

Submariners Association

Recognised by the Ministry of Defence
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Vice Patron Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE

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NATIONAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE

MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE (Unconfirmed)

Held in the
Best Western Yew Lodge Hotel Kegworth
on
Saturday 24th March 2018

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Conference, then gave a safety talk with particular reference to emergency exits and reminded those assembled of the 'No Alcohol' rule for the Conference and they were requested to remove any drinks that might be present. He then reminded those attending that only one Delegate per Branch was permitted to sit in the front sections of the seating arrangements and that all the Observers should be located in the rear sections. He then advised the Observers that they were not permitted to take part in the debate but had an important role in assisting their Delegates to accurately report back to their Branches what went on during Conference. Prior to the Roll Call the Chairman took the opportunity to inform the assembled Delegates that the rules for debate would be explained at the appropriate time, however a Delegate wishing to speak should raise their hand and when asked to stand should clearly state their name and Branch for the benefit of the National Secretary who was recording the proceedings. The Chairman then requested the Delegates to make themselves known and following a count by the Tellers a total of 28 Delegates were found to be in attendance:

2. ROLL CALL National Management Committee:

Present	Absent
Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL (Patron)	Admiral Sir James Perowne KBE (Vice-Patron)
Rear Admiral Niall SR Kilgour CB (President)	Mr Ray Gritt (Vice President)
Cdr. Bob Seaward OBE (Vice President)	Rear Admiral Tony Whetstone CB (Vice President)
Mr Dave Barlow (Vice President)	Mr Chris Freeth (Committee)
Mr. Iain Mackenzie MBE (Vice President & Parade Marshal)	
Mr Ian Atkinson (Vice President)	
Mr Jim McMaster (Chairman)	
Mr Ian Vickers (Secretary)	

Mr Nigel Mellor (Treasurer)	
Mr David Woolterton (Membership Secretary)	
Mr Frank Pas (Committee)	
Mr Stuart Brown (Committee)	
Mr Brian Tate (Committee)	
Mr Andrew Morgan (Committee)	
Mr Sandy Powell (Committee)	
CPO Paul Swaby (Serving Rep)	

Branches Represented:

Barrow-in-Furness	Medway Towns
Basingstoke	Merseyside
Beds & Herts	Middlesex
Blackpool & Fylde	Norfolk
Burton on Trent	North Staffs
Cheltenham & West Midlands	Northern Ireland
Dolphin	Nottingham
East Kent	Plymouth
Exeter	Scottish
Gosport	Sheffield
Hull	Sunderland
Leicester & Rutland	Wales
Lincoln	West of Scotland
Manchester	West Riding

Total number of Branches represented = 28

Mr David Woolterton (Membership Secretary) confirmed that all who attended were in date with their annual subscriptions.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following branches (22):

Australia	Morecambe Bay
Bath	New Zealand
Birmingham	North East
Blyth & Wansbeck	Peterborough
Brierley Hill	Poole
Bridlington	Portsmouth
Colchester	Royal Berks
Derbyshire	South Kent
Essex	Southampton
Gatwick	Sussex
Indalo in Spain	Vectis

4. DEPARTED SUBMARINERS

The meeting stood to observe one-minute silence in memory of those members of the Submariners Association

and indeed all submariners who had Crossed the Bar in the preceding year. We have lost 81 members since we last met.

5. President's Address to The SA Conference 25th March 2017

I think we are at an important moment in the submariner's association, I link that to the close engagement to the serving community, because I think that will bring us much more into an organisation with weight and long future. And, to that end as well we have some important issues to debate coming up later. I always enjoy the debates with both sides of an argument. There are some important issues to resolve which will give us clarity to go forward. I look forward to the healthy discussions.

6. MINUTES OF THE 2017 NATIONAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE

The Chairman commented that the Minutes from the 2017 NCC had been in the possession of all branches for the past 12 months. As is customary he would ask that we do not go through them item by item, if this was acceptable could someone Propose them to be an accurate account of the meeting.

The membership secretary Dave Woolterton made a comment on the life membership of those over 90. Part of the clause was that they had to have been a member of the association for 10years. It had become apparent that the data base is not as accurate as it should be and there was no way of confirming the years of membership.

The membership secretary would like to drop that rule.

Steve May (Barrow) said branches should have accurate records of their members.

The membership Secretary said that not all branches had good records and members drip in and out of the association. The general opinion was for the 10-year rule to be dropped and the Chairman made the final decision to drop the 10 year rule.

Proposed by- Les Catlin Gosport Branch

Seconded by- Mark Pugh West Riding Branch

The Chairman then asked for a show of hands to confirm that the Minutes are a true and accurate record of the 2017 National Council Conference.

FOR: 27 AGAINST: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 1

Motion Carried The Minutes of the NCC 2017 are now CONFIRMED

7. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were two main actions from last years' conference

- a) Blackpool branch proposed a Welfare Office for the Association. This was later withdrawn. The Chairman has produced a document- A Guide to Welfare which was distributed to every branch secretary. Positive feedback has been received.
- b) The NMC Confirmed that the Association will continue to donate substantial sums to The Submarine Memorial Fund which is administered by the RNBT.
- c) The 10 year rule just changed.

8. RATIFY NEW ROLES:

Ian Vickers	Secretary	For 25	Against 0	Abstentions 1
Nigel Mellor	Treasurer	For 24	Against 0	Abstentions 2
David Woolterton	Membership	For 25	Against 0	Abstentions 1

9. OFFICERS REPORT

Secretary

Good morning gentlemen and thank you for appointing me your new National Secretary. I have been thinking about this position for about four years now, but it has never been quite the right time to apply. I will do my best

to keep you up to date with events as they happen and any changes that may affect your branches. I'm not new to the secretary position, I have been the secretary of the International Submariners Association for the past ten years and during that time the two associations have moved slowly together. And will hopefully work together closer in the future.

I don't mind telling you that I am dyslexic. I live with it, and I make mistakes, mistakes that I cannot see so please correct me. I will not take offence. And for the committee please don't ask me to read anything more than two paragraphs long as I could end up faltering or reading backwards.

Thank you, gentlemen.

Comments on the secretary's report:

The Chairman stressed that it is the National Secretaries job to pass on information to the branches, it is then the branch secretary's job to forward it on to their members. This passing of information is an on-going and continuous process and not just limited to an item on the Agenda of branch meetings. It is important to remember that not all members can attend branch meetings, so all information should be distributed as and when received.

Paul Ellis (Nottingham) we must be very careful of information sent and kept. The British Legion have been fined a huge amount for abusing personal details.

Chairman. We are very fortunate that two of our members on the NMC in their work life are right into the new regulations. Stewart Brown and Paul Swady. They have agreed to keep us on the straight and narrow. Stewart is in the process of accreditation and any information we get that is relevant and pertinent we will send out.

Paul will contact the Navy Command Data Protection Officer and seek their advice.

Several other comments were made by other branches, but we will send out information to all branches as we get it.

Feel free to pass any information regarding this to other organisations, they will be having the same problems.

Note: **When sending to multi addressees BLIND COPY the addresses as this prevents the recipient from having half a page of addresses when he opens or prints the information.**

Les Catlin (Portsmouth) suggested a branch secretary guide book. The Chairman said it was in hand.

Treasurer.

Good morning Gents.

As outgoing treasurer, I will make this report

I would like to tell you what happened when Keith passed away. At the July NMC meeting it was agreed that Keith Bishop would take over as National Treasurer. Unfortunately, Keith died that night at my house which was devastating for me. We then found out just how much Keith was doing. Keith was running Dolphin Branch virtually on his own as well as the role of National Membership Secretary. We still had the problem of National Treasurer, I took over the running of the Dolphin Branch and Nigel stepped in as Treasurer. The secretary's job Jim has done for the last few months until a replacement could be found.

Keith was setting up a data base for membership. Fortunately, our web master offered to take over the role of Membership Secretary. He has set up a number of processes which will make the job easier to collect money. Now we are up and running as best as can be.

You should have two copies of the accounts

The Balance Sheet is now a Statement of Financial Position
And the Profit and Loss is a detailed Financial Statement

Comments on the treasurer's report:

Denis Rawle (Scottish) Last year's account show a healthy increase. The treasurer said the increase was to cover the next few years instead of asking for more money every year.

Brian Hall (Exeter) Would like to thank the outgoing treasurer for his services and hard work

Chairman. Took this opportunity to remind everyone that Annual Subscriptions for 2019 are due on the 1st January not the 31st March. Don't wait until the 15th December and then say, "it was too late to collect subs" It won't wash. You now have 9 months' notice to ensure that your branch is paid up on time!

Membership Secretary Report-

As of 1st January 2018, our membership stood at: -
Full Members; 1709
New applicants; 215
Deceased; 74

Payments should reach the Association by the 1st January. Late payment should be an exception to the rule, not the rule.

This year since January we have lapsed 187 members through late payment. 3 of those resigned bringing our membership down to 1583.

As Web Master as well as Membership Secretary we have a lot of information on the web site.

With the new regulation we may have to go to each individual member and ask their permission to have their information on the web site. Same with the NMC, I will have to ask if we can post photographs addresses and details on our site. This will come down to branch level as well with meeting places and contact details.

At some point I am going to have to come to you for permission.

Any questions to the membership secretary?

Paul Ellis (Nottingham) can we have notification of subs due earlier than December, to which the reply was yes, they will be available earlier.

There was a challenge to the payment date to National.

David Barlow confirmed this; The financial year runs from 1st January to 31st December the current Rules and Constitution state that; (Clause 4a) 1st February to branches. (Clause 4d) The subs have to reach the National Membership Secretary no later than the 1st March.

The Chairman deferred this until the recommendations had been debated.

Membership Secretary stated the 13 branches were non-compliant on 1st March this year and two still, remain outstanding.

Direct Debit and Standing Orders. Standing orders are a nightmare, we do not know when they are coming in and we have no control over them. Those on Standing Orders will be encouraged to change to Direct Debt.

Why do we collect branch fees with the Direct Debt, simple, branches have complained that they have difficulty in collecting branch fees from some members who pay by SO/DD so to get around the problem National collect everything and when the branch has fully paid up the branch fees will be refunded to the branch so the branch does not have to chase reluctant payers.

10. Rules of Debate for a Proposal

The Chairman will read out the motion and any relevant information

The Chairman will invite the proposing branch to confirm he has a Secunder for the Proposal.

The Chairman will then invite the proposer to make his Proposal.

The Chairman will invite the Secunder to speak for the Proposal.

The Chairman will open the debate to the Delegates. A delegate wishing to speak should raise his hand and wait for the Chairman to call him.

He should state his name and branch in a clear and audible voice for the benefit of all Delegates and the Minutes.

Each delegate may speak only once. The Chairman has the right to curtail a speaker if he is going on too long, digresses from point or if he is being too repetitive.

When all Delegates who wish to speak have done so, the Chairman will ask the Proposer to conclude.

The Chairman will then call for a vote to be taken.

In the event of a tie where a simple majority is required The Chairman has a casting vote.

Clause 5 (d) of the Rules and Constitution refers.

The tellers will take a count of the votes. I ask that you all hold your hand well in the air during counting.

Any motion carried which affects the Rules and Constitution **in any way** requires a 2/3 majority to succeed. Clause 7 (b) of the R & C applies.

Any motion which does not affect the Rules and Constitution requires a simple majority to succeed.

Proposal No.1

Proposed by: Norfolk Branch
John Taylor

Seconded by: Manchester
Stephen Collins

Norfolk Branch proposes that the Submarine Memorial be relocated to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Background Information

Site is no longer suitable to hold a memorial service there due to not being able to divert traffic; the frontage of the Memorial is now a cycle track in addition a lamp post has been positioned in front of it.

The site at the National Arboretum is a purpose built venue for such Memorials and the facilities are second to none, large free car park, large refreshment and dining facilities with a Chapel if there is bad weather, also entry is free, it is also fairly central in UK.

It is therefore requested that contacts are made to City of London (who we think own the site) pointing out the problems which has made a fair amount of expense also from a state of security the Arboretum is a better location. Asking if they are willing to let it go also to give financial assistance to move it.

Also, if City of London is willing to allow it to be Move then a National Lottery grant be applied for also. If a move is refused then steps taken to build a new Submarine Memorial at the Arboretum.

Comment from NMC: The Memorial commemorating the British submariners who died in the First World War was unveiled on 15 December 1922 by Rear Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair, Chief of the Submarine Service. Fifty-four boats were lost during the First World War and with them the lives of 138 officers and 1,225 men, approximately one-third of the Submarine Service's total personnel. The First World War as the first arena in which submarines would play a significant military role. An inscription was added later to include the memory of those submariners lost in the Second World War.

It is important to remember that the Submariners Association does not own this Memorial. We should be proud of the fact that we, the Submarine Family have such a dignified and prominent Memorial right in the centre of one of the busiest cities in the world, freely available for all to see and admire. There can be few, if any, locations in the UK as accessible to everyone as London. To relocate this Monument would involve not only huge logistic and administrative problems but would be cost-prohibitive. It is difficult to imagine the City of London councils agreeing to have one of their monuments dismantled and removed. Our Monument has recently been up-graded to a Grade II* Memorial of Historical Interest.

John Taylor spoke about the problems with the site in London, stating that the Arboretum is a better venue and purpose built for the memorial.

It was pointed out that the Embankment parade is a full weekend event, with Westminster on Saturday and the Embankment Parade on the Sunday.

Vote: For 6 Against 18 Abstentions 4

Proposal failed

Proposal No.2

Proposed by: Scottish Branch
Denis Rawle

Seconded by: Plymouth Branch
Keith Burt

Scottish Branch proposes that a new paragraph be added to the National Rules and Constitution.

Clause 3 - MEMBERSHIP. New paragraph 3(iv) to read;

Submariners of other navies who have qualified for their dolphins, having completed the equivalent of RN Submarine part 3.

Background Information

None submitted by Scottish Branch

Comment from NMC: How would this situation be controlled? How would applicants prove that they are qualified submariners from their own navy? There already exists an association for submariners of all countries to join if they so wish; that is the International Submariners Association and there is a branch in the UK. There also exists the opportunity for submariners of other countries to join our Association as Associate Members and as such they can enjoy the camaraderie and all other benefits and aspects of membership except they cannot hold office at branch or national level. Unless the ultimate reason for joining is to hold a position of authority, there is no need for an 'outsider' to become a Full Member.

The Scottish Branch stated that they have and have had members from different countries in their branch and thought it unfair that they could not be full members.

This was backed up by the Plymouth Branch who also have had foreign submariners.

Les Catlin (Gosport) Said it would be difficult to equate their qualifications to ours

Steve May (Barrow) We have our own International Submariners Association they can join and it would be difficult for the Membership Secretary to control.

Vote: For 5 Against 20 Abstentions 3

Proposal failed

Proposal No.3

Proposed by: Scottish Branch
Dennis Rawle

Seconded by: Plymouth Branch
Keith Burt

Scottish Branch proposes an amendment to the National Rules and Constitution.

Clause 4 - SUBSCRIPTIONS.

New clause to read: *The annual subscription be reduced to £10.00 from £15*

Background Information

None submitted by Scottish Branch

Comment from NMC: This Proposal gives no reason why we should reduce subscriptions from 28 pence per week to 19 pence per week (figures rounded). The proposer fails to mention our ongoing liabilities which will only increase through time and not decrease. As an Association we are obliged to hold Public Liability and Employers Liability Insurance, this costs money and we do not charge branches for this. We have

commitments to contribute to our charity (Submariners Fund administered by RNBT), we donate to other charities and branches when requested. We must fund the Embankments Parade which although sponsored at the moment will not be so in two years' time. We have finally brought our accounts to a reasonably healthy state, but we must always look to the future and the costs which will not go away. To state that we have a bank balance of £XXX is too superficial and does not take into account our outgoings.

Denis Rawle (Scottish) Three years ago our branch had a subscription on £20. Now that national subs are £15 the association is taking three quarters of our income. *The Chairman pointed out that is up to the branch what they charge. We are talking about national subscriptions.*
Our members do not want to pay it as they do not think they are getting value for money.

Keith Burt, (Plymouth) We need to reduce our association costs so that the subs can go back down.

John Erskine (Northern Ireland) Two reunions ago we spent a lot of time debating over a small amount. The association needs the money.

Steve May (Barrow) When the subs went up two years ago some people left, and things have settled down. We do not want to go through that again.

Vote: For 3 Against 22 Abstentions 3

Proposal failed

Proposal No.4

Proposed by: Scottish Branch
Dennis Rawle

Seconded by: Plymouth Branch
Keith Burt

Scottish Branch proposes an amendment to Clause 10 of the National Rules and Constitution.

After the first sentence of Clause 10 - BRANCHES, the following to be inserted;

The Branch is to appoint 3 officers to administer its activities.

Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

An associate member may undertake the office of Secretary on the understanding that two thirds majority voted by the branch.

Background Information

None submitted by Scottish Branch

Comment from NMC: It states in Clause 10 - BRANCHES; "*Management of individual Branches shall generally follow the guidelines of the Constitution and the advice of the National Management Committee*"

It is clearly stated in the Rules and Constitution that Associate Members shall not be eligible to hold office at local or national level Clause 3 (d) (ii) is unambiguous on this point. Furthermore, it should be realised that if Associate Members become eligible to hold office then all Associate Members will have to be registered in our Membership Data Base and therefore be liable to pay subscriptions as Full Members do. It is the clear responsibility of branches to administer their branches using Full Members in the positions of responsibility. Dilution of Membership criteria can only lead to a negative outcome.

Dennis Rawle, (Scottish) We have great difficulty in getting secretaries treasurers and chairman. An Associate Member can take on the role of secretary as long as they get a 2/3 majority from the rest of the members

Keith Burt (Plymouth) Hello again! A lot of our members are young and serving and a lot at the other end of the age scale. We cannot see a problem of an Associate Member taking on a roll.

Dave Barlow (Vice Chairman) It is against the constitution as it stands at the moment. Claws 3(d)(ii)

Vote: For 4 Against 21 Abstentions 3

Proposal failed

Recommendations

Rules of Debate for a Recommendation

The Chairman will read out the Recommendation and any relevant information. The Chairman will ask for a branch to propose that the NMC Recommendation is made into a Proposal and then for a Secunder. The Proposing branch may amend the Recommendation wording so long as it still reflects the original intent of the Recommendation. For example, a quantity, or time, or date, or amount of money etc. may be changed. The Delegates will then vote on whether the Proposal can be debated. If approved we then proceed in the same manner, with the same rules, as for Proposals (see above). If there are no Proposer and Secunder, then the Recommendation fails and will not be debated or voted on.

Recommendation 1

The National Management Committee will recommend that Clause 4 of the National Rules and Constitution be re-written entirely in such a manner as to avoid any misunderstanding or ambiguity as to the requirements and obligations of members.

Clause 4- SUBSCRIPTIONS to be written as follows:

- 1) *Annual subscriptions are due on the **First of January** and **shall** be paid to the National Membership Secretary by the **First of March** at the very latest, so that all branches are fully paid up prior to the NCC (A.G.M). There are no exceptions to this rule.*
- 2) *Any member not paid by the First of March will be deemed a "Lapsed" member.*
- 3) *Cost of Annual Subscriptions will be reviewed every three years at the NCC. and any adjustments will be discussed and voted on at that time.*
- 4) *Membership cards will be issued to new members when the Membership Secretary has received payment of subscriptions.*
- 5) *Renewal year stickers for the Membership Cards will be issued in December.*
- 6) *Applications for membership received and paid up after the first of October will cover the member until December 31st the following year. This concession is for 'new joiners' only and does not apply to lapsed members re-joining.*
- 7) *Subscriptions can be paid by Direct Debit to the National Membership Secretary. This is the preferred method of payment and should cover the cost of National and Branch Subscriptions. An application to pay using this method can be found on the Association web site. Payment by Direct Debit is available to all members, existing and new, and is a personal choice.*
- 8) *The amount and collection of Branch subscriptions are a matter for the internal organisation of each branch. However National Membership Secretary needs to be informed of branch subscriptions to*

enable him to refund branch when necessary. This would occur if member included branch funds in his Direct Debit.

Background Information

In recent years some branches have experienced difficulties in understanding what is required of them in regard to the payment of National Subscriptions and the importance of paying these subscriptions to the Membership Secretary by the due date. To assist branch Treasurers in this matter and to ensure that the requirements of this issue are fully understood it is felt by the NMC that the entire Clause 4 be re-written in simpler terms. The content and requirements have not changed but have been written in a manner as to be fully understood

Steve May (Barrow) Amendment to para 2. Remove the second part. Resubmit application on being lapsed. This was debated and decided to change. Vote taken.

Vote: For 25 Against 0 Abstentions 3

Para 7 Debated and not changed.

Proposed by: Barrow

Seconded by: Plymouth Branch

Vote: For 22 Against 1 Abstentions 5

Proposal Carried.

Recommendation 2

The NMC will Recommend that the Rules and Constitution Clause 3 - Membership, section (a), be amended to include a new sub-section (ii) and that subsequent sub-sections are re-numbered in sequence appropriately.

The new sub-section (ii) to read:

(ii) Officers and ratings of the Royal Navy who have commenced formal Submarine Training in the recognised training facilities.

Background Information

Present Criteria for Membership of Submariners Association.

The present criteria for Full Membership of the Submariners Association is laid down in the Rules and Constitution and Management Committee Standing Orders Issue 4 March 2015 and are as follows;

Clause 3 - Membership;

(a) The Association is open for Full Membership to:

- (i) Officers and ratings who have served, or who are still serving as qualified members of the Ships Company of HM Submarines. This includes members of the crews of Allied submarines which operated under the command of the Flag Officer Submarines in British Flotillas during World War Two (1939 - 1945).
- (ii) Exceptionally, qualified submariners of other navies who have served in HM Submarines on exchange drafts for at least six months may have applications for full membership submitted by a branch for consideration by the National Management Committee.

- (iii) A person who was a Full Member of The Association on 27 March 1999 and has continued to be a Full Member.

Sections 3(ii) & (iii) above are clear and are not discussed here.

At present to become a Full Member of the Submariners Association (SA) you must be a qualified member of the Ships Company of HM Submarines i.e. having passed the necessary SMQ or in the case of officers, Part III. This means that there is a limited opportunity to discuss SA membership and encourage participation with these ratings/officers as they are dispersed throughout the Flotilla or establishments. I believe the time has come to revise this situation and offer Full Membership to ratings/officers when they join the Submarine School either in HMS Raleigh or HM Naval Base Clyde and commence their training. It is at this stage that the opportunity to discuss and debate the merits of joining the SA is most likely to succeed. Students are enthusiastic and more likely to join. Once they are Members most will continue to be so for many years, possibly for life. By having to wait until they have qualified at sea we lose the initiative and momentum and the chances are that we have lost the rating. By losing contact we lose the opportunity to recruit these submariners to the SA.

It has been considered making the trainees Associate Members until such times as they have qualified at sea, but this would mean that we are in fact no further forward than we are right now. We would lose contact as they are dispersed throughout the Flotilla and Bases and again lose the opportunity to have them as Full Members. Many similar organisations, for example The Royal Marines Association, approach new entrants as soon as they join up, they strike while the iron is hot! The benefit of this early contact should not be underestimated.

This is a radical change to our present stance, so we must consider the '*Pros & Cons*' of such a proposal.

Pros:

- Each '*intake*' of trainees is a captive audience. We can talk to them when they are fresh, enthusiastic and with an unbiased mind-set.
- We have the opportunity to increase membership by a huge amount!
- We can finally rid ourselves of the image of....."*the thing you do when you retire*"
- We will have an increasing number of young members of both genders with new, bright ideas
- We would truly become a major pillar in the Submarine Division.

Cons:

- How will we know if a trainee fails the course or drops out for any reason?
- How will we know if a trainee does not complete his Sea Training part of his qualification?

When a suggestion like this has been mentioned in the past the main objection has been as the '*Cons*' above. After discussion with the Submarine Command Warrant Officer I can inform that you a solution to this situation is in place and available.

The procedure is already in place whereby the Senior Training Officer in SMQ (North) is informed of the progress of all SMQs once they have left the School. He is routinely notified of those who pass and those who do not pass their training at sea. He is obviously also aware of those who do not complete their training in the School. Regular monthly contact between him and a member of the NMC, the Chairman or the Membership Secretary for example, will ensure that the Association is always aware of any new member who does not complete his qualification requirements.

There are probably many more Pros & Cons than mentioned here but just because a problem presents itself does not mean that it cannot be solved with some thought and consideration

We have the chance to establish the SA as the '*go to*' organisation for ALL submariners serving and non-serving and this would be so much easier to accomplish if we can recruit when the target audience is gathered together in a classroom.

We must at the same time guard against seeming to '*Press Gang*' trainees. That would be counter-productive. We seek only to fully utilise the situation as it presents its self. By talking to trainees in the classroom environment we have the perfect opportunity to explain what we are about and what we stand for; the chance to impress upon them why they should be part of the organisation and be an active Member of the Family. It is also an opportunity to show the future generation of submariners that we are not just a group of old men sitting in pubs drinking too much and spinning dits! In spite of all the work that has been done over the past decade or so to move on from

the 'Old Comrades' impression there is still the underlying perception that the SOCA still prevails. Encouraging the youngsters to join will help to show that this is no longer the case.

Our present membership is an aging population and that cannot be denied or indeed avoided but we can still encourage youngsters, the next generation of submariners, to pick up where we leave off. They must be convinced that our heritage, our Memorials, plaques and graves are important and most important of all we must never forget those who have gone before us.

We can only achieve this with the full support and participation of the serving submarine community at all levels. Their support must be more than just lip-service. We need an opportunity to approach trainees and put our case to them. This means more than just turning up at the occasional Passing Out Parade where it is already too late. We are just the 'old boys' sitting on the side of proceedings at this stage!

We need an opportunity to speak to trainees at some stage, probably at the start of their course and explain what we are about. This has to be supported by the staff of both training establishments (HMS Raleigh and HMNB Clyde). And every bit as important and maybe more important, are us - the existing members, the old guys, we MUST make it clear that we welcome these youngsters, that we acknowledge them as our future and welcome them enthusiastically!

If the Submariners Association is to have any chance of long-term sustainability it can only be achieved by opening our doors to the future submariners and making them feel that they matter to us, that we depend on them to carry the torch forward.

Those who attended the Embankment Parade this year must have noticed the number of serving personnel who were present; several hundred and the number grows each year. HMS Sultan alone was represented by around 90 personnel of whom approximately half were Phase 2 Trainees! SMQs are similarly encouraged to attend and assist many such events throughout the year. They do so willingly and are proud to represent the RN Submarine Service and yet they are not allowed to join the Submariners Association!

Where do you see our membership in 5 or 10 years? I suspect that unless we change our philosophy and actively encourage new, young members we will become an ever-diminishing group of old men. Still spinning great dits but dying as an Association. Now is the time to move on from "*...the veterans Association*" and become "*... veterans OF the Association!*"

If we remain exactly as we are our Association will eventually wither on the vine as we gently move towards our final patrol.

WO Andy Knox

Stated that he encourages all new recruits to join the association, but it is up to them to join. To get them at this early stage before they go to sea and lost in the Fleet is preferential. This was backed up by the Chairman. The debate went on for 15 minutes with a few suggestions put forward. Branches should advertise themselves and tout for the new members. It was also mentioned about starting new branches in areas where there are none-at the moment, possibly one in Neptune.

Proposed by: Sunderland

Seconded by: Gosport

Vote: For 22 Against 3 Abstentions 3

Taken to debate. As it had been debated it was taken direct to a vote

Vote: For 21 Against 3 Abstentions 4

Proposal carried.

11 **Branch to propose the toast at the 2019 conference.**
By rota it is Indalo in Spain and they have agreed.

