

BECTU RULES REVISION AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2008

**Britannia Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool
9 and 10 May 2008**

President: Tony Lennon
General Secretary: Gerry Morrissey
Chair of Standing Orders Committee: Lorraine Dance

SUMMARY AGENDA

- 1 Opening of conference by the President
- 2 Announcement by the SOC of the names of tellers
- 3 Report of the SOC
- 4 Statement by the General Secretary
- 5 Rules revision conference
- 6 Annual conference
 - Financial report and statements
 - NEC's report to conference
 - Debate on specified paragraphs
 - Propositions
 - Election of incoming Trustees, Appeals Committee and SOC
- 7 Declaration of NEC ballot results
- 8 Close of conference

The Standing Orders Committee (SOC) for the 2008 conference comprises Lorraine Dance, Albey George, Andy Love, and Turlough MacDaid. Following the resignation in January 2008 of Mike Wilson, there is one vacancy to be filled.

If you have received more than one copy of this agenda, the others are for circulation within your branch.
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STANDING ORDERS – AN INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This introduction does not form part of the standing orders themselves, but is intended to help, especially, new delegates by setting them in context.

Who are the SOC?

The Standing Orders Committee (or SOC) is called this because they draw up the 'standing orders' (or procedural rules) for each conference. They also aim, with the agreement of conference, to make sure the standing orders are followed so that conference business proceeds in an orderly way and on time. The SOC will make a report at the beginning of the conference on how they think the conference's business should be handled. This will also point out any errors in the agenda, or difficulties that may possibly arise.

The five members of the SOC for this year's conference were elected at last year's conference. One has since resigned from the committee for personal reasons, and branches have been invited to nominate a replacement to officiate at conference. The SOC have elected a chair from among their number, Lorraine Dance, who will make most of their announcements. The SOC are responsible only to conference.

What does the SOC do?

The SOC have responsibility for preparing the agenda for the conference (see standing order 5). Last September they set the deadlines for branches to submit rule changes, propositions (or motions) and amendments, and later decided whether or not they should be included in the agenda. Rule changes and propositions had to be received by 31 January 2008, and amendments to them by 20 March. They published to branches their reasons for rejecting any rule changes, propositions or amendments, and for your information these are also reprinted in this agenda booklet.

Similar rule changes, propositions or amendments can be 'composited' (combined) by the SOC, and the SOC can invite a branch to withdraw its rule change, proposition or amendment in favour of another one or a composited one.

Last September the SOC also invited branches to submit nominations for the incoming SOC, the Appeals Committee and the Trustees of the union. Where a ballot is required they will be elected by the delegates at this conference in a ballot run by the current SOC (see standing order 15).

The SOC informed branches that it was willing to advise in advance on the drafting of rule changes or propositions if branches so wished. During conference delegates may approach the SOC table for guidance on procedure at any time.

The standing orders for the 2008 rules revision and annual conferences now follow.

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE BECTU RULES REVISION
AND ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2008

1 Constitution of the Standing Orders Committee

- (a) The Standing Orders Committee (the SOC) for the 2008 rules revision and annual conferences shall comprise those members elected at the 2007 annual conference in accordance with rule 42(a). The SOC shall elect from among its own members a chair of SOC.
- (b) The members of the SOC shall hold office until the conclusion of the rules revision and annual conferences.
- (c) The SOC shall be responsible only to the rules revision and annual conferences (hereafter 'conference').

2 Functions of the SOC

- (a) The SOC shall be responsible for the preparation and submission to the conference of the agenda for the meeting and these standing orders for the regulation of the proceedings.
- (b) The SOC may combine proposed alterations to rules, policy propositions or amendments which are of similar intention, and invite those submitting them to withdraw them in favour of a composite proposed rule alteration, proposition or amendment.
- (c) The SOC shall be responsible for inviting nominations and for the election of the Standing Orders Committee, Appeals Committee and Trustees to take office after the conclusion of the conference in accordance with rules 42(a), 26(a) and 3(a) respectively.

3 Tellers

The SOC shall appoint tellers subject to the approval of conference.

4 Doorkeepers and/or stewards

The SOC shall appoint doorkeepers and/or stewards to examine the credentials of all delegates and authorised visitors to conference. Delegates must have been appointed or elected by a branch meeting convened under rule 28(a)(v) or, if a quorum has not been obtained at a branch meeting, by the branch committee under rule 29(a).

5 Agenda

Preparation of the agenda for conference shall be by the SOC, and that agenda shall be adhered to unless for a good and sufficient reason the SOC recommends otherwise during the course of conference.

6 Timetable

The sessions of conference shall be as follows:

Friday 9 May 2008

08.30-14.00 registration of delegates

14.00-17.00 rules revision conference

Saturday 10 May 2008

09.00-13.00 annual conference (including workshops)

14.00-16.00 annual conference

7 Order of business

Unless SOC recommend otherwise, the business of conference shall be dealt with as nearly as may be in the following order:

- (a) opening address by the President
- (b) announcement of the names of tellers
- (c) presentation of the SOC's report
- (d) statement by the General Secretary
- (e) rules revision
- (f) presentation of the National Executive Committee's financial report and audited financial statements
- (g) presentation of the National Executive Committee's annual report, with themed workshops
- (h) propositions and debate on specified matters in the NEC's report
- (i) election of the incoming SOC, Appeals Committee and Trustees
- (j) declaration of the result of NEC elections
- (k) conclusion of conference

8 Chair

In accordance with rule 35(c) the President of the union shall take the chair at conference and shall have a casting vote as provided by rule 40(a)(i). In his/her absence the chair shall be taken by the Vice President.

9 General Secretary, Assistant General Secretaries and NEC members

In accordance with rule 40(a)(ii) the General Secretary, Assistant General Secretaries and members of the National Executive Committee (NEC) shall be entitled to speak but not to vote at conference.

10 Paid officials

In accordance with rule 40(a)(iv) paid officials shall only be entitled to speak at conference at the discretion of the chair and shall not be entitled to vote.

11 Order of debate

- (a) Speakers must address the chair.
- (b) The **mover** of a motion (including a motion to alter the rules), unless otherwise recommended by the SOC, shall be allowed not more than three minutes.
- (c) The **second** of a motion shall be allowed not more than two minutes.
- (d) **Subsequent speakers**, including movers and seconders of amendments, shall be allowed not more than two minutes.
- (e) The seconder of a motion or amendment must be a delegate from a different branch to the mover.
- (f) No speaker shall speak more than once (other than a mover exercising the right of reply) on any one motion or amendment, except on a **point of order** or correction.
- (g) The mover of the original motion, but not the mover of an amendment, shall have the **right of reply**, and shall be allowed not more than two minutes to do so, introducing no fresh matter.
- (h) Amendments shall be moved, seconded and discussed in turn during the course of the general debate. After the debate, each amendment shall be put to the vote in turn, each, if carried, creating the **substantive motion**.
- (i) Except where disability may require alternative means, members shall stand when speaking, and other than on questions, points of procedure, and formal moving and seconding (that is, without a speech) shall come to the speaker's rostrum to speak.
- (j) **Closure** or 'that the **question be put**' may be moved and seconded only by delegates who have not spoken previously in that particular debate, and shall be put to the vote immediately and without discussion. If the closure motion is carried the mover of the original motion shall have the right of reply before it is put to the meeting. Should the chair consider that there is no practical difference of opinion among the delegates, he/she shall have the power to stop discussion and put the motion to the vote.
- (k) Any delegate who has not spoken on the question before conference may move '**next business**', on the seconding of which the chair may, without discussion, put that motion to the vote. In the event of its being carried, conference shall at once proceed to consideration of the next item of business on the agenda.
- (l) Should the chair stand during a debate, the member speaking shall **give way** and neither he/she nor any other member shall speak until the chair gives leave.
- (m) No member shall interrupt a speaker except on a **point of order**, which must deal only with procedure.
- (n) On the motion of a delegate or made on behalf of the NEC being seconded and carried, that on a specific item of business conference 'go into **committee**', standing order 11(e) shall be suspended and speakers may, at the discretion of the chair, speak more than once and without time limit, provided that all discussion is confined to the specific item concerned.
- (o) On the motion of a delegate being seconded and carried, that on a specific item of business conference 'go into **closed session**', the chair shall order that all persons other than delegates, members of the NEC, officials of the union, and staff of the union required for the continuation of proceedings, shall leave the conference room for the duration of that session.
- (p) The chair may declare, or a delegate may move, that a session in committee or a closed session shall end forthwith.
- (q) The **chair's decision** on any point whatsoever is final.
- (r) The chair may be removed only if a vote of **no confidence in the chair** is moved, seconded and carried by a majority of the delegates present and voting.

12 Emergency propositions and references back

- (a) The SOC may, at its discretion, admit to the agenda at any time **emergency propositions**, the matter of which arises in circumstances that could not be foreseen at the final date for receipt of propositions.
- (b) Should conference **refer back** the report, or part of the report, of the NEC to annual conference, it shall be held to justify the inclusion by the SOC at its discretion of an emergency proposition on the same subject.
- (c) In accordance with rule 45(e) no emergency proposition for rule alteration shall be made at any conference.

13 Quorum

In accordance with rule 39(g) the quorum for all meetings of conference shall be a majority of the total of delegates registered for attendance, or the presence of delegates entitled to attend representing three-fifths of the membership of the union, whichever is the less.

14 Voting

Voting at meetings of conference shall be by poll of delegates, normally by **show of hands**. Any proposal made to alter the rules under rule 9(e) or rule 45 shall be decided by a **two-thirds majority vote** of the delegates present and voting, but all other questions before conference shall be decided by a **simple majority vote** of the delegates present and voting. However, at the request of at least ten delegates rising in their places immediately following the chair's announcement of the result of such a poll, a **card vote** shall be taken. In a card vote each branch represented at conference shall be entitled to register votes equal to the number of paid-up members of the branch as at 31 December immediately preceding the conference, such membership to be certified by the General Secretary. The result of a card vote (a simple majority or two-thirds majority as the case may be) shall determine the question.

15 Ballots

The SOC shall be responsible for ensuring that the nominations for elections to be conducted at annual conference (that is, for the incoming SOC, Appeals Committee and Trustees) accord with the rules. The chair of SOC shall act as returning officer in all ballots conducted at conference. Where National Executive Committee election results are declared at conference under rule 40(d) they shall be declared by the General Secretary.

16 Documentation

No documentation shall be circulated or displayed within the conference hall that has not previously been approved by the SOC as germane to conference proceedings. Further, no documentation shall be circulated or displayed within the conference venue without the permission of the SOC.

17 Disorder

Should any person persistently cause a disturbance and refuse to obey when called to order, he/she shall be named from the chair. If he/she persists in creating disorder he/she shall be expelled from the conference.

18 Mobile phones and pagers

Mobile phones, pagers and other communications devices must be switched off in the conference hall during conference sessions, unless specifically authorised by the SOC.

19 Recording of the proceedings

No unauthorised recording, mechanical or electronic, may be made of the proceedings of conference without the express permission of the SOC.

20 Suspension of standing orders

The chair may at his/her discretion accept a motion, which must be properly seconded and put to the vote, to suspend any one or more of these standing orders, with the exception of standing orders 12 and 14 and this standing order, provided such a motion is not at variance with the rules of BECTU, names the order or orders to be suspended, and gives a specific reason and where appropriate a specific period (not exceeding thirty minutes) for their suspension.

SPEAKERS

If you wish to speak on an item please come to the front in good time. There are chairs reserved for delegates waiting to speak. If you have a disability which means you would have difficulty in doing this, let the SOC know in advance and a radio microphone can be brought to you. Begin by announcing your name and branch.

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

See especially standing orders 11(j), (k), (m), (n) and (o). Delegates should ensure that they are fully aware of the effect of a procedural motion before moving it.