

Association

Ottawa and District Branch

Bylaws and Procedures

Issued Under the Authority

Of

The Branch Executive Committee as Agreed at

Annual General Meeting

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BYLAWS AND PROCEDURES

# INTRODUCTION

## Intent

These Bylaws and Procedures establish how the Ottawa and District Branch of The Royal Canadian Regiment Association is organized and operates for the benefit of its members, including supporting the goals and objectives of the National Association.

## Authority

All members of the Branch are subject to the Bylaws and Procedures contained in this document.

## Amendments

Proposed amendments to this document may be made by any Active Member of the Branch. They should be submitted in writing to the Secretary for consideration by the Executive, who will assess their merit. At the Annual General Meeting (AGM), proposed amendments deemed to have merit, will be voted on for approval.

For amendments of an urgent nature, the Executive may implement them immediately, however, will table them at the next AGM for ratification.

## Biennial Review

The Executive will conduct a review of these Bylaws and Procedures every two years to ensure their currency and utility.

# BRANCH NAME, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

## Name

Ottawa and District Branch, The RCR Association

## Purpose

The Branch exists to foster, maintain and promote the traditions and well-being of The Royal Canadian Regiment, to offer comradeship, and to generate ésprit de corps among retired and serving members of the Regiment who reside in the Ottawa area.

## Objectives

The objectives of the Branch are to:

* help preserve the memory of those who have died in service with The Regiment;
* assist the sick, wounded and needy who have served in The Regiment;
* lend support to spouses of deceased Branch members;
* help maintain The Regiment’s memorials and promote its history, including supporting The RCR Museum;
* foster and strengthen comradeship among Branch members; and
* strengthen bonds with serving members of The Regiment posted to Ottawa by providing them a regimental “firm base” comprising serving and retired soldiers of all ranks linked by a shared heritage and ethos.

# BRANCH CHARTER AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

## Granting of Charter

In 1972, The Royal Canadian Regiment Association authorized the creation of the Ottawa and District Branch of the Association, through the granting of a Charter. The charter document will be framed and kept in a secure place by the Branch Executive. The Charter may also be displayed in the location where the Branch membership regularly meets. The charter will only be withdrawn should the Branch become inactive or cease to exist.

## Relationship to the National Association

Through its charter, The Ottawa and District Branch exists as an officially recognized component of The RCR Association, enjoying both the privileges of the Association while being committed to its corresponding obligations.

# ELIGIBILITY FOR BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

The following persons shall be eligible for Branch membership:

* all serving and retired members of The Regiment;
* serving or retired members of regiments that have an official alliance with The RCR;
* all members or former members of other Corps who have served on attachment with The RCR, e.g. RCEME, RC Sigs, Logistics, Medical, etc.
* persons from other units, corps, or organizations who have served as part of an RCR Battalion Group, Battle Group or Task Force for a period of six months or longer, or who have served under RCR command while on operations.
* persons who are deemed by the rest of the membership to have a special affiliation with the Branch because of services rendered, or who are spouses of deceased members wishing to maintain connection with the Branch.

# MEMBERSHIP TYPES

The Branch will comprise the following types of members.

## Active Members

Persons who are paid up in their annual Branch dues, allowing them to receive all the benefits and privileges of membership, including voting rights.

## Inactive Members

Persons who are maintained on the Branch nominal roll and E-Mail list but are not current in paying their annual Branch dues, and subsequently do not receive all the benefits and privileges of membership, nor do they have voting rights. They can become Active Members upon payment of their annual dues.

## Lifetime Members

Persons who are age 80 or older. These members are not required to pay annual Branch dues, however they may vote and receive all the benefits of membership.

## Associate Members

Persons who are spouses of deceased members or who reside more than 100 km outside of Ottawa. These members are not required to pay annual Branch dues and do not have voting rights, however, are entitled to all the other benefits of membership.

## Honorary Members

Persons who are not members of The Royal Canadian Regiment may be granted the distinction of becoming Honorary Members of the Ottawa Branch of The RCR Association by a majority vote of the Active Members at the Branch AGM. Granting such a distinction will usually be to recognize someone who has rendered a special service to the Branch or to The Regiment. Honorary membership may also be given to someone who has contributed in a major way to Canadian defence and security, including academically. Honorary members do not pay dues and receive all the benefits and privileges of membership, with the exception of voting rights. Honorary Branch Membership does not automatically infer membership into The RCR (national) Association.

## Membership Cards

The Branch may provide membership cards to all Active, Lifetime, Associate and Honorary members.

## Membership Annual Dues

Persons wishing to be considered Active Members of the Branch are required to pay annual dues in the amount of $10. This amount is subject to change as recommended by the Executive and approved by the Membership. Persons who have not paid their annual dues within three months of the new Branch year, i.e. by 01 April will be classified as “Inactive Members.”

## Membership in The RCR (National) Association

Membership in Ottawa and District Branch, The RCR Association does not automatically entail membership in the National Association. Ottawa and District Branch Members who do not belong to The RCR (National) Association are strongly encouraged to join it.

# MEMBERSHIP REVOCATION

## Requirement for “Good Standing.”

Membership in the Branch for all persons is contingent on them being in “good standing.” This means Members subscribe to the Branch’s purpose and objectives, and aspire to act in a way both publicly and privately, that upholds the honour and reputation of the Regiment. After due consideration of the facts by the Branch Executive, Members who are deemed to be not in good standing, may have their membership revoked by the President.

# BRANCH ORGANIZATION

## General

The Branch will comprise an Executive Committee and the five types of members as detailed below.

## Executive Committee

The role of the Branch Executive Committee (hereafter referred to as “Executive”) is to administer the Branch on behalf of the Members. As a minimum, the Executive will consist of a President, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer. Other positions may be added at the discretion of the Executive.

# BRANCH MEETINGS AND OPERATING YEAR

## Monthly Meetings

The Executive will organize monthly Branch meetings to be held, normally, on the last Friday of each month, with the exception of July, August and December. In July, the Branch will meet on the Friday closest to 10 July, for the celebration of Pachino Day. The location of meetings will be as advised by the Executive, but as a rule, will be in a central location easily accessible to Members, and be at minimum cost.

## Annual General Meeting

The Executive will organize an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Branch, to be held, normally, on the last Friday of October. The main purpose of the AGM will be to:

* provide Members a review of the Branch’s operations and activity over the past year;
* advise of Branch and Regimental activities planned for the upcoming year and invite Members to offer their own suggestions and ideas;
* provide a financial report for the current year’s activities;
* approve the upcoming year’s operating budget;
* approve the granting of honorary memberships in the Branch for persons so voted; and
* elect or affirm the Branch Executive for the current year.

## Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive will meet at the call of the Branch President, normally a week or two in advance of the next Branch meeting. The purpose of Executive meetings will be to identify and/or confirm planned activities for the Branch, review Branch finances including ensuring good stewardship of Branch funds, and consider issues relevant to the Branch and the Regiment at large. The Secretary will record the Minutes of Executive Committee meetings and distribute them to Executive Members, as well as file both electronic and hard copies of the Minutes. Meetings of the Executive shall be open to all Branch members.

## Operating Year

The Branch Operating Year runs from 01 January to 31 December.

## Quorums and Voting

The only Branch meeting requiring a quorum is the AGM. In this case, 20 percent of the Active Membership will constitute a quorum for voting on motions tabled at the AGM. Non-binding votes may take place at any meeting, for the purpose of gauging opinions on a particular subject.

# BRANCH EXECUTIVE

## Responsibilities

The Executive shall be responsible to the Members for the efficient operation of the Branch, centred on its purpose and objectives as stated. In addition the Executive shall be the sole authority for the following:

* conducting all business for the Branch;
* developing an annual Branch Activities Calendar, updated through the year as required;
* appointing sub-committees or individuals to carry out any project or business of the Branch;
* accounting for and carefully managing Branch funds in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures;
* preparing an annual Branch budget to be approved by the Members at the AGM;
* setting, collecting, recording and administering membership dues;
* producing and issuing any membership cards;
* approving disbursement and expenditures of Branch funds;
* maintaining regular contact with the National Association and Regimental Headquarters;
* liaising with the Regimental Kit Shop for procurement of regimental items as may be desired by the Branch; and
* using social media to promote Branch activities and enhance communications with both Branch Members and The Regiment at large.

## Filling Executive Positions

Every effort must be made to fill vacant Executive positions as soon as possible to ensure the efficient administration of Branch affairs. Election of Executive Members will normally occur at the AGM by a majority vote of the Branch’s Active Members present. Should an Executive position (with the exception of President) require filling during the year, the President may appoint a member to fill it pending the next AGM. If only one nomination is received for a vacant position, appointment of that individual may be made by acclamation upon the approval of a majority of the Executive. Should the position of President become vacant for whatever reason, prior to the AGM, the Vice President will fill the position and become “Acting President.” At the AGM the Acting President may seek affirmation to become substantive President, or stand for election if there are other nominees.

## Term of Service

The Executive members’ terms will be for one year, from AGM to next AGM, subject to renewal on a yearly basis by majority vote of Active Members present at the meeting.

## Voting

All votes will be by counting show of hands.

## Role and Functions of Executive Members

The Executive will work collectively in carrying out its duties and responsibilities with Executive decisions, as a rule, being made by consensus. Specific responsibilities and duties of Executive Members are described at Annex A.

## President’s Authority

Should there not be Executive consensus on an issue, the matter will be suspended (parked) until the next Executive meeting when it will be discussed again. Should there still be no consensus, the Branch President is authorized to determine the matter by Presidential decision. In this process, the President may also canvas Branch Members to ascertain their opinion. Notwithstanding, the President will have final decision making authority on all matters pertaining to the Branch’s operations, consistent with maintaining the integrity of Branch Bylaws and Procedures.

## Protection of Executive Members

No member of the Executive shall be liable for any fault or misconduct of another Executive Member whose actions result in losses or damages to monies or properties for which the Branch Executive has been entrusted.

# BRANCH PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

## General

The Executive will organize a program of Branch activities consistent with the Branch’s purpose and objectives.

## Activities Focus

For the most part, Branch activities will centre on monthly gatherings of Branch Members (except for July, August and December) and the commemoration of “regimental days,” especially the Regimental Birthday (21 Dec), Paardeberg (27 Feb) and Pachino (10 July.) Other days and events may also be commemorated in a special fashion such as Remembrance Day (11 Nov) and St. Andrew’s Day (30 Nov).In addition, there may be excursions to the Canadian War Museum as well as visits to units of the Regiment and to other Branches.

## Activities Calendar

The Branch Secretary will maintain an up-to-date Branch Activities Calendar and distribute it on a quarterly basis via E-Mail to Branch Members, as well as post it on the Branch web page and the Association page of The RCR web site.

## Participation in Regimental Special Events

The Branch, to the extent it is able without drawing on Branch funds, will endeavour to provide representation at major Regimental events to which it has been invited such as the Annual General Meeting of the The RCR Association (national level), Presentations of Colours, Unit Competitions, and Changes of Command.

## Cards and In Memoriam Donations

Active Members and their spouses who are admitted to hospital will be sent a “get well” card on behalf of the Branch. On the death of an Active Member or their spouse, the Branch will send a sympathy card to the family along with a $50 memorial donation to The RCR Museum.

# BRANCH COMMUNICATIONS

## Approach

There will be a pro-active approach to communications within and outside of the Branch in order that all Members are well informed of Branch activities and inspired to participate in them.

## Types of Communications

The primary means of communication will be by regular E-Mails to Members from the Branch Executive, informing them of upcoming events, recent happenings within the Branch, and any administrative matters requiring Members’ attention.

## Branch Web Site and Face Book Page

To facilitate good Branch communications, the Executive will endeavour to maintain a Branch Web Site for members’ reference, as well as a Branch Face Book account. The Branch Secretary will be lead for this activity.

# BRANCH DRESS AND MEMORABILIA

## Dress

Dress and appearance for Branch Members at Branch functions will be in accordance with expected regimental standards for the occasion (as detailed in Regimental Standing Orders) and the dress regulations of the facilities being used. The expression “we are what we appear” should guide members’ approach to dress. As a minimum, Branch Members should own a regimental tie or cravat and wear it as they deem appropriate. Members are also encouraged to own a regimental blazer with VRI breast pocket crest for those occasions when greater formality is expected e.g. Remembrance Day, and when representing the Branch in other venues.

## Branch Banners

The Branch will maintain both an RCR Association banner without a pike and a Regimental Banner with pike. Where feasible, these banners will be displayed at Branch functions and other events where there is a Branch presence, such as Remembrance Day and Wreaths Across Canada ceremonies. The Vice President will be responsible for holding and displaying the banners.

## Branch Photo Album and Memorabilia

The Branch Executive will ensure that a Branch photo album is maintained for the purpose of preserving a hard copy photographic record of Branch activities and personalities. The Executive will also preserve, maintain and hold for display at Branch meetings assorted memorabilia such as plaques, framed pictures, and regimental souvenir items. A member in good standing may be appointed to assist with this task.

# BRANCH FINANCES

## Guiding Principle

Generally speaking, the Branch will operate on a “pay as you go” principle, with activities being financially self-supporting, unless the Executive deems the activity merits a subsidy from Branch funds. In no case will any debt be accrued by the Branch.

## Operating Funds

Funds in an amount determined by the Executive and recorded in the budget shall be maintained to assist with Branch operating costs, including for providing services to Branch Members.

## Sources of Funds

The Branch will raise funds through the collection of annual dues from Members and by a small charge levied at monthly Branch meetings. In addition, Members will be charged for Branch activities they participate in that have an associated expense. This will be at an “at cost” rate, unless subsidized with Branch funds.

## Spending and Cheque Signing Authority

The Executive has authority to determine, on behalf of Members, how Branch funds are expended. No expenditures shall be made without the authority of the Executive. On those occasions when time is of the essence and delay may result in a financial cost, the Branch President may authorize expenditure of Association monies, to be ratified at a later date by the Executive. All Executive Members will have signing authority for cheques, with there being two Executive signatures on all cheques cut.

## Expenditures

The Executive shall pay out of Branch funds such expenses as are reasonable and necessary to conduct Branch business. Where such expenses are less than $50.00 for any particular administrative expense, Executive approval need not be sought, however, records of such expenses must be retained and recorded in the minutes of Executive meetings.

## Receipts and Record Keeping

The Branch will ensure that all income and expenses are fully documented, including with receipts.

## Treasurer’s Authority

The Treasurer has standing authority to initiate agreements, authorize purchases, and make payments in support of approved Branch activities.

## Banking

The Branch will have a bank account for the deposit of funds and other banking business. All banking business of the Branch shall be transacted by the Treasurer, aided as required by other Executive members.

## President’s Hospitality Fund

The President is authorized an annual fund of $50, to be used at his discretion, for providing Branch hospitality to guests who have been invited to partake in Branch activities. This fund will be accounted for in the Branch budget, with payments from the fund being controlled through a chit system managed by the Treasurer.

## Annual Branch Financial Review and Statement

An independent (someone not on the Branch Executive) review of the Branch’s financial operations will be conducted annually. This review will be briefed at the AGM. In addition, at the AGM, the Treasurer will provide a detailed financial report covering the past year’s financial operations. This report will form part of the minutes of the AGM.

Attachments

Annex A - Executive Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Annex A to

Branch By-laws and Procedures

Executive Committee Roles and Responsibilities

# Branch President

The President provides leadership and direction aimed at achieving the Branch’s purpose and objectives. This includes overseeing the work of the Executive Committee, encouraging ésprit de corps among Branch Members, and fostering good relationships with outside groups and agencies. The President speaks for the Branch and represents its interests to the National Association, Regimental Headquarters and the Colonel of The Regiment.

To these ends, the President is expected to:

* be well informed on all Branch matters and able to provide oversight;
* develop good relationships internally and externally;
* be forward thinking and fully committed to the Branch’s well-being;
* have a good working knowledge of the The RCR Association’s General By-Laws, Ottawa Branch Bylaws and Procedures and Regimental Standing Orders;
* be able to work collaboratively and effectively with other members of the Branch Executive;
* be a good listener and attuned to the interests of members;
* be a good role model and positive image for the Branch; and
* be a good communicator.

Specific duties include but are not limited to:

* presiding at Branch and Executive meetings ensuring that they are run efficiently and effectively, including the recording of minutes at Executive meetings;
* being a co-signatory for the Branch in all legal and financial matters;
* directing the Executive’s work regarding Branch governance, administration and program of activities;
* ensure the safekeeping and accounting of all Branch funds and property held in trust;
* consulting regularly with Executive Members on their role and helping them optimize their contributions;
* ensuring that the necessary skills are represented on the Executive Committee and that a succession plan is in place to help find new Executive Committee Members when current ones depart;
* preparing and issuing via E-Mail on a regular basis (usually monthly) Branch updates/ SITREPS for the Branch Membership and the National Association;
* communicating regularly with the Presidents of other Branches, the national Association, RHQ and the Colonel of The Regiment; and
* promoting partnerships with potential sponsors, funding agencies, local, provincial and federal government, businesses and other organizations that may be able to assist with the Branch’s purpose and objectives.

# Vice President

The Vice President understudies the President and assists in the management of Branch activities. This includes taking on projects and tasks such as organizing Branch dinners and special events. In effect, the Vice President is the strong right arm and *confidant* of the President, advising of concerns and issues among Branch members, and providing an informed point of view to the Executive. The Vice President’s role is commonly regarded as preparation for becoming the next President.

To these ends the Vice President should:

* be well informed of all aspects of the Branch and its activities;
* have good interpersonal skills, working collaboratively with other Executive Members, and fostering good relationships internally and externally;
* be able to step in for, or otherwise represent, the President when needed, including chairing meetings;
* be forward thinking and committed to meeting the goals of the Branch;
* possess good knowledge of Branch Bylaws and Procedures, The RCR Association Bylaws and Regimental Standing Orders;
* be a good listener and observer, being attuned to the interests of Members;
* be a good regimental role model and a positive image for the Branch; and
* be a good communicator.

Specific duties include but are not limited to:

* filling in for the President when required, including chairing Executive meetings in the President’s absence;
* being a co-signatory for Branch legal and financial matters;
* assisting in developing the Branch activities plan and overseeing its execution, with particular regard to Regimental Birthday, Paardeberg and Pachino festivities;
* liaising, as opportunities present, with other regimental and corps associations with a view to organizing joint activities of common interest;
* keeping custody of the Branch banners, photo album and other Branch paraphernalia, and bringing these to Branch meetings and events;
* preparing the Branch’s annual submission to The Regimental Journal (Pro Patria);
* promoting Branch ésprit de corps through book raffles and similar type events; and
* other duties as directed by the President.

# Treasurer

The Treasurer is a diligent, competent and honest individual, capable of managing all aspects of Branch finances. It is important that the Treasurer be well organized and possesses basic financial management skills.

Specific duties include but are not limited to:

* advising the Executive in the general management of the Branch’s finances;
* receiving and securing incoming monies, including keeping accurate records of Membership payments;
* assisting with financial reviews;
* paying bills and invoices;
* maintaining a detailed record of all income and expenditures;
* conducting banking;
* preparing regular financial reports for review at Executive Committee meetings;
* being a co-signatory on the Branch bank account; and
* leading the annual budget development process leading to a draft budget for Branch approval.

# Secretary

The Secretary is the primary administration and communications officer for the Branch. He is responsible for recording, documenting and communicating the activities of the Executive Committee as well as tending to the basic administrative needs of the Branch. As such, the Secretary must possess good writing and computer talents and have excellent command of the English language. The Secretary must further possess astute listening skills and be able to identify, record and explain the key issues of any discussion.

Specific duties include but are not limited to:

* advising the President and Vice President on all administrative matters pertaining to the Branch and its effective and efficient functioning;
* coordinating meetings of the Executive or general membership and promulgating notifications of such meetings as directed by the President;
* carrying out general secretarial duties including preparing agendas, recording and distributing minutes of meetings, and preparing, receiving and disseminating correspondence;
* being a co-signatory on the Branch bank account;
* maintaining up-to-date Branch membership lists, with the list for Executive use containing members’ E Mail and postal addresses and their phone numbers;
* sending out cards and making memorial donations to The RCR museum for Active Members and spouses who are hospitalized, or who have died;
* ensuring the currency and upkeep of Branch Bylaws and Procedures, including entering approved amendments thereto;
* distributing on a quarterly basis to Branch members an updated Branch Activities Calendar and membership list;
* assisting the Vice President in preparing the Branch’s annual submission to Pro Patria;
* preparing the Branch’s submission to the National Association’s quarterly newsletter (In Touch);
* assisting with the upkeep of the Branch photo album;
* maintaining the Branch web site, Face Book page and other social media used by the Branch; and
* providing Branch news and information for the Association page of The RCR (national) web site.