

**BVA Email Protocol Guidelines**  
**Reviewed and Supported at BVA Executive Meeting – October 21, 2015**

**Background:**

- Various concerns have been expressed regarding the use of emails, including responsibility for communicating via emails, whether or not to copy others on certain emails, etc. etc.
- Emails can be effective for communicating information, however they are not a particularly effective way of working an issue. It has been observed that one email can beget a sea or trail of emails, as one person after another adds a couple of further comments and copies others, sometimes addressing the original topic, or sometime twisting or morphing it into something else. The net result for receivers of the sea or trail of emails is confusion as to what is going on, who is managing all this input, and what is the net outcome / direction, etc.
- In thinking about this topic, I don't view that a motion is needed, rather I offer a few guidelines for members to bear in mind and reference regarding emails. We can build on / adjust these guidelines.

**Email Guidelines:**

- Emails that are sent out to BVA members at large should come from the President, or the appropriate person on the BVA Executive that is designated for communication.
- Emails related to BVA Committee or Executive Meetings, such as agendas, meeting topic support information, should be limited to those on the Committee.
- Avoid trying to 'work items' via email. If a person has requested feedback on a topic, send the feedback to the requester, without copying in everyone else. This is a fairly common practice used in business. The requester gets the feedback, does some consolidation, perhaps speaking to individuals on the side, and then may put out a revised proposal to the whole committee, that can then be discussed and resolved either via a conference call or via an in person meeting.
- To reinforce, mass back and forth email communication is not effective in working or resolving issues...it actually can add to confusion as to what the issue or direction is, and lose recipients in the process.
- Always default to 'Reply only to the Sender', before considering if anyone else needs to see the same email. If so, ask yourself why does someone else need to see the response? This is not about limiting email communication, it is about managing emails, so that people can cope and stay focussed on the critical few items, and not get lost in a sea of emails.