



The Institute of Fire Safety Managers

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GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW BRANCH

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THE INSTITUTE OF FIRE SAFETY MANAGERS

NEW BRANCH FORMATION

1 Definition

- 1.1 This document has been prepared to define the requirements of a new branch or group and provide Council with guidance on the creation and governance of a new branch or group of the Institute.
- 1.2 A new branch of the Institute will be a financially independent body of members located within a specific geographical area outside of the UK. Ideally a new branch will have a minimum number of six members with two thirds at Member grade.
- 1.3 A new group of the Institute will be a financially independent body of members located within a specific geographical area within the UK. Ideally a new group will have a minimum number of six members with two thirds at Member grade.
- 1.4 The new branch/group will charge its own membership fees which will be in addition to the annual fees payable to the Institute.
- 1.5 The Institute would provide to any potential branches, sufficient ‘Seed-corn/setup’ monies to help set up that branch. This to be provided upon request after submission of a financial proposal on how that money will be spent. Once established, then each following year, on submission on their Action Plan, they will be provided with up to 10% of the membership revenue fees based on the number of members in that defined area. Branches are to be run as per the Institutes Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- 1.6 The Institute will assist the new branch/group as necessary, but the

branch/group will carry on activities as a legally distinct body, established for the purpose of pursuing the objectives of the Institute.

- 1.7 There are specific requirements required by the Institute's Memorandum and Articles of Association. This document has been prepared in conjunction with those requirements.

2 Governance

- 2.1 Any new branch/group would be bound by the principles outlined in the Memorandum of Association.
- 2.2 Those principles require the Institute to promote its objectives and in doing so to enable new members to carry out the functions of a Branch and to facilitate the interchange of ideas.
- 2.3 The liability of a new branch/group must be limited to that branch/group and be a separate entity to the Institute. Any income or expenditure should be directed solely towards the promotion of the objectives of the Institute.
- 2.4 The Institute requires new branch/groups to submit their constitution to Council for approval.
- 2.5 New branches established outside of the UK will be required to include within their constitution, any local legal requirements, provided that none of these conflict with the principles that govern the Institute in the UK.
- 2.6 New branch/groups are responsible for their own financial management. The annual accounts of the Institute reported at the Annual General Meeting do not incorporate the accounts of any new branch/groups.

2.7 Once a new branch/group is formally inaugurated the new branch/group is entitled to charge an annual Branch/group Fee which is decided locally and is administered by that Branch/group.

3 Guidance

3.1 This document provides the guidance necessary for the establishment of a new branch/group of the Institute which is divided into the following steps.

- Establishing an “Inaugural committee”
- Commencing the recruitment of members
- Establishing a program of activities
- Establishing the democratic arrangements necessary for a new branch Committee.
- The formal inauguration of the new branch
- Participation in the International activities of the IFSM

3.2 Throughout these steps, close contact with the Institute’s UK Council members will assist in the process.

4 Inaugural Committee

4.1 An Inaugural committee for a new branch can be established by a small number of willing members of the Institute. It is preferable if a proportion of the members are corporate members which are classed as Life Fellows, Fellows, Members and Associates.

4.2 This guidance requests that new branch Councils are made up with at least two thirds of the membership at Member grade or above. Ideally a minimum number of 6 members are required to form a new branch.

4.3 It may be useful for the Inaugural committee to reflect the principle positions in a future new branch Council, that is a Chair, who would

become the new Branch President and possibly Secretary, with a member to lead on subjects such as treasurer, recruitment, events and marketing.

5 Membership

5.1 The ideal minimum number of members for a new branch/group to be viable is six members. Practical matters such as the geographical spread or concentration of members will be of greater influence. It is more important that the members are active in support of the new branch/group.

5.2 Recruitment materials are available without cost from IFSM Head Office, although any proposals to modify any materials would require approval at a Council meeting.

5.3 Application forms and fees for membership will remain with the new branch/group.

5.4 It will be important that the Inaugural committee establishes lists and contact details of members. IFSM Head Office can provide details of existing members of the Institute. A local record of membership will facilitate communication and attendance at new branch/group events.

6 Meetings

6.1 A fundamental reason for establishing a new branch/group of the Institute is to facilitate the meeting of members, these meetings can be held at whatever time of day is most convenient and can be a long or short as necessary.

6.2 The content of meetings is more important than the frequency of location of meetings, since a well thought out agenda is more likely to attract members and potential members. Interesting relevant subjects delivered by

high profile and proficient speakers will draw in the members and establish a reputation for the new branch/group as being an Institute that provides real value.

- 6.3 The cost of meetings may need to be funded by those who attend, or by sponsorship. Access to meeting facilities is something that can sometimes be facilitated by an employer of fire engineers, using company or Institute's facilities.

7 Branch / Group Constitution

- 7.1 A new branch/group draft constitution must be produced and agreed by the Inaugural Committee, before being forwarded for approval by Council.
- 7.2 The new branch/group constitution will include the arrangements for elections to the new branch/group Council. All members of the new branch/group will be entitled to vote in the election. The voting arrangements will need to suit local circumstances but the ballot must be secret.
- 7.3 Once the new branch/group Committee has been democratically elected, its first task must be to arrange for the inauguration of the new branch/group. The President of the Institute normally carries out the inauguration. It is necessary, therefore, to plan in advance and, by liaison through IFSM Head Office, establish a suitable date. There are no specific requirements of an inauguration ceremony.

8 Web Site

- 8.1 The Institute's website contains additional useful information. The website address is www.ifsm.org.uk