



COMMONWEALTH
DROWNING
PREVENTION

MEMORANDUM

To: National and Associate Member Organisations

cc: Board of Trustees
Business Development Committee

From: Dr Steve Beerman, Deputy Commonwealth President

Date: 9th February January 2026

Subject: Board of Trustees – Elected Trustees - Nominations

Attachments: RLSS Trustee Nomination Form

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the provisions of our Supplemental Charter and Bye Laws and the Society's Regulations, the term of our current Board of Trustees ends in May 2026. Therefore, we hereby commence the nomination process to appoint or reappoint Trustees. Under the updated December 2025 Regulations, current Trustees can stand for a further term providing they still meet the criteria as outlined in this memorandum.

This Memorandum is a formal call for Nominations for the following positions.

1. Trustee from a Major Contributing National Branch
2. Regionally Elected Trustees

Appendix A contains the Terms of Reference of the Board of Trustees and Appendix B contains details of the role of a Trustee.

PROCEDURE

Trustee Recruitment Criteria

Legal Requirements:

Meets the Requirements of a Trustee as defined by the UK Charity Commission; information on which is available from the UK Charity Commission or at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do>

Knowledge:

- Knowledge and/or qualifications in drowning prevention, public health, behaviour change and/or organizational development.
- Knowledge of organisational leadership.
- Knowledge of RLSS.
- Knowledge of the Commonwealth of Nations and Secretariat.
- Awareness of Regional drowning prevention related issues.

Attitudes:

- Commitment to learning, a team-based approach to accelerating RLSS capacity building and drowning prevention.
- Awareness in the RLSS Strategic Action Plan and the collaborations for member organisations.
- Commitment to being available and prepared for scheduled meetings and actively contributing.
- Supporting succession planning and actions that foster younger generations.

Skills:

- Experience in the leadership and governance of a volunteer-led organisation.
- Collaboration with Regional and Country partners (WHO offices, governments, sponsors etc) to accelerate drowning prevention.
- Availability and ability to facilitate the mentorship of emerging members.
- Communicate effectively to inspire and bring clarity.
- Regional, national or international/Commonwealth leadership aspirations desired.

Nominee Characteristic Guidance:

- Gender diversity of Trustees within each Region and overall, on the Board of Trustees
- Diversity of socio-economic, cultural backgrounds and thinking

A consideration could include reaching outside the traditional lifesaving community human resource pool.

Nominations

Terms of Office:

As from 12 December 2025, the term of office for Regionally Elected Trustees will be for a 3 year period with a maximum 3 consecutive terms – consecutive terms to be first endorsed by the Member Branch.

Those Trustees who in May 2026 will have served 3 or less terms are eligible to be re-nominated as follows.

1. If a Trustee has already served 3 terms, they are eligible to be re-nominated for one further term only.
2. If a Trustee has already served 2 terms they are eligible to be re-nominated for one further term. At the completion of the term, they will be ineligible to be re-nominated for a further term.
3. If a Trustee has already served 1 term, or part thereof, they are eligible to be re-nominated for the 2026 to 2029 term. At the completion of this term they will be eligible to be re-nominated for a further term.

Major Contributing National Branches

The three Major Contributing National Branches RLSS UK, Lifesaving Society Canada and RLSS Australia shall nominate an appropriately experienced, knowledgeable and skilled person, who also meets the above criteria, to be a Trustee of RLSS and are encouraged to consider gender when making their nomination.

The nominee shall as a minimum meet the Trustee Recruitment Criteria as provided on page 2 of Appendix A below.

The Nomination Form will be completed and submitted for all nominees by the closing date and time.

Regionally Elected Trustees

Nominations for two Regionally Elected Trustees from the respective regions of Europe/Africa, Americas and Asia Pacific shall be submitted by Member Branches from their respective regions using the RLSS Nomination Form

The nomination and election of the two regionally elected Trustees will be through the following process:

- i) In each region, nominations for the two regionally elected Trustees will be sought from two different genders; one male and one female
- ii) Following the closing date for nominations, and where there are multiple nominations from each gender, an election with the relevant regional members will be held with the nominee in each gender receiving a simple majority declared elected.
- iii) Should there be only one nomination for either gender, the nominee who also meets the relevant provisions of the Regulations shall be duly elected.
- iv) If a vacancy remains following the above process, the Board of Trustees empower the RLSS Deputy Commonwealth President and the Operations Manager to seek nominations to fill the relevant vacancy. Should there be multiple nominations received within the nomination period, an election with the relevant regional members will be held with the nominee in each gender receiving a simple majority declared elected.

The term of office for Regionally Elected Trustees will be for a maximum 3-year period with a maximum 3 consecutive terms – consecutive terms to be first endorsed by the Member Branch.

The nominee shall as a minimum meet the Trustee Recruitment Criteria as provided on page 2 of Appendix A below.

The Nomination Form will be completed and submitted for all nominees by the closing date and time.

Meetings of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall meet electronically (e.g. Zoom, Teams or similar application) each quarter, one of which shall be an Annual General Meeting. The Board will endeavour to meet face to face when meetings are held of the Commonwealth Council and the Advisory Committee of Presidents.

Closing Date and Time for Nomination Forms

Duly completed nomination forms for all Trustee positions shall be submitted by email (preferred) or in writing to the contact details as provided below and no later than the close of business on **28th February 2026**.

Elections

If necessary, elections will be held in accordance with the Regulations of the RLSS and as set out above.

CONTACT:

Operations Manager
The Royal Life Saving Society, Commonwealth Headquarters,
Red Hill House, 227 London Rd,
Worcester WR5 2JG
UNITED KINGDOM

Email: Commonwealth@rlss.org.uk

Appendix A

Extract of RLSS Regulations Issue 12, December 2025, G Board of Trustees.

Composition:	<p>BOARD OF TRUSTEES</p> <p>The Board of Trustees shall comprise the following persons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Deputy Commonwealth President</u> • <u>Treasurer</u> • <u>Up to 9 Regionally Elected Trustees</u> <p>There shall be a maximum of three Trustees elected from each of the following regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Europe/Africa - Americas - Asia Pacific <p>In each case a Major Contributing National Branch shall have priority nomination for that region. The number of Regionally Elected Trustees shall be the remaining number after Major Contributing National Branch Trustees are appointed.</p> <p>There shall only be one Regionally Elected Trustee from any one member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Appointed Trustees</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One Youth Trustee. ○ Up to two additional Trustees may be appointed by the Board, in consultation with the Commonwealth Council. • <u>Additional Members of the Board (non-voting)</u> <p>Additional members of the Board (aka Board Members) may be co-opted by the Board as invited members or observers but shall not be charity Trustees or have votes. (Bye-Law 22 refers).</p> <p>The Business Development Committee members shall attend as ex-officio and non-voting observers to the Board.</p> <p>The Board may have additional observers at its meeting at the discretion or invitation of the Deputy Commonwealth President.</p> • <u>Advisors to the Board of Trustees (non-voting)</u> <p>The Board has the ability to co-opt advisors on particular issues for time limited durations.</p>
Trustee requirements:	<p><i>Term of Office</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A term of office for Regionally Elected Trustees will be up to 3-years with a maximum 3 consecutive terms – consecutive terms to be first endorsed by the member. • The term of office for Appointed Trustees shall be up to 3-years period a maximum 3 consecutive terms. • The term of office for the Appointed Youth Trustee shall be up to three years with a maximum of 3 terms. Youth Trustees may be appointed or re-appointed for a maximum of one three-year term if the appointment or re-appointment is when they are either 28 or age 29 years.

	<p><i>Diversity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board shall reflect diversity in its membership, and specifically, at all times, the Board shall be made up of no fewer than 2 of any one gender.
Recruitment of Trustees:	<p><u>Regionally Elected Trustees</u></p> <p><i>Recruitment Criteria</i></p> <p><u>Legal Requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets the Requirements of a Trustee as defined by the UK Charity Commission; information on which is available from the UK Charity Commission or at the following link https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-what-you-need-to-do <p><u>Knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and/or qualifications in drowning prevention, public health, behaviour change and/or organizational development. • Knowledge of organisational leadership. • Knowledge of RLSS. • Knowledge of the Commonwealth of Nations and Secretariat. • Awareness of Regional drowning prevention related issues. <p><u>Attitudes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to a learning a team-based approach to accelerating RLSS capacity building and drowning prevention. • Awareness in the RLSS Strategic Action Plan and the collaborations for member organisations. • Commitment to being available and prepared for scheduled meetings and actively contributing. • Supporting succession planning and actions that foster younger generations. <p><u>Skills:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in the leadership and governance of a volunteer-led organisation. • Collaboration with Regional and Country partners (WHO offices, governments, sponsors etc) to accelerate drowning prevention. • Availability and ability to facilitate the mentorship of emerging members. • Communicate effectively to inspire and bring clarity. • Regional, national or international/Commonwealth leadership aspirations desired. <p><u>Nominee Characteristic Guidance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender diversity of Trustees within each Region and overall, on the Board of Trustees • Diversity of socio-economic, cultural backgrounds and thinking <p>A consideration could include reaching outside the traditional lifesaving community human resource pool.</p> <p><i>Nominations and Elections</i></p> <p>The Major Contributing National Branches shall nominate an appropriately experienced, knowledgeable and skilled person, who also meets the above</p>

	<p>Recruitment Criteria, to be a Trustee of RLSS. RLSS shall declare the nominee as duly appointed upon receipt of their formal nomination.</p> <p>Nominations for two Regionally Elected Trustees from the respective regions of Europe/Africa, Americas and Asia Pacific shall be submitted by members from their respective regions using the RLSS Nomination Form.</p> <p>RLSS Nomination Forms for Regionally Elected Trustees from the regions shall be distributed before 1 February in each third year or as otherwise determined by the Board.</p> <p>Completed nomination forms shall be returned by the last day in February in each third year or as otherwise determined by the Board.</p> <p>There shall only be one Nomination from each member.</p> <p>The nomination and election of the two regionally elected Trustees will be through the following process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> v) In each region, nominations for the two regionally elected Trustees will be sought from two different genders: one male and one female. vi) Following the closing date for nominations on the last day of February in each third year, and where there are multiple nominations from each gender, an election using email with the relevant regional members will be held between 1 March and 15 April of the same year with the nominee in each gender receiving a simple majority declared elected. vii) Should there be only one nomination for either gender, the nominee who also meets the relevant provisions of the Regulations shall be duly elected. viii) If a vacancy remains following the above process, the Board shall empower the Deputy Commonwealth President and the Operations Manager to seek nominations to fill the relevant vacancy. Should there be multiple nominations received within the nomination period, an election with the relevant regional members will be held with the nominee in each gender receiving a simple majority declared elected. <p>The term of office for Regionally Elected Trustees will be for a 3-year period with a maximum 3 consecutive terms – consecutive terms to be first endorsed by the member.</p> <p>The nominee shall as a minimum meet the Recruitment Criteria as provided above.</p> <p>The Nomination Form will be completed and submitted for all nominees by the closing date and time.</p> <p>A nominee for the Youth Trustee shall be not older than 29 years at the time of his/her initial nomination. Youth Trustees may be appointed or re-appointed for a maximum of one three-year term if the appointment or re-appointment is when they are either 28 or age 29 years.</p> <p><i>Elections</i></p> <p>The nominated representative of a Major Contributing National Branch shall be considered as duly elected.</p> <p>The remaining number of Elected Trustees from respective regions of Europe/Africa, Americas and Asia Pacific shall be elected by the member Presidents or Chairpersons</p>
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	<p>from their respective regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are equal number of nominations to the number of vacant positions, then the nominees shall be deemed as duly elected. • If the number of nominations be more than the number of vacant positions, then an election shall be held by email (or post where email is not available) between 15 March and 15 April in each third year or as otherwise determined by the Board. • If the number of nominations is less than 2 in any region a second nomination process shall be held. Should any vacancies subsequently occur they shall be filled by the Board, the process for which shall be determined by the Board. <p><u>Appointed Trustees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Youth Trustee – appointed by the Board following election by youth between 18 and 29 years who are active members of RLSS committees and/or a RLSS youth forum. The election process shall be ratified by the Board as recommended by the youth. • Up to two additional Trustees may be appointed by the Board, in consultation with the Commonwealth Council. The Appointed Trustees shall be appointed at any time and through a process as determined from time to time by the Board. The Board shall give consideration to the following appointment criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meets the Requirements of a Trustee as defined by the UK Charity Commission ○ Knowledge of RLSS ○ Have specific skills in commerce, finance, marketing, law or business generally or such other skills which complement the Board composition, but need not have experience in or exposure to lifesaving or drowning prevention ○ Contribute to the principles of Diversity that shall include Region, Gender and Ethnicity. • A current Curriculum Vitae shall be provided for each Appointed Trustee as and when appointed by the Board.
Co-opted Board Members (Bye Law 22 refers)	<p>Bye Law 22 permits the Board to co-opt additional members of the Board as invited members or observers, but who shall not be charity trustees or have votes.</p> <p>The Deputy Commonwealth President or Treasurer shall make recommendations to the Board for co-opted Board Member positions to be created and filled for specified roles or purposes. The purpose of each shall accompany the recommendation in the form of a position (aka role) description.</p> <p>The position description shall outline the role, responsibilities, term of appointment, and reporting requirements.</p> <p>The co-opted Board Member shall cease to be a Board Member when the term of appointment expires unless it is extended by the Board in ordinary meeting. The Board may also terminate the role of any co-opted Member at any time if it considers the function no longer necessary. The maximum term of appointment of a co-opted Board Member shall be eight years.</p>
Board Induction:	<p>The Board is the Trustee Board of the Society and includes Trustees and co-opted Board Members. All Trustees shall meet the guidelines as defined by the UK Charity Commission, be aware of the Trustees duties (Appendix 1) and be properly inducted by the Deputy Commonwealth President. Each Trustee shall be required to duly sign the RLSS Confidentiality Undertaking and the RLSS Conflict of Interest Declaration.</p>

Chair:	Deputy Commonwealth President
Vice Chair:	Treasurer
Clerk:	Operations Manager
Meeting Frequency:	Quarterly via teleconference, one of which shall be an Annual General Meeting
Quorum:	A meeting cannot start or transact business without a quorum. The quorum shall be six Trustees. There shall be one vote per Trustee.
<i>Scope/Purpose</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board is the Trustee Board for the Charity and therefore all governance, business decisions and activities of the Society need to be approved/noted by this Board, at their discretion and in accordance with the Supplemental Charter. 2. The Board may delegate some of its functions to Specialist Committees or Taskforces. 3. The Board reserves the right to refer matters to the Commonwealth Council for guidance. 4. The Board shall be responsible for approval of the Regulations. 5. The Board is responsible for the preparation and publication of the Trustees Report and compliance with statutory requirements. 	
<i>Finance</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve Annual Budgets and Annual Financials. 2. Appoint an Independent Financial Examiner (Auditor) on the recommendation of the Treasurer. 	
<i>Committees and Taskforces</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It shall be usual practice that a Committee or Taskforce can be established by a Director to further the actions outlined in the Strategic Action Plan and assigned to a Director. 2. Quite separately, the Board may establish Specialist Committees and Taskforces to advise the Board on special matters the Society needs to address. The specialist committee or taskforce membership and Chair will be appointed by Board, on merit of knowledge and skills. 3. All recommendations for action from any Board Specialist Committee or Taskforce shall be formally approved by the Board. Recommendations from Committees or Taskforces shall be approved by the Director or Board as appropriate. 4. A Committee and Taskforce will be guided by a Terms of Reference developed by Board or Director in consultation with the nominated Chair at the time of the formation of the committee or taskforce. 5. The Board and Directors will embrace diversity in its selection of committee and taskforce members and will seek to appoint members to reflect diversity, including, but not exclusive to Region, Gender, Youth and Ethnicity. 6. Formation of Committees and Taskforces shall be in accordance with the 'Guidance for setting up a RLSS Taskforce' document. 	
<i>External Relationships</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members of the Board should utilise their knowledge of external organisations and relationships to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - help shape and guide the strategic direction of RLSS - to expand external relationships including lifesaving organisation and Commonwealth bodies 2. Key Relationships shall include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commonwealth Secretariat - Commonwealth Foundation - The International Life Saving Federation – ILS 	

Appendix B

UK CHARITIES TRUSTEES DUTIES (Appendix 1 of the RLSS Regulations)

ELIGIBILITY TO BE A TRUSTEE

You must be at least 18 to be a trustee of a charity.

You must be properly appointed following the procedures and any restrictions in the charity's governing document.

You must not act as a trustee if you are disqualified under the Charities Act, including if you:

- have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception (such as fraud)
- are bankrupt or have entered into a formal arrangement (e.g. an individual voluntary arrangement) with a creditor
- have been removed as a company director or charity trustee because of wrongdoing

There are further restrictions for charities that help children or vulnerable people.

TRUSTEES' 6 MAIN DUTIES

1. Ensure your charity is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit

You and your co-trustees must make sure that the charity is carrying out the purposes for which it is set up, and no other purpose. This means you should:

- ensure you understand the charity's purposes as set out in its governing document
- plan what your charity will do, and what you want it to achieve
- be able to explain how all of the charity's activities are intended to further or support its purposes
- understand how the charity benefits the public by carrying out its purposes

Spending charity funds on the wrong purposes is a very serious matter; in some cases trustees may have to reimburse the charity personally.

2. Comply with your charity's governing document and the law

You and your co-trustees must:

- make sure that the charity complies with its governing document
- comply with charity law requirements and other laws that apply to your charity

You should take reasonable steps to find out about legal requirements, for example by reading relevant guidance or taking appropriate advice when you need to.

Registered charities must keep their details on the register up to date and ensure they send the right financial and other information to the commission in their annual return or annual update.

3. Act in your charity's best interests

You must:

- do what you and your co-trustees (and no one else) decide will best enable the charity to carry out its purposes
- with your co-trustees, make balanced and adequately informed decisions, thinking about the long term as well as the short term
- avoid putting yourself in a position where your duty to your charity conflicts with your personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body
- not receive any benefit from the charity unless it's properly authorised and is clearly in the charity's interests; this also includes anyone who is financially connected to you, such as a partner, dependent child or business partner

4. Manage your charity's resources responsibly

You must act responsibly, reasonably and honestly. This is sometimes called the duty of prudence. Prudence is about exercising sound judgement. You and your co-trustees must:

- make sure the charity's assets are only used to support or carry out its purposes
- not take inappropriate risks with the charity's assets or reputation
- not over-commit the charity
- take special care when investing or borrowing
- comply with any restrictions on spending funds

You and your co-trustees should put appropriate procedures and safeguards in place and take reasonable steps to ensure that these are followed. Otherwise you risk making the charity vulnerable to fraud or theft, or other kinds of abuse, and being in breach of your duty.

5. Act with reasonable care and skill

As someone responsible for governing a charity, you:

- must use reasonable care and skill, making use of your skills and experience and taking appropriate advice when necessary
- should give enough time, thought and energy to your role, for example by preparing for, attending and actively participating in all trustees' meetings

6. Ensure your charity is accountable

You and your co-trustees must comply with statutory accounting and reporting requirements. You should also:

- be able to demonstrate that your charity is complying with the law, well run and effective
- ensure appropriate accountability to members, if your charity has a membership separate from the trustees
- ensure accountability within the charity, particularly where you delegate responsibility for particular tasks or decisions to staff or volunteers