



## Looking To The Future - The Restructure Commission

**J**ames Hagerty, Chair of the Restructure Commission, outlines its work and the recommendations it submitted to Grand Council on 6th November 2009.

### Introduction

In May 2005 Grand Council established a committee to formulate a Strategic Framework for the future development of the Association. Subsequently, in May 2007, a proposal was submitted to undertake a review of the Association's governance arrangements with the object of improving those arrangements and reducing the size of Grand Council.

At a meeting held at Hinsley Hall, Leeds, in November 2008, Grand Council considered the international evolution of the Association, models of leadership through which the Association could operate, the effectiveness of the Association's systems and structures, financial models through which the Association could operate, and a strategic plan for the Association. In particular, one central theme was identified - 'Restructuring the Association'.

### The Restructure Commission and its Terms of Reference

In February 2009 Grand Council decided to pursue the decisions taken at Leeds and draft terms of reference were drawn up for an independent Commission to evaluate existing systems of governance and structure and propose alternatives. Grand Council decided that the work of the Commission should be divided into two phases with each having a particular focus.

The terms of reference for the Commission in Phase 1 were:

- (a) To identify and evaluate options for international structures that would enable the Association to be governed effectively as an international organisation.
- (b) To identify and evaluate appropriate national structures and governance models that would support the proposed national framework.
- (c) To identify, in broad outline, governance responsibilities appropriate to (a) and (b) above.
- (d) To report to Grand Council setting out details of options considered and a recommendation as to the Commission's preferred way forward. The Commission was directed to report to Grand Council by 1st September 2009.

In the light of Grand Council's decision on the Commission's recommendations arising from Phase 1 the terms of reference for the Commission in Phase 2 were:

- (a) To identify a time-scale for transitional arrangements to take effect.
- (b) To produce a plan for the management of the transition to the chosen model of governance within the agreed time-scale.
- (c) To oversee the management of the change.
- (d) To report to Grand Council within the time-scale directed.

### The Commission

Grand Council approved the Terms of Reference and appointed the following as members of the Commission: James Hagerty (Province 3), Chairman; Gerry Barton (Director, Province 20); Past Grand President James Kelly (Province 15); Victor Nicholls (Province 3), Administrative Officer; Bernard Noakes (Director, Province 2); and Peter Woodford (Province 19). The Commission was required to carry out its work and consultations independently of Grand Council.

### The Commission's Work

The Commission held its first meeting in Harrogate in May 2009 and has held subsequent meetings in Coventry. Information was collected through a questionnaire, correspondence, consultations, papers and discussions. Nearly 60 people, most of whom had wide experience of the Association or who had specific responsibilities within it, were kind enough to offer views and suggestions. The compilation of the Commission's first report was informed by these views.

### The Commission's First Report

The Commission's First Report was submitted to Grand Council in October 2009. The major recommendation was that the present form of governance be replaced with a system which will comprise:

- a. Circles and Groups
  - b. Elected Provincial Councils
  - c. Elected National/Regional Councils
  - d. An elected International Governing Council.
- In connection with the adoption of a new form of governance, the Commission further recommended that:
- a. The nature and functions of Circles and Groups will not change.
  - b. Revised Rules and Regulations be formulated to reflect a new model of governance.
  - c. The governance responsibilities and functions of each tier of the Association be clearly defined.
  - d. Criteria be established for the formation of Provinces.
  - e. Redefined Provinces be established in order to effect more equal representation on National/Regional Councils.

- f. Elected National/Regional Councils be established and to have delegated authority from the International Governing Council.
- g. National/Regional Presidents be elected.
- h. An elected International Governing Council be established from among the National/Regional Presidents.
- i. The International Governing Council to have the authority to govern the international Association.
- j. An International President be elected from among the International Governing Council.
- k. Provision be made for the further international development of the Association.

On 7th November 2009 Grand Council accepted the above recommendations and instructed the Commission to proceed to Phase 2.

### The Commission: Phase 2

The Commission recommended that Task Groups be established to prepare and implement the changes inherent in the Commission's major recommendations and to fulfil the Terms of Reference for Phase 2. The Task Groups and their Chairs are as follows:

- (a) **Rules and Regulations Task Group** (Andrew Murray, Province 1).
- (b) **Legal Task Group** (John McNally, Province 2).
- (c) **National/Regional and Provincial Task Group** (Peter Woodford, Province 19).
- (d) **Administrative Task Group** (Past Grand President James Kelly, Province 15).
- (e) **Financial Task Group** (John Rayer, Director, Province 7).
- (f) **International Task Group** (Bernard Noakes, Director, Province 2).

Other Brothers will be invited to complete the membership of Task Groups which will not be less than 3 and not more than 5 in number. The Commission will act as the co-ordinating committee of the Task Groups and will be responsible for their overall direction and work.

### Timescales and Costs

Grand Council and the Commission are anxious that the next phase is undertaken carefully. There are many delicate and complex issues to address. A completion date of November 2011 has been agreed. It may be that certain changes can be introduced ahead of others.

Grand Council and the Commission are anxious that the exercise is value for money and that costs whilst inevitable are not excessive. The Restructure Commission's First Report is available on the Association's website.