



Task Force Survey Results

The results are in for the Women in Project Controls (WPC) Task Force Survey!

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

68 members responded to the survey, 94% of whom are female.

Women in project controls are educated, and they seek professional certification more often than the average AACE member, perhaps as a means of achieving an equitable salary or recognition. Nearly 3/4 of respondents believe that certification has helped them to achieve their professional goals.

The majority of respondents work full-time in an office, in a variety of roles and with varying levels of responsibility. In comparison to the average AACE member, a slightly higher percentage of women work part-time. Women are working at construction jobsites in increasing numbers, but acceptance of women at international jobsites remains an obstacle.

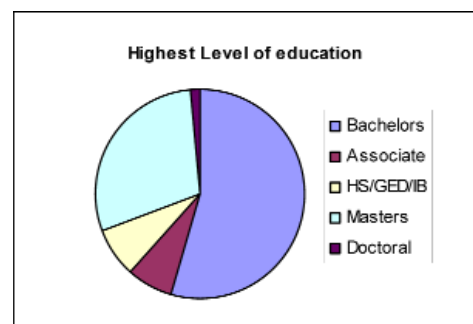
Over half of the respondents believe that membership has helped them to achieve their professional goals. Professional development, certification, continuing education, and networking are the primary reasons why the respondents joined AACE.

Nearly 3/4 of respondents receive reimbursement from their company for membership dues, but a much smaller percentage of respondents receive reimbursement for attending conferences and dinner meetings. This finding illustrates a need for companies to equate active participation with an increased benefit of membership.

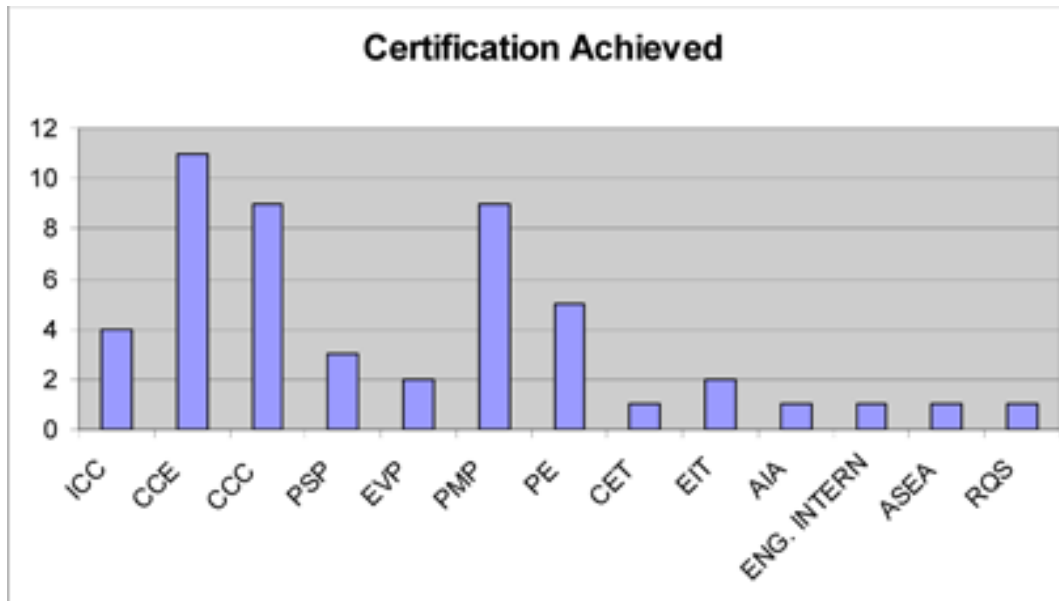
The survey generated some preliminary ideas about how AACE can best serve its female members, along with some general comments about the profession, and women's experience within the profession. Practical actions can be taken by the Women in Project Controls Task Force, the Education Board, the Sections, the Marketing Department, and AACE's own members to address these needs.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION

Women in project controls have received higher education, and nearly 1/3 of respondents hold advanced degrees. 54% of respondents hold a bachelor's degree. 29% also hold a master's degree, and 1% also hold a doctoral degree. These results are strikingly similar to those for the 2004 AACE salary survey.



50% of respondents have received professional certification, and 35% of those respondents hold a certification from AACE (compared to 17% of the respondents for the 2004 AACE salary survey). 8% are licensed professional engineers or architects (compared to 15% of the respondents for the 2004 AACE salary survey). 25% of respondents hold more than one certification or license. 70% of those who have received some form of certification believe that doing so has helped them to achieve their professional goals.



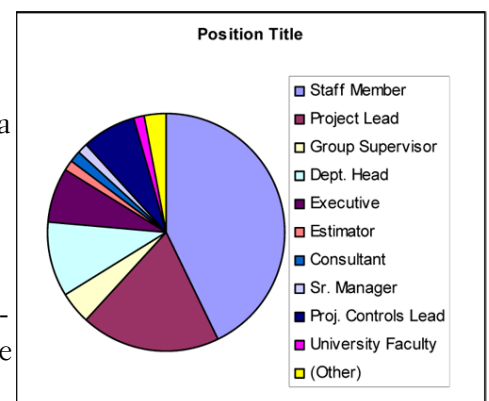
The results of our survey indicate that women tend to pursue additional education and certification, as visible proof of achievement and qualifications. This may be related to the finding in the 2004 AACE salary survey, which shows that "...women's salaries are about 8% less than men's, despite [sic] having the same level of education". According to the same salary survey, "...respondents with either a CCE or CCC certification receive approximately ... 11% ... more in annual salary, compared to those without." This data supports the theory that women can achieve a more equitable salary by obtaining certification.

EMPLOYMENT

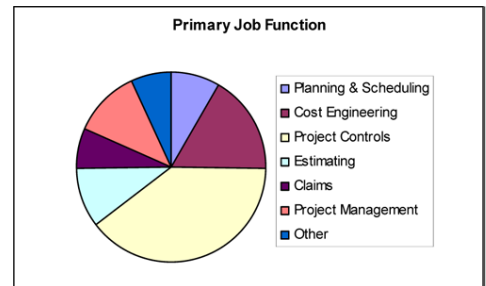
The majority of respondents (94%) are employed full-time. 1% are unemployed, 1% are on sabbatical, and 4% are employed part-time. The percentage of respondents for the WPC survey who are working part-time is higher than the corresponding percentage (1.4%) of respondents for the 2004 AACE salary survey.

43% of respondents categorize themselves as a "staff member". 31% are a project lead or group supervisor, while only 19% are a department head or executive. These results are strikingly similar to those for the 2004 AACE salary survey.

The diversity of responsibilities and roles filled by women in project controls illustrates the difficulty in finding a name that can adequately define our membership. Project controls is a primary job function for 41% of



respondents, with 19% performing either estimating or scheduling, 18% working as cost engineers, 12% employed as project managers, and 7% working in claims. This distribution of job functions is similar to that of all members, both male and female, as indicated by the 2004 AACE salary survey.



The majority of respondents (87%) work in an office, with only 13% of respondents employed at the construction site. However, 68% of respondents have worked at a construction site at some point during their career. This indicates that acceptance of women on construction sites is increasing as more women pursue nontraditional careers. Feedback from respondents indicates, however, that acceptance of women at international jobsites remains an obstacle.

MEMBERSHIP

The survey had a good response from both AACE members and nonmembers. The survey link was circulated to key individuals, with a request that they distribute the survey within their company and department, and also that they distribute the survey to their peers. 74% of respondents are AACE members.

Of those members, 4% are student members, 6% are associate members, and 2% are life members. No respondents are fellows or emeritus members. According to AACE headquarters, of 5250 Members, only seven women are prepaid Life Members (of 167 total), two are Honorary Life Members (of 20), three are Fellows (of 70) and one woman has Emeritus status (of 107).

On average, the respondents have been a member of AACE for 4 years, compared to an overall Association average membership of 7 years. This supports empirical evidence (through the annual AACE salary surveys) that the number of female members has been increasing over time, with the number of female respondents nearly doubling every ten years (from 2.4% in 1982, to 5.9% in 1995, to 12.3% in 2004). The average age of AACE members is 48, with newer members averaging 42 years old.

26% of respondents have served as a volunteer at the section level, and 9% have served as a volunteer at the Association level.

54% of those who are AACE members believe that membership has helped them to achieve their professional goals. When asked what specific benefits came with membership, they listed the following:

- Networking
- Lifetime learning
- Job opportunities
- "AACE provides a common standard for measuring performance"
- Good professional references
- Workshops
- Access to latest info in the field
- "Credentials on my resume"
- "Education improved my skills and judgment"
- Leadership opportunities
- "PSP certification has helped me and the members of our scheduling department raise the bar of scheduling at our company"



- "I have received certifications that validate my knowledge and experience when doing consulting work."
- "Meetings provide additional information on what techniques are being used and are successful in business."
- Increased visibility
- "Membership helps maintain my certification"
- Opportunities for certification
- "ICC certification qualified me for a raise"
- "I have learned a lot through AACE and think it's a great tool in my career."

Several of those who perceive that they have not benefited from membership admit that they have not had time to participate in training, and believe that they need to be more involved. This supports other evidence that those people who are active in professional societies receive the greatest benefit from membership.

Professional development (70%), certification (61%), continuing education (57%), and networking (57%) are the primary reasons why the respondents joined AACE. These same motivators were discussed at the January 2006 quarterly AACE board meeting.

COMPANY SUPPORT

77% of respondents receive reimbursement from their company for membership dues. However, only 32% receive reimbursement for attending conferences and even fewer (18%) receive reimbursement for attending dinner meetings. 17% of nonmember respondents said that they would join the Association if their employer would pay for dues.

If companies see value in membership (as evidenced by reimbursement of dues), we need to ask why they don't necessarily see value in active membership (as evidenced by the lack of reimbursement for conferences and dinner meetings). Continuing education is a primary benefit of participation in events.

INDUSTRY VISIBILITY

A number of respondents had comments about the image of the cost engineer and the value of certification, as follows:

- "Emphasizing the importance of having certified personnel to do the job effectively will bring the profession of Cost Engineering to a higher level."
- "AACE needs to do a better job in getting recognition for its certifications."
- "Improve the recognition of the association across the engineering and construction industries."
- "Not many people recognize the importance of effective project controls, and it is treated almost like an accounting/administrative job."

It is clear that the Association needs to continue efforts toward greater recognition and acceptance of AACE certification, and Association visibility overall. An increased appreciation for the field of cost engineering will benefit both members and employers.



SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The survey included some preliminary ideas about how AACE can best serve its female members. As can be seen in the chart below, the respondents favor supporting those suggestions.

What practical actions can AACE take to meet the career needs of women in project controls?

	% in favor
Create a mentoring program	60%
Increase professional recognition for women through awards	28%
Acknowledge the technical contributions of women to the field of project controls	38%
Offer skills workshops, such as critical decision-making, work-life balance, and leadership	47%
Offer business management workshops, such as finance/economics, marketing, and business writing	37%
Provide support for women who are re-entering the workforce	22%
Establish a network of women in project controls	50%
Increase the number of women in Association leadership roles	31%
Create opportunities to develop technical expertise	41%

Many of the respondents also provided recommendations for improvement, as follows:

- "More networking events would be appreciated."
- "It is too expensive to go to conferences."
- "There is no AACE chapter in my area."
- "Lunchtime meetings would be much more feasible for working mothers."
- "It's not clear where to log on the AACE website to update your information such as change of address."
- "The topics at meetings and conferences are too advanced."
- "It would be nice to have a 101 series covering the basics of estimating, cost engineering, claims, etc. So often the dinner meetings assume a knowledgebase that may not exist (esp. for people new to the industry or have focused in one area)."
- "Our local chapter is very weak, and there is not a high participation rate, in regards of the amount of Project Control staff employed in our area. I would like information on how I could help with the local chapter."
- "I think it would be very beneficial if there was a 'support group' type of network of women in our field that we would be able to go to for advice or such."
- "The meetings held in the evenings are not conducive for attendance for women with young children in childcare."



Some general comments about women's experience within the profession provided further insight:

- "I became a cost engineer in 1973 and it took much longer for me to get promotions than my male counterparts."
- "On foreign assignments, locals are not always welcoming of women in senior positions."

CONCLUSION

The true value of the survey is not just in conducting the survey, but in learning from the data gathered and acting on the lessons learned and suggestions for improvement.

Based on the data received from the survey, and comparisons to demographic information from AACE Headquarters and the 2004 salary survey, our recommendations are as follows:

- Continuing education is a primary benefit of participation in events, and employers who reimburse members for participation at dinner meetings and conferences will receive a greater return on their investment. The AACE Marketing Department needs to reach out to employers, and illustrate to them that those people who are active members of professional societies receive the greatest benefit from membership.
- AACE members can assist with identifying and nominating female candidates for fellowship, awards, and leadership positions.
- The WPC Task Force should continue to acknowledge and publicize the technical contributions of women to the field of project controls and cost engineering.
- The Education Board should consider offering courses in business management and leadership skills.
- The WPC Task Force should continue to develop a network of women in project controls.
- AACE headquarters needs to increase visibility for the CyberSection, which serves members who do not have access to a local Section.
- The Education Board and the Sections should consider offering and marketing a cross-section of courses and events which address all technical skill levels, including introductory level.
- An increased effort by the Marketing Department and the Board of Directors would result in greater recognition and acceptance of AACE certification, an overall improvement in Association visibility, and an increased appreciation for the field of cost engineering.

