



CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH SERVICE AND EX-SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

CONSTITUTION

TITLE

1. The official title of the organisation shall be the Confederation of British Service and Ex-Service Organisations – short title COBSEO. COBSEO is a private company limited by guarantee.

OBJECTS

2. COBSEO is established to represent, promote and further the interests of Service and ex-Service men and women of all ranks, and of their spouses and dependants by all practical, legal and proper means including:
 - a. Exchanging and co-ordinating information internally
 - b. When necessary, acting as a point of contact for external agencies to the members of COBSEO
 - c. Identifying issues of common concern, particularly welfare matters, and co-ordinating any necessary and appropriate action
 - d. Representing and supporting the needs and opinions of its member organisations, individually and collectively at Central and Local Government levels and with other agencies.

FINANCE

3. COBSEO shall be financed by an annual membership fee, set by the Executive Committee, payable by all members and by additional voluntary contributions from the membership, each according to its means in accordance with the formula adopted by the Executive Committee. Funds shall be paid into COBSEO's bank account. Any cheques drawn for more than an amount to be decided annually by the Executive Committee must be signed by both the Secretary and the Chairman or Vice-Chairman. The Secretary may sign cheques of a lesser value.
4. The accounting reference date of COBSEO shall be 30 April.

5. COBSEO's financial accounts, kept by the Secretary, shall be presented to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman three times a year at regular intervals.
6. COBSEO's financial accounts shall be audited annually by a competent person from the staff of one of the charities represented on the Executive Committee.
7. The accounts shall be circulated with the agenda for the Annual General Meeting.

MEMBERS

8. Membership of COBSEO shall be open to all those organisations whose purpose is to promote and further the welfare and general interests of Service and ex-Service men and women and of their dependants. Members of COBSEO shall be members of the company limited by guarantee. The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be members of COBSEO as long as they hold office.
9. The Executive Committee shall, in all cases, approve acceptance for membership.
10. The Executive Committee may terminate membership.

MEETINGS

11. COBSEO shall hold a General Meeting once a year. The Executive Committee may convene an Extraordinary Meeting at any time.
12. The Chairman or Vice-Chairman shall chair all meetings of COBSEO and of the Executive Committee. If neither is present, the members of the Executive Committee present shall appoint one of their number to chair the meetings.
13. No business shall be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum of members is present at the time the meeting begins. A quorum for General Meetings shall be 20 persons.
14. At any General Meeting a resolution put to the vote shall be decided by a show of hands. Each member organisation shall have one vote. Changes to the constitution must be carried by a two-thirds majority of entitled organisations present.
15. COBSEO shall in General Meeting elect a Chairman who shall hold office for three years and be eligible for re-election. The maximum period that a Chairman shall hold office shall be six years, i.e. two terms.
16. COBSEO shall in General Meeting elect a Vice-Chairman who shall hold office for two years and be eligible for re-election. The maximum period that a Vice-Chairman shall hold office shall be six years, i.e. three terms.
17. The supercession of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman should, if possible, be separated by at least one year.

DIRECTORS

18. The members of the Executive Committee shall be the directors of the company limited by guarantee and carry out the duties therein entailed.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

19. An Executive Committee consisting of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of COBSEO, six permanent members and six elected members from the member organisations shall manage the business of COBSEO. All representatives shall be the chief executives or nominated alternatives of their organisations.
20. The six permanent members shall be:
 - a. The Royal British Legion (TRBL)
 - b. The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association – Forces Help (SSAFA Forces Help)
 - c. Seafarers UK (KGFS)
 - d. The Army Benevolent Fund (ABF)
 - e. The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund (RAFBF).
 - f. Veterans Scotland
21. The six elected members shall be nominated from member organisations. Members shall be appointed at the annual General Meeting for a period of three years, two members being appointed every year. Elected members may stand for re-election.
22. The Executive Committee shall make such rules for the conduct of business as are necessary for the furtherance of the objects of COBSEO. For example, specialist knowledge or opinion may be co-opted when necessary.
23. A quorum for meetings of the Executive Committee shall be five members.

SECRETARY

24. The Executive Committee shall appoint a Secretary.
25. The Secretary shall be the Company Secretary of the company limited by guarantee and carry out the following duties:
 - a. Maintaining the statutory registers
 - b. Ensuring that statutory forms are filed promptly
 - c. Providing members with notice of meetings

- d. Sending the Registrar copies of resolutions and agreements
 - e. Supplying a copy of the accounts to every member of the company as required
 - f. Keeping records of all meetings of COBSEO and the Executive Committee. Such records shall be distributed to members of COBSEO or the Executive Committee as appropriate and shall be approved by COBSEO or the Executive Committee as appropriate.
 - g. Ensuring that people entitled to do so can inspect the company records
 - h. Keeping COBSEO's financial accounts.
26. The Secretary shall be responsible for liaison with the membership and any administrative arrangements for meetings, events and similar occasions.