



The Association of Retired Commissioned Officers

Rules

Incorporating a new paragraph “2A Aims”, an amended paragraph “2 Objectives”, and a new paragraph “14A Tenure of Office”, as adopted by the 25th AGM convened in McKee Barracks, on 04 October 2019.



The Association of Retired Commissioned Officers

Rules

General

1. **Title**. The title of the Association shall be “Association of Retired Commissioned Officers” (ARCO) or in Irish, “Cumann Na n-Iar Oifigeach Coimisiúnta”.
- 2A **Aim**. Representing retired commissioned officers of the Permanent Defence Force, ARCO encourages and fosters the unique fellowship and comradeship established during military service, and promotes and protects the interests and needs of members, and eligible spouses or civil partners, within its competencies.
2. **Objectives**. While maintaining a positive image of the Association, and reflecting retired officers’ values and ethos which derive from service in the Permanent Defence Force, the following internal and external objectives will be implemented:
 - a. **Internal Objectives**
 - (1) Promotes, defends and protects the rights, interests, quality of life, services, and welfare of retired officers, and eligible spouses or civil partners.
 - (2) Supports the protection, relevance and improvement of members’ and eligible spouses’ or partners’ pensions and secondary benefits.
 - (3) Advises and assists, within its competencies, members and eligible spouses or partners, on pensions and pension related matters.
 - (4) Monitors change, coordinates advice and provides general support thus enabling members to benefit fully from opportunities following early or age-related retirement.
 - (5) Provides a forum for analysis and debate, and the formulation of responses to anticipated developments that may impinge on the lives of retired officers, and eligible spouses or partners.
 - (6) Facilitates mutual support, networking opportunities and social occasions, for both retired officers and for those who remain active in the workplace, thus maintaining a fruitful bond with colleagues, in sharing talents and interests for their common benefit.



- (7) Ensures that the particular needs of officers retiring without a pension entitlement are catered for in a meaningful way, and that such officers enjoy parity of esteem within the Association with all other members.
- (8) Conducts an effective internal and external communication strategy by means of regional meetings, social media, website, biannual newsletter and text-a-message service.
- (9) Organises events and activities supporting ARCO's objectives and members' interests.

b. **External Objectives**

- (1) Establishes and maintains pro-active involvement with kindred organisations and agencies, in order to collectively engage in public advocacy and political lobbying, on issues relevant to retired officers.
- (2) Engages with Government Representatives, Government Departments and Agencies on pensions, pension related issues, and enhanced services for retired officers, and eligible spouses or civil partners.
- (3) Presents, within its competencies, presentations, submissions and statements on appropriate issues including Defence, Foreign Affairs, Veterans' Policy, Remuneration, Pensions and Welfare.
- (4) Advocates, using appropriate means on behalf of the Defence Forces, its personnel, its veterans and the families of serving personnel.
- (5) Conducts meetings on an annual basis with both the Minister for Defence, and the General Staff, and on a quarterly basis with both the Department of Defence and RACO.
- (6) Fosters professional excellence within the Defence Forces through the sponsorship of an award for the Best Student on Army, Naval Service and Air Corps Cadet Courses, and by supporting Defence Forces Mentoring Programmes.
- (7) Promotes effective and efficient liaison, coupled with mutual support and unity of effort, with ONE, IUNVA, RACO and PDFORRA, on matters of mutual interest.
- (8) Provides a member of the Executive Committee to the Defence Forces Benevolent Fund's Executive Committee, to CAOGA's Board of



Management, and to the Council of the Alliance of Retired Public Servants.

- (9) Participates in, or represents retired officers at State and Defence Forces ceremonial events, both at National, Regional and Local levels.

3. **Membership.** Membership of ARCO shall be confined to former Commissioned Officers of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) subject to the approval of the Executive Committee (Excom). A candidate for membership shall complete the necessary application form, either in hard copy or electronically, and once approved by the Excom, shall be subject to an annual subscription.

4. **Financial Matters**

- a. The Excom shall have an account in the name of the Association in a Bank of its choice. The Excom may also invest any funds surplus to its day to day needs in Interest bearing account(s).
- b. The Honorary Treasurer shall be responsible for the operation of these accounts on behalf of ARCO and shall, in accordance with Paragraph 15 d below, present each meeting of the Excom with an up to date Statement of the account(s).
- c. Two signatures shall be necessary to sign each cheque; any two of the four designated members of the Excom appointed for this purpose at its first meeting may sign cheques.
- d. The Honorary Accountant shall audit the accounts annually and present the said accounts to the AGM as a true and accurate representation of the financial affairs of ARCO.
- e. The Financial year shall be from the 1st August to the 31st July.

5. **Subscriptions.** There shall be a subscription payable by a member of an amount laid down from time to time by the AGM. The membership Subscription shall be due on the 1st of August annually.

6. **Termination of Membership by Resignation**

- a. A member shall cease to be a member once written notice of resignation has been forwarded to the Secretary of ARCO. Subscriptions shall not be re-imbursed on resignation.
- b. A member whose subscription is in arrears for more than one year may be struck off membership of the Association after due warning to the member has been given in writing by the Secretary.

7. **Termination of Membership by Expulsion**

- a. The Excom shall have the power to expel any member of ARCO whose conduct



is deemed to have brought the organisation into disrepute or who has acted in a manner inimical to the objectives of the Association. Initially a two thirds majority of the Excom shall be necessary to initiate the expulsion of any member.

- b. Any member who is recommended for expulsion shall be given notice in writing by registered post of the reason/s for the proposed expulsion and shall be invited to attend a meeting of the Excom and/or make a case in writing against the proposed expulsion; this notification shall be at least 28 days in advance of the Excom meeting convened for the purpose of considering the expulsion of the said member.
- c. Once the member has been afforded the opportunity of making a case against the proposed expulsion that member can only then be expelled after the Excom votes in favour of expulsion by a two thirds majority. A member notified by registered post who does not respond to the invitation to make a case against the proposed expulsion, either in person or in writing, to the Excom meeting convened for the purpose of considering said member's expulsion may be expelled summarily.
- d. Prior to any decision of the Excom to expel a member, the member shall be informed of a right to appeal such decision to an independent Appeals Panel consisting of the ARCO Trustees. The decision of the Trustees shall be final. The decision of the Trustees shall be communicated to the Excom and, in turn, by the Secretary of ARCO to the member by registered post.

8. **Voting**

- a. Motions at Excom meetings shall be passed by a simple majority of those present. In the case of equality of voting, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- b. At AGMs and Extraordinary General Meetings, only fully paid up members of ARCO shall be eligible to attend and vote. Each attending member shall have one vote at the relevant meeting and all votes must be cast in person at the meeting. In the case of equality of voting, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

9. **Methods of Notification**

- a. The submission of an Email address and/or Mobile telephone number by a member shall be construed to mean that said member accepts that electronic means shall be the principal method of communication except, as laid down below, for notices of motion, nominations for election and for the expulsion of a member.
- b. Notification of meetings of the Excom and the follow up to such meetings shall be exclusively by electronic means.
- c. Newsletters and any other correspondence to/from members may be distributed either in hard copy or by electronic mail at the discretion of the Excom.
- d. Nominations for election and notices of motion which have to be signed must be submitted in hard copy as well as requests for holding an Extraordinary General



Meeting of ARCO.

- e. All correspondence to a member being considered for termination of membership under Paragraph 6 b, or expulsion under Paragraph 7 above shall be by registered post.

10. **ARCO Website**

- a. The ARCO website provides an easily accessed on-line reference point for the communication of a range of matters affecting and of interest to ARCO Members.
- b. The website also enables easy access to archived material and provides a mechanism whereby members or other interested parties may initiate contact with the elected office holders of the association.
- c. The website will be managed by a webmaster appointed by the Excom who will normally be a member of the Excom.

11. **Dissolution**

- a. A resolution to dissolve the Association shall be proposed only at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) whose sole purpose shall be the proposed dissolution of the Association and shall be carried by a majority of three quarters of the members present. The Dissolution shall take effect from a date fixed by the EGM.
- b. The members of the Excom shall be responsible for the winding up of the Assets and Liabilities of the Association. Any property remaining after the discharge of the debts and liabilities of the Association shall be disposed of in accordance with the direction of the EGM.

12. **Arbitration**. In any dispute regarding the interpretation of these Rules, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be the final arbiter.

The Executive Committee

13. **Officers**. The Officers of the Association shall comprise of:

- a. The President,
- b. The Vice President,
- c. The Honorary Secretary,
- d. The Honorary Treasurer,
- e. The Honorary Membership Secretary, and



- f. The Immediate Past President of the Association ó initially for one year only.

14A **Tenure of Office**

- g. All the Officers as prescribed in Rule 13, with the exception of the President, shall be elected at the AGM and serve for one year, or until the next AGM whichever is the sooner. They shall be eligible for re-election. The Excom shall nominate a member of ARCO for the post of President. The President shall be elected by the AGM and shall be limited to a term in office as President for a maximum period of three consecutive years.
- h. With the exception of the President, the maximum number of years that any officer of the Association may hold an officer appointment is five continuous years. In the event that there is difficulty in getting a replacement for an individual office holder, it is permissible for the current office holder to be re-elected on a year by year basis.
- i. **Regional representatives on the EXCOM** may serve continuously provided they are nominated with a proposer and seconder for a regional representative position for election at an AGM. The proposer and seconder must be from the region in which the representative wishes to represent.
- j. If there are several persons competing for a regional representative position, there shall be an election process within the region to select their representatives by majority vote. An officer of the EXCOM may be appointed to oversee regional elections if required
14. **Trustees.** ARCO shall have three Trustees duly elected by the members at the AGM of the Association. The Trustees shall be members of the Association but shall not be members of the Excom.
15. **Functions of the Officers.** In addition to specific functions set out for Excom members below, Excom members shall carry out other functions at the direction of the President or the Excom.
- a. **The President.** The President shall preside at all Excom meetings and at the AGM, and shall direct the Excom in the management of ARCO. At official functions, the President shall wear the ARCO Chain of Office.
- b. **The Vice President.** The Vice President shall represent the President when required and chair meetings of the Excom in the absence of the President.
- c. **The Honorary Secretary.** The Honorary Secretary shall be responsible for the efficient management of electronic and hard copy communications internally and externally on behalf of ARCO; shall issue agendas for Excom meetings at least 7 days in advance of such meetings; shall record the minutes of such meetings and distribute same electronically within 7 days of the meetings conclusion; shall perform the administrative functions set out in Paragraph 18 below in the case of



the AGM; and shall chair meetings of the Excom in the absence of the President, Vice President in that order.

- d. **The Honorary Treasurer.** The Honorary Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial management of ARCO and shall operate any bank account/s on behalf of ARCO; shall maintain accurate accounts and ensure, with the auditor, that audited accounts are available for presentation and adoption at the AGM; shall present all meetings of the Excom with an up to date financial statement of the accounts and other financial information as may be required by the Excom; shall organise in conjunction with with Finance Branch, DOD, the deduction of annual subscriptions from participating members; and shall chair meetings of the Excom in the absence of the President, Vice President and Honorary Secretary in that order.
- e. **The Honorary Membership Secretary.** The Honorary Membership Secretary shall be responsible for custody of the ARCO membership records and in conjunction with the Honorary Treasurer the updating and maintenance of the ARCO membership electronic data base; shall advise the Excom of the membership position at meetings.
- f. **The Immediate Past President of the Association.** During the year immediately following presidency of ARCO, the immediate Past President shall be entitled to attend all Excom meetings.
- g. **Trustees of ARCO.** The Trustees shall be responsible solely for forming an Appeals Panel to hear any appeal from a member whose membership the Excom is proposing to terminate by expulsion under the terms of Paragraph 7 above.

16. **General Responsibilities of the Excom**

- a. The management of ARCO shall be invested in the Excom who shall have full powers to carry out the business of ARCO and to make decisions between general meetings of ARCO. The newly elected Excom shall take office on the day after the AGM. Excom membership is confined to fully paid up members of ARCO.
- b. The Excom, which shall normally not exceed eighteen members, shall consist of the Officers of the Association, as set out in Paragraph 13 above, together with two regional representatives from each of the following regions i.e. Eastern Brigade and Southern Brigade areas, the Defence Forces Training Centre, the former Western Brigade area, the Air Corps and the Naval Service.
- c. Regional representatives shall be elected at the AGM and serve for one year or until the next AGM whichever is the sooner. They shall be eligible for re-election.
- d. The Excom shall have power to co-opt members to fill any vacancies which may occur during its term of office; such co-opted members shall serve for the remainder of the period of the Excom's term of office.



- e. The Excom may co-opt additional member/s from time to time to perform specific functions at the direction of the Excom; such co-opted member/s shall remain until the specific function for which the co-option was made has been completed or until the remainder of the period of the Excom's term of office whichever is the sooner.
- f. The Excom shall be responsible for:
 - (1) The smooth day-to-day running of the Association,
 - (2) The interpretation of the Rules of the Association,
 - (3) Managing the finances of the Association,
 - (4) Appointing a member of the Excom to be its Web Master,
 - (5) Overseeing the work of the Sub-Committees,
 - (6) Such other duties as from time to time may be decided by an AGM,
 - (7) The provision of a suitable, cost effective, office for ARCO's sole use,
 - (8) The payment of legitimate, reasonable expenses incurred by members of the Excom in the necessary performance of ARCO duties,
 - (9) The Excom shall have power to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association in accordance with Paragraph 20 of these rules. Members shall be given at least fourteen days' notice of the meeting and the Honorary Secretary shall specify the matter/s to be discussed on the Agenda when giving such notice.

17. **Meetings of the Excom**

- a. The Excom shall normally meet once per month at a time and place to be decided by the President in consultation with the Honorary Secretary. The Excom may decide to meet less frequently than monthly; this can be decided at Excom meetings by a simple majority of members attending.
- b. Where possible at least seven days' notice of the meeting shall be given to all members and such notice shall include the Agenda for the meeting.
- c. A quorum for Excom meetings shall be at least one Officer and at least five other members of the Excom.
- d. The President shall preside at all Excom meetings. In the absence of the President the Chairman for that meeting shall be the Vice President, Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer, in that order.



- e. The Excom may at any time appoint from among the Members of the Excom such sub-Committees as it may deem necessary. Such sub-Committees shall conduct their business in accordance with the direction of the Excom.
- f. Special Meeting/s of the Excom may be called by the President or by a request by at least five other members of the Excom to discuss matters of importance to the membership. Such request shall state the reason for calling the meeting.
- g. Normally seven days' notice of the holding of such a Special meeting shall be given by the Honorary Secretary to all members of the Excom. The Special meeting, once assembled, shall discuss the issue which precipitated its calling. Other matters may also be discussed at the discretion of the President.

Annual General Meeting

18. **The Annual General Meeting Date for the AGM.** The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held in the month of October each year or on any later date in that year to be specified by the Excom.
- a. **Quorum.** The quorum for an AGM shall be twenty members to include one officer of the Association as set out in Paragraph 13 above. If there is no quorum at an AGM, the Chairman shall dissolve the AGM and shall refer the matter to the Excom which will re-convene the AGM to some other future suitable date. If there is still no Quorum at the re-convened AGM, the Members present shall form a Quorum.
 - b. **Notification and Motions.** The Honorary Secretary shall send out written notification of the meeting to all members by the 31 August or at least five weeks in advance of the AGM at the latest. The notification for the AGM shall include the Agenda, any notices of motions received from members or instigated by the Excom, and, any proposal to instigate any changes to the Rules of ARCO. Motions for the AGM should be received by the Honorary Secretary at least one month in advance of the meeting. Such motions shall be in hard copy form and shall be signed by the Proposer and Seconder. All motions, including changes/amendments to the Rules shall be circulated to all members in advance of the AGM.
 - c. **Nominations for Officers, Excom Members and Trustees.** Nominations to fill vacancies for Officers, Elected Excom Members and Trustees must be sent, in writing, to the Honorary Secretary of ARCO to arrive at least one month before the AGM. The nominations must be signed by the proposer and seconder, both of whom must be members of the Association. In addition the written consent of the Nominee must accompany the nomination. To be selected as an Officer or member of the Excom a person must be a paid-up member of the Association. A copy of each nomination, with the names of the Proposer and Seconder, shall be circulated to all members in advance of the Annual General Meeting.
 - d. **Amendments to Rules.** No rule or an amendment to an existing rule shall be made except at an AGM. Notice in writing of any proposed new rule/s or



amendment/s shall be given to the Honorary Secretary, at least one month before the date of the meeting. No alteration to the rules of the Association shall be made without a two thirds majority of those present and voting as per Rule 8 above.

- e. **Motions from the Floor at an AGM.** A two thirds majority of those attending at an AGM shall be necessary to accept a motion from the floor.
19. **Format and Conduct of the AGM.** In addition to the election of Trustees, the following business shall be conducted at the AGM:
- a. The President’s Report,
 - b. The Honorary Secretary’s Report,
 - c. The Honorary Treasurer’s Report which will include the Statement of the Audited Accounts and Balance Sheet for the financial year just ended,
 - d. The Honorary Membership Secretary Report,
 - e. The Election of Officers and members of the Excom,
 - f. The Election of the Honorary Auditor who shall not be a member of the Excom,
 - g. Discussion and decision on any Notices of Motion or Amendments to Rules which have been submitted for the consideration of the AGM, and
 - h. Any other business.

Extraordinary General Meeting

20. **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)**

- a. The Excom may convene an EGM at any time at its discretion to discuss any matter deemed to be of utmost importance to the wider membership of ARCO. A decision to convene an EGM shall require a two third majority at the Excom meeting.
- b. On receipt by the Excom of a request to do so specifying the topic and signed by at least fifty members of ARCO an EGM shall be convened. In the event of the receipt of such a request the Excom may only discuss matters germane to the request for the convening of the EGM. The Excom shall decide a date, time and place for the EGM to be held which must be within one month of the receipt of the requisition.
- c. Members shall be given at least fourteen days written notice of such a meeting by the Honorary Secretary. Such notice shall specify the subject matter/s to be discussed as well as the date, time and place of the meeting. The notification to members shall indicate whether the EGM has been convened on the initiative of



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the Excom or by a request from at least fifty ARCO members.

- d. Only the matter/s specified by the Excom or by at least fifty members may be discussed at such an EGM. The EGM shall be conducted in the same way as an AGM.

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