

**National Sea Rescue Institute of South Africa “NPC”**

**Registration No 1967/013618/08**

**“The Institute”**

**Station Commander Election Policy**

**Approved: 2019**



## STATION COMMANDER ELECTION POLICY

### PURPOSE

Station Commanders are the catalyst for effective leadership and the achievement of the goals of the institute. This policy spells out the intention of Sea Rescue to go about ensuring that suitable candidates are elected in a democratic and fair process.

### 1. SERVICE TERM

- 1.1. StatComs will be elected at a full station meeting held in during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of **September** so that appointments can be made by the 1st October.
- 1.2. The appointments stand for three years and the terms begin in October of 2019, 2022 and so forth).
- 1.3. The maximum term limit is 3 terms (i.e. 9 years total service) – as prescribed by good corporate governance (King III), and as stands for Board members. A candidate may also re-apply after a term of absence.

### 2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1. Only currently qualified shore or sea crew members who have served a minimum of 1 full year as **operational crew** by the 1<sup>st</sup> September that year on that station may vote (trainee time does not count).
- 2.2. Only currently qualified sea or shore crew, who have served a minimum of 3 full years as **operational crew** by the 1<sup>st</sup> September that year, will be eligible to be nominated to the operations support committee to stand for election.
- 2.3. Where there is a Fundraising committee on station, the Chairman is entitled to one vote on behalf of that committee.
- 2.4. In stations which are newly formed, or where there is a majority of new crew, with insufficient voting numbers, or candidates for a reasonable election – a revised election criteria will be discussed in conjunction with the regional representative and the operations manager.
- 2.5. The ratification of applicants will be done by the operations support committee in the first week of August.

The following criteria will be considered in the ratification process:

The candidate:

- 2.5.1. Should have a successful record of serving in leadership roles on the base (Coxswain or Shore controller), and must participate actively on the station committee.
- 2.5.2. Should be well experienced with all craft classes and base maintenance.
- 2.5.3. Should have had experience and aptitude in many station management facets (i.e. have taken on the roles of admin officer / training officer / maintenance officer, etc.)
- 2.5.4. Should have participated on some of the centralised development courses.
- 2.5.5. Must have a reputation of supporting the institutes goals and value system.

### 3. APPLICATION & PROCEDURE

- 3.1. Members of the station management committee will be contacted individually by email by head office, during the month of June to inform them of the voting process going forward.
- 3.2. Station Management will then inform the station that nominations for candidates for the position of station commander are open. Nominations must be sent to the operations manager by the end of July.

- 3.3. Ratification of the nominations will be done by operations support committee in the first week of August.
- 3.4. By the 15<sup>th</sup> of August a notice listing those ratified (see below) to stand in the election will be provided and posted on the station notice board. These are the election candidates – which the station will vote for.

#### **4. PROCESS**

**It is desired that at each election and at each station a vote is always held, irrespective of whether there is only one certain candidate or not.**

The “process” of the crew voting achieves two things (even if there is a sure-fire candidate):

- It reminds the crew that every three years that they have the power and the responsibility to elect their own leader, and that it is not a “taken for granted” process.
- It reminds the StatCom that he is privileged to serve the crew, and that he has been duly chosen to the position, rather than being merely re-appointed year on year.

The process of voting is a symbolic representation of the responsibility of choice in the leadership.

#### **5. ELECTION EVENING PROCEDURE**

- 5.1. At the station voting meeting an appointed election officer is to hand voting papers (with the eligible names on it), to those entitled to vote. The electoral officer must be an entirely independent person from the station, who has no interest or benefit in or from the station election.
- 5.2. The election officer should reference a “voting list” to ensure that no one is omitted, nor any non-entitled persons included.
- 5.3. Absent voters may give their vote by written proxy, email or by direct written communication to the electoral officer on the voting day.
- 5.4. The electoral officer is to collect the folded papers.
- 5.5. One nominated crew member and the electoral officer are to count the votes in the presence of the voters and nominees.
- 5.6. The details of the voting can be made known to the Station at this point.
- 5.7. The results of the Station election must be communicated to the operations manager without delay by the electoral officer by way of email or text message.
- 5.8. If there is a tie, the names of those candidates must be disclosed and another ballot held immediately, with only the tied two candidates in the running.
- 5.9. In the unlikely event of a further tie the process is to be repeated. If this does not resolve the matter, the electoral officer must inform the operations manager soonest, with a casting vote by the operations support committee being the winning vote.

Deputy StatComs will be appointed by the Station Commanders, in consultation with the station committee.

These rules may be altered by the operations support committee if needed in special circumstances. Feedback from stations is very important and most welcome in this regard.

#### **6. STATION HAND OVER PROCEDURE**

- 6.1 After the results of the vote have been made known to the station – the remaining weeks of September are the Station hand over period.

- 6.2 Within 4 weeks of the new Statcom taking command, he/she will conduct a Handing & Taking-Over Procedure and the results, signed by both the Statcoms and verified by the regional representatives will be sent to Head Office. This ensures that accountability and responsibility is accepted by both StatComs and the regional representative.
- 6.3 The required form to be completed will be supplied which will take the form of a Mini Audit of the Station, its Assets and Crew

/...ends

### **STATION NOTICE PRIOR TO VOTE:**

#### What Makes a Good StatCom?

It's that time of our planning cycle where we vote for our Station Commander. This is done every 3 years. It is always tempting for crews to vote for the most popular Crewperson / Coxswain, who gets on with everyone – but there is more to being a StatCom than meets the eye...

- **Leadership:** Leadership skills are a must. This includes knowing and living the mission, being able to plan, organise, motivate, communicate, resolve conflict, and so much more:
- **Popularity:** Crew must get on with the StatCom. However often the best StatCom, will not be the most popular person – and for good reason. It can be difficult for the “popular person” to make a difficult decision when it is needed, as the very thing that their position is based on (popularity) can be threatened.
- **Delegation skills:** It's no good having a station commander who does everything by themselves and does not allow or encourage others to do anything. On the same note – it is no good having a StatCom, who delegates everything. The best StatComs let the energy of the crew flow, but channel it in the right direction. They are not stagnant.
- **Empowering and Succession:** The best measure of a StatCom is how well the station does in the years after he/she steps down. Do they build their crew up to be able to take on more and to grow? If they are away – do things still carry on seamlessly?
- **Skills to get the job done:** StatComs must know about the running of the station, in terms of the assets, and the tasks that need to be accomplished.
- **When the going gets tough:** Who would you want at the helm of the station? This is the best test when deciding. Imagine a complex and challenging rescue situation where lives are at stake. Who would keep calm, who would manage the big picture – and who would people have faith in?

Being a StatCom is a huge responsibility. The lives & happiness of the crew & the condition of the base and vessels is directly in their control. Leadership is from the top down.

Sea Rescue is an amazing organisation, served by awesome volunteers, who are led by great StatComs. Here is your chance to keep it that way.

Choose Wisely!