

# Convention Strategy

Executive Officer Rob Oerlemans

## Background

The Multiple District Convention is a core part of the annual program for Lions. It serves the following functions.

- To provide an opportunity to conduct the Business of the Association,
- To provide an opportunity to recognise and acknowledge the achievements of the Association,
- To provide the opportunity for Multiple District Projects and activities to promote their goals to Lions, and
- To provide a recreational and social opportunity for members.

The Convention is an operational activity of the Multiple District, however the Multiple District has specific strategies to ensure that Conventions remain successful, effective and cost-effective.

## Convention Business

The focus on the Business Sessions in recent years has been reduced compared to last century. This is likely to be related to the maturity of the organisation as well as the naturally conservative nature of the members.

Convention Business sessions appeal to a subset of Lions – those who are more interested in the 'political' aspects of the organisations, those who aspire to leadership, and those past leaders who wish to guide the organisation. More broadly, members wish to be involved when the Convention makes decisions about projects and activities of interest, and when fees are discussed.

There is pressure on timing for Business Sessions from the members of the increasing list of Projects and Foundations who wish to promote their causes, and from the committees driving events on the standing program – particularly Leo of the Year and Youth of the Year.

This has been dealt with in respect of Policy review but is likely to be an ongoing concern.

Forums and Workshops are becoming more difficult to accommodate in the program due to the pressures of other Convention Business. The primary training programs now focus on Leadership Institutes and Area Forums, however forums and workshops may be included in the Convention at the discretion of the Council Chairperson.

## Recognition and acknowledgment

This is an important part of the Convention and it relates to the presentation of awards and acknowledgement of our leaders. Presentation of awards is always compromised by the lack of attendance of the awardees. In many cases, they are not present and therefore the acknowledgement is not effective.

It is also important for our newer members that the balance between acknowledgement and more future-focussed activities is carefully managed. Our organisation needs to look forward as well as reflect on the past.

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## Promotion of projects

The MD201 Convention provides an important opportunity for Lions Projects and Foundations to report to the members on their activities and seek the support of members for their programs. Three main methods are used for the promotion of projects:

1. Displays and exhibitions
2. On- stage presentations
3. Reporting through the Convention Handbook

Efforts have been made to improve the quality of presentations and reports and this strategy recommends that it continues.

## Social and Recreational opportunities

As previously stated, these activities are very important to our members, and our organisation. Fun, friendship and fellowship build engagement, increase motivation and enthusiasm. The majority of social functions, however, are built entirely around food and drink. This reflects the maturity of the organisation, but I wonder if it is as effective for newer and younger members?

## Discussion

The Convention is an operational activity of the Multiple District. The policy, constitution and procedure guide the convention operation to ensure that it is effective, financially responsible and that it supports the legal and policy obligations of MD201.

The organisation invests heavily in the Multiple District Convention both in terms of human and financial resources and though it meets the internal needs of the organisation, there are few examples that this investment helps to promote the organisation.

Successful conventions and conferences draw attention to the organisations and associations conducting them. The Convention itself provides an excellent opportunity for non-Lions to discover the value of our organisation and this strategy focusses on this objective.

The public should be invited to visit the displays and exhibitions, keynote addresses and presentations by Lions projects.

Scope should also be considered to focus the gala dinner on a philanthropic or charitable cause and invite members of the public book tables and attend.

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## Strategies

1. Council endorses the principal purposes of the Multiple District Convention as being:

- a) Convention Business
- b) Recognition and Acknowledgement
- c) Promotion of Projects, and
- d) Social and Recreational Opportunities

2. Council resolves that the program of Convention's ought to be flexible and responsive to best meeting the purposes outlined above, subject to the following standing items being accommodated:

- (a) The Opening Ceremony
- (b) Flag Ceremony
- (c) Remembrance Ceremony
- (d) Business Sessions
- (e) Leo of the Year Final
- (f) Youth of the Year Final
- (g) Convention Luncheon
- (h) Closing Ceremony
- (i) First Conventioneers Function
- (j) Gala Dinner
- (k) Introduction of the Council.
- (l) Introduction of the incoming Council.

3. Council resolves that the Convention Program and events be developed to maximise the opportunity for the public to attend.

## Supporting Documents

- 1. Convention Policy
- 2. Convention Procedure
- 3. Template Program
- 4. Convention Bid documents

Revision No.	1.0	Relates to:	Governance
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Author	Rob Oerlemans	Authorised by	Rob Oerlemans

### TABLE OF REVISIONS

Rev #		Description of Change
1.0	April 2014	New document