

DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

Introduction

Communication is essential to the effectiveness of any team. Clear lines of communication are especially relevant as increasing use is made of electronic communication channels (the Internet and email). To achieve success, it is important for district leaders and Clubs to understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to communicating with other district leaders and with clubs.

The District Communication Protocol has been developed to assist district leaders and Clubs manage the flow of information in accordance with The Manual of Procedure (MOP) and Code of Policies.

District Communications and Technology Committee

The Communications and Technology Committee has been established to:

- Provide information and services to district leaders, Clubs, Rotarians and the public through the Internet and associated channels of communication;
- Oversee the development of electronic information services to enhance and support district administration and services offered to Clubs; and
- Support district programs and Clubs to adopt and use information communications technologies for administration and communication purposes.

These aims will be met by:

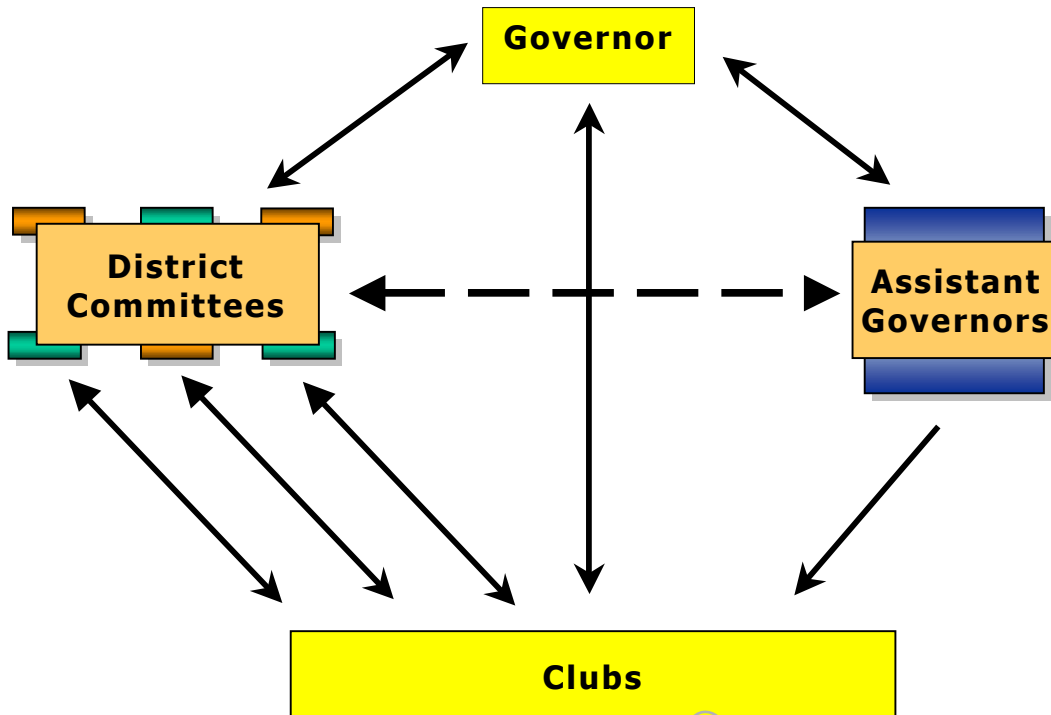
- Maintaining the district web site (www.d9710.rotary.org.au);
- Providing web services so that Clubs and district programs may have their own Internet presence;
- Providing an email service for district leaders, programs and Clubs;
- Encouraging and supporting the use of RI-CAS (Club Administration System);
- Providing advice on the use of information communications technologies; and
- Maintaining the district's computer and digital projection inventory.

Channels of Communication

Electronic communication (via email and the Internet) is the preferred method of communication in our Rotary world. This also includes information dissemination, advertising of programs, and conducting business with district, RI and TRF.

The primary channel of communication between district leaders, district coordinators, program chairs and Clubs will be by email direct to the Clubs (President and Secretary). These communications should be copied the Assistant Governors for information.

This flow of information within the district, between Clubs and district leaders and programs, will look like:



District committees and Assistant Governors are able to communicate directly with Clubs on their area of responsibility. The endorsement of the District Governor should be sought for communications outside of a specific area of responsibility. Broadcast email messages are discouraged. Senders should seek alternative means of communication. The District web manager will manage messages to all Clubs.

Important information, events or returns will also be communicated to Clubs via letter from the District Governor to the Club President.

All communications should be acknowledged. All emails from the District Governor will require an email of acknowledgement.

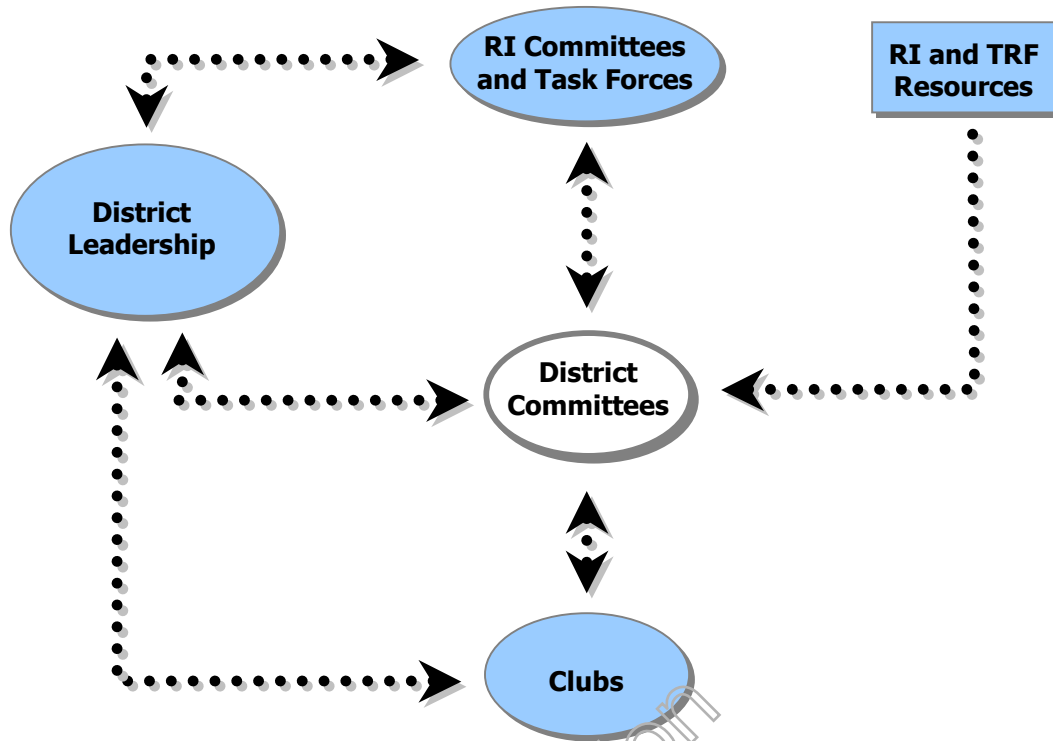
Information of District and Club activities will be published regularly on the District web site. This covers information of interest to the public, advertising of district and club events for Rotarians, and calling for nominations and participants in Rotary programs.

The District Governor will publish a monthly newsletter. This will be available electronically on the District web site with a limited number of papers copies distributed to Clubs and other parties.

A weekly news bulletin will be distributed electronically to Clubs. A weekly public relations bulletin will be distributed to Clubs.

The District Planning Calendar will be maintained, showing District events, along with the closing dates for RI, District and program returns or nominations.

Rotary International and its committees or taskforces may communicate with district leaders and Clubs. The established protocol for this type of communication is shown here:



Information received from RI, TRF or an RI committee or taskforce should be communicated to Clubs as soon as possible after receipt. This information should also be made available on the District web site.

District web site

The primary purpose of any Rotary publication, whether it be a printed piece, such as a club or district bulletin or newsletter, a sound recording, or be published electronically such as the content of Web site or electronic mailing list, is to advance the Object of Rotary.

The District maintains a presence on the Internet (www.d9710.rotary.org.au) to provide timely and accurate information to Clubs, Rotarians, and the public about the activities of Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation. Information accessible includes:

- District and RI news;
- Membership information;
- District calendar;
- Program information;
- Nomination forms; and
- Returns

Space on the District web site will be made available for Clubs to create and maintain its own web site should it so desire. Conditions of use are available for the District web manager.

Publishing information on the District web site and letting Clubs know the location of the material will be the alternative to sending large volumes of data to Clubs. Similarly, the web site will be the alternative communication channel for any program or committee seeking information from Rotarians and persons wishing to participate in advertised Rotary programs.

Email system

A generic email address for each nominated District position and club has been created. This means the email address is assigned to a particular individual person although the sender does not need to know the address of the receiver. So, each email address remains constant for a nominated position or club. It can be assigned to a different person at any time, such as at the annual changeover of office bearers, or when a vacant position is filled or if the assigned individual is absent.

To use our email forwarding system, please follow the following formats:

Club address clubname@d9710.rotary.org.au

To find the specific wording for any club, please check the website listing for that club

District position,
program or function position@d9710.rotary.org.au

eg District Community Service coordination would be
community@d9710.rotary.org.au
RYPEN would be rypen@d9710.rotary.org.au

All major position email addresses can be accessed via the individual committee pages on the District website.

Guidelines on the use of email

The generic email addresses are for Rotary business only

The system is not for non-Rotary business. The system is not for sending jokes, cartoons, chain letters or hoax "Virus Warnings" even if they have originated from another Rotarian. Use an individual email address if you wish to send him or her non-Rotary information.

Do not discuss confidential information on email

Sending an email is like sending a postcard. If you do not want your email to be displayed on a public bulletin board, do not send it. Once an email is sent it can be forwarded, wrongly delivered, backed up, intercepted and copied.

Subject Line

Use the word ROTARY in your subject line, as it is a Rotary International protocol. All messages should have a meaningful title in the Subject Line.

Your Identification – Signature Block

All Rotary email should contain a signature block that includes the name of the sender and the sender's Rotary position and/or club, as appropriate, at the end of the message. A contact telephone number may also be included.

Use concise, structured text in lower case

Do not make an email message longer than it needs to be. Try to keep sentences to a maximum of 15-20 words. Using dot points and numbered paragraphs can assist with the information. Do not "SHOUT" by WRITING YOUR ENTIRE MESSAGE IN CAPITALS.

Use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation

For accuracy please. Emails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can change the meaning of the text. And do watch your spelling.

Be sparing with attached files

Avoid large attached files, including graphics, especially where the message is being sent to a number of recipients. It is preferred the information is incorporated into the body of the email message. If an attachment is necessary it should be in a widely accepted format such as Adobe™ Portable Data Format (PDF) or Rich Text Format (RTF). As a general rule, a 100 KB file should be the maximum size used for a Rotary attachment. If a large amount of data has to be made available, discuss the matter with the web manager for alternatives.

Use an up to date virus protection system

Computer viruses are a real hazard of the Internet system. Many viruses are transmitted via email. You must have an effective virus protection system and update it frequently.

Do not overuse the high priority option

It is rarely necessary to use the high priority option. If it is overused, it will lose its function when you really need it ("crying wolf"). Moreover, even if a particular message does have high priority, it can come across as aggressive if you flag it as 'high priority'.

Read your message before you send it

Obviously, read all your messages through carefully before they are sent. If the "send" button is pressed accidentally before you are ready to send or an error is found after the email has been sent; immediately send an amended message.

Take care if you use "Reply to All"

Only use Reply to All if your reply message is to be seen by each person who received the original message.

Take care with abbreviations and emoticons

Do not use email jargon or emoticons for your Rotary emails. Some recipients are not aware of their meanings. That can confuse or even offend.

Be careful with formatting, colours, rich text and HTML messages

Remember, all email programs do not allow viewing of complex formatting. Do not use complex formatting for Rotary emails. You can slow down the receipt of the message or change the received message. Keep Rotary mail business-like.

Do not request delivery and read receipts unnecessarily

Requesting a delivery or read receipt shows before recipients see your message. If used for group messages they can overload the system. Many recipients will over-ride the receipt anyway. So, if there is a delay in an expected reply, it is better to re-send the original message or follow up by telephone or fax.

All emails from the District Governor are to be acknowledged by return email.

Try to keep language gender neutral

In line with the Rotary policy on language use in other forms of communication, please avoid using sexist language.

Don't reply to "spam" – and don't send it!

Replying to "spam" (*Spam is junk email*) even by unsubscribing, you are confirming that your email address is 'live'. Confirming this will generate even more spam. So, delete the message or use software that removes spam automatically. Contact your Internet Service provider for assistance if you receive spam regularly. If the problem persists and the source appears to be a Rotary user, please notify the web manager.

System Management

The District web manager is responsible for the daily operation of the District web site and the email system. The Chair of the Communications and Technology Committee has overall responsibility for the management of the system.