

RIMS Delegate Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking on the role of RIMS Delegate for your chapter. Your election to both your local board of directors and RIMS House of Delegates is an indication that your chapter views you as a leader. Your job is an important one, and it comes with much responsibility. RIMS has developed this handbook to help you better understand the RIMS Delegate position. Whether you are newly elected or are a seasoned volunteer, we hope that these pages will help to ensure that your term as RIMS Delegate will be a successful one.

ROLE OF A RIMS DELEGATE

The RIMS Delegate role involves working cooperatively with your chapter, elected officers and directors, RIMS staff and Society members. You need to be thoroughly knowledgeable of both chapter and RIMS activities. As RIMS Delegate you have become your chapter's key link to the Society. Your responsibility as a RIMS Delegate is twofold. As a RIMS Delegate you should:

- Guide the Society in the achievement of its overall objectives.
- Provide a link between the Society and your chapter.

RIMS Delegates are expected to attend the House of Delegates meeting once a year at the RIMS Annual Conference. Prior to the meeting you are responsible to present agenda items to your chapter, receive member and board input and act on their behalf at the House of Delegates Meeting. Following the meeting, you are required to report back to your chapter about what happened. You should also make them aware of any changes to RIMS Constitution and Bylaws that may have been voted on, as these changes may impact your chapter's constitution and bylaws. In addition to the House of Delegates Meeting, special meetings may be called as outlined in the Society's Constitution and Bylaws. For example, meetings by mail for election of RIMS Board of Directors and RIMS Nominating Committee, as well as other items will be called throughout the year as necessary.

Tasks surrounding the House of Delegates Meeting are only one aspect of the RIMS Delegate position. Throughout your term you will serve as the link between your chapter and the Society. At your chapter board meetings and general membership meetings, you should provide updates on what is happening with RIMS. These updates will enable local members to get the most out of their membership, as they will become more aware of RIMS products and services.

In addition to the duties discussed above, many chapters assign other tasks to their RIMS Delegate as appropriate. For example, some RIMS Delegates act as a membership recruiter, entertain potential speakers, build relationships with other member organizations, and participate in legislative activities for the chapter. It is important to make sure you understand what is expected of you by your chapter as you take on the role of RIMS Delegate. Check with your chapter's president or your predecessor to discuss the ins and outs of the jobs, and to obtain a job description.

RIMS CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

As a RIMS Delegate, you should become familiar with RIMS Constitution and Bylaws. The paragraphs below have been included because they specifically deal with your role as a RIMS Delegate.

Article V – CHAPTERS

Section 5. Delegates

Each chapter shall elect one of its Deputies, usually a member of its board of directors to serve as a representative of the chapter to the House of Delegates in accordance with the provisions of Article VI. The Delegate is elected by the chapter membership at its Annual Meeting to serve as a voting member of the chapter board and as a voting member of the RIMS House of Delegates on behalf of the chapter.

The chapter shall advise RIMS in writing, within fifteen (15) days of election, of the Delegate elected, along with the name of the member in which the Delegate is employed.

The Delegate acts as communication liaison between the chapter and RIMS leadership, representing the chapters' concerns and interests to RIMS at large, as well as reporting on RIMS directions and activities at the local chapter level. It is the Delegate's responsibility to communicate any changes in the chapter constitution and bylaws necessary to comply with constitutional changes in the RIMS Constitution and Bylaws.

Article VIII

House of Delegates

1. House of Delegates. The House of Delegates is comprised of one Regular Member from each Society chapter. 2. Election and Term of Office. A chapter must appoint one of its Regular Members to serve as the chapter's delegate. A delegate serves a 2-year term beginning on January 1. 3. Duties. A delegate serves as the communication liaison between the delegate's chapter and the Society. The House of Delegates elects the Society's Board of Directors and may develop policy recommendations for consideration by the Board of Directors. If the House of Delegates adopts a policy recommendation by majority vote, the Board of Directors must consider the recommendation at the next Board of Directors' meeting and must report back to the House of Delegates as soon as practicable after the meeting. 4. Vacancies. If a delegate is unable or unwilling to serve, the delegate's chapter may appoint another Regular Member to complete the unexpired portion of the term. 5. Meetings. The House of Delegates meets annually at a time and place to be determined by the Society. The Society must provide the delegates with notice of the meeting time and location no fewer than 5 nor more than 60 days in advance. If a delegate cannot attend the meeting, the delegate's chapter may designate another regular chapter member to attend as an alternate delegate. Proxy voting is permitted at the meetings of the delegates. Delegate voting without a meeting may also occur by regular mail, overnight delivery, electronic mail, or online ballot. A majority of delegates forms a quorum; a majority of those voting is required to carry a matter when a quorum is present unless otherwise provided by the Bylaws or Illinois law.

RIMS CHAPTER CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS TEMPLATE

Each RIMS chapter has its own constitution and bylaws on which they base their governance. The information below was taken from the [Chapter Constitution and Bylaws Template](#) that RIMS has created for chapters to use. This template is in compliance with [RIMS Constitution and Bylaws](#). The information below should be included in your chapter's constitution and bylaws.

ARTICLE V - RIMS DELEGATES

The Chapter's Board of Directors shall elect, at its Annual Meeting, one of its deputy members, usually a member of its Board of Directors, to serve on the House of Delegates of RIMS for a two (2) year term. Said two-year term shall commence on the first (1ST) day of January [*Chapter may use another date*]. Delegates may be elected to successive terms [* Unless Chapter elects to have term limits. See Art. VI, Section 4.) The Delegate shall serve as a voting member of the Chapter Board, as well as a voting member of RIMS House of Delegates.

A Delegate elected to be a RIMS Director shall serve as such Director only and the Chapter shall designate another Delegate to complete the Delegate's unexpired term.

The Chapter shall notify RIMS at RIMS principal office, in writing and within fifteen (15) days of election, of the Delegate elected, along with the name of the member company in which the Delegate is employed.

The Delegate acts as communication liaison between the chapter and the RIMS leadership, representing the chapters' concerns and interests to RIMS at large, as well as reporting on RIMS directions and activities at the local chapter level. It is the Delegate's responsibility to communicate to the Chapter when it is necessary to make changes in the Chapter Constitution and Bylaws required to comply with constitutional changes in the RIMS Constitution and Bylaws.

In the event that a Delegate cannot be present at a meeting of the House of Delegates, the Chapter may designate an alternate Delegate by providing written notification of the name and address of the alternate Delegate to the Secretary of RIMS prior to the commencement of the meeting of the House of Delegates.

THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES MEETING

BEFORE THE MEETING

The agenda and materials for the Annual Meeting of the House of Delegates will be sent to you at least one month prior to the meeting. Please review the materials promptly. You should discuss issues scheduled for the House of Delegates Meeting at a chapter meeting or communicate them in writing to the members. The RIMS Delegate is expected to report the results of the House of Delegates meeting back to the chapter. The RIMS Delegate is the chapter's voice in the Society. Good communication is critical to enhancing and strengthening your chapter.

If your employer will not finance the cost of travel, your chapter may want to consider financing the trip to ensure attendance. It is important that each RIMS Delegate be present and participates at each meeting. If for some reason you are unable to attend, it is your duty and obligation to ensure that a suitable alternate is found to attend the meeting in your place and that RIMS is notified of your chapter's alternate. Please be sure to forward the meeting materials to the person who will be attending the meeting on your behalf. If you are unable to find an alternate delegate to represent your chapter, please be sure to complete the proxy form enclosed with your meeting materials designating RIMS Secretary to vote on your chapter's behalf.

The Society's success, as well as your ability to fulfill the RIMS Delegate's responsibility, will depend largely on your attendance and preparation for each meeting. The following suggestions may help as you prepare for the meeting:

1. Familiarize yourself with both the Society's and your chapter's Constitution and Bylaws. Getting well acquainted with these documents, which set forth RIMS objectives and goals, will be necessary and helpful. They are the rules that have been voted on by past RIMS Delegates and currently guide the Society.
2. Prior to the House of Delegates meeting you will receive reports and background information on items coming up for vote in the form of a House of Delegates Book. These books are mailed approximately 30 days in advance of the meeting so that you have an opportunity to discuss agenda items with your chapter and local board of directors. Time should be built into your monthly chapter meetings the month before and the month after each House of Delegates Meeting to address these issues. It is up to you as RIMS Delegate to get your chapter's input. If you are unable to attend your chapter's monthly meeting prior to a House of Delegates meeting, get input via email, fax or mail. If you have any questions concerning items in your House of Delegates Book, consult your RIMS Board of Directors Chapter Liaison, RIMS President, or RIMS staff in New York.
3. Your own knowledge of Society issues and your chapter's position on each will make you a more informed RIMS Delegate. Discussions in your chapter prior to a House of Delegates meeting provide an opportunity for you and your chapter to determine positions or alternatives on agenda items, which you then can present at the House of Delegates Meeting. Remember, you are responsible to your chapter to help govern the Society in a responsible manner.
4. If your chapter wishes to introduce an item, it is best to notify the Society President at least 60 days in advance of the meeting to be certain that the topic is included on the agenda. This will assist other members of the House of Delegates in their preparation enabling them to make informed decisions.
5. Discussion of programs and activities can be highly constructive and is an important part of your job as RIMS Delegate. However, be sure you are fully informed regarding the particular programs you wish to judge. Sometimes background information may serve to alter your position.

6. The RIMS Board of Directors and the RIMS staff headed by a Chief Executive Officer are responsible for aiding you and can be of considerable help. Always working with the ins and outs, the programs and problems of the Society, they can provide background information on past programs and additional, pertinent information on current items.
7. The book that you receive prior to the House of Delegates Meeting is designed to assist you in being an informed decision maker. It is not intended for public release outside RIMS membership and may contain items that are confidential to the management of the Society. After action is taken, the House of Delegates may determine a method of information dissemination to the general public.
8. Feel free to contact any member of the RIMS Board of Directors or the RIMS staff for assistance. If you choose to send correspondence to RIMS President it will be routed to that individual.
9. House of Delegates meetings are open to all interested Deputy Members. You may find it useful to invite and encourage attendance at the House of Delegate meetings by other members of your chapter.

AT THE MEETING

The annual House of Delegates meeting is held in conjunction with RIMS Annual Conference. The following rules apply to assure an active and productive meeting:

- RIMS follows Robert's Rules of Order to establish the procedures at its meetings. A copy of these rules is available for purchase at <http://www.robertsrules.com/>.
- RIMS uses an anti-trust statement prior to convene its meetings as follows:
 - *It is the policy of the Risk and Insurance Management Society, Inc. to comply in all respects with federal and state anti-trust laws. This meeting will follow a formal, pre-approved agenda for the purpose of conducting the business of the Society. Accordingly, discussion of any matters relating to competition among our members or relating to practices that may restrain trade with third parties is not permitted. These prohibited subjects include prices, discounts, allocating territories or customers, boycotts or any other statements that may be construed as being anti-competitive.*
- Stick to the agenda. Only offer new subjects for discussion during the Town Hall portion of the meeting. By going off the agenda you could impede the progress of the meeting or cause side discussions, which can be distracting to meeting attendees and facilitators.
- RIMS Constitution and Bylaws specifically excludes discussion of topics not scheduled and circulated to the RIMS Delegates at least fifteen days in advance of meetings other than the annual meeting. You can, however, submit a new item when the President asks for new business and appropriate action will be taken at that time.
- Adequate preparation for the House of Delegates Meeting should permit you to keep your responses short and to the point. Make sure to open your House of Delegates Book well before you are on your way to the meeting or as you are entering the meeting.
- If you must offer a lengthy presentation, it is a good idea to conclude with a brief summation that stresses important points.

- Wait until you are recognized before speaking. Speak into the microphone if one is provided otherwise speak clearly and loudly so that everyone can hear you. Introduce yourself and the chapter you represent. If you have a comment, you should ask to be recognized. Your comment may be an important contribution. There is no point in losing it in unacknowledged conversation that all can not hear. Likewise, be sure to give each speaker the courtesy of your attention.
- Hurriedly passed motions do not receive the consideration they deserve. Better to table them until next meeting rather than pass a motion that you may regret later.
- When subjects generate considerable discussion or require research and study, it is appropriate that a study committee or task force be appointed. This is an excellent way of moving a meeting along and assuring that divergent points of view will be given a full hearing. Those with opposing views should be given a full opportunity to present their case.

AFTER THE MEETING

Now that the meeting is complete, it is your job to report the results of the House of Delegates Meeting to your chapter. Most RIMS Delegates give a formal presentation to their chapter which explains each agenda item. Others report in the chapter newsletter or on the chapter's Web site. It may be helpful if you take notes at the House of Delegates Meeting to aid you when you need to explain each action taken.

Remember when you are reporting to your chapter, explain to them in detail what a RIMS Delegate is, what a RIMS Delegate does, and why you are reporting to them. Do not take for granted that the general membership understands your role. You may have new members in attendance or existing members that haven't heard from you before. In this way you serve as a continuing link between the various segments of the Society.

THROUGHOUT YOUR TERM

Beyond the House of Delegates Meeting, you should be active throughout your term as a RIMS Delegate. Acting as the link between your chapter and RIMS is an ongoing job. Prior to chapter board meetings and/or general meetings, call RIMS Membership and Chapter Services Department for a RIMS update. RIMS staff can help you to identify hot topics and new initiatives and projects that may be of interest to you and your chapter. Bring this information back to your chapter and your board, informing all about the exciting things happening in the Society. You can reach RIMS Membership and Chapter Services Department at chapterservices@RIMS.org or by phone at 212-655-6031.

During your term as RIMS Delegate, you will find that you are often sent information on new tools and resources that are available to chapter officers. These notifications are sent through RIMS Chapter Tips e-mails, letters, or the Chapter Officers E-Group. Please make sure to bring attention to any new tools and resources that are developed for your chapter's use at your next board meeting.

Your chapter's president or your predecessor can help you better understand what is expected of you as RIMS Delegate, and may in fact have a job description for the position. Try to stay involved in your chapter's activities throughout your term. Your chapter may assign you to additional tasks or projects to pull on your experience and knowledge, and you should consider volunteering to help on committees or task forces that seem appropriate.

WORKING WITH RIMS STAFF

RIMS staff is eager to work with you. Association management is a profession and the staff is seasoned in all its phases. The staff can assist you with organization procedures, answer any questions and help resolve problems you may have.

RIMS staff is available to make recommendations and suggestions as needed. The RIMS Board of Directors has allowed for some staff to travel to your chapter, as budget permits. This exposure enhances their knowledge of the Society, its members and your needs. They are a valuable resource which you should not hesitate to use. It is suggested that at least once a year you invite a speaker to your chapter from the RIMS Board of Directors, a RIMS committee or RIMS staff to keep your chapter apprised of what is going on in the Society.

At times you may wish to suggest new activities or a change in existing programs. Before offering suggestions, it might be beneficial to check with elected officers and the Executive Director. Consultation will avoid pitfalls surrounding activities, which might be redundant or are already under consideration. If you have any questions, please contact RIMS staff at chapterservices@RIMS.org or by calling 212-655-6031.

PREPARING YOUR SUCCESSOR

Now that your term as RIMS Delegate is coming to an end, you have one more task that you must complete. It is very important to prepare your successor. With any new job, it is extremely helpful to have your predecessor provide you with some guidance. You can act as a mentor to your chapter's new RIMS Delegate, by providing them with your knowledge of the position. You can help them by letting them know what has worked and what has not. You can also explain what will be expected of them by RIMS and your chapter. Finally, you can make sure they are aware of resources, like this handbook, that can help make their job a little easier.

In order to make the transition a smooth one, make sure your chapter includes the contact information for the new RIMS Delegate on their updated officer roster. This will enable RIMS to send information directly to the new volunteer. Also, if you receive any materials or meeting notices that is intended for the RIMS Delegate following your term, please make sure to pass them along to the appropriate person and let RIMS know the new person's contact information. You can send updated information to chapterservices@RIMS.org or call 212-655-6031.

CONCLUSION

Your position as a RIMS Delegate is a vital one. As RIMS Delegate you will have the opportunity to network on different levels, gain recognition, and improve your meeting management skills. You are not only a leader in your chapter, but you are a leader in RIMS and you have a voice as to the overall direction of the Society.

The RIMS Delegate position is not a job to be taken lightly. A successful RIMS Delegate will have completed any goals set forth by the chapter, given an accurate and prompt reporting of issues to your chapter's membership and board of directors, attended the House of Delegates meeting or sent a proxy, made yourself available to your chapter's officers and volunteers, and have been a good team player. As your chapter's RIMS Delegate you can make a difference!