

STANDING ORDERS OF THE GENERAL FONO

1 Composition

- (1) —
- (2) The General Fono encourages the inclusion of women as members of the Village delegations.
- (3) —
- (4) —
- (5) —

2 Chairperson

- (1) The Chairperson of the General Fono shall be responsible for the good conduct of the meetings of the General Fono.
- (2) The Chairperson shall consult with the Council of the Ongoing Government about the agenda for each meeting of the General Fono and shall ensure that the matters on the agenda are addressed by the General Fono.
- (3) The Chairperson shall not speak in relation to any agenda item and shall have no vote on any General Fono resolution.
- (4) The Chairperson of the General Fono, and the Deputy Chairperson, shall be designated each year by the Taupulega of the Village of the Ulu o Tokelau for that calendar year, from among members of that Village other than the Faipule and Pulenuku.
- (5) The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall be appointed by the General Fono, in accordance with the designation of the Taupulega, on such conditions as the General Fono thinks fit.
- (6) If the person who chairs the General Fono is a General Fono delegate, the Village of that person shall designate a substitute delegate.

3 Meetings

- (1) —
- (2) —
- (3) The General Fono shall meet at such place as the Council of the Ongoing Government decides.

- (4) A notice shall be posted by the Executive Officer in the Executive Office of each Village specifying the date and place of each meeting of the General Fono.
- (5) The Council of the Ongoing Government shall give as much notice as possible in each Village and to the Administrator of the date, place, and business of each meeting of the General Fono.

4 Quorum

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5 Conduct of meetings

- (1) The Chairperson shall introduce the matters to be discussed or decided at a meeting of the General Fono.
- (2) A member of who wishes to speak at a meeting of the General Fono shall do so only with the approval of the Chairperson.
- (3) —
- (4) Voting shall be by voice, secret ballot, or show of hands, as the Chairperson decides.
- (5) —

6 Secretary

- (1) The General Fono shall designate a person to act as its secretary.
- (2) The Secretary shall ensure that minutes of every meeting of the General Fono are kept, and that they are, after consultation with the Chairperson of the General Fono, distributed to each Taupulega as soon as possible after the meeting of the General Fono.
- (3) The minutes shall include the name of every person present at the meeting of the General Fono as a member.
- (4) The decisions of a meeting of the General Fono shall be written and confirmed by the General Fono at the end of that meeting.
- (5) The signature of the Chairperson shall be evidence of that confirmation.

7 Control of meetings

- (1) Subject to paragraph (3), meetings of the General Fono shall be open to members of the public.
- (2) The Chairperson may allow any person who is not a member of the General Fono to speak on any matter under consideration at a meeting of the General Fono.
- (3) The Chairperson may —
 - (i) call on any person present at a meeting of the General Fono to withdraw at any time if the business of the General Fono should properly be continued with the public excluded; or
 - (ii) exclude from a meeting of the General Fono any person who is behaving in a disorderly manner; or
 - (iii) call on any police officer to eject from a meeting of the General Fono any person who refuses to withdraw following the request of the Chairperson.

8 Committees

- (1) There shall be such committees of the General Fono as the General Fono may appoint.
- (2) A committee shall consist of such persons as the General Fono determines.
- (3) A committee shall consider such matters as are referred to it by the General Fono, and shall report on those matters to the General Fono.
- (4) The General Fono may give such directions as it thinks fit with respect to the procedure to be followed at meetings of a committee, and in particular may give directions with respect to the convening of meetings of the committee, the number of members of the committee which shall constitute a quorum, and the manner in which questions arising at a meeting of the committee shall be decided.

9 Procedure

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10 Change of rules

These rules may be changed by decision of the General Fono.

11 Council for the Ongoing Government

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12 Signing authority

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13 Law making

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14 Application of Standing Orders to non-members

When a person who is not a member of the General Fono participates in the proceedings of the General Fono these Standing Orders apply to that person.

15 Publication of documents

- (1) No document prepared for or by the General Fono or a committee of the General Fono may be published and its contents disclosed, except with the permission of the General Fono until the document has been received by the General Fono.
- (2) The General Fono upon receipt of a document may order it to not be disclosed.
- (3) No document prepared for or by the General Fono or a committee of the General Fono where the public were excluded shall be disclosed.

16 Business of the General Fono

- (1) The decisions of the General Fono shall, except with the approval of the General Fono, be made on the basis of remits.
- (2) All remits to the General Fono must be submitted to the Secretariat before the closing date for remits as advised by the Secretariat.
- (3) No remit received after the closing date shall be included in the agenda of the General Fono.
- (4) Except in the case of urgency, the General Fono shall not discuss any matter which is not on the agenda.

- (5) The Secretariat shall ensure that all remits submitted for the General Fono—
 - (i) Be given an identifying number;
 - (ii) Have a distinctive name;
 - (iii) Indicate the sponsor;
 - (iv) Specify the purpose of the remit and any background to it;
 - (v) Provide sufficient detail for the remit to be understood; and
 - (vi) Include the draft motion that will be presented to the General Fono.
- (6) Any remit which has a financial implication must be accompanied by a certificate from the Government's or the Village financial advisor relating to that financial implication.
- (7) All remits shall be one page or less exclusive of any supporting documents such as reports or draft legislation.
- (8) The Secretariat will return any remit not in accordance with this rule.
- (9) The Secretariat must supply to each member and to the Chairperson and to the Deputy Chairperson a copy of all documents, which are to be tabled in or presented to the General Fono, no later than 10 working days before the day on which they are to be tabled or presented.
- (10) A Village or Department shall indicate to the Chairperson the priority that the Village or Department gives each remit of that Village or Department before the General Fono agenda is finalised.

17 Remits to expire

No remit will be carried forward from one calendar year to another without express decision to that effect by the General Fono.

18 Speaking limits

Except with the approval of the Chairperson through the General Fono, speaking rights shall be exercised in the following way —

- (i) Proponent: maximum 5 minutes;
- (ii) Others: maximum 2 minutes per person per subject.

19 Declaration of private interests

A member must —

- (i) Declare any personal or private financial or business interest that member or any spouse or business partner of that member may have in a matter before the General Fono; and
- (ii) Withdraw from the proceedings of that General Fono when that matter is considered, unless the General Fono otherwise decides.

20 Breach of Standing Orders

- (1) A member or any other person at a meeting of the General Fono may by order of the Chairperson be excluded from the meeting if they contravene or fail to comply with these Standing Orders or any direction of the Chairperson.
 - (2) Where a member is excluded from a meeting of the General Fono the Chairperson shall indicate the period of exclusion which shall not be longer than that of the sitting in progress.
 - (3) Where a person other than a member is excluded the Chairperson shall indicate the period of exclusion which shall not be longer than that General Fono meeting.
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