

Chapter 15

SECRETARY'S MANUAL

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District Secretary

15.1 Preface. Immediately after nomination to the office of district secretary, one should become familiar with the duties as shown in the district bylaws. As well, seek the advice and assistance of the previous district secretary. Consult the USPS Operations Manual and district bylaws and use them as a constant reference, especially Operations Manual, Chapter 4, "District Organization."

This section summarizes the duties and responsibilities of the District Secretary. Recognize that the duties of any office can and do change with time.

At the beginning of the district's watch year, prepare a calendar with dates annotated for calls to Councils and Conferences.

15.2 Responsibilities. The District Secretary is responsible for the following committees and activities:

- Historian
- Publications ... if so assigned
- Newsletter editor ... if so assigned
- *The Ensign* correspondent
- Computer Systems
- Ship's Store ... if so assigned
- District Roster

The Secretary's duties are usually outlined in detail in the district bylaws. The following itemizes the basic duties:

- 1) Keep the official attendance at conference and council meetings;
- 2) Keep minutes of the conference and council proceedings and conduct the correspondence of these bodies;
- 3) Maintain an up-to-date mailing list for meeting notices and other district communications. Include the Chief Commander, the National Executive Officer and the National Secretary on the mailing list;
- 4) Receive written certifications from squadron commanders for delegates to the district conference;
- 5) Put the agenda of conference and council meetings in final form and mail to members;
- 6) Have custody of the official copy of the district bylaws and keep it correct to date. Preserve important motions that might otherwise become buried and lost in the minutes of past meetings of the Council or Conference in a convenient and readily accessible form (codified standing rules). These include operational matters and decisions such as those pertaining to district publications, memorial expenditures, responsibility for conferences, terms governing educational and attendance awards and trophies as well as any other items appropriate for preserving in permanent form;

7) Maintain a file of all documents, records and communications of the district;

8) Make a report to each conference and council meeting;

9) Send a copy of conference and council minutes when approved to the National Executive Officer, the National Educational Officer and the National Secretary. Send a copy of amendments to district bylaws to the chairman of the National Committee on Rules;

10) Report to the National Secretary (using DB2000 if possible or form OD-1) the names and addresses of newly-elected district officers for incorporation in the Directory of National, District and Squadron Officers, which is published annually. This report is due at Headquarters by 01 February of each year. If there are changes past this date, send by electronic mail the changes from the original certification;

11) Maintain and publish a roster of all district and squadron officers within the district; and

12) Turn over to your successor all records, reports, communications and documents of the district.

15.3 Calls to Meetings. As a bridge officer, the District Secretary is obliged to attend all Council meetings and all Conferences. As well, the District Secretary is responsible for issuing a call for each Conference and Council within the time frame specified in the district bylaws. At the beginning of the district's operational year, prepare a calendar with dates annotated for calls to Council and Conference. The time required for a call varies whether the call is for a Council or Conference and what material is included in the call. The call should be mailed first-class to members of the Council or Conference and/or the approved district mailing list. The call should include:

- The date of the call
- The date and time for the meeting
- The location of the meeting
- The host squadron
- The uniform of the day or recommended dress

- The agenda, which should include the anticipated order of business and mention time sensitive reports, such as the Nominating or Finance Committee report

The minutes for any Conference or Council should include the following:

- An announcement indicating that the document represents the minutes for a specific meeting
- The date and location of the meeting
- The name and status of each person making an official report to the body
- The specifics on all motions, including the names of members making and seconding the motion, any amendments and the outcome
- The name of the person responsible for recording the minutes

15.4 Custodial Responsibilities. The District Secretary is custodian of the official copy of the district bylaws. The Secretary receives the bylaws after a major update or revision from the chairman of the Committee on Rules. The Secretary, based on the applicable action of the adopting Conference, adds minor changes, revisions, or amendments to the bylaws. The amendment action can be inserted into the applicable article or section or can be an attached amendment. The exact text of the intended bylaw amendment must be included in the call for any Council or Conference at which the amendment is to be discussed. If the text of the amendment is lengthy and will not reasonably fit in the call, it is permissible to include the text as an attachment, provided that the call itself mentions the bylaws amendment and has a note stating that the attachment contains the complete text.

15.5 District Organization. Organizational charts are typically based on the model bylaws for district and common practice. The organizational structure may differ from other districts. A typical district organization chart is located as the last page in Chapter 4 of the USPS Operations Manual.

Squadron Secretary

15.6 Preface. Immediately after nomination to the office of Secretary, become familiar with the duties as shown in the squadron bylaws and seek the advice and assistance of the former Secretary. The current USPS *Operations Manual* should also be used for reference.

15.7 Responsibilities. As newly elected squadron secretary one should become familiar with the general order of business at USPS meetings. This order normally proceeds as follows:

- Meeting called to order
- Request the secretary to determine whether there is a quorum
- Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll call
- Request the secretary to read the minutes of the previous meeting and obtain acceptance from the membership
- Reports of officers
- Reports of committees
- Unfinished business
- Elections (when appropriate)
- New business

It is important that accurate minutes of all squadron meetings and meetings of the Executive Committee are kept. Copies of the squadron bylaws, the USPS *Operations Manual*, a current membership roster and the minutes of previous meetings should be at hand. Always use full names of persons and committees in transcribing the minutes. Meetings should be recorded on tape for future reference if necessary. Whether adopted or rejected, every principal motion placed before the assembly should be entered in the minutes.

15.8 Annual Report. At meetings of the Squadron and Executive Committee, the Secretary reports the current membership status (including resignations, transfers and deaths) and any correspondence affecting the interests of the Squadron. The Secretary must make an annual report in writing at the end of the squadron year. This report should include statistical summaries of membership changes during the year, a breakdown of

membership according to grades and the percentage of advanced grades held compared with the total membership. The report should also present an itemized accounting of the expenses of operating the secretary's office (such as stationery supplies, printing, postage and clerical assistance) in addition to recommendations and suggestions for improving the handling of squadron business.

15.9 Additional Duties. In addition to taking, recording and archiving minutes and reports, the Secretary should:

- 1) Retain membership records for at least five years;
- 2) Report at each meeting on resignations, transfers, deaths and correspondence;
- 3) Verify squadron membership records against Headquarters' records; notify Headquarters of any discrepancies;
- 4) Act as Supply Officer where there is no Supply Officer;
- 5) Provide affidavits of banks used as depository with forms furnished by the bank;
- 6) Send to USPS Headquarters certification of delegates to USPS annual or special meetings and proxies for delegates to USPS annual or special meetings with forms supplied by USPS; and
- 7) Follow up with committee chairmen before Executive Committee meetings.

The Secretary sends the following to USPS Headquarters:

- 1) Changes of address, resignations and deaths (use form HQ-102 or DB2000);
- 2) Transfers, as approved, using form HQ-110;
- 3) Reinstatement, with check for current year's USPS dues using form HQ-103;
- 4) Request for replacement of lost certificates, with check and with a letter of transmittal;
- 5) Orders for stationery with USPS Ensign imprinted, record sheets and binders, lapel buttons and other miscellaneous items as available; and
- 6) In concert with the Commander, report to National any members who may pass away during

the watch year to be included in the “Last Horizon” section of *The Ensign*.

Write to the National Secretary in care of Headquarters for information and advice on any matters not covered in the USPS *Operations Manual*.

In the event of the death of a member or someone in a member’s immediate family, perform such acts as have been determined to be appropriate by the Commander or Executive Committee (flowers, letter of sympathy and/or donation to USPS Educational Fund).

Important documents to be kept for Squadron reference:

- USPS *Operations Manual*
- Squadron and District Bylaws
- District Operations Guide
- Membership Directory/Roster
- *Robert’s Rules of Order* (latest edition)

15.10 Job Descriptions and Responsibilities. The job descriptions for District Secretary and Squadron Secretary are similar. This section combines the descriptions; where a portion of the job pertains only to Squadron or District Secretary, that fact is noted.

The Squadron Secretary is encouraged to attend district meetings. The Secretary should be familiar with the appropriate sections of the *Operations Manual*.

The Secretary shall:

- 1) Keep the official log of attendance and minutes of general, executive and special meetings;
- 2) Maintain an up-to-date mailing list for meeting notices and communications;
- 3) Have custody of the official copy of the bylaws and keep it up to date;
- 4) Keep up to date the standard operations procedures and have them revised periodically for deletion or addition to bylaws;
- 5) Maintain a file of all documents, records and communications;

6) Handle such official correspondence as the Commander designates;

7) Report to the National Secretary on forms provided by Headquarters (DB2000 may be used to submit OD-2) the names and addresses of the newly elected officers;

8) Cooperate with the Squadron Treasurer in processing information and forms relating to new members, transferring members and reinstatements;

9) Send the list of delegates and alternates for Conferences to the district secretary at the appropriate time.

An Assistant Secretary may be elected or an assistant to the Secretary may be appointed to work with the Secretary as required. This person should be capable of assuming the office of Secretary when required.

15.11 Secretary’s Department Committees. Committees organized under the Secretary’s Department are:

- Historian
- Roster
- Squadron Newsletter ... if so assigned
- *The Ensign* Correspondent
- Ship’s Store
- Computer Systems

15.12 Historian. To ensure the preservation of historical material, it is suggested that the Commander appoint a Historian as a lieutenant in the secretary’s department. The Commander should choose a person willing to serve for more than one year so that the Historian becomes a link between changes of watch.

The Historian should be custodian of all minutes of past meetings and copies of the newsletter and roster. A further function is to preserve the non-current material of historical value from the files of all officers and committees. The Squadron Historian forwards a copy of this material via the District Historian to the National Historian Committee for permanent preservation at National Headquarters (Forms may be submitted electronically using DB2000 or the Historian’s website).

This form is filed within 30 days after the change of watch. The Historian's records should include:

- 1) Details of squadron formation and list of charter members and honorary members;
- 2) Squadron Charter (safe storage, proper care and security of Squadron Charter);
- 3) Minutes of executive committee, member and annual meetings including names of district officers attending and officer and departmental annual reports;
- 4) Copy of bylaws including amendments;
- 5) Legal documents and records (that is, Incorporation Files and State Exempt Organization Certification);
- 6) Member records (that is, courses completed, merit marks earned and contributions to Squadron or District);
- 7) Honors and special awards given or received (that is, District, National or other organizations);
- 8) Biographies and photos of present and past officers and those attending squadron activities;
- 9) Rosters of members (that is, joining, active, inactive and leaving);
- 10) Publicity clippings and photographs;
- 11) Records of hosting or participating in meetings and events (that is, inter-Squadron, District and National);
- 12) Complete file of publications, such as newsletters and special announcements; and
- 13) Important correspondence (that is, U.S. mail, email, faxes).

The Historian will advise the Commander of significant anniversaries and solicit help from all members to collect information and photographs pertaining to all squadron activities that may be retained as part of the Squadron or District history.

15.13 Roster. The roster represents one of the best historical records concerning members. It should be kept current and up to date by the Secretary's Department.

Rosters are now available for download from National Headquarters through the USPS website. Roster information is accessed through a user name and password and delegated use. Questions regarding the process should be directed to the Rear

Commander of the Information Technology Committee. This information should be passed from watch to watch.

A roster request can be made on line via DB2000, via the Information Technology Committee home page on the USPS website or by contacting Headquarters. Only the Squadron or District Commander is authorized to request a roster. He can request a roster only for the respective Squadron or District. This authority, however, can be delegated to the Secretary or other squadron members as deemed appropriate by the Commander. The respective Commander or Secretary (that is, District or Squadron) must initiate the request by phone in the event of a lost password.

Approximately 15 May the Information Technology Committee generates and releases new passwords. District Commanders receive the district passwords; Squadron Commanders receive the squadron passwords. The passwords are delivered to the respective commanders by mail. They are delivered with sufficient lead time so that users are not inconvenienced when old passwords become invalid. The Commander may distribute the password as deemed appropriate.

If DB2000 is used to obtain a roster, it is strongly suggested that the user have the MQSeries client installed on his machine. This enables immediate downloading and uploading instead of depending on email as a transmission medium. Note that if using email the "sqdXXX.ex_" file will be returned as an attachment to a reply email, generally within a few hours, during normal business hours. Please refer to the operating system and email program documentation for methods to extract and save attached files. All changes to the squadron or district roster database files must be made using DB2000. Please refer to the DB2000 installation and the DB2000 update help files for more information on the DB2000 program. The changes will be made to the national database, and a complete and updated roster file can be requested at a later date. If the squadron is not able to use DB2000, any changes can be faxed or mailed to the national office, using the appropriate forms available from Headquarters.

15.14 Newsletter Committee or Squadron Editor. This chairman and the committee produce and edit the squadron newsletter to keep the membership fully informed of coming events, announcements and review of recent events. Among those serving on the committee may be a photographer, a publisher or printer, an advertising manager and reporters. The squadron newsletter is the main vehicle of communication within the membership. Although the publication may vary from one page photocopied monthly to an elaborate magazine, the important consideration is communicating all essential information accurately.

Duties of the chairman and the committee are:

- 1) Determine the contents and plan each issue;
- 2) Request material from officers, committee chairmen and other members;
- 3) Proofread the copy, working in as many pictures as the photographers may furnish; and
- 4) Distribute the finished issues to the membership.

The photographer should be familiar with the operation of a camera, work with the editor and attend all Squadron or District functions as well as interface with the National Publications Committee. The photographer furnishes photographs to the PRO chairman, editor, historian and *The Ensign* correspondent and displays the pictures whenever possible. Pictures are worth a thousand words and everyone likes to be in pictures. Some events to be covered are:

- Change of watch
- Special awards
- Special activities
- Special guests
- Special presentations
- Social events such as rendezvous and raft-ups

15.15 *The Ensign* Correspondent. This person will act as a reporter of squadron or district news with the following duties:

- 1) Originate, solicit and forward to *The Ensign* editor or the district correspondent articles of newsworthy squadron activities such as cruises,

rendezvous, public relations, cooperative charting efforts and other information of national interest;

- 2) Work with the squadron or district photographer to obtain pictures to accompany such articles and promote submission of photos suitable for *The Ensign* cover pages;

- 3) Assist with the promotion of advertising for *The Ensign* (the squadron may earn commissions for advertising secured for *The Ensign*);

- 4) Review the squadron publication and forward any articles or photographs of general interest to the district *The Ensign* correspondent; and

- 5) Be familiar with and understand *The Ensign* deadline schedule.

15.16 Ship's Store. National has a Ship's Store. Due to the extensive array of items available from it and the timely manner in which items can be procured, many districts and/or squadrons do not maintain one. As well, many squadrons do not include the Ship's Store as a responsibility under the Secretary. This section is thus intended for those that do maintain a Ship's Store be it under the Secretary or another department.

The National Ship's Store is a member benefit with an inventory of items including Change of Watch supplies, clothing, safety items, travel items, bridge gifts, Vessel Safety Examiner and Certified Instructional materials. Most carry the USPS logo. Ship's Store maintains a current web site at www.shopusps.org at which all merchandise may be seen and ordered. Ship's Store provides incentive for Squadrons and Districts to sell their merchandise in three ways:

- 1) Squadrons may order specific material at members' request for resale. A minimum of \$250 worth of merchandise must be sold (no returns) for a profit of 20% to the squadron.

- 2) Districts can arrange to have material sent to their semi-annual conferences for viewing and sale. The District can earn 20% of the amount that is sold at the conference. Two months in advance, a responsible person should contact the headquarters warehouse manager, Art Stevens, at stevensa@hq.usps.org or at 888.367.8777, extension 214, to request an updated Ship's Store order form and information on how to conduct a Ship's Store

at a District meeting. The order form may be received by mail, fax or an electronic form in Excel may be requested. The order must be submitted to headquarters six weeks before the intended date of sale. Requests must include the name of the responsible member, date of sale and shipping address. Districts with 1,000 or fewer members may order up to \$3,500 of material, while larger districts will be limited to a \$5,000 order. District 5, which is twice the size of others, will be limited to a \$10,000 order.

Headquarters will prepare and ship the merchandise at no cost to the District. Included will be a "USPS Ship's Store Sales Event Control Sheet" listing the items, starting count, and selling price. There will also be columns for the end count, number sold and gross sales. 20% of the gross sales may be taken off and the District is responsible for the final amount.

Orders may be taken for items not included in the merchandise sent. The price of such items can be included in the gross total, subject to the 20% commission. Order forms will be enclosed with the kits. The shipping charges less 20% must be included with the cost to the customer. These orders with the individual's name and shipping address must be included when the unsold merchandise is returned to headquarters.

All items that are not sold must be properly repacked and returned to headquarters correctly identified along with the completed Sales Event Control Sheet together with the check covering the net total. This must be within ten days of the sale. The returning mailing expense is the responsibility of the District.

3) Members can access the Ship's Store web site at www.shopusps.org or phone Customer Service at 888.367.8777, extension 210, to place an order from Ship's Store. The member's District and the individual's Squadron will each receive 2.5% of the total phone or web site orders. This is paid out semi-annually to the District and the Squadron. [Refer to 17.5 on page 17-2] for more information on this subject.

4) It is important to set up Ship's Store sales so that the local unit is the seller and simply a sales agent of USPS. Mistakes in this area could subject USPS to liability for conducting business in a state and to collecting sales tax. Ensure you check with all local and state regulations in this regard.

15.17 Computer Systems. This person or committee is responsible for the research, development and implementation of planning, training and operational guidance for computer systems and applications used by Headquarters, District, or the Squadron.

Computers are used at Headquarters for all phases of accounting and fiscal control, membership records, warehouse inventories, educational records and examination grading, typesetting and mailing labels for *The Ensign*, a USPS personnel information bank and headquarters correspondence.

Computer Systems also supports, promotes and develops computerization projects for the membership. These projects include squadron and district record-keeping, data transfers between Headquarters and Squadrons or Districts, merit mark preparation, conference registration and any other USPS endeavor that would benefit from computerization.

15.18 Communications. Communications are essential to smooth functioning of a Squadron or District. This area includes the work of the telephone committee, roster committee, correspondence committee and an Internet communications committee. Many Districts and Squadrons have Internet home pages intended to be sources of information for the members and visitors to the site and to provide a conduit for modern-day communications. Information regarding the requirements for squadron websites may be found on the Information Technology section of the USPS website. Some of the information that should be found on the home pages includes:

- Education calendar to include courses offered from all squadrons
- A schedule of district and squadron events, including special meetings, dinners, rendez-

- vous, changes of watch and whatever else the squadron wants to announce, including USPS Boating Course information and class schedules with a map of squadron locations with individual squadron contacts
- Home pages and Internet links for all squadrons; contact district webmaster for how-to, design, and maintenance information
 - Links to USPS, CPS and other boating sites, such as USCG, BoatUS and yacht clubs
 - District information and district newsletters, council and conference information, boat shows, and activities of general interest to members and the local community
 - Email directory for member-to-member communications