

# DRAFT CONFERENCE GUIDELINES FOR THE AUSTRALASIAN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY – FEBRUARY 2008

(Amended 7 July 2009 by Terry Korn)

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## INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are not a comprehensive account of all issues and actions that are likely to be addressed during the running of a conference. To improve the guidelines (and fill in those gaps) it would be helpful if each *Conference Convenor* updates them after completion of their conference. A timeline shall be included in a future update.

The key roles in the conference organization (as identified in this document) are:

1. *AWMS Committee* (the committee elected at an AGM to run AWMS)
2. *Conference Convenor* (the AWMS member who has volunteered to run the conference normally in his/her local region).
3. *Conference Manager* (the company that is contracted to provide conference management services e.g. OnQConference) – if required.
4. *Executive Conference Committee* (committee comprising an AWMS Committee representative, the Conference Convenor, and the Conference Manager)
5. *Local Conference Committee* (local people involved in the conference organization)

## THE AIMS

The Australasian Wildlife Management Society hosts a conference to provide:

- Professional development and a continuing education forum for members, especially students;
- Forum for discussion of current research and wildlife management issues;
- Networking opportunities for members;
- Members with access to relevant corporate suppliers;
- Forum for the Annual General Meeting of the Society;
- Raise revenue for the Society.

## THE FORMAT AND THEME

The conference is to be an annual event, held over 3 days with the Annual General Meeting of the Society held during the conference.

The conference will normally have a theme, which is to be determined by the AWMS *Committee* and *Conference Organiser*. The program and theme should include a range of ideas and topics that will attract members and non-members, as well as industry suppliers.

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## THE TIMING

The conference is normally held in late November/ early December each year. The *AWMS Committee* and *Conference Organiser* shall jointly determine the dates of the conference (ideally one year in advance to maximize promotion opportunities).

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES

### **AWMS Committee Responsibilities**

- Liaise with the *Conference Organiser* via then *Executive Conference Committee* (see below), and fulfill the following functions:
- Approve the conference proposal.
- Approve the theme and business sessions.
- Approve and monitor the budget.
- Approve other activities as necessary.

### **Conference Convenor Responsibilities**

The Convenor of the Conference, shall:

- Issue the *Conference Manager* tender (if not managed in-house)
- Establish and manage the Local Conference Committee
- Appoint *Local Conference Committee* members to manage the scientific program, social program, exhibitions and sponsorship.
- Manage dealings with the nominated *Conference Manager*
- Co-ordinate promotional material and offers (speakers, sponsors, delegates).
- Provide speaker and program details to the *Conference Manager* for inclusion in Conference printed material
- Contact prospective sponsors (in conjunction with *Conference Manager*)
- Devise a marketing strategy
- Including AWMS newsletter and email listserver
- Liaise with the AWMS Newsletter editor for publicity
- Liaise with the *Conference Manager* to maximize information reach through databases.
- Prepare press releases and arrange attendance by media where appropriate
- Provide database lists of prospective delegates, sponsors and exhibitors (in electronic format) to the *Conference Manager* for contact purposes (lists should be obtained from previous conference organizers).
- Draft a budget in collaboration with the *Conference Manager*

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## **Executive Conference Committee Responsibilities**

An Executive Committee will be established to include:

- The Conference Convenor
- An *AWMS Committee* member with the responsibility for Conferences,
- The appointed Conference Manager.

Responsibilities will include:

- Endorse the suitability of the conference venue.
- Endorse the theme and symposia sessions.
- Endorse the overall format and content of symposia sessions.
- Invite a prominent person to open the Conference.
- Overview the budget in consultation with the *Conference Manager* and recommend for approval by the *AWMS Committee* (i.e. incorporates registration fees, trade exhibition fees and sponsorship target).
- Seek approval by the *AWMS Treasurer* and/or a nominated director for conference payments.
- Establish and maintain a rigorous accounting system for the conference budget.

## **Local Conference Committee Responsibilities**

A conference sub-committee may be appointed by the convenor as required. Any sub-committee shall support the local organizing committee and the *Conference Convenor* as follows:

### **Program**

- Suggest a program topic (or several) and program structure
- Recommend and invite potential speakers
- Provide input on program structure
- Assist in attracting delegates, event preparations and conference marketing.
- Issue invitations to keynote and session speakers and session chair people.
- Review conference program (includes reviewing and selecting submitted papers)

### **Social**

- Identify social event options, and then manage the organisation of selected events
- Suggest potential sponsors for the social events

### **Sponsorship / Exhibition**

- Identify and approach potential sponsors and exhibitors
- Provide suggestions specific to the conference that may enhance the event or opportunities

### **Conference Tours**

- Nominate/arrange and manage pre and post conference tours

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## **Conference Manager Responsibilities**

Note: These are to be agreed at the time the contract is awarded by the *Conference Convenor*.

The duties may include the following:

- Attend conference committee meetings.
- Provide Secretariat support to the Executive and Committee.
- Prepare and maintain planning checklist/timetable.
- Prepare action sheets of Committee/*Conference Manager* tasks.
- Inspect and recommend conference venue (in collaboration with the *Conference Convenor*) and advise of contractual arrangements.
- Receive proposals for services required (i.e. exhibition stand contractors, audio visual, provide report and comparative recommendation to Executive for sign off by Board.
- Compile proposals for potential sponsors of social events, provide report and recommendation to Executive Committee.
- Book all conference accommodation and oversee contractual arrangements for sign off by *Conference Convenor*.
- Organise conference-discounted airfares.
- Advise on the budget for recommendation to the *AWMS Committee*, and provide ongoing budgetary advice.
- Establish a conference bank account (Trust Account) and maintain financial management (including GST reporting).
- Provide a telephone, mailing, fax and email base for all conference enquiries.
- Recommend menu selection.
- Recommend social program and entertainment, and accompanying persons programs.
- Assist in drafting text for conference material
- Arrange for distribution of conference material.
- Manage the papers process and liaise with Executive.
- Prepare letters of acceptance or rejection of abstracts.
- Liaise with speakers re abstracts, audio-visual, travel and accommodation arrangements.
- Coordinate audiovisual services.
- Process registrations and distribute acknowledgment letters and Tax Invoices in a timely manner.
- Provide up-to-date status reports.
- Maintain ongoing communication with:
  - conference venue staff.
  - reservations Manager at accommodation venues.
  - speakers.
  - trade exhibitors and sponsors.
  - Clients.
- Manage trade exhibition and/or poster displays.
- Provide manpower for packing of material into conference satchels.
- Provide other activities/support as agreed in the contract.

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## THE VENUE

The following are the necessary requirements of any conference facility booked for the AWMS Conference:

- A room that is able to accommodate 250 delegates theatre style for conference lectures.
- A separate area to accommodate an industry exhibit, adjacent to the lecture theatre, and capable of housing up to 10 display booths, approx 3m x 3m in size.
  - This area should also be large enough to allow catering and some social functions to be hosted within the industry exhibition area to allow industry maximum exposure to attending delegates.
- Acceptable costs associated with any bookings and catering provisions.
- Ability to offer accommodation within the facility or the venue is located close to a range of alternate accommodation options.
- Ideally the location will be within walking distance to a central business district or shopping precinct.
- Ease of access to an airport.
- Audio visual facilities in-house, or accessible by a professional audio provider.
- At least one break out room that is able to accommodate up to 30 delegates theatre style

## FINANCE

(This section summarises the responsibilities of the various groups involved in the management of the conference)

### **AWMS Committee Responsibilities**

- Approve and monitor the budget.
- Provide seeding funds if required.

### **Conference Convenor Responsibilities**

- Issue the Conference Manager tender
- Manage dealings with the nominated *Conference Manager*
- Draft a positive budget in collaboration with the *Conference Manager*

### **Executive Conference Committee Responsibilities**

- Overview the budget in consultation with the *Conference Manager* and recommend for approval by the Full AWMS Committee any profit splits between AWMS and the organization/institution for which the *Conference Convenor* may work (**this must be completed prior to the conference budget being finalised**).
- Determine budget parameters, e.g. registration fees, trade exhibition fees and sponsorship target.
- Seek approval by the AWMS Treasurer and/or a nominated director for conference payments.

- Establish and maintain a rigorous accounting system for the conference budget
- Complete final conference accounts and distribute any surplus in the previously agreed manner.

### **Conference Manager Responsibilities**

Note: These may be agreed at the time the contract is awarded by the Conference Convenor.

- Advise on the budget for recommendation to the AWMS Committee, and provide ongoing budgetary advice.
- If agreed as part of the contract, establish a conference bank account (Trust Account) and maintain financial management (including GST reporting).

### **Financial Support for Students, Indigenous People and Invited Speakers**

- Note: The following guidelines were endorsed by the AWMS committee and placed on the AWMS website in 2007. An updated version was placed on the website in July 2009. It is the responsibility of the Executive Conference Committee to check the AWMS website for the latest version of these guidelines

AWMS can provide financial support for costs incurred by Invited Speakers for the annual conference. AWMS also encourages students and indigenous people to attend their conferences but recognises some may find it difficult to attend for financial reasons. The intention of the subsidies is to provide financial assistance to those people with low incomes to help them attend, participate in and/or present a paper at the annual AWMS conference. The criteria below indicate who would be eligible for these subsidies and how preferences will be made in years when applications are high.

#### Student

- Full-time or part-time student with a limited income (e.g. Student Stipend or part-time work only).
- Must be a senior author and present a paper (spoken or poster). The amount of money available for subsidies is limited and in years where application numbers are high preference will be given to those students presenting spoken papers over poster papers and who register for the full conference.
- To be eligible to receive the full subsidy of 50% of travel costs (to a maximum of \$500), the applicant must have been a member of AWMS for at least two years at the time of the conference.
- Applicants who have been a member for a year or less are eligible for a subsidy of 25% of their travel costs to a maximum of \$250.
- Applications for a subsidy must be endorsed by the student's supervisor.
- Students who register and pay for part of the conference rather than the full conference will only be permitted to participate in the section of conference for which they have registered and paid

At the February 2008 committee meeting it was decided that the Conference Organiser should budget to cover the average number of student subsidies funded over the past five years (available from the Treasurer). If the number of approved

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applications exceeds the five-year average, AWMS can be expected to cover the difference.

### Indigenous People

Travel subsidies and registration for indigenous people will be considered (as per students) where indigenous delegates cannot get full support from their member organisation and where it is considered desirable for them to attend a specific symposium. If appropriate to their circumstances, free registration may be considered. Subsidies will be considered where applicants can:

- Identify themselves as an indigenous person of Australia or New Zealand (other countries will also be considered)
- Are involved in wildlife management in that country
- Will present a paper (spoken or poster) or have experiences relevant to a conference symposium.

In years where the application for subsidies are high preference will be given to those people whose experience is most relevant to the symposia planned for the conference.

Where appropriate, indigenous delegates will be eligible for:

- A travel subsidy as per students
- A student registration or, if appropriate to their circumstances, free registration.

### Invited Speakers

1. Speakers would normally be invited to present by a Symposium Organiser (as a speaker for a symposium) or the Conference Convener (as a Keynote speaker).
2. Speakers may be invited from anywhere in the world.
3. Members attending annual conferences would be expecting the latest developments in the speaker's field of expertise to be presented and discussed.
4. Preference will be given to speakers who can attend an annual conference for its entire duration (i.e. not just for their presentation).
5. Invited speakers are encouraged to actively participate in social events and mingle with AWMS conference attendees in order to maximise benefits for each.
6. Invited Speakers from any branch of wildlife management (scientists, wildlife managers, wildlife users, educators and extension/interpretation officers, policy development, government agencies, and indigenous managers) are encouraged to attend AWMS conferences.
7. Preference will be given to Invited Speakers in a different branch of wildlife management from those selected to present at the previous one or two conferences, i.e. AWMS encourages inter-annual variety in themes/topics presented.
8. Requests for funds for Invited Speakers should be submitted in writing or by email to member(s) of the AWMS Committee. A final decision on Invited Speakers that have been nominated, and the amount of funds available for any given speaker, will be judged by the Committee on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind relevance to membership, reputation of the speaker, and where they are coming from. Arrangements to cover outstanding expenses should be made by individual speakers, or by another host institution.

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## THE PROGRAM

The conference program should be build around symposia that in many cases will relate to the conference theme. There are normally open sessions to accommodate the likely diverse range of submitted papers.

Ideally, the program should contain at least one well-known keynote speaker as a primary draw card. The budget may contain an allowance to pay a fee for one professional speaker engaged in the keynote role.

Each conference will develop its own program, however sessions should be staged between the following hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm.

The preferred presentation time for each speaker is to be determined by the Local Conference Committee which is chaired by the *Conference Convenor*.

The *Conference Convenor* may appoint a Program Coordinator who will:

- Seek expressions of interest from prospective groups that may be interested in being involved with the conference – main symposia or parallel program;
- Coordinate responses and allocate time frames to groups, taking into account the conference social program, plenary sessions and the AGM.
- Liaise with and takes an overview of group programs to ensure quality and variety in the papers and to maintain delegate interest;
- Seeks 200-250 word abstracts from speakers for printing in the program and placing on the website for promotional purposes.
- Provide preliminary program details for printing the promotional brochure (7-8 months prior to the event) and complete program details for printing in the Conference Proceedings
- Select and coordinate chairpersons and/or MC for the program.

## Caughley Medal

Recipients of the Caughley Medal receive a fully-paid trip to the next AWMS conference so that they can deliver a keynote presentation on the topic of their choice. Although AWMS will cover the cost of flights and accommodation, it is expected that the Conference will provide free full registration. A 50-60 minute time-slot (to be confirmed in consultation with the award winner) shall also be made available for the keynote presentation early in the conference (i.e. first or second day).

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## Student Session and Awards

A student symposium was trialled at the 2007 conference and it was resolved at the 2007 AGM that:

- (a) The student symposium should be held as early as possible in the conference (preferably the first afternoon) so that students are familiar to the conference participants.
- (b) Students should have **at least** 15 mins for their presentations.
- (c) The student symposium should not follow a theme. Its aim is to highlight the best student work and excellent prizes are awarded to the winners.

It is expected that that not all students will automatically present in the symposium: rather, student presenters are selected based on ticking a box saying that 'we wish to present in the student symposium' and the quality of their abstract. Students with a poor abstract and/or few results should be encouraged to present a poster.

Separate judging panels should be selected for the Student Spoken Presentations and Student Poster awards. Each panel should, as far as possible, be composed of a minimum of three people and a maximum of four people. The panel should have a mix of academic and agency people and it should have a mix of genders. The panel should be arranged by the Conference Organiser.). One person needs to be the panel Chair, and it is the responsibility of that person to design and distribute a scoring sheet for each presentation or poster and to notify the President of AWMS with the names of the award winners prior to the Conference Dinner.

Student awards are announced at the Conference Dinner. It is expected that there be at least two awards (i.e. "Best' and 'Runner-Up') be made for both Presentations and Posters: further awards (e.g. 'Highly Commended) could be made at the discretion of the judging panel.

In recent years CSIRO Publishing has kindly sponsored all the student prizes, and it is hoped that this tradition will continue. The awards are announced at the Conference Dinner by the President and the CSIRO Publishing representative presents the award.

The current CSIRO Publishing representative is:

Dr Camilla Myers  
Managing Editor, *Wildlife Research*  
**CSIRO PUBLISHING**  
PO Box 1139 (150 Oxford Street - for couriers)  
Collingwood, Victoria 3066, Australia  
Tel: +61 (0)3 9662 7629 Fax: +61 (0)3 9662 7611  
Email: camilla.myers@csiro.au

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## THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

An appropriate and attractive social program is essential for the success of the conference. It must include a conference dinner.

While each event will establish its own flavour for functions as considered/suggested by the local committee or executive committee, each conference should host the following (or similar) functions:

- Conference welcome i.e. Ice-breaker function
- Conference Dinner (at which any new committee members are announced by the President, the student awards are presented, and any Caughtley Medal winners announced) and where possible, a
- Student Dinner – to be organized by the student representative on the AWMS committee or their nominee.

In order to provide sponsors and exhibitors maximum exposure to delegates attending, the preferred location for the Welcome function, is within the trade exhibit in the conference venue.

The costs for conference functions are included in registration rates.

Guest programs and/or pre/post conference tours, may be introduced as an adjunct to each conference as proposed by a local committee. These should be organized accordingly but in every instance, no financial commitment, contract or obligation can be entered into (on behalf of AWMS) by anyone other than the *Conference Convenor*. Any conference tours/guest programs must not be conducted unless costs will be covered.

## INDUSTRY EXHIBITIONS

AWMS will develop sponsorship and exhibit packages together with a floor plan specific to each venue, and focusing on the budgetary requirements of each conference.

An industry prospectus and industry registration form will be prepared and circulated to industry 6-8 months prior to the conference, offering early bird incentives and other space purchase options. The prospectus may also contain marketing incentives, encouraging delegate participation with companies exhibiting at the conference. Special consideration will be given to the Conference requirements of AWMS Corporate Supporters.

On receipt of registration, detailed exhibition information is forwarded to companies, detailing stand sizes, inclusions, electrical provisions etc. Close liaison will continue with each company, until the cessation of the event. The exhibit layout may include:

- an exhibit space in a prominent position, for AWMS
- several free spaces and booths, which are used as contra deals for AWMS sponsors
- sufficient space in the centre of the room for provision of catered breaks

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- sufficient space to allow for tea breaks throughout the room
  - small amount of delegate seating
  - a separate area for exhibitor tea and coffee – which is provided continuous throughout the week.

Exhibitors wishing to make announcements at the conference will be required to provide written advice of their announcement which will be broadcast by an AWMS representative during the lunch breaks. No touting within the exhibit will be permitted.

## MARKETING

Dates for every event should be published on the AWMS website as soon as they are available – potentially 12 months ahead. Tentative dates can be published provided they are noted as confirmed as soon as this happens.

Marketing of each event should commence at the event the year prior (via mention by the AWMS president or *Conference Organiser*). Flyers can be designed and posters displayed in the stand with handouts and items promoting the forthcoming destination.

A preliminary brochure of the event should be circulated to membership at least 7-8 months prior to the event and can contain a form seeking expression of interest or an early registration form.

Final registration form and program information should be produced and circulated at least 3 months prior to the event, ideally four months out.

Industry Prospectus should be produced and circulated to potential exhibitors at least 7-8 months prior to the event.

E-Newsletters and advertisements in the AWMS Newsletter should be organized at regular intervals following the preliminary brochure right up to the commencement of the conference.

Media leading up to and during the conference should be organized by the local organizing committee. This group is best situated to liaise with media outlets (radio/TV/newspaper) covering the region/state in which the conference is being held.

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# GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKERS AND CHAIRPERSONS

All delegates registered at the conference may attend any session or parallel program listed.

All rooms should be clearly identified and will be open well before the start of the first session each day.

## Speakers

As conference participants, all speakers must register by completing a registration form. Discussion on free registration or per diems for speakers should be resolved with the speaker before the conference.

Speakers should ensure they are familiar with the room location for their talk, before the start of the session. Audio visual aids are provided in each venue and each speaker's requirements will have been canvassed prior to the event.

## Chairpersons

It is difficult and at times a thankless task, but a most important one. Chairpersons should meet the speakers before the session - check that they know the location of the venue and are happy with the audio visual arrangements.

Double-check that any special requests have been catered for, before the event. Introduce the speaker, giving short, relevant details of his or her background that will be of interest to the participants.

Agree beforehand, who will receive the audience questions and whether questions are to be asked during or after the presentation. Some may prefer to have no questions.

In fairness to all subsequent speakers (and importantly if concurrent sessions are in place), it is essential that the speaker does not go over time.

Chairpersons should lead the audience in thanking the speaker at the conclusion of the presentation.

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## SERVICE CONTRACTS

In order to ensure equal opportunities and fair-trading to all parties involved, where practical a minimum of two quotes should be sought for any potential service/contribution.

Each quote/proposal is to be forwarded to the *Conference Convenor* via e-mail or post and then compiled into a Comparison Report for review by the *Conference Convenor* and endorsement by *Executive Conference Committee*.

If it is seen that a member has a conflicting interest or is in similar trading with the Company(s) involved, the member will automatically be excluded from viewing any tenders or quotes or providing input to the discussion.

Where it has been established that there is a conflict of interest with a particular member, other members should not breach the privacy of the supplier or party involved by discussing the subject, even on a 'one to one' basis.

All quotes/proposals should be treated with strict confidence and must not be distributed.

### Definition of a Conflict of Interest

A *conflict of interest* occurs when there is a situation where a person has a personal or business interest in a matter, either direct or indirect, which may result in a pecuniary or non pecuniary benefit through involvement in a discussion or decision of the committee. A perception of a conflict of interest is when it could be reasonably concluded that a conflict exists.

### Requirements:

If a member of the committee has a direct or indirect interest in a matter being considered by the committee, the member must, as soon as the relevant facts come to the member's knowledge, disclose the nature of the interest to the Chair of the committee or at a meeting of the committee, which ever can be expedited earlier. The disclosure must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

When a member makes a disclosure of a perceived conflict of interest the members at the meeting must determine whether or not there is a conflict of interest. If the members determine there is not a conflict of interest then the member may participate in discussion on the matter.

When a member makes a disclosure of a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest and it is determined by the committee to be an actual conflict of interest the member may neither: participate in discussions or take part in any subsequent decision of the committee with respect to that matter.

A declaration of perceived or actual conflict of interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes must also include what action the members took to overcome the perceived or actual conflict of interest to process the agenda item.

## AUDIO VISUALS

Speaker audio requirements will be sought one month out from the event. In order to minimize costs, all speakers should be encouraged to use data projection (powerpoint) as their means of presentation, over slide projectors and overheads.

The session room will provide the following audio aids:

- Data projection unit
- Laptop or PC
- Lectern and microphone
- Lapel microphone
- Screen
- Laser Pointer
- Other pieces of equipment can be provided on request, depending on cost.

**EXAMPLE: AUDIO-VISUAL REQUIREMENTS FORM**

Please help us to help you make your presentation memorable and enjoyable for the Conference delegate. It is important that we are able to help you present your session(s) in the way that best fits your needs and this requires planning.

*To that end, we do request that all presentations are prepared in Powerpoint format. The latest version of the program will be available at the conference. All session rooms will be provided with a data projector and laptop computer for presenters.*

Should you require 'extra' audio-visual requirements, please complete the details below for each of your talks so that arrangements can be made for you. If giving a number of talks and if your requirements are the same for each of these, please make a note of this.

Please keep in mind that each piece of equipment hired does add to the cost and while we will obtain what you need, within reason, please request only those items that you will actually require.

NAME			
PRESENTATION TITLE			
DAY		TIME	
<b>EQUIPMENT NEEDED</b> (Please tick)			
MICROPHONE		VIDEO CASSETTE RECORDER (format VHS only)	
LECTERN		FLIPCHART	
OVERHEAD PROJECTOR		SLIDE PROJECTOR	
WHITE BOARD		ADDITIONAL SLIDE PROJECTOR	
LASER POINTER			
OTHER REQ'TS (Specify i.e. dual projection)			

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM TO THE ADDRESS BELOW **BY (date)**  
PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT IT MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS AT SHORT NOTICE ON THE DAY OF YOUR PRESENTATION,SO IT IS IMPERATIVE YOU CONSIDER YOUR REQUIREMENTS CAREFULLY.