

District 7040 Communications Policy Draft 4

Background

With the number of channels now open for Rotarians to use to communicate with each other, it is time that some guidelines be created to communicate clearly and efficiently, make the most efficient use of people's time and energy and to avoid conflict and misunderstanding.

While there is nothing currently written down for a communications policy for District 7040, we tend to operate on the following basis:

- All bulk emails circulating information, requesting action, etc. from District Office (Admin), District Team goes from the office to the Presidents and Secretaries - is bcc'd where necessary but always to the AG's.
- Any email which has to reach **all Rotarians** in the district with information goes through ClubRunner and is usually sent by the DG through the E-communications officer.
- Items which are news only (i.e. a club's anniversary, challenge to other clubs, etc.) get posted as a news item on the ClubRunner page by the District webmaster (or designated content managers) when provided by the individual clubs or members.
- Posting/sharing to the social media sites are made by a small group of volunteers who either create original material about district activity or select and share from material of districtwide interest that has been posted to Club Facebook sites.

Communications principles

The following are the general principles by which the Communications Policy will be created and operate:

1. Communication will be in English and French.
2. Communication should be brief and easy to understand.
3. The use of all the various media for communication should be encouraged.
4. The policy should allow for distributed generation and dissemination of messages.
5. Wherever possible, communications that are created will be propagated in the most efficient manner possible to as many channels as deemed necessary without undue extra effort.
6. Efforts will be made to limit the numbers of bulk emails to avoid message fatigue; usually it is one email per week through the District Governor and/or the E-Communications officer.
7. Important communications and documentation should be archived in an easily searchable place and, while respecting individual privacy, should be generally publicly available.
8. The District ClubRunner website and email capabilities are for District use and should not be used by clubs to reach other clubs, unless specific permission has been received by the District Governor. According to RI Policy in the *Manual of Procedure*, the District and/or Club ClubRunner site is *never* to be used by an individual Rotarian to communicate with anyone else regarding political or religious issues.

Audiences

The following audiences will be considered for the creation and operation of the policy. While there may be overlap between audiences, each will have its own set of guidelines.

1. District Leadership Team
2. Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers of Clubs of District 7040
3. District Committees
4. Rotarians of District 7040
5. General public and potential Rotarians

Primary Communication Channels & Purpose

The following are the main communications channels considered for the policy.

1. E-mail
 - a. To communicate with individual members on specific topics. The District ClubRunner email system is for District use only, not for clubs.
 - b. Custom distribution lists may be used by a club for its own members only; by Area Governors for the clubs in their area; by Committee Chairs for their committee; and by the District Executive.
2. District ClubRunner Website and Information Management System is used:
 - a. To provide a source of District & Club information and archive of documents specific to D7040 Rotarians.
 - b. To maintain and monitor the District & Club database of members.
 - c. To list the District Committees with the Committee Chair and the Committee members under District Organization.
3. District Social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) are used:
 - a. To provide general Rotary information available to all Rotarians and public and to promote Rotary D7040 to the world.
 - b. To share information about club events and celebrations as long as the information is sent to the District Social Media committee members.

Policy

1. **Communications to or from District leadership team and/or District Committees**
 - a. Email to the District Leadership Team will originate from the District Governor, District Secretary or District Trainer through ClubRunner and may be sent in English only.
 - b. Since email messages are only kept for 3 months on ClubRunner, any leadership team or committee messages should be copied to the person sending it.
 - c. Committee chairs will maintain the list of membership for their committee.
 - d. Committee Chairs may communicate directly with the members of their committee through the ClubRunner system by establishing a Custom Distribution List.

- e. Area Governors may communicate directly with the executives of their group of clubs, and may establish a Custom Distribution List for their clubs only.
- f. Copies of District documents will be maintained by the District Secretary on ClubRunner, and will be maintained by a Committee Chair for their committee.
- g. All general messages will be copied to the DG.
- h. The E-communications officer may communicate to the District Leadership Team on behalf of the DG, DGE or District Trainer at their discretion.

2. Communications to Club Executives

- a. All email communication to club executives will be in both English and French.
- b. Emails from District leadership to the executives of the clubs in District 7040 will be routed through the DG or the E-communications officer; however, Area Governors may communicate directly with the executives for their clubs only. Committee chairs may communicate directly with the members of their committee.
- c. Efforts will be made to limit the number of direct emails containing routine messages to Clubs unless they are urgent or if time sensitive information necessitates additional messages. Items may be combined into a multi-topic, digested messages where practical.
- d. Routine messages will include but are not limited to:
 - i. Notices of District or RI business (e.g. dues, meetings, event registration)
 - ii. Requests for information on club activities
 - iii. Request for actions on the part of the club
 - iv. Surveys
- e. Copies of documents will be maintained by the District Webmaster or by the Committee Chair for his/her committee.
- f. The DG (or designate) may authorize additional single purpose e-mails to this group if he/she deems necessary.
- g. All communications should be kept short and to the topic and may be edited before posting or being sent out.

3. Communications to general membership

- a. District newsletter/bulletin
 - i. The District newsletter or bulletin shall be in both English and French.
 - ii. The DG or designate may author a newsletter that may be sent to all Rotarians through the ClubRunner Bulletin system.
 - iii. Submissions for the newsletter/bulletin should preferably be submitted in English and French, if possible.
 - iv. Stories for themes of different months are requested from Committee Chairs who are experts on their topic.
 - v. Stories submitted by clubs may be included as part to the regular newsletter/bulletin, if they are deemed by the editor of the bulletin to have sufficient interest to a broad segment of the membership. Stories must be short with a maximum of 2 photos
 - vi. The stories and bulletins will be displayed on the District website until they are replaced by new material or become outdated.

b. Email notices

- i. All email notices will be in both English and French.
- ii. Bulk direct emails (other than newsletters/bulletins) to all Rotarians will be kept to a minimum and will only include:
 - a. Emergency or Time sensitive notices
 - b. Invitations to District-wide events
 - c. Surveys on approved topics approved by District Leadership
- iii. Emails will be routed through the District Governor and the District E-communications officer, who will use the ClubRunner e-mail system as a distribution means.
- iv. In the event that there is question by the E-communications officer on the need for a particular single issue email for mass distribution, the DG (or their designate) will have the final decision.

c. Social Media

- i. Rotarians are encouraged to post club or members activities using their personal or club accounts to their own Club's Facebook and/or Twitter sites.
- ii. Rotarians are encouraged to post in both English and French.
- iii. Clubs are encouraged to have Facebook pages rather than groups.
- iv. Items that may be of broader interest to Rotarians around the District may be shared with the District Facebook and Twitter site.
- v. A group of Rotarians that will make up the Social Media committee and will be designated to have "content creator" access to the District Facebook site. This will allow for promoting and sharing posts from clubs in the district or Rotary International on the Official District Facebook page. This allows for automatic cross-posting to the District Twitter site and sometimes the front page of the District website.
- vi. Video files concerning club or District activities may be posted to the District YouTube site by the designated site manager(s).
- vii. Other social media channels may be developed and used given enough Rotarian interest to support and manage activity on those particular sites. All sites portrayed as being an official District channel will be first approved by the District Public Image/Social Media chair.

4. District Communications to the General public and Potential Rotarians

- a. The District will aid Clubs in communicating to the general public and potential Rotarians. This may be done by:
 - i. Sharing club stories more widely by posting on District social media sites
 - ii. Sharing Rotary International materials of interest on the District Social media sites and through newsletters/bulletins.
 - iii. Items may be added to the District website through News or Stories

5. District Use of Skype and GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar

- a. Use of Skype and GoTo Meeting, GoTo Webinar should be encouraged to cut down on individuals driving to a central meeting place.
- b. GoToMeeting may be used by Area Governors to communicate with their clubs, and may also be used by the District Governor to communicate to a group of clubs.
- c. There is only one GoToMeeting account for the district at the moment, but it allows for up to 100 participants. Currently the DG is in charge of the account.
- d. GoToMeeting may be used to communicate to groups that have been brought together in regions by either Area Governors, or through the organization of District Committee chairs, or the District Trainer.
- e. Committee chairs may use GoToMeeting/Webinar to set up committee meetings and can request set-up ahead of the meeting time.

6. District ClubRunner Website and Management Information System

- a. The District webmaster will be responsible for the overall operation of the District ClubRunner website. They may be assisted by a number of committee members.
- b. Stories posted on the front page of the District website will be:
 - i. primarily about District 7040 Rotarians, activities, business
 - ii. of interest to a broad section of Rotarians in the District (as deemed by the poster)
 - iii. helpful in promoting a positive image of Rotary in the District
 - iv. attractive to not-yet-Rotarians motivating them to inquire further
- c. Stories may be posted by the DG, District Secretary, a designated Communications Chair or committee member, or the Webmaster and committee, keeping in mind that stories on the front page need to be posted on the French website version in French.
- d. Stories will be removed from the front page after approximately 30 days or prior to the publishing of the next e-bulletin. They will remain on the stories page of the website which is reachable from the top menu.
- e. Stories will be attached and included with the DG's regular newsletter for distribution to all Rotarians listed in the database.
- f. The Webmaster will post all important District documents to the appropriate section of the website when they are submitted by a member of the District Team.