

An everyday Guide for the Lodge Director of Ceremonies

The Day of the Meeting

On the day of the meeting I would suggest that you make yourself a check list, here are some suggestions on how DC's list should look, I am sure that you will have ideas.

Firstly, get to the meeting place early, if you appear to be in control, the Brethren will feel more relaxed:

- Check the lodge Room
- Talk to the WM – a chat to him and see if there is anything that is worrying him, run through any procedure/ changes etc. and try and relax him. If you have created a crib sheet give him a copy.
- Speak to the Wardens, maybe check they are happy with everything maybe a reminded of something.
- Talk to the Deacons are they ok with they have to do?
- Talk to the IPM
- Talk to the Tyler
- Remind the Stewards they are collecting Alms – WM first.
- Talk to the Secretary are there any changes/ amendments/ additions.
- Are the Aprons available for the Candidates and Master Elect

This is all important, not only to relax brethren and maybe remind them, but to maybe prepare yourself for the Un-prepared, that Sixth Sense which all DC's should try to develop.

I would also create a separate check list for the Festive Board but that is a subject for another separate paper. But I will mention that anything over 30 minutes between the meeting and the festive board is probably too long – the old adage of leaving them wanting more, is better than having Brethren wishing ‘ I wish they would get on with it’.

Some things to think about as the meeting starts:

- i) Start time – are the candles alight
- ii) Announce Mobile phones off
- iii) Announce Fire exists
- iv) Is your incoming procession in order
- v) Are all the officers in position and brethren seated, is the organist ready.

Brethren, you can see, there is a lot for you to do. Lists, I believe are invaluable, they enable you to **Prepare for the un-prepared**

Preparation of the Lodge

This is obviously the responsibility of the Tyler to set up the lodge, but you as DC are finally responsible because if something is missing during the meeting, it is to you that everyone will turn to resolve the problem. A separate download is available called: Lodge Preparation Notes

The Installation Meeting

A highlight each year, the celebration of a new WM.

It is the time when the lodge will receive the PGM, a Chain or the Representative of the RWPGM. As the DC you have a lot of preparation and will be very involved on the day. Ensure that you work closely with the Provincial DC or his Deputy who will give you a lot of help where needed.

Remember: The Gavel is not offered to the Representative of the RWPGM. The Representative does not have a Deputation to meet him. And on the outgoing procession from the lodge the announcement is: The WM, attended by his Wardens 'Accompanying' the PGM, Dep PGM, APM's, or the Representative of the RWPGM - is the correct announcement.

Particularly at the Festive Board, all but a few lodges allow the Provincial DC or Deputy to look after the Festive Board. As you all know, it is the Provincial Grand Masters request that the Provincial DC or Deputy runs the Festive Board. This is for a number of reasons: A) The Provincial DC or Deputy escorts the PGM, Chain or Representative to the meeting and it is his duty to ensure they are looked after at the festive board. B) The Provincial DC or Deputy will have presided over each year, a minimum of 13-14 Festive Boards over a 6 year period – needless to say the Provincial team have a lot of experience. C) The Provincial DC's or Deputy will always try to meet the traditions of the lodge. And finally, D) this is a special meeting, something out of the ordinary than the usual business of the lodge and for this reason having someone else run the Festive Board continues that feeling and allows the lodge DC chance to relax after a busy in day.

The catch word to a successful Director of Ceremonies is PREPARATION.