS’s mission statement, bylaws, and Informer topics provided some insight into EAS’s communicated values. To find out the perceptions of EAS employees

regarding the organizational identity of EAS, an electronic survey was administered and focused interviews were conducted with three EAS employees. Many survey questions were developed using the bylaws and mission statement of EAS. More questions were developed by analyzing the topics of stories published in the previous year (see Table 1: Frequency of Topics in The Informer, 2006-2007 above). The final question of the survey was based on Albert and Whetten's (1985) tripartite definition of organizational identity (CED). The following figures provide the survey questions administered to EAS employees and their responses to those questions.

#### *Responses to Multi-Choice Questions*

Question Set 1 was based on EAS's bylaws, as shown below in Figure 1: Employee Perception of EAS Purposes. An organization crafts a set of bylaws to provide rules to govern its internal affairs. I posed these bylaws-based questions to find out how EAS employees viewed the organization's ability to put its communicated values into action. Because bylaws are essential to an organization, the responses to Question Set 1 provide insights into some of EAS's central characteristics, as perceived by its employees.

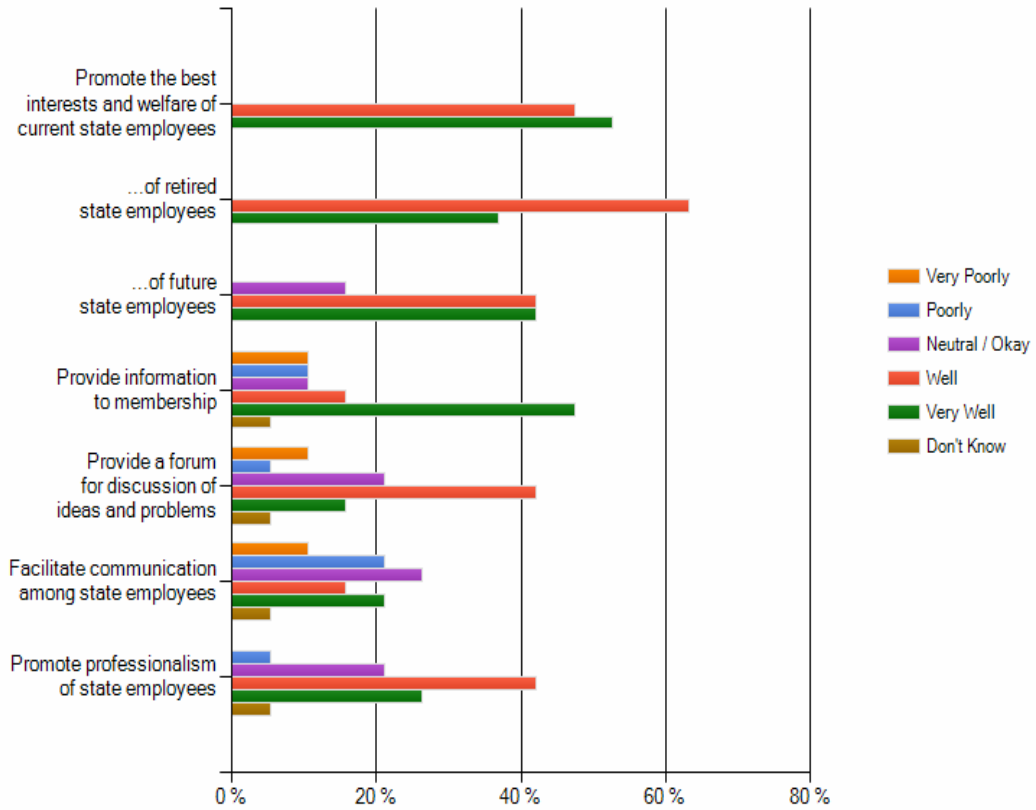
An interesting finding is that 100% of respondents believe that EAS does "well" or "very well" at promoting the best interests and welfare of both current and retired state employees, indicating that EAS employees see state employees as a central characteristic of the organization. Findings are mixed in regard to how well EAS communicates with its membership, though the majority of respondents believe EAS performs "well" or "very well" when providing information (63%) and providing a forum for discussion (58%). However, there seems to be some disagreement as to how well EAS facilitates communication among state employees, with a majority of respondents (58%) indicating EAS does only "okay" or even "poorly" and "very

poorly” on this issue. These mixed results seem to indicate that although EAS does promote the interests of state employees to the state’s General Assembly – a political activity – EAS does not do as well communicating with and among membership, which could imply a lack of focus on hearing the voices of its membership. This may also indicate that EAS employees would like to see better communication between the organization and its membership.



Figure 1: Employee Perception of EAS Purposes

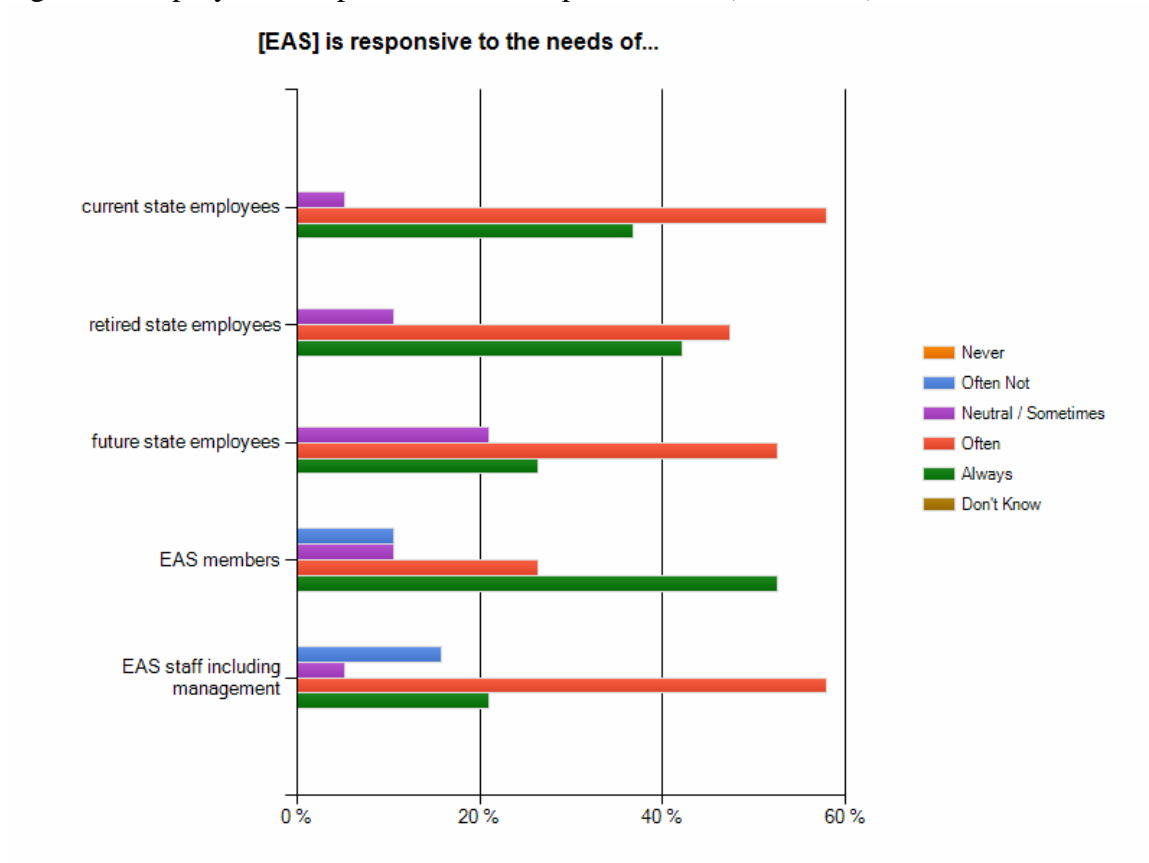
[EAS's] bylaws make statements about the purposes of [EAS]. In your opinion, how well does [EAS] accomplish these purposes?



Question Sets 2-5 were based on the analysis of topics from the previous year's edition of The Informer. The analysis of Informer topics suggested that EAS wants to respond to the needs of its membership and of state employees, or at least wants to appear to respond to those needs. I posed these topics-based questions (Question Sets 2-5) to see if there was a correlation between what EAS appeared to value, indicated by what EAS publishes in its newsletter, and what EAS employees perceived regarding how EAS actually operates. The responses to the following four question sets provide insights into how EAS employees perceive EAS's central and distinctive characteristics.

As shown below in Figure2: Employee Perception of EAS Responsiveness, the majority of respondents believe that EAS is "always" or at least "often" responsive to the needs of state employees (current, retired, and future); however, there seems to be some slight disconnect between the perceptions of how state employees are treated compared to how the EAS membership and EAS employees are treated. To be fair, the majority of respondents (more than 75%) do believe that EAS is responsive to membership and employees, but a fairly significant percentage of respondents (about 20%) see that EAS is either "often not" or only "sometimes" responsive to the needs of EAS staff including management. These results could imply that while state employees are certainly central and distinctive to EAS's organizational identity, less attention is paid to membership and employee needs than some respondents believe should be paid.

Figure 2: Employee Perception of EAS Responsiveness (“NEEDS”)



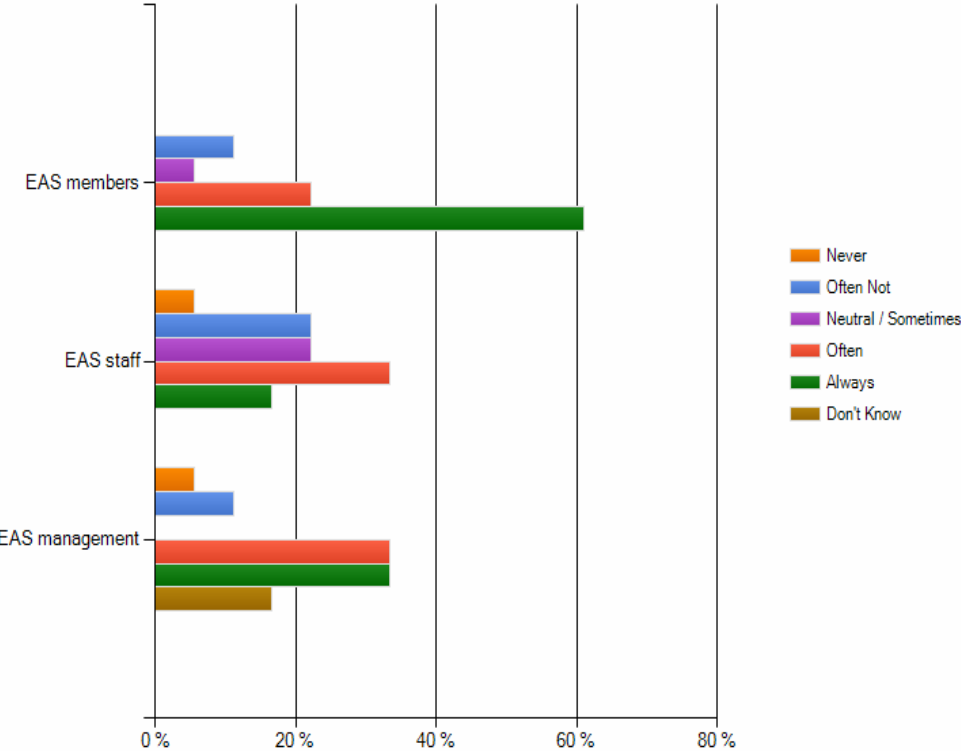
As shown below in Figure 3: Employee Perception of Member Ownership, Question Set 3 asked respondents for their perceptions of EAS's efforts to encourage its membership and its employees to "own" EAS. EAS has, throughout its history, claimed to be a member-driven organization; the responses to this question set indicate EAS employee perceptions regarding how consistently EAS achieves this claim. The fact that a huge majority of respondents (more than 80%) believe that the EAS membership is consistently encouraged to feel like owners of EAS indicates the importance of members and their participation in the organization. However, there seems to be another disjunction regarding how consistently the EAS staff<sup>11</sup> are made to feel like owners of EAS, illustrated by the large percentage of respondents (50%) indicating that EAS "never," "often [does] not," or only "sometimes" does this. In contrast, only about 15% of respondents believe EAS never, often, or sometimes makes EAS management feel like owners. One interpretation is that while members are a central characteristic of EAS's organizational identity, its staff feel that perhaps they are not seen as being as essential to EAS as they should or would like to be seen. There also seems to be the perception that management is encouraged to feel like owners more often than staff are, implying that a power differential exists.

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<sup>11</sup> At EAS, "management" includes administrators, like department heads; "staff" includes workers like receptionists, support personnel, and recruiters, among others.

Figure 3: Employee Perception of Member Ownership (“OWNER”)

As an organization, how consistently does EAS encourage EAS members, staff, and/or management to feel like owners of EAS?

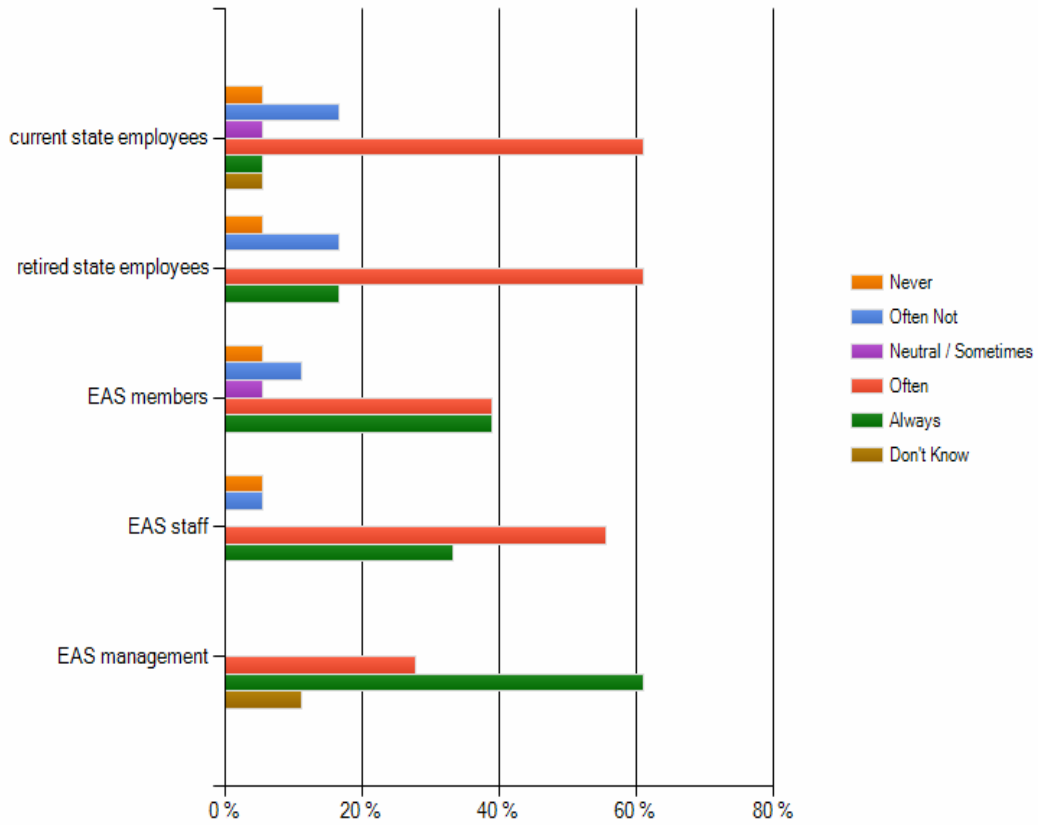


As shown below in Figure 4: Employee Perception of EAS Transparency, Question Set 4 asked respondents for their perceptions of EAS's efforts to provide information regarding its "inner workings" to its membership and employees and to both current and retired state employees. Not only do the topics of Informer articles suggest EAS's concern with providing such information, but so do EAS's bylaws. The responses to this question set indicate EAS employee perceptions regarding how consistently EAS actually provides information on its inner workings.

Because EAS works for the best interest of state employees, one might assume that transparency – an act which enables people to make better informed decisions and which indicates a level of respect for information recipients, EAS members – is consistently provided by the organization to its members and employees. The large majority of EAS employees who responded to this question set say that they believe EAS "often" or "always" provides transparency to current (69%) and retired (79%) state employees, to the EAS membership (78%), and to EAS employees (both staff (95%) and management(89%)). However, an interesting disjunction is evident when comparing the perceptions of transparency provided to the EAS membership. Though the majority believes EAS provides information about its inner workings to the membership, 22% of respondents seem to think that EAS is not doing as well as it should, perhaps, in being a transparent organization. The doubt expressed by some EAS employees could indicate a perception that the membership is not as well-respected as it should be and that members should be better informed about how EAS is operated.

Figure 4: Employee Perception of EAS Transparency (“INNER”)

**EAS provides information about its inner workings (i.e., what leadership is doing and why, how EAS operates, where budget money goes, etc.) to...**

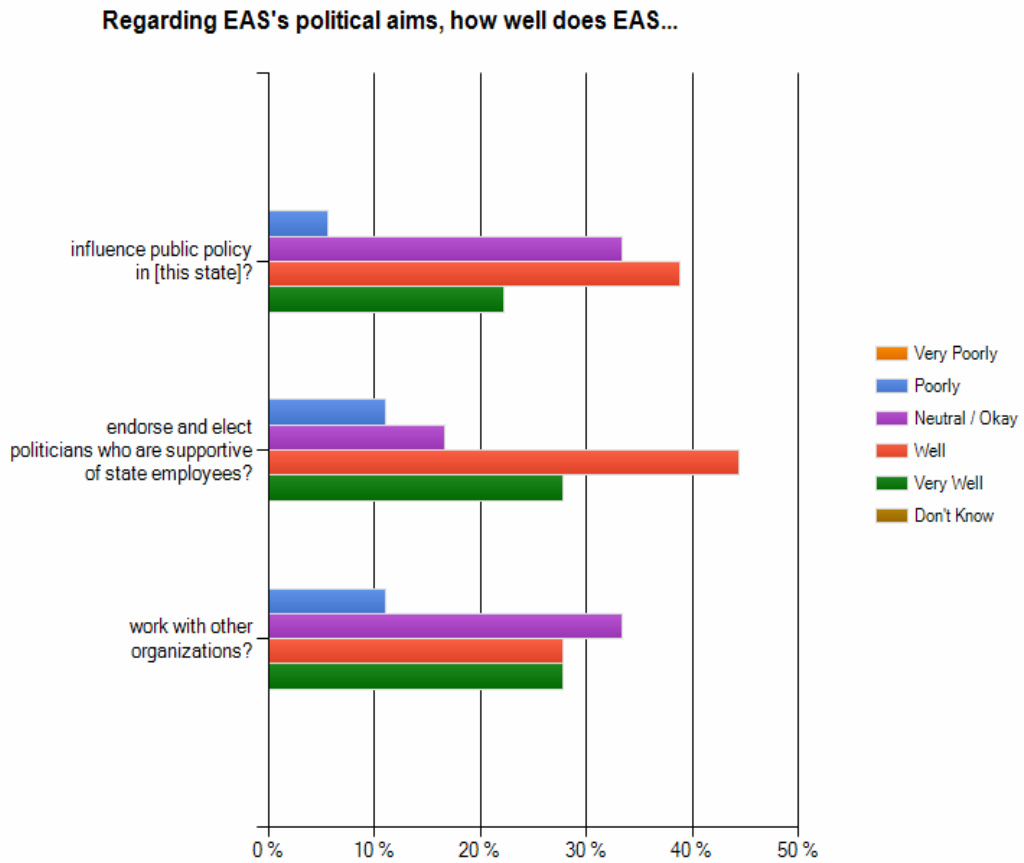


As shown below in Figure 5: Employee Perception of Political Influence, Question Set 5 asked respondents for their perceptions of EAS's efforts to gain and wield political influence. Since its beginning, EAS has claimed it provides a voice for state employees, especially regarding pay and benefits. Because the state legislature must approve state employee pay and benefits, EAS must cultivate relationships with elected officials. The responses to this question set indicate EAS employee perceptions regarding how well EAS is able to actually influence public policy and elect state employee-friendly politicians.

Generally speaking, EAS employees believe that EAS does "well" or "very well" at influencing public policy and electing politicians who are supportive of state employees, and in working with other politically-minded organizations (like the SEIU). However, a relatively large percentage of respondents (about 35%) believe that EAS does only "okay" or "poorly" at influencing state politics, possibly indicating that EAS employees think the organization could or should do more to effectively influence public policy or electing friendly politicians. This result could also indicate that EAS employees simply do not feel heard by politicians, or that labor issues are not important to the state's publics.



Figure 5: Employee Perception of Political Influence (“ELECT” and “PUB POL”)

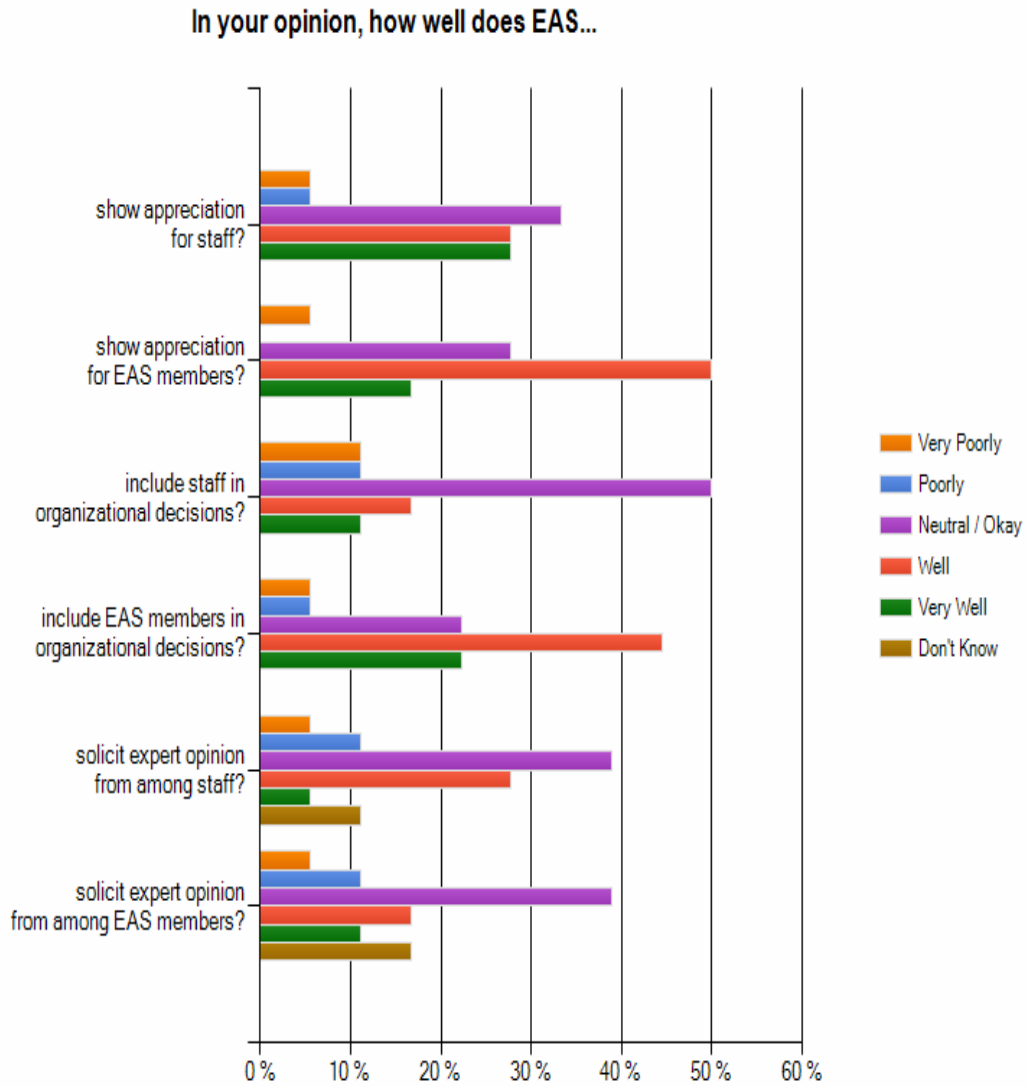


As shown below in Figure 6: Employee Perception of Employee and Member Treatment, Question Set 6 was designed to find out how EAS employees perceive their treatment by the organization. EAS claims to exist for state employees and the EAS membership, to work for their benefit, but how well does the organization treat its own employees? The responses to this question set provide insight into whether EAS's claims about supporting state workers are consistent with its treatment of its own workers.

The majority of respondents think that EAS does "well" or "very well" at showing appreciation for the staff (53%) and the membership (66%) of EAS. However, a significant percentage thinks that EAS only does "okay" or even "poorly" or "very poorly" at showing its appreciation. This possible disjunction could indicate that EAS employees are, or at least feel, underappreciated. This perception seems ironic for an organization whose purpose is to promote the best interests and welfare of state employees. More disturbing is the fact that 50% of EAS employees think EAS is only "okay" at including staff in organizational decisions, a result which again indicates that employees feel underappreciated or ignored. Similar results can be found regarding the soliciting of opinion from EAS staff and membership – 39% think EAS does only "okay" at this. This result also could be interpreted as staff and membership being ignored by the organization.

The fact that about 32% of those surveyed felt that EAS performed only "okay," "poorly," or even "very poorly" in regard to including the EAS membership in organizational decisions seems to point to a possible disjunction between the enduring and distinctive characteristics of member ownership of and involvement in EAS. Employees seem to think the membership is not, perhaps, as centrally involved in the organization's decisions as it should be.

Figure 6: Employee Perception of Employee and Member Treatment



### *Responses to Open-Ended Questions*

The final set of questions from the survey required respondents to provide their own comments rather than choosing from multiple options. The instructions for this question read, “For the final question, I’d like to know your perception of different attributes or characteristics of EAS as an organization. As well as you can, please provide a word or phrase which, in your opinion, best answers the following:” The sub-questions are listed below.

When asked, “What is the central characteristic which helps define EAS? (In other words, if you took away [blank], EAS would not be EAS.),” 72% of respondents indicated that its membership or state employees were the central defining characteristic of EAS. The remaining 28% of respondents used other phrases to describe EAS’s central characteristic, including “aggressiveness,” “personal agendas,” “unity,” “staff,” and “friendships between staff and membership.”

When asked, “What characteristic of EAS has endured since EAS’s beginning and will continue into the future?,” 72% of respondents indicated that members or state employees were the enduring characteristic of EAS. 31% of those respondents specifically mention EAS’s work regarding benefits or equality for state employees. The remaining 28% of respondents used more subjective concepts to describe EAS’s enduring characteristics, including the phrases “endurance to continue fighting,” “feeling of being an extended family,” “the feeling of being a family,” “strength,” and “pride and respect.”

Several respondents to this subquestion indicated that EAS’s political lobbying efforts on behalf of members are included as part of EAS’s enduring characteristics. Respondent comments included “looking out for State Employees trying to get better benefits,” “activists

working together, advocates for members,” “it’s [sic] attempt to increase benefits of its members,” and “working for active state employee’s [sic] and retired members.”

When asked, “What characteristic of EAS is unique? (In other words, what distinguishes EAS from other organizations?),” 56% of respondents indicated that members and state employees were the distinctive characteristic of EAS. Of those respondents, 30% specifically mention the large number of EAS members as being the distinctive characteristic of EAS. 33% of respondents used other phrases to describe EAS’s distinctive characteristics, including “decisions are made by members [of] the Executive Committee and Board of [Governors], not the staff,” “Progressive,” “a family that fights to improve the future,” “it represents both management and labor,” “effective,” and “strength in numbers.” 11% of respondents indicated “not sure” or “nothing” made EAS unique.

Three respondents to this subquestion made comments regarding relationships. One respondent indicated that the “rank and file staff interaction with members” is the characteristic which makes EAS unique. Another indicated “the loyalty [sic] from staff and members” makes EAS unique, while another mentioned “member participation.”

Taken as a whole, the responses to these open-ended questions indicate that the EAS membership or state employees are the central, the enduring, and the distinctive feature of EAS. Other responses indicate that EAS employees feel a sense of personal relationships between employees and members; many respondents used words like “family” or phrases like “activists working together” and “rank and file staff interaction with members.” This sense of having personal relationships seems to be a characteristic of EAS which is unique and distinctive. An emphasis on personal relationships could indicate that EAS employees see their jobs as more than just a job – they feel it is important for the organization to interact with the state employees

the organization was created to serve and that EAS does this better than other similar organizations.

### *Interviews*

Structured interviews were performed at EAS headquarters with three randomly-selected employees; by “randomly-selected,” I mean that I ran my finger down a list of EAS employees to select potential interviewees. The questions<sup>12</sup> were designed to probe a little further into the data collected from the survey; the interviews gave me an opportunity to follow up on any questions I had regarding the results from the online survey. The three EAS employees I interviewed all worked in departments other than the Communications Department. Although the employees were randomly chosen to be interviewed, I purposely eliminated Communications Department employees from the interview pool because of my extensive interactions, including interviews, with those employees. I also eliminated from consideration the four employees based in locations far away from the EAS headquarters, as well as employees with whom I had personal acquaintances. The three interview participants were Rita, Tyler, and Kay.

Rita, a 16-year veteran of EAS, had worked for the state General Assembly in the 1980s. In the early 1990s, she met a secretary for one of the state representatives, who told Rita that EAS was looking for a receptionist. Rita noted that compared to the General Assembly and another state agency she had worked for previously, EAS possessed several distinctive characteristics. For one thing, EAS was “more family-oriented.” At other places, she said, “you did your job and went home.” Comparing EAS with other employees’ associations, Rita confessed she didn’t know much about other organizations, but she felt that EAS “helps members more than other [organizations] do,” because EAS is “member-driven.” As a worker,

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<sup>12</sup> A copy of the entire interview protocol is included in Appendix E.

she felt that her work was appreciated; her perception was that other organizations did not appreciate workers: “[The employees] can say something [to employers of other organizations] but it won’t matter.” Rita felt strongly that EAS put a lot of effort into providing information for its membership, particularly by researching an issue; this effort made EAS different from other similar organizations. She also felt strongly that EAS “stands behind employees, retired and active. [EAS] offers more to retirees than other [employees’ associations].”

When asked about how EAS had changed over her years as an employee, Rita noted she had worked for several executive directors and had seen many staff changes, most due to retirement or moving out of state. She also mentioned that EAS has recently moved to a newer, larger, more modern building. She said that in the older building, “people were on top of each other;” now, people had more room, but she missed the “closeness” of the old building. She went on to say that the friendliness of employees was still there: “The changes are good.” When asked what a new EAS employee might find, Rita again emphasized the friendliness of EAS employees: “Everyone would make an effort to speak to [the new employee], make sure you’re comfortable.” She said that after a while, though, “the personalities come out [because EAS] employees speak their minds.”

Tyler had been with EAS for a year and a half. He had previously worked at a nearby state university and had heard about EAS “through casual conversations with people with political interests,” so when he found a job listing in the newsletter, he thought EAS would be a good place to work. Comparing EAS with the university and other places he had worked – a real estate agency, Starbucks, retail shops – Tyler said that they all had “hierarchy, [a] typical power structure.” But, he said, EAS encouraged him “to think more” and that a day at EAS was never routine. Comparing EAS to other employees’ associations, Tyler said he didn’t know many

other associations very well, though they seem “mostly the same.” Tyler stated that EAS was more “member-driven” than other associations, even if what the members want “may not be well thought out.” Tyler emphasized that EAS was the only employees’ association to work with both active and retired members: “Other [associations] don’t seem as vocal about retirees.” He also emphasized that EAS was an association, not a union.

While most of Tyler’s comments regarding EAS’s distinctive characteristics were positive, he did have some criticisms of the organization. He felt he and other EAS employees were treated well, though the pay they received was not as much as they deserved. Tyler said the organization was “fractured, but not broken,” due in some part to the “multiple personalities” within the organization. Many employees, he said, saw themselves and their jobs as the most important in the organization, resulting in what he called “junior high” behavior where the focus was on personal issues rather than solving a problem.

When asked how EAS had changed over the time he had worked there, Tyler stated the organization had mostly stayed the same: “dysfunctional.” His first month at EAS, he said, was “a nice honeymoon” which soon ended. Tyler felt that each department within EAS had its own “agenda” that sometimes interfered with problem solving. Conflicts were not always worked out in a mature manner; instead, “whoever throws the loudest tantrum” won. When Tyler was asked what a new employee might find at EAS, he said “the atmosphere varies depending on what department or part of the building you work in....Department managers vary. Some are laidback and some [employees in other departments] are not allowed to have fun.”

Kay had only been with EAS for about five and a half months. Kay, who found the EAS job listing through CraigsList, had previously worked for a construction company, a nonprofit children’s charity, and a New York City school district administration office. Interestingly, Kay



said that until her job interview, she thought EAS focused only on retirees, because of the emphasis on retiree issues. She found EAS to be distinct from her other employers in several ways, particularly in the way employees were treated. Kay indicated that the children's charity did not treat employees as would be expected: "[The charity] wants to treat kids well, but they didn't treat [their] staff well. [The workload and responsibility] wasn't worth the money." EAS, she said, was "totally opposite." She said she felt "cherished" by EAS, which "fights for staff" when necessary. When asked to compare EAS with other employees' associations, Kay said she was not familiar with other associations, but that she had been a union member with the NYC school system. She compared EAS favorably with the union, stating that EAS usually "goes beyond" for state employees to keep a person from unfairly losing his or her job. She also noted that although unions are stronger in New York than in EAS's state, the employees themselves were not necessarily better in New York. Kay stated that EAS was "very informative, not secret" about issues like job losses or pay raises; comparatively, other organizations she had worked for kept these types of issues "quiet."

When asked about how EAS had changed during her short time there, Kay said that no physical changes had occurred, but that one big event happened: EAS affiliated itself with the Service Employees International Union, one of the largest unions in the world. Kay thought she and EAS would probably see a lot of changes, but she was not nervous about potential changes because of the management's "openness;" staff meetings were held monthly to keep staff informed during the process of affiliation with SEIU. When asked what a new employee at EAS might find, Kay responded that respect from management could be expected. She said the work atmosphere was "very friendly" and "family-oriented," and that co-workers often ask about each other's family members.

The information gathered from these interviews highlights the importance of the EAS membership, the relationships between EAS employees and members, and retired state employees. It also highlights some of the disjunctions apparent in the results of the survey. For instance, while the idea that EAS is a family-oriented organization is to some extent supported by each of the three interviewees, Tyler is not completely onboard with that assumption, suggesting that for some employees, integrating personal and professional lives is not always desirable. Also intriguing is Tyler's use of the phrase "fractured but not broken" and "multiple personalities" to describe EAS. This idea of a fractured but not broken organization will reappear later in this dissertation. One particularly interesting result from these interviews is the fact that only Kay, the newest employee I interviewed, mentioned EAS's affiliation with SEIU. In fact, nowhere in the survey responses was the affiliation even mentioned. The apparent lack of concern or interest of EAS employees about the affiliation with SEIU seems odd; though the affiliation automatically increased EAS's political power, EAS employees do not yet consider this new power when discussing EAS's organizational identity.

#### *What is EAS's Organizational Identity?*

Using Albert and Whetten's (1985) CED theory of organizational identity as a framework, a clear picture of EAS's organizational identity can be seen through employee perceptions as revealed through the responses to the survey questions and to the structured interviews, and through the values communicated through item topics and sections of The Informer, EAS mission statements, and Article II of the bylaws. Remember, according to Albert and Whetten, the answer to "Who are we as an organization?" must fulfill all three of the criteria for determining organizational identity: claimed features of central character, distinctiveness, and temporal continuity. Four features appear to be important to EAS's organizational identity:

- Relationships among EAS employees are a distinctive feature
- Gaining and wielding political influence is an enduring and central feature
- Focus on retirees and retirement issues is a distinctive and central feature
- Commitment to benefiting the EAS's membership is the central, enduring, and distinctive feature

While each of these features is valuable to EAS, only one fulfills all three of Albert and Whetten's criteria; only EAS's membership are perceived by EAS employees as the central, the enduring, and the distinctive feature of the EAS organization. The following sections examine each of these important features in some detail.

### *EAS Employees*

According to their own perceptions, EAS employees in general seem to have productive working relationships; in fact, these relationships are often identified by EAS employees as both a distinctive and a central characteristic of the organization. An important part of EAS's purposes, according to its Bylaws, is to facilitate communication among state employees and to promote professionalism of state employees. A disconnect in this area between EAS's stated purposes (to make workers better informed and more professional) and what actually happens in the EAS workplace is, at the least, ironic. After all, one would expect an organization which exists to promote the best interests of workers would itself promote the best interests of its own workers. Most EAS employees agree that the organization – that is, the people who make up the staff, management, and leadership of EAS – does promote the interests of EAS employees; however, some intriguing areas of disconnect do exist. These areas of disconnect will be briefly introduced in the following paragraphs; a more detailed discussion will be presented Chapter 6: Analysis.

In their interviews, EAS employees Rita and Kay said that one of the distinctive characteristics of EAS is its friendliness and “family” orientation. Kay used the word “cherished” when asked how she felt as an EAS employee, and said she felt an “openness” in the organization’s information-sharing processes (for example, monthly staff meetings) that was not displayed at other organizations where she had worked. However, it would appear from looking at the survey results from EAS employees that while many of them generally agreed with what Kay and Rita said, many others did not. When asked how well EAS showed appreciation for staff, 56% of respondents felt that EAS did so “well” or “very well,” though a third of respondents felt EAS was only “okay” at showing appreciation and 11% felt they were “poor” or “very poor” in this area.

Interviewee Tyler felt EAS employees were friendly, but he, like some other employees, had generally negative perceptions of how management treated staff. For instance, half of the survey respondents felt EAS did only an “okay” job at including staff in organizational decisions, and 22% felt EAS did a “poor” or “very poor” job; only 28% felt EAS did this “well” or “very well.” Many survey respondents (39%) felt EAS did an “okay” job at soliciting expert opinion from among its staff, while a third felt EAS did “well” or “very well.” 17% thought EAS did a “poor” or “very poor” job soliciting opinions. Overall, however, EAS employees seem to feel the organization is responsive to their needs: 79% of survey respondents indicated that EAS was “often” or “always” responsive to the needs of EAS staff. 21% responded that EAS was “often not” or “sometimes” responsive to their needs, but no one indicated EAS was “never” responsive.

### *Political Influence*

EAS was originally founded in 1946 for the purpose of voicing the needs of state employees to the state's General Assembly, making it both an enduring and a central characteristic of EAS's organizational identity. The desire for political influence can be seen even in the publication schedule of EAS's newsletter The Informer, which is published to coincide with the schedule of the General Assembly. By aligning the publication of their newsletter with the General Assembly's schedule, EAS is able to target their audience with specific information the audience will need to participate in the political process. For instance, an edition of the newsletter is published in May, providing the membership with critical information in time to lobby the General Assembly and the Governor's Office before the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1 when the governor must sign into law the state's annual budget. The August edition of the newsletter highlights the budget items that EAS lobbied for, endorsed, or otherwise supported to have included in the budget; these highlights serve to show its membership and other readers (including state politicians) how strong EAS's political influence is.

EAS employees generally perceived the organization's political influence to be effective. When asked how well EAS influenced public policy in the state, a large majority (61%) responded "well" or "very well." A third felt EAS did an "okay" job at influencing public policy, while only 6% felt they did a "poor" job. When asked how well EAS did at endorsing and electing politicians who are supportive of state employees, a very large majority (72%) responded that EAS did "well" or "very well." 17% thought EAS did "okay" and 11% thought EAS did "poorly" at endorsing or electing employee-friendly politicians. Although no respondent explicitly used the word "political" to describe EAS, several respondents alluded to

EAS's political aims. For instance, one comment said that EAS's central defining characteristic was that it "protects the rights of state employees," an inherently political endeavor. When asked about EAS's enduring characteristic, several respondents pointed to EAS's political work: "looking out for State Employees trying to get better benefits," "activists working together, advocates for members," "it's [sic] attempt to increase benefits of members," and "endurance to continue fighting" were among the comments from the survey.

### *Retired EAS Members*

Although EAS originally focused solely on active state employees, rather than retirees, the organization evolved to include retirees. In fact, the year before this study took place, EAS created a new position within the organization, the Retirement Director, to help focus EAS's efforts to address the needs of retired state employees, especially retired EAS members. While the EAS membership in general is seen as the most important feature of EAS, as discussed in the next section, the focus on retired members is seen as a central and distinctive part of EAS's organizational identity. In their interviews, Rita, Tyler and Kay noted EAS's distinctive focus on retirees. Tyler emphasized that EAS was the only employees' association he knew of that was "vocal" about retirees; Kay said that the focus on retirees was so sharp that until her job interview, she was under the impression that EAS worked solely on retiree issues. Rita felt strongly that EAS "stands behind employees, retired and active" and that EAS "offers more to retirees" than any other employees' association she knew of.

The survey responses from other EAS employees support what the three interviewees reported. When asked how well EAS promoted the best interests and welfare of retired state employees, every single respondent indicated EAS did this either "well" (63%) or "very well" (37%). When asked how responsive EAS was to the needs of retired state employees, an

overwhelming majority (90%) indicated EAS did this “always” or “often.” A very large majority of respondents (78%) also believed that EAS “often” or “always” provided information about EAS to retired state employees.

### *EAS's Membership*

Although several features are important to the identity of EAS, clearly the most important feature is the EAS membership, including both active and retired state employees. It is the one feature which is perceived as meeting all three of Albert and Whetten’s criteria: EAS members are the seen as the essence of the organization (Central), the members distinguish EAS from other similar organizations (Distinctive), and the membership of state employees in EAS has remained the same since the organization’s inception (Enduring).

When asked directly to provide a word or phrase describing EAS’s central defining characteristic, a large majority (72%) of survey respondents indicated that state employees and/or the EAS membership were central to EAS’s identity. When asked what characteristic of EAS had endured since the beginning and would continue into the future, another large majority (72%) indicated that state employees and/or EAS members were the enduring characteristic of EAS. A smaller majority (59%) of survey respondents indicated that the EAS membership and/or state employees were the distinctive characteristic which set EAS apart from other similar organizations. Of those respondents, a third specifically mention the large number (55,000) of EAS members as an important component of EAS identity.

Elsewhere in the survey, EAS employees were asked about their perceptions of how EAS members are treated or regarded by the organization as a whole. When asked if EAS is responsive to the needs of the EAS membership, a large majority (79%) of respondents indicated “always” or “often.” A very large majority of respondents (83%) felt that EAS “often” or

“always” encouraged EAS membership to feel like owners of the organization. A large majority (78%) felt EAS provided transparency regarding the inner workings of EAS to the EAS membership. A majority (67%) felt that EAS did “well” or “very well” in showing appreciation for EAS members, while a similar majority (68%) felt EAS did “well” or “very well” including EAS members in organizational decision-making.

### *Chapter Conclusion*

In this chapter, I discussed the results of my inquiries into the organizational identity of EAS, especially as that identity is perceived by EAS employees. The organizational identity (CED) of EAS was characterized as focusing particularly on the EAS membership, but also on EAS employees, political influence, and retired state employees. In Chapter 5, I present the results of my study of the EAS review and revise group and review processes for The Informer; this part of the study was undertaken in order to discover the ways in which EAS’s organizational identity influences or otherwise relates to the group’s review processes, and to discover the ways in which the review group and its processes contribute to EAS’s identity. In Chapter 6: Analysis, I tie together some of the threads presented in this chapter and the next, in order to make visible the connections between EAS’s organizational identity and the processes of the review and revise group. Chapter 6 also includes a discussion of the intriguing disjunctions or disconnections which were uncovered by the survey and interview responses of EAS employees, as well as some which were uncovered by the study of the review and revise group and the processes undertaken to create The Informer.



## CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF THE REVIEW AND REVISE GROUP'S CULTURE

### *Introduction*

This chapter explores the culture of the EAS review and revise group. The driving question of this chapter is, “How can the culture of the review and revise group be characterized?” To understand the group’s culture, observations of the group’s review and revise processes were conducted, including review and revision sessions and face-to-face meetings; in addition, modes and frequencies of margin comments made by reviewers were analyzed, as was the content of the comments. Using Susan Kleimann’s (1993) framework from her study “The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review,” a set of characteristics which help define the culture of the review and revise group can be seen. Kleimann identifies three main aspects of the review process that are influenced by a review group’s culture: “[T]he different cultures of individual divisions [in an organization] affect every aspect of the review process, from the structure of the process to the way reviewers frame their written comments to the number of written comments” (p. 57). Kleimann’s framework has been adapted slightly to work with the EAS review and revise group; for instance, the EAS review and revise group often used orally-delivered review comments in addition to written, so oral comments were also examined for this study. Three broad features characterize what Kleimann calls a collaborative culture. According to her case study of two divisions at the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), collaborative cultures

- Structure their review process using concurrent review, a flattened hierarchy, widely available written guidance, and stipulated deadlines;
- Conduct face-to-face meetings to consolidate and/or reconcile comments; and

- Use statements and questions in comments nearly half the time, emphasizing the negotiative aspects of revision / review (pp. 62-67).

Once the review and revise group's culture is established, we will see more clearly any threads or connections which can be made between the organization's identity and the ways EAS's organizational identity influences (or does not influence) the process of the collaborative revision and review done for The Informer. Identifying and studying these connections can show how the group's review processes influence or otherwise relate to the identity of EAS. It can also show how the culture of the writing workgroup affects the group's processes and the final written product, and also affects and is affected by organizational identity. After this chapter, an analysis follows, which links the writing processes discussed in this chapter and the organizational identity of EAS as discussed in the previous chapter.

#### *Description of Review and Revise Group Participants*

The review and revise group was comprised of four core members who did the bulk of the work and two other members. The core members of the review and revise group consisted of two people whose jobs as editor-in-chief and managing editor made them directly responsible for the newsletter, and two associate editors who supported the two other core members with tasks like copyediting and fact-checking. In addition to making up the review and revise group, these four core members also comprise the Communications Department. The other two group members were the organization's legal counsel, who reviewed and approved article content from a legal perspective "so we don't get sued," and EAS's executive director, who had little direct input in revision or reviewing, but whose opinion, as the editor-in-chief stated, "always matters," especially since the executive director has final approval over the publication.

Table 3: Review and Revise Group Positions and Responsibilities, below, lists the pseudonyms of each group member, along with a number signifying his or her hierarchical position within the review and revise group, though not necessarily within EAS as a whole, and his or her job title at the time of the field study. Pseudonyms are used for all names in this study, including those in the table. The table also provides information about the major responsibilities of each group member and about each member's main focus during the review and revise process.

Table 3: Review and Revise Group Positions and Responsibilities

<b>Position in Hierarchy/ Pseudonym of Reviewer</b>	<b>Job Title / Responsibilities</b>
(1) Dan	Executive Director <i>Approves final Content List</i> <i>Writes a column</i> <i>Approves final proof of newsletter</i>
(2) Tim	Chief of Staff / General Counsel <i>Writes a column</i> <i>Reviews text of articles</i> <i>Review Focus = Legal perspective</i>
(3) Terri	Director of Communications / Editor-in-Chief <i>May contribute to Content List; Approves Content List</i> <i>Writes articles; alternates writing front page with Elaine</i> <i>Review Focus = Rhetorical Content</i>
(4) Elaine	Assistant Director of Communications / Managing Editor <i>Draws up initial Content List</i> <i>Writes articles; alternates writing front page with Terri</i> <i>Review Focus = Grammar</i>
(5) Cassie	Associate Editor <i>May contribute to Content List</i> <i>Writes articles and photo cutlines (captions)</i> <i>Review Focus = Fact checking</i>
(6) Melissa	Advertising Manager <i>Coordinates advertising for newsletter</i> <i>Writes articles</i> <i>Review Focus = Punctuation</i>

As mentioned in Chapter 3: Methods, the core members of the review and revise group have a variety of professional and education backgrounds. Terri has an undergraduate degree in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia and a Masters degree in Government from Johns Hopkins University. Before coming to work for EAS five years prior to this study, she spent many years in military and government service. Elaine has an undergraduate degree from a Midwestern university, and had experience in journalism and communications before joining EAS seven years prior to this study. Melissa and Cassie both have undergraduate degrees from local universities. Melissa served as an intern for EAS before she was hired permanently, just a couple of year before this study. Cassie had experience in communications, and of the four core members of the review and revise group, had been employed by EAS the longest – about nine and a half years.

#### *Production Cycle of The Informer*

The 16-page full-color newsletter is published four times a year in coordination with the schedule of the state’s legislative body, the General Assembly, consisting of a House of Representatives and a Senate. As shown below in Table 4: The Informer 2007-2008 Publication Schedule, the production of The Informer starts about five weeks before the newsletter arrives in the mailboxes of the EAS membership. EAS membership and employees are invited to submit articles for the newsletter on any topic they are interested in, though Terri said on rare occasion she will solicit an article from an expert. However, the organization’s preference is that anyone who writes an article be an EAS member, so the writer is asked to join the organization; Terri will “rarely” waive this requirement. (See Appendix G for a list of membership eligibility criteria.) The majority of articles is written by the four core members of the review and revise group. When an article is submitted by an EAS employee outside of the Communications

Department (i.e., Insurance Department, Retiree Department, etc.), that department’s director indicates approval of the article by “signing off” (EAS’s term) before publication.

Table 4: The Informer 2007-2008 Publication Schedules

<b>Edition</b>	<b>External Copy Deadline (M)</b>	<b>Director Sign-off (F)</b>	<b>Move to design studio for layout (M 12 p.m.)</b>	<b>Proofs T, R, M (T) Legal Review (T)</b>	<b>Publication to [Printer] (T 9 a.m.)</b>	<b>To [CES Capital] (F 9 a.m.)</b>	<b>To USPS (W)</b>	<b>In Members’ Mailboxes (F)</b>
<b>Nov 2007</b>	Sept 17	Sept 21	Sept 24	Oct 2, 4, 8	Oct 9	Oct 12	Oct 17	Oct 26
<b>March 2008</b>	Jan 22 (T)	Jan 25	Jan 28	Feb 5, 7, 11	Feb 12	Feb 15	Feb 20	Feb 28
<b>May 2008</b>	March 24	March 25	March 31	April 8, 10, 14	April 15	April 18	April 23	May 2
<b>Aug 2008</b>	June 23	June 27	July 7	July 15, 17, 21	July 22	July 25	July 30	Aug 8

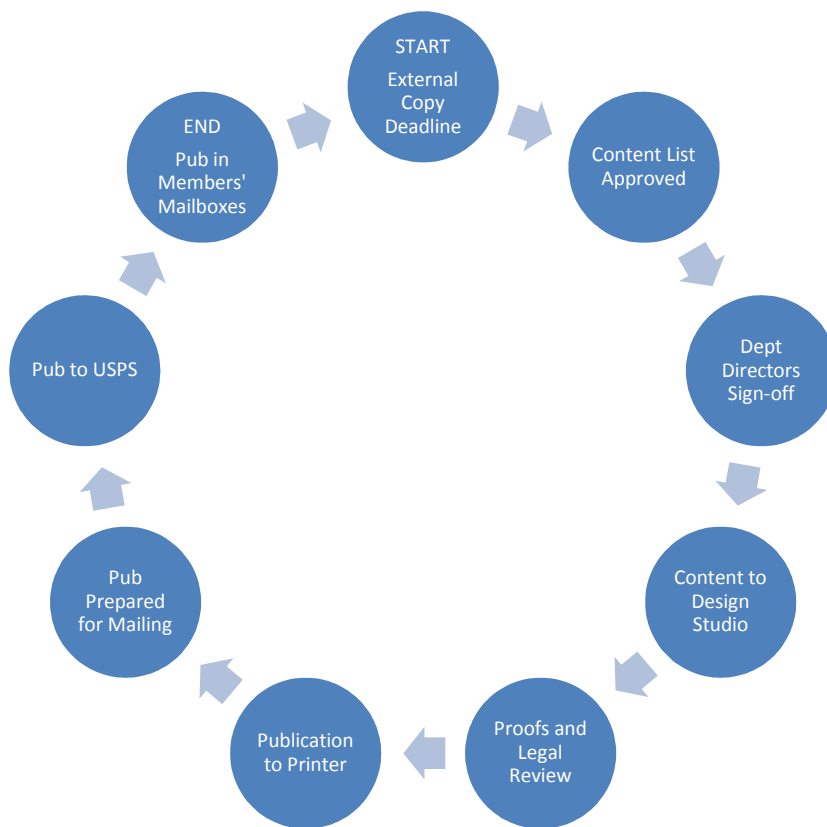
Illustrated below in Figure 7: The Informer Production Cycle, the cycle begins with the creation of the content list<sup>13</sup>, a guide for the reviewers regarding the articles, photos, and advertisements for the upcoming edition of the newsletter. The content list is based in large part on the topics of the articles and/or photos submitted by EAS membership or employees and articles written by members of the review and revise group; the articles written by membership or other non-employees are referred to by the Communications Department as “external copy.” Elaine draws up the initial content list, with Cassie contributing information regarding the advertisements for the edition; the content list is then approved by Terri, who said she occasionally adds or subtracts information if necessary, though during this study she did not. After the content list meets their approval, Terri and Elaine bring the list to EAS’s executive

<sup>13</sup> An example of an EAS content list is included in Appendix D.

director, Dan, for a discussion of the article content, the photographs, and the advertisements. At the end of the meeting, Dan indicates his approval.

When I asked Terri if Dan had ever refused to approve the topics for The Informer, she said he had not because any problems were negotiated and worked through. Because of his position as executive director, Terri said, Dan ultimately has the final say on anything regarding the newsletter, but that he “rarely if ever” uses his authority because he trusts Terri and Elaine’s judgment and expertise as communicators. The content list review meeting is discussed in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

Figure 7: The Informer Production Cycle



The day the external copy is due, a face-to-face meeting of the four core members of the review and revise group is held in Terri's office to discuss word count for the articles, an important step in the process because of the limited amount of space available for content in the newsletter. Then each group member returns to her own office to begin individually revising the text of the articles, focusing on her area of expertise. For instance, Cassie writes all the "cutlines" or captions for the photographs, and she fact-checks article content; Melissa's expertise is in punctuation and spelling. Elaine and Terri focus on more global-level concerns, particularly rhetorical content or "messaging" in Terri's word, though both women also perform copyediting; Elaine focuses especially on grammar (sentence structure, subject/verb agreement, etc.). However, it should be noted that each core group member performs all the different types of editing, not only those in her area of expertise. The types of edits made by the review and revise group during this study are discussed in a later section.

After the first two rounds of collaborative reviewing, during which the articles' text is revised, copyedited, and fact-checked by the core members of the review and revise group (Terri, Elaine, Cassie, and Melissa), the content is sent via email to the designer. The designing of the newsletter is outsourced to a local company; the designer is not an employee of EAS, which is why she is not included in this study as a part of the review and revise group. In addition, she does not participate in reviewing the newsletter; rather, her task is simply to make the design changes as requested by the review and revise group. Within a week of receiving the content, the designer sends the first set of designed proofs – which includes text and graphics – back to Elaine via email. Over the course of three separate days spanning a week, revisions are made to the proofs, including a legal review by Tim, EAS's legal counsel. (As noted, a more detailed discussion of the edits will follow in a subsequent section.) The final version of The Informer is

sent to the printing company the next day. Three days after that, it is sent to a company which prepares the newsletters for mailing. Five days afterward, the ready-to-be-mailed Informers arrive at the post office, and EAS members receive their copies of the newsletter in their mailboxes within the week.

### *Content List Review Meeting*

A meeting to discuss the content of the upcoming edition of The Informer was held just after the external copy deadline. The meeting took place in the executive director's office and included Dan, the executive director; Terri, the editor-in-chief of the newsletter; and Elaine, the managing editor of the newsletter. The content list was drawn up by Elaine, who showed it to Terri for her approval before the two editors met with Dan to discuss the list and gain his approval. My main purpose for observing the content list review meeting was to observe the interactions between the three group members. In particular, I wanted to see if the opinions and expertise of the editors were seriously considered by the executive director. The evidence collected during the meeting indicates that Dan does indeed take under serious consideration any suggestions or comments made by Terri and Elaine, though ultimately he must make the final decision regarding approval of topics and/or content for the newsletter articles and other items, like photographs.

The digital audio recording of the content list review meeting was transcribed and divided into segments; a total of 18 segments were identified. Of these 18 segments, two segments involved relatively inconsequential matters (names of interns and what schools they were from); these two segments are not considered. As shown below in Table 5: Decisions Made During Content List Review Meeting, of the remaining 16 segments, Terri and Elaine's opinions prevailed in 63% of them, while Dan made the decision in 19% of the segments. Two



decisions (12%) were postponed until EAS’s legal counsel could be consulted, and one decision (7%) was postponed until a particular archived photo could be located. The fact that Terri and Elaine’s opinions prevailed more than three times as often as Dan’s is one sign among many that the EAS review and revise group utilizes a flattened – though not entirely flat – hierarchy during its review process. This flattened hierarchy and its effect on the review process is discussed in a later section of this chapter.

Table 5: Decisions Made During Content List Review Meeting

<b>Action</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Terri and Elaine prevail	10	63%
Dan prevails	3	19%
Decision postponed	3	19%

*Example of Terri and Elaine’s Opinions Prevailing*

In one segment, the group discussed how to present information about a retirement-related issue. Dan asks about different options, but after Terri and Elaine explain their thoughts on the matter, Dan defers to their expertise. The group’s comments illustrate the organization’s concern for EAS’s retired members and the value placed on communicating effectively with the membership, while also highlighting the tight production schedule of the newsletter.

Dan: Okay, [moving on to the] retirement [section]. What are we going to do next?

Elaine: We’re going to quote [the EAS insurance specialist] in the article.

Dan: Is there going to be a picture with that one?

Elaine: We don’t have one; we don’t have time. [Terri nods in agreement.]

Terri: We thought we’d just use some art.

Dan: We could just do a history. We could do an historic outline of events. Or is that too much?

Terri: If you're going to do the timeline of the treasurer [in the front page article], you are going to be timeline-killing people if you do this one too. Also, I think it would be better to save the timeline for next time when they [the insurance department] have a decision.

Dan: Okay, you're the expert.

### *Example of Dan's Opinion Prevailing*

In another segment, the group discusses options for a photo to accompany the front-page article<sup>14</sup> about a lawsuit filed by EAS against the state Treasurer's office. Terri offers some options for the photo; Dan flatly rejects one option but agrees with another. The careful consideration of the photo illustrates EAS's desire to communicate effectively with its membership, particularly about EAS's political influence.

Dan: What is the photo going to be?

Terri: In our heads, it was either going to be us dropping off the lawsuit at the courthouse or someone in this office, desk spread out with paper. And have someone kind of looking over them.

Dan: I don't like that one. The courthouse idea I like okay.

### *Description of the Review and Revise Sessions*

For the first round of collaborative reviewing, which occurred the same day the department directors reviewed and signed off on the articles, I stationed myself in the central hub of work that day, Terri's office. Review and revision took place throughout the entire day. At some point during the day, every member of the review and revise group either personally visited

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<sup>14</sup> In 2007, *Forbes* magazine insinuated that a payola scandal in the state Treasurer's office was negatively affecting the state employees' pension fund. To ascertain the truth of the accusations, EAS began requesting public records from the Treasurer's office. After a year of requests resulted in only incomplete records being provided, EAS filed a lawsuit to obtain the requested public records.

Terri's office or Terri spoke to him or her on the telephone. In addition to face-to-face and telephonic communication, a situation which I call "hallway chatter" took place fairly often. Here is an example of what I mean by hallway chatter: Melissa, who was sitting in her office reviewing an article written by Elaine, called out to Elaine who was sitting in her office, to question a particular edit Elaine had made and explained why she disagreed. Elaine, without getting up from her office chair, simply called back that Melissa's explanation was fine with her, giving Melissa permission to change the edit as she saw fit. I call this exchange hallway chatter because instead of using a conduit like the phone or email, the two reviewers used the hallway to transmit their ideas. A more detailed discussion of other oral exchanges is presented in a following section.

For the second round of collaborative reviewing, which took place on the morning of the day the content would be moved to the design studio for layout, I stationed myself in Elaine's office to observe several hours of review and revision. Similar to the activity during the previous session, every core member of the review and revise group either visited Elaine's office or Elaine spoke to her on the phone or in hallway chatter. At one point, Elaine joined Terri in Terri's office to do some heavy revision on an article written by an intern. Neither Dan nor Tim took part in this day's review.

The third round of collaborative reviewing took place the day EAS received the first proof from the design studio. The hub for the day's reviewing was Elaine's office. Each core member individually reviewed the proof, focusing on her area of expertise. Cassie checked the ads; Elaine compared the content list to the proof until she was satisfied that all the content was there. Elaine gathered the copies of the revised and reviewed proofs with margin comments, then consolidated all of the individually-made comments onto a clean copy of the proof. If any

conflicting revision advice came up, Elaine said she either makes the revision decision herself, discusses the different revision suggestions with Terri, or discusses the revision suggestion with the person who suggested the edit or the person who originally wrote the item. Terri came to Elaine's office later in the day to jointly review the margin comments and revision suggestions. As with previous sessions, this revision session included hallway chatter and several office visits. During this round of review and revision, EAS's legal counsel, Tim, reviewed the proof for any potential legal issues.

The fourth round of collaborative review and revision hit a slight snag early in the day: the designer was late in returning the second proof, the one which incorporated the previous round of revisions, to Elaine. When she finally received the proof, Elaine compared the second proof to the first one to ensure that all corrections were done properly; after that, she did another read-through of the proof. The other three core members of the review and revise group also read through the proof. Cassie and Elaine discussed on several occasions some factual corrections to the proof, both in Elaine's office and through hallway chatter. In this round, Elaine did much of the local-level editing, including tasks such as consulting the Associated Press Stylebook for advice on whether the phrase "P.O. Box" requires periods (it does), looking up on the Web the correct name for the Centers for Disease Control, and verifying the proper use of the word "principles" with a dictionary.

The fifth and final round of collaborative review and revision resulted in only minor changes to the third proof. Terri and Elaine normally do this last round together face-to-face, without the other two core members. During this study, however, Terri was out of town, so the two women reviewed the proof over the telephone. Elaine made all final changes to the proof and returned it to the design studio first thing the next morning.

### *Margin Comments*

For this project, “margin comment” is defined as any mark written on the draft by a reviewer. A “substantive margin comment” is a margin comment which has a rhetorical meaning, as contrasted with, say, a spelling correction or the deletion of a word to save space. The modes, or categories, used for analysis are based on Kleimann’s (1993) case study of the review processes at the GAO. Analysis of the modes allowed for the detection of patterns, such as which reviewer made the most comments, how many comments were direct changes, and how often statements and questions were used. Such information, according to Kleimann, provides an indication of the influence of social context, which includes organizational identity, on the process of review. As shown below in Table 6: Modes and Frequency of Margin Comments, margin comments were classified into four modes: Statement, Question, Direct Change, and Non-Word Symbol.

Table 6: Modes and Frequency of Margin Comments

<b>Name of Reviewer</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>DC</b>	<b>Total</b>
Dan	0	0	0	0	0
Tim	4	0	4	6	14
Terri	47	13	41	96	197
Elaine	34	10	7	174	225
Cassie	17	22	74	25	138
Melissa	8	16	13	142	179
<i>Subtotals</i>	110	61	139	443	<b>753</b>

In addition to classifying margin comments by their modes, I also examined the substance of the reviewers’ comments in order to establish the presence of connections between the review and revise group’s revision suggestions and EAS’s organizational identity and communicated values. As can be seen below in Table 7: Communicated Values Reflected in Substantive Margin Comments, substantive margin comments were classified into six categories:

EAS Membership, Providing Accurate Information, Political Influence, Communication with Membership, Retirees, and EAS Employees. Data analysis shows that the category with the most occurrences is EAS Membership at 30%, meaning that 30% of all substantive margin comments made by the review group were made specifically with the membership in mind. However, if one were to consider three other categories – Providing Accurate Information, Communicating with Membership, and Retirees – as indicating the review group’s focus on and concern with the EAS membership, then about 70% of all substantive margin comments were made with the EAS membership in mind. These large percentages indicate that the review group’s revision suggestions are connected to EAS’s communicated values and organizational identity, particular in the group’s focus on the EAS membership.

Table 7: Communicated Values Reflected in Substantive Margin Comments

<b>Communicated Value</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
EAS Membership	23	30%
Providing Accurate Information	18	23%
Political Influence	17	22%
Communication with Membership	7	9%
Retirees	6	8%
EAS Employees	5	7%

Where appropriate, I incorporate into the presentation of the examples of the modes some specific examples to illustrate how the group’s margin comments are a reflection of EAS’s most important organizational identity traits or characteristics. As a reminder, these characteristics of EAS’s organizational identity are EAS’s membership, retired members in particular, and, to a lesser extent, political influence and EAS employees. Naturally, any revisions made to an organization’s official documents can be interpreted as being for the benefit of the document’s intended audience. Because the primary intended audience for The Informer is the EAS membership, one could assume that all revision suggestions regarding the newsletter would be

made with the EAS membership in mind. However, in this section I will point out specific instances where the comments are directly related to the organization's valuation of EAS membership. Some examples are provided and briefly discussed in this section; a more detailed discussion appears in a later section of this chapter.

### *Examples of Statements*

On a page with three brief articles with photos, Melissa made a statement requesting uniformity among the articles. Her statement said, "all 3 either need bylines or contact info or both." Each of the three articles was written by an EAS employee and the topic of each article was an EAS member (one of whom was also an employee). Melissa's call for uniformity reflects not only a desire for a professionally-presented document, but her comment also shows the organization's emphasis on providing ways for the membership to communicate with EAS employees.

During his review of the front-page article, legal counsel Tim added a statement to the draft noting some rhetorical issues to be addressed by later revisions. The original sentence read, "...we requested very detailed and specific records or 'convincing evidence' that [the state treasurer's] office acted responsibly and reasonably as required by the public records law..." Tim circled part of the sentence and wrote, "sounds like a new request – sounds like we received specific documents – neither is true, totally." Tim also suggested adding either the word "reiterated" or "repeated" to indicate the records had been requested more than once but the request received no response from the government agency. Tim's margin comments illustrate not only his desire to present accurate information, but also the organization's doggedness in influencing public policy in the state and its desire to wield its political influence for the benefit of all state employees, including the EAS membership.

### *Examples of Questions*

On a column written by EAS President Lydia Southern<sup>15</sup>, Cassie questioned the plural of the word BlackBerry, the mobile device. Southern had pluralized it “Blackberries,” but Cassie wrote on her draft, “Blackberry’s?” (After consulting the BlackBerry website, Elaine discovered the preferred plural is BlackBerrys.)

On an article of “external copy” written by an EAS member, Terri asked for help from the other reviewers clarifying an important point. The article was about the annual enrollment for the state’s health plan. Terri wrote, “Article confuses me – must people ‘switch’ or will they be automatically switched to 80/20 or another plan if they do nothing?” Terri’s question regarding the clarity of the article’s information illustrates EAS’s responsiveness to the needs of its membership, as well as the organization’s attention to the benefits and welfare of state employees. In this case, Terri wanted to ensure that the audience understood exactly what they must do in order to benefit from the state’s health plan.

### *Examples of Direct Changes*

In an article she had written about an EAS member’s bid for a General Assembly seat, Terri inserted additional material to provide more information about the incumbent. The original sentence read, in part: “The [state] Center for Public Policy Research ranked Rep. [Smith] 116 out of 120 [in terms of effectiveness].” Terri’s direct change made the sentence read this way: “...ranked Rep. [Smith] 116 out of 120 in 2005 and 119 out of 120 in 2003.” Terri’s margin comment shows that the incumbent representative was not an effective leader for the previous several years. In the context of the article, her comment illustrates EAS’s attempt to wield

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<sup>15</sup> Pseudonym



political influence, in part by getting state employee-friendly political candidates – in this case Rep. Smith’s opponent – elected to the General Assembly.

On the column by the EAS President, Melissa made a direct change to the punctuation of a sentence. The original sentence read: “The association is at a crossroads, we just have to make our minds up what we really want for our employees we represent...” Melissa corrected the comma splice to make the new passage read: “The association is at a crossroads. We just have to make our minds up...”

### *Examples of Non-Word Symbols*

Cassie’s area of focus during revision sessions is fact-checking. On an article announcing the candidacy of an EAS member/employee, Cassie fact-checked several items: a state representative’s name and title, his political affiliation and the name of the county he represented, and the date of his party’s primary. Over each of these items, Cassie placed a checkmark to indicate these facts were verified. In addition to illustrating the review and revise group’s scrupulous attention to factual accuracy, Cassie’s margin comment shows EAS’s attention to electing state employee-friendly representatives, in part by providing accurate election-related information to the EAS membership.

On one of the designed proofs, Elaine noticed a discrepancy in the kerning of the front page article. She drew an upward arrow ( ↑ ) on the proof to indicate the spacing needed to be pushed up a bit.

### *Oral Exchanges in Review and Revise Sessions*

For this dissertation, the term “oral exchanges” includes only spoken discourse. While Rachel Spilka (1990) defines oral discourse to include “writing resembling speech, such as comments written in margins” (p. 45), the project at hand distinguishes between what I call

margin comments and those comments made face-to-face or on the telephone between two or more members of the review and revise group. These oral exchanges included telephone conversations, hallway chatter, a meeting, group review and revise sessions, and what I call “the office pop-in,” which is similar to hallway chatter, but occurs when one person is in her office and a person in the hallway simply “pops” her or his head into the office to make a quick statement or ask a question. To make analysis easier, digital audio recordings were transcribed, supplemented by handwritten field notes, to produce a written document. Upon reviewing the information, I found that Kleimann’s (1993) suggestions regarding characteristics of a collaborative process could be found, to varying degrees, in the oral exchanges of the review and revise group. These characteristics helped form the basis of the categories of analysis, as shown below in Table 8: Frequency of Oral Exchanges Categories in Review and Revise Sessions. The categories are

- Advice-seeking,
- Negotiation / Discussion,
- Agreement / No Discussion, and
- Sharing Organizational Knowledge or Experience.

“Advice-seeking” occurred when advice was sought by a member of the review and revise group; often the advice was sought on the basis of a member’s specialized expertise, like legal training or knowledge of language mechanics. Sometimes the asker simply needed another set of eyes (“Does this look right?” “Should I use this word or that one?”). Advice was sought from within the review and revise group, from other EAS employees, and from texts like a dictionary, a style guide, or a website.

“Negotiation / Discussion” occurred during discussions among members of the review and revise group. Different options for solving a problem were expressed by one or more members, followed by a discussion regarding the pros and cons of the option(s). The members taking part in the discussion negotiated until a solution or a best option was chosen.

“Agreement / No Discussion” occurred when the group members agreed to a particular change to the text without discussion or negotiation, or an option was chosen with no discussion of different options.

“Sharing Organizational Knowledge or Experience” occurred when the group members used their knowledge of EAS or their experience within the organization to solve a problem. At other times, a newer member asked to be taught something about how the organization works, allowing her to “expand [her] knowledge of the organization” (Kleimann 65).

Table 8: Frequency of Oral Exchanges Categories in Review and Revise Sessions

<b>Category</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Advice-seeking	29	39%
Negotiation / Discussion	22	29%
No Discussion / Agreement	15	20%
Sharing Organizational Knowledge or Experience	9	12%

### *Examples of Oral Exchanges*

Following are specific examples of how the four categories of oral exchanges occurred during face-to-face collaborative review and revise sessions. A brief introductory paragraph will provide some context for each of the exchanges, including information about the session, the participants, and which category is exemplified. I also point out, where appropriate, how the examples of oral exchanges reflect the four important characteristics of EAS’s organizational identity.

*Example 1: Advice-seeking*

This example of advice-seeking took place during the third review and revise session. After written margin comments were made to the articles and to the designed proofs, Terri and Elaine met in Elaine's office to consolidate the margin comments made individually by the review and revise core group members. Elaine made changes to an electronic version of the document on her computer, while Terri sifted through the four or five versions of the hard copies containing the handwritten margin comments. At various times during the session, the other members of the review and revise group stopped by or telephoned Elaine's office, usually to ask a question or provide an answer to a question Terri or Elaine had asked earlier. In this segment, Elaine and Terri discussed a portion of text, but found they could not make a decision without seeking Tim's advice related to his legal expertise:

Elaine: You told me Tim need to add something about court?

Terri: Yes, he mentioned that.

Elaine: I'll touch base with him about that.

Terri: I think [this phrase is] confusing. What do you think?

Elaine: He didn't mention it to me. He just told me [voices overlap].

Terri: I mean, we talk about this whole lawsuit, and then we say, "and we filed a friend of the court."

Elaine: Does that mean...I don't know what that means.

Terri: It's just like we're saying we support this effort, which we state without stating.

Then we filed a friend of the court. I don't know.

Later, Tim came to Elaine's office to offer his advice regarding the correct legal wording of the phrase. The phrase was changed to reflect Tim's expert opinion.

*Example 2: Negotiation/Discussion*

This example of Negotiation/Discussion took place during the fourth review and revise session held in Elaine's office. Terri and Elaine negotiated the wording of an article which was reprinted from another source. Both women noticed an error in the text, but they were reluctant to change the text from a previously-published article. Elaine offered an option for changing the text; Terri countered with a reason for sticking with the original. Elaine backed off, presumably in acknowledgment of Terri's higher position in the hierarchy, but Terri reconsidered Elaine's suggestion and accepted it. This segment illustrates the centrality of the EAS membership in two ways: Firstly, the large number of members is important to the reviewers and they want that number to be accurately stated; secondly, out of respect for the article's author, an EAS member, the reviewers are reluctant to change his article without an excellent reason for doing so.

Elaine: Okay, good. Right here where he says 54,000 members. I didn't know if we could put in brackets, "more than"? Or is that actually all right? We have more than 54,000 members.

Terri: It's 55,000 members.

Elaine: Or we could change it to 55, but this is directly from his.

Terri: If he's saying 54, and this is his flyer he sent out...

Elaine: Okay, that's fine.

Terri: If you want to put in brackets, "more than."

Elaine: That would be my suggestion.

Terri: Okay.

### *Example 3: Agreement/No Discussion*

This example of Agreement/No Discussion occurred during the fourth review and revise session held in Elaine's office. Terri and Elaine discussed where to place an announcement for a district-sponsored golf tournament / fundraiser. The Informer contains similar announcements in every edition, so the women were accustomed to the routine of placing them in the most appropriate section. Their oral exchange was brief, supplemented with points and nods, and the two arrived quickly at an agreement about where to place the announcement. The reviewers illustrate their concern for retired members by placing the announcement of the golf tournament – an activity popular with retirees – in the retirement section of the paper.

Terri: I mean, maybe the golf...

Elaine: [could go] Here on the retirement page.

Terri: Only because that works.

Elaine: Perfect.

Terri: Yeah.

### *Example 4: Sharing Organizational Knowledge or Experience*

This example of Sharing Organizational Knowledge or Experience occurred during the third review and revise session, which took place in Elaine's office. Cassie popped in to Elaine's office with a question about a woman who wrote a special article for The Informer. EAS's policy is that anyone who writes an article for the newsletter must be a member of EAS. Cassie could not locate the woman's name in the member database. Using their organizational knowledge of EAS, Elaine and Terri were able to offer some hints on finding the writer's name in the database. This segment illustrates the centrality of the EAS membership, and the importance of communication with the membership, to the review and revise group. Because

membership is valued, the reviewers only want employees or members to write articles for its member-directed publication.

Cassie: [when the writer spoke to you, Terri,] Did she talk to you as a member?

Terri: She, when I told Leslie Foster<sup>16</sup> that we didn't accept things from people who are not members, she was upset about that. And then photocopied her membership card and gave it to [an EAS employee].

Cassie: She did?

Elaine: Yes. Maybe she had a different last name.

Cassie: I wondered if she had a different last name. There's no Foster in the database.

Terri: Is that why I didn't see it.

Cassie: Maybe she's been married and she never changed her name.

Elaine: If you looked it up by number maybe it would be there. Maybe it was Foster-something.

Terri: Yeah because once I did that, I was like, oh no [I can't find it]. It's in District 40, I do remember that.

After her discussion with Elaine and Terri, Cassie went back to her office to search the member database again. Owing to Elaine and Terri's knowledge of the EAS member database and how to manipulate it to get information, Cassie was able to find Leslie Foster's name. The writer was confirmed to be an EAS member, and was therefore eligible to have her article published in The Informer.

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<sup>16</sup> Pseudonym

*What Are the Characteristics of the Review and Revise Group’s Culture?*

Using Kleimann’s framework (1993), a set of characteristics which help define the culture of the review and revise group can be seen. As previously mentioned, Kleimann’s framework has been adapted slightly to work with the EAS review and revise group. As shown below in Table 9: Collaborative vs. Hierarchical Cultures, three features characterize what Kleimann calls a collaborative culture: the structure of the review process, the nature and frequency of meetings, and the modes and frequency of margin comments. The following sections examine in some detail each of the characteristic features exhibited by the EAS review and revise group.

Table 9: Collaborative vs. Hierarchical Cultures (Based on Kleimann’s framework)

<b>Process Feature</b>	<b>Collaborative Culture</b>	<b>Hierarchical Culture</b>
Structure of Review Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concurrent review</li> <li>• Flattened hierarchy</li> <li>• Written guidance available to all group members</li> <li>• Stipulated due dates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sequential review</li> <li>• Vertical hierarchy</li> <li>• Reliance on unwritten guidance</li> <li>• Due dates can be stipulated or not</li> </ul>
Nature and Frequency of Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal meetings between editors / reviewers are required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal meetings between editors / reviewers are not mandatory</li> </ul>
Modes and Frequency of Commenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made fewer margin comments</li> <li>• Nearly half (48%) of EAS margin comments were statements and questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made nearly twice the number of margin comments</li> <li>• About 75% of GAO Division 2 comments were direct changes; about 20% statements and questions</li> </ul>

*Structure of the Review Process*

The EAS review and revise group utilized a concurrent review structure, as contrasted with a serial or sequential review structure. In a sequential structure, one reviewer sees the draft at a time. The reviewer makes changes and written margin comments on the draft, then sends



the draft to the next reviewer, who incorporates the comments as s/he sees fit, makes his or her own changes or comments, then sends the draft to the next reviewer. While a sequential structure does not necessarily set up an ineffective process, it does tend to quash negotiation; in fact, editors or reviewers may never know whether their changes were accepted or rejected or why. A collaborative culture will more often than not utilize concurrent review (Kleimann, 1993, p. 64). In a concurrent structure, a draft is sent to all reviewers at once. Each person makes changes to and adds comments on their draft, then the comments are reconciled to produce a revised draft, which may or may not then be returned to the reviewers for more comments and changes. All four of the EAS review and revise group core members received the first draft of text at one time, and each person made changes and comments. Although each person individually revised text, the group members also spent a great deal of time talking to each other, engaging in what Jack Selzer (1983) calls “communal brainstorming” (p. 180). After individual revisions were done, either all four core group members or Terri and Elaine would consolidate and/or reconcile the margin comments. Each round of revision followed a similar pattern: individual revision supplemented with oral exchanges or communal brainstorming, followed by a consolidation of comments. (These oral exchanges will be discussed in the next section.) This type of concurrent structure, according to Kleimann (1993), “flattens the hierarchy, because it suggests that reviewers have different but equally important information” (p. 64). This flattened hierarchy within the review and revise group seems to echo the larger organizational value of communicating with and providing information to the EAS membership, in that a flattened hierarchy emphasizes the importance of multiple perspectives and the distribution of information.

Two other features of a collaborative culture evident in the EAS review and revise group's review process which help flatten the hierarchy are widely-available written guidance and stipulated deadlines. The EAS review and revise group uses the AP Stylebook as its standard; any stylistic questions can be answered by referring to it. The group also has a widely-available policies and procedures guide overseeing their review process. These types of written guidance can settle many editorial disputes before they even begin, as when Melissa changed commas in a text. When asked by Terri to explain why she changed the commas, Melissa referred to the AP Stylebook. The availability of written guidance helps to equally distribute information, and consequently power, amongst the review and revise group members, encouraging a flattened hierarchy. In addition, the equal distribution of information reflects the larger organizational value of communicating with and providing information for its membership.

Stipulated deadlines also encourage a flattened hierarchy, allowing group members to know exactly when they are expected to have their review comments ready. For the EAS review and revise group in particular, deadlines are very important, as evidenced by the tight production schedule and publication cycle of The Informer. The newsletter is published in sync with the state's General Assembly schedule – highlighting EAS's desire to influence the politics of the state – and content is based, in large part, on that schedule. For instance, before an election The Informer will contain articles endorsing candidates, and before a major legislative vote is scheduled the newsletter will contain information about the issue at hand and about how EAS members can lobby the Assembly. Additionally, the review and revise group members acknowledge that the stipulated deadlines – stipulated up to a year in advance, in fact – help the

group maintain its focus and cohesion. As Terri noted, “Everyone knows everyone else’s deadlines, everyone knows they need the others [reviewers], so no one gets let down.”

#### *Oral Exchanges to Consolidate and/or Reconcile Comments*

Orality played an important role in the group’s review and revise sessions. As noted above, the entire review and revise process hinges on the group members’ ability to discuss revision options or choices, negotiate through any differences in opinion, and seek advice from any reliable source (including experts or texts). Throughout the first three review and revise sessions, all the core group members – Terri, Elaine, Cassie, and Melissa – spoke to each other quite often; the other two members, Dan and Tim, were consulted as necessary. The fourth session saw Terri and Elaine do much of the revision, with some input from Cassie and Melissa. For the final review and revise session, Elaine took the lead, but consulted with Terri as she “neatened up” (Elaine’s phrase) the final proof. Every session, whether all four core group members participated or only Elaine and Terri participated, relied heavily on oral exchanges between the group members.

These scheduled face-to-face sessions are an important characteristic of the EAS review and revise group’s process. According to Kleimann (1993), these types of meetings “create ownership of the [document....and] encourage collaboration” (p. 66). In the five review and revise sessions and meetings, the participants used Advice-seeking (39%) and Negotiation / Discussion (29%) to solve the largest majority of revision problems. They sometimes simply agreed with each other (20%) or had similar ideas about how to solve problems, and they occasionally used or shared their organizational knowledge (12%) to solve problems. The emphasis on advice-seeking and negotiation/discussion indicates that group members respect each other’s opinions and expertise, a crucial ingredient in a collaborative writing group’s

culture. This respect for a variety of perspectives and expertise allows the group to more effectively contribute to The Informer; consequently, the group is better able to communicate with the EAS membership in more effective ways.

#### *Modes and Frequencies of Margin Comments*

A large number of statements and questions often indicates a level of respect between group members regardless of his or her position in the hierarchy. It can also indicate that individual expertise and knowledge of the group members are valued. Direct changes, “in some cases...set up a hierarchical relationship of ‘I know and you don’t’ ...[amongst] the team. In other instances, the direct changes are part of the collaborative effort...to create a best product. The [GAO] division’s culture seems to determine which interpretation dominates” (Kleimann, 1993, p. 66).

In the core group, the two higher-ranking members of the team wrote more statements and questions compared to the two lower-ranking members: Terri wrote 60 margin comments which were either statements or questions; Elaine wrote 44 which were statements or questions. The lower-ranking members wrote statements and questions, too, although to a lesser degree than the higher-ranking members: Cassie wrote 39 margin comments as statements or questions, and Melissa wrote 24 as statements or questions. The total percentage of statements and questions was 22.7% of all the written comments.

Direct changes (DC), on the other hand, leave little to no room for negotiation or discussion. In this case, however, most of the direct changes are in spelling or punctuation, or deletions and word changes to decrease space; rather than purposefully shutting out discussion, many of these DCs may simply be a matter of practicality. As noted by Kleimann (1993), the culture of the review and revise group could help determine which interpretation of the number

of DCs is most likely. Some examples of these direct changes include the deletion of a descriptor phrase to decrease space (“House Bill 779, ~~an agency bill drafted by Retirement Systems staff,~~ was introduced by...”); a spelling correction (“principles” rather than “principals”); and a correction in punctuation (“Annual cost of [state] Medicaid enrollees; obesity: \$864 per person.” A note indicated the semicolon should be changed to an apostrophe). The EAS review and revise group actually displayed a proportion of statements and questions to direct changes similar to the GAO division which Kleimann identified as hierarchical. However, because many of the EAS group’s direct changes were related to practical, easily-solved matters (like saving space or changing punctuation to align with the AP Stylebook), and because, as Kleimann notes, the culture of the workgroup helps “determine which interpretation dominates” (p. 66), one could – and, in fact, I do – interpret the large number of DCs as an indication of a “collaborative effort...to create a best product” (p. 66).

As shown in Table 6 on page 91, the margin comments of the reviewed documents (text-only and proofs) contain more than twice as many direct changes as statements and questions. The seemingly high percentage of direct changes (58.8%) could be interpreted that EAS relies heavily on a hierarchical structure; however, as noted, an organization’s culture influences how the percent of direct changes is interpreted. As previously discussed, the observations of the review and revise sessions indicate that a great level of respect exists between all hierarchical levels of the group. The margin comments written by individual group members seem to be understood to be a starting point for discussion, not an ending. These margin comments, particularly those expressed in statements or questions, get ironed out and negotiated through during the oral exchanges, whether they are in meetings, in telephone calls, or in hallway chatter.

The highest-ranking member of the hierarchy, the executive director Dan, did not make any margin comments at all. His role in the review and revise process was limited to approving the content list, occasionally being consulted by other members of the group, and providing final approval of the publication. The second highest-ranking member, the legal counsel Tim, only contributed 14 comments, mostly related to his area of expertise. The next two members in the hierarchy, the editor-in-chief and the managing editor, each contributed roughly the same number of comments as each other: Terri (#3 on the hierarchy) made 197 comments, while Elaine (#4) made 225 comments. Of those comments, Elaine's comments were 77% direct changes, while Terri's margin comments were 49% direct changes. The two lower-ranking members of the hierarchy, the associate editor and the advertising manager, differed hugely in their proportions of direct changes: Cassie's margin comments were 18% direct changes, while Melissa's were 79% direct changes.

The proportions of direct changes could be related to each member's area of expertise. Most of Melissa's direct changes can be attributed to her area of expertise, mechanics. In order to make these changes, she simply corrected mechanical errors or typos by referring to EAS's style guide, the AP Stylebook. For example, when Terri questioned Melissa's deletion of some commas, Melissa simply referred to the AP Stylebook. Cassie, whose focus is on fact checking, made most of her direct changes to correct factual errors. For example, while revising the text of an article, Cassie changed a member's title from "Mrs." to "Dr." to reflect the woman's correct title; another of Cassie's DCs corrected an EAS district number. Terri often made direct changes related to punctuation or grammar, but her focus is on rhetorical content. For instance, in one direct change to an article about a rival union, Terri inserted a descriptive clause with additional information to help the audience understand what the union meant to EAS: "...a union

competing against [EAS] to represent state employees....” Elaine also made many DCs regarding punctuation and content, but her main focus during revisions is grammar. For example, she directly changed the tenses in part of an article to maintain consistency. The original sentence read, in part, “...they believe our request is fulfilled...;” Elaine’s DC changed the sentence to read, “...they believed our request was fulfilled.”

The members of the EAS review and revise group seem to focus on their collective and individual ownerships of the document they are creating. There is a sense of collaboration in which the members engage in substantive interaction, they take responsibility for the document, and they negotiate, coordinate, and resolve questions (Allen et al., 1987; Bosley, 1989; Galegher & Kraut, 1994). In other words, the human interactions which make up the writing process – the “collaboration” – are as important as the written text(s) the group produces. With one exception, the EAS review and revise group exhibits all the characteristics Kleimann (1993) assigns to a writing group with a collaborative culture. The EAS group utilizes concurrent review, flattens its hierarchy, makes written guidance available to all group members, stipulates its due dates well in advance, and requires formal meetings between reviewers. The only characteristic that is different is that the EAS review and revise group uses roughly the same proportion of direct changes to statements and questions in its margin comments as a group that exhibits a hierarchical culture. One explanation for this anomaly is that Kleimann’s study focused on the review process after copyediting had already been completed. Consequently, her study participants may have been more concerned with global-level or rhetorical issues, rather than on punctuation or spelling requiring direct changes.

### *Substance of Margin Comments*

Although I am deviating slightly from Kleimann's (1993) framework, an examination of the substantive margin comments is useful. Kleimann did not examine in detail the content of the margin comments written by the GAO writing groups, and so did not include specific content changes in her characteristics of a collaborative writing group culture. However, for the EAS review and revise group, the content of their comments reveals not only a collaborative culture, but also a strong identification with EAS's communicated values and, consequently, EAS's organizational identity. This identification will be examined at length in the next chapter.

The substance of the review and revise group's margin comments indicates that each of these values is considered during the review processes for The Informer. For example, the largest proportion (30%) of substantive changes made to the text of the newsletter showed a concern for the EAS membership, while 23% of substantive changes were made to improve the delivery of accurate information to the EAS membership and 22% were made to enhance or showcase EAS's influence over state politics. These values-related substantive changes indicate a sort of "buy-in" amongst the review and revise group members in regard to EAS's organizational identity. As noted, a further exploration of the identification of the group members to EAS as an organization will be provided in the next chapter.

### *Chapter Conclusion*

As with any organization, EAS communicates its values through its official documents, like its newsletter, mission statements, and bylaws. An analysis of these documents showed that some of the most important communicated values of EAS are the centrality of its membership, the providing of information to and communication with its membership, political influence on behalf of its membership, the centrality of retired state employees and EAS members, and the



importance of EAS employees. In this chapter, I explored the processes undertaken by the EAS review and revise group in the production of the EAS newsletter, The Informer, and discussed the results of my inquiries into the culture of the workgroup. Ultimately, I characterized the culture of the review and revise group as a collaborative one. As previously noted, the next chapter focuses on making visible any significant connections between EAS's organizational identity and the processes of the review and revise group. Additionally, Chapter 6 offers a discussion of some disjunctions or disconnections between the organization's identity and the processes of the workgroup.

## CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS

### *Introduction*

My research into EAS's organizational identity and collaborative writing processes proved a fertile soil rich with questions. As with most interesting research, the questions raised outnumber answers provided. In this dissertation, I have examined the organizational identity of the Employees Association of the State and explored the culture and processes of the EAS review and revise group. In this chapter, I will make visible the connections between these two elements – organizational identity and the review and revision processes within the organization – in order to discover the implications of those connections. I will also make visible any disconnections between EAS's identity and its writing processes. Before I go any further, let me directly ask the obvious questions: Why should these connections be examined? In what ways does an organization benefit if its actions (for instance, as in this case, review processes) are reflective of the organization's identity? Two answers became evident during my study. Firstly, an alignment of the review and revise group's processes (as a representation of organizational actions) and EAS's organizational identity means a stronger, more credible, and ultimately more effective ethos for The Informer and, consequently, for the organization. Secondly, the organization benefits from an alignment in terms of collaboration, cooperation, and commitment to the organization on the part of its employees. If employees identify with the organization, if they buy in to the organization's ethos and its values, they are more likely to be productive organizational members.

### *The Voices of EAS*

Although somewhat controversial (see Peter Elbow's 2007 article in College English), I argue for the existence of an organizational voice which expresses the organization's character, its organizational ethos, as part of both its image and its identity. For workplace writing studies,

the idea of organizational image relies on the assumption that organizations can control, at least to some extent, what external constituencies perceive about the organization. One way organizations can control their image is through a consistency of messaging (Argenti, 2009). That is to say, the organization must “speak” with a consistent voice in order to craft its image. One of the most effective ways for an organization to speak is by communicating its organizational values via its official documents, like its newsletter. The processes of EAS’s review and revise group help the organization to speak consistently with its own voice, because the goal of any review process is to produce a document that “messages” with an institutional voice. Kleimann (1993) writes that, “In any organization, the review process is designed to create an institutional product. As such, it deals not only with context but also with organizational values” (p. 67). The voice of the institutional document needs to convey the ethos of the organization.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, my study raised many interesting questions. In this section, I will ask and answer several of the most salient.

- What do the communicated values “say” about EAS’s organizational identity?
- What does the employees’ perceived organizational identity “say” about EAS’s organizational identity?
- What does the review and revise process “say” about EAS’s organizational identity?

### *EAS’s Communicated Values*

What do its communicated values “say” about EAS’s organizational identity? Aust (2004) writes that “communicated values are intrinsic to an organization’s identity” (p. 522). Communicated values, like those expressed in EAS’s mission statement or shown by the topics

of its newsletter or expressed in its bylaws, are supposed to reflect essential or central – that is, intrinsic – characteristics of the organization. These communicated values are usually constructed by organizational leaders, and Aust notes that “[i]t’s important for those responsible for constructing and transmitting external messages, that they form a collective voice by which the organization is known” (p. 530). These externally-directed messages can project as a “harmonious chorus” if the messages are consistent or congruent, or the messages can project as a “multiple-headed monster” (p. 530). In the case of EAS, the examined messages which communicate organizational values do seem congruent and consistent.

In this study, I examined three official documents from EAS: its mission statement, the purpose article in its Bylaws, and its newsletter. Each of these official documents communicates in its own way what EAS values. EAS’s mission statement is a succinct encapsulation of its purpose and values: “[EAS] is committed to protecting and enhancing the rights and benefits of current, retired and future state employees.” The mission statement communicates that EAS values state employees. “Article II: Purpose” in EAS’s bylaws states that EAS’s purpose is to work for all state employees (not only its membership), including promoting their best interests and promoting professionalism. Article II also requires EAS to communicate with state employees and EAS membership, including providing information, providing a forum for discussion, and facilitating communication. Article II communicates that EAS values state employees, and especially values communication with and among state employees and EAS membership. My analysis of the types of articles published in The Informer indicated that member participation is a central value of the organization. Other values communicated through the newsletter included providing transparency to the EAS membership about how the organization is run, and responding to the needs of its membership. The commonality between

these three official documents is their emphasis on the value of state employees and the EAS membership.

### *Organizational Members' (EAS Employees') Perceived Organizational Identity*

What does the employees' perceived organizational identity "say" about EAS's organizational identity? The central aspect of EAS's organizational identity from the employees' perception is that the membership is the most important thing. The EAS membership is also considered one of its enduring characteristics. The distinctive characteristic mentioned most often is the membership, especially the large number of members. In particular, EAS employees believe that the organization does an excellent job at promoting the best interests and welfare of both current and retired state employees; in fact, this was the only area in which 100% of survey respondents indicated agreement, showing a very strong perception that EAS carries out its stated mission. While the perceived organizational identity of EAS does focus on the EAS membership, which is consistent with EAS's communicated values, some inconsistencies do exist.

Although the general perception of EAS employees regarding EAS's organizational identity is that the EAS membership is the central, enduring, and distinctive characteristic of the organization, results were mixed in regard to how well EAS communicates with its membership. These mixed results seem to indicate a disjunction between what EAS says it values – communication with and among members – and how some EAS employees perceive that value is actually manifested. Another area of mixed results was in the employee perception of EAS's responsiveness to the needs of its membership and its employees. EAS employees also think that EAS membership is consistently encouraged to participate in the organization, but another disjunction can be detected regarding how consistently the EAS staff are made to feel like

owners of EAS. Other mixed results indicate a disjunction between EAS's desire to influence public policy and its success at actually being influential. Despite these slight disjunctions, EAS employees generally seem to believe that it is the EAS membership which is the central, enduring, and distinctive characteristic of the organization. Together, these perceptions say that overall EAS employees buy in to the communicated values of EAS, especially when it comes to valuing the membership of EAS.

#### *Culture and Processes of EAS's Review and Revise Group*

What does the review and revise process "say" about EAS's organizational identity? Are the perceived organizational identity and the communicated values manifested in the review and revise process, or are some other values manifested in the process? The review and revise group appears to exhibit the features of a collaborative culture. By utilizing a concurrent review structure, the group says that "reviewers have different but equally important information" (Kleimann, 1993, p. 64). The concurrent review structure helps to flatten the hierarchy within the group. By providing widely-available written guidance (such as a style guide) and stipulated deadlines, the group acknowledges that non-subjective standards are important, so that all group members share in the same knowledge of what is expected. Regularly scheduled face-to-face meetings between group members say that the group wants to "create ownership of the [document...and] encourage collaboration" (Kleimann, 1993, p. 66). The only area of inconsistency was in the number of direct changes made by the reviewers, which indicates a more hierarchical culture than a collaborative one; however, I believe this can be explained by my conflation of the revision process – which included proofreading – and the review process.

Overall, the processes of the review and revise group, with its collaborative rather than hierarchical culture, indicate that the group values each other's expertise and skill. As the

creators of one of EAS's official documents, the group seems to manifest the organizational value of the central importance of the EAS membership, especially when it comes to communicating with them. As noted in the previous chapter, the review and revise group make substantive margin comments which appear to be the manifestation of EAS's organizational values. For example, ensuring that contact information for EAS leadership and Informer article writers is provided to readers is evidence that the review and revise group values communication between the membership and the organization. The group's scrupulous attention to factual accuracy, particularly when it comes to matters such as district numbers and members' correct names, shows the group is concerned with keeping the newsletter's readers well-informed and with showing appreciation and respect for EAS members. Some substantial margin comments – for example, verifying the date of a party's primary or asking the difference between a bill and an act – focus on clarifying information with the goal of encouraging readers to participate in state elections and gaining political knowledge. One of the reasons the writing group seems to function well is that they actually do identify with the organization and its communicated values. Because they buy into EAS's communicated values, the group members decide to cooperate and to work well together; they decide to have a collaborative culture. The substance of the group members' margin comments is one strong indicator that the members buy in to EAS's communicated values. As a result of this buy-in, the review and revise group effectively contributes to the success of EAS and, as Kleimann might suggest, to the organizational identity of EAS.

### *Ethos and Credibility*

An organization's ethos is an important part of its organizational identity. Roger Cherry (1988) characterizes ethos as providing a “[perspective] on self-representation in written

discourse” (p. 253). In this dissertation, the “self” is an organizational one. A rhetor, in this case EAS, constructs an ethos to represent him/her/itself to an audience. Cherry writes, “*Ethos* refers to the need for rhetors to portray themselves in their speeches as having a good moral character, ‘practical wisdom,’ and a concern for the audience in order to achieve credibility and thereby secure persuasion” (p. 253, italics in original). In order to persuade its audiences, both internal and external, an organization needs credibility.

Credibility is particularly important for EAS, because it relies heavily on its powers of persuasion. For instance, if its membership does not buy in to EAS’s ethos, then volunteers might not be willing to donate time or money or passionate leadership. If state legislators do not buy in to EAS’s ethos, then the legislators may not feel the need to respond to EAS’s attempts to secure better pay or benefits or working conditions for state employees. If the media do not buy in to EAS’s ethos, then the organization may be portrayed negatively in the press, which could be particularly damaging in a state unfriendly to labor unions. When an organization’s power to persuade is what keeps it afloat, credibility can be like a form of currency. For a non-profit organization which relies on its identity as a type of social capital, loss of credibility can be especially harmful. EAS’s success is not based on financial return; rather, a measurement of success for the organization is its ability to persuade various actors (legislators, media, its own membership) to act effectively on behalf of state employees. EAS’s ability to persuade is inextricably tied to these actors’ perceptions of EAS’s credibility; the stronger the organization’s credibility, the stronger its persuasive power.

Organizational ethos, therefore, is a valuable asset to an organization. Michael Halloran (1982) points out that ethos “says in effect, Believe me because I am the sort of person whose word you can believe” (p. 60). For any organization, its very life depends on whether its



audience perceives the organization as the sort whose word the audience can believe. I argue that it is even more important for an organization like EAS – a non-profit labor association – that its audience and other actors (i.e., media, legislators) believe that EAS is trustworthy and believable, because it is EAS’s reputation that allows it to continue to work for the benefit and welfare of its members and other state employees. EAS “sells” its reputation as an effective representative or voice of state workers; if that reputation is tarnished (that is, if its ethos is diminished) then EAS’s “product” is tarnished. Halloran goes on to say that a speaker must “create in his audience a strong and favorable impression of his own character. He does this in part by *bringing to the rhetorical occasion a good reputation...*” (p. 60, italics mine). In other words, although the immediate communication at hand is important, in order to have a strong ethos a speaker – in this case, EAS – must bring a good reputation to the rhetorical occasion. A speaker who brings a tarnished reputation cannot persuade audiences as well as it could with a sterling reputation.

### *Cooperative Behaviors*

The communicated values of an organization are an important aspect of creating a good organizational reputation. As noted, a good reputation is crucial for persuading external audiences (EAS membership, state legislators, media) and for persuading internal audiences like organizational members (EAS employees). In addition to organizational image – the “impression held by a particular [external] group towards a corporation [or organization]” (Alvesson, 1990, p. 376) – and organizational identity, there exists a third way of looking at an organization: organizational identification (Whetten and Godfrey, 1998). Identification with an organization or a group happens when an individual sees traits in the group that s/he wants to claim for her/himself. For instance, if an employee sees that EAS is a family-oriented place to

work, and the employee himself values family, the employee may identify with the organization. Stronger identification with an organization will lead to more cooperative behaviors among its members (Dukerich, Golden, and Shortell, 2002). The more an EAS employee sees desirable personal traits being exhibited by the organization, the more likely it is the employee will cooperate with other employees in order to contribute positively to the organization.

It is through organizational processes, like the review and revise process, that organizational members contribute to the organization. Cheney and Tompkins (1987) argue that if organizational members can identify with the organization, that sense of identity “directs the individual in terms of making contributions to the organization” (pp. 1-2). If individuals do not feel in sync with the larger identity of the organization, and if that identity does not trickle down to individual processes like those of the review and revise group, then those individuals are less able or less likely to make strong contributions to the organization as a whole. As a result, the whole organization suffers. The members of the review and revise group contribute to EAS with their behavior and interactions with each other (margin comments, oral exchanges). The group’s collaborative culture is another contribution made by the group members to the organization and its identity. Similarly, Dukerich, Golden, and Shortell (2002) argue that “organizational success is partially determined by organizational members’ cooperative behaviors” (p. 508). The stronger a member’s group identification, the more likely it is that the member will engage in cooperative rather than non-cooperative behaviors; these cooperative behaviors increase the likelihood of organizational success. That is to say, if organizational members (like EAS employees in general or the members of the review and revise group specifically) perceive the organizational identity of their organization (EAS) as attractive, then there is a positive relation to cooperative behaviors.

### *Harmonious Chorus or Multiple-Headed Monster?*

When we hear everything that is being said by and about EAS, what are we hearing? We are hearing the voices of the review and revise group speaking through its review process; we are hearing the voices of the EAS employees speaking through the survey; and we are hearing the voices of the EAS organization speaking through its official documents. Do these voices speak in a “harmonious chorus” or as a “multiple-headed monster”? I believe that, for the most part, EAS’s review and revise processes are reflective of EAS’s organizational identity as expressed through the perceptions of EAS employees and the values communicated by the organization’s official documents.

EAS is definitely not a multiple-headed monster. However, it is also not a totally harmonious chorus either. The disjunctions that exist are disjunctions between EAS’s communicated values and the EAS employees’ perceptions of EAS’s organizational identity. And although it is the processes of the review and revise group which help create only one “note” in EAS’s communicated values, the processes themselves are in alignment – in harmony – with EAS’s organizational identity. As a result of this alignment between processes and identity, the ethos of The Informer, and consequently of the entire organization, is stronger and more effectively persuasive. And because the review and revise group buys in to EAS’s organizational ethos, the group contributes positively to the organization as a whole by cooperating and collaborating effectively, behaving as productive organizational members.

### *Chapter Conclusion*

In this chapter I established the importance of organizational ethos and organizational identification as they relate to effective organizational processes. I showed how alignment between organizational actions or processes and organizational identity increases the ethos or

credibility of an organization. Such an alignment also increases the likelihood of cooperative behaviors by employees, which in turn increases the overall success of the organization. In a final Postscript, I offer suggestions for additional research, focusing especially on the interesting but unanswered questions raised by this study.

## POSTSCRIPT: SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As noted previously in this dissertation, few studies examine how organizational identity actually functions in terms of workplace processes. I want to see more research of this type performed, particularly to discover how organizational identity influences collaborative writing processes within different types of organizations (i.e., community organizations, international corporations, etc.). The question – Cross’s (1994) question – that originally made me curious about the connections between identity and processes has not been totally and completely answered by my research. Cross wondered how different types of organizations, displaying different kinds of cultures, allow their collaborative writing processes to be influenced by their identity and vice versa. As a case study, my experiment is not reproducible. However, the information gathered from more case studies of different organizations, or even different workplace writing processes, could shed light on the relationship between organizational identity and workplace writing.

I suppose all researchers, at least the good ones, finish a study and immediately begin to ask, “What if?” I have several “what ifs.” I will present these questions in the hope that a future researcher may find a way to incorporate these into her or his own study – a study I would be most interested in reading.

- What if I had studied the process of drafting the articles which were published in The Informer; what might have I discovered? If different stages of collaboration were studied, would any differences emerge? What if only the final document (the organizational newsletter, in this case) were studied, rather than the process which produced the document? If only the final document had been compared to organizational identity, what results might have been found?

- What if I studied specific subcultures within EAS? How many subcultures are involved in a small organization like EAS? Kleimann's (1993) study of the GAO and her discovery that two divisions within the same organization had different cultures is both intriguing and puzzling to me. How can (or do) two distinct – almost opposite – subcultures both reflect the identity of the GAO? Interviewee Tyler commented that the different departments within EAS had different approaches to their work. Had I studied a different department at EAS, how/would the results have differed?
- Regarding the electronic survey, what if I connected demographic information to the answers given? I did not connect personal information to responses in an effort to offer respondents the highest degree of anonymity possible. Had I made these connections, I could have broken down the responses into categories like male/female, length of employment at EAS, or management/staff. Perhaps the perceptions of a ten-year employee differ significantly from those of a ten-month employee. I strongly suspect I would have found significant differences between management's perceptions of EAS's organizational identity and the perceptions of the rank-and-file staff.
- What if I had considered the EAS membership as the internal stakeholders or perceivers of EAS's organizational identity? In other words, what if I had considered the EAS membership, not the EAS employees, to be the organizational members? What might have been the results if I had surveyed the membership for their perceptions regarding EAS's organizational identity and compared those perceptions with the workplace writing processes of EAS? Or perhaps compared those perceptions to other membership-directed processes, like the annual convention, a district meeting, or a membership recruitment workshop?

- What if there were any differences in the modes of margin comments (statements, questions, direct changes, non-word symbols) written depending on who wrote the article? If someone high up in the hierarchy wrote the text of an article, would that have influenced the type of margin comments written by a lower hierarchy person? Or vice versa?

The answers to these questions would help us, as scholars and practitioners, understand more thoroughly how identity and processes are interconnected. The deeper understanding would most likely lead to more effective workplace processes or behaviors.

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## APPENDIX A: IRB Approval Materials

### University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board

East Carolina University  
Ed Warren Life Sciences Building • 600 Moye Boulevard • LSB 104 •  
Greenville, NC 27834

Office **252-744-2914** • Fax **252-744-2284** • [www.ecu.edu/irb](http://www.ecu.edu/irb)

Chair and Director of Biomedical IRB: L. Wiley Nifong, MD

Chair and Director of Behavioral and Social Science IRB: Susan L. McCammon, PhD

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TO: Alexis Poe Davis, Student, Dept of English, 2202 Bate Building ECU  
FROM: UMCIRB  
DATE: February 25, 2008  
RE: Expedited Category Research Study  
TITLE: "An Examination of the Relationship Between an Organization's Identity and Its Collaborative Editing Processes"

#### UMCIRB # 08-0167

This research study has undergone review and approval using expedited review on 2.22.08. This research study is eligible for review under an expedited category because it is on collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes. It is also a research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. [45 CFR 46.101](#)(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Dr. S. McCammon deemed this **unfunded** study **no more than minimal risk** requiring a continuing review in **12 months**. Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a continuing review/closure application to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The above referenced research study has been given approval for the period of **2.22.08** to **2.21.09**. The approval includes the following items:

- Internal Processing Form
- Informed Consent
- Interview Questions

Dr. S. McCammon does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

**The UMCIRB applies 45 CFR 46, Subparts A-D, to all research reviewed by the UMCIRB regardless of the funding source. 21 CFR 50 and 21 CFR 56 are applied to all research studies under the Food and Drug Administration regulation. The UMCIRB follows applicable International Conference on Harmonisation Good Clinical Practice guidelines.**



Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
[Terri D.], Dir. Of Communications/Designee

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
[Tim H.], CoS/General Counsel

## APPENDIX C: EAS Publication Review Guidelines

### **What has to be reviewed?**

#### **All of the following, whether produced in-house or by an outside vendor:**

- Any external brochure, pamphlet, newsletter, booklet, poster, sign, invitation or similar publication, logos, ads, public service announcements and any promotional item (mugs, T-shirts, etc.) that is to be produced, printed or reprinted.
- Presentations/TV radio presentations for use outside of [EAS] building.
- All existing or revised materials when reprinted.

### **What does not have to be reviewed?**

- Intra-communications such as e-mails, memos, instructions, manuals, letters
- Web content.
- When in doubt contact the Communications/Public Relations Director. As a rule, if the publication uses the [EAS] logo and is for distribution outside of [EAS] please review.

### **The Review and Approval Process:**

Department directors must ensure that publications originating within their departments are factual, accurate and conform to [EAS] policies. The following multilevel review process will be followed:

1. Review by department director for technical and factual accuracy.
2. Review by Chief of Staff/General Counsel who will determine if publication requires review by Executive Director. If not, Chief of Staff/General Counsel will initial and date in Executive Director's signature line.
3. Review by the Communications/Public Relations Office for overall AP style, readability, correct usage, design and compliance with logo policy.

\*Exception-Member discount ads and fliers will be reviewed by department director and communications/pr staff member only.

### **Preferred Vendors:**

The Communications/Public Relations Department has selected preferred vendors with design, printing and addressing service vendors, which are to be used for all professional publications. The Communications/Public Relations Department reserves the right to change vendors based on their affordability, service and product quality.

Departments continue to be the primary liaison to vendors. If your job is estimated at less than \$1,000, pick one of the three vendors. If printing jobs are more than \$1,000, please remember to obtain a quote from each of the three preferred vendors.

\*\*Please meet with communications/pr staff prior to and during projects to ensure maximum communication and efficiency during projects.\*\*

### **United States Postal Service:**

Contact the [EAS] USPS account manager before beginning a project to ensure that that your publication is designed and mailed in a cost-efficient manner. [contact] can be reached at [\[contact\]@usps.gov](mailto:[contact]@usps.gov) or [phone].



## APPENDIX D: Content List for The Informer

### **Front Page – [Terri]**

- Treasurer’s Office records request filled or lawsuit
- Photo
- Timeline of records request

### **Retirement (burgundy banner)**

- Retirement Lawsuit Reaches Ct. of Appeals – [Elaine]
- Contributory Death Benefit Open Enrollment Feb.-May w/ pic of Sen. [Allen] – [retirement director]

### **Public Policy (green banner) – [Elaine]**

- Quotes to Note
- [EAS] affiliation/collective bargaining article (reprint)
- Photo/cutline of Collective Bargaining Committee

### **Health Care (purple banner)**

- [state] Alliance Health grant article – [intern]
- SHP Open Enrollment w/ [Leslie Foster] thumbnail pic (provided by SHP)
- Box for “what to do” to change to PPO plan – [Melissa] (not SHP board mtg)
- ~~SHP PPO session dates~~

### **Center Spread – [Cassie] “[EAS] Members Give Back” (Member Action red banner)**

- District 5, 6, 7 Christmas parade (photo and cutline)
- District 59 Christmas stockings (photo and cutline)
- District 59 Alzheimer Walk?? (photo and cutline)
- District 19 donation
- District 43 Angel Tree (photo and cutline)
- District 43/[EAS] Christmas party (article, photo and cutline)
- District 60 fire victim donation (photo and cutline)
- District 60 Relay for Life booth (photo and cutline)
- District 66 Scholarship Raffle (photo and cutline)
- District 37 DOT Christmas event (photo and cutline)
- District 65 Christmas Tree project (photo and cutline)
- District 65 Child Sponsor project (photo and cutline)

### **Move items below to 3<sup>rd</sup> page of Member Action if needed**

- District 3 Save the Date Golf Tournament (box with graphic)
- Scholarship apps due April 15 Ad (text from poster) – [Elaine]
- [EAS member] Runs for [state] House – [Terri]
- [EAS member] award w/ headshot – [Melissa]

### **Columns – [Terri]**

- President’s Message
- Executive Director
- Counselor’s Comments

**Back Page**

- See Strength, See Action, See Results ([EAS member] pic/quote from booklet)
- Feature Member Discount Vendor (Perks) – [EAS staff]

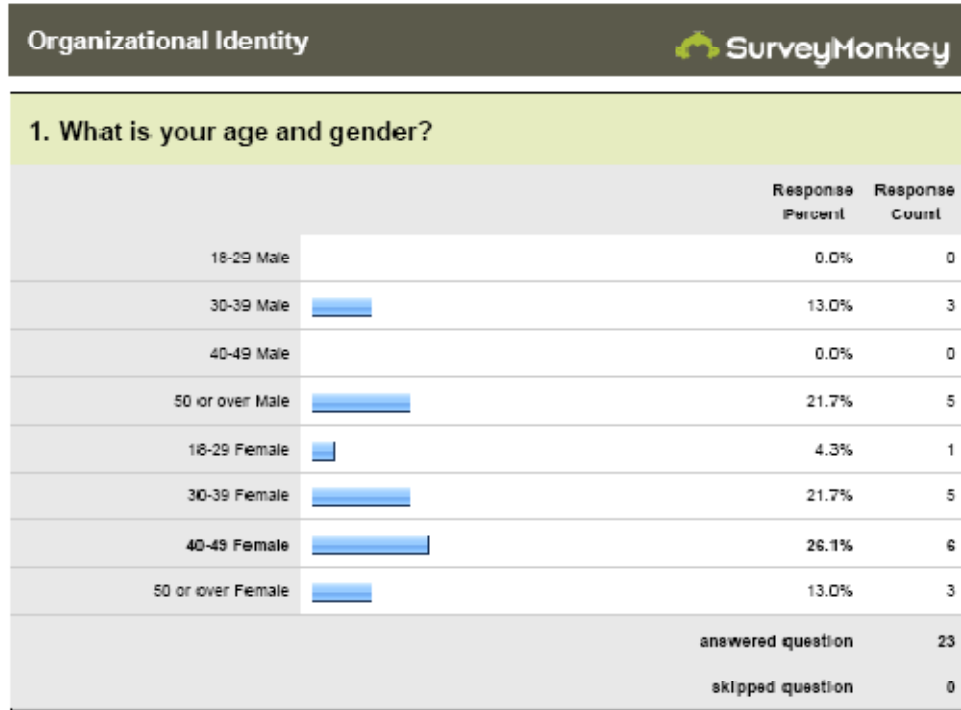
## APPENDIX E: Interview Protocol

Participant Code: \_\_\_\_\_


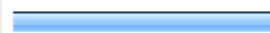




- Tell me about how you came to be involved with [EAS].
- Explorations might include: How did you first hear of [EAS]? When did that happen? (Pay special attention to any words or phrases the participant uses to describe [EAS].) (addresses element of ‘enduring’)
- What other types of organizations have you worked for? Have you ever worked for another state employees’ organization? Explorations may include: What were your experiences there? How do they compare with [EAS]? (addresses element of ‘distinctive’)
- Has (or how has) [EAS] changed over the time you have been here? (addresses element of ‘enduring’) Explorations may include: What has not changed? How do you feel about that? Is that consistent with other things you see at [EAS]? Could you elaborate on that?
- Suppose I were new at [EAS]. Regardless of what department or position I worked in, what do you think I would find? (addresses element of ‘central’) If the participant asks what I mean, I may ask about what expectations supervisors have about job performance, what does management emphasize on the job, what is the general working atmosphere like? Explorations might include: Say I worked in the executive director’s office. How would that be similar or different to what you have just described?
- In what ways do you believe [EAS] is different from other state employees associations, public worker associations, or unions that you are familiar with? (addresses element of ‘distinctive’)
- Does [EAS] claim to be different from other similar organizations, like state employees associations, public workers’ associations, or unions? (addresses element of ‘distinctive’) Exploration might include: How does [EAS] show this?

In concluding the interview, I may re-visit some of the words and phrases put together at the beginning of the interview, as well as any items or responses I found interesting. I also may ask for any final thoughts, to make the participant feel listened to and maybe to catch anything not caught in the structured part of the interview.


APPENDIX F: Online Survey Instrument



2. How long have you been a paid employee of [EAS]? [NOTE: If the length of your employment falls between options, choose the lower number. For instance, if you've been employed at [EAS] for 5 years and 11 months, please choose the 1-5 years option.]

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 1 year		9.1%	2
1 - 5 years		59.1%	13
6 - 10 years		13.6%	3
11 - 15 years		9.1%	2
16 - 20 years		4.5%	1
More than 20 years		4.5%	1
answered question			22
skipped question			1

3. Is your employment with [EAS] part-time or full-time? [NOTE: If you've worked both full- and part-time during your employment at [EAS], you may choose both.]

		Response Percent	Response Count
Part-time		0.0%	0
Full-time		100.0%	22
Comment (Optional)			0
answered question			22
skipped question			1

**4. [EAS's] bylaws make statements about the purposes of [EAS]. In your opinion, how well does [EAS] accomplish these purposes?**

	Very Poorly	Poorly	Neutral / Okay	Well	Very Well	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Promote the best interests and welfare of current state employees	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	47.4% (9)	52.6% (10)	0.0% (0)	4.53	19
...of retired state employees	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	63.2% (12)	36.8% (7)	0.0% (0)	4.37	19
...of future state employees	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	15.8% (3)	42.1% (8)	42.1% (8)	0.0% (0)	4.26	19
Provide information to membership	10.5% (2)	10.5% (2)	10.5% (2)	15.8% (3)	47.4% (9)	5.3% (1)	3.83	19
Provide a forum for discussion of ideas and problems	10.5% (2)	5.3% (1)	21.1% (4)	42.1% (8)	15.8% (3)	5.3% (1)	3.50	19
Facilitate communication among state employees	10.5% (2)	21.1% (4)	26.3% (5)	15.8% (3)	21.1% (4)	5.3% (1)	3.17	19
Promote professionalism of state employees	0.0% (0)	5.3% (1)	21.1% (4)	42.1% (8)	26.3% (5)	5.3% (1)	3.94	19
						Comment (Optional)		3
						answered question		19
						skipped question		4

### 5. [EAS] is responsive to the needs of...

	Never	Often Not	Neutral / sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
current state employees	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	5.3% (1)	57.9% (11)	36.8% (7)	0.0% (0)	4.32	19
retired state employees	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	10.5% (2)	47.4% (9)	42.1% (8)	0.0% (0)	4.32	19
future state employees	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	21.1% (4)	52.6% (10)	26.3% (5)	0.0% (0)	4.05	19
EAS members	0.0% (0)	10.5% (2)	10.5% (2)	26.3% (5)	52.6% (10)	0.0% (0)	4.21	19
EAS staff including management	0.0% (0)	15.8% (3)	5.3% (1)	57.9% (11)	21.1% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.84	19
						Comment (Optional)		0
						answered question		19
						skipped question		4

**6. As an organization, how consistently does EAS encourage EAS members, staff, and/or management to feel like owners of EAS?**

	Never	Often Not	Neutral / Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
EAS members	0.0% (0)	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	61.1% (11)	0.0% (0)	4.33	18
EAS staff	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	22.2% (4)	33.3% (6)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.33	18
EAS management	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	0.0% (0)	33.3% (6)	33.3% (6)	16.7% (3)	3.50	18
						Comment (Optional)		5
						answered question		18
						skipped question		5



**7. EAS provides information about its inner workings (i.e., what leadership is doing and why, how EAS operates, where budget money goes, etc.) to...**

	Never	Often Not	Neutral / Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
current state employees	5.6% (1)	16.7% (3)	5.6% (1)	61.1% (11)	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	3.47	18
retired state employees	5.6% (1)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	61.1% (11)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.67	18
EAS members	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)	38.9% (7)	38.9% (7)	0.0% (0)	3.94	18
EAS staff	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	55.6% (10)	33.3% (6)	0.0% (0)	4.06	18
EAS management	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	27.8% (5)	61.1% (11)	11.1% (2)	4.69	18
						Comment (Optional)		1
						answered question		18
						skipped question		5

## 8. Regarding EAS's political aims, how well does EAS...

	Very Poorly	Poorly	Neutral / Okay	Well	Very Well	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
influence public policy in [this state]?	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	33.3% (6)	<b>38.9%</b> <b>(7)</b>	22.2% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.78	18
endorse and elect politicians who are supportive of state employees?	0.0% (0)	11.1% (2)	16.7% (3)	<b>44.4%</b> <b>(8)</b>	27.8% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.89	18
work with other organizations?	0.0% (0)	11.1% (2)	<b>33.3%</b> <b>(6)</b>	27.8% (5)	27.8% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.72	18
						Comment (Optional)		0
						answered question		18
						skipped question		5

### 9. In your opinion, how well does EAS...

	Very Poorly	Poorly	Neutral / Okay	Well	Very Well	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
show appreciation for staff?	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	33.3% (6)	27.8% (5)	27.8% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.67	18
show appreciation for EAS members?	5.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	27.8% (5)	50.0% (9)	16.7% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.72	18
include staff in organizational decisions?	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	50.0% (9)	16.7% (3)	11.1% (2)	0.0% (0)	3.06	18
include EAS members in organizational decisions?	5.6% (1)	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	44.4% (8)	22.2% (4)	0.0% (0)	3.72	18
solicit expert opinion from among staff?	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	3.19	18
solicit expert opinion from among EAS members?	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	38.9% (7)	16.7% (3)	11.1% (2)	16.7% (3)	3.20	18
						Comment (Optional)		0
						answered question		18
						skipped question		5

10. For the final question, I'd like to know your perception of different attributes or characteristics of EAS as an organization. As well as you can, please provide a word or phrase which, in your opinion, best answers the following:

	Response Percent	Response Count
What is the central characteristic which helps define EAS? (In other words, if you took away [blank], EAS would not be EAS.)	100.0%	18
What characteristic of EAS has endured since EAS's beginning and will continue into the future?	100.0%	18
What characteristic of EAS is unique? (In other words, what distinguishes EAS from other organizations?)	100.0%	18
	answered question	18
	skipped question	5

## APPENDIX G: List of Membership Eligibility Criteria

### Membership Type: Who is Eligible

Active: Current state employees

Retired: Retired state employees

Associate: State Employees' Credit Union employees or [EAS] staff

Affiliate: Individuals or organizations who support the purposes of [EAS] and have been approved by the Board of Governors for membership

