



FREEMASONS

New Zealand

Grand Secretary Newsletter

Issue 2008/18
21 July 2008

For Grand Lodge contact information, please see the bottom of this newsletter.

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Grand Lodge Restructuring Final Report

As posted on our website:

<http://www.freemasons.co.nz/cms/gl/discussion-papers/grand-lodge-restructuring-final-report/>

Restructuring of Grand Lodge

July 2008

Background

1.1 The initial Discussion Paper circulated last December has, over the last six months, received wide-ranging discussion and debate throughout the country – with views and comments varying from region to region.

1.2 The feedback has been very helpful, and led to a further planning session in late June which also involved the three Divisional Grand Masters. The objective of the meeting was to flesh out some of the operational details of the proposal in light of the feedback, in order to then promote a refined proposal which will be the basis of the remit to Communication 2008.

1.3 While the major structural change is at the level of the existing Boards, there is a devolution of decision-making down to Divisions, and so the roles of Div GMs and of Dist GMs attract renewed emphasis.

Dist GMs attract renewed emphasis.

1.4 This paper outlines in more detail the proposed restructuring, how it will impact on lodges, brethren and Districts, and some of the rationale behind the changes.

Executive Summary

2.1 The paper sets out the reasoning behind the changes, and we urge you to read that detail if you are in doubt over any of the following bullet points.

The operational decision-making roles of the two existing Boards are to be transferred to the Divisions, under the control of the Divisional Grand Masters.

The two existing Boards will each cease to exist – the Board of Benevolence ceasing on 31 December 2008; the Board of General Purposes on 30 June 2009.

One new Board will come into existence, charged with Governance of the Craft. All operational decisions will rest at Divisional level, with the monitoring/policy role resting with the new Board.

Each Divisional Grand Master will have a series of advisory committees set up to assist him in the management of the Division. These committees will involve suitably qualified brethren from the Division, who will report to the Divisional Grand Master.

District Grand Masters will also have an important role to play, not merely in the pastoral area but also in managing their Districts. These duties are currently detailed in the Manual produced for District Grand Masters, but they have not received the attention which they merit. One effect of the restructuring is to emphasise the importance of these tasks.

The Board of Governance will comprise eight members, namely: The Grand Master, the Chairman; the Grand Registrar, the Grand Treasurer, the Grand Almoner, three appointed brethren – one from each Division – with suitable qualifications to fill the governance role expected.

A role of Chief Executive within what is currently 'the Grand Secretary's Office' is seen as fundamental to the restructuring, which will include providing logistical support and provide resources to the Divisional Grand Masters as needed.

A schematic diagram of the new structure is attached, as is a summary of the roles of the various parties.

Operational decision-making

3.1 One primary outcome of the restructuring proposal is to empower Divisional Grand Masters to manage, oversee, and control their Divisions. To do this, each Division will have a series of committees set up to advise and assist the Div GM, and where further resources are needed, the Div GM will have recourse to the Chief Executive.

3.2 The Div GM currently has the task to manage his Division and the proposed restructure only serves to emphasise that important role by devolving the decision-making upon the Div GM.

3.3 The roles of the various entities are proposed to be as follows.

Board of Governance

4.1 The existing two Boards currently operate within both the operational area and the field of governance. As part of the proposed restructuring, both Boards will cease to exercise those roles and both will go out of existence in all practical sense.

4.2 In their place will be created a new entity, which will not have an operational role as such, but will instead focus on governance issues, setting policy, auditing progress, reporting, and monitoring performance. This will be the much defined role of the Board of Governance.

4.3 This Board would receive, for example, a report from the Chief Executive containing recommendations/reports on topics such as finances, building portfolio, relevant aspects of Divisional performance, policy considerations, and statutory/constitutional issues.

4.4 The Board would comprise eight members, namely:

The Grand Master

The Chairman

The Grand Registrar

The Grand Treasurer

The Grand Almoner

Three appointed members, one from each Division. These three members would be appointed by the Grand Master, following the nomination process.

5. Grand Lodge Office

5.1 The duties of this office will continue to be administration of the Deposit Scheme, production of the Freemason magazine, provision of logistical support and resources as needed to brethren, and general management of the finances and property of Grand Lodge.

5.2 The Board of Governance will have some sub-committees which will rely on the Chief Executive for administration and action. The Finance Sub-committee will oversee and advise on investment issues and the like; the Publicity Sub-committee will advise on marketing and promotional opportunities; and so forth, all under the responsibility of the Chief Executive, who will in turn be answerable to the Board for the timely performance and outputs of those sub-committees.

5.3 The new Board will be charged with reviewing, determining, and introducing any changes within Grand Lodge office itself.

6. Divisional Grand Masters

6.1 The many duties of the Div GM are contained in their existing Manual. These include administration and management of their Division, a ceremonial role, pastoral care, a reporting function, mentoring and training, officer selection and succession, and general implementation of policy.

6.2 To assist in the discharge of these roles, particularly where local decision-making is involved, Div GMs will set up such committees at Divisional level as necessary. The importance of these committees in the decision process cannot be over-stated.

6.3 Div GMs will appoint members to these committees as needed, and for terms which may vary. Succession is recognised as important, as well as ensuring brethren with the right skills become engaged in their Divisional structure.

6.4 Reporting to and from the brethren will remain a top priority – at all levels of the structure.

7. District Grand Masters

7.1 These brethren are elected from those who have the abilities to manage and administer a District – not merely ceremony and to provide pastoral care, but to assist lodges and brethren in all areas of Freemasonry. Training, communication, reporting, implementation of policy, succession planning, ensuring benevolence is maintained at the highest levels of visibility whether in the form of assisting those in need or lodge/district projects in the community.

7.2 The conduit for reporting between lodges and the Divisional GM – airing concerns and promoting District issues.

8. Concerns previously raised

8.1 The Discussion Paper circulated December 2007 attracted debate and comment. Much of that comment was supportive, and all was constructive. While there was unanimity on the concept of one overall Board, there were differing views as to the make-up of the Board.

8.2 It is important to recognise the fundamental change in the role of this new Board – it has no operational decisions to make; they will all be made at a Divisional level. The focused role of the new Board of Governance is purely and simply setting policy, auditing and monitoring performance, undertaking its statutory role, and the important task of reporting.

8.3 To perform this role will require brethren with special skills appropriate to the task. The role does not necessarily require the most popular brother to be appointed – the Board needs a mix of skills and talents and the only way to achieve that outcome is to have nominations being made by lodges and brethren, and then for our Grand Master making appointments.

8.4 This ought to ensure we do obtain a Board with a range of skills and a balanced set of abilities. Age and Masonic rank should be of little import – although across the Board one would expect a depth of Masonic knowledge and sentiment, mixed with a degree of corporate experience and expertise.

8.5 The job description of an appointed member will be circulated in November (if the proposed changes are adopted at Communication), and brethren will be invited to nominate suitably qualified brethren for the role. Those nominations will be collated by your Divisional GM (as there is to be one appointee from each Division), and forwarded to the Grand Master for consideration and then a decision.

8.6 Nominations will be called for immediately after Communication 2008, and a period allowed for responses until the end of March 2009. The Grand Master's decision should be available within a fortnight of that date. Once the GM has appointed the three Divisional Board Members, their CVs and details will be distributed to lodges and brethren, first for the purposes of transparency and secondly so brethren at large can be satisfied that the best brethren were appointed to the role.

8.7 The role of the Div GMs as outlined above is the result of their thoughts and input. The suggestion from some brethren that the Div GMs ought to be part of the Board of Governance is not supported by the Div GMs, who see the clear distinction between the Governance and the Operational duties.

8.8 The Divisional Representative, currently elected by brethren on a 'first-past-the-post' basis, would continue to have a role promoting the interests and issues of

brethren. The forum for his input must of course be where the operational decisions are being made which might impact on lodges and brethren, i.e. his participation will be at Divisional level, facilitating the exchange of information and communication between Divisional GM and the brethren.

8.9 Other suggestions affecting the term for Board members to serve in office have all been taken on board, and an orderly rotation of members is to be implemented, with no Board member serving more than a five year maximum term.

8.10 Communication remains a high priority – the Board will circulate its minutes to Div GMs and summaries to District GMs and lodges. A forum will be provided at each Divisional Conference for the brethren and the Board to interact. The Biennial Communication will remain as the ultimate occasion when the brethren have the opportunity to speak on all and any issues affecting the Craft, and to make determinations which bind Grand Lodge and all its various officers and bodies.

8.11 Implementation of the new structure will be monitored to ensure no unforeseen glitches occur. The Grand Almoner, with the assistance of the Divisional Grand Almoners, will review the operation of our benevolence activities in late 2009 to ensure that performance is in keeping with the brethren's expectations, and that the important progress made in this area is not being impaired by the new structure.

9. Conclusion

9.1 The Grand Registrar has been asked to prepare such constitutional changes as may be needed in order to implement the changes discussed above. These changes will be circulated in the usual way to lodges and brethren, together with any other remits. The proposal will then be debated and considered at Communications in Christchurch.

9.2 It is an important evolution in the structure of Grand Lodge, which we recommend to you for support.

Barry McLaggan
Grand Master

Neville Patrick
President
Board of General Purposes

Mark Winger
President
Board of Benevolence

Attachments:

Organisational Chart of new Structure
(see website article for the chart)

Summary of roles

DistGM
Reporting
Pastoral
Ceremonial
DivGM Advisory
Training - lodges
Comms

Implementation of Policy
Succession Planning
Cttee of Management
Benevolence
- Community
- lodge
- families

DivGM
Div Management
Ceremonial
Pastoral
Admin
Stat obligations
PR
Cttee management
Reporting (4 ways)
Offences
Conferences
Dispensations
Dist Advisory
Officer selection
Mentoring/Training
Implement policy

GL Office
Incl CEO
F/M House
Staffing resources
Deposit Scheme
Stat obligations
PR/Mag
Logistical support
- reports
- regalia
GM support

Board
Reports
- GM
- CEO
- finances
- building (etc)
- DivGM
- others
Setting policy
Auditing
Reporting
Stat obligations
CEO Appointment

Current Committees
Planning
Education
Building
Membership

Benevolence
Communication
Music
IT
Ceremonial

Free to a Good Home

The Grand Lodge Offices have about twenty of these Perspex® magazine and booklet displays left in storage.

They are FREE to any Lodge who wants them (you just need to promise to use it! Little birdies have been telling us they have been winding up in the Secretary's closet...).

This one is proudly displayed in the lobby of Freemason House in Wellington.



Please contact the Communications Officer if you would like one shipped to your Lodge.



Missed the latest edition of
New Zealand Freemason?

Click [here](#) to request a copy

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