

FACT SHEET 5: SUB-COMMITTEES – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?

Sub-committees are formed by a P&C Association to undertake specific planning and/or management tasks on behalf of the association. Sub-committees are categorised as:

- Ad Hoc Committees - which are formed to carry out specific tasks and cease to exist after these tasks have been completed (eg, Centenary Committee).
- Standing Committees - those which have an ongoing role and are elected annually at, or confirmed by, the P&C Annual General Meeting (eg, Canteen Committee).

Sub-committees have delegated authority and are fully accountable to the P&C Association. Each sub-committee must operate within the terms of reference or rules set for it by the P&C. Sometimes a sub-committee may write its own rules but these must be properly endorsed by the P&C before the sub-committee begins its work.

A proper sub-committee must:

- be elected by the P&C Association
- conform to the rules of operation endorsed by the P&C Association
- report regularly to the P&C Association
- Hand over any profits which may have resulted from the sub-committee's activities, after all operational costs have been met, though some sub-committees may require a working budget (eg, Canteen Committee).

A sub-committee does not have a constitution separate from the P&C, nor a separate set of office-bearers. The head of the sub-committee is known as the convenor or chairperson.

A sub-committee may operate a separate bank account; however, each sub-committee's books are the responsibility of the P&C Association's Treasurer although the sub-committee may elect a book-keeper to work with the Treasurer. The sub-committee's books must be submitted for audit when the association itself undergoes its annual audit.

Further, a sub-committee has no discretion to commit funds, beyond meeting operational costs, for the purchase of school resources.

Insurance cover for sub-committees

All P&C Association insurance, purchased from Federation, extends to sub-committees provided the four points listed in paragraph three above are strictly followed. This is essential to limit a P&C Association's overall exposure to risk. It is necessary to pay a special fee to extend cover for sub-committees which have a higher than usual exposure to risk. Currently these sub-committees are Out of School Hours Care sub-committees (OOSH), and After School Classes (music/band/drama etc sub-committees).

The Principal's role on sub-committees

The Principal is automatically a member of the P&C Association and its sub-committees. The Principal does not have the right of veto or the right to gag association or sub-committee discussions. However, the Principal is expected to highlight disparities between association/sub-committee discussions and Department of Education and Training (DET) policies. The Principal must be given notice of every association and sub-committee meeting but his/her inability to attend is not adequate grounds to postpone or cancel any association/sub-committee meeting. The Principal may delegate another member of staff to attend.

It is a requirement of the DET that all P&C Association monies be expended with the endorsement of a majority vote at a general or special meeting of the P&C Association itself. It is reasonable for a fundraising sub-committee, when handing over its profits to the P&C, to suggest how part or all of these profits may be spent. The P&C, of course, is not obliged to adopt these suggestions but continued disregard from the P&C could discourage active fundraisers.

