

Unit President/Chairman Job Description

Responsible to the Unit Board/Committee

Key Relationships

- Unit board members and all unit volunteers
- SAR partners
- Local Media
- Regional Manager and other regional staff

Purpose of the Position

The President is responsible for the overall leadership and management of the operation of the Unit through its Board members and office holders and for the effective running of Board meetings.

Responsibilities

1. Manage the Board meetings and AGM, and set the agenda in consultation with the Unit Secretary.
2. Lead the Unit through the development and implementation of its annual operational plan and setting of strategic goals, reviewing progress against agreed operational plans and goals at each Board meeting.
3. Represent the Unit in local media and within the community by acting as and ambassador for Coastguard and an advocate for the Unit.
4. Ensure the Unit Officers carry out their roles and responsibilities by checking progress and activities at Board meetings and at other times as appropriate that they have the support and resources needed.
5. Oversee the development of unit operating guidelines, policies and procedures and that these are implemented. Set a timetable for the review of the effectiveness and updating of these guidelines, policies and procedures.
6. Be a signatory for all Unit bank accounts and support the Treasurer by checking and signing off on all payments.
7. Provide an annual report to the members and supporters of Coastguard (unit name) that reviews the unit's activities for the year and its progress in implementing its operational plans and strategic goals.
8. Liaise with the Regional Manager in relation to the operation of the Unit within the Coastguard strategic direction and compliance with Coastguard Policies and Procedures. Seek the support and advice of the Regional Manager on the management of the Unit.
9. Monitor the moral of the Unit and take steps to ensure that our people are well trained, equipped and appropriately supported. Ensure that appropriate acknowledgement is made of individuals and the contribution they make to the Unit and to Coastguard.

Decision Making

The President / Chairperson should determine with the Board what decision making processes should be used, for example consensus or majority rules.

To avoid making poor decisions the President / Chairperson should ensure that appropriate information and evidence is made available to Board members on which to base decisions.

Decision making tips

1. Decide on small matters promptly
2. Make decisions with firmness
3. Explore all alternatives and encourage input from all Board members
4. Act upon the chosen decision

Meeting Management

1. Plan the meeting when setting the agenda and circulate the agenda at least a week before the meeting to allow participants to prepare. The agenda should include more than a list of topics, a commentary or inclusion of information on the topics to be covered and decisions to be made will be useful to allow participants to have given thought and consulted with appropriate people before the meeting.
2. Facilitate the discussion at the meeting. Encourage all participants to express their views, those who are reticent and keeping dominant personalities in check. Do not allow the discussion to become personal, stick to facts. Once the topic has been well canvassed move the Board on to make a decision. If you need more information to make a decision then decide how and who will obtain this and take the item forward to the next meeting.
3. Keep the meetings to a reasonable time frame, set a start and finish time and stick to it. Start meetings on time; don't wait for stragglers to show up. When someone arrives late don't review what you have already discussed this wastes the time of those who showed up on time.
4. Do not revisit decisions unless major new information or a change in circumstances has arisen.
5. Plan in advance the dates, times and places for your meetings for the year and ask participants to diary these to try and ensure maximum participation.
6. Stay focused on the agenda. You can appoint a volunteer topic keeper at the beginning of each meeting to ensure that the discussion stays on point. If other issues arise add them to the general business at the end of the meeting if there is time or hold them over to the next meeting.
7. Minutes should be circulated within a week of the meeting so that everyone is reminded of their actions arising out of the meeting.

Knowledge and Skills Required

Ideally the President / Chairperson is someone who

- Can communicate effectively and
- Has or is prepared to develop good working knowledge of the constitution, policies and procedures of the Unit and Coastguard
- Is a supportive leader for all the Units members and ensures they are well informed about Unit activities