



BRITISH MODEL FLYING ASSOCIATION

**A GUIDE TO THE BMFA AREAS
OBJECTIVES and CONSTITUTION**

**AND
ADVICE TO AREA COMMITTEES**

Issue 5 Draft (MK)

February 2022

A GUIDE TO THE BMFA AREAS OBJECTIVES AND CONSTITUTION AND ADVICE TO AREAS COMMITTEES

Gender - words of masculine gender should be taken as including the feminine gender unless the context indicates otherwise.

Assumptions

1. Area Delegates will lose their Directorship
2. Full Council will be disbanded and replaced by a new smaller 'Management Council (MC*)' – name to be confirmed
3. Representation of the Areas at MC* will be by Members Director and a small number (exp 3-5) new 'Regional Directors' who may or may not be Area Delegates

A. BMFA Structure

The BMFA is a legally constituted "Not for Profit" organisation and as such it is formally registered at Companies House. This means that it is subject to relevant legislation, which is handled by a formal Constitution with governance by a Board of Directors, the MC*, which is charged with representing the interests of all the members. This dictates the nature of some of the BMFA structure.

In the pre-internet era, the primary link that ordinary club members had with the BMFA was via their club and respective Area. Now that the day-to-day running of the BMFA is handled by the professional staff in the BMFA Office, headed by the CEO, much contact to and from individual members is done directly from that office albeit usually through the member's club if the matter is beyond a simple membership query. This has been subsequently developed to include direct member e-mailing and methods to exploit this channel further are being discussed.

However, the work of the BMFA office is supported throughout the organisation by volunteers who are vital to the running of the organisation. The Areas, with their volunteers, continue to provide a vital link between the clubs and the BMFA and help ensure that the interests of the ordinary club flier and country member can be properly represented and protected.

To many fliers, the BMFA is simply the organisation which provides their insurance so that they can fly with confidence at their local club field. Other than that, and perhaps the bi-monthly BMFA News magazine, they have little contact with the organisation other than when things go wrong, such as a threat to their flying field for example. However, as the motto says, "Together we Achieve" and the interests of both the fliers and the organisation benefit from a continued interaction via the Areas.

The MC* comprises of ten (nine?) Elected Officers (Executive Directors) and 4 Area non-Executive Directors who along with the Members Director represent the BMFA's Areas and members in addition to the representatives of the RAFMAA and the RNMAA.

The Elected Executive Directors of the MC* are:

- Chairman
- Vice Chairman
- Chief Executive Officer
- Honorary Secretary
- Honorary Treasurer
- Technical Secretary
- Competition Secretary
- Members Director
- Achievement Scheme Director

The five Technical Committees handle the rules and competitions for their disciplines and are represented by the Technical Secretary They have regular interaction through the

Technical Council and a good understanding of the interests and activities of competition fliers.

The Area Delegates collectively meet a minimum of three times per year at Areas Council. This meeting is chaired by the Members Director.

The Area Officers are elected to look after the interests of the Affiliated clubs, their members and Country Members who reside within the Area. They rely on input from their clubs and the Country Member representative in order to do this. Collectively, the Areas also play a vital role at Areas Council in administering the Achievement scheme. They are responsible for appointing Area Chief Examiners, who in turn agree examiner appointments to club level and so help improve standards of flying and safety for all. The Achievement Scheme is a good example of something the organisation provides for every flier, not just those interested in competitions. The Areas Council appoints the members of the Achievement Scheme Review Committee (ASRC) and has final administrative oversight of their activities, decisions, and recommendations.

This document and indeed the Areas Constitution itself will need additional changes as the Society develops (for example, to reflect organisational changes or the increasing use of the modern technology for conducting much of the business of an Area). If any Area believes that further changes to this guide and/or the Constitution are desirable to reflect current practices, then they are asked to highlight these potential changes to the BMFA's Members Director and these will be discussed further at Areas Council.

Commented [MK1]: This will need revising when the responsibilities of the ASRC Directorate are published

B. The Areas

Each of the fourteen Areas has a Committee of its own, elected in much the same way as a club committee. The Area Committee includes a Delegate who is their representative on the Areas Council. This Delegate has a responsibility to represent the interests of all clubs and members within the Area. This is the route by which club fliers can have their interests properly raised and considered by the BMFA, and this is one of the ways that the BMFA provides demonstrable democracy to its membership.

The Areas should hold regular meetings, not less than four a year including the AGM, at a mutually convenient time (usually evenings) and location or by using electronic conferencing. These meetings are generally scheduled shortly in advance of the Areas Council meetings, in order to allow the Area Delegate to be briefed on how to respond to the various Council agenda items, including any votes. Every club in the Area should be invited, but sadly many clubs choose not to attend. This means that the Area representation is not as effective as it could be, and this is a situation that the Areas Council strives continuously to improve.

Commented [MK2]: Operationally, this will need revising

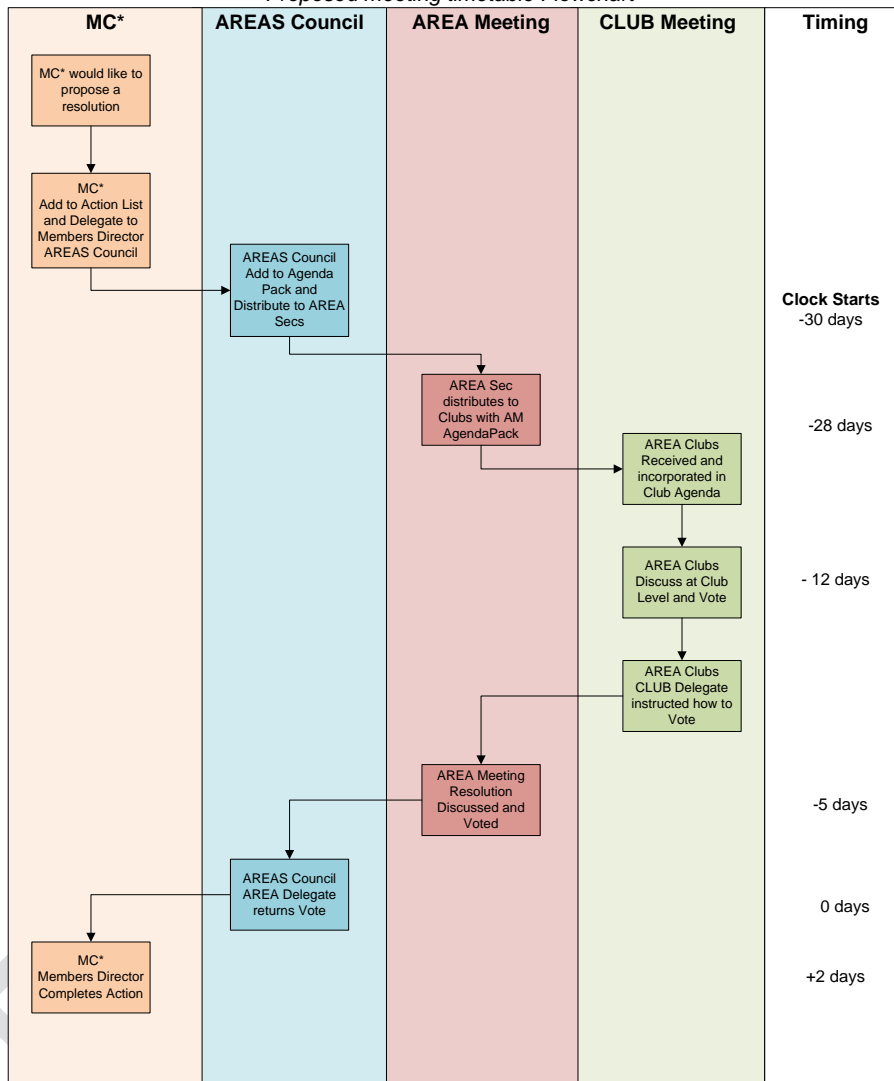
Commented [MK3R2]: I am also unsure how the new system will work where an area must hold a meeting before the Areas council meeting which will be before the new combined exec/FC (MC*) meeting.

To ensure that Clubs have the opportunity to discuss resolution passed by either MC*, AREAS Council or the Area then sufficient time must be allowed for information to be collated, distributed and discussed, down to Member Level. The (suggested) meetings timetable is as follows:

Commented [MK4]: My thoughts on how to get round the meeting timing and bring in line with present

Step	Activity	Timelapse
1	MC* would like to make a change	
2	Discuss within MC* full meeting and agree it's a great idea	
3	Produce or amend resolution	
4	Add to Action list to follow up > delegate to AREAS COUNCIL	< -30d
5	AREAS COUNCIL send out Agenda and proposals/resolutions	-30d
6	Received by Areas and distributed to clubs and on Area website etc	-28d
7	Received by Clubs and discussed at Club Meeting	-12d
8	Discussed at Area Meeting and Voted on accordingly	-5d
9	Area Delegate reports back to AREAS COUNCIL and votes Accordingly	0d
10	AREAS COUNCIL (Members Director) completes Action and returns result	+2d
11	MC* reconvene to review Actions list	

Proposed meeting timetable Flowchart



Dependencies and Notes

1. BMFA Meetings dates need to be scheduled in Advance and adhered to
2. Clubs time their own meeting 1-2 weeks in Advance of Area Meeting
3. Agenda Pack Must be distributed on time.
4. This model allows 23 days from Distribution of AREA Agenda pack to Area Meeting which is less than at present
5. Timing of MC* Meeting to be in Advance of AREAS Council
6. Members Director is AREAs Delegated Authority at MC*

Club Delegate Role and Responsibilities

When a club re-affiliates to the BMFA each year, an affiliated Club Committee should nominate an individual (Delegate) to attend and vote at Area meetings on the club's behalf and this person should be recorded as the Delegate on the BMFA justgo members portal. However, Club representation at an Area meeting should be encouraged and made as simple as practically possible. Providing that the club Delegate is a listed recognised elected official (for example, Chairman or Secretary) then they may also represent their club as an alternate to the listed Delegate by voting on matters as they are raised. It is important to identify and test that a club representative does have the authority to vote. If a club official or delegate cannot be present, then the club secretary should notify the Area Secretary in advance that the attendee does indeed have carry the voting right of the club. Irrespective of the circumstances, a club is permitted only one vote although non-voting members may contribute to any debate or discussion. The Area Chairman may use his discretion to determine whether an unknown club Delegate should be allowed to vote.

C. Area Activities and Objectives

There are no predetermined objectives or activities for Areas as the nature of the BMFA organisation rightly gives a high degree of autonomy to each Area to deal with its local issues as it feels is best. Nonetheless the Areas Council wishes to see best practice pursued across all Areas with a sharing of ideas and feedback via the Areas Council (by email or the BMFA Areas Forum if there are no scheduled meetings imminent) of concepts and activities from which all could benefit.

The following are suggested tasks which each Area should undertake on behalf of its member clubs.

- Organise and run Area Examiner/Instructor workshops in support of the Achievement Scheme – with the aim of improving consistency – and advertise to the wider community.
- Organise local informal Area competitions, events and or training events, and advertise to the wider community, as appropriate.
- Co-operate with the Council and officers of the Society in running any national competition or event in the Area.
- Communicate Safety matters and reports
- Communicate CAA matters and reports
- Publicise and propagate the aims and achievements of the movement within the Area.
- Assist and encourage the formation of new clubs or societies in the Area
- Stimulate youth involvement/support local youth groups to encourage aeromodelling as a sport hobby.
- Seek to stimulate and improve attendance of Area clubs at Area meetings.
- Manage the activities of all Area Chief Examiners and Instructors within the Area and ensure effective review of performance for annual ratification.
- Arrange for Club examiner tests as required, in order to maintain an adequate number of Club Examiners to provide effective delivery of the Achievement Scheme in the Area.
- Assess and recommend as appropriate, any new Area Chief Examiners and Instructors, as required to maintain effective delivery of the Achievement Scheme in the Area.
- Ensure effective communication of Area activities, primarily to all Area clubs, but also to other Areas and the wider community. The use of an Area web site and possibly a Facebook page (or similar) is mandated.

- Generate BMFA News articles, as appropriate, on any of the above activities.
- Organise and run Achievement Scheme Examiner workshops – to improve consistency.
- Arrange details and dates of any open competitions or rallies proposed by the clubs in the Area.

D. Guidance on the Areas Constitution document

The purpose of this section of the document is to give guidance to all the BMFA Area Committees and their members and officers, on the clauses of the Area Constitution in such a way as to clarify the practices needed to run the Area.

It is not a replacement for that Constitution and if difficulties arise then it must be the wording of the Constitution document which forms the basis of decision.

All Areas should have copies of the Area Constitution and should note any relevant decisions arising from MC* and Areas Council meetings which have an impact on procedures and operating practise for an Area.

1. INTRODUCTION

The boundary of the Area and which clubs are assigned to an Area is determined by the MC* based upon county boundaries

Members of the Society are CLUBS, not individuals. This is carried forward from the Articles of Association of the Society and does have constitutional impact in certain circumstances.

Individuals who join the Society outside the club structure are called Country Members. They are represented at Area meetings by the Country Member Representative

2. PURPOSE

Explains in high level terms, the purpose of the Areas.

3. MEMBERSHIP

All affiliated CLUBS within an Area are automatically MEMBERS of the Area Committee.

The Area cannot remove a member club but can refer the actions of that club to BMFA MC* for action.

A Club located on a boundary between two Areas can request to be transferred to the adjacent Area. This request will be considered by both Areas affected.

Country Members are considered a club in their own right and are represented by the Country Member representative who carries one (1) vote on their behalf.

4. OPERATION

Area Management

This section is largely self-explanatory, but attention is drawn to actions required by the Constitution of certain officers and also to some implications on how the Area operates.

Most important is the fact that these Elected Officers are NOT the Area Committee; they are the Officers of the Area Committee. It should be noted that an Area MUST appoint a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Area Delegate. Failure to appoint these key roles means that an Area cannot operate effectively and this must be reported to MC* within seven days of the shortfall.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Officers of an Area have the following outline responsibilities

- Chairman whose primary responsibilities are to manage the affairs of the Area and Chair Area meetings.
- Vice Chairman who shall support the Chairman and delegate in the Chairman's absence
- The Area Secretary is required to record and maintain the Minutes of all Area meetings and deal with Area correspondence. The Area Secretary must ensure that all relevant notices of AGMs and EGMs are posted to clubs at the correct times. The Area Secretary is required to copy the Minutes of all Area meetings to the BMFA Office and the Members Director. If there are regular monthly meetings, then it is reasonable to wait for Minutes to be confirmed at the next meeting before sending them in. If Area meetings only take place three or four times per year then the provisional Minutes should be sent to the BMFA Office and Members Director for review. Area AGM or EGM Minutes should be sent to BMFA office within 28 days as provisional Minutes.

The Area Secretary must ensure that all relevant notices of AGMs and EGMs are posted to clubs at the correct times.

- The Area Treasurer is required to manage the Area Finances and send an Income and Expenditure Account and a balance sheet to all clubs in the Area and these must be sent out with the main AGM notice. The Treasurer should liaise with the Area Secretary about this and should make sure that the audited accounts are ready and with the Area Secretary at least one month before the Area AGM. This in turn means that the accounts should be with the Financial inspectors several weeks before this date. However, the financial year runs from 1st April to 31st March, and this gives four or five months in which to prepare the accounts.

The Area Treasurer is also responsible for co-ordinating the completion of the annual budget pro-forma, if this is required, and ensuring that it reaches the BMFA office at the appropriate time each year.

- Technical Councils may nominate a representative to attend Area Meetings. This representative may request manpower assistance, funding assistance or seek other assistance - for example to hold competitions within the Area. The representative will not have any voting rights unless he is also nominated as a Club Delegate.
- The Area Delegate is expected to attend the Society's Areas Council meetings and report Council business to the Area.

It is important to note that the Area Delegate is NOT mandated in either the Area Constitution or the SMAE Articles of Association to follow the Area's wishes in all matters. The most that the Delegate is required to do is to 'liaise between the Areas Council and the Area Committee' and to 'ensure that Council is kept informed' of the opinions of the Area Committee and the clubs within the Committee's jurisdiction.

In practice the Council Delegate will follow the Area's wishes whenever he can, but Areas should take note that there are occasions at Council when matters are raised from the floor and the Delegate will be asked to make decisions purely on what he hears around the table.

The Area Delegate is also a voting member of the Areas Council.

If the Council Delegate has to miss a Council meeting for any reason, then he may send a substitute. This can be very useful for an Area as it will sometimes allow other Area officers gain experience of a Council meeting that they would otherwise never have. This should not be underestimated as it can give the Area Committee an insight into the work that is required of their Delegate.

- The Achievement Scheme Co-ordinator also has duties outlined in the Constitution. Note that anyone can stand for this post; existing Chief Examiners within the Area are not barred from it. The ASC will be the Delegate to the ASRC Directorate meetings.

He will be responsible for identifying and mentoring ACEs and ACIs and recommending the correct balance of ACEs and ACIs at the AGM.

The Area Achievement Scheme Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that sufficient ACEs and ACIs exist within the Areas. The ASC can also provisionally ratify a candidate mid-term if required although this should be discussed in advance with other Area Officers. The ASC will identify the ACEs and ACIs and discuss their re-ratification with the Committee prior to the AGM. The ASC will propose that the identified candidates are ratified or re-ratified accordingly. Normally this would be by secret vote but if all meeting Delegates agree then a Block Vote may be called. It is inferred that the ASRC Directorate are responsible for identifying the requisite number of ACEs and ACIs as they are best placed to identify those with the correct skill and knowledge.

If an Area is unable to identify an ASRC Delegate (ASC) then the ASRC may appoint an individual on the Areas behalf,

- Financial Inspectors. It is acceptable for an Area to have only one independent Financial Inspector but it is safer with two. Note that they cannot hold any other elected post on the Committee.
- Temporary posts may be created at any meeting and they last until the next AGM when they can be extended on a yearly basis. Areas should make use of them when needed. They are useful for someone running a special event such as a fly-in etc. Their 'official' status makes paying expenses to them much easier. If the Area does create any such ex-officio posts, it is important to let the BMFA office know within a few days as they need to keep Area officers' records up-to-date.
- Communications Officers – (typically 2 people plus assistants as needed) who are responsible for promoting the Area news as is required using appropriate media. They are responsible for the website content, Area news, liaising with local press offices (as required) and social media presence.
- Country member representative – who is responsible for liaising with those members not affiliated to a BMFA affiliated club and will carry their vote at any formal Area meeting.
- Youth Engagement Officer – Appointed by the Area and will represent the Area on the Education subcommittee. Responsibilities include engaging with Youth Groups, Scouts, ATC divisions within the Area.
- Area Chief Examiners and Area Chief Instructors. This ties these posts into the Area system and allows the Area some control over what they do. The requirement to report to the Area at the AGM also gives the Area an overview of their activities during the year and may be of use in deciding whether or not to continue their ratification.

FORMATION OF SUB-COMMITTEES

- These enable the Area Committee to focus work into smaller groups of people. Note that such Sub-committees do not need to be made up of Area officers or even regular attendees at Area meetings. However, the precedent is that one member of a Sub-Committee must be an Area Officer. It also enables the Committee to manage its workload providing the methods used are in line with current Society practices. However, the use of sub-committees enables the Area Committee to make decisions within the Area which may materially affect the way the Area deals with all paid up BMFA members in the Area. Clearly, decisions taken under this clause must go through Areas Council and there is also a right of appeal to the MC*.

- This also allows the co-option as ex-officio of people having a wider view of the aims and interests of the Society. For instance, a teacher from a local school might be co-opted to help with the Area education programme.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Anyone who resides in the Area and has either paid fees to the Society or is a Fellow of the Society may become an Officer of the Area (he does not necessarily have to be a club member).

At each AGM, around half of the Area officers' posts come up for re-election. The officers in these posts are deemed to have retired by rotation.

At any ordinary Area meeting, vacancies for Area officers can be filled by co-option. The Area does not have to wait for the AGM or call an EGM. Such co-options only last until the next AGM when the post becomes available for election again. The two-year cycle of elections must be maintained and so, for instance, if an officer resigns within a few months of being elected, the replacement officer would be co-opted until the next AGM and at that meeting the post would be an elected one for the next single year. If an officer resigns when he is into his second year of a term, the co-opted officer will serve until the AGM and the post would then be a normal two-year term election.

In the following, the word 'must' is mandatory and means that if any of the following three things happen, the officer in question is disqualified.

- Any officer who is bankrupt or in receivership or who is in debt enough to have to make special arrangements with his creditors.
- Any officer who is committed by doctors to a relevant institution, but also anyone who 'becomes of unsound mind'. This implies a level of, eccentricity, which might fall short of being legally classed as 'lunatic'.
- Any officer who is no longer an Individual member of the Society. This is covered in the SMAE Articles which gives an individual member three months to renew before he automatically forfeits his membership. By the first Area meeting after the 1st of April each year all officers of the Committee must have current BMFA membership. This should not be confused with the insurance aspect of membership. The insurance cover becomes invalid just two weeks after 1st January each year.

If an Area Officer chooses (for any reason) to resign his post then he **MUST** put that in writing. It is not acceptable to simply choose not to attend meeting or fail to communicate with the committee of the Area. It is permitted for an Area Committee to remove an unsuitable post holder half way through his two year term by a vote at the AGM. Note that this cannot be done at any other time; for instance, an EGM cannot be called to do it. Note the wording of the two thirds majority voting requirement: it means that any abstentions at the meeting will be counted with the 'against' votes. This allows an Area to get over the situation where a person says he will do a job but is failing to do so by non-attendance at Area meetings. Just sending in an apology to the meeting you are not attending is not a 'reasonable excuse'. Being on holiday, away on business or attending a BMFA event like a Council meeting does however constitute a valid reason.

If an officer rarely appears at meetings but still does a good job for the Area then if the Area desires for him to remain an officer of the Committee, and, if he does not stand for election or fails to be re-elected, he may be co-opted back each time his term expires.

5. FINANCE

The Area is apportioned finances dependent on the ability of the Society to provide financial support and a dependency on the Area to submit a budget approximately 6 months in advance of the financial year. The budget is submitted on a standard excel spreadsheet form and broadly covers three areas:

- a. Event Support
- b. Capital purchases
- c. Area Support (meetings etc).

The Area Treasurer produces the Area Financial Summary which is subject to independent inspection and submitted for approval at the Area AGM. The start and finish of the Area financial year should be filled in and it MUST coincide with the Society's. There is no choice in this matter.

Note that if the member clubs of an Area take it upon themselves to organise and administer their own affairs at Area level then responsibility cannot be put onto MC* if things go wrong. If, however, Council passes a resolution which demands that an Area or Areas do something specific then the responsibility for such actions as are carried out does lie with Council.

6. MEETINGS

AREA MEETINGS

A meeting of the Officers of the Committee is NOT a meeting of the Area Committee and, although it can be useful in certain circumstances, it will always be an informal meeting with no powers under this Constitution even if it is quorate. Section 6.5 deals with these informal meetings.

An Area Meeting (AM) occurs when the appropriate notifications have been sent out and all members of the Committee (i.e. the Area's clubs) have an opportunity to send a Delegate.

Meetings can be held face to face at a suitable location within the Area or using electronic conferencing technology.

Member clubs can assign one representative (Delegate) to these meetings. Other club members are welcome to attend meetings, can take part in discussions and debates, but cannot vote. Secretaries and the meeting Chair need to ensure that the voting strength is established at the start of the meeting and also identify exactly who is able to vote and who is not.

Any current BMFA member may attend a meeting without a specific invitation and that includes Country Members. None of these people may vote but their input to meetings is sometimes invaluable. Normal meeting procedure is that the decision on whether they can speak at the meeting is the Chairman's but, again, many Areas have an unwritten policy that anyone present at a meeting may speak. How these things are handled is the responsibility of each Area Committee under the guidance of its Chairman.

Area Committees should meet as often as necessary to run the business of the Area, to pass on to member clubs the decisions made at MC* and Areas Council meetings and to agree on items to be passed back to the relevant Council as either proposals or points to be made in debate. This should not be interpreted as 'as often as needed to run the events calendar' or 'as few times as we can get away with'.

A resolution must be proposed and seconded before being voted on. Any amendment to the resolution must then be considered at the point. Voting follows with a vote on the Amendment(s) (in reverse order followed by voting on the (potentially) amended resolution. Only the Delegates of member clubs present at the meeting may do this. The Secretary should note proposers and seconders by club name, not by individuals' names. Area officers and club representatives, if they are not signed-in voting club

representatives, cannot propose and second resolutions or amendments but may put resolutions forward to the meeting with a request that they be proposed and seconded.

Votes shall be by show of hands of those entitled to vote. On a tied vote the Chairman has a casting vote even if not entitled to a vote in the original show of hands.

GENERAL MEETINGS (AGMs and EGMs)

Note that the Area AGM must be held to align (within 28 days) with the BMFA AGM.

These meetings can be face to face, held at a suitable location within the Area or use Electronic conferencing technology. If electronic conferencing technology is used then the system must support secret ballots.

Initial notice of the Area AGM must be given to all the Area clubs at least 28 days prior to the meeting. Note that this is a minimum time and that no maximum is stated.

Compliance with this is achieved if the date, time and venue of the forthcoming AGM is included with any Area paperwork going out to clubs during the year. The best way is to tag it on to any regularly published list of Area meetings and then no-one can complain that they don't know when and where the AGM will be held.

An AGM or EGM cannot have 'Any Other Business' on the agenda. Any proposals to be discussed at the AGM must be submitted in writing before 28 days of the AGM.

The Area Secretary has fourteen days in which to finalise and post out the final notice of the AGM, complete with the agenda. The earliest it can be done is 28 days before and the latest is 14 days before the meeting. This posting is also the one in which the Area accounts must be sent out.

An EGM can only be called in one of three ways:

1. On written demand of five member clubs. This does not mean that five club representatives can call an EGM. Such a demand must be produced in writing on the relevant Clubs' headed notepaper and signed by the Club Chair. Company law insists that calls for an EGM also state the reason why and although the law doesn't apply to Areas in this sense, a precedent is there which should be followed.
2. On an instruction by BMFA MC* after a resolution has been passed by Council making this necessary.
3. If the Area Committee wants to do so, for a specific reason and after a resolution to hold one has been passed by the Area Committee at ANY Area meeting (Ordinary or General). Note that this is not the same as the Area officers wanting to hold an EGM.

All AGM and EGM business is 'special' to that meeting and can only be items that are published on the agenda of the meeting. There can be no AOB, and the items discussed do not come up as 'matters arising' or 'Minutes' at ordinary meetings.

Note that if there may be general items to discuss or it is known that something is coming up around AGM time, an ordinary Area meeting may be called to follow immediately after the AGM closes. Such a meeting is constitutional as long as the appropriate notice has been given and it can have AOB items. However, this cannot be done on the spur of the moment. For instance, if something comes up in officers' reports that has implications that need to be discussed then it can only be placed on the agenda for the next ordinary Area meeting. This is a good reason for automatically calling an Area meeting after the AGM with the single agenda item of AOB. The time limits for calling a meeting remain valid (i.e., it cannot be called at the AGM) therefore it is recommended that the notice calling for the AM it is sent out with the AGM agenda and accounts.

The quorum for a full (not Sub) Area meeting is six (6) signed-in voting club representatives. This is not necessarily the same as six Area officers.

The 7 days' notice to inform the Society after two failed consecutive (non-quate) AGM or EGM means that the Society will be made aware of a problem within an Area quite quickly and it gives a structure by which Area meetings can be re-started. This does not mean that the Area Committee has ceased to exist; after all, it is made up of all the clubs in the Area. However, the Area Committee may not have its full complement of officers, and this is the reason for the automatic EGM.

Each club is allowed one voting representative (Delegate) at the meeting although other observers from the club are allowed. The Delegate or representative for a club must be present at the meeting, he must be a member of the club he is representing, and he must sign the voting register as such. If the meeting is held by electronic conferencing, then the Secretary will maintain the voting register.

Hand voting is on a straight majority; one club, one vote. No proxies are allowed.

Officers of the Committee do not have a vote as a right. They may only vote if they are signed-in as the voting representative of an Area club.

If the vote is tied, the Chairman has a casting vote, whether he is a signed-in club Delegate or not. This can lead to a situation where the Chairman of the meeting has had no vote in the initial hand vote but he is entitled to an eventual casting vote simply on the fact of his being the meeting Chairman. The voting procedure has to stop somewhere.

The Area Secretary must make sure that he has received a copy of the latest club list from the BMFA office or from the justgo portal before any General meeting. A list is normally posted out to all Areas at the end of October and this should be in time for Area AGMs but if an EGM is called, special arrangements may require to be made with the BMFA office.

Vice Presidents, Fellows and Elected Officers of the BMFA living within the Area can go to Area AGMs and EGMs but do not have a right to vote simply because of their position. They can only vote if they are present as the signed-in voting Delegate of an Area club, of which they must be a member. Even with no voting rights the fact that they are on the official 'invitation list' will grant them the right to speak at the meeting.

Most Areas welcome Country Members to their meetings and Area Officers can be elected from these persons if they volunteer to work for the Area.

This allows the Society to update Area officer files and to monitor the Area's accounts and general business.

7. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

It is recognised that a standard Constitution may not suit all Areas as an Area has a certain amount of Freedom to Operate in Any way that it seems fit. Therefore, this Constitution allows an Area to add (subject to the ratification clause), additional clauses and paragraphs that may take precedence over the standard constitution described in Sections 1 to 7. These additional paragraphs and clauses should be listed in Section 8 below and if applicable state which clauses are superseded. Changes to the Constitution may only be made at the AGM and MUST be ratified by Areas Council at the following Areas Council meeting. This is to ensure that a proposed Constitutional change does not 'break' the operation of the BMFA, is reasonable and is lawful. It should be noted that if this Constitution changes in the future, then any Area changes will have to be re-ratified accordingly.

E. GENERAL

Individuals and/or member clubs cannot use the name of the Area Committee to promote activities or fund raising without the permission of the Area Committee. In practice Area Committees would be most unlikely to object to a club advertising an event but would not be so happy with business use of the Area name or logo.

No individual can use the name of the Area Committee for his identification in legal proceedings. In other words, they must use their own name and address in dealing with proceedings even if the proceedings involve the Area.

Changes involving amendment to the Constitution may only be passed by Areas Council usually at the October Council meeting. This will enable all Areas to ratify them at the Area AGM. Most of the changes will have been recommended by Areas Council. Any changes ratified by Areas Council are binding on ALL Area Committees. However, an Area may make subsequent changes as described above.

F. DISSOLUTION

The only way that an Area may be dissolved is at the discretion of the MC* of the BMFA and that is subject to approval at the Annual General Meeting of the BMFA. Any funds held by the Area at this time shall be returned to the BMFA and will eventually be allocated for Affiliated Club support. This enables a defunct Area to remain on the books for five years in the hope that it can be reformed and become active again.

The Area may be merged with other Areas within the BMFA at the discretion of the MC* of the BMFA and subject to approval at the Annual General Meeting of the BMFA. Any funds held by the Area at this time shall be transferred to the new combined Area.

G. WORKING WITH CLUBS

An essential role of the Officers of the Area is to build a solid, professional but friendly relationship with affiliated clubs and their members. It is essential that the Area is seen as approachable and a source of resources and that its role is not to 'police' club activities in any form.

To this end, reliable and, where possible, personal communications with Affiliated Clubs, their members and Country members are essential. The BMFA now provides a mass e-mail communication system that can target all registered members within the Area, but this is a very impersonal method of communication. Targeting the committee of clubs via e-mail lists available from the justgo portal is a useful means of advising Club officials and issuing invitations to attend Area meetings and so forth. Historically though, there is little evidence to suggest that this is enough to engage with the club and encourage them to attend and support the Area.

Ideally, the best way of building relationships is to engage with the clubs on their "home turf" and meet the club officials and members in their local environment. Care must be taken to ensure that the BMFA representatives are simply there to introduce themselves, explain their role and the purpose of the Area and initiate a dialogue. The real objective is to meet the club officers and engage them with BMFA and Area initiatives. It should be recognised that successful clubs evolve and learn to operate within the environment that they can acquire. It is rarely textbook perfect, and it is not the role of the Area to judge or officiate while on a club site. The Area is certainly not there to lay down the law. However, there may be practices observed that could cause concern. The only acceptable way to deal with any issues or concerns is a quiet word with the club Chairman.

For an Area to be relevant to the members, it has to offer more than be a focal point for BMFA business, it needs to provide or sponsor events that are relevant to the majority of their members. Typically, this would be fly-ins and similar events, perhaps interclub events and of course, Achievement Scheme Workshops and Roadshows. In all cases, this means that clubs will be required to host these events and building relationships to facilitate this is essential.

BRITISH MODEL FLYING ASSOCIATION

SMAE Ltd

Chacksfield House, 31 St Andrews Road, Leicester, LE2 8RE
Telephone - 0116 2440028 Fax - 0116 2440645

Amendment History

- Issue 1** 3rd June, 1995
Dave Kerswell, BMFA Northern Area Chairman.
Chris Bromley FSMAE, BMFA North West Area Chairman.
- Issue 2** December 2002
- Issue 3** December 2003
Chris Bromley FSMAE, BMFA Technical Secretary
- Issue 4** February 2015
Robin Sleight MBE, BMFA Honorary Secretary

Issue 5Draft26 – February 2022