

# INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS

## SOUTH WESTERN BRANCH

### Constitution and Rules

#### 1. **Name.**

The name of the Branch shall be the ***South Western Branch of the Institution of Fire Engineers***, and shall bear the short title of the ***South Western Branch***.

#### 2. **Object.**

To foster and support the Institution of Fire Engineers in its object, and so far as is possible within the structure of the Branch, to subscribe to and carry out the object, namely:

*To promote, encourage and improve the science and practice of Fire Extinction, Fire Prevention, and Fire Engineering, and all operations and expedients connected therewith, and to give an impulse to ideas likely to be useful in connection with or in relation to such science and practice to the members of the Institution and the community at large.*

In furtherance of the above object, and ancillary to it, the Branch may:

- a) Enable members to meet and to correspond and to facilitate the interchange of ideas respecting the improvements in the various branches of the said science, and the publication and communication of information on such subjects and to coordinate and encourage Groups within the Branch.
- b) Do all other things incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above or any of them.
- c) Do all in its power to prepare and produce suitable candidates for membership of the Institution as requisite and to encourage and assist members to attain corporate membership.

#### 3. **Branch Organisation**

- a) The Branch shall be made up of the following two groups: - Devon and Somerset, Cornwall and such groups as may be decided by the Board of Directors of the Institution.
- b) The Presidency of the Branch to be held by each Group for two years in rotation. The order to be: - Cornwall, Devon and Somerset.

#### **4. Membership.**

- a) All grades of membership shall be eligible for membership of the Branch and the Institution as long as they are not in arrears with annual subscriptions.
- b) A member of a Branch shall have that membership terminated in the event of such person's annual subscriptions being in arrears for twelve months from the date of the same becoming payable, subject to notice being given in such manner as the Branch deems fit.
- c) In the case of each member elected in the last three months of any financial year, the first subscription shall cover both the year of election and the preceding year, but shall only entitle the person elected to exercise any vote in the proceedings after election.
- d) Members of at least 15 years standing, may from the 1<sup>st</sup> April in the financial year following the attainment of the age of 60, make a payment of twice the annual Fellowship subscription which shall entitle them to remain members of the Branch during their lifetime without the payment of any further annual subscriptions.

#### **5. Meetings**

- a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held in or about the month of May each year at which the accounts of the previous year shall be submitted for approval and the Branch Council and officers for the ensuing year shall take office, having been elected in accordance with Rule 6.
- b) Extraordinary General Meetings shall be held as required at times and places to be determined by the Branch Council, notice of which shall be communicated in writing to all members of the Branch not less than nine days prior to the day of the Meeting. Such notices shall specify the exact business to be discussed at the Meeting, and no business shall be transacted or resolution proposed of which notice has not been given.
- c) On a requisition in writing signed by or on behalf of ten members being received by the Secretary, an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called forthwith giving at least nine days and not more than twenty-one days notice thereof. Such notice shall specify the exact business to be discussed at the Meeting, and no business shall be transacted or resolution proposed of which such notice has not been given.
- d) Every member present at a Branch Meeting, irrespective of class, shall have one vote, but in cases of equality of voting, the Branch President shall have a second or casting vote.

## **6. Branch Council & Officers**

- a) The Branch shall elect members from within the Branch to form a **Branch Council** who shall hold office for a two year period, all members of the Branch Committee shall be eligible for re-election.
- b) Every second year there shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer (which office may be joined with that of Secretary).
- c) The President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected from the Group holding office for the following two years, and the Vice-President shall be selected from the Group holding the Presidency in two years time. The order to be:- Devon and Somerset followed by Cornwall.
- d) At each Area Group meeting prior to the Annual General meeting of the Branch, three members of each Group Committee for the ensuing year shall be elected members of the Branch Committee (usually the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) and the Branch Secretary notified prior to Branch Annual Meeting of the names of the members so elected.
- e) The member elected as the General Assembly Representative for the Branch shall be appointed as a member of the Branch Committee.
- f) All members of the Branch of any class shall be eligible for election as officers or to the Branch Committee.
- g) The Branch Committee shall appoint a suitably qualified person as Auditor.
- h) The officers other than the Auditor shall be entitled to be present and vote at all Meetings of the Branch Committee.
- i) In the event of a casual vacancy arising for a Branch officer, the post may be filled by a Branch member until the next Annual General Meeting. Such appointment to be subject to a majority vote at a Branch Committee meeting.

## **7. Proceedings, Powers and Duties of the Branch Committee.**

- a) The Branch Committee shall have the power to co-opt for a specific purpose any member of the Branch to serve on the Branch Committee and to fill any casual vacancy occurring therein.
- b) The Branch Committee has determined our quorum, as three Committee members
- c) The Branch Committee shall manage the property, proceedings and affairs of the Branch, and shall exercise all powers of the Branch which are not required

to be exercised by the Branch in General Meetings, subject to any Regulations from time to time made by the Branch in a General Meeting.

- d) The Branch Committee shall not have the power to refuse membership to the Branch, but shall report any reason for wishing to decline specific membership to the Board of Directors. Where the Branch wish to terminate a membership, then it shall be reported to the Board of Directors for approval.
- e) The Branch Committee shall meet at times and places to be determined by itself, but if the Honorary Secretary should receive notice in writing from three members of the Branch Committee requesting that a Meeting of the Branch Council be called, the Honorary Secretary shall do so forthwith, giving at least nine and not more than twenty one days notice thereof.
- f) It shall be the duty of the Branch Committee to ensure that a copy of the Annual Report, Audited Accounts and the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting are forwarded as soon as possible to the Board of Directors.
- g) The Branch Committee shall not take any action not in accordance with the general policy of the Institution and any resolution, either of the Branch Council or a General Meeting, which in any way affects matters of policy, must be submitted forthwith to the Board of Directors.
- h) The President and Treasurer shall be empowered to incur approved expense on behalf of the Branch and Branch Committee, and be authorised to operate a current banking account for this purpose and shall notify the Branch Committee of any action taken under this ruling.

#### **8. Election of the General Assembly Representative**

- a) Each constituted Branch of the Institution is entitled to elect one General Assembly Representative to attend General Assembly meetings. The Branch Representative must hold a minimum grade of Graduate to serve as the Branch Representative.
- b) An open and transparent ballot of all members of the Branch shall elect the Branch General Assembly Representative to the General Assembly.
- c) Nominations for this Office proposed by a member of the Branch and seconded by two other members, shall be addressed to the Branch Secretary and arrive no later than the first day of March in the year of election.
- d) Ballot will be taken of members present at the Branch Annual General Meeting in the year of election and nominations should be returned to the Branch Secretary by the indicated close date printed on the nominations and elections of office paper prior to the AGM.

- e) The Branch Secretary shall send, in writing the name of the duly elected Representative to the Chief Executive Office so as to arrive no later than the first day of June in the year of election.
- f) Each term of office for a Branch Representative to the General assembly shall be for a three-year period but he/she shall be eligible for re-election subject to a maximum of two consecutive terms of three years.
- g) The Branch Committee may nominate another member of the Branch to act as the Branch designated alternate to attend meetings of the General Assembly in the absence of the Branch Representative.
- h) A Branch Committee may remove from office their representative and designated alternate in the event that they do not properly execute their duties and responsibilities.

**8. Alteration of Constitution.**

This Constitution shall not be altered or added to except at a General Meeting of the Branch at which such alteration or addition is approved by at least two-thirds of the members present, notice of the proposed alteration having been given to members.

*NB Before becoming operative any such alteration shall require confirmation by the Board of the Institution in accordance with the Institution's By-Laws.*

Approved at a Branch meeting held on the day of .....2008

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Branch President

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Branch Secretary