



Provincial Grand Chapter of Cumberland & Westmorland

Masonic Hall, Station Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 6BT

Guide for DCs

This is a practical Guide for all Chapter DCs. It is not exhaustive and any questions relating to the work of the DC or etiquette can be directed to the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies, E. Comp. B Bower, on 01900 871058 or 07745362150

The Guide is based on Seminars given to Chapter DCs by E. Comp. Bower in 2012.

Dress – Setting the Standards

The DC sets the standard of dress which all Companions should aspire to: smartly dressed at all times; gloves to be plain white; shoes to be black and polished; socks are to be black or very dark; trousers are to be pressed neatly; shirt to be plain white; jacket is to be black and clean. It is good practice not to wear the jacket while driving to a Meeting. The tie should be plain black, Craft or Royal Arch tie. The Provincial tie should be worn at the Chapter Installation, and any function where the Grand Superintendent is attending.

Regalia

The Apron should be worn around the middle of the waist (a hook can be sewn on the back of the Apron to hook onto the jacket middle button: this will stop the Apron slipping down below the waist line. Sash or Ribbon to be worn over left shoulder, the knot of which in line with the right trouser pocket unattached from the Apron. All Chapter Officers' collars (including the Three Principals) are plain red (only PZs wear ones with a central gold stripe). They should be worn over the shoulders and clipped into the jacket collar (there is no need to wear any other collar underneath). The Royal Arch Jewel should be worn at all times including in Craft Lodge. PZs' Jewels are only worn in the Chapter with the RA Jewel (not instead of). During the 2016 RMBI Festival the Festival Jewel will be worn for the duration of the Festival then removed (unless it is designated as a permanent jewel). The wearing of lapel pins should really be kept to a minimum and only those that relate to the Royal Arch. Top pocket handkerchiefs should not be worn.

Conduct / Approach

The best way of carrying out your duties is to be approachable and friendly. To get the best out of the Companions they have got to feel comfortable when they approach you with a problem or a question. Try not to show frustration: remember, the Companions are doing



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their best and look to you for guidance. If you don't know the answer to a question, please don't make it up: tell the Companion concerned that you will find the answer and report back to him. He will appreciate your honesty.

Involve the ADC as much as possible – he is a potential successor and needs to be encouraged.

The DC or ADC should not prompt: invite a Past Z, or someone who is keen to help, to prompt and make sure he is hidden from view as much as possible. The Scribe's desk is a good place.

Before the Convocation

Prior to the meeting starting make sure the ADC checks the furnishings are set out correctly and the Charter is displayed. If the candles are the oil-filled type make sure they were full before the Chapter was set up. Light them 10 minutes before you start (note: some Chapters light them as part of the opening).

While the ADC is checking the equipment the DC will make sure everyone has arrived and are wearing their correct Collars etc. He will make sure the Candidate has arrived and his Proposer has placed him somewhere where he cannot see the Companions in their regalia (you may spoil it for him if he gets a preview) ready to enter Chapter.

Entering the Chapter

When you enter the Chapter with the Principals, bring the Companions to order to receive the Three Principals.

Once you are in the Chapter make sure the Principals ask how many will stay for the meal, relay the information to the Janitor who will inform the caterers as soon as he can. (This can be by Scribe N reporting directly or by asking the Principal Sojourner to pass on the information when he retires to entrust the Candidate).

Provincial Visitors

In the event that your Chapter has a visitor, such as the Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals or the Provincial Grand Scribe N, they will arrive with no Provincial DC. The Chapter will most likely have been informed of their Private Visit, by one or the other: just in case, be prepared.

Form an Escort of 6 - if possible - Provincial Grand Officers. Ask the Janitor to report to the Chapter Scribe N that your visitor seeks admission as soon as the Chapter is opened. Scribe N will report to the M E, who in turn will say to his DC (do not forget you are already inside



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for the opening) *E Comp D of C will you please assist.* Go straight to the door, check everything is in order, turn around and bring the Companions to order. Suitable words are *Companions you are standing to order to receive E Companion-----his name, the Assistant To The Provincial Grand Principals, Provincial Escort forward* (keep it simple). Don't forget he will acknowledge the Pedestal on entering. Form the Escort in two lines of three inverted on the North Side of the Banners. You will be at the front waiting for the Representative to walk through his escort. Turn to the Three Principals and introduce him to them by his Name. He will exchange greetings with them and he will go to his seat next to Haggai and sit. The Escort from the rear and the senior officer will come through and court bow to the Principals and take his seat and so on until the last of the Escort are at their seats and remain standing. You then say *Companions be seated.* You give a court bow to the Representative and then the Principals and sit and resume your normal duties.

The Representative will make his report after the 2nd (in some Chapters, this may be announced as the 2nd and 3rd) risings and ask to retire. The DC instructs his ADC to take post, approximately two thirds of the way down the south side of the Banners facing forward. DC calls the Escort to order. Leave a gap behind the ADC large enough for any Grand Officers to fit in and, lastly, the Representative. Call the Companions to order, Guide the Grand Officers to position then go to the Representative, court bow, offer the hand (palm upwards and flat) and guide him to his position. You should be lined up as follows: ADC, Representative, Grand Officers and Provincial Grand Officers at the rear. In some Chapters you can form an Escort without inverting the Escort: it depends on the space you have to work in.

Once you are ready.....*Companions you will remain standing whilst the Assistant to the Provincial Grand Principals Retires, accompanied by officers of Supreme Grand Chapter and the Provincial Grand Officers. Comp Organist; forward Companions.* Don't forget to tell your escort that the Representative will acknowledge the Pedestal on his way out.

Festive Board

Please don't delay things if a Representative is there. He sits on the right of H. He will reply to the 5th toast. Make sure the Chapter Z is aware of this, and to couple his name to the toast. He will reply to the toast before anything else is done.

Ask the representative if he wishes to take wine with the Three Principals. If yes, do it after the first course. If appropriate - ask him if he would like to include the New Exalte in his toasts.

You may want to bring your Guest in with the Three Principals. Call the Companions to order to receive the Three Principals accompanied by (whoever is present) and you start off the applause.

There should be no other interruptions between the first five toasts (such as collection of the meal money or raffle money).



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Remember, if the M. E. Z. wants a visitor to say a few words, please give him time to make a few notes. Ask early.

Remember, if things proceed smoothly the Companions and the Visitors can leave or stay as they please. Try not to be seen to rush proceedings: there is a happy medium. When your official visitor says he will retire, ask the Companions to rise and show their appreciation for his visit. Walk out with him and make sure he has his case *etc* with him, wish him a safe journey home, then return to your duties.

The DC is on duty until the Janitor has given the final Toast of the evening.