

CSM5 Term Retrospective

tl;dr:

- CSM5 took office in a stakeholder role thanks to efforts by CSM4.
- CSM5 did a lot of stuff during its term that might or might not be of interest to future councils.
- The scope of CSM5 Summit discussions evolved even more toward “big picture”.
- Communications improved during CSM5 but remains the #1 challenge for both CCP and the CSM.

About This Document

Details about how former councils conducted their activities are not well documented. This retrospective sets a precedent for better documentation of council activities and is provided in the spirit of continuity and to serve as a historical reference. It covers the Fifth Council of Stellar Management’s operational decisions, key activities, significant challenges, and lessons learned. Although each council will conduct activities based on the current state of EVE Online as well as the unique capabilities and preferences of its members, it is hoped that this document will provide useful background information and ideas that may be worth adapting or adopting.

This document is organized as follows:

- [CSM5 Lineup](#). List of CSM5 members; description of key tasks for officers; summary of changes in membership.
- [CSM5 Takes Office](#). An overview of the situation and initial activities.
- [CSM5 Operational Decisions](#). Details about operational decisions made by CSM5.
- [CSM5 Summits](#). Synopsis of June, October, and December meetings; useful facts for first-time CSM members.
- [CSM5 Management of Development Priority Lists](#). Description of process and activities related to CSM5 submitting development priority lists in its role as a stakeholder.
- [CSM5 Special Projects](#). Descriptions of various special projects undertaken.
- [CSM5 Communications with the Community and Media](#). Methods and benefits of ongoing communications.
- [CSM5 Key Challenges in Working with CCP](#). Descriptions and CSM5’s approach to dealing with challenges.
- [CSM5 Lessons Learned](#). Key lessons learned in working with CCP and operating in a stakeholder role.
- [Tips from CSM5 Members](#). Advice for those new to CSM.
- [CSM5 Links](#). Convenient links to information about CSM5 elections, delegate details, activities, and raised proposals.

CSM5 Lineup

In accordance with protocol defined in the CSM White Paper, CSM5 officers were appointed as listed below.

- Chair (Mynxee)
- Vice Chair (Dierdra Vaal)
- Secretary (Teadaze)
- Vice Secretary (Trebtor Daehdoow)

Other delegates:

- Ankhesentapemkah
- Korvin
- Vuk Lau
- Meissa Anunthiel
- Sokratesz

Alternates:

- Mazzilliu
- T'Amber
- Helen Highwater
- ALPHA12125
- ElvenLord

At the conclusion of the June Summit, Ankhesentapemkah was removed from the CSM by CCP for an NDA violation. No details were provided as to why. Mazzilliu as first alternate was installed in the empty delegate seat. Subsequent to the October Summit, T'Amber resigned in protest over CCP's decisions to move ahead with microtransactions in EVE. Approximately two weeks prior to the end of CSM5's term, Vuk Lau resigned his CSM5 seat.

It is worth noting that the Chair has no special powers except to facilitate working meetings. However, in practice, the Chair is generally called upon to organize, assign, and track group efforts; act as spokesperson to the media; assist in facilitation at Summits; post in the forums on behalf of the CSM; and in some cases initiate or be requested to participate in communications with CCP about Council matters. Any other leverage or decision-making power the Chair may be granted will relate only to internal council matters and solely at the whim of other council members. Based on the CSM protocols defined by CCP, the Chair has no power to dictate the actions of or level of participation by other CSM members.

CSM5 Takes Office

CSM5 took office on June 5, 2010. Thanks to CSM4's lobbying efforts, we were the first CSM to be given stakeholder status. This meant we would—like other stakeholder groups in CCP—be allowed to submit development lists for consideration in each release planning cycle, championed by our advocates at release planning meetings. As part of the handoff from CSM4 to CSM5, we inherited a list of 29 items passed by CSM4 but not yet submitted to CCP. Preparing and submitting that list was one of our first tasks.

The next emergency was to prepare for the June Summit, scheduled for barely three weeks from the date we took office. One of the main concerns of CSM5 coming into office was the fact that CCP did not seem committed to actually fulfilling the “Excellence” promise made in their 2009 kickoff. That concern formed our primary message for the June Summit, which was scheduled just three weeks after we took office.

In addition to the considerable effort of preparing for the Summit, the first couple of weeks of our term were spent finding our feet, getting to know each other, making operational decisions, and figuring out what and when things needed to be done. By the time we flew to Iceland for the June Summit, a good working relationship had formed among CSM members and we began to hit our stride.

CSM5 Operational Decisions

From the beginning of its term, CSM5 adopted a Council culture of inclusiveness and professional standards of behavior as would be expected of any stakeholder group in a business environment. These guiding principles formed the basis for the following operational decisions:

- Members were encouraged to conduct themselves in a professional and collaborative manner to the extent possible.
- To ensure that a record was maintained for reference by future councils, key discussions and activities were conducted on the internal CSM forums instead of using voice comms or other methods of communication that did not lend themselves to easy archiving and access by future councils.
- Within the rules set by CCP, CSM alternates were treated as equals in terms of information sharing and meeting participation. CCP did not at first include alts in mailings to CSM and in fact was reluctant to do so. However, the CSM5 Chair insisted and CCP reluctantly agreed. Unfortunately, communications from CCP to the CSM continued to overlook inclusion of alternates. Therefore, Teadaze created a mailing list that included alternates and CCP was requested by the CSM5 Chair to use that for all CSM communications. This ensured that alternates were kept in the information loop so that they could be better prepared to serve in a delegate's place when called upon to do so. In that same spirit, alternates were encouraged to keep up with and participate in CSM discussions on the forums and participate in CSM working meetings (even if they were not needed to vote in place of an absent delegate). It should be noted that CCP specifically insisted early in CSM5's term that a few topics be discussed only by delegates and not alternates. The CSM5 Chair, supported by the

other delegates, questioned every such request and continued to advocate inclusion of alternates in all communications from CCP.

- Communications about CSM business that occurred between CCP employees and individual CSM members were encouraged to be shared with the rest of the membership for the sake of transparency and keeping everyone in the loop.
- As representatives of the players, we endeavored to communicate frequently and as transparently as possible with the community about our activities, challenges, and results.
- Volunteers were requested to step up to contribute to group tasks, although level of availability and interest varied widely. The Chair generally organized such tasks, followed up with volunteers to determine status of their action items, kept everyone informed of progress, reminded people about deadlines, and brought issues to the attention of the group for resolution.
- Working meetings were conducted on a regular schedule, typically every second Saturday and fourth Sunday at 17:00 EVE Time. As required by CCP, an announcement for each meeting was posted in Jita Park Speaker's Corner by the Chair at least a week prior to the meeting date. The primary purpose of working meetings was to raise proposals for discussion and vote, as well as discuss any other pertinent CSM business. The meeting agenda was regularly updated in the meeting announcement thread as necessary.

CSM5 Summits

CSM5 attended three Summits during its term, in June, October, and December. An overview of what went into preparing for these meetings is summarized below, followed by a brief review of events for each summit. Finally, some observations about the realities of attending summits.

CSM5 Summit Preparation and Participation

Since Summits are the CSM's main chance to interact with CCP developers and others, a lot of work goes into preparing for them. The key tasks are:

- Identifying key concerns and messages for focus at the Summit
- Session topic selection and submission
- Preparing CSM presentations

If a keynote message is identified, it is a good idea to look for opportunities to support it as much as possible through session topic selection, presentation content, and discussion points to be made once in Iceland. CSM5 had "Commit to Excellence" as its June Summit keynote, which set the tone and theme for the subsequent Summits (although microtransactions evolved as the theme for the October Summit when it became obvious shortly before October that CCP would be introducing microtransactions to EVE).

The June 2010 Summit

CSM5 selected "Commit to Excellence" as our keynote for the June Summit, supported by [an accompanying proposal](#) in Assembly Hall (which so far is the most supported proposal ever there, with

2,360 supports out of 2,842 replies and 95.5K reads). The idea that CCP should iterate on existing features and stop adding new unfinished ones found a voice in many sessions, including those for factional warfare, lag, the UI, and Incarna.

At this Summit, it finally became clear that a majority of development resources were committed to Incarna. The public outcry when the community learned from the Minutes that many long-standing issues and problems would not be addressed any time soon due to that was enormous. As a result of the “Summer of Rage”, CCP woke up to the fact that their customers were highly dissatisfied. In response, they regrouped and began a series of initiatives that resulted in many game improvements. That started a level of interaction with the CSM that was previously unheard of. To illustrate this, prior to that point no devs engaged with CSM members in our internal forums. Afterwards, devs began starting threads and participating in CSM-started threads to address a wide variety of topics.

The Minutes provide detailed summaries about the discussions that occurred in all sessions at this Summit. In the past, CCP took responsibility for producing the Minutes. CSM5 decided that in order for the Minutes to be as thorough as possible, we would take responsibility for that task. Mynxee was the primary author of the Minutes, drafted from her detailed notes and notes provided by Trebor, Dierdra, and CCP’s scribes. After CSM review and revisions, the draft was submitted to CCP for their review. CCP requested a handful of revisions. The revised draft was resubmitted to CCP and soon after published.

The October 2010 Summit

This Summit was a special one requested by Hilmar. It was intended to address the CSM’s evolution and responsibilities as a stakeholder as well as the CSM’s concerns that it was not treated equitably with regard to information shared by CCP across stakeholder groups--especially related to annual kickoff meetings, release planning meetings and sprint demos.

This Summit gave the CSM an opportunity to talk with CCP management, watch the annual kickoff presentation (“Deliver!”), learn more about how CCP employs the AGILE development process, observe sprint demos where teams show progress on their various development tasks, and address CSM/CCP process questions.

As a result of the revelation prior to this meeting that CCP would be bringing microtransactions to EVE, that topic took center stage during many of the sessions. CSM5’s message was “We prefer no microtransactions in EVE, but if they happen, they should only be for vanity items and not for items that confer a game play advantage.” The outcome was that CSM5 got its message across successfully and CCP promised that microtransactions would be for vanity items only.

As with the June Summit, CSM5 again took primary responsibility for drafting the Minutes following a similar process as the was done with the June Minutes. This time, however, CCP provided more substantive feedback for the draft submitted for their review. There was some negotiation between CSM5 and CCP about content changes, but the Minutes were finally published to the satisfaction of all.

The December 2010 Summit

Despite the drama it apparently provoked when the December Minutes were published, the December Summit was remarkably businesslike in tone. CCP staff was much more engaged with CSM5 than in June, and the meetings were not adversarial in nature. A recurring theme was incremental development, following up on the positive feedback from the staged release of Incursion. CCP's original plan was to release both the Captain's Quarters and Establishments in a big package, and they expressed confidence that they would be able to pull this off. CSM5 argued that it would be safer to do a staged release, to "under-promise and over-deliver", and to use the initial CQ release to battle-test the core Incarna code. CSM5 also got CCP to agree that Incarna should not cause a performance hit to the dock/change ship/undock sequence, and suggested that the default entry point for Incarna should be the Balcony (as a replacement for ship-spinning), not the CQ itself.

After the Summit, CSM5 and CCP agreed to collaborate on the task of producing the Minutes so that they could be published as soon as possible. Both parties took responsibility for drafting various session write-ups and submitting them to the other for review and feedback. Most feedback was accepted and incorporated as requested. The one exception was the draft for the Incarna sessions. CSM5 wrote detailed summaries of those sessions. CCP insisted on revising those sections to a few short paragraphs, citing NDA and a desire to control messaging about Incarna. CSM5 members protested this censorship vigorously, but to no avail. To the annoyance of several CSM5 members, interviews with CCP staff in the press which were published in the same timeframe as the Minutes contained much of the same information about Incarna that CCP edited out of the December Summit Minutes.

Summit Agendas and Discussions

Identifying topics for Summit agendas was a collaborative process during CSM5's term. CCP proposed an initial agenda for the June Summit, which CSM5 countered with its own proposal and supporting arguments (particularly regarding why CSM5 felt certain of CCP's proposed topics should be eliminated or combined in favor of allowing more time for topics of higher importance to CSM5). CCP took the lead for the October "stakeholder summit", with input from CSM5. CSM5 took the lead for the December Summit agenda, with input from CCP. Discussion about Summit agendas was conducted on the internal forums so that everyone involved could participate in and keep up with updates.

As the CSM evolved, the nature of discussions at the Summits changed from a focus on individual issues to a higher level design focus. This is reflected in the type of topics that were addressed at Summits during CSM5's term. As an example, in addition to game content changes or concerns, CSM5 was engaged on marketing, public relations, release strategies and other bigger picture matters. In all cases, CSM5 endeavored to represent community interests and to provide an "expert customer" perspective.

For Freshmen CSM Members: Practical Details Related to Summit Attendance

For those who have never traveled to Iceland or been on CSM before, this section provides a brief overview to address the most common questions.

Travel to Iceland. CCP covers airfare, hotel for the duration of the Summit, and some meals. A month or so prior to a scheduled trip to Iceland, CCP consults with CSM members to find out who will be attending and what their travel preferences are (e.g., departure airport, dates to travel, etc.). CCP makes all arrangements, but it is worth reminding them to allow more time for connections since they are unfamiliar with airport layouts and traffic levels that may affect your ability to make a connection. Your tickets will be issued as e-tickets via email.

CCP arranges for your transport from the airport to your hotel. Each CSM member traveling to Iceland gets their own hotel room. Most hotels in which the CSM is housed offer complimentary breakfast and free (or compensated by CCP) wifi. CCP treats the CSM to dinner at least once during the stay. Lunch is taken in the CCP cafeteria on meeting days. Coffee, soft drinks and cookies are also freely available there during meetings. You are responsible for everything else.

Even in summer, Iceland can be chilly. Consult weather forecasts and temperature averages, then plan accordingly. An umbrella is highly recommended—it rains a lot!

Iceland is 220V, so you may need a transformer as well, though most laptop power supplies just need a plug adapter.

Making purchases in Iceland. You need no cash in Iceland. Everyone takes plastic, even for tiny charges. Just remember that your bank or credit card company is likely to charge a small fee for currency conversion. Alcohol is expensive compared to some other places. There is a 24-hour convenience store a short walk from hotels where CCP typically houses CSM members.

Getting to CCP Headquarters. Summit sessions are conducted at CCP HQ. Normally you will walk there from your hotel in the mornings, often accompanied by CCP Diagoras or another CCP staffer assigned to herd the CSM cats ;) Depending on where the hotel is, allow about 20 minutes for the walk. If it's raining or you prefer not to walk, cabs are available.

What to expect in meetings. Meetings generally begin at 9 a.m. sharp and continue until 5 or 6 p.m. with break for lunch around noon—usually for an hour. Meetings may continue later if participants are willing. The pace is relentless, since each session is only an hour and usually there is more to be covered than can be squeezed in. One of the biggest challenges is staying on topic. The other is avoiding getting bogged down in circular disagreements or incessant repetition of the same message. To assist in this, CCP hires a mediator who attends all sessions and whose job is to facilitate the meeting and keep things on track (or get them back on track as needed). CCP does record the sessions, but it is strongly recommended that you take detailed notes because you may find you will need to refer to them in later sessions and you will most certainly need them when the time comes to draft the Minutes.

Social activities. Reykjavik has numerous bars and restaurants and a lively night-life scene within walking distance of the hotel. Most nights, CSM members and CCP staffers hang out for dinner and drinks and more spaceships discussion.

Fatigue. Fatigue is a very real consideration during the Summits. Long tiring days of wall to wall meetings, partying, and simply the effects of travel are all likely to affect your energy levels. Don't underestimate how much sleep you will need to be productive and attentive in meetings.

Tourist activities. You may wish to extend your trip for a few days on either side of the Summit to enjoy some of the lovely tourist attractions that Iceland offers. Information about what is available can be found in your hotel or by asking others. Incidentally, if you choose to stay extra days, you will be responsible for covering the cost of your hotel for those days.

Post-Summit Activities

Probably the most time-consuming post-Summit activity for CSM5 was drafting the Minutes so that they could be published in a timely fashion. Although there are no rules about how soon Minutes must be published, the community has come to expect publication within 2-3 weeks. CSM5 managed community expectations by providing an estimated publication timeframe and regular progress reports starting soon after each Summit.

Once the Minutes were published, there was invariably a great deal of discussion by the community in various venues as well as many questions seeking clarification and further details. While NDA constraints sometimes hampered our ability to respond, CSM5 members were very active in engaging in those dialogs. Doing so also provides the opportunity to clarify context and nuances of discussion points that may not have been clear as a result of the necessarily condensed format of the Minutes.

Action items for both CSM and CCP are sometimes identified during Summits. CSM5 communicated and tracked them by noting them in the Minutes, creating tracking posts on the CSM internal forums, discussing status of action items in working meetings, and in the case of the June Summit, documenting the status of items on a wiki page.

CSM5 Management of Development Priority Lists

Preparing a development priorities list for submission to CCP for consideration in its release planning involves the process shown below.

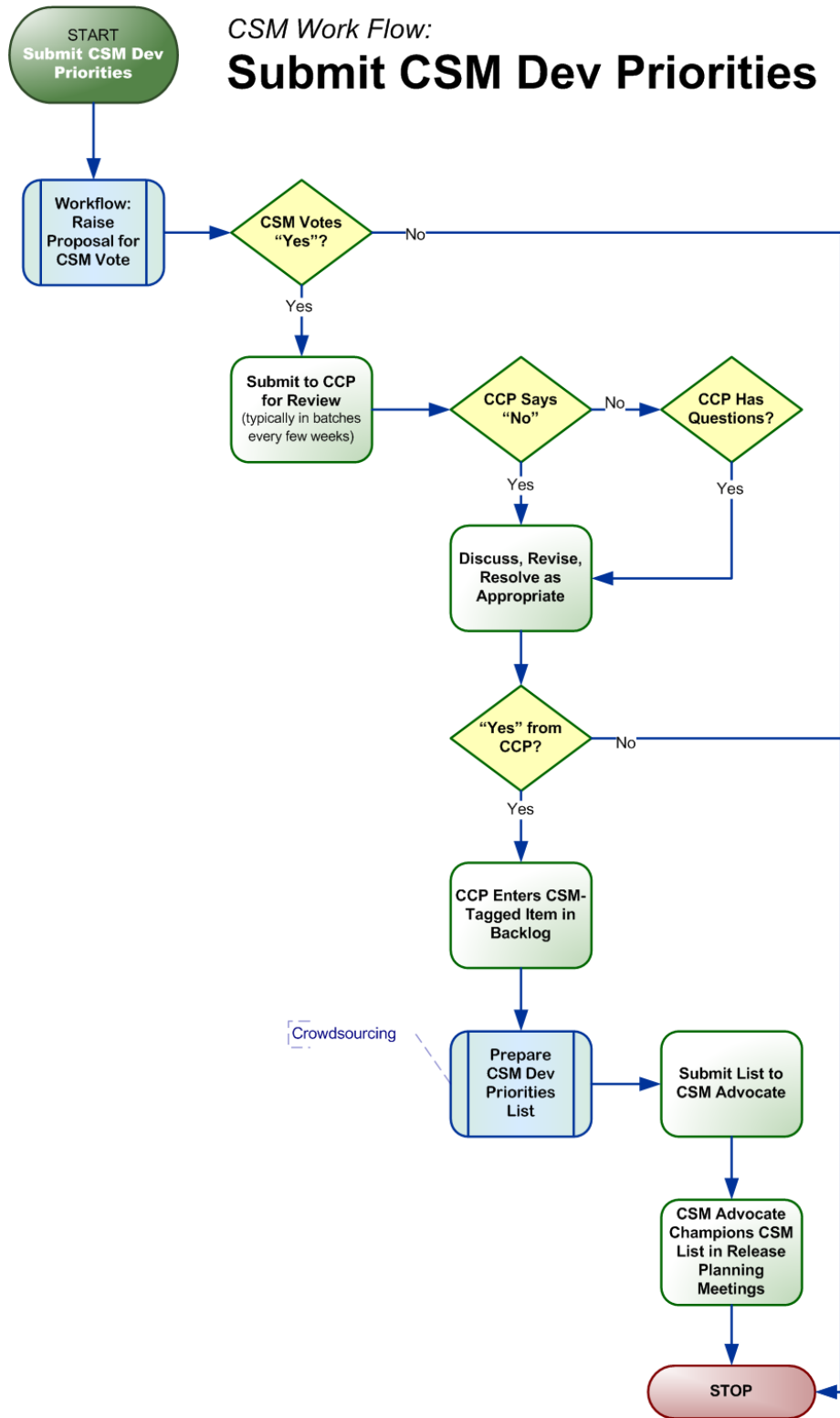


Figure 1. CSM Workflow: Submit CSM Dev Priorities

The first step in making issues eligible for inclusion in the prioritization process is raising proposals at CSM working meetings for a vote. The way this process is currently done is shown in the workflow below:

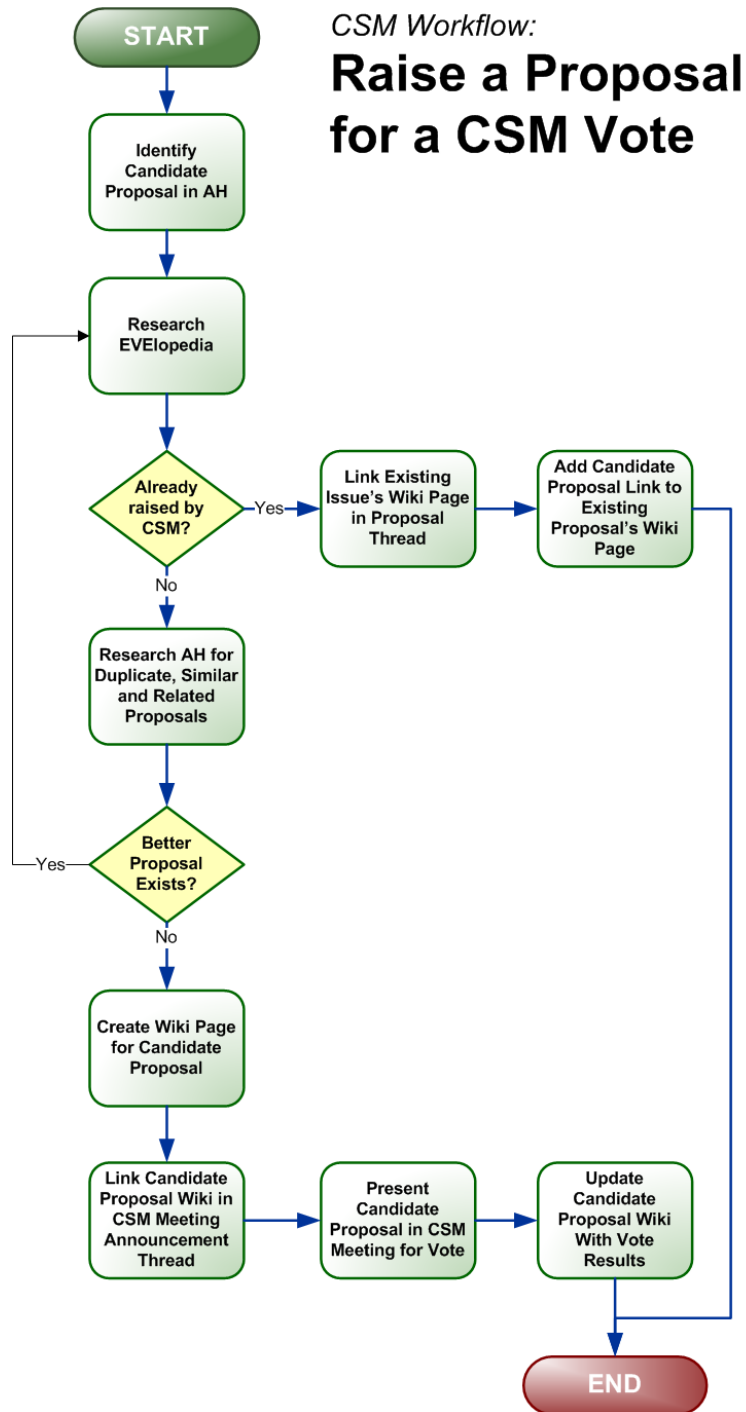


Figure 2. CSM Workflow: Raise a Proposal

Once a proposal has passed the CSM vote, it can be submitted to CCP for review. CCP then responds with a “Yes” indicating the proposal is possible to implement or “No” indicating that the proposal is not possible to implement. In the case of “No” responses or questions from CCP about proposals, there is usually an opportunity for some kind of dialog to answer questions or discuss the reasons behind a “No” response to see if a proposal could be tweaked sufficiently to change that response to a “Yes”.

If the answer remains “No”, the proposal is shelved. If the answer is “Yes”, the proposed change is entered into the backlog tagged as a CSM item.

When the CSM advocates notify the CSM of a scheduled release planning meeting, the CSM considers the CSM backlog and comes up with a development priorities list. CSM5’s approach to this was to include all items in the CSM backlog on its list, conduct a crowd sourcing exercise in Assembly Hall to get player input on priorities, then review the results and do another prioritization pass within the CSM. The results from that pass made up the list which we submitted to CCP for release planning consideration.

Both the crowd sourcing and final CSM prioritization methods evolved over CSM5; currently, the public prioritization provides a weighted list of player priorities, and then this list is reviewed by CSM, with each interested CSM marking any number of items as important; the final list is the items sorted first by the number of CSMs who deem them important, and then subsorted by the player priorities. Both the unfiltered and CSM filtered lists are published on the wiki. Those lists are then championed by CCP Xhagen and CCP Diagoras in release planning meetings.

As a follow-on, CCP often communicated with CSM5 to indicate that items from the CSM backlog had been assigned to scrum teams or had been completed and would appear in a future release.

CSM5 Special Projects

During its term, CSM5 undertook some special projects, including:

- **Updates to the CSM Issue Wiki Pages.** The goal was to bring all CSM issues posted on the wiki up to date. A common problem with issues from early councils is that they while wiki pages existed for them, they were categorized incorrectly and thus did not appear in the CSM Issues page. The most common missing data was voting results. As of the end of CSM5’s term, what remains to be done are some CSM1 and CSM2 issues.
- **CSM5 Public Round Table.** Organized and facilitated by Dierdra Vaal, [this event](#) provided the community with an opportunity to submit questions to CSM5 members and engage in moderated dialog.
- **Incarna Open Letter.** After lengthy debate among CSM5 members, the Incarna Open Letter was published in Jita Park Speaker’s Corner several weeks after the December Summit. The intention of the letter was to express in a unified voice (minus mazzilliu) CSM5’s ongoing concerns about Incarna. CCP had some weeks to respond to a preview of the draft letter and chose not to do so. There was also no response or effort to engage CSM5 about our concerns after the letter’s publication.

- **Continuity Document.** CCP requested CSM5 to produce a transition / continuity document to provide future CSMs with insights on what we did and what worked/didn't work, as well as what to expect at Summits and overall during a term in CSM office. The result is this document.

CSM5 Communications with the Community and Media

CSM5 communicated frequently with the greater EVE community about CSM activities. This “official” CSM messaging not only helped establish credibility for the Council, it also allowed CSM5 to better manage community expectations with regard to things like Minutes publication, CSM backlog items status, CCP decisions with which the CSM agreed or were consulted about, etc.

Some of the methods used to communicate CSM5 information were:

- Updates to the CSM5 Activities Summary Wiki (with an accompanying stickied post in JPSC)
- Updates to Teadaze’s CSM database after working meetings
- Publication of raw logs from working meetings (usually announced in the meeting thread in JPSC)
- Publication of Minutes after Summits (usually announced by dev blogs from our advocates)
- CSM5 members’ personal blog posts related to CSM5 activities
- CSM5 members’ Twitter and Facebook posts related to CSM5 activities
- Publication by CCP of CSM5-written blogs on the EVE Online site
- Forum participation at eveonline.com and in other venues
- Interviews of CSM5 members by EVE podcasters and bloggers as well as gaming industry media

CCP does not control or direct the CSM’s communications with the community, except for the obvious requirement that NDA-covered information may not be shared. They may, however, request that the CSM coordinate with CCP on the timing of some messages. With regard to CSM blogs published by CCP, the CSM is free to initiate those and request their publication; CCP may also request that the CSM write blogs (as they did with CSM5 to encourage voting for the CSM6 election).

CSM5 Key Challenges in Working with CCP

- **Communications lag.** Since email and internal forums are the only two “official” ways to communicate with our CSM advocates, delayed responses—often for several days—are not uncommon. Occasionally, no response is received. Direct messaging of CCP Xhagen (@strangelocation) on Twitter has been useful for getting acknowledgement at least. However that is an “unofficial” channel. The lack of more immediate access to our CSM advocates was a matter of ongoing frustration in CSM5.
- **Feeling out of the loop.** CSM5 often felt like it was operating in a vacuum due to sporadic or no information from CCP about CSM-relevant matters, for example, CSM items being assigned to sprint teams, dates for release planning meetings, or what was shown in the most recent sprint demos. Throughout our term, it required a lot of follow-up to be sure that we were properly informed about dates and issues relevant to deadline-sensitive tasks. In mid-February 2011, our advocates promised to start providing weekly status updates in the internal forums to improve the CSM’s awareness of

development activities associated with CSM items as well as other CSM-relevant information. These posts were quite helpful but were often late or not done when other priorities got in the way.

- **Establishing and maintaining dialogs.** Outside of the Summits, dialogs between CSM5/CCP were initiated in one of three ways: by submitting an email request to our advocates, by posting questions on the internal forums, or by responding to posts made there by CCP devs. Some email conversations were initiated by CCP devs with CSM5 via its mailing list, but those were either short-lived or moved to the forums to continue there. Many productive discussions occurred in the internal forums, as well as a few not-so-productive ones. During CSM5's term, there were a couple of instances where attitudes and behavior crossed the line and resulted in a communications breakdown that halted discussion. Considering that CCP devs have no obligation to interact with the CSM, keeping things civilized in such discussions is highly recommended. It is also useful to learn to "speak the devs' language" and see things from their point of view. It is also useful to recognize that discussions tend to ramble and lose momentum unless someone who notices this happening calls for things to get back on track. Even discussions that stay on track and are civilized can die from lack of attention by either party. Conducting short highly-focused face-to-face meetings with devs via teleconferencing between Summits, supported by follow-up forum discussion, could provide a more effective approach to maintaining dialogs until they reach a productive conclusion.
- **Lack of defined work processes.** CCP has defined few processes related to CSM/CCP collaboration or CSM stakeholder tasks. CSM5 defined processes on the fly as needed and where appropriate recommended them to CCP for use in collaborative efforts. These are documented mainly in the *Operational Decisions* and *CSM5 Management of Development Priority Lists* sections of this document.

CSM5 Lessons Learned

- **Getting work done.** Group tasks that involve opinions and input from nine or more people can take a long time to get done. Patience with the process is recommended. However, it is also important to recognize when discussion has become nonproductive or counterproductive. When that occurred during CSM5, the Chair typically took action to move discussion forward or called for a vote to arrive at a decision.
- **Getting responses from CCP.** Getting answers from CCP frequently requires proactive follow-up to initial emails, forum posts, or contacts by the CSM. Be relentless, document everything, and use tracked dates and other facts to reinforce your follow-ups. CSM5 got better responses to complaints about lack of communication when facts were cited that demonstrated trends or how much time had passed since a request for information was made.
- CCP loves numbers, so provide metrics to support arguments whenever possible. Often, the task is not convincing CCP to do something, but providing ammunition to a group inside CCP that already agrees with CSM. An argument that "players want us to fix rockets" is not as strong as "28.47% of the players want us to fix rockets."

Tips from CSM5 Members

- Keep your expectations low; freshman CSM members in particular often have much greater expectations about what they will achieve during their terms than is realistic.
- Be mindful that the CSM is a stakeholder, and as such, gets to submit its development priorities but has no power to tell CCP what to do.
- When trying to convince devs to do something, deliberately leaving out "cons" arguments doesn't work.
- Devs usually mean exactly what they say, not what you think you heard. Learn the definition of the words and be ready to make your point using precisely the words for the things you mean. Be ready to talk semantics. Apocrypha is a good example. Players thought it awesome; devs -- according to Nathan and Erlendur -- thought it wasn't. The difference was that players' assessment criteria was feature density/scope and near lack of severe bugs. The devs' assessment criteria was related to number of defects and "technical debt".
- Don't repeat the same thing five times or five different ways. It is useful to verbally note your agreement with the points of others, but there is no reason to repeat that in your own words unless you have something new to add. Unnecessary repetition just slows down the proceedings and means less time available for other topics.
- Don't bring up 150 inane "issue" requests that will clog up the pipes and take time that could valuably be spent on discussing larger "vision" things. CSM Summits have evolved to focus more on higher level discussions than nitty gritty changes.
- The time you think something will take to implement in the game is probably inaccurate. What seems easy frequently is not; sometimes the opposite is true.
- Keep requesting information until the devs provide it. There have been requests that went unanswered for more than a CSM term that eventually got a CCP response. For example, it took CCP two years to tell us the reason we didn't have a new cyno effect was because they wanted to implement it using a method that didn't involve hard-coding it, but they didn't have that method sorted out yet. Yet, all that time the CSM was under the assumption that the cyno effect wasn't getting any dev love because nobody could be bothered to assign a graphic dude to it for a week.
- Don't mind the forum warriors. Read what they say, but think for yourself. Also keep in mind that the most valuable forum posters are those who can make a clear point using 10% of the words that others do.
- Make an effort to speak the same language the devs are speaking. It is not the same language the players speak. Even when the same words are used, they have different meanings. Some examples include "dungeons", "easy", "soon", and "cleaner code/improved code metrics". CSM members must be the connection and therefore must be able to translate in both directions. This means taking the time to ask devs for information and definitions that will let you be a more effective connection between players and devs.
- Keep in mind that player perspective and dev perspective are two very different things. Players focus on how changes will impact how they play the game or ease their life in-game; devs think about how changes will impact the server, affect code maintenance, and integrate with other features or functionality. The CSM has to reconcile both points of view.

- Learning to speak the devs' language and see things from their point of view is crucial if you want to have any hope of being persuasive. Demonstrating that you are trying to see things as devs see them will go a long way in getting their attention on your suggestions and concerns.

CSM5 Links

- [CSM5 Election Results](#)
- [CSM5 Delegate Information](#)
- [CSM5 Activities Summary](#)
- [CSM5 Proposals Raised for a Vote](#)

Document Version History

- **Version 1.0:** Original publication.
- **Version 1.1:** *CSM Lineup* section content edited to remove speculative comments regarding Vuk Lau's resignation. *CSM5 Management of Development Priority Lists* section edited to add figure numbers and captions workflow graphics.