

Christopher Sanderson:

We want to have a series of introduction meetings to help answer any questions about the **2026 Sections Congress**. We're about, about a year. But there's a lot of things our Sections are gonna have to get in place and done. So I'm gonna start us off and all the hard questions Jim and Faye are gonna help us out.

So, in reference to Sections Congress next year, it's gonna be in **Glasgow Scotland, August 21-23 2026**, so I'm very excited about Sections Congress and I'm very excited about all the potential for all the young professionals within our organization to participate as well. Those individuals that are not a designated PSD (primary Section delegate) will have to worry about taking care of their own expenses to the conference and we'll talk more about that as time goes forward. With that, I'm gonna go ahead and turn it over to Jim, and we're going to listen to his presentation and ask some questions.

Jim Look:

Okay, sounds good Christopher I really appreciate that intro.

Sections Congress is a different type of event. This is, first of all, not a technical conference. This is an IEEE-MGA organizational conference, and is one of the few opportunities for Section leadership to talk directly to IEEE MGA staff and communicate your issues, work together with other Section leadership to identify and put together programs that benefit your Sections. This is not a technical meeting at all. You'll be able to of course talk with some of the other staff members that handle (for example) vTools , but it's basically a conference of Section leadership to speak with one voice to IEEE staff as to what can be done to make your life easier, to make Section operations easier, to work together, and make your whole operation much more efficient and much more satisfying form you end.

Sections Congress is going to be held next August, but we've got some short term deadlines that need to be hit, we will talk about all of them in a few minutes. This is a global forum. This happens every three years where the organization physically brings together several hundred Section leaders. We're talking about almost 600 Section leaders at this conference. And all of the Sections are able to send one Section delegate whose expenses will be paid by MGA.

The primary Section delegate (PSD) not only represents the Section, but they also vote in a formalized process to rank a number of recommendations as to which ones are the most important to the Sections and which ones should be either funded or staffed for implementation.

Why attend? Again this is for your Section leadership. You know the problems of dealing with your Section organization, with vTools, with organizing meetings, identifying your members, then reaching out to your members. These are all administrative things that can be made much easier. We've obviously made changes over the years. In fact, vTools resulted from recommendations that were made at Sections Congress eight to twelve years ago and slowly implemented over time. And again, it's the intent to make your administrative duties as straightforward and simple as possible. So you can spend your time dealing with your members and looking at what events can be done at the Section level. This is, again, your voice, your opportunity to personally talk with IEEE staff leadership. I'd expect you would be able to talk to Cecelia Jankowski and the rest of the MGA staff one on one if you want to, in addition to the rest of the elected IEEE officers.

You'll also have the opportunity to vote and make your voice known as to what recommendations, what things can be done to make your life easier, to make things work better at the Section level, to make the Section organization easier, faster, and more fluid as far as getting the

word out. Likewise, we're looking for new ideas. We've got, like I mentioned, one of the recommendations over the years was the development of vTools which is a whole suite of organization, meeting organization, of membership identification and membership contact tools. We're also looking for different things, how staff can organize or how we can work with staff to put in programs that will benefit your Section and make your life easier as a Section leader.

The recommendation process is one of the key aspects of Sections Congress is the development and ranking of recommendations that come in worldwide from all of the Section leadership. They're gonna bubble up from the Regions. Each Region has to come up with three top recommendations to pass along. And these are items that will make the Section more effective, make your volunteer life easier and make the ability of Sections worldwide to be more effective in supporting the whole IEEE effort. We'll be going through that development process of the recommendations and in fact that's why we need this much time in advance, because we'll be going through several rounds to identify recommendations from Region 5, look back over previous recommendations, see which ones were not implemented or which are still valid to implement this year. We'll end up forwarding the top three recommendations to the organization committee sometime early in 2026. And then at Sections Congress I will go through a voting process to identify the top three among all the recommendations that were submitted worldwide. And after that, MGA will organize and report upon the activities, the implementation of these recommendations at MGA functions until the recommendations are in fact completed. So that's another aspect, it's the putting together the recommendation, identifying needs and identifying specific programs to specific changes that can be done for implementation as part of the support for your local Sections.

Here are the deadlines. Again, MGA will pay for one delegate per Section. Prior to **November 1st**, we need to have at least a preliminary

list of those primary delegates (PSD) because they are going to be involved with quite a few activities during November 1st. and early Q1 2026. So we need to have those names (at least initially) locked down. We'll have some ability to modify them with a final deadline of February 10th to establish the final attendee list.

We'll also be sending representatives from the Regional Women in Engineering and Regional Young Professionals. So there will be a good contingent of Region 5 people that will be attending Sections Congress with MGA cost reimbursement. Sections Congress is also open to anyone who would like to attend at their own Section's expense.

Summary of the expenses, these are pretty much standard IEEE business expenses, and there is a list of attendees by category at the region level:

- MGA will cover normal expenses for PSD,
- MGA board members,
- SC2026 Committee members,
- SC2026 Region Coordinators,
- MGA Vice Chairs Elects and Regional Director Elects (if known),
- Chair of MGA SAC, Chair of IEEE-YP Committee, and Chair of IEEE-WIE Committee,
- 50% reimbursement for Regional YP chair, Regional WIE chair, and Regional SAC chair with equal 50% paid by their Region.

Following the standard IEEE travel policy, it looks like we're looking depending upon airfares in the range of \$2500-\$3000 per person depending on where you're coming from. And that was what would be defined in more detail and it's based on previous Sections Congress policies.

Main dates, **December 6th** is the first of a series of live events where the primary Section delegates will meet online for a MGA

sponsored webinar. Thus we need to have people identified pretty much firmed up by that time so they can attend the series. This is part of the orientation training MGA will provide to start the discussion in preparation for the events in 2026

## **Q&A Starts**

**1) Chris Camargo - Is there a document that captures the issues or recommendations that came out from the region previously we can look at**

- a) Jim Look - I know we have the compiled recommendations from MGA worldwide. I don't know if we have the draft of all the prior items from just Region-5.
- b) John Reinhert - I have all of those from Region-5 and I believe I have the complete list as it was voted on as well somewhere, I don't have that to be able to show you right now.
- c) Jim Look - Yes, we will get that out to you because we can look at that for good concepts and ideas that we can build upon and maybe fine tune and make them a bit more relevant and get them back into the system because there are obviously recurring themes.

**2) John Reinhert - What is the theme for 2026**

- a) Jim Look - Leading Technology for the Global Good

**3) Joe RedField - Is there a program developing in terms of what content will be available for people to see? I remember in the past Sections Congress there was just a ton of training on everything you wanted to know about and a ton of stuff you never even knew you didn't know. But is there a program that's starting to be developed or maybe major areas that can be distributed to the PSDs or those interested in being PSDs?**

- a) Jim Look - I think you can look back at the 2023 conference and pull out that agenda. I think we can expect the topics to

be very similar. I'm looking at the webinar on December 6th where I expect that MGA will have much more detail. Right now you know as much as I do about the actual nitty gritty of the program. That's why I think the December 6th webinar is going to be quite informative.

**4) Arthur Depoian - I have not heard anything yet about additional PSD because we had talked about that and that came up in some of our conversations and Christopher (Sanderson) mentioned that info I believe. And is this list of PSDs mainly for headcount at this point because lets assume if say Fort Worth or Denver each want to send additional people that might be relevant?**

a) Jim Look - I think the primary purpose is to ensure that MGA knows who to reimburse because we want to avoid a situation where we have more than one person per Section thinking that MGA is paying for their trip. So I think the spreadsheet you're (Art) working on will be the official region 5 document as to who is approved to receive reimbursement from MGA.

b) Joe Redfield - If I could jump in here from an Area chair perspective, we wanna ensure that we get the maximum benefit to the Region and for those that maybe attend Sections congress at the Section's expense, we would love it if we have the names of who's going so we can train them. So I believe Art on that spreadsheet, say add another tab off to the side so we can try to keep track of those other attendees who are not MGA sponsored.

**5) Kate Landow - Can we add this to the big events international conference that our region intends to be hosting in the next few years? And part of that is can we strategize as far as what content and programs we want funded so we can also benefit from those programs..**

- a) Christopher Sanderson - The purpose of this particular conference call is I want us to focus on Sections Congress itself. Any other activities and things we're thinking about we will be having discussions at our regional meeting, our Sections meetings, and we could bring those ideas up or even send me an email so i can make sure that we have appropriate budget coverage for those

## **Q&A Ended**

### **Christopher Sanderson Wrap Up:**

Last Sections Congress in Australia, the Houston Section actually had five additional people who attended. We had the PSD, as well as the rest of the leadership who held a particular position. I was fortunate to be able to go because I was the Awards and Arrangement Chair.

Understand the Houston Section picked up all those expenses. MGA did not pick them up. So one of the things I would definitely encourage you to do if you have young professionals that are coming up through our organization that are volunteering and doing the things that volunteers do, this can be an award or incentive to get involved and contribute to the growth of our organization.

Jim Look - Absolutely. That's a fantastic lead in. The YPs will certainly find things to do to enhance their understanding of the organization. In fact, the first time I went to Sections Congress, I had NO idea the breadth and depth of the organization. It's a real and true learning experience.

## **Q&A Opened Again**

- 6) **Walt Downing - How do we register for the event if we plan to attend?**

- a) Colleen Bailey - I was PSD at the last one and Art came on his own dime, We registered the same way but if you were the PSD you had like a code to get your registration covered and if you were not PSD you paid like normal.

**7) Walt Downing - Approximately how much was the registration fee in the past?**

- a) John Reinhert - around \$400 if i remember correctly

**8) Chris Camargo - When does registration open?**

- a) Around the November 1st deadline

**9) Sanjeev Pannala - Is there a limitation to who can attend outside of the one person sponsored by MGA?**

- a) Jim Look - I think Christopher outlined those limitations, but no, the Section can send as many delegates as they want, MGA will only pay for the single PSD per Section and the Section can cover the expense of anyone else they wish to send.

**10) Christopher Sanderson - Jim how can we get in contact with you for further questions?**

- a) [Jim.Look@ieee.org](mailto:Jim.Look@ieee.org)