

http://www.pandc.org.au/fs_02officebearers.asp

Fact Sheet 2: Duties of Office Bearers

Who are the office-bearers of an Association?

Office-bearers are elected at an Association's Annual General Meeting. The standard and prescribed constitution states that there will be a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and a Treasurer. This group, together with up to six elected Association members (the exact number should be stipulated in the association's by-laws) forms the Association's Executive Committee.

Can one person simultaneously occupy more than one office-bearer position?

No

Can two people from the same family simultaneously hold office-bearer positions?

Yes

What are the duties of the President?

The President has a responsibility to ensure the successful functioning of the Association, the attainment of its objectives, the responsibility to foster the fair participation of all members and consistent adherence to its constitution. The President should ensure that new members are made to feel welcome. The President, as the name implies, presides at all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee. The duties of the President include preserving order, ruling on contentious matters of procedure and assisting the progress of discussion by preventing irrelevant or repetitious discussion or offensive remarks.

The President, when in the Chair, should present a face of impartiality during debates. Personal views may be given provided the President vacates the Chair, for the entire course of the discussion on the specific topic.

The President also has important responsibilities outside of meetings. The President may represent the Association at official functions and act as the Association's spokesperson when public statements or actions are appropriate.

The President, as well as being the convenor of the Executive Committee, is ex officio a member of all sub-committees.

What are the duties of the Vice-Presidents?

The Vice-Presidents are required to take on any of the Presidential duties defined above when invited to do so by the President or when the President is, for reasons of illness or alternative commitments, unable to undertake those duties. If, for any reason, the President's office falls vacant, one of the Vice-Presidents should act as interim President until a new one is elected.

What are the duties of the Secretary?

The Secretary is the principal administrative officer of the Association and is responsible for carrying out the decisions of the meeting - unless otherwise stipulated. The Secretary prepares, in consultation with the President, all meeting agendas. The Secretary maintains a list of financial (voting) members. The Secretary is also required to attend every Association meeting and take notes of the discussions in order to produce a set of minutes for subsequent distribution to members. Minutes should indicate the time, date and location of the meeting, the members in attendance, the apologies accepted, the identity of the Chairperson and record every decision which was supported by majority vote.

The Secretary is also asked to receive and table all incoming correspondence and write and send all outgoing correspondence. The constitution for P&C Associations stresses that the Secretary is responsible for the handing over of all records and minutes to the incoming Secretary on vacating the position.

What are the duties of the Treasurer?

The Treasurer is responsible for the sound financial management of the Association. The Treasurer receives and deposits monies, maintains records, draws cheques and presents accounts, in the form of a report, at each general meeting. The Treasurer presents all records for auditing each year and ensures that the audited accounts are tabled for adoption at the Annual General Meeting.

Should the Treasurer be uncertain about correct financial management protocols he/she should refer to the advice in the Department of School Education's School Manual on Financial Management or telephone P&C Federation for advice.

Should, for any reason, the Treasurer not be in a position to acquit any of the above mentioned tasks another officer of the Association may take on these roles in the Treasurer's absence, preferably with the Treasurer's agreement.

The Treasurer is responsible for the handing over of all financial records, to the incoming Treasurer should the Annual General Meeting decide to elect a new Treasurer.

What does an Association do if one of its office bearer positions becomes vacant?

Sometimes in the period between Annual General Meetings one or more office-bearer positions fall vacant because of an incumbent's untimely death, resignation, decision to leave the Association or because of some continuing and long-term incapacity to fill the functions of a particular office bearer position.

A casual vacancy will also occur if the Association, through majority vote at a general or special meeting, declares its lack of confidence in a particular office-bearer. Casual vacancies should be filled by ballot at any general or special meeting.

What are the duties of the Executive Committee?

The Executive Committee provides the office bearers with opportunities to discuss their respective duties and to develop collegiality and team-work.

The Executive Committee is convened by the President and may be called on to exercise leadership between general meetings if quick decisions, actions or statements are required on the Association's behalf.

The Executive Committee is also competent to call special meetings of the Association. All decisions taken by an Executive Committee between meetings should be fully reported to the next general or special meeting of the Association with a view to securing the meeting's endorsement for the decisions taken.

Obviously, while the Executive Committee has a role of leadership it is also fully accountable to the broader membership for the way that leadership is exercised. If a general or special meeting of the Association decides that leadership has been exercised irresponsibly or inappropriately it is free to formally censure its Executive Committee or any member of that committee or to move a vote of no confidence in the committee or any member of that committee, after appropriate notice has been given. If the latter vote is successfully carried by a majority vote of Association members, those cited as not possessing the Association's confidence should immediately resign. If resignations are not forthcoming the members may declare the positions vacant to facilitate new elections.

Can members of the school staff hold an office bearer's position on the school parent organisation at the school where he/she works?

The Department of School Education prohibited such participation by school staff in its 1975 handbook for teachers. Since then, however, the prohibition has not been re-issued or formally rearticulated. Accordingly, school parent organisations should feel free to elect their own office-bearers regardless of their place or type of employment.