



Quarterly *Communication*

7:30pm Wednesday 20 September 2023

MWBro. Anthony Bucca, Grand Master welcomes
you to the September Quarterly Communication



COMMUNICATION of the UNITED GRAND LODGE OF ANTIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF VICTORIA

WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER AT 7.30PM
FREEMASONS BAYSIDE

OPENING ODE

Hail, Eternal; by whose aid
All created things were made,
Heaven and Earth Thy vast design,
Hear us, Architect Divine!

May our work begun in Thee
Ever blest with order be,
And may we when labours cease
Part in harmony and peace.

AGENDA

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| [1] | Welcome to all in attendance | Grand Master |
| [2] | Confirmation of the Minutes of the Communication of Grand Lodge held on 21 June 2023 | RWBro. M Luxford |
| [3] | Apologies | Grand Secretary |
| [4] | Communications from the Grand Master & Sister Grand Lodges | Grand Secretary |
| [5] | Motion for Constitutional Change | Grand Registrar |
| [6] | Report of the Masonic Council
Report of the Commercial Council
Report of the Board of Directors of Royal Freemasons
Report of the Freemasons Foundation | Grand Secretary |
| [7] | Brethren Deceased since the last communication | Grand Master |
| [8] | Report from the Royal Freemasons | RWBro. C Head |
| [9] | Grand Treasurers Report | Grand Treasurer |
| [10] | Election of Grand Treasurer 2024 - 2025 | Grand Master |
| [11] | Investiture of District Coordinator
Presentation of Certificate of Masonic Studies | Grand Master |
| [12] | Musical Items | Grand Lodge Choir |
| [13] | Announcement of the outcome of the vote for Constitutional Change | Grand Secretary |
| [14] | Address by the Grand Master | Grand Master |
| [15] | Close Grand Lodge | Grand Master |



MASONIC COUNCIL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2023

Membership:

RWBro John Rodrigo (*Chair*)
WBro Domenic Donato (*Deputy Chair*)
WBro. Peter Grounds
WBro. Eric Williams
WBro Robert Woolley
RWBro Bruce Cowie (*Grand Secretary, General Manager*)

Observers at meetings at their discretion:

MWBro Anthony Bucca (*UGLV Grand Master*)
RWBro Peter Henshall (*UGLV Deputy Grand Master*)

Meetings – July 2023 to September 2023

The Masonic Council met on 10 July and 14 August

The Masonic Council at its first meeting in July elected RWBro. John Rodrigo to Chair the Council. WBro. Domenic Donato was elected in August as the Deputy Chair.

The Council at each meeting has received reports from the Education and Membership VATS:

Matters ongoing for Education include:

1. Review and update training for MAP presenters
2. Programs to understand the meaning and messages in the ritual
3. Development of material for presentation to non-Freemasons at open nights
4. Review of the role of Lodge Education Officers
5. Promotion of the Certificate of Masonic Studies
6. Planning for the Freemasons Convention in 2024
7. Use of the website for Masonic Education material.

Matters ongoing for the Membership include:

1. Geo Targeting Program. This involves training of District and Lodge representatives who are able to assist in implementation of programs involving social media and the website to promote interest in membership targeted to individuals that fit the criteria for membership of Freemasonry.

2. Lodge Engagement. Development of an Engagement Manual to ensure members in every Lodge can engage effectively with members, their families and the community.
3. Mentoring. Ensuring Lodge mentors appointed in every Lodge to mentor new members as they progress on their Masonic Journey.

The Membership VAT are also working with the National Membership Project, that involves representatives from all Grand Lodges in Australia and New Zealand to share ideas and promote best practice across the different jurisdictions.

The Council has received reports from the Grand Inspector of Workings on various matters to assist Lodges with improving the Standard of ritual and ceremonial. This includes the re-establishment of the Exemplification team who had their initial meeting event for interested Freemasons at East Melbourne on 24 June.

Concern has been raised with the Council on a number of Lodges that are operating contrary to the Book of Workings or contrary to agreed protocols. These will be addressed collectively or with individual Lodges as appropriate.

The Council granted relief from Capitation fees for a number of worthy Brethren.

The Council considered reports from the Grand Secretary on serious disciplinary matters and other matters of Masonic Interest to the Council.

RWBro John Rodrigo
Chair, Masonic Council September 2023



COMMERCIAL COUNCIL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2023

Membership:

RWBro. Trevor Somerville	<i>(Chair)</i>
VWBro. Chris Dzanovski	<i>(Deputy Chair)</i>
VWBro. Felix Pintado	<i>(Masonic Member)</i>
Mr David Mandel	<i>(Independent Member)</i>
Mr Ian Sanders	<i>(Independent Member)</i>
Ms Elaine Ko	<i>(Independent Member)</i>

Invitees to meetings:

RWBro. Bruce Cowie	<i>(UGLV Grand Secretary)</i>
RWBro. Bruce Stockdale	<i>(UGLV Grand Treasurer)</i>
VWBro. Steve Simson	<i>(UGLV Grand Superintendent of Works)</i>

Observer at their discretion:

MWBro. Anthony Bucca	<i>(UGLV Grand Master)</i>
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Secretariat:

VWBro. Robert Brennand	<i>(UGLV Finance & Business Support Manager)</i>
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Meetings – July 2023 to September 2023

The Commercial Council met on 11 July, 24 July and 24 August 2023.

As of 1 July 2023, the Committee comprises both Freemasons and independent members. Three are new members, combined with three others who previously served on the interim Council. This has created a dynamic and effective mix of past experience, combined with fresh expertise and knowledge.

At its first meeting on 11 July, the Commercial Council elected RWBro. Trevor Somerville as Chair and WBro. Chris Dzanovski as Deputy Chair.

At its subsequent business meetings, the Council's discussions focussed on developing strategies to lead the organisation into the future, immediate term priorities, and the support required to deliver commercial outcomes and returns to the membership. The future outlook is to continue to build on these strategies and put in place actions that will drive outcomes to the benefit of Freemasons Victoria, with regular updates on progress being reported to the membership.

Immediate term priorities include:

1. Finalising the 2022-23 year end accounts and financial audit
2. Preparing for the update and renewal of the UGLV insurance program
3. Reviewing cyber-security risks and controls at Freemasons Victoria.
4. Reviewing progress on the property works register.
5. Reviewing lease arrangements and options at Freemasons Victoria owned properties.

RWBro Trevor Somerville
Chair, Commercial Council
September 2023

Report to the Quarterly Communication

September 2023

From the Board Chair

In the last three months at Royal Freemasons, we have made considerable progress on the sale of selected Retirement Living and Residential Aged Care communities, which is part of the rescaling of our operations. We have also made some positive steps towards the future and celebrated the work of our wonderful team of aged care workers.

Sale of selected Royal Freemasons Homes

Two of our Retirement Living communities, Berwick Brae Village (Berwick) and Canadian Pines Village (Ballarat), and three of our Residential Aged Care communities — Ballarat, Gregory Lodge (Flemington) and Bacchus Marsh — have all now officially transferred to mecwacare ownership and operation.

After receiving approval from the Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) our Streeton Park and Redmond Park Retirement Living communities transferred to Aveo ownership and operation on July.

Finally, in early August, we announced that Estia Health will be acquiring our Benalla and Bendigo (Kangaroo Flat) residential aged care homes. Estia Health is one of Australia's largest aged care operators, currently owning and operating 73 residential aged care homes in South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, and caring for more than 8,000 residents every year.

Estia Health currently owns and operates residential aged care homes in Long Gully, Bendigo and Samaria St, Benalla. As part of this transition, they intend to relocate employees and permanent residents from these two locations to join our homes and create a single Estia Health in Bendigo and Benalla.

Our residents will remain in their homes and experience very little change as their homes transfer from Royal Freemasons to Estia Health. They will continue to receive the care and services they require. Estia Health also looks forward to welcoming Royal Freemasons Bendigo (Kangaroo Flat) and Benalla employees based at these homes upon transfer.

The settlement and formal transfer of ownership of our Benalla and Bendigo (Kangaroo Flat) communities to Estia Health is scheduled for early October.

While we are sad to be saying farewell to our Benalla and Kangaroo Flat communities, we are positive that the residents and staff in these two homes will continue to receive high-quality, compassionate care from Estia Health and that our staff will continue to work in a supportive environment under Estia Health's management.

Report to the Quarterly Communication

Thank you for giving to our Tax Appeal

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all who gave generously to our Tax Appeal, to raise funds for our Resident Outing Program.

Residents in our aged care homes love their regular excursions to cafes and restaurants, and events such as concerts, art exhibitions and vintage car shows. These activities enhance their wellbeing in so many ways by giving them the chance to experience new environments and activities, fresh air and exercise, and a break in their daily routine.

Thank you for giving to this program, which makes such a tangible difference to our residents' lives.

We are still taking donations, so if you would like to contribute, please visit:

royal-freemasons-tax-appeal-2023.raisely.com

We are incredibly grateful for your contribution!

Implementation of wage increase for eligible aged care workers

From 1 July, we increased the wage rates for our eligible aged care employees in accordance with the Fair Work Commission's (FWC) Stage 2 Aged Care Work Value decision.

We are very pleased to apply these increased rates of pay to staff in recognition of their continued service and the high standards of care they provide.

As you may be aware, the FWC decided in February 2023, to increase minimum Award rates of pay for employees working in aged care by 15 percent. The increase has been specifically applied to the following job roles:

- personal care workers
- registered nurses and endorsed enrolled nurses
- head chefs
- lifestyle staff
- home care workers who work in aged care.

Report to the Quarterly Communication

In response to the Work Value decision, the Federal Government announced it would increase funding to aged care providers to assist them to pay the wage increases determined by the FWC. Funding was also allocated to our organisation, which pays above Award rates of pay under their enterprise agreements.

We worked constructively with the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) and Health Workers Union (HWU) to reach an agreement on increased rates of pay for our eligible employees, and to ensure that available funding from the Federal Government is passed on for the purpose it was intended.

For staff who were not included in this wage increase, there is an upcoming Stage 3, which will look at the work value for aged care workers such as cleaners, food services, and laundry workers. Submissions for Stage 3 open soon and we expect a decision by mid-2024.

Mandatory care minutes formally begin in October for Royal Freemasons Ltd Residential Aged Care

From 1 October 2023, residential aged care providers will be required to meet mandatory care minute targets for direct care given to residents by personal care workers (including nursing assistants), enrolled nurses and registered nurses. These targets are a recommendation from the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission (ACQSC).

In response, we are continuing to undertake thorough workforce planning to ensure we have sufficient staff to deliver direct care to our residents in the long and short term.

We welcome this recommendation from the ACQSC as an important measure in ensuring our residents receive the high-quality personal and clinical assistance they need every day.

Royal Freemasons' Head Office relocates to Moubray Street

As part of the rescaling of our operations, in early August, we relocated our Head Office to Coppin Centre on Moubray Street. Our Support Services staff are now working out of the Moubray and Tope buildings there, and it is wonderful to be back working on the site where Royal Freemasons began in 1867 and to be reconnected with the heritage of the organisation.

Refurbishments at Royal Freemasons Coppin Centre

Residents in Coppin Centre's Colbran Dementia Unit are delighted with the recent refurbishment to their home. The centre has received a fresh coat of paint, new carpet to replace the vinyl on the floors, new artworks on the walls as well as brand new table settings and linen.

The outdoor area at Coppin Plus has been refreshed and new outdoor furniture ordered so residents can enjoy the area when the warmer weather returns.

Coppin Suites are also undergoing refresh with staff currently sourcing new linen for the whole facility.



Renewal of Coppin Plus courtyard.

Report to the Quarterly Communication

Aged Care Employee Day celebrations

On Monday 7 August, we celebrated Aged Care Employee Day to honour the wonderful staff who work tirelessly in our Residential Aged Care homes and Home Care services.

To celebrate, we held a BBQ lunch at each of our Residential Aged Care homes, and Support Services staff helped with the cooking and serving. We were also delighted to have our Board Chair, Craig Head and Director, Rosemary Evans join in the festivities.

To top the day off, a video was emailed to staff, which included heartfelt messages of gratitude from CEO John Fogarty, our residents and their families.



Royal Freemasons Board Chair Craig Head (left) and Director Rosemary Evans (right) celebrate Aged Care Employee Day with staff at our Footscray and Coppin Centre Residential Aged Care Homes.

Finally, we also want to thank those who have donated, provided a gift in their Will or have volunteered over the past quarter. If you, your Lodge or District would like to support Royal Freemasons through fundraising or volunteering, please contact your local home, phone the team on 03 9452 2200 or visit our website royalfreemasons.org.au/become-a-volunteer.

On behalf of the Board, Trustees, staff and residents of Royal Freemasons Homes of Victoria, we are so grateful for your unwavering support.

Fraternally,

RWBro Craig Head, PJGW
Board Chair

Quarterly Report

TO THE UNITED
GRAND LODGE
OF VICTORIA

September 2023



Freemasons
Foundation Victoria

In 2023
more than **\$220,000**
in Victorian flood relief funding

Lodge activities

Several Lodges successfully applied for Masonic Grants to donate towards worthy causes in their communities. Please share your stories with us, at news@freemasonsfoundation.org, and tag @FreemasonsFoundationVictoria on social media. Well done to Colac Masonic Lodge and Central Goldfields Masonic Group for their charitable activities being mentioned in local papers.

We were recently invited to visit Henty Lodge to talk about FFV's work; this is an opportunity open to all Victorian Lodges.

Support available

The Community Grants program is open for applications until 30 September.

Masonic Grants and Education grants are also open for Lodges, and the Benevolence program is available to Freemasons in need year round.

Bursary applications are now closed, and applications for 2024 Scholarships will open on 1 December.

[Apply online](#) and if you have any questions, please contact Theresa or Neil on (03) 8535 4780 or enquiries@freemasonsfoundation.org

Recent events and news

On June 22 and 23, FFV representatives, including Chairman Rodney Lavin, Director John Patterson and Executive Officer Neil Cripps, travelled to the flood-hit towns of Shepparton and Rochester in Northern Victoria. It was heartwarming to see and hear first-hand accounts of the community's flood relief efforts, and how FFV's support helps these groups and affected residents. The visit attracted lots of interest and generated several stories in local media outlets. Since visiting another grant has been directed to one of these groups, bringing the total in 2023 flood funding to more than \$220,000.

In August together with Williamstown Lodges, Sunshine Wisdom Lodge and Werribee Enterprises we presented a donation of \$20,000 to Dementia Australia, for a project that develops strategies to correct the biochemical failure that leads to toxic protein build, leading to better brain health as we age and potential new therapies for Alzheimer's disease.

Welcome to Theresa Mangion, FFV's new Grants and Communications Officer. Feel free to [reach out to Theresa](#), who works Mondays and Tuesdays, if you need any assistance with grant applications.

Is your Will up to date?

Have you considered how up to date your Will is?

Watch this [two minute video](#) to hear about some very important matters to be aware of. If you would like to create your Will online, we have partnered with SafeWill to bring Freemasons Foundation friends and their family members the opportunity to do so for just \$80. [Find out more.](#)

Thank you to all Freemasons, Foundation Members, Directors, and staff for their commitment to the vital philanthropic work undertaken.

Rodney Lavin JP
Chairman of Directors

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www.freemasonsfoundation.org



UNITED GRAND LODGE OF VICTORIA

MOTION FROM GRAND REGISTRAR

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

REFORMS TO COMPLAINTS PROCESS AND NEW MERCY RULE

AMENDMENTS TO RULES 324 AND 334 TO 351 AND NEW RULE 354A

Pursuant to Rule 413 of the Book of Constitutions I, Ian William Doggett Upjohn KC, Grand Registrar move that the Book of Constitutions be amended as set out in the attached documents:

1. Complaints Committee Reforms;
2. New Rule 354A – Masonic Sanctions & Privileges Panel.

The explanatory memoranda, new and amended rules are contained in the attached "Constitutional change supplementary documents"

VWBro. I.D. Upjohn,
Grand Registrar

