

IRISH SOCCER REFEREES SOCIETY CONSTITUTION



Effective from 20th October 2018

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1. NAME:

The name of the Society is: IRISH SOCCER REFEREES SOCIETY hereinafter 'the Society'. OBJECTS AND FUNCTIONS

- a) To watch over and promote the interests of referees in general.
- b) To improve the status of referees.
- c) To improve the standard of refereeing.
- d) To promote closer relationships between referees and football associations and bodies similar to the Society. To assist all such associations and bodies in promoting the best interests of association football at all levels.
- e) To assist other representative bodies of referees in their education and general work.
- f) To assist in maintaining a regular supply of referees.
- g) To establish new branches of the Society where none exist.
- h) To make such representations to any governing bodies as may be thought necessary for the good of the game and the benefit of referees and refereeing.
- i) To do such things as are conducive to the attainment of the objects herein before mentioned. It is hereby expressly declared that each sub-clause of this clause shall be construed independently of the other sub-clauses hereof and that none of the objects mentioned in any sub-clause shall be deemed to be merely subsidiary to the objects mentioned in any other subclause.

2. BRANCHES:

- a) The Society shall consist of existing branches and any new branches that may be established in accordance with the objects of the Society. A new branch or branches may be established provided that such new branch or branches shall not be overly proximate, in the opinion of the Council, to the location of any branch or branches existing at the time and the establishment of any such new branch or branches shall be subject to the prior approval of the Council.
- b) Each branch shall consist of branch members who are, at the time, members of the Society and no person shall be entitled to be a branch member of more than one branch at any time. This clause is not to be construed as preventing the election of any Honorary Branch Member, hereafter referred to as life (non-active) provided that such honorary branch member shall have paid on his behalf the affiliation fee by the Branch of which he is a member.
- c) In the event of a referee wishing to join a branch and has previously been a member of another branch he/she must have clearance in writing from both branches and be ratified by the national officer board. Subject to fulfilling ALL the criteria applicable to the branch he/she is transferring into. If in the event of an objection being made, the transfer must then be approved by council.

- d) Each branch shall be responsible for collecting from members, no later than (determined by branch) of each year the Affiliation Fee, which fee shall be prescribed from time to time by the Council, for Membership of the Society and such fees as are collected, together with a list of members who have paid or on whose behalf a fee is paid, shall be paid to the Treasurer of the Society no later than the 31st of January of each year.

In relation to life (non-active) members a once-of fee, the amount of which shall be agreed from time to time by council, will be paid in the year that they become non-active. Existing life members are considered to have paid this fee.

Non-payment shall render the member liable to be removed from the society Roll of Membership and the Branch liable to a fine and or suspension. Payment of the prescribed Affiliation Fee shall confirm that the member accepts and agrees to be bound by the rules of the Society. The fees collected shall remain throughout the property of the Society.

Any Branch that has not submitted its members Affiliation Fees by the 31st of January of each year to the Treasurer shall be fined by Council if no adequate reason is provided.

- e) Nothing in sub-clause d) of this clause should be read so as to prevent each Branch from charging a Branch Membership Fee.
- f) It shall be necessary, in order to remain a branch of the Society, for each branch to elect by secret ballot at an Annual General Meeting, to be held not later than the 30th of June of each year, a Chairman, an Honorary Secretary, a Treasurer and a Branch Committee and to inform in writing, within fourteen days of said Annual General Meeting, the General Secretary of the Society of the names and addresses of the individuals thereby elected and all notices must be sent to said addresses in order that they be deemed valid. In the event of the change of address of any branch officer the Branch shall inform the General Secretary of any such change and henceforth all notices shall be sent to such new address as are required by this constitution.
- g) Each branch shall, every three years or such other period of time as the Council may decide from time to time or upon the establishment of a new Branch, be entitled to elect one Delegate, from its branch members for every 30 branch members, or part thereof, excluding life (non-active) members who are, at the time of the election of the delegate, branch members of the branch that elects the Delegate. And the elected Delegate shall hold office for three years or until he dies, resigns or is removed, by the Branch, from office at which stage the branch shall be entitled to elect a new Delegate.
- h) Each Branch shall elect its Quota of Delegate(s) by simple majority at the branches Annual General Meeting and shall inform in writing, within fourteen days of said Annual General Meeting, the General Secretary of the Society of the names of the individual(s) thereby elected. Unless a branch has been formed in the intervening period, then a branch may nominate an interim delegate until such a point as they can vote on a delegate at their upcoming AGM.

- i) In the event of a Branch delegate being elected as an officer of Council, the Branch may nominate a substitute delegate to represent the Branch. In the event of the substitute delegate attending Council meetings such substitute shall have a vote.
- j) Each Branch may adopt its own rules and regulations, but these shall not be at variance with the Society's Constitution which takes precedence on all such issues.
- k) The Elite Panel shall elect two delegates to represent the panel at council.
- l) If the membership of a branch drops below ten this shall automatically trigger a review, this shall consist of the national officer board and the branch committee. The review will concentrate on how best the council can support the branch. After six months, another review must be carried out in order to agree the best pathway forward for the branch in question.

3. Membership:

- (a) A member is an individual who has had an affiliation fee paid on his/her behalf by his branch. Upon receipt of his/her affiliation/membership fee from his/her branch has had his/her name entered on the society roll book of members for the applicable year
- (b) The council shall have the authority to remove from the roll book of membership any member it considers having brought the Society into disrepute, subject to the right to appeal in accordance with the rules of the society and the F.A.I
- (c) Membership is open to all referees on the FAI register of referees.
- (d) A member can act for or represent Society on a committee of an affiliated body of the Football Association of Ireland, ONLY when such permission or authority has been granted or sanctioned by the National Council.

4.1 Level of membership:

(a) Full Membership

Full membership is open to registered referee's, of all Grades, who have been awarded a license to referee by the Football Association of Ireland, with the exception of Associate referee's, and who are listed on the FAI register of referees, for the current year, and who can produce their license on application for membership to the ISRS.

(b) Honorary Life Membership.

Honorary Life Membership can be awarded to a member or former member as outlined in 4.4

(c) Associate Membership

Associate membership is open for all FAI registered referees as outlined in 4.5

(d) Non-Active Membership.

As outlined in 4.6

4.2 Applications:

- (a) Each applicant must be of sound mind and of good character, and that the applicant can demonstrate that they possess the qualities to ensure they can carry out their refereeing duties, and that those duties will be discharged in a professional manner.
- (b) An application to join the ISRS must, in the first instance, be made to the branch secretary of the branch closest to where the applicant resides or to the branch closest to where the applicant has opted to officiate. The application must be ordinarily dealt with at the next available meeting following receipt of the application by the branch secretary.
- (d) Every applicant must have a proposer and a seconder **who both must** be of good standing with the branch. Such proposer and seconder must be present at a branch/committee meeting at which the application is being considered and they must be branch members. They must sign the application form before it is submitted to the branch committee. Failure to do so will not impede the application process but may delay it due to checks and balances. The proposer and seconder may be asked to be present at the meeting to discuss the application.
- (e) The applicant must, upon duly being proposed and seconded have the support of the majority of the branch committee.
- (f) The branch will in every case have absolute discretion to decide whether any applicant is suitable for admittance and whether such applicant will or will not be admitted to membership of the branch.
- (g) If the applicant is deemed suitable by the branch committee and the applicant is granted membership, he/she may be required to attend the next branch meeting for the purpose of introduction to the members.
- (h) If the application is rejected then the applicant must be notified of the decision, and the reasons outlined, within 48 hours and be informed that they have the right to appeal the decision to the national officer board. This must be done in writing by the applicant within one week of the decision and be sent by registered post to the General Secretary.
- (i) All applications whether approved or rejected must be sent to the General Secretary for notification within 14 days of the decision being made.

4.3. Full Membership:

- (a) Applicants must have satisfactorily completed a referee's course organised by/and/or through the FAI or any of its affiliated bodies and have been awarded a license to referee for that season or the season immediate following the current one in which the course has been completed.
- (b) Applicants must have completed the requisite number of Training/Education modules as set out by the FAI for the awarding of a license to referee. Consideration in this regard, **MUST** be given to applicants applying directly from a beginner's course, or those applicants who are returning to officiating having spent some time as an observer, in line with the FAI's Guidelines for Referees, (iv) returning to refereeing.
- (c) Applicants must have attained their 16th birthday.

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- (d) Applicants who have held membership previously must satisfy the criteria as set out in this sub section.
- (e) All new members must meet the branches quota of meetings as set down in the universal rules after the commencement of membership.
- (f) All probationary periods must be overseen by the member's branch and be no less than 12 months
- (g) All full members serving a period of probation qualify for FULL voting rights and the FULL benefits of membership during their probationary period, including, but not exclusive to Training, Education, meetings, AGM's, SGM's and EGM's.
- (h) Any member who has a period of probation extended, or who has been denied a renewal, can appeal that decision to the National Executive of the ISRS.
- (i) No new full member shall be eligible to stand for any ISRS committee until they have completed at least two years uninterrupted continuous service within society
- (j) Membership fee to be determined by the local branch, bearing in mind the reduced rates council charge new members.

4.4. Honorary Life Membership:

- (a) All proposals to bestow Honorary Life Membership on a member, must be submitted to the National Council, by either the proposer's or seconder's own branch and must be accompanied by the name and branch of the proposer and seconder and should include a resume outlining the reasons for the proposal.
- (b) The nominated person MUST have served the branch at local or National level, and must NOT hold a current license to referee, but this shall be left to the discretion of the National Officer Board in exceptional circumstances.
- (c) A nominee must have served the ISRS, with outstanding service.
- (c) Nominations for Honorary Life Membership will be considered and bestowed by the national officer board at the council meeting closest to the applications been made and will be presented to the recipient by the President, or a designated representative of the President.
- (d) An Honorary Life Member is subject to the Branch rules.
- (e) The National Executive of the ISRS are the only body that can remove the Honorary award from a member on receipt of an application from the local branch outlining the reasons for their application. However, the National Officer board, also reserve the right to withdraw honorary membership from a member, even in the absence of such application.

4.5. Associate Membership:

- (a) All persons who are registered referees with the FAI and who, have been classified as an Associate referee, and have been awarded an Associate Referee's License, shall be eligible to join the ISRS as an Associate Members ONLY.
- (b) A registration fee to be agreed upon by the local branch bearing in mind the reduced fee for new members that Council charge and the exclusion of insurance cover.
- (c) Associate members will **NOT** be covered by ISRS insurance.
- (d) Associate members are ineligible to be proposed for branch committee, delegates to ISRS or stand for ISRS Executive positions or vote in any such election.
- (e) Associate Members must apply to become full members of their local Branch, on the awarding of the appropriate license from the FAI. Such application can be made immediately but must in all circumstances be made before the commencement of the next year of membership of Society. All such applications to the Branch Secretary, to be expedited, if the Associate member has obtained the appropriate license from the FAI, as set out in the Guidelines for Referees, 2.1 (a), and has a proven track record in the branch. The branch should at ALL times encourage Associate referees to become Full members.
- (f) Any Associate member who is in breach of 4.5 (e), shall be subject to disciplinary proceedings.
- (g) Associate members are subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association of Ireland, The ISRS Constitution and Universal Rules.
- (h) Associate members shall at the discretion and invitation of the branch committee, be invited to partake in the full branch meeting. All Associate members will be entitled to attend the training and educational parts of any branch meeting.

4.6. Non-Active Membership:

- (a) Current members and former members of the ISRS are entitled to hold Non-Active Membership.
- (b) All applicants must fulfil all the criteria for membership as set out in Rule 4.1 in its entirety.
- (c) Non-Active Members are considered to be Full Members except in the application of the ISRS insurance policy in so far as it applies to them, and their non-active status.
- (d) Non-Active Membership refers specifically to those members who do NOT hold a current license to referee.

5. THE PRESIDENT:

The Society shall have a President who shall act as Chairman and shall be an officer of the Council and shall be elected in accordance with clause 6b(ii).

6(a). ELIGIBILITY FOR POSITION OF PRESIDENT:

Every member of the Society of at least five years standing is eligible to seek election to the position of President and must be proposed and seconded by at least two branch members from different branches.

6(b). PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING PRESIDENT:

- a) Nominations for the position of President must arrive by registered post to the General Secretary not later than the 1st of March in the relevant year.
- b) The General Secretary shall send to each Branch Secretary within 5 working days with the required number of voting papers together with the same number of sealable envelopes. If the Branch Secretary is a candidate in the election, he must notify the General Secretary of the name and address of another Branch Officer, to whom the election papers are to be sent.
- c) If the General Secretary is a candidate all correspondence in connection with the election shall be handled by the Assistant General Secretary.
- d) The election for President shall take place during the month of March & April in each relevant year at Branch General Meetings on a day or days selected by each branch.
- e) The President shall be elected by direct vote of the members.
- f) Every member of society shall have the right to vote at the election for President if they are fully paid members of society and are in good standing.
- g) The voting shall be by secret ballot and on the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote
- h) The votes cast shall be sent by registered post to the returning officer, to be nominated by council, to arrive no later than the 8th of May in the relevant year.
- i) The returning officer shall appoint two current council members to act as scrutineers whose duty shall be to separately count and record the votes. In the event that the individual scrutineer's results do not match the Returning officer shall order a recount until such stage as the results match.
- j) The returning officer shall communicate the result to each Branch Secretary and to each candidate not later than the 31st of May in the relevant year.
- k) The returning officer shall hold the voting papers until the 21st of July following the election.
- l) Each candidate shall be entitled to call for and attend a recount of the votes. A recount shall be initiated by the candidate sending to the returning officer by registered post a request for a recount, which request must be sent by the 28th of June. Any such recount shall take place prior to the 15th of July.

7. TENURE OF THE PRESIDENT:

- a) The President shall hold office for three years commencing at the first meeting of the Council of the new season, unless before the expiration of the three-year period he a) resigns b) dies or c) is suspended from office by a simple majority of the Council following a vote of no confidence in accordance with clause 13 (h) hereof
- b) The President may seek election for a maximum of two consecutive terms after which he must step down for one term before becoming eligible for office again.
- c) In the intervening period between election and the assumption of office of the new President the outgoing President shall continue to hold office and exercise the powers of the office but shall work closely with the newly elected President to ensure a smooth transition of office.
- d) Any representative positions, which are held by virtue of the office of President of the Society and not in a personal capacity, shall be taken up by the incoming President upon his assumption of office.

8. POWERS OF THE PRESIDENT:

- a) The President shall have the power to act on his own initiative where necessary on any matter pertaining to the Society or its affairs provided that his proposed course of action is agreed to by at least three other officers of the Society and having consulted all the other Officers where practicable.
- b) Such act or actions by the President shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Council for ratification.

9. OFFICERS:

The Officers of the Society shall be President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer & Public Relations Officer of which shall be Honorary positions.

10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

- a) All Officers shall hold office for three years unless they resign die or are suspended from office. All Officers, other than the President shall be elected by the delegates in attendance at the last meeting of the season of the Council in an election year.
- b) Nominees for the position of any officer must have been members of the previous Council and have attended at least fifty per cent of the meetings of the previous Council.
- c) Voting for each office shall be by simple majority of delegates in attendance, one vote per delegate, voting by secret ballot.
- d) Nominations, duly proposed and seconded by members of the Society of at least 12 months standing, must arrive by registered post to the General Secretary at least 28 days before the last meeting of the Council of the new season.

- e) Officers must step down prior to the election, in doing so they may become a branch delegate and may vote provided their branch does not exceed the number of delegates that they are allowed under the constitution.
- f) The new officer board shall then assume office on the first meeting of the new council term. Until the new officer board takes up their new positions they shall carry the title, (Position - Elect).
- g) Each branch shall be informed by the General Secretary of the name and addresses of the Officers of the Society not later than 21 days after their election and all notices must be sent to said addresses in order that they be deemed valid. In the event of the change of address of any officer the General Secretary shall inform each Branch of any such change and henceforth all notices shall be sent to such new address as are required by this constitution

11. DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

In performing their duties as officers each officer shall act independently of their branch and in the best interests of the society as a whole.

- a) It shall be the duty of the President to act as chairperson at all Council meetings and to represent the Society at all meetings whereby a representative of the Society is required
- b) In the absence of the President all his powers and duties shall devolve to the Vice President.
- c) It shall be the duty of the General Secretary to: -
 - 1) Attend all meetings of Council.
 - 2) To take and keep proper minutes of all meetings of Council.
 - 3) Keep and produce at all meetings of Council a copy of the constitution.
 - 4) Attend to all matters relating to Society which from time to time be referred to him.
 - 5) Issue to each Branch, within 30 days of each Council meeting minutes of said meeting.
- d) It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to: -
 - 1) Keep an account of all monies received and expended by and due to the Society.
 - 2) Produce an annual Income and Expenditure account and details of all monies due to and payable by Society for each financial year ending 31st December; these accounts must be laid before a Council meeting before 31st March each year.

The accounts may be subjected to audit by two members of society nominated by Council.
 - 3) Maintain the membership roll of the Society, in particular to update the roll as affiliation fees are paid and issue each branch with the annual updated membership roll. He shall further provide details of the membership roll to such bodies as request that information and are in his opinion proper recipients of that information.
- e) It shall be the duty of the Public Relations Officer to: -

Gain as much publicity as possible so as to assist the Society in its objectives and function

12. THE COUNCIL:

The Council shall consist of the Honorary Officers and Delegates.

13. MEETINGS OF COUNCIL:

- a) The Council shall meet not less than three times in the calendar year and otherwise as the Honorary Officers deem necessary and the first meeting of the new season (commencing 1st July) shall be held prior to the 30th of September in each year.
- b) Any two Branches may request in writing to the General Secretary the holding of a Council meeting and such meeting must be held within four weeks of such request.
- c) If in the reasonable opinion of the majority of the Officers of the Society (and for the purposes of this rule if there is a tied vote between them the Chairman shall have the deciding vote) the requested meeting has no valid purpose, then the Officers may insist that the Branches requesting the meeting pay all expenses incurred by the Council, or such part thereof as they consider reasonable, in the holding of the said meeting.
- d) Any seven Delegates to Council representing at least seven different branches, including at least one Officer, within 30 minutes of the appointed time, shall form a quorum to start the meeting.
- e) The General Secretary shall send notice of Council meetings to each Branch Secretary no later than 30 days before the holding of each meeting and it shall be the duty of each Branch Secretary to inform its Branch Delegates of the date and location of such meeting.
- f) The council has the power to abridge such notice in exceptional circumstances, provided at least one half of the elected delegates are present and agree to such abridged notice.
- g) Each Branch shall be represented at every council meeting by a minimum of one delegate, this includes the elite panel. Failure to comply with this clause will render the offending party liable to disciplinary action, which may include a fine, suspension and or exclusion from society.
- h) **Notice of Motions:**
 - 1) Each branch and the Officer Board of the Society shall be entitled to forward a motion on any business relating to the society for consideration at any meeting of Council.
 - 2) All notices of Motions must be submitted to the General Secretary and received by him no later than 28 days before the meeting of Council at which it is proposed to consider the motion.
 - 3) The General Secretary shall no later than 21 days before the meeting of Council provide each branch with copies of all proposed motions to be considered at the council meeting.
 - 4) The council has the power to abridge such notice in exceptional circumstances, provided that at least one half of the elected Delegates are present and agree to such abridged notice.
 - 5) Each motion must be seconded by another branch present before a vote is taken in relation to the motion.

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- 6) A motion shall be carried if a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote are in favour of the motion except where provided for elsewhere in the Constitution.
 - 7) In the event of a tied vote rule 15 shall apply.

14. POWERS OF COUNCIL:

- a) The Council shall have the power to: Decide on all matters relating to the proper functioning of the Society and the upholding of the authority of Council.
- b) Elect representatives of the Society to such other bodies as required except to the positions on the Senior Council and Referee's Committee of the Football Association Ireland, such positions being held automatically by the President of Society.
- c) Appoint sub-committees for such purposes and with such powers, including the power to co- opt, as they may deem necessary, but always provided at least one Honorary Officer is appointed to each sub-committee.
- d) Make provision for an examination of a Branch's finances, examine all books, records and papers and question any of the officers or branch members on their maintenance.

15. VOTING AT COUNCIL:

- a) Each Officer and each Delegate present shall have one vote and decisions shall be made by simple majority of those present and entitled to vote.
- b) In the event of a tied vote the President\Chairman shall only have a deciding vote.

16. FINANCE:

- a) A current bank account should be used with a recognised banking institution in the state for the funds of the Society.
- b) The cheques of the Society shall be signed by two of the three signatories designated by Council on the nomination of the Treasurer one of whom shall be the Honorary Treasurer.
- c) The current account should not be overdrawn except where other funds are available to meet such amounts overdrawn# d) The financial year shall run from 1st January to 31st December.
- e) Council shall have power to invest the Society funds in a non-speculative way as it sees
- f) Officers of Council and members of sub-committees of Council shall be entitled to receive from Council reasonable expenses and allowances necessarily incurred while on Council business. All such expenses shall be submitted to the Honorary Treasurer at no greater than quarterly intervals
- g) Branch(s), which seek the assistance of Council in relation to a Branch dispute, may be held responsible for all reasonable expenses incurred by the representatives of Council. If the Branch is held responsible it will pay to the Society, the amount of the expenses incurred no later than 30 days after the expenses have been approved by Council

17(a). DISCIPLINE:

In the event of an alleged minor breach of the Code of Conduct by a member of the society the alleged breach shall be investigated by and a decision shall be made by the member's home Branch using the following procedure:

- a) The Member shall be notified in writing by registered post, of a date on which the member is to appear in front of the Branch /Disciplinary Committee for a hearing. The notice shall state the rule(s) alleged to have been breached. The member shall receive at least 14 days' notice of this hearing. He will also be informed that he may have with him another society member of his choosing to assist or advise him at the meeting should he/she wish to do so. The costs of registered postage shall be levied on the referee(s) concerned should he/she be found guilty of the alleged breach of branch rules.
- b) In the event that the member cannot for good reason attend on the date specified in the notice he shall contact the branch within fourteen days of his receipt of the notice to specially fix a date for the hearing suitable to all parties' which date shall be within 14 days of the day originally scheduled for the hearing.
- c) In the event that the member does not attend on the date specially fixed the case will be heard and concluded with in the member's absence. The member can present his case in writing.
- d) The member concerned shall be notified by registered post, within 7 days of the hearing, of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee.
- e) The notice shall inform the member of his right to appeal the finding to an appeals subcommittee of the society.
- f) The General Secretary shall be notified by registered post, within 7 days of the hearing, of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee
- g) If a suspension from Irish Soccer Referees Society is involved and the member having exhausted all appeals procedure then the FAI Assessor(s), the local league secretary, the local match appointments officer(s), and the FAI (referees' section) shall be notified by registered post, within 7 days of the hearing, of the findings of the Disciplinary Committee.

17 (b) Disciplinary & Disputes Control Unit:

In the event of an alleged serious breach of the Code of Conduct by a member of the society the alleged breach shall be reported to the General Secretary of the ISRS and a Disciplinary Control Panel shall be appointed using the following guidelines.

- a) The branch secretary or the member making the complaint must make a written submission to the General Secretary within 10 days of alleged breach.
- b) The branch secretary or member must also notify the appellant of the complaint at the same time of notifying the General Secretary

- c) The President and General Secretary shall allocate a committee on receiving the alleged breach
- d) Once a committee has been established the hearing must be held within 10 working days, all parties must be written to informing them of the hearing date, both sides will be offered the chance of making written submissions before any hearing.
- e) If one side cannot make the first hearing another hearing must be scheduled within 10 working days
- f) Any written submissions must be circulated to all relevant parties at least 48 hours in advance of hearing.
- g) The decision of the DDCP must be made and circulated to both parties in writing within 5 working days of hearing with the reasons for the findings.

General Information regarding DDCP:

- Offer of mediation shall always be available but both sides must agree
- Alleged offender will have the right to be accompanied by another society member
- Maximum of 3-person delegation representing committee\branch
- Those making the complaint shall be heard first
- Alleged offender to be heard second
- Both sides to be offered the opportunity to engage at the same time.

18. APPEALS:

- a) A member sanctioned for any minor infringement may appeal a decision of a branch as follows:
 - 1) The appeal shall be initiated by posting same by registered post to the General Secretary of the society within 14 days of receipt of the notice and
 - 2) The appeal shall be accompanied by a postal order/banker's draft, payable to I.S.R.S. for €150. Council which shall be refunded only if the appeal is upheld and -
 - 3) The member shall also notify in writing the Branch Secretary, the local FAI assessor(s), the local match appointments officer, FAI referee section.
 - 4) On each occasion, an appeal is lodged by any branch member against a decision of a branch, an appeals subcommittee selected from the DCP shall be formed to hear and decide the appeal.
 - 5) No member of Council shall be eligible to sit on an appeals sub-committee which is hearing an appeal from the branch of which that council member is a member.
 - 6) Decisions of the subcommittee shall be notified by the General Secretary to the appellant and his/her Branch in writing within 14 days of the decision being made. The notice shall inform the appellant and the Branch of the right, if any, to appeal the finding and the procedure for doing so.
 - 7) Decisions of the appeals sub-committee shall be notified to Council in the minutes of the Council meeting following the decision.
 - 8) All appeals must be made in accordance with the following conditions: -
 - a) Appeals shall be made to the General Secretary within 14 days of written notification of the decision of the Branch.
 - b) A copy of the appeal shall be sent to the Branch by the appellant.
 - c) All correspondence in relation to appeals shall be by registered post.
 - d) All appeals shall be acknowledged within 14 days of receipt of same by the General Secretary.

- e) All appeals shall be heard within 30 days of receipt by the General secretary.
- 9) The appeals subcommittee shall elect a Chairman from amongst its members.
- 10) All appeals must be accompanied by a postal order or bank draft with the appropriate fee which will be returned if the appeal is successful.
- 11) All decisions of the appeals sub-committee may be appealed to the FAI Appeal Board subject to that body's rules.
- 12) If the correct procedures are not followed as per the constitution or universal rules, then the officer board have the right to refuse an appeal from either the branch or the individual member.

Appeals Procedure For DDCP:

- 1) Any appeal must be in writing and received by General Secretary within 14 working days of the DDCP's decision being circulated.
- 2) Appeal notice must be accompanied by bank draft or money order to the value of €200
- 3) Appeal shall be heard by National Officer Board, minus officer who acted as chairman on DDCP Regional Committee within 5 working days of the appeal being received by the General Secretary.
- 4) Minimum Quorum of 3 persons on appeal committee
- 5) No officer member involved in the original hearing shall be permitted to sit on appeals committee
- 6) All decisions of the National Officer Board may be appealed to the FAI Appeal Board subject to that body's rules.

19 (A). HONORARY LIFE VICE PRESIDENT:

The Council may from time to time confer the position of Honorary Life Vice—President on members of long standing in the society.

19 (B). HONORARY LIFE PRESIDENT:

The Council may from time to time confer the position of Honorary Life President on members of long standing in the society

20.ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION:

This Constitution may be revoked, altered or added to by the following procedure

- a) All motions to amend the constitution must be lodged with the Hon Secretary at least 60 days prior to the upcoming council meeting
- b) Each branch must convene a meeting or meetings to allow its members to debate and vote on the motion(s) to amend the constitution thus giving a mandate to the branches council delegate(s) to vote on the motion at the upcoming council meeting. This meeting must be held before the upcoming council meeting. As agreed the council of the ISRS shall send a copy of the original text of the constitution, the proposed changes and the reason(s) for the changes no later than 30 days prior to the upcoming council meeting.

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- c) The voting shall be by secret ballot at a branch meeting, which in turn shall mandate the council delegate(s) to vote at council.
- d) A simple majority shall be sufficient to mandate the council delegate in how to vote on the motion at the upcoming council meeting.
- e) The vote to amend the constitution shall be by roll call at the council meeting, each branch shall be listed alphabetically, and each delegate(s) shall be asked by the assistant secretary of the ISRS how they wish to vote. A two thirds majority is required for the motion to pass. If the motion receives the two thirds majority the constitution must be altered within 30 days of the council meeting. If the motion does not receive the two thirds majority the motion will have been deemed to have failed and will not be carried.
- f) The Honorary secretary of the ISRS shall validate the roll call and issue a copy of the results with the minutes of the council meeting prior the next council meeting.
- g) If any mistakes, duplicates or contradictions are detected in the constitution or universal rules the changes that are necessary to amend the constitution or universal rules can be made at the upcoming council meeting without having to send out a constitutional pack

21. DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY:

- a) The Society may be dissolved at any time by consent of five-sixths of the membership of the Society present and voting at a meeting duly convened for that purpose by Council.
- b) The assets or liabilities of the Society at the date of dissolution shall be divided amongst the members of the Society at the date of dissolution.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Members shall, when representing society, both on and off the field of play behave in a manner which would enhance and promote the good name and status of their fellow members.
2. Members shall adhere to the Football Association of Ireland's 'Rules and codes of conduct, FIFA, UEFA Rules and- Directives', and to the Constitution of the Society and to the rules and instructions of their respective branches.
3. Members shall, when representing society generally refrain from conduct which would be considered as unbecoming of their members.
4. Members are required to wear the current designated society dress code when attending:
 - a) Any social function in an official capacity
 - b) Council meetings of the society and when officiating at matches where three or more officials are appointed.
5. On receipt of a match appointment members shall:
 - a) If unable to fulfil the appointment the member shall contact the appointing offices as soon as possible and advise of same.
 - b) Read the instructions carefully and liaise with the other match officials if any.
 - c) Be present at the designated venue a minimum of thirty minutes before kick-off time and where three or more officials are appointed a minimum of forty minutes is recommended or as instructed by the official in charge.
 - e) Behave in a courteous manner.
 - f) Perform and have carried out all pre-match inspections, checks and instructions which are normal good custom and practice for the relevant level and grade of competition.
 - g) Ensure that all post-match requirements are strictly adhered to and fulfilled.
 - h) Return the appointment documentation as required by the league or affiliate.
6. At all times the member shall ensure that the other match officials on any match at which the member is officiating are members of the society, in all other circumstances the prior permission of the local branch should be sought.

Universal Branch Rules & Social Media Guidelines

Membership & Members:

1. Each branch Secretary shall maintain a register of all current members.
2. A member is an individual who has paid their membership fee in full and abides by the ISRS Constitution and Universal Rules to the branch.
3. Is granted honorary life membership by the branch. Active honorary members must pay affiliation, insurance and registration. The branch may also have non-active referees as members.
4. Membership fees to be agreed and paid in full by the (insert agreed amount and date).
5. Full voting rights to honorary life members once such members fulfilled the same requirements as existing for full members and have severed all ties with the Football Associations & its affiliates or sought permission from the national officer board.
6. Membership of the branch imposes the following obligations on members.
 - a) Members must attend at least (insert agreed number of meetings) as well as attend any meetings such as AGMs or where attendance is required.
 - b) To adhere to the code of conduct as stipulated in the ISRS Constitution.
 - c) A member who is absent from a meeting, MUST, (branches discretion) after the meeting submit to the branch secretary, a written explanation for the absence. Failure to comply with this rule may result in disciplinary action being taken on foot of same.
 - d) Failure to pay membership fees by (insert date) may result in exclusion from membership list, which must be published annually in March.
 - e) All active members must be registered with the FAI and any person wishing to join (Branch) shall be eligible for registration, subject to their application for membership being accepted and completion of the relevant probationary period. (Probationary period to be set by the branch, but must not exceed three years)
 - f) Each member has the responsibility of ensuring that when officiating with other referees that they are members of the I.S.R.S and must always adhere to the code of conduct of the ISRS Constitution.
 - g) Members must only officiate with society members.
7. All applications for membership (including transfers and re-joins), to a branch shall be considered by the branch committee, taking into account all of the relevant information, including the applicant's previous membership, if applicable. All meetings to consider and discuss membership issues must be minuted and recorded and produced when required to assist in any appeal.

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8. All applications for membership once accepted, must be subject to a minimum of 12 months' probationary period, and must be reviewed no later than 12 months after acceptance.
9. Applicants have the right to appeal all decisions of the branch committee in relation to membership. Appeals to be sent to ISRS General Secretary
10. No member of any branch may take legal action against the branch on any issue relating to the application of the branch rules or other matters until all the possibilities of sports jurisdiction within the Football Association of Ireland and the I.S.R.S. have been exhausted.
11. All members of the Branch must be covered by I.S.R.S. insurance
12. Members shall adhere to the F.A.I. rules relating to Referees, in the Constitution of the Society and to the rules and instructions of their branch.
13. Member shall refrain from giving interviews or opinions on decisions, games or other referees to the press, TV or radio or social media and shall abide by the society social media guidelines.

Discipline:

1. Any branch committee may sanction his or her member for minor infringements as per the constitution of the ISRS
2. Any major breaches by any member must be reported to the General Secretary who shall in consultation with the President of society appoint a Disciplinary Control Panel as per the constitution of the ISRS.
3. All members have the right to appeal any decision as per the ISRS Constitution and all parties must be notified as per the ISRS Constitution.

Annual General Meeting

1. The branch committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting not before February the 1st or after May 31st of the given year unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise
2. Accidental omission to give notice to, or the non-receipt of such notice by any member shall **not** invalidate the election or any motion passed at the Annual General Meeting.
3. The following shall be the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting
 - a. To read any apologies received.
 - b. To approve and sign the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any Special General Meeting(s) in the intervening period.
 - c. To receive the Chairman's address
 - d. To receive the Secretary's address
 - e. To receive the Treasurer's report.
 - f. To elect the Chairman for the ensuing year.
 - g. To elect the Vice-Chairman (if required) for the ensuing year.
 - h. To elect the Secretary for the ensuing year.
 - i. To elect an assistant secretary (if required) for the ensuing year
 - j. To elect the Treasurer for the ensuing year.

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- k. To elect an assistant Treasurer (if required) for the ensuing year
 - l. To elect not more than (**branches discretion**) ordinary member to serve on committee as Committee Member.
 - m. To elect the required number of delegates to council every three years
 - n. Where a branch has more than one delegate the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are automatically elected by virtue of their office.
 - o. To decide on any motions duly submitted accordance with the constitution.
4. All votes for the election of offices at the A.G.M. shall be by secret ballot and the result shall be decided by simple majority. If more than two candidates go for the same position, then the system of proportional representation is used.
 5. To be eligible for election to the branch committee a candidate must have at least two years continuous membership of the branch immediately preceding the election, attend at least (**insert agreed %**) of branch meetings and must not hold any position (paid or unpaid) in the Football Association of Ireland or any of its affiliated bodies except where representing the Society and with the prior permission of the I.S.R.S. Council and the Branch Committee. Those members on a probationary period shall be excluded from running for committee
 6. Candidates may be nominated and seconded in their absence only when their written permission is presented to the Annual General Meeting.
 7. Notices of motion (rule change) duly proposed and seconded by fully qualified members, must be in the hands of the Secretary at least fourteen days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
 8. All motions require a simple majority of total votes cast at the Annual General Meeting in order to succeed.
 9. When a vote on a motion is required at the Annual General Meeting it may be either by secret ballot, or a show of hands and the result decided by simple majority. (Not for the election of officers.)
 10. Tally Clerks (if necessary) shall be appointed by the Chairman at the start of the voting and shall retain that function for the remainder of the voting.
 11. The quorum for the Annual General Meeting is 51% of total membership in attendance before it is deemed valid.
 12. 50% of the committee plus one must be in attendance.
 13. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting duly signed and adopted at the following Annual General Meeting shall be kept by the Secretary.
 14. Any vacancy or vacancies which may arise between AGMs shall be filled in an election at the next ordinary branch meeting.
 15. The treasurer's annual report must be submitted to the national officer board via the General Secretary no more than fourteen days after the AGM.

Special General Meeting:

1. On the demand in writing signed by at least 70% of the members or by order of the branch committee, a special general meeting shall be held.
2. No less than one week's notice shall be given for such a special general meeting and not more than four weeks may elapse before such a meeting is held in the case of a demand for such a special general meeting being received by the Secretary.
3. The Quorum for the special general meeting shall be 51% of total membership before it is valid.
4. 50% of the committee plus one must be in attendance.
5. Any SGM called shall be to discuss and decide on the matter for which the special general meeting has been called. A written agenda must be presented to all members before the meeting where possible.
6. There shall be no further business discussed at the special general meeting.

Finances:

1. The branch shall raise funds by whatever legal means are decided by the committee. Audited accounts are available each year to the AGM
2. The following criteria must be met for any branches finances
 - a. A branch account (current and/or deposit) must be maintained in a branch of a recognised banking institution.
 - b. All cheques must be accompanied by at least two cheque signatories, one of whom must be the treasurer.
 - c. Any withdrawal slips must follow the same procedure.
 - d. It is the responsibility of all committees to maintain all accounts and ensure the branch remains solvent.
 - e. The Financial Year shall run from AGM to AGM.
 - f. All expenses paid to either the serving committee or members representing the branch must be recorded in the treasurer's report.

Meetings:

1. A branch agenda must be drafted before all branch meetings and agreed upon before the commencement of any branch meeting.
2. Branch agendas must contain the following:
 - a. Minutes of previous meeting
 - b. Matters arising
 - c. Correspondence
 - d. Treasurers report if required
 - e. Training and education & AOB

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3. The quorum for all branch meetings must be no less than 51%.
4. The minimum committee present must be no less than 50% plus one.
5. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall act as Chairman, the committee shall select a chair if necessary.
6. Any letter, request or communication to be sent by the branch secretary to a member will be addressed to the last known address of that member. An email shall also be accepted as a written communication unless disciplinary matters are involved.

Change of branch Rules:

1. Any branch rules that involves the changing of dates of meetings that must be attended, branch subscription fees or any minor change relating to set branch can only be done so at an agm or egm and shall follow similar criteria set as a motion.
2. Any other changes to branch rules must follow the criteria as set down in the constitution, section 20.

Measures to deal with serious and serial offenders:

If any member is found guilty of a breach of Rules, Regulations, Code of Conduct or Ethics, by the DDCP, FAI, or by any disciplinary body, the following shall be the case:

If found to have been in breach and receives a suspension for 6 months up to one year:

- Disqualifies the person for running for any ISRS committee at the next AGM/EGM/SGM
- If found to have been in breach and is suspended for a period of more than one year.
- Disqualifies the person for running for any ISRS committee for the entire duration of their suspension.

Repeat Offenders:

Less than six months' suspensions or having been found guilty of any rule breach.

- One suspension in any 3-three-year period, No Action required.
- Two suspensions in any 3-three-year period.
 - Having been found to have breached any rule twice in any 3-year period.
 - Banned from sitting on an ISRS committee for 2 years.
- Three suspensions in any 3-year period.
 - Membership reviewed by local committee
 - Banned from sitting on an ISRS committee for 5 years.

FAI Observers, Non-Active Members and FAI Affiliates:

- While respect must always be shown to FAI Observer's, non- active members & FAI affiliates, they are not automatically entitled to attend branch meetings even if they hold the position of honorary member. They may seek an invitation to attend from the local branch committee but are subject to the ISRS code of conduct while in attendance.
- FAI Observers, non-active members and FAI affiliates may be invited to participate in a branch meeting & be allocated time to carry out their duties by the branch committee, but they may also be asked to leave the meeting when society business is being discussed.

ISRS Social Media Guidelines

General Social Media Guidelines:

In online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a referee, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about refereeing and the League in which you officiate in. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your work and with your Branch's values and professional standards.

Each social media platform has its own rules and regulations, but the social media guidelines listed below are a standard list that applies to all social media interactions. It is important that you, as a referee, follow these guiding principles when online, to avoid bringing yourself the Branch or the FAI into disrepute. It is prudent for all referees to be mindful of commenting on public forums and social media about footballing matters.

It is in this context that the following ought to be considered and accepted:

- (a) A referee should refrain from publishing comments at ANY time about clubs, players or referees or league administrators on any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects.
- (b) You represent the officiating industry, your associations, your assigners and your footballing partners. Act accordingly.
- (c) Consider social media communications as public at all times — even if created with private intentions. If you are going to use social media in any form, consider that your communication may be read by anyone at any time.
- (d) A referee should promote officiating in a positive light and with a general feeling of pride and professionalism. You are an ambassador for officiating.
- (e) In particular, referees should refrain from making any comment on a game that they have been appointed to or make any comment on any game that they have officiated in during any post-match scenario, including local media platforms.
- (f) A referee should not make any comment on any disciplinary action taken during any game that they have officiated, to avoid jeopardising potential future disciplinary sanctions against any player/manager or club officials.
- (g) Do not post hostile or harassing comments about refereeing, players, other referees or the league in which you officiate in. Harassment is any offensive conduct based on a person's race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, religion or any other status identified and protected by law.
- (h) A referee should refrain from comments that can be interpreted as slurs, demeaning, inflammatory, defamatory etc. Any defamatory comments made online may be actionable and leave you exposed to a Court award of damages. Remember, in the end you are personally responsible for your own online content.

- (i) Be smart about protecting yourself, your privacy, and confidential information you may have in relation to your refereeing. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully.
- (j) Disparaging comments about the League in which you referee in, or about a club or player can have a serious impact on all referees in the league – you must consider the serious reputational damage that such comments can do and to avoid making them in the first instance. Such comments may leave you open to potential disciplinary sanctions by the ISRS Disciplinary Control Panel and/or by the FAI.
- (k) A referee should refrain from engaging in specific play and or ruling evaluation/commentary, whether it be of a game you officiated, one that you witnessed or in general about the impact of officials in any other sporting event.
- (l) Communications among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through the use of social media. Be mindful that email and other forms of direct communication can be made public.
- (m) Be very sparing in the sharing of your personal information, including photos. Adjust security settings accordingly. Report fake profiles or posts to the appropriate authorities/governing bodies in a timely fashion.