# C.A.R. Directors Reference Guide
# DRAFT for review at October Meetings

The job of a CAR Director can be quickly summarized:

1) Take the news/wants/needs from home to CAR.
2) Participate in the process at CAR meetings;
3) Learn all the interesting things going on at the cutting edge of our business;
4) Bring the news home and share it.

There is an official CAR Director Guide furnished by the organization (available at CAR.org) which may be of interest and certainly will be of use to you. This is a more general handbook, intended to give you both the official word, and some other suggestions that are intended to be simply practical knowledge that will be of help to you when you attend CAR meetings.

## Director Responsibilities

**1. Serve on C.A.R. State Committee(s).**
**2. Attend all assigned C.A.R. Committee meetings and Region Caucuses.**
**3. If you are unable to attend a committee meeting and write a report appoint a replacement. If you unable to do so, contact the Regional Chair in a timely manner so your Region has representation at all Committee meetings.**
**4. Attend all C.A.R. Director's Sessions and remain present for their entirety. The Regional Chairperson takes attendance at the Sessions. The absence of any Director from two consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors, unless for good cause submitted to the Board of Directors in writing, shall authorize the Board of Directors to declare the office of such director (and if such Director is the Regional Chair), that position in addition vacant. This does not apply to Directors for Life or past C.A.R. Presidents. Excused absences must be processed through the Regional Chair.**
**5. Complete written Committee Reports.**
**6. Attend all Special Meetings called by the Regional Chair.**
**7. Communicate regularly with Local Board/Association Committee Chairs.**
**8. Maintain an active e-mail account to receive C.A.R. communications.**
**9. Have a good general understanding of this guide.**

**LONG BEFORE THE MEETINGS** - Term of Office & Committee Assignments

Be aware that the elective year of CAR and NAR runs from the day after the final day of the fall NAR meetings to the last day of the fall NAR meetings of the following year. Your actual term as a CAR Director starts at some point in early November. Even before that, the CAR committee selection process requires your attention.

Directors are usually assigned to at least one CAR standing committee as a Regional Representative. This position carries the responsibility of representing your Region in the matters under consideration – and that entails knowing what matters that committee will be considering, and whether there is input to be taken from your Region. Then you will report back to the other

Region Directors what occurred in the committee meeting(s) and what, if anything, they will be expected to deal with at the Board of Directors meeting.

Directors may also request to be appointed as Members at Large of 2 additional committees, for a total of 3 assignments. Some Regional Representatives carry over from the previous year, but you can always ask to be assigned to any desired committee as a Member at Large. This process is best done through the Regional Chair, who can also help you select committees, and can even write recommendations for you for those appointments where appropriate.

AOR Presidents are automatically scheduled for the Association Presidents Leadership Forum--which conflicts with several Thursday AM committee meetings. They should take note of that when they are selecting their committee assignments.

There are a few closed committees and advisory groups (Executive, Strat Planning, Standard Forms, Education Advisory, Communications Advisory, Nominating, Risk Management Advisory, Expo Advisory) that follow a different selection process. If you're interested in these, contact your Regional Chair for further information.

Once you know what your committee assignments are, it's a useful to find out what those committees did last year. Some of the issues are complicated and background information is often crucial. If you're interested in additional committees and plan to attend those meetings as a guest you can also research those. Go to the C.A.R. website at (http://car.org), then navigate to Meeting Events>C.A.R. Meetings>Committees>Archive.

Materials for upcoming C.A.R. meetings are posted to this website approximately two weeks before the meeting date. Look over the agenda items to see if any have particular significance for your Region. You may want to contact some members in the region for feedback before the meeting. ***Information needs to flow both ways for the CAR organization to be effective and responsive.***

## MENTOR PROGRAM

The Mentor Program was established to help new CAR Directors become familiar with the meetings and committee process. It is suggested that new Directors be paired with experienced Directors within the Region who have a schedule which will allow them to help the new Director. This will enable the new Director to not only learn about the process of the organization, but the importance of caucus, committees and Board of Director's Meetings. It may be advisable that the new and experienced directors be matched so that their committee meetings avoid conflicts as much as possible. It would also be nice to have the mentor go to lunch and/or dinner with the new Director at least at the January meeting and help them to find lunch/dinner partners at the June and fall meetings. The Mentor and the new Director may be from the same Association or not as the Region wishes. The pairing of Directors shall take place each year at a meeting prior to the first CAR meetings of the New Year.

**LEGISLATIVE BASICS** - The Sacramento Summary

In order to more fully appreciate what goes on in the committee meetings, it's helpful to gain a basic understanding of the California State Legislature and how bills become law. In fact, most of the action items at the June CAR meeting relate to pending legislation. There is a cool little book entitled "California's Legislature", published by the Office of the Chief Clerk of the California State Assembly (order at http:// leginfo.ca.gov). It answers most of the questions you'll have, features historical tidbits, and includes a nice glossary.

The web site at http://leginfo.ca.gov covers all pending legislation and allows you to "subscribe" to individual bills so that you're informed by e-mail whenever there is a change to the bill, or its status. Subscribing to the bills under consideration by your assigned committees keeps you current with relatively little effort.

The C.A.R. website also has weekly coverage of legislative activity and includes "red alerts" when input from individual members is needed to support a C.A.R. position on a particular bill. Although C.A.R. has a very powerful and effective lobbying presence, it must carefully allocate resources to real estate related issues where its efforts can make a difference in the outcome.

**PRACTICAL ASPECTS** – or, What Every Director Really Needs to Know

A few weeks before the Business Meetings, check with your Association staff regarding hotel reservations, Regional dinner arrangements, if any, and Installation Dinner tickets (for the January meetings), Tech Tuesday (Fall meetings), reimbursement arrangements with your Association, and any other information on which you are not clear.

A little thoughtful preparation can enable you to continue to keep up with business at home while at the C.A.R. meetings. A laptop computer and portable printer provide access to MLS data, e-mail, report writing and the drafting of offers. Be sure your cell phone has a "vibrate" mode. C.A.R. has a "no cell phone or pager" policy for all meetings. If you don't have a "vibrate" mode, leave your phone on "silent" mode or turn it off. An extra cell phone battery is a requisite, if your phone can't operate for a day of heavy use on a single charge, because it is a virtual guarantee that the calls for which you have been waiting for a month will all come in during CAR.

Dress code for the meetings varies somewhat from year to year, depending on the preferences of the C.A.R. President. "Business casual" is a term often applied, but not universally understood, particularly by those living in beach towns. For men "Dockers or better" with business shirt and sport coat is generally appropriate during the day. Reasonable attire for women is more diverse, but generally is more neat than formal, with business suits (including pantsuits) predominating. The Installation Dinner in January is often "black tie optional"; if you love formal wear, go for it! You're going to do lots of walking, so bring comfortable shoes for all outfits. Weather varies widely, according to the city and the season, but conference rooms range from sweltering to frigid – and sometimes both during a single meeting. Wear layers!

**GETTING THERE** – Travel Tips

If you're traveling some distance to the meetings (this is particularly true for Sacramento and San Diego) plan to arrive on Tuesday. Unless you enjoy 4 a.m. departures, you're not going to be there in time for Wednesday morning's schedule. If you have other interests in the city of the meeting (shopping, friends, family, errands, other meetings) consider arriving a day early or staying a day later to take care of your personal activities. Once ***the committee meetings start Wednesday morning, there is little spare time until after the final Director's Session on Saturday morning.*** If someone accompanies you, warn them that from Wednesday through Friday, they won't see much of you till evening.

After you check into your hotel room, unpack and set up your laptop (bring an RJ45 cable just in case), get acquainted with the hotel and find out how far the conference center is. Why not stretch your legs and walk over to the center to get registered and check out the floor plan? On Tuesday afternoon, it's easy to register and get your C.A.R. badge, any tickets to special events, and the final schedule for the meetings. You'll also have an opportunity to contribute to CREPAC (Champion and 99 Club) and Political Survival. Whenever you leave the convention/hotel area, you might want to take off your CAR badge, unless you want the locals to point and snicker.

**THE MEETINGS** – Pace Yourself

It is smart to go through the schedule Tuesday night and figure out where and when the committees meet for which you are a member. Then, check out other committees that it would be interesting to sit in on, at least for part of the meeting, and add those. With some coordination, the Directors of each association should be able to cover most of the important meetings.

The committee meetings start **early**. Some begin at 7 a.m. (6:45 a.m. for "Exec" on Saturday), most at 8AM. Conduct your evening activities accordingly. If you think breakfast at a restaurant may compromise your timely arrival, get coffee and a pastry to go. Elevator traffic may slow your departure from the hotel because many Directors leave for the meetings at the same time.

When you reach the meeting room, note that committee members sit up front, guests sit behind. If there's a sign-in sheet, be sure to sign it. You should already have the meeting materials from the C.A.R. website, but there are usually extra copies at the front or back by the door, and also sometimes additional late breaking material.

Although there's a lunch break in the meeting schedule, it may not allow time for a formal lunch. Few restaurants near the conference centers have the capacity to handle the C.A.R. lunch crush.

Those present at committee meetings are the Committee Chair, Vice Chair North, Vice Chair South, the Committee Members-at-Large and the Regional Representative Committee Members. There is also a Committee Liaison who facilitates communication with the Executive Committee. Most importantly, C.A.R. Staff provides expert commentary on the all the issues and suggests how to translate committee discussion into effective legislative strategy.

During committee meetings you may wish to participate in the discussion. Most committee meetings have microphones placed in one or several areas of the room for that purpose. When you reach the microphone, *state* ***your name, your region, and whether you are a member of the committee***, before offering your comments. Keep your remarks brief and to the point.

The Executive Committee ("Exec") reviews and discusses all action items brought forward from the standing committees before they proceed to the floor of the Director's Sessions for a vote. Regional Chairs attend the Exec meetings to offer further input. If the action item has financial or strategic planning implications for CAR (and many do), it is referred to the Strategic Planning and Finance Committee for review before going to Exec. Exec may agree with the action item, modify it, or recommend against it. The motion then proceeds to the Board of Directors (that's you!) for final consideration.

**CAUCUS MEETINGS**

The C.A.R. regional caucus meetings are held as scheduled by the Regional Chair to review the issues raised at committee meetings, and to conduct any Regional business (i.e., elections-Summer, budget-Fall). The caucus meeting rooms are scattered throughout the conference facility, and a schedule with each location is prominently posted at Registration and in the hotels. Find the your Region's location prior to the Caucus.

Conducted by the Regional Chair, caucus discussions are largely limited to issues that need immediate attention and are likely to appear as action items at the Director's Sessions on Friday or Saturday. Regional Reps are expected to give a brief oral report covering any action items coming out of your assigned committee, and to include a sense of the discussion in the

event some debate factored into the vote. Debate at the committee level may translate into changes to the motion that emerges from the Executive Committee for final consideration. A regional liaison from the Executive Committee frequently stops by our caucus to get input and to answer any questions. Don't discard other significant information from your committee meeting; include it in your final committee report.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS SESSIONS** – The Big Show

You may be surprised at seeing a Board of 1100 members--but it works! In the huge room, you will see signs designating where each Region's Directors are to sit. Join your group, and be sure the Regional Chair records your attendance.

The first of the two Director's Sessions is held on Friday afternoon, and includes some preliminaries and voting on selected action items from the first two days of committee meetings. Sometimes key issues are dealt with Friday. The Friday Caucus follows, making for a long day. If you feel tired at this point, you've got lots of company.

Unwinding on the last evening of the meetings has its attractions, but Saturday morning rolls around pretty quickly and is important. Be prudent. The final Director's Session is held at 8 a.m. on Saturday. Attire at the Saturday Director's session is traditionally very casual (traveling clothes).

On Saturday, rise early, pack, and get ready for the trip home. Become familiar with the "express checkout" procedures for your hotel. If a quick departure is desired, you may want to get your car out of valet parking and move it to a self-parking facility. Valet parking at most hotels cannot hope to deal with several hundred directors who all want to leave at once. The final session is usually completed by 11-11:30 a.m., and sometimes earlier, but controversy and debate can also push the finish toward noon. This possibility raises the checkout conundrum, because some hotels have an 11a.m. checkout. You can usually explain the situation to the front desk and get some leeway. Alternatively, hotels often have a secure room where you can leave your luggage after you checkout. If you're flying home, book a return flight that gives you plenty of time to get to the airport---without scampering out of the Director's Session before it's over.

Saturday is the finale. This is the session where controversial issues often hit the floor and the speakers line up at the microphones. Directors may debate each issue and modify the motion before taking action. If you want to speak, do so! Go to one of the 4 microphones and wait for the Chair to acknowledge you. ***State your name and Region, be brief and speak directly to the motion on the floor.*** Occasionally, the proceedings require a ballot vote coordinated by the Regional Chair. ***It is important that all Region Directors be present to vote.***

**COMMITTEE REPORTS** – Communicating the Outcome

All Directors appointed to a C.A.R. Standing Committee, either as a Regional Representative or Member-at-Large, are expected to complete a brief written report concerning the issues discussed at committee meetings. Try to transcribe your notes soon after your committee meeting, when your recollections are fresh. (This is easy if you have a laptop.)

Reports should emphasize action items, but also include brief coverage of other matters of interest and any special presentations. Where possible, tailor the report to your Region members. Check with your Regional Chair or Association staff for any direction as to distribution of these reports.

***Communication between members and C.A.R. is critical to the health of the organization. When the system works properly, issues raised at a local level can work their way through the system to appear as policy or statutory changes that affect the entire state.***

**CONCLUSION**

A single Director, speaking in Committee or from the floor of the C.A.R. Director's Session, can influence the body and alter the direction of the entire membership. That is the difference between just attending the C.A.R. meetings and seeking out the full value of involvement.