

AOC STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

PURPOSE: The purpose of Appendix B is to set forth the vision, priorities, and provide overarching goals for the Association by which the AOC's Board of Directors establishes the annual objectives, priorities and execution plans for the Association. Appendix B will assist the BOD in preparing for future efforts and initiatives to advance the Associations mission and purpose, communications, budget allocation, staffing requirements, education, advocacy, professional recognition and other services and benefits to members, chapters, and sponsors.

Our Vision, Mission and Values:

The AOC is a 501(c)6 international non-profit association with 70 chapters in 21 countries. We presently have over 14,000 individual members and 225 corporate members. Our membership includes active duty and retired military, government and civil service, and industry. The AOC has long represented a specialized niche profession, supported by a designated operational community. However, over the past 30 years, the electromagnetic warfare profession has changed dramatically. Technology is rapidly advancing, and the importance of electromagnetic spectrum operations is now central to combat operations across all warfighting domains. As we begin the next decade, the AOC carries great potential to grow and become the leading association for our members and stakeholders in an increasingly competitive environment.

Achieving our vision by 2026

WE WILL PLAN AND EXECUTE OPERATIONS IN ALIGNMENT WITH FIVE (5) STRATEGIC GOALS TO BE THE AOC WE WANT TO BECOME IN 2026 AND BEYOND.

1. GROW OUR GLOBAL MEMBERSHIP COMMENSURATE WITH OUR MARKET TO REACH AT LEAST 20,000 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND 350 INDUSTRY MEMBERS BY 2026.
2. BUILD AN ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS ENTERPRISE TO DELIVER TIMELY AND PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS.
3. DIVERSIFY STREAMS OF REVENUE TO STRENGTHEN OUR ABILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT.
4. STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS TO REFLECT OUR GLOBAL PRESENCE BY INCREASING INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP, ENHANCING MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE, AND DEVELOPING A PLAN TO IMPROVE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT.
5. GROW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATION AND STEM PROGRAMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH RECENTLY ESTABLISHED ROADMAPS.

OUR VISION: BE THE *PREMIER* GLOBAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION ADVOCATING ACROSS DEFENSE INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, MILITARIES, AND ACADEMIA FOR ACHIEVING AND SUSTAINING A MILITARY ADVANTAGE IN THE ELECTROMAGNETIC SPECTRUM.

To succeed in today's dynamic market environment, we will adopt a growth-oriented mindset and business model to become the AOC we want to become in 2026 and beyond.

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

- We will be **agile**. We must have the capacity to find, design, and capture opportunities to provide value to stakeholders in the global defense electronics market.
- We will be **competitive**. We are currently the leading organizational voice for EW, but we are no longer the only voice seeking to influence segments of the growing EW-related community.
- We will **accept risk**. We need to be ready to respond to market demands and cannot afford to rest on familiar business approaches, many of which are outdated. The AOC will position ourselves to stay relevant and ahead of our competition.
- We will be **resilient**. Dynamic changes in global defense electronics market are creating both tremendous uncertainty and opportunity. We must plan and execute our mission to leverage, mitigate, or recover from developments that impact our community.

OUR MISSION: WE EDUCATE, CONNECT, AND ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN THE GLOBAL ELECTROMAGNETIC WARFARE COMMUNITY.

AOC will execute our mission through a range of products and services offered by our international headquarters and working in collaboration with our chapters and dedicated volunteers to cultivate a professional EW workforce, influence stakeholders, mobilize our members and prepare the next generation of leaders, operators, thinkers, and experts in EW-related fields.

CORE VALUES: WE EMBRACE THREE CORE VALUES THAT DRIVE OUR CULTURE AS A GLOBAL ASSOCIATION:

1. **Leadership:** The AOC will emphasize consistent leadership in our organization. We will clearly articulate our identity and core values for our members and execute programs and activities that reflect our core values, and facilitate, influence, and align stakeholders throughout our global community to achieve enduring progress in the advancement of EW and related disciplines.
2. **Professionalism:** Elected officers and association staff will hold the highest standards of ethics and execution of professional responsibilities to best serve our members around the world.
3. **Diversity:** The AOC will embrace diversity across age, gender, race, ethnicity, and education for greater appeal to our total membership to improve decision making and problem solving, introduce greater creativity and innovation, enhance product development, and deliver mission success.

Our Strategic Goals -- Building AOC 2026

The 2021 AOC 5-Year Strategy (2022-2026) will govern our decision-making, program development, and culture. The strategy identifies key market and organizational trends that will shape how we will provide benefits to our individual and industry members, value to our international stakeholders across government, industry, and academia, and define our role in shaping the profession we represent. **Accountability for attaining AOC's strategic goals rests with the senior headquarters staff and with the relevant committees of the board of directors.**

The following strategic goals provide a blueprint of our AOC business model and the market environment in which we operate. The plan identifies five (5) strategic goals and three (3) operational imperatives that we will embrace to achieve dynamic growth in the coming years. **Ultimately, our success will be measured by our commitment to the plan and our ability to develop the supporting operational plans required to accomplish these goals.**

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

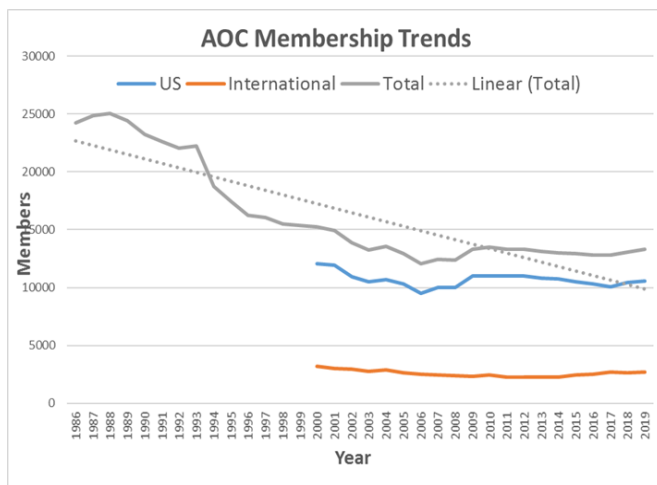
Approved: Nov 11, 2021

Finally, the Strategy serves as a guiding document for the AOC Board of Directors in assessing the health of our association and the performance of our senior staff.

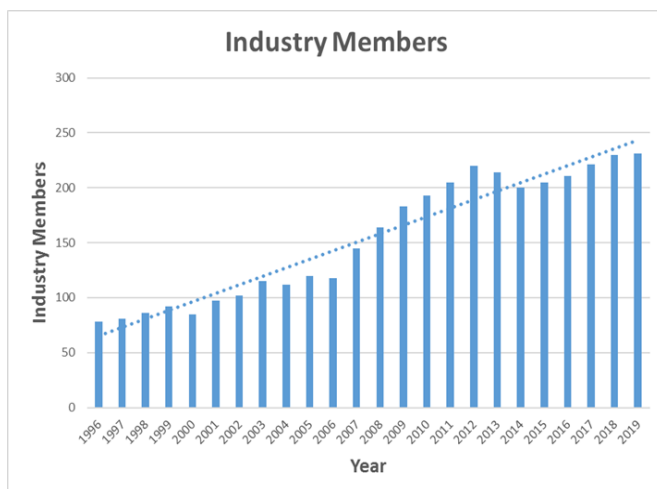
AOC strategic plan sets five (5) goals for the organization that cut across five (5) major areas: Membership, Advocacy and Outreach, Communications & Marketing, Education, and Meetings and Events. For each goal, the plan identifies specific environmental and organizational challenges that must be addressed and solutions for staff and board members to achieve each of these goals over the period of the plan. Accountability for attaining AOC’s goals rests with the senior headquarters staff and with the relevant committees of the board of directors.

GOAL #1: GROW MEMBERSHIP COMMENSURATE WITH MARKET EXPANSION TO REACH AT LEAST 20,000 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS AND 350 INDUSTRY MEMBERS BY 2026.

We have tremendous potential to grow in today’s market and operational environment. We are also in the best position among other organizational competitors to identify and track the EW-related



workforce. Despite a diminishing cadre of dedicated EW specialists across the military services in the US and abroad, **the number of military and government personnel that operate within the electromagnetic operating environment (EMOE) and must have at least basic level of proficiency in EW-related disciplines is increasing exponentially.** This has increased the pool of potential members that AOC must pursue to provide the professional value necessary in today’s military and global workforce. Unfortunately, our approach to membership is outdated, and our chapter program is cumbersome. These create a disincentive for attracting a younger and more diverse membership base. Studies show that professional development, networking, and advocacy are leading reasons to join an association and younger generations of members today look to scale their participation based upon their own professional goals. For industry membership, the market that AOC serves is growing faster than we can pace. According to the Journal for Electromagnetic Dominance (JED) Defense Electronics Resource Guide, there are 603 companies that identify as EW, SIGINT, or related categories. Yet, only approximately one-third are AOC industry members. Furthermore, our current reach into the commercial sector is minimal. The value



proposition for industry membership does not align sufficiently with what companies look for in

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

association membership today. **Based on feedback from industry, companies are looking for a la carte benefits that can be packaged and scaled with a focus on business leads, access to stakeholders, reductions in pricing, advocacy, and market and business analytics.**

How We Will Grow - Enabling Objectives for Achieving Goal #1

- **Modernize** individual and industry membership programs to allow members to scale their membership, benefits, participation commensurate with their professional or business requirements.
- **Reform** chapter programs, including guidance on establishing new chapters, Chapter of the Year, and related activities to balance the interests of all chapters and ensure all chapters can build unique programs that respond to their local needs. Members must be able to access and leverage chapter activities and resources outside of their geographic region.
- **Employ** dedicated industry outreach staff to build an industry affairs operation that provides persistent business development and market analysis to industry customers and connects AOC with potential industry members in the U.S. and abroad.
- **Provide** dedicated outreach to the EW-related operational community in the U.S. and abroad. AOC must become relevant and supportive of our warfighters, including enlisted and officer personnel. We need to establish outreach initiatives that position AOC to be an important association to advance their mission and their careers.

GOAL #2: BUILD AN ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS ENTERPRISE TO DELIVER TIMELY AND PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS.

Advocacy delivers association value to stakeholders across government, industry, and academia to raise general awareness, influence decision-makers and represent the best interests of a community. It is relational in nature and requires adaptability to keep pace with any environment and agility to seize opportunities when they arise. Over the past few years, AOC has focused on building its advocacy program through a range of initiatives including its Congressional Education Program, Industry Partnership Projects, and various knowledge resources. In 2021, AOC Advocacy successfully launched two new podcasts, the History of Crows and From the Crows' Nest. The program is also seeking to reestablish technical reports and studies as deliverables to the membership and stakeholder communities.

Marketing and Communications (MARCOM) is the method by which an organization interacts with members, stakeholders, and the broader community it serves. **Successful communications not only transmits and shares information, but also shapes perspectives and how specific audiences interact with an organization.** Our MARCOM department manages association-related content for the JED and the weekly E-Crow, social media platforms, and the website. It also ensures our AOC branding is consistent across all activities and deliverables and interacts with defense-related media outlets to advance our messaging.

The JED is AOC's official monthly publication and regularly considered the #1-member benefit of the AOC. A unique aspect of the JED is that despite its value to our membership, we do NOT subsidize or influence the news and editorial content of the magazine. **The editorial independence of the JED is an important feature that adds to the quality and reliability of the analysis it provides.**

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

Despite the value of the JED to AOC membership, there are several challenges facing it on the horizon and AOC will need to address the future of JED within the next 1-2 years.

- We do NOT have sufficient influence or control over decisions from our publisher that impact JED publication, including changes to editorial staff.
- Customers demand timely and informative content, but long publication and delivery lead-times mean that the news covered in JED is outdated or previously reported by other news outlets, leaving AOC and JED at a competitive disadvantage. While analysis of the EW and SIGINT market remains a valuable attribute of JED, monthly print publications are not competitive in reaching stakeholders in today's business environment.
- JED is funded through corporate advertisements. Marketing trends show that companies are devaluing print advertisement in favor of digital and multi-media platforms.

Advocacy and Communications programs working in collaboration with each other are critical to the success of any organization. **For AOC, these two programs offer the most growth potential in terms of new deliverables and the monetization of these deliverables.** An enterprise approach to Advocacy and Communications will work to align all association projects, activities, and deliverables to our mission. It will ensure all content, access and opportunities associated with our programs, in the US and abroad, are distributed through a range of print, digital, and multimedia deliverables, and monetized accordingly, to engage members and stakeholders at their point of value.

How We Will Grow – Enabling Objectives for Achieving Goal #2

- **Develop** a platform for the distribution and monetization of current news, information, and other original content through a range of print, digital and multimedia resources. This includes incorporating the AOC website and JED online platforms to boost advertisements, memberships, sponsorships, and other subscriptions to broadcast AOC messaging and content across our entire community.
- **Establish** a fellowship program through the AOC Educational Foundation to attract subject matter expertise and provide organic technical research and writing.
- **Develop** a feasibility study by June 1, 2022, to assess all options for publishing JED. The study should also include recommendations for JED schedule (monthly, quarterly, etc.) and format (print, digital, hybrid), and the potential hiring of at least one (1) credentialed journalist to provide journalistic representation and original content for the AOC.
- **Build** a comprehensive Congressional Outreach Program that provides constant and effective AOC engagement to the US Congress, guides policy and defense budget development, and educates Members of Congress and staff.
- **Grow and properly resource** other advocacy initiatives, including initiatives suspended due to COVID-19, such as Industry Partnership Projects, and new initiatives started in 2021, including AOC podcasts and the AOC history initiatives.

GOAL #3: DIVERSIFY STREAMS OF REVENUE TO STRENGTHEN OUR ABILITY TO ADAPT TO CHANGING BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT. NO PROGRAM SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF OVERALL PROGRAM REVENUE BY 2026.

Prior to COVID-19, approximately 70 percent of program revenue was derived through the Annual AOC International Symposium and Convention and annual conferences. We rely too heavily on

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

meetings and events to generate revenue in the annual budget. This limits our ability to respond to external factors that impact event attendance and travel. In 2020, COVID-19 forced the cancellation of our annual convention for the first time in 57 years, as well as all in-person conferences from March 2020 – April 2021. We artfully and successfully pivoted to virtual events to mitigate some of the loss of revenue, but we were otherwise challenged to adapt across other departments and programs. While virtual events will likely remain an important offering for the foreseeable future, a return to in-person events whenever and wherever possible remains essential for the financial health of the association. **We, however, must inoculate ourselves against future changes in the market and the reevaluation of in-person events by offering a broader range of monetized deliverables across all departments that will make AOC more agile in a competitive environment.**

We will dedicate resources necessary to build leading-edge events and grow attendance and exhibitor participation at our annual convention and conferences. The Meetings and Events Department routinely introduces new and innovative components to our events to improve the attendee experience. Unfortunately, over-reliance on the department for annual revenue to sustain the association creates a disincentive to pursue new features. **We will rethink how to identify and support our annual conferences and new conference and meeting opportunities.** In total, Meetings and Events should not exceed 50 percent of association revenue in any year with a goal of 40 percent by 2026.

Beyond meetings and events, we will also invest resources to build a menu of deliverables including technical reports, multimedia initiatives, education services, and smaller turnkey workshops through both our 501(c)6 and 501(c)3 organizations to capture new opportunities and re-package content from other AOC initiatives for broader distribution throughout EW-related communities.

How We Will Grow – Enabling Objectives for Achieving Goal #3

- *Establish* a revolving Program Development Fund that provides seed funding for new programs and activities with a multi-year return on investment (ROI) schedule. This revolving fund will help AOC build organic programs that our community needs without having to bend too early in development to the demands of advertisers and sponsors.
- *Grow* the AOC International Symposium and Convention exhibit floor to accommodate at least 200 industry exhibitors by 2026. This includes updating sponsorship and branding opportunities to allow exhibitors to scale participation.
- *Recalibrate* our conference planning to grow signature classified conferences and identify new opportunities to increase our relevance in adjacent markets.
- *Reorganize* the AOC Education Foundation to be a center for technical expertise, reports and collaborative studies, in addition to other charitable services, such as scholarships and STEM that fall under the 501(c)3 designation, that competes for federally funded research and development contracts and other partnerships with research institutions.

GOAL #4: STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS TO REFLECT OUR GLOBAL PRESENCE BY INCREASING INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP, ENHANCING MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE, AND DEVELOPING A PLAN TO IMPROVE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT.

International membership represents approximately 30 percent of total members and chapters in 20 countries around the world. Prior to COVID-19, international membership represented a leading growth demographic. Despite an overall decrease in international members due to epidemic

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

restrictions, including accessibility to events and delays in delivery of the JED, international participation especially in chapter-based activities continued to remain strong. We expect international membership to recover in 2022 as regions adapt to a new business environment. Aside from chapter activities, we offer two annual international conferences: AOC Europe and AOC Asia. Both conferences are managed by Clarion Events, U.K. AOC consultants or volunteers develop the agenda. These events are essential to our mission. They provide an opportunity for international members to come together regionally without travel to the U.S. and offer non-U.S. centric perspectives to issues facing our global EW community.

That said, a few gaps persist that limit the growth potential for international programs: (1) the AOC lacks sufficient professional staff to reach and collaborate with non-US-based defense companies and stakeholders, which creates disproportionate investment of association resources; (2) international programs and activities are not sufficiently balanced with other AOC programs focused primarily in the U.S., which can exacerbate a “two AOCs” image for our business; and (3) each region around the world has unique cultural, market, and demographic challenges and opportunities, but the AOC is not sufficiently resourced or organized to adapt its brand, programs, and chapter development efforts to reach a diverse global community.

We will promote a broader international perspective to our programs, events, and activities, and build partnerships with international stakeholders to better reflect the global nature of our community. **The AOC respects each of the diverse cultures and situations that vary from country to country around the world. Furthermore, the AOC respects the wishes of local members and industries in the international regions. If a conflict of interest arises between multiple parties, the AOC will take a neutral position and will not support one party over the other.**

How We Will Grow – Enabling Objectives for Achieving Goal #4

- *Employ* staff as required responsible for international industry and stakeholder outreach focusing on Europe and Asia (and other regions as deemed a priority by the AOC Board of Directors) to make the AOC commercially relevant to all members.
- *Develop* a study by November 2023 to determine the feasibility of establishing a sustainable global operations presence with dedicated staff and necessary infrastructure and connectivity responsible for planning and coordinating international programs, conferences, outreach, and international partnerships.
- *Establish* a process to ensure all AOC deliverables communicate appropriate messaging to global stakeholders.

GOAL #5: GROW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATION AND STEM PROGRAMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH RECENTLY ESTABLISHED ROADMAPS.

Professional development certification and STEM programs are two of the most important areas for us to build in the next five years. According to recent studies, professional certification is a leading reason to join associations. **Members are now more than ever looking to their associations to provide new skillsets and professional development certifications to help them navigate an uncertain and dynamic market environment.** For STEM, to sustain growth over the next decade it is necessary to attract a younger and more diverse membership demographic, especially in their early careers. **Through STEM, we can show students emerging career opportunities in EW-related fields of study and help**

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

them get started in their careers through scholarships, internships, and internationally recognized competitions. In 2021, we made great strides in the early development of both programs and is working on establishing comprehensive roadmaps for growth of these two programs.

How We Will Grow – Enabling Objectives for Achieving Goal #5

- Support and resource existing roadmaps for certification and STEM programs. Relevant departments and committees should brief the Strategy Committee on implementation NLT November 2022. The Strategy Committee will identify strategic objectives for these programs covering 2023-2026.

Operational Imperatives to Grow AOC

Our 5-Year Strategy offers bold and disruptive recommendations to grow our organization in an increasingly competitive global defense electronics ecosystem. If we do not modernize and grow existing programs and build new innovative enterprises, we will not be able to offer sustained relevancy and credibility to our global community and related stakeholders. Success will require an all-of-AOC approach that accepts risk and provides mutual support. To this end, the Strategy Committee has identified three (3) operational imperatives that must be pursued over the next five years for our organization to achieve the strategic goals laid out in this report.

1. Financial. Strategically invest in operations to build new programs without pay-as-you-go requirements that stifle innovation and avoid risk. This includes, but is not limited to, the establishment of a Program Development Fund (3.1).

The Strategy Committee recommends the infusion of funding into the annual budget for growth initiatives (staff and programs) and the establishment of an unfunded priorities list to identify additional resources necessary to achieve department programs. The infusion of new funding should include justification and proposed ROI. Financial investment to the scale necessary for growth will require short-term deficits but must project long-term ROI and increased revenue.

2. Workforce. Hire additional staff to alleviate the saturated workflow of existing staff and departments.

The Strategy Committee recommends the Executive Director to provide a 5-year hiring plan for as many as 16 additional staff, including full-time, part-time, and consultants (outlined below). This does not include necessary staffing identified for a reorganized educational foundation. The Executive Director may also offer recommendations for changes to pay and benefits for new staff hired after January 1, 2022. The following are recommendations for staffing, but do not necessarily reflect requirement or priority:

- Executive Director (+2) – Administrative Assistant; financial officer
- Advocacy & Outreach (+3) – Congressional Affairs, International Industry Affairs, Market/Technology/Policy SME
- Membership (+2) – dedicated Recruitment and Retention and Chapter Outreach/Field Managers
- MarCom (+3) – Writer (credentialed); Communications and event marketing
- Sales (+2) – Associate sales managers (commission)

OpMan 14 – Appendix B

Approved: Nov 11, 2021

- Does not account for additional sales requirements if JED is brought in-house
 - Events (+1) –conference planning for additional events
 - Education (+2) – Director of Education; manager of STEM, mentorship/young crows as it pertains to education and future certification.
3. Technology and Software. To keep pace with information technology, social media, and preferred media channels for knowledge resources, invest in a range of enabling technologies for digital and multimedia deliverables and resources, including but not limited to audio/visual equipment for podcasts and livestream initiatives, design software for website and graphics, and upgraded Member Management Software to accommodate membership growth and increased functionality. *The Strategy Committee recommends the Executive Director provide a joint department technology and software improvement plan.*