



## WACSSO OLC

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Thursday, 7 September 2017, 10:03 AM

Site: **WACSSO OLC**

Course: **WACSSO OLC (WACSSO)**

Glossary: **P&C FAQs**

### C

#### Question:

**Canteen and uniform shop: Are canteen workers entitled to long service leave?**

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:07 PM)

#### Answer:

Yes, under the Long Service Leave Act all canteen employees are entitled to long service leave. A formula to calculate long service leave for canteen workers is available from the Department of Commerce 1300 655 266 and from their online website.

#### Question:

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Are employees and volunteers required to sign in and out before entering and leaving the canteen or uniform shop?**

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 12:52 PM)

#### Answer:

Yes, for insurance and employment requirements employees and volunteers working in a business must sign and state the hours they were present in the workplace or venue. This clarifies pay disputes, acknowledges correct pay processes and can verify an insurance claim.

#### Question:

**Canteen and uniform shop: Can a P&C employee/volunteer claim their own vehicle expenses?**

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:57 PM)

## Answer:

The P&C may require an employee or volunteer to use his or her own vehicle within the ordinary course of their employment or volunteering. When formulating an agreement relating to use of private vehicles the P&C should consider the following:

- The P&C should seek agreement that there is no expectation of recompense as a result of any damage incurred to a vehicle whilst being driven in the ordinary course of their employment or volunteering.
- The driver of the private vehicle must hold a current Western Australian motor vehicle drivers' licence of the correct class for the vehicle being driven and the number of passengers being transported.
- Private vehicles that are to be used for work related travel must be registered, mechanically sound and in a roadworthy condition.
- It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that the vehicle is comprehensively insured, and any risk to the private vehicle is the sole responsibility of the owner.
- The driver of the private vehicle is responsible for paying all traffic and parking fines incurred in the course of work/volunteering related travel.
- Under the Western Australian Road Traffic Act, drivers are not eligible to drive a private vehicle if their blood alcohol level is above the legal limit (as specified under law), they are under the influence of illegal drugs or they are taking medication that cautions against driving.

## Footnote:

Where it is part of an employee's job description or volunteer's role to use their private vehicle for any P&C business, such as banking, it is the P&Cs responsibility to see the employee or volunteer has a current WA driver's license and will be operating a licensed vehicle. Any mileage can be a tax deductible inclusion in their wages or claimed by the employee through their annual taxation claim. Any volunteer reimbursement made upon a tax receipt declared according to the P&C Constitution 12.8 reporting process.

## Question:

Canteen and Uniform Shop: Can an Office Bearer of the P&C be a paid canteen employee?

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:21 PM)

## Answer:

Yes, however WACSSO **STRONGLY discourages this practice**. The WACSSO office receives calls from concerned P&C members regarding the unworkable situation where a P&C Office Bearer is the paid canteen manager. If this is happening at your canteen then the P&C needs to make it quite clear to the persons concerned that in relation to the management of the canteen they are employees and not Office Bearers. They must carry out any instructions given to them by the canteen managing body, e.g. canteen sub-committee or the Executive Committee of the P&C. **At no time should they be participating in debate or voting** on issues regarding pay and conditions of canteen employees. If the person is a signatory on P&C accounts then they should not be signing their own pay cheques. It also would not be prudent for this person to hold a voting position on the canteen sub-committee. If they attend canteen sub-committee meetings, it should be in an advisory capacity only.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: Can children of compulsory school age undertake voluntary work in the school canteen?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:51 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, there are two Acts that do not allow children to be in canteens. The first is the School Education Act 1999 Section 29 (2) which states that a child must not be "... engaged in work for the purpose of gain by a person even if the child is not paid for the work done." Breaches of this rule carry a \$5000 fine. Secondly, under the Occupational Safety and Health Act it is not permissible to introduce a hazard into a workplace. Young children especially would be considered a hazard in a canteen. Finally, if a child of compulsory school age is working in a canteen they are not insured either by the P&C or the school. The only exception to the above is in circumstances where the students are accessing the canteen facilities as part of a detailed educational program within the school curriculum. This type of agreement must be fully discussed between the P&C and the school with careful consideration given to the Canteen Supervisor's role and responsibilities. There should be no expectation that the Canteen Supervisor takes on extra duties or has the workplace disrupted during normal working hours.

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Can members of the P&C, employees or volunteers in the canteen purchase goods through the canteen at wholesale prices?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:15 PM)**

**Answer:**

This practice is discouraged by WACSSO, as the canteen is a business in its own right and incorrect trading figures can give a false overview to the Australian Taxation Organisation (ATO) of the business' viability and trading capacity. It is not good business practice and should not be encouraged. Any misuse or misappropriation of the business ABN, business name or business stock is grounds for dismissal for an employee and is serious misuse of a business name by a volunteer and would be viewed as a breach of the employer and P&Cs trust.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: Can the canteen employee be paid to do the banking?**

**(Last edited: Thursday, 20 April 2017, 2:59 PM)**

**Answer:**

If a canteen worker's job description or duty statement states they are required to do the banking then their employment contract should reflect this as part of their duties. If this duty occurs during working hours, the employee must be paid. The P&C must declare any fringe benefits paid to employees if considered part of their wage. An employee covered by WorkCover insurance on the way to the bank must use the most direct route from the place of work. WorkCover ceases once the employee leaves the bank. Any queries regarding WorkCover can be directed to Globe Insurance Services on 0499 968 657.

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Can the P&C run the canteen on a voluntary basis?**

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 12:54 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes. It should be noted that voluntary workers should be treated with the same courtesy in regard to duties and industrial relations issues as would a paid employee. It is important that an "in charge" person be identified from the volunteers for each day the canteen is open. The P&C or canteen sub-committee should establish job descriptions for all voluntary positions similar to those of any paid canteen employees. Where the canteen is run on a voluntary basis, the volunteers would be covered by the Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance if the P&C is affiliated with WACSSO. It could be required if the canteen or uniform shop is operated by volunteers that a Working With Children Check could apply.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: Can the Principal run the school canteen?**

(Last edited: Thursday, 9 March 2017, 9:15 AM)

**Answer:**

Please see the attached document from WASCA for options on running the school canteen.

 [2016-09-21-Food-service-options-for-schools-fact-sheet.pdf](#)

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Does the schools insurance cover money, uniforms and canteen stock owned by the P&C?**

(Last edited: Thursday, 20 April 2017, 2:59 PM)

**Answer:**

No, the P&C is an independent autonomous body and therefore is required to take out its own insurance cover for these items. This insurance will be in relation to fire, theft, burglary, malicious damage, fusion and water damage. For insurance information, please contact Globe Insurance Services on 0499 968 657.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: Is it necessary for the P&C to have a Canteen Committee to operate the canteen?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:01 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, the P&C is an autonomous body and can determine the manner in which it manages the canteen or uniform shop. Where the P&C chooses not to have a canteen committee or uniform committee a resolution should be made at a general meeting of the P&C to identify which body or person/s are responsible for the day to day management of the canteen/uniform shop. This can be a financial member of the P&C appointed to carry out this task or the Executive Committee can be given this responsibility.

In both instances the P&C should determine (by resolution at a general meeting), the type of reporting required, for example the presentation of a written statement of receipts and expenditure, up-to-date bank reconciliation statement and a copy of relevant bank statement/s balance sheet to each P&C meeting. An annual statement of receipts and expenditure and profit and loss must be prepared annually and all books passed to the P&C Treasurer for audit by the Association's honorary auditor.

The P&C should also establish the roles and responsibilities in relating to the canteen or uniform shop management by either the Executive Committee or the person appointed for this task. Where a person is appointed to carry out this task a "job description" and a title such as "Canteen/Uniform Coordinator" should be established for that person. The Executive Committee must provide minutes of its meetings to the next general meeting of the P&C for adoption/ratification of any decisions made. This would include those meetings called specifically for canteen management.

WACSSO recommends that where possible a canteen committee be formed and terms of reference adopted. Refer to WACSSO website [www.wacssso.wa.edu.au](http://www.wacssso.wa.edu.au) for information and terms of reference for standing committees.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: Is it necessary for the school principal to be a member of an interview panel to select a paid P&C employee?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:59 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, the P&C or the committee responsible for operating the relevant facility at the school should determine the composition of any panel. The school principal as a member of the P&C and the Executive Committee can be invited to be a member of the panel but it is not mandatory.

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Should the canteen sub-committee provide a report to the P&C Meetings?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:17 PM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, the canteen sub-committee convener should provide a written report/overview of the activities of the canteen containing recommendations where relevant to menu changes, employees, opening times etc. This report should contain a statement of receipts and expenditure, up-to-date bank reconciliation and a copy of the most recent bank statement. A statement of receipts and expenditure and profit and loss must be prepared annually and all books passed to the P&C Treasurer for audit by the Association's honorary auditor.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: What is the role of the principal of the school at a P&C meeting in regard to the management of the canteen?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:53 PM)**

**Answer:**

The School Education Act 1999 states the school principal is an ex officio member of the P&C and the Executive Committee. The principal has the same voting and speaking rights at a P&C and Executive Committee meeting as any other financial or elected member. Where the P&C manages the canteen, the P&C may form a canteen committee. All standing committees of the P&C must have Terms of Reference to enable them to operate. The P&C may appoint the principal as an ex officio member of these committees. The principal does not have the power to close a P&C canteen and does not have control over the employees of P&C canteen. As long as the P&C canteen adheres to the Healthy Food and Drink Policy advocated by the Department of Education as to goods sold in the canteen the Principal would have no input other than as a member of the P&C or a member of the standing committee formed for that purpose.

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**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: What protective clothing is required for volunteers and staff working in the canteen?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:49 PM)**

**Answer:**

Protective clothing provides a barrier between you and food prepared in the canteen. All staff and volunteers are required to:

1. Wear aprons. Aprons are worn to protect food from the bacteria you may have on your clothes that may have been picked up on your way to the canteen, such as bacteria from animals, people, bushes and vehicles. Aprons also protect your clothing from spills, splashes and squirts.
2. Tie hair back and ensure it is kept away from the face using a hair tie and/or clips – it is a great idea to wear a hat or hair net as well to stop hair falling into food and also prevent fingers touching hair when scratching your head.
3. Wear enclosed footwear, such as sneakers. Shoes with heels or open sandals are not acceptable.

**Question:**

**Canteen and uniform shop: Who can a canteen employee speak to if they have a problem or a grievance?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:10 PM)**

**Answer:**

In the first instance the employee should speak to the canteen committee convenor. It is recommended that:

- the P&C and/or the Canteen Committee develop a grievance management process.
- A "Liaison Person" is appointed to liaise with the paid canteen staff and the canteen sub-committee and/or P&C.
- A job description be established for this position and be adopted by the P&C at a General Meeting.

If the P&C has elected a canteen sub-committee to carry out the management of the canteen, the P&C President is the "principal employer at law" and any paid or voluntary canteen staff may approach the President with any work related issues. The P&C President is an ex-officio member of all committees of the P&C and must be notified of time and dates of meetings. It is important that the P&C President is kept up to date on the activities of all P&C committees. All committees of the P&C must report to all general and/or Executive Committee meetings of the P&C in the manner determined by the P&C.

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Who officially should be in the canteen?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:22 PM)**

**Answer:**

The only people who should be in the canteen whilst food is being prepared or when students are being served are the paid employees and those volunteers on roster to work in the canteen for the day. It is not appropriate for P&C members and school staff to be in the canteen to pick up documentation or to sign cheques whilst the canteen staff and volunteers are preparing food or serving students.

P&C Executive members and members of the canteen sub-committee, including the canteen sub-committee convenor, should not make a habit of "dropping in" to the canteen during working hours. Any instructions or information should be given to the canteen staff prior to the opening of the canteen or after the canteen is closed. It is best to make an appointment with the canteen staff for a suitable time to discuss relevant issues.

These guidelines are insurance and Occupational Safety & Health requirements to cover any claims that arise from within the canteen.

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Are P&Cs obligated to run the school canteen and the school uniform shop?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 2:19 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, these are business ventures and there is no obligation for a P&C to operate them. If the P&C chooses to concentrate on other fundraising options and get together to discuss educational topics of interest to stay involved in the school community, this is acceptable. The *School Education Act 1999* recognises P&Cs as a forum where anyone interested in the welfare of government schools can meet to discuss educational issues. This means a P&Cs place in a school should be valued regardless of whether they operate the canteen or uniform shop. In saying this, many schools support P&Cs that are willing to operate a viable business successfully.

**Question:**

**Canteen and Uniform Shop: Do canteen workers require a Working with Children Check (WWC)?**

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:48 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, the WWCC does apply to paid and voluntary canteen workers. The only exemption for this is if they are a **parent** to a child at the school in which they are working. This includes step-parents, legal guardians and 'de-facto' parents. However, the P&C can request all workers in the canteen or uniform shop obtain a WWCC as part of a P&C policy requirement.

**Question:**

**Canteen: Who can run the school canteen?**

(Last edited: Thursday, 9 March 2017, 9:21 AM)

**Answer:**

Please see the attached document from WASCA for options on running the school canteen.

 [2016-09-21-Food-service-options-for-schools-fact-sheet.pdf](#)

**Question:**

**Correspondence: Can the P&C President write and send letters on behalf of the P&C Association?**

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:32 AM)

**Answer:**

No, the P&C usually directs the P&C Secretary to write and send letters on behalf of the P&C. If the P&C has a Secretary who is happy to write the minutes but does not feel confident about putting together a letter then it is acceptable to direct the President to write the letter. A P&C President must be able to take the initiative if a P&C resolution has not been carried out by an office bearer. A lack of action by an office bearer could be detrimental to the P&C as a whole and the P&C President can ask for greater accountability from P&C office bearers. The P&C President cannot send out letters in the name of the P&C either if it has not been authorised by the P&C in some way.



**Question:**

**Correspondence:** Can the P&C Secretary write letters on behalf of the P&C without first obtaining the permission of the P&C?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:16 AM)

**Answer:**

No, any correspondence forwarded on behalf of the P&C and signed by the P&C President should be endorsed communication by a General Committee Meeting of the P&C. If the matter is of an urgent nature then an Executive Committee Meeting called giving 48 hours' notice can address the issue and issue approval.

**Question:**

**Correspondence:** Can the Principal edit and change something the P&C submits in the school newsletter?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:36 AM)

**Answer:**

The school newsletter is distributed by the school therefore the Principal can determine what will appear. If the P&C wish to mail information directly to parents then the school would not have control over the content, but this does not have practical ramifications, as parent's addresses and personal details held at the school are confidential. Any letter distributed through the classroom to parents must have the administration's approval so consider the positive benefits of working together.

**Question:**

**Correspondence:** Does all correspondence of the P&C, including letters from any of its sub-committees, have to be signed by the President of the P&C?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:07 AM)

**Answer:**

It is important that the President of the P&C is aware of any correspondence sent out in the name of the P&C. The P&C Constitution Rule 11.1 states that the P&C Secretary is responsible for all correspondence of the P&C. The President should sight, and where possible sign, all correspondence that goes out however the P&C Secretary is able to sign letters on behalf of the P&C with the President's approval. Conveners of sub-committees or individual members do not have the authority to write or sign letters on behalf of the P&C unless given authority through the sub-committee's Terms of Reference or by the general committee. Where a P&C sub-committee wishes to send out their own correspondence the General or Executive Committee of the P&C must give their approval and it must sighted by either the P&C President or the P&C Secretary.

**Question:**

**Correspondence:** How should the P&C handle anonymous correspondence?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:02 AM)

**Answer:**

Any correspondence received by the P&C that is unsigned should simply be ignored and most definitely not tabled at any meeting of the P&C or Executive committee. The letter should not be circulated by members of the P&C or in the school community. This type of correspondence can only cause conflict within the P&C, especially if the letter contains statements regarding another member of the P&C. It is a good idea for P&Cs to establish a complaints management process to deal with complaints or conflict between P&C members.

Based on the legislation (*School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000*), the Department of Education has policies in place that identify processes whereby parents and members of the school community can lodge legitimate complaints about principals and teaching staff. The P&C is not the forum for disgruntled parents to express their complaints about the management of the school verbally or written (signed or anonymous). This applies to P&C email accounts where signed correspondence in and out is accepted. Printed out emails should be tabled and noted as correspondence received.

**Question:**

### Correspondence: Who should open the P&C mail?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 9:56 AM)

**Answer:**

The P&C Secretary should open all P&C mail, regardless of whom it is addressed to unless it is marked 'Private' or 'Confidential'. Examples of mail that would be marked 'Private' or 'Confidential' could include employee information or police checks that should only be viewed by the recipient.

All other mail entered, as received mail in the correspondence ledger by the P&C Secretary should be noted as passed on to the person intended.

**E****Question:**

### Election: Does a person have to be present at a P&C Meeting to nominate for a position on the P&C executive or sub-committees?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:39 PM)

**Answer:**

No, however they do need to be aware of that the nomination will take place. It is important that the person nominating another person for a position on the P&C is present at the meeting. This enables the person to vote should an election be required for the position. If it is impossible for a person to attend the meeting then it is preferable that they indicate in writing to the President prior to the meeting that they are willing to accept a position should they be nominated and elected.

**Question:**

### Employees: How much do we pay our canteen employee?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:10 PM)

**Answer:**

WACSSO is not legally permitted to give specific employment information.

Contact the Department of Commerce on 9222 7700 or [www.commerce.wa.gov.au](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au) or alternatively the FairWork Ombudsman can be contacted on 13 1394 or [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) for guidelines on the federal wage structure. The P&C, as employers, need must make sure they pay their employees the correct wage allowance. This will depend on the trading capacity of the P&C as a business as to whether they pay their employees a state or federal award.

**Question:**

**Employees: What are the conditions of employment a P&C should consider?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:12 PM)**

**Answer:**

This is a complex question and does require expert advice. The WACSSO P&C Employment Guide online at [www.wacssso.wa.edu.au](http://www.wacssso.wa.edu.au) is available for P&Cs to download a wide variety of employment information and templates. Many Department of Commerce documents and templates are available for P&Cs to utilise and adjust according to their individual business needs. Contacting the Department of Commerce on their Wageline 1300 655 266 offers expert advice and up to date information, especially on workplace relations.

Importantly P&Cs should seek professional advice before acting, especially in when in doubt. Time, money and good business relationships could be in jeopardy if not acted on correctly.

**Question:**

**Executive: What do we do when an Office Bearer resigns?**

**(Last edited: Monday, 26 June 2017, 1:59 PM)**

**Answer:**

## First: Don't Panic!

Next: If one of your Office Bearers (President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer) resigns the following action should take place :

### **Immediately:**

- Request the resignation in writing (an email will suffice).
- The Vice-President should preside at meetings until a President is elected (see Constitution Rule 10.0)
- Contact the bank immediately and have the relevant Office Bearer removed as a signatory.
- Change any common passwords the P&C executive uses and request bank security tokens/code generators (email, bank etc) be returned.
- Request all records and documents held by the Office Bearer be returned as required under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2015 (Part 4, Div. 1)*
- Request any other P&C materials be returned e.g. badges, ID lanyards etc
- If it is the President that has resigned, then nominate another member of the Executive (preferably the Treasurer) to be the primary contact for employees until the role is filled. The employees should be contacted and informed of the resignation and the interim arrangements.
- If it is the President that has resigned, then nominate an Executive member to fulfill their ex-officio role on sub-committees.

### **Before the first General Meeting (or Special General Meeting) after the resignation:**

- Advertise the position widely (newsletter, Facebook, School App).
- Ask the Principal for assistance in promoting the position and its importance to the school community.
- Give 7 days notice of the meeting.
- Place on the agenda: 1) Correspondence in: Email resignation from (Name) – outgoing P&C (Role).  
2) An item on the agenda 'Elections' and a sub-item under that 'P&C (Role)'.

### **At the first General Meeting (or Special General Meeting) after the resignation:**

- Hold the election and take the meeting minutes to the bank to add the new signatory.
- Advise the Principal of the details of the newly elected Office Bearer.
- Advise WACSSO of the details of the newly elected Office Bearer.

F

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can a P&C ask for accountability and billing from school prior to donating?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:45 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, it is fine for a P&C to ask the school for an initial bill or quote before donating money. For example, in a case where a P&C intends to contribute half of the cost of a new playground, with the school contributing the other half, it is perfectly reasonable to wait until the bill has arrived and an actual amount is known before a contribution is given.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can a P&C member vote on a decision from which they stand to gain financially?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:24 AM)**

**Answer:**

If a member of a P&C is involved in a fundraising project and their business stands to gain financial benefit from that project should they be allowed to vote in decisions made for that project? If the P&C is deciding whether to make a financial commitment to a project should their vote count or would it be seen as influencing a decision for their own benefit?

This is a clear conflict of interest and must be addressed if the member does not declare themselves as impartial.

Specific obligations stated with respect to members of the Committee, is they must:

- declare any direct or indirect personal or pecuniary interest in a contract or proposed contract [*Associations Incorporation Act, Section 21(1)*]. The committee member is also not allowed to participate in any discussions or voting relating to such a contract [*Associations Incorporation Act, Section 22(1)*].
- make sure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the P&C Association fulfills its legal obligations under the *Associations Incorporation Act, Section 42*.

Failure to comply with any of these requirements may result in a fine of \$500. It is therefore important that members of the Executive Committee are aware of both their own and the P&C's legal obligations under the *Associations Incorporation Act*.

Ballot voting on these issues is recommended so that all members feel free to vote accordingly.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can individual members, including the President, of a P&C make financial decisions alone?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:37 AM)**

**Answer:**

No, all financial decisions must be made at an Executive or General meeting as a collective body passed by a vote with an 'absolute majority'. A P&C Association should actively involve or seek the school community opinion prior to making large financial decisions as best practice.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can P&C money be used to fund P&C social functions, gifts or staff farewells?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:41 AM)**

**Answer:**

WACSSO supports the legal stance that P&C money should not be used to fund social functions for P&C members, gifts or staff farewells. As an incorporated association your P&C is governed by the rules of the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 which states that "The property and income of the association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects or purposes of the association and no part of that property or income may be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of the association, except in good faith in the promotion of those objects or purposes".

The School Education Act 1999 clearly states that "An association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise than for the benefit of students at a government school".

A suggestion to overcome this issue is for a P&C to advertise and hold a fundraiser and advertise that the purpose is so the P&C bank the money raised to purchase the occasional bereavement card, farewell flowers, plaque or gift. The P&C would need to motion any purchases and list them in the Treasurers reconciliation presented to the general members for accountability. This would be a fair and equitable way of undertaking any purchases of this nature and still abide within the regulations. If your P&C choose to spend some of this specially raised money to have a thank you morning tea or barbecue for your volunteers, the expenditure is transparently accountable to all parents in the school community assisting to maintain the P&Cs legal obligations. All decisions to spend this specially raised money would require a correctly ratified motion passed within a General Meeting.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can P&Cs use internet banking?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:32 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, WACSSO has determined that the process of electronic payments (Internet Banking) satisfies the requirements of P&C Constitution Rule 12.4 and 12.5, provided there are two separate members logging on with passwords, and no individual person can make payments without the second authorisation. Those two members logging on with passwords must be authorised signatories as per Constitution rule 12.5. A third person registered to be a signatory is advisable in case one member is unavailable. This has become an efficient method of banking for P&Cs and secure options are available through many banking institutions.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can the P&C pay accounts or reimburse people by cash?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:50 AM)**

**Answer:**

No, Section 12.4 of the P&C Constitution states that all payments must be made by cheque or similar type, to allow for accountability and transparency for auditing purposes, the P&C should not deal in cash transactions other than petty cash.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can the P&C Treasurer give a verbal financial report to the P&C meeting?**

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:59 AM)

**Answer:**

No, a written report is a Constitutional requirement (Rule 12.8) and P&Cs should ensure proper accountability of their financial affairs. WACSSO recommends that all financial reports be in writing and contain a statement of receipts and expenditure, up-to-date bank reconciliation statement and a copy of the relevant bank statements. This would include the P&C general account and where relevant, from those committees which handle money and have their own bank account such as Canteen, Uniform, or fundraising committee. All P&C money-handling processes need to be accountable and transparent.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can the P&C use a debt collection agency to recoup money?**

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:31 AM)

**Answer:**

There is nothing to stop a P&C from using a debt collection agency, though it would be preferable that it did not get to this stage. Before you take this step, you need to look at the process used when distributing fundraising items. If items are sent home without the parents consenting to accept them as part of a fundraising exercise then, in law, they may be seen to be an unsolicited gift and you may not have legal recourse to get them (or your money) back. If the parents have signed for them and agreed to take them knowing they are a fundraiser and must be paid for or returned unsold, then you do have the law on your side.

Remember, also, that debt collection agencies charge up to 50% of the money they recoup. It may not be worthwhile taking this extreme step. Best practice within P&C businesses such as a canteen or uniform shop is a "No Credit Policy" therefore not extending or offering credit in any format regardless the client.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can the School Registrar be the auditor for the P&C?**

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:26 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes, provided there is no conflict of interest. The P&C Constitution requires the auditor is someone “preferably with appropriate qualifications” so it is up to the P&C to decide if they are suitable. Consider asking a registrar from another local school to do the auditing process as an alternative.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Can the school's auditors ask to view the P&Cs books?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:29 AM)**

**Answer:**

No, the P&C Association's books of account, including those of any sub-committees are not part of the school's financial records and are therefore not subject to audit by the school's auditors. However, the P&C must supply the Principal with a copy of the audited financial statement according to the School Education Act 1999 Section 147(b) and P&C Constitution Rule 12.9 and this report should demonstrate that best practice is being undertaken by the P&C with their financial affairs.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Do P&C Associations need to have their books audited?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:12 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, the P&C Constitution states the P&C books are to be audited annually by an appropriately qualified person (Rule 14.1). The School Education Act 1999 Section 147 and the P&C Constitution Rule 12.9 requires that the P&C give the Principal and WACSSO a copy of the audited annual financial statements. The P&C Treasurer should ensure that any audit of the P&C books of account include all sub-committees where money is handled, for example canteen, uniform shop, pre-primary, fundraising or any other committee created. All these books need to be audited at the same time and by the same person or persons to give an operational overview of the whole of the P&Cs finances.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Does our P&C Association need to register with the Australian Charities and Not-for profit Commission (ACNC)?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:55 AM)**



**Answer:**

It is not compulsory to register with the ACNC however it is recommended. By registering with the ACNC, the P&C is exempt from paying income tax, are able to apply for other charity tax benefits and have the opportunity to apply for both state and commonwealth grants. Registered P&C Associations are required to submit the Annual Information Statement requested by the ACNC each year. Only medium sized (annual revenue > \$250,000 and less than 1 million) and large sized (annual revenue > 1 million) associations are required to submit a financial statement. After the AGM, your P&C Association will need to update the responsible person information and contact details via the ACNC portal. You will still need to update details with the Australian Taxation Office.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Does the P&C Treasurer have to give a receipt for money received?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:53 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, the P&C Treasurer must issue a receipt for *all* money received including membership subscriptions, or donations. It is important that the P&C adopt a standard process for all fundraising activities. This includes the procedure for collecting, counting and banking the money and the persons involved should sign a receipt to verify the amount collected. Any large sums of money handed to the P&C Treasurer should be counted in front of the person handing over the money and a receipt given, even if it is for a fundraising event. All receipts need to meet the taxation standards and requirements.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Does the P&C Treasurer have to have accounting skills to take on the role?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:52 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, it is advisable when the P&C accepts a nomination for their P&C Treasurer they ask for someone with suitable skills or qualifications in this area. This role is not one to be undertaken lightly as the Treasurer is responsible for all the P&C finances and they need to be fully conversant with legal and constitutional obligations and responsibilities prior to applying for the position. A nomination accepted simply because a member has put up their hand could have a detrimental effect on the P&C. Their lack of skills and knowledge can be stressful for the nominee who has all good intent. The result could be a P&C being in financial difficulties and disarray very easily. All members are responsible for lack of accountability and decision-making as members all have an equal vote. Advertise the need for suitable attributes, background skills, and the availability to do the role. A P&C needs someone who can provide continuity, stability and clarity with all they undertake, very similar to other roles within the P&C.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: Does the P&C Treasurer have to personally bank P&C money or can this be delegated to another person?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:06 AM)**

**Answer:**

The P&C Treasurer is responsible for the safety of money received and should ensure that it is deposited with the bank as soon as possible after it is received. The responsibility for counting and banking the money from the canteen and the uniform shop can be delegated to another person. For this to happen the P&C Treasurer, the P&C Executive Committee or the relevant sub-committee, must identify this person and put a process in place, to ensure due diligence is undertaken by establishing a job description for this task. If the P&C has insurance to cover money, check the terms of the policy as many stipulate that money must be banked on the next working day, or the cover is not valid. Try to avoid holding money on Friday when you are unable to get to the bank until Monday. Circumstances can vary according to the P&Cs location and ease of accessibility to a banking facility is not always possible, for example remote locations.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: How can I easily view our P&C Bank Statements?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:02 AM)**

**Answer:**

Any member of the P&C is permitted to view any documents or accounts of the P&C Association, however sometimes it becomes difficult to view the bank statements as the Treasurer may not have them handy or you may feel uncomfortable asking for fear of implying that you do not trust the Treasurer. A suggestion recommended by one of our P&Cs is to apply for Internet Banking, you can set it so that certain people have 'view only' rights and this way the statements can be viewed easily and without having to wait for the Treasurer.

It is crucial that members know the true financial situation of the Association and therefore ask questions of the Treasurer if they do not understand a report and that the bank statements reflect the Treasurer's report. If you are a Treasurer and are questioned in this fashion, don't take it as doubting your ability or honesty, rather that the members understand the importance of your role and ensuring that the P&C funds are being spent to benefit students attending Government Schools.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: How do I ensure the Tax Office can speak to my P&C's representative?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:36 AM)**

**Answer:**

The Australian Tax Office needs to know when certain changes occur with the P&C.

They include changes that might occur to:

- The legal or trading name;
- Postal, email or business address;
- Authorised contact person;
- Associate details (including public officer, director, office bearer, partner or trustee);
- Main business activity; or
- Financial institution account details.

As many non-profit organisations elect office bearers for an annual term, the authorised contact people often change from year to year. To assist the tax office protect the organisation's privacy and provide office bearers with access to the information they require to perform their duties, the tax office ask that non-profits and other organisations notify them when there has been a change of office bearers authorised to make enquiries about the organisation's tax affairs.

To do this, you can contact the ATO on 132869 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. You will need to provide proof of identity requirements. For further information regarding these, read the page "Ensure we can speak to your organisation's representatives" at [www.ato.gov.au/non-profit](http://www.ato.gov.au/non-profit)

Alternatively, you can change your organisation's ABN registration details online through ABN lookup at [www.abn.business.gov.au](http://www.abn.business.gov.au). To be able to change your organisation's details online, your P&C will need register for the ATOs online services. If you want to register, go to [www.ato.gov.au/onlineservices](http://www.ato.gov.au/onlineservices).

**Question:**

**Financial Matters: How do I include the canteen employees' wages in my P&C Treasurer's report while maintaining confidentiality?**

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:46 AM)

**Answer:**

How do I include the canteen employees' wages in my P&C Treasurer's report while maintaining confidentiality?

You can group all wages related outgoings under a single heading entitled "Employment Expenses" or similar. This can include superannuation, refunds of employee expenses, holiday pay, wages etc. It is important that no names be used. This will ensure confidentiality for employees.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** Is it appropriate for a school to make an assumption of receiving funds from the P&C Association when compiling the school budget?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:57 AM)

**Answer:**

One of the objects of a P&C Association, as stated in the *School Education Act 1999*, is “to assist in the provision of resources, facilities and amenities for the school”. However, this is not the only object of a P&C Association and many P&Cs do not undertake any fundraising at all. It is becoming increasingly difficult for any community-based organisations to recruit volunteers and raise funds. Therefore, any monies that a P&C donates to the school for purchases should be considered a bonus. Consider also that fundraising is an unreliable income and it would be unrealistic for a school to rely on this income as part of their school budget. The P&C would be placed under undue pressure and stress if they committed to any large ongoing amounts of funds.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** Is the P&C required to get (3) quotes for any purchases it makes and present them at a general meeting?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:42 AM)

**Answer:**

No, but this is common policy for many organisations and can be discussed and introduced as a standard P&C Policy requirement. It is also possible to introduce an expenditure limit, within a Terms of Reference applicable to P&C quotes, stating how they wish the P&C committee to undertake seeking quotations. Quotes would be dependent on the type of purchase, operational or otherwise. For operational expenses, the P&C might set a limit for decisions, so large expenses might require the full P&C approval. Reporting accountability is still required as standard practice by any sub-committee or the Executive. The majority of decisions would require P&C approval before any expenditure is made.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** Should P&C's run their uniform shop and canteen as a business?

(Last edited: Thursday, 9 March 2017, 9:17 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes, best business practice is not to overstock the uniform shop or canteen. Only carry enough stock for immediate business needs. Price items to make a sufficient profit to cover costs and future expenses, keep good records, provide correct receipts according to the ATO requirements, insure stock in case of loss or damage, bank all monies taken in a timely manner and have set procedures for operation of the uniform shop and the canteen. Adhere to staff requirements and be conversant with any legal guidelines. Have a 'Terms of Reference' (operational guidelines for accountability and transparency) for the sub-committee of the uniform shop and canteen committee to follow.

**Question:**

Financial Matters: The Executive Committee is not satisfied with the Auditor's report, can the P&C seek a second opinion?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:13 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes, the Executive or General Meeting of the P&C can put a motion for this request.

**Question:**

Financial Matters: The P&C Association is holding considerable funds in the bank account, what should be done with the money?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:04 AM)

**Answer:**

According to the Constitution of the P&C, income shall be spent to 'promote the interests and moral, physical, social and educational welfare of the children of the government school/s in relation to which it is formed". Having lots of money sitting in a bank account does little to promote the interests or education of the children in government schools. WACSSO recommends to P&C Associations that the money is best spent in the year that it is raised. This is a reasonable expectation unless the P&C is saving for a particular purchase, such as a big-ticket item. The school community's expectation is that money raised throughout the year is spent to benefit the current kids in the school, not 'saved for a rainy day'.

**Question:**

Financial Matters: The P&C wants to purchase an item of equipment for the school but would like to avoid paying the GST on this item. Can this be achieved?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:49 AM)

**Answer:**

All schools register for the GST and hence can claim back any GST paid for equipment used within the school. P&Cs can endorse the school to purchase equipment and the school needs to provide a purchase document for the P&C to pay on account. Original accounts or a certified copy needs to be kept by the P&C for auditing and taxation purposes.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** The P&C would like to request parents make a once a year payment to the P&C instead of, or in addition to the usual fundraising events, should it be called a P&C 'Levy' or P&C 'Donation'?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:46 AM)

**Answer:**

The definitions from the Macquarie Dictionary are:

LEVY: "a raising or collecting, as of money or troops, by authority or force"

DONATION: "a gift, as to a fund"

The use of the word "levy" implies a compulsion to pay. The P&C does not have the authority to impose a compulsory payment on the parents of children enrolled at the school. P&Cs should consider advertising the payment as a P&C Contribution as this does not imply compulsion but choice.

Note: This does not apply to the P&C membership subscription. People wishing to be a member of the P&C must pay a subscription not exceeding \$1 (Regulation 124(2)(a), School Education Regulations 2000). Payment of a donation to the P&C does not confer membership on that person.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** What is the correct use of P&C funds?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:37 AM)

**Answer:**

The School Education Act 1999 Section 143 (3) states that "an association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise than for the benefit of students at a government school". The P&C Constitution (Rule 4.1) reiterates this objective. WACSSO does not recommend P&C funds be used to purchase gifts or to provide entertainment for teachers, volunteers, or P&C members but suggests looking at other ways of supporting these particular objectives.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** When the P&C Association holds reserves in their bank account under canteen and uniform accounts is this ok?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:08 AM)

**Answer:**

It is sensible to maintain some funds in these accounts for contingencies, particularly if the P&C Association operates a uniform shop and canteen and employs staff. Employing staff comes with obligations such as annual leave, sick leave, long service leave and then any outstanding operational accounts. Money must be set aside for these obligations as they are mandatory payments. WACSSO suggest that separate accounts are set up for canteen and uniform to offer clarity in reporting.

It is not advisable to tie up large amounts of money in P&C accounts 'for a rainy day' unless it is for a particular purpose. Remember that parents contributing to the funds raised in any year will expect to see that money spent to the benefit of their children while they are attending the school. It is good practice for the P&C Treasurer, together with the P&C Executive, to prepare an annual budget based on expected income and proposed expenditure. This would allow the Executive Committee to determine how much money needs to be set aside for operational contingencies.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** Who can I contact with queries regarding taxation/superannuation for P&C business?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:34 AM)

**Answer:**

Please contact the ATO with all queries relating to taxation and superannuation. Visit [www.ato.gov.au/non-profit](http://www.ato.gov.au/non-profit) or call the non-profit assistance number 1300 130 248. WACSSO office staff are not authorised to provide advice or assistance with matters relating to taxation or superannuation.

**Question:**

**Financial Matters:** Can the P&C donate funds to a charity?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 10:44 AM)

**Answer:**

No, as stated in the School Education Act 1999 Section 143 (3); P&C Constitution Rules 2.2 and 4.1: The School Education Act 1999 Section 143 (3):

That “an association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise than for the benefit of students at a government school”.

**P&C Constitution:**

- 2.2 assisting in the provision of resources, facilities and amenities for the school or group of schools.
- 4.1 The funds of the Association and the property acquired by the Association shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Association and no part of those funds or that property may be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of the Association, provided that nothing herein shall prevent the expenditure in good faith of funds on the administrative costs incurred by the Association.

**Question:**

**Fundraising: Can a P&C decide the terms and conditions of the fundraising raffle they want to run?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:43 PM)**

**Answer:**

No. All raffles run by the P&C Association fall under the regulations of the Gaming and Wagering Commission Act 1987. Different rules apply to different types of lotteries. You may need a permit.

Any queries relating to raffles, lotteries and gaming can be directed to the Dept. of Racing, Gaming and Liquor.  
[www.rgl.wa.gov.au](http://www.rgl.wa.gov.au)

**Question:**

**Fundraising: Can P&Cs use the ‘Points System’ for distributing funds raised?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:46 PM)**



**Answer:**

The 'Points System' is where the children of parent helpers are rewarded more than those children whose parents are unable to help, e.g. in the case of raising money for school camps or excursions, students whose parents have volunteered time would receive greater funding toward the activity than those who have not.

P&Cs must adhere to the P&C Constitution and the Education Act 1999. The constitution states (Section 143 (3) "An Association is not to expend its funds that are in excess of administrative costs otherwise for the benefit of students at a government school." WACSSO would therefore not recommend the 'Point System' as it doesn't reflect this objective.

Money raised by the P&C should be distributed *equally*. If a group of parents wish to raise money under the P&C banner, they must also abide by the rules of the Association. They must be P&C financial members and WACSSO would recommend that a Sub Committee be formed and Terms of Reference be adopted. Their fundraising activities will then be covered by insurance. Any fundraising decisions must be ratified by the General Committee.

**Question:**

**Fundraising: How many fundraising events can the P&C hold in a calendar year?**

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:42 PM)

**Answer:**

There is no restriction on how many events the P&C can hold. WACSSO recommends P&Cs hold a variety of types of events and to try to run effective events that give good return.

P&Cs should only hold as many events as they can comfortably manage, as each undertaking relies on a considerable amount of time and energy donated by members and volunteers. Burn out is a real risk and can jeopardise future goodwill of P&C members.

I

**Question:**

**Insurance: Are P&C members and other volunteers covered if they have an accident while volunteering for the P&C?**

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:52 AM)

**Answer:**

Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance coverage is included with WACSSO affiliation fees. This is only for volunteers acting on behalf of the P&C, but they do not have to be members of the P&C to be covered.

**Question:**

**Insurance: Can a P&C create fundraising event policies?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:49 AM)**

**Answer:**

Policies that relate to the safety and responsibility of children at fundraising events could conflict with the P&C's Public Liability insurance coverage. Best practice is check with your insurer, anything conflicting with your insurance policy could make the P&C openly liable. Rather than creating event policies consider supplying a consent form parents must sign if they wish their child to attend an event. The form should describe the event and what safeguards are in place. Any children with medical conditions or any special needs would need to have their parent attend the event themselves to supervise their child. A disclaimer should be included on the form exonerating the P&C from any expenses, claims or responsibility if there was an accident. The signed copies should be taken to the event and later stored away for a period of at least 12 months in case of any possible disputes

**Question:**

**Insurance: Does the school's insurance cover money, uniforms and canteen stock owned by the P&C?**

**(Last edited: Thursday, 20 April 2017, 3:00 PM)**

**Answer:**

No. The P&C is an independent autonomous body and as a business is required to take out its own insurance cover for these items. As each P&Cs insurance needs will vary it is recommended that affiliated P&Cs contact WACSSO for information or the WACSSO insurer Globe Insurance Services on 0499 968 657.0 for quotes and enquires.

**Question:**

**Insurance: How can the P&C get hold of its Certificate of Insurance?**

**(Last edited: Thursday, 20 April 2017, 3:00 PM)**

**Answer:**

Please call Globe Insurance Services on 0499 968 657.to obtain the Certificate of Currency for your P&C. It is also important that the P&C approve all fundraising events at a meeting to ensure that the activities are covered by the P&Cs public liability insurance. Approved events must be recorded in the P&C meeting minutes.

**Question:**

**Insurance: Is Public Liability Insurance as provided through affiliation with WACSSO the same as Workers' Compensation (WorkCover)?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:51 AM)**

**Answer:**

No, these are quite different types of insurance. When a P&C chooses to affiliate with WACSSO and pays the affiliation fee, it accesses Public Liability Insurance currently to the value of \$20 Million dollars (\$20m). In May each year, P&Cs will receive information on canteen stock, uniform and WorkCover insurance and an invitation to take up these insurances with WACSSO's Insurance Broker.

Canteen stock insurance covers: Fire and extraneous perils, spoilage of goods, burglary and money.

WorkCover Insurance also known as Workers' Compensation is compulsory for all employers to hold for all their employees.

**Question:**

**Insurance:** My P&C is holding a fete where a number of stall holders will be running games, rides and selling food and drink. Does the Public Liability Insurance we hold, as part of our affiliation with WACSSO, cover these stall holders?

(Last edited: Friday, 3 July 2015, 11:55 AM)

**Answer:**

No. Each stall holder will require their own Public Liability Insurance and you should seek a Certificate of Currency from each one prior to the event going ahead.

**Question:**

**Insurance:** What issues are involved in my P&C offering personal accident insurance to parents for their children?

(Last edited: Thursday, 20 April 2017, 3:01 PM)

**Answer:**

P&Cs cannot offer insurance to parents directly and there is no personal insurance offered or approved by the Department of Education. Globe Insurance Services advise that P&Cs can make parents aware of any insurance product available to them; however the parent must contact the insurer direct and make their own decision. Insurance brokerage is not within the role of the P&C

**M**

**Question:**

**Meeting:** Do members have to be present at a P&C Meeting to vote?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:28 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, the P&C Constitution Rule 18.1 states that financial and ex officio members present at a meeting are entitled to vote. There is no mention of proxy voting in the Constitution. Today people are able to be present at a meeting remotely by teleconference, via Skype or video conference with the introduction of new technology this enables this to take place. The guidelines for this procedure is that the Chairperson must mention that a member will participate remotely identify them when they are present and it must be mentioned in the minutes when they are present, via what medium, stating what time they entered the meeting. It is important they are present for the whole time for an important decision on a particular topic, the whole discussion and the voting procedure for transparency. They should be able to ask questions the same as every other member if required throughout the discussion. If challenged all members can see they were able to make an informed decision prior to voting. It should be noted in the minutes when they leave the meeting and note whether the quorum changes and adjust the meeting accordingly.

**Question:**

**Meetings: At which meeting are the minutes of the AGM adopted?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:07 PM)**

**Answer:**

The AGM minutes should be adopted at the next P&C General Meeting held after the AGM. The minutes of the last P&C General Meeting can be tabled and adopted at the AGM.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Can resolutions carried at a P&C meeting be rescinded?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:19 PM)**

**Answer:**

Resolutions can be rescinded in two ways either at the same meeting where it was passed or at a later meeting of the P&C.

To rescind a resolution at the same meeting:

A motion be put to the meeting "That resolution ..... be rescinded". For this motion to be passed it would require a two-thirds majority vote of the financial members present at the meeting.

To rescind a resolution at a later meeting:

The financial member wishing to rescind a resolution is required to give notice in writing to the President of the P&C, not less than 7 days prior to the next meeting of their intention to move to rescind. A motion "That resolution .....be rescinded". For this motion to be passed it would require a simple majority vote of financial members present at the meeting.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Can the P&C insist that the Principal and teachers attend meetings and give reports?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:30 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, the Principal is an ex officio member of the P&C and has the right to attend any meeting of the P&C meetings if they wish and has all the rights of a financial member. All teachers may join the P&C as financial members, they need to keep in mind any conflict of interest when participating in the decision making process. Neither the Principal nor teachers are obliged to give reports at P&C meetings.

The Principal is only required to be a financial member if they wish to be counted in the quorum of a General Meeting otherwise it is not required for them to participate at Executive or General Meetings.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Can the P&C place a notice in the school newsletter of its upcoming AGM?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 2:39 PM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, seven (7) days' notice of the AGM required and advertising in the school newsletter is sufficient. Because the newsletter belongs to the school, the Principal's approval must be gained first.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Can the Principal edit and change P&C Meeting minutes?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:11 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, the P&C minutes are the responsibility of the P&C Secretary to produce in a clear unbiased and professional manner. If for some reason the correct process is not being undertaken the P&C Executive or WACSSO can suggest appropriate changes before distribution to the general P&C members.

A P&C Secretary needs to produce minutes that are generic, with no names attached, with unbiased content that conveys a general overview of the topic discussed, states a motion, the outcome of the motion and if any action is to take place. At this point names used will indicate who will undertake the action. The ramifications of inappropriate minutes can result in extreme cases legal action, loss of membership, breach of confidentiality, privacy and dissent within the P&C. If a P&C Secretary is uncertain of correct minute taking procedures then WACSSO have many resources and P&C training freely available to affiliated P&C members. The positive benefits of undertaking a role bearers tasks correctly is the mainstay of working together as a P&C.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Do the minutes of a P&C executive meeting have to be circulated to all the financial and ex officio members?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 2:30 PM)**

**Answer:**

Best practice is that P&C executive minutes are circulated at least 7 days prior to a scheduled general meeting. Financial and ex officio members of the P&C should be given the opportunity to read the minutes of an executive committee meeting prior to a scheduled general meeting at which they will be adopted. The P&C should decide on the method of circulating/distributing the executive minutes. The minutes can be posted or emailed to each financial and ex officio member in draft format, pending ratification.

**Question:**

## Meetings: How do P&Cs decide on when they will conduct meetings as an Association?

(Last edited: Monday, 4 May 2015, 3:43 PM)

**Answer:**

In order to retain and encourage new membership, P&Cs need to look at the wider school opinion regarding when to hold meetings and accommodate the general needs as best as possible. Many P&Cs do face the difficult decision whether to have P&C meeting in the evenings or daytime. Having an alternative day and night meeting has the advantage of offering all parents the opportunity to attend a P&C meeting but numbers will be the deciding factor as a quorum is a requirement to hold a legal meeting. Both timeframes have the disadvantage of not meeting the needs of everyone in the school community or the Office Bearers volunteering in the roles. The P&C Constitution 15.1 states 'The Annual General Meeting and General Meetings of the Association shall be held at such times and places as shall be determined by a General Meeting providing that **at least one General Meeting** shall be held in each term of the school year'.

**Question:**

## Meetings: How should voting be undertaken at a P&C meeting?

(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:16 PM)

**Answer:**

Voting should be by a clear show of hands. The Chairperson can ask for either those against or those for the motion to indicate with a show of hands. If a motion is closely contested then an independent person should be asked to count the votes to verify if the motion has been passed or lost. A motion can only be passed with an 'absolute majority' that is 50% plus 1 of a correct quorum of those members present.

**Question:**

## Meetings: Is the P&C able to discuss school policies at P&C meetings?

(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 1:55 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, members of the P&C Association are able to discuss any school policy and make recommendations based on their discussions. The P&C representative on School Council can present any P&C recommendations to the School Council. When discussing school policies avoid being negative and overly critical. Remember to outline alternative solutions to perceived or identified problems. P&C members need to keep in mind that a P&Cs opinion does not change a school policy, as it is the School Council or school board responsibility to make decisions on school policy issues. Parents have elected parent representatives on School Council that they can lobby if they feel strongly enough about an issue. Any management issue is the responsibility of the school principal and these concerns should not arise in P&C meetings. Any parental management concerns need to be taken to the principal through the right school processes and not directed at the principal in a P&C meeting. Prior notice of all agenda items should eliminate controversial issues arising in this forum and it is the Chairperson's responsibility to inform members when a topic needs redirecting.

**Question:**

**Meetings:** Is there a quorum for a general meeting of the P&C Association?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 2:42 PM)

**Answer:**

Is there a quorum for a **general meeting** of the P&C Association?

Yes, according to the current P&C Constitution Rule 17.3 at a general meeting you must have ten (10) financial members present if your school has over 100 students and five (5) financial members if your school has less than 100 students to hold a constitutional P&C meeting. This does not include the Principal unless they have paid the membership fee to the P&C.

**Question:**

**Meetings:** Must every decision of the P&C be voted on by the whole meeting?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:23 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes. Each motion that comes before the P&C meeting must have a mover, seconder and must go to a vote. It is not acceptable to simply have the motion moved and seconded.

**Question:**

**Meetings:** Something has come up on which a decision needs to be made. Can our P&C hold out of session motions by email?

(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:21 PM)

**Answer:**

No, decisions need to be made at an Executive or General Meeting of the P&C and minutes need to be produced and ratified at a General Meeting.

**Question:**

**Meetings:** The Principal is unable to attend a P&C Meeting and sends the deputy principal, who is not a P&C member, in his place. Can the deputy principal vote on recommendations put to the P&C?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 4:02 PM)

**Answer:**

No, there is no allowance in the P&C Constitution for proxy voting. Voting is normally by show of hands, so a person must be present at a meeting to register a vote. The deputy principal would need to become a financial member of the P&C to be able to vote unless they are acting in the Principals role full time for an extended period of time.

**Question:**

**Meetings:** What are the restrictions on discussion of topics at a P&C meeting?

(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:14 PM)

**Answer:**

It would be inappropriate for a General Meeting to discuss school management issues or any school community individual, parent, student, or school staff member. These should be private discussions held between the parents, the teacher and the Principal. The P&C under the provisions of the School Education Act 1999 precludes them from intervening in the control or management of a school, intervening in the educational instruction of students and exercising authority over the teaching staff or other persons employed at the school other than their own staff. These are the only restrictions, which leaves the field wide open to discuss general education, safety, health issues, matters that have a bearing on the welfare of students as well as a whole range of local, state or national issues that arise. Remember, the P&C is a public forum for parents to discuss the education of their children, and members should be encouraged to embark on wide issue discussions.

**Question:**

## Meetings: What can we do if our P&C meetings are too long?

(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 1:50 PM)

**Answer:**

Some good tips for encouraging more timely meetings:

- Having properly debated discussions, using the *Rules of Debate*, can limit meetings from going over timeframe and might suit the majority of members.
- Keep to the agenda and any new topics are discussed only if time allows otherwise they are placed on the next meeting's agenda (this gives others time to consider the topics).
- Have a Chairperson who controls the flow of the meeting so it finishes on time.
- Limit the agenda items to a set number as this allows each item to be given the consideration they deserve.
- Advertise the timeframe of the meeting and keep to it. Members will thank the Chairperson and new members can make an informed decision if they are able to come along.
- The Executive can meet to discuss the agenda items prior to advertising the meeting to check if research is completed for all topics and documentation will be available for the meeting. Are the topics are valid for P&Cs to discuss or do they need referring to the appropriate source.
- Consider having a timekeeper at meetings to remind members if they are monopolizing the meetings and not giving all members a fair opportunity to speak.

**Question:**

## Meetings: What happens when the Chairperson loses control of a meeting or when there is disagreement between members that inhibits meetings?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 4:01 PM)



**Answer:**

It is important that the Chairperson maintain control of the meeting at all times. Having an agenda, meeting format, meeting procedures and a 'Code of Conduct' for members will give tools for the Chairperson to utilise and implement for meeting control. The Chairperson and P&C members should be familiar with the formal "Rules of Debate and Standing Orders" for P&C Associations in case they are used within a meeting. These are included in all the role bearers' guidebooks, in the WACSSO Constitution and are outlined clearly in the WACSSO Meeting Guidelines booklet available in hard copy or on the WACSSO website.

Where there is a breach of standing orders, the Chairperson may request a member to retract the offensive statement, and may debar that member from taking part in any further debate until the statement be retracted. The Chairperson has the power to close the meeting at any time. The Rules of Debate explain the formalities of how a motion is debated formally, for example speakers for and against, method of address at meetings and amending motions. Unruly meetings should be discouraged and the P&C needs to address and implement formal rules of behaviour as a precedent to set a standard for future meetings.

Individuals choosing to be part of a P&C need to keep sight of the goal of an association which is " assisting the public education of children within the school" and focus their energies being part of a positive team with other like-minded parents. A P&C consists of a wide variety of individual parents that as a team can make a difference to public education.

**Question:**

**Meetings: What is the role of the Principal of the school at a P&C meeting?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:25 PM)**

**Answer:**

The School Education Act 1999 allows the school Principal to be an ex officio member of the P&C and a member of the Executive Committee. The Principal has no more power at a P&C and Executive Committee Meeting than any other member does. Where the P&C manages the canteen, the P&C may form a canteen sub-committee. All sub-committees of the P&C must have terms of reference to enable them to operate. The P&C may appoint the Principal as an ex officio member of these committees. The Principal does not have the power to close the canteen, have control over the employees or dictate what is sold in the canteen as long as it is operated according to the Healthy Food and Drink Policy outlined by the Department of Education. Their input is the same as any member of the P&C or a sub-committee formed for that purpose.

**Question:**

**Meetings: When does the P&C have to hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM)?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 19 June 2015, 2:23 PM)**

**Answer:**

P&C Associations are required to be incorporated which means they are governed by legislation enshrined in the Associations Incorporation Act 1987. Section 23 of this Act refers to the AGM and states "... an incorporated association shall hold an AGM in every calendar year within 4 months after the end of the association's financial year or such longer period as may in a particular case be allowed by the Commissioner."

For the majority of P&Cs the financial year is the calendar year starting on January 1<sup>st</sup> and ending on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the same year. Therefore, these P&Cs must hold an AGM sometime before the end of April in the following year.

P&Cs are able to change the date of their year end and thereby change the date of the AGM. For details on how to do this please contact the WACSSO office for details on the correct process to be undertaken.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Who has speaking, moving and voting rights at meetings of your P&C?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 4:07 PM)**

**Answer:**

Every financial and ex officio member of the P&C present at the meeting. This includes the Principal and all office bearers such as the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. They all have the right to move a motion, speak to a motion, and participate in any debate or discussion. Importantly all can vote on any issue being considered by the P&C. Unfortunately all observers in a meeting, do not have speaking or voting rights, but on request can speak if given the right to by the Chairperson.

The Chairperson should vacate the chair to move a motion, speak for or against an issue or participate in general discussion on any issue, especially if there is any conflict of interest.

The Chairperson does not have to stand aside from chairing for the entire meeting, only that portion dealing with the issue that they wish to have active involvement in. Usually the Vice President would chair the meeting for the time required. However, should the Vice President also wish to be actively involved in the current debate or not be in attendance at the meeting then the meeting can select another chairperson.

Naturally, should any Executive member of the P&C have a vested interest in an issue being considered by the P&C they should declare the nature of the interest and remain impartial by not taking part in the debate or discussion and not voting. Removing themselves from the room to allow for free debate is also required.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Can our P&C hold an out of session meeting by email to make a financial decision?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:21 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, all decisions need to be made at a General or Executive meeting of the P&C and minutes need to be produced and ratified at a General meeting.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Can the P&C have their meetings away from the school?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 4:04 PM)**

**Answer:**

If, for some reason, the meeting of the P&C cannot be held on school grounds, it would be suggested to have the meeting at a local café, restaurant or community hall. It is not suggested that the meetings are held at a P&C member's home as other members might feel they are unable to express their views freely in an unbiased manner. Conducting a P&C meeting in a licensed venue might offend some members and limit their attendance and need to consider the P&C have a duty of care to their members. Outside venues need to be compliant for volunteer insurance coverage.

**Question:**

**Meetings: Do the minutes of a P&C Meeting have to be circulated to all of the financial and ex officio members?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 2:34 PM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, all financial and ex officio members of the P&C must be given the opportunity to read the minutes of a General or Executive Committee Meeting prior to the General meeting at which they are to be adopted. The P&C should decide on the method of distributing the minutes. Once the minutes are adopted, they can be put on the school notice board, P&C or school website etc.

**Question:**

**Membership:** Can members call for a vote of no confidence or vote to remove current office bearers?

(Last edited: Tuesday, 28 April 2015, 3:34 PM)

**Answer:**

The Constitution currently does not allow for the removal of an office bearer. Putting forward a vote of no confidence clearly indicates to an office bearer the lack of support they have in the P&C and they should act accordingly. The P&C should make sure people who are prepared to stand for the office bearer positions at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) are the most suitable. Office bearers need to be fully prepared to undertake their responsibilities and obligations when they take on P&C positions.

**Question:**

**Membership:** Can staff members of the school be members on the P&C Association?

(Last edited: Tuesday, 28 April 2015, 3:28 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, the Principal and staff of the school can be financial members of the P&C Association and can be elected to office bearer and executive position.

**Question:**

**Membership:** When is someone a financial member of a P&C Association?

(Last edited: Tuesday, 28 April 2015, 3:30 PM)

**Answer:**

A person can choose to become a P&C member at any time prior to the start of a P&C meeting.

Financial membership is a requirement of the School Education Regulations 2000 and someone is a member of the P&C once they pay the subscription, which is to be no more than \$1 per member.

Membership of a P&C is required to be renewed at every AGM of the Association. A request for the payment of a P&C voluntary contribution does not include P&C membership. A P&C member is required to pay an individual subscription fee and to register their details to complete their membership.

**Question:**

**Minutes:** Can P&C meeting minutes be ratified by any P&C member?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:17 PM)

**Answer:**

No, only a financial member that was present at the former meeting can accept meeting minutes as a true account of what took place. Amendments if required are accepted prior to the ratification process.

**Question:**

**Miscellaneous: What is the compulsory school leaving age?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:21 PM)**

**Answer:**

The legal leaving age is 16 to 17 years of age as of 2008. The Department of Education has information to assist parents at [www.det.wa.edu.au/participation/detcms/portal](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/participation/detcms/portal)

**Question:**

**Miscellaneous: Can the P&C have their newsletter sponsored?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:20 PM)**

**Answer:**

Your P&C is an incorporated body, so you are autonomous in your decision-making and can decide as a body what is in your newsletter and which organisations you support so long as the newsletter is distributed by email or some other means off the school grounds. If, however, it is distributed on school grounds (and therefore available for the children to read) the school council would need to approve it and the Principal, as the site manager, would have the final say. If the P&C decide to use the school logo on your publication, the Principal could decide to attach conditions to its use.

We recommend writing an advertising and sponsorship policy for the P&C (and of course having the policy ratified by the P&C at a general meeting) and then putting it forward at School Council for approval. If it is not approved and your P&C still decided to retain the policy, your P&C advertising and sponsorship policy would only apply to publications, functions or activities not happening on school grounds or using the school logo. In any case, if and when you do decide to advertise in a newsletter in which the school logo is used, we suggest a disclaimer which makes it clear that the school does not endorse any of the products or services advertised.

**Question:**

**Miscellaneous: Can the P&C send out mail to parents independently from the school?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:18 PM)**

**Answer:**

For the P&C to communicate directly and independently with parents would require the school to provide parents' names and addresses and this breaches the Privacy Act and goes against the Department's guidelines. The school needs to welcome and approve a P&C initiative such as this. The school could encourage the P&C to survey parents independently and could send mail to parents on behalf of the P&C. This would be a way of not breaching the Department's guidelines and the privacy of parents.

**Question:**

Miscellaneous: Does WACSSO offer legal advice and is WACSSO the P&C's governing body?

(Last edited: Thursday, 20 April 2017, 3:02 PM)

**Answer:**

No. WACSSO is your representative voice within Public Education in Western Australia and in the broader community. WACSSO provides advice and often refers P&Cs to other authority bodies e.g. Department of Commerce, Australian Taxation Office, Globe Insurance Services., etc. P&Cs as an incorporated body are required to adhere to the P&C Constitution, the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 and specified areas in the School Education Act 1999.

**Question:**

Miscellaneous: Is it okay for a P&C member to be responsible for students during school hours when they are off school premises?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:16 PM)

**Answer:**

When students are taking part in any activity either on or off school premises, a teacher must be present. Teachers are the only people who have duty of care for the students during school hours and that duty of care is not transferable.

**Question:**

Motion: What is the difference between a meeting "MOTION" and a "RESOLUTION?"

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:47 PM)

**Answer:**

A "**motion**" is simply a formal proposal for action to be taken, it requires approval or it could be an idea or option to be discussed then approved. In other words, if you want the P&C to make a decision about something, an individual needs to put forward a motion. The motion becomes a "**resolution**" once voted on by all the financial members present and it is carried.

O

**Question:**

Office Bearers and Executive: Can an elected Office Bearer of the P&C hold a position on a P&C sub-committee?

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:51 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes. The Secretary, Treasurer or Vice-President can be elected to any of the P&C's sub-committees, e.g.: canteen, uniform and can hold a position such as Convener, Treasurer or Secretary of these committees. The President is an ex officio member of all sub-committees of the P&C. Where there is no sub-committee the P&C may appoint a person to carry out the Treasurer's role on committees where money is handled. This person can also be an elected Office Bearer.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: Can an Office Bearer of the P&C be a paid canteen employee?**

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:59 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes, however WACSSO **STRONGLY discourages this practice**. WACSSO office receives calls from concerned P&C members regarding the unworkable situation where a P&C Office Bearer is the paid canteen manager. If this is happening at your canteen then the P&C needs to make it quite clear to the persons concerned that in relation to the management of the canteen they are employees and not Office Bearers. They must carry out any instructions given to them by the canteen managing body, e.g. canteen sub-committee or the Executive Committee of the P&C. **At no time should they be participating in debate or voting** on issues regarding pay and conditions of canteen employees. If the person is a signatory on P&C accounts then they should not be signing their own pay cheques. It also would not be prudent for this person to hold a voting position on the canteen sub-committee. If they attend canteen sub-committee meetings, it should be in an advisory capacity only.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: Can the position of President be held by more than one person?**

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:34 AM)

**Answer:**

No, the P&C Constitution only allows for one person to hold any position on the Executive Committee including that of President. The composition of the executive committee is for 8 individuals. The role of the vice-president is to understudy the president. Some of the president's tasks can be delegated to the vice-president. The constitution also allows for the vice-president to chair the meeting should the president be absent.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: Can the Principal be an Office Bearer for the P&C?**

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:54 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes. As an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee the Principal has the same rights and responsibilities as any other Executive Committee member. The Principal can propose motions, vote and be elected to sub-committees and Office Bearer positions.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: Can we have a secret ballot for the election of office bearers at the AGM?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:41 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, voting is by a show of hands, unless a ballot is required under the Association's rules, or a ballot has been requested at the meeting. In the case of a ballot, the Chairperson should appoint returning officers e.g. principal and one other person to distribute ballot papers, count the votes and advise the Chairperson of the result.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: How many positions can a financial member hold on the Executive Committee?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:31 AM)**

**Answer:**

The P&C Constitution only allows for one person to be elected to any position on the executive committee. The composition of the executive committee is 8 members made up of the President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, the Vice-President, not less than 3 other financial members and the school principal who is ex-officio.

In some instances in order to fill the positions of Secretary and Treasurer P&Cs may have two people to carry out the duties of these positions. Only one of these persons is the "official elected" Secretary and Treasurer and the P&C must identify which ones when the election takes place. The other persons are "appointed" to either be the minute Secretary (or to carry out other Secretaries duties) and Assistant Treasurer also with defined duties. Only the "official elected" Secretary and Treasurer are signatories on cheque book of the P&C as stated at 12.5 of the P&C Constitution.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: Is there a maximum number of years someone can serve as a P&C Office Bearer or executive member?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:28 AM)**

**Answer:**

No, all office bearer positions and executive committee memberships come up for election every year at the Annual General Meeting and there is nothing stopping a person continuing to nominate and seek re-election.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: What happens to our P&C if we are unable to get people to fill the Office Bearer positions?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:46 AM)**

**Answer:**

The election of an Executive Committee is a requirement of the P&C Constitution. Without Office Bearers you do not have a properly constituted P&C and it will cease to exist. The implications of this are that any business currently run by the P&C e.g. canteen, uniform shop, would eventually have to cease trading.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: What is the acceptable timeframe to find P&C Office Bearers?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:44 AM)**

**Answer:**

If the AGM does not get any nominations to fill these roles then the P&C needs to advertise another General Meeting for this purpose and consider the options of closure if the P&C remains unconstitutional. The Election of an Executive Committee is a requirement of the P&C Constitution, without Office Bearers, the P&C is not properly constituted.

Considerations taken into account are what would happen to the money from a P&C canteen or uniform shop especially concerning insurance, liabilities, employees, and worst-case scenario of a wind down, closure of the P&C.

If the P&C has not succeeded to fill the Office Bearer positions within 3 months from the AGM, please contact the WACSSO office.

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: What is the role and responsibility of the Executive Committee and how often should it meet?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:38 AM)**



## **Answer:**

The P&C Constitution gives the Executive Committee the power to manage the finances and affairs of the P&C when the P&C is not meeting. The Executive Committee usually meets when items of business that were not dealt with at the P&C meeting have been referred to it for action or where an item of business of an urgent nature arises where a decision has to be made prior to the date of the next general meeting of the P&C. It is not usual for the Executive Committee to meet on a regular basis.

Should the Executive Committee hold a meeting then those persons elected at the AGM to the executive committee, (office bearers and not less than 3 other persons) plus the principal should be given not less than 48 hours' notice of the date of the meeting. A quorum for an Executive Committee meeting is 5 of its members. All of the members of the Executive Committee must be notified not less than 48 hours prior to any meeting of the Executive Committee. (P&C Constitution Rule 16.2)

In small schools (less than 100 students) the quorum for an Executive Committee meeting is 3 members.

Minutes of such a meeting must be tabled at the next general meeting of the P&C for ratification of motions/resolutions/decisions made. A general meeting of the P&C is the higher body and has the power to override decisions made by the executive committee. Every effort should be made to avoid using an Executive Committee as the managing group of the P&C.

The Executive has the power to make financial decisions on behalf of the P&C. Some of the decisions the Executive might need to make are emergency decisions, especially if there are time constraints between meetings and decisions need to be made, urgent replacement of equipment, wages and staff issue decisions are only made at Executive meetings.

If the Executive make a decision that the general committee do not agree with then the decision can be overturned as long as it has not been already acted on. The general committee can request and discuss a 'Terms of Reference' for the Executive, limiting expenditure decisions within the Executive (for example anything over a set amount). This means all big financial decisions are made by the general P&C as a team, especially where to allocate their funds.

All Executive members need to be informed if an Executive meeting is called, they need to be given 48 hours' notice, to send apologies, or to indicate their attendance. General members do not need to be informed if an Executive meeting will take place, and if for some reason a general member wished to attend they need to ask the President if they can do so just in case the topic for discussion is of a confidential matter. If a general member does attend an Executive meeting, to view how the Executive operate (similar to a potential WACSSO Councillor) they are not able to speak at the meeting unless given the Chairpersons approval (same rules as WACSSO).

Meeting of Executive meetings are presented to the next General meeting for ratification and are not published to the general community.

## **Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: What powers do the Office Bearers (President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice-President) of a P&C have?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:49 AM)**

**Answer:**

None, by themselves. The Executive Committee consists of all Office Bearers and not less than three (3) other members and the Principal as an ex officio member in a school of over 100 students. In a school of less than 100 students all the Office Bearers plus two (2) other members and the Principal make up the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has the power to control and manage the affairs and finances of the P&C when the full P&C cannot meet (refer to P&C Constitution Rule 9.2). The Executive Committee must provide minutes of its meetings to the next General Meeting of the P&C for adoption or ratification of any decisions made. A quorum is required for an Executive Committee Meeting and all of the members of the Executive Committee must be given not less than 48 hours' notice of a meeting. (P&C Constitution Rule 16.2)

**Question:**

**Office Bearers and Executive: When should the P&C Office Bearer form be returned to WACSSO?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 8:33 AM)**

**Answer:**

April 30<sup>th</sup>. According to the P&C Constitution, P&Cs must have held their AGM and return their Office Bearer's Forum and Audited Financial Statement to WACSSO by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Q**

**Question:**

**Quorum: Do you have to provide minutes of a P&C Meeting at which a quorum was not present?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 3:25 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, a discussion does not constitute a meeting. No minutes are required in this case and no action can be undertaken from what is discussed. The Chairperson establishes if there is a quorum present at a General or an Executive Committee Meeting of the P&C prior to the meeting commencing. It is a bit disappointing for those financial and ex officio members who have turned up only to find that a meeting cannot go ahead because of a lack of a quorum

**R**

**Question:**

**Records: Can minutes be recorded in pencil or must they be in ink?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 9:33 AM)**

**Answer:**

Minutes should be recorded in ink whether they are handwritten or keyed in on a laptop or computer. If minutes are recorded in electronic format and later printed, they should be transcribed exactly as written. Minutes are an overview of what took place at the time and cannot be altered or written from memory. P&C minutes are not a verbatim recording of the dialogue, no names are required to identify motions and emotive language is part of correct minutes, only action items name the person. Any amendments must be approved and agreed to prior to the minutes to ratification at the next meeting.

**Question:**

**Records:** How long do we keep P&C records, such as correspondence, financial information, minutes and employment records?

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 9:03 AM)

**Answer:**

General correspondence kept for only 1 year unless it is of an ongoing nature and relevant to the P&C minutes. Books of accounts are legal records and retained for 7 years. The P&C minutes are archived as permanent historical records of the P&C Association. You are legally required to keep all employment records for a minimum of 7 years from resignation or termination of the employee.

Archived P&C records kept at the school should be preferably in a locked cabinet or a secure area.

**Question:**

**Records:** In what format should the records be kept?

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 9:05 AM)

**Answer:**

The P&C minutes must be retained in hard copy format as they are signed by the Chairperson after each meeting to certify the copy being held. Digital technology is changing at such a rapid rate that recorded documentation held on CD or a removable hard drive or USB could be obsolete in the future and become unreadable. A P&C that hold digital records will also need to retain paper records.

**Question:**

**Records:** Is the P&C under any legal obligation to keep accurate financial records?

(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 9:36 AM)

**Answer:**

Yes, there are P&C Constitutional obligations 12.6, 12.7 that state the Honorary Treasurer keep accurate books of account and they are required to have the books audited and the statement presented at the P&C AGM. A copy of the executive members and the annual auditing statement needs to be provided to the Principal according to the Education Act 1999 and WACSSO according to the current P&C Constitutional rules 12.8 and 12.9.

**Question:**

**Records: What if our P&C records are destroyed by a natural disaster?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 9:31 AM)**

**Answer:**

A natural disaster is unavoidable and unfortunately could result in the loss of all of a school's records. To take measures to ensure the protection of the P&C records it is suggested they are stored on the school grounds at all times and not members' homes. If the school were struck by natural disaster insurance would cover loss of P&C property but not their records. It is a P&C obligation that the Executive's details are given to the principal and WACSSO with a copy of the annual financial auditing statement. These documents would provide some records in case there was a natural disaster eventuating in a loss of P&C documentation.

**Question:**

**Records: What is the correct copy to keep of ratified minutes as the true record?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 26 June 2015, 9:34 AM)**

**Answer:**

Minutes ratified as true and correct require the Chairperson at the time to sign them to authorize them as the true copy. P&Cs often overlook to get the Chairperson to sign the minutes but it is a standard requirement. The signature should also have the date under it so it matches the minutes taken on the day.

S

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Can the School Council run the canteen?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:56 PM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, but only if it is an incorporated Council. Only the Minister can approve the incorporation of a Council and they must be convinced that such a move will be beneficial to the students or improve the management of the facilities. If the P&C operates the canteen there would have to be a very good reason for the School Council to take over the management.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: I am not a member of the School Council but would like to go to the meetings. Is this allowed?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:53 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes. Council meetings must generally be open to the public. However, the Council may decide to close part or all of a meeting to members of the public. Grounds for closure of a meeting are listed in Regulation 116 of the School Education Regulations 2000.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: Can a person's membership be terminated if they miss a meeting?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:07 PM)

**Answer:**

No, membership can only be terminated if a Councillor has been absent, without leave or reasonable excuse, from three (3) consecutive meetings.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: Can I just call for a special meeting because I have a particular issue I wish to see discussed?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:00 PM)

**Answer:**

No, there is a process that must be followed before a special meeting can take place:

- (i) The Chairperson must be advised in writing of the purposes of the proposed meeting.
- (ii) The meeting must be requested by at least 20 families of students at the school or at least half the number of families of students at the school; whichever is the lesser number.
- (iii) Only matters set out in the notice to the Chairperson may be discussed at the meeting.
- (iv) The purposes of the proposed meeting must be relevant to the Council's functions.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: Can I re-nominate at the end of my term as a School Councillor?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:03 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, as long as you are eligible to continue to hold the position. The Council may wish to advertise for nominations for the position to the wider community to demonstrate an unbiased reinstatement of the position.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Can the principal terminate a Councillor's membership?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:08 PM)**

**Answer:**

No, the decision to remove a member must be made by a resolution of at least 2/3 of the members of the School Council, not by an individual.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Can the school registrar be a member of the School Council?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:28 PM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, the registrar may represent the staff at the school. The Principal must call for nominations from all staff for the staff positions on the School Council. This is not limited to teaching staff. If there are more nominations than positions available then the Principal must organise an election.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Can we have students under the age of 15 on the School Council?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:25 PM)**

**Answer:**

Students must be 15 years of age or reach 15 during the year to be eligible to be a voting member of an unincorporated School Council. If the Council is incorporated then the students must be 18 years of age. However, it is advisable to co-opt members of your student council when School Council is addressing issues that directly concern them.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: How are the parent representatives chosen for a School Council or board?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:36 PM)**

**Answer:**

The principal must call for nominations from all the parents who have students enrolled at the school.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: How does the Council reach a decision?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:10 PM)**

**Answer:**

The Council reaches a decision by voting on a motion put to it. A decision of a Council does not have effect unless it has been made by an absolute majority.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: How long is the term of office of a School Councillor?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:01 PM)**

**Answer:**

The Council will determine the length of office, but it may not exceed 3 years.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: How many representatives can the P&C have on a School Council?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:32 PM)**

**Answer:**

The P&C may have a representative on the School Council but the school council may decide to have only parent and community representatives and include the P&C representative in the community section of the council. It is up to the School Council to decide if more than one position is made available for the P&C to be represented.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: How many times a year does the School Council meet?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:55 PM)**

**Answer:**

The Council will determine the number of times it will meet. However, it must hold at least one meeting that is open to the public and in which a report is presented on the performance of the Council's functions. A special meeting of the Council may be called for by parents of students, or by students themselves if over 18 years of age.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: I am the P&C representative on the School Council and the P&C has asked that I bring up the subject of homework in relation to a P&C member's complaint about a particular teacher. Is it okay to do this?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:48 PM)

**Answer:**

Any complaint against a teacher must be directed to the principal by the individual making the complaint. Neither the P&C nor the School Council should be discussing individual teachers. As a result of questions to the principal, the School Council may be directed to review the school's homework policy.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: I have children attending the school and am also a teacher at the school. Can I be a parent representative on the School Council?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:30 PM)

**Answer:**

No, unfortunately Section 127(3) of the Education Act 1999 states that a person who is the Principal of, or on the staff of, a school and who also fits the category of parent or community member "can only be a member of the Council in his or her capacity as the Principal or staff member".

**Question:**

School Council Questions: If I am a P&C member, but not the elected P&C representative, can I still nominate for one of the parent positions on the School Council?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:39 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, a parent representative must represent the views of all of the parents of students enrolled at the school; they should not have a set agenda. As a P&C representative, you represent the view of the P&C Association. Essentially, these two views would be the same, as the P&C is the autonomous parent group in the school.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: Is proxy voting allowed at School Council meetings?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:19 PM)



**Answer:**

No, a member to be able to vote must attend the meeting in some format, physically or electronically, for example either by teleconference or videoconference, and it must be noted in the minutes taken. There is no proxy, email or postal voting in either School Council meetings or P&C meetings.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Is the P&C able to canvass parent opinion regarding school policy without a mandate from the School Council?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:16 PM)**

**Answer:**

The P&C is able to discuss school policies at its meetings and with its membership. However, the P&C should not canvass the opinion of the whole school community unless it has been directed to do so by the Principal or the School Council. If the P&C takes it upon itself to do this it could be seen to be interfering in the day-to-day management of the school.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Is WACSSO able to offer training to School Council members, particularly those from the P&C?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:18 PM)**

**Answer:**

Unfortunately, WACSSO no longer has the contractual rights to be able to offer training to School Councils. P&C Associations make up WACSSO's core business and at present, our training targets the management of P&Cs. School Councils and School Boards are under the management of the Department of Education and they do offer training opportunities if requested from a school. WACSSO State Council is of the opinion that parent participation at this level would be best served if our organisation were part of the School Council training in partnership with the Department of Education.

WACSSO acknowledges the need for training of parents, and in some cases the principals and staff. WACSSO has pursued dialogue with the Minister for Education and the Director General of Education on this matter, but with little success to date. Continual feedback from disgruntled School Council members has provided us with information that will strengthen our arguments and we will keep our affiliates informed as to progress on this issue.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Our Principal has suggested we have eleven (11) members on the School Council including himself, is this correct?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:26 PM)**

**Answer:**

If your school is an unincorporated School Council it must have at least 5 members and not more than 15 members. For an incorporated Council the minimum number is 10. It is up to the School Council to determine the number that suitably reflects the school community at your school.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions:** Our school has a limited student population and a small number of parents to call on to fill vacancies on committees and councils. Do we have other options for our School Council?

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:15 PM)**

**Answer:**

The Minister may give approval for 2 or more schools to have a joint council, and will determine the number of members to be on the joint council. Discuss this option with your Principal.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions:** What does the P&C need to do if the principal decides not to comply with the correct School Council composition?

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:34 PM)**

**Answer:**

The P&C will elect a parent representative from its membership as it has done in the past. The Principal is responsible to hold School Council elections for those members unrepresented so the composition remains correct. The Education Department policy section can be contacted if parents have any concerns over the School Council composition as it is clearly defined according to legislation.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions:** What happens if a position becomes vacant before the term of office ceases?

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:05 PM)**

**Answer:**

The Principal must call for nominations from suitably qualified people to fill the position on a casual basis. "Suitably qualified" means people who fit the category of vacancy, for example parent, staff or community. "Casual basis" means for the residual period of the predecessor's term of office, if the person who leaves has one year left of a three-year term, then the new person serves one year. They can choose to re-nominate after this period.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: What happens if there are more nominations than there are positions available?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:37 PM)**

**Answer:**

If the number of nominations exceeds the number of positions available then the principal must organise an election. All the parents of students enrolled in the school are eligible to vote.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: What happens if we cannot get any community members on our School Council?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:23 PM)**

**Answer:**

If you have exhausted every avenue in trying to recruit community members, then the positions must be allocated to parents. Remember that parents and community members combined must make up the majority of members on the School Council.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: What is an absolute majority?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:13 PM)**

**Answer:**

The School Council 'absolute majority' is more than 50% of *all members* of the Council, not just of those present at a particular meeting as is the case at P&C meetings. This is easier to explain using an example. If your Council has 10 members who are all present and voting, then the absolute majority is 6. If you hold a meeting and 7 members turn up and a motion is voted on with 5 in favour and 2 against, then the motion would be lost. This is a simple majority not an absolute majority which would require 6 in favour.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: What is the quorum for a School Council Meeting?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:31 PM)**

**Answer:**

There is no quorum for a School Council Meeting as all motions need to be carried with an absolute majority of the full membership regardless of how many attend a meeting.

**Question:**

**School Council Questions: Who can vote on the School Council?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 2:12 PM)**

**Answer:**

Each Council member (including the Chairperson) is entitled to one vote.

**Question:**

School Council Questions: Should the P&C's School Council representative report to the P&C on matters discussed at School Council Meetings?

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:41 PM)

**Answer:**

A representative is a person who has been delegated to speak and act for a group of people. To adequately fulfil that role the person will need to discuss issues with the group they represent, and then present the view of the group to the School Council. The P&C members are entitled to expect to hear the feedback from the School Council Meeting. On rare occasions, School Council could necessitate the closing of the meeting to the public to discuss issues that are of a confidential nature. In these instances, it may be that the duly elected P&C representative is not able to report on his issue to the P&C.

**Question:**

Social Media - A parent has made a complaint or negative comment about a staff member or P&C member on the P&C Facebook page. How do I respond?

(Last edited: Tuesday, 19 January 2016, 7:58 AM)

**Answer:**

The administrator for the page should respond politely that social media is not the appropriate channel for

personal complaints and then refer the commenter to the relevant authorised person such as the school

principal or P&C President. If the comment is inappropriate, abusive, offensive or defamatory, it should be

deleted by the administrator.

**Question:**

Social Media - Our P&C is holding a Fete and we want to attract the wider public to attend. Is the P&C allowed to undertake paid Facebook advertising of our event?

(Last edited: Tuesday, 19 January 2016, 8:00 AM)

**Answer:**

Facebook advertising can be an effective way of reaching outside of the immediate school community and

into the wider local area to let the public know about your event, for minimal cost. Facebook advertising can be tailored to a specific geographical area or demographic and the P&C can set the spending limit they

wish to adhere to. Any financial outlay by the P&C must be voted on at a general meeting and the P&C must

discuss whether it believes there would be a cost or other benefit to undertaking the advertising. The P&C

should also investigate all forms of free advertising, such as an article in the local newspaper, word-of-mouth,

or posting flyers at local shopping centres or playgroups.

**Question:**

**Social Media - Our school Principal has said our P&C Facebook page has to close because there has been too much negativity, gossip and misinformation. What do we do?**

**(Last edited: Tuesday, 19 January 2016, 7:57 AM)**

**Answer:**

Closing down a social media account must be carried out through a vote at a general meeting of the P&C.

It is not the decision of a single individual. However, if the page has become toxic the P&C must think long

and hard whether it is fulfilling its purpose – benefitting the operations of the P&C and thus the students at

the school. If the page is not operating successfully, closure is an option. The P&C should conduct a review

of the page and its operations to see whether it is aligned with WACSSO's Social Media Guideline. If not, changes or closure may be warranted.

**Question:**

**Social Media- Can the P&C open its own Facebook Page or other social media account?**

**(Last edited: Tuesday, 19 January 2016, 7:56 AM)**

**Answer:**

Yes. When used wisely, social media can be a fantastic tool for communicating with members and the school community and promoting the P&C's great work. The P&C must discuss and then vote at a general

meeting to establish a Facebook Page or other social media account.

**Question:**

**Special General Meeting: Who can call a Special General Meeting of the P&C?**

**(Last edited: Thursday, 30 April 2015, 9:26 AM)**

**Answer:**

A Special General Meeting may be convened by the President or Honorary Secretary or by requisition signed by five (5) financial members of the Association as stated at 15.2 of the P&C Constitution.

**Question:**

**Special Meeting: What can we discuss at a Special General Meeting of the P&C?**

**(Last edited: Monday, 4 May 2015, 3:45 PM)**

**Answer:**

The business discussed must be in the notice of the meeting that requires formal notice of seven (7) days for special General Meetings and can be on one topic only. There can be three motions put forward all related to the one topic but no new business or reporting is undertaken within a Special Meeting. Members should be given every opportunity to be fully informed of the reasons for calling the meeting and of the background to the issues to be determined. Special General Meetings are called if an important item has arisen, and the P&C feel due care should be taken to ensure all legal requirements are met.

At the meeting, business will be limited to the items on the notice paper. If a substantial amendment is proposed, or if new business suddenly arises, it will be necessary to adjourn the meeting to allow absent members to be informed, or the meeting may agree to call another special meeting after the required period of notice.

**Question:**

**Stacking: How can the P&C prevent people from stacking meetings?**

**(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 April 2015, 4:05 PM)**

**Answer:**

What does stacking a meeting mean? It usually involves a number of people attending a P&C meeting and becoming members so that they can put a motion to the meeting and have the numbers to vote that motion through. Often, these people have had no prior contact with the P&C and do not attend again after they have forced through their motion. Members can feel very intimidated by the stand-over tactics often used by these individuals. The P&C Constitution contains no provision to allow P&Cs to stop people from joining the P&C at any time they choose. This unfortunately allows less scrupulous people to stack meetings in an attempt to force issues through the P&C. But there are a number of ways in which P&Cs can try to avoid the problem:

- P&C's may decide to only take motions on notice i.e. members must give prior notice of issues they wish to discuss at a meeting.
- If the Chairperson asks at the beginning of the meeting if anyone present has any other items they wish to add to the agenda. This gives the Chairperson the opportunity to prioritise the agenda and everyone is forewarned of what will be discussed. If people do not take advantage of this and wait until the end of the meeting to bring up a topic, the Chairperson is well within their right to advise the person that this new piece of business will be carried over to the next meeting where it will become General Business. It also helps if your P&C has an advertised starting and finishing time for their meetings.
- The Chairperson and the Secretary should look very carefully at all motions proposed. Often the subject matter may be one that the P&C has no legal right to discuss, as it could be a school issue.

**Question:**

**Sub-committees: Can the fundraising sub-committee of the P&C hold events without prior approval of the P&C?**

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:24 PM)

**Answer:**

No. in order for the activities of the fundraising sub-committee to be under the protection of Public Liability Insurance of the P&C, any event has to be approved of the P&C. WACSSO recommends that the P&C and any fundraising sub-committee compile a calendar of events and approve it at the start of the year to eliminate any oversight or misunderstanding.

**Question:**

**Sub-committees: Do you have to be a financial member of the P&C to be a member of a sub-committee?**

(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:21 PM)

**Answer:**

Yes, all members of P&C standing committee such as canteen, uniform, pre-primary, or fundraising must be financial members of the P&C. These members are elected onto these committees at the AGM or a general meeting of the P&C. All standing committees must have terms of reference to enable them to operate. In the case of the fundraising committee, it is important that the P&C approve all fundraising events to ensure that the activities are covered by the P&Cs public liability insurance. The P&C should also establish a process for fundraising events which includes the manner in which money is collected and documentation is held. Information regarding Standing Committees or Sub-Committees Terms of Reference are downloadable from the WACSSO website [www.wacssso.wa.edu.au](http://www.wacssso.wa.edu.au).

**Question:**

**Sub-committees: How can the P&C Executive Committee handle the issue of sub-committees acting outside of their operational guidelines or Terms of Reference?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:31 PM)**

**Answer:**

It is extremely important that all sub-committees of the P&C have a Terms of Reference. These are the operational guidelines endorsed by the Executive Committee. Once a P&C implement guidelines it is much easier to oversee a sub-committee and refer them to the content of the Terms of Reference if they are undertaking inappropriate processes. If a sub-committee continually ignores their Terms of Reference, the P&C Executive Committee may have no choice but to disband the committee. The Executive Committee would then take over the running of the business that the sub-committee was operating. It is usual to declare all positions on all sub-committees vacant at the AGM. WACSSO has example Terms of Reference for affiliated P&Cs to use.

**Question:**

**Sub-committees: Is the P&C President an ex-officio of any sub-committee?**

**(Last edited: Friday, 24 July 2015, 1:25 PM)**

**Answer:**

Yes, by right of their elected position, the P&C President can sit on any sub-committee as a member and has all the rights of a sub-committee member, such as voting and speaking. But it is not a mandatory requirement they do attend meetings, they can be asked to come along to assist with an issue or simply go along to observe the meeting.

T

**Question:**

**Training: Is P&C training available for all P&C members?**

**(Last edited: Tuesday, 28 April 2015, 3:40 PM)**



**Answer:**

Yes, WACSSO offer the opportunity of P&C training to all affiliated P&Cs at no cost. Any school community member will find it worthwhile to refresh, enlighten, question, become involved, develop skills, gain knowledge and participate with like-minded people. Surrounding district schools are invited, promotion material and a Host Pack provided, enquire about the details of the arrangements with the WACSSO Training & Development Officer. P&C training is available at a school near you. Importantly let your P&C members and school community know about the opportunity.

V

**Question:**

**Volunteers: Can we pay honorariums and have paid bookkeepers for the canteen?**

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:08 PM)

**Answer:**

The term honorarium is no longer used these days. With changes to the Income Tax Act and now GST, all money earned must be registered. An employee or someone contracted to do a one-off job must be given a group certificate, even a contractor (self-employed) with an ABN.

If the P&C resolves that it wants to pay a person to do the canteen books then that person must be paid either as a permanent employee of the P&C at the going rate of pay for that particular job or as a self-employed contractor. The person can be a financial member of the P&C, but to avoid potential conflicts of interest it is not recommended that they be an elected member of the canteen sub-committee or the Executive.

Where the paid bookkeeper is a P&C employee then the P&C is required to deduct the appropriate amount of tax and pay superannuation and workers compensation. It is important that the P&C or the canteen sub-committee develop a job description for this position. The job description or duty statement should outline the hours of work required each day and nominated times and include when they would be able to come into the canteen to collect the necessary documentation to do the job. The P&C should adopt the job description and as in most cases, the person would be doing the books from home.

The P&C still has to provide workers compensation whilst that person is on site. Even though this person may be a financial member of the P&C, the Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance (if the P&C is an affiliate with WACSSO) does not cover them whilst carrying out paid employment on behalf of the P&C.

Regardless of whether a volunteer does the canteen books, the P&C should still establish a job description for this role and include times when the volunteer would be able to come into the canteen similar to that of a paid employee carrying out the same task.

**Question:**

**Volunteers: Do you have to be a financial member of the P&C to work as a volunteer in the canteen?**

(Last edited: Wednesday, 29 July 2015, 1:05 PM)