

# Methodist Forces Board Standing Orders

MC/24/60

Date of meeting	13-15 April 2024
Contact name and details	Doug Godfrey-Swanney, Chair of the Methodist Forces Board Godfrey-SwanneyD@methodistchurch.org.uk
Action required	For approval.
Resolutions	60/1. The Council receives the report. 60/2. The Council approves the revised Standing Order for the Methodist Forces Board and commends it to the Conference.

The Methodist Forces Board has reviewed the Standing Order which governs its constitution and proposes the amendments as set out below:

**1007 The Forces.** (1) The Methodist Council shall annually appoint a Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force Board, ('the Forces Board') through which it shall exercise general oversight of:

(i) the work of all ministers who are set apart to serve under the direction of the council as chaplains to the forces, **both Regular and Reserve Chaplains;**

(ii) **missional activity which helps to fulfil the church's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, working closely with the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust and other partners as appropriate.**~~the work of all deacons serving in support of chaplains;~~

~~(iii) all lay workers employed by the council to serve in support of chaplains;~~

~~(iv) declared Methodists in the forces.~~

This Standing Order, prior to 2014, appeared as S.O. 355, and was subsequently amended in 2016 to include deacons within category (i).

'Declared Methodists' is a category employed by the Ministry of Defence in determining the number of chaplaincy appointments.

(1A) The Forces Board shall also **support, encourage and promote**~~exercise a general oversight~~ of the work of ministers appointed to serve as ~~Reserve Chaplains~~, Officiating Chaplains and Cadet Force Chaplains.

(1B) The Forces Board shall consist of a chair and:

(i) the secretary of the Forces Board, who shall be appointed in accordance with Standing Order 313 or 314, and be a member of the Connexional Team;

(ii) the Secretary of the Conference or a senior member of the Connexional Team to represent them;

(iii) the principal chaplains appointed and serving under clause ~~(32)~~;

(iv) two chaplains, other than a principal chaplain, appointed and serving under clause ~~(32)~~, one of whom shall be serving as a chaplain to the cadet force;

(v) a District Chair, who shall have responsibility for chaplains in stationing;

For representation on the Stationing Committee see S.O. 322(1)(iii).

(vi) two or more lay persons, one of whom shall oversee the provision in the forces of the training programmes prescribed by the Methodist Council under Standing Orders 565 and 680(1)(ii).

The prescribed training programmes are for Local Preachers (S.O. 565) and Worship Leaders (S.O. 680).

~~(2) The board shall through its secretary make such arrangements with the government authorities as may be necessary for the well-being of Methodist members of the forces and their families.~~

~~(3)~~ **(2)** (a) The secretary of the board shall be responsible for recommending both to the government department concerned and to the Stationing Committee the name of any person to be appointed as a chaplain to the forces, subject to any policy as to overall numbers of such chaplains agreed by the committee.

(b) Chaplains shall be regarded as ministers in the home work. ~~Deacons serving in support of chaplains shall be similarly regarded.~~ In either case they shall be members of the Synod of the District specified for that purpose in the stations and, in the case of presbyters, subject to its discipline, but each shall, nevertheless, attend the Synod of the District in which ~~he or she is~~ **they are** serving and shall be eligible for election by that Synod as a representative to the Conference.

For reports to be made to Synods see S.O. 442.

~~(4)~~**(3)** Such chaplains are not appointed to the Circuits in which they are for the time being located, and their services may be utilised for Circuit purposes only so far as is consistent with the discharge of their proper duties. In order that opportunities of fellowship and service may be offered to them, the secretary of the board shall notify the Superintendents and Chairs involved of any change in the Circuit or District in which they are located.

They should be invited to circuit staff meetings (S.O. 523(1)).

~~(4) Such chaplains, deacons and lay workers are not appointed to the Circuits in which they are for the time being located, and their services may be utilised for circuit purposes only so far as is consistent with the discharge of their proper duties. In order that opportunities of fellowship and service may be offered to them, the secretary of the board shall notify the Superintendents and Chairs involved of any change in the Circuit or District in which they are located.~~

They should be invited to circuit staff meetings (S.O. 523(1)).

~~(5) The financial support of the work of forces chaplains is provided from government payments.~~

~~(6) [revoked]~~

~~(7) The secretary of the board shall be responsible for maintaining the Forces Membership Roll and for making the annual return of members held on it.~~

### \*\*\*RESOLUTIONS

**60/1. The Council receives the report.**

**60/2. The Council approves the revised Standing Order for the Methodist Forces Board and commends it to the Conference.**