



Kingdom of Lochac Communication Review

Terms of Reference

Document control

Date	Version	Author	Comment
5 May 2016	0.1	Rowan Perigryne (Robyn Spencer)	Initial draft
9 May 2016	0.2	Rowan Perigryne (Robyn Spencer)	Updated with initial comments
15 May 2016	1.0	Rowan Perigryne (Robyn Spencer)	Final internal
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Context

The Kingdom of Lochac (Lochac) within the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) comprises several key organisational structures, including the Crown, the Peerage Orders, the Offices, and the set of landed Barons and Baronesses, supported by the SCA Australia (SCA Ltd) Board and SCA New Zealand (SCANZ) Committee.

Each of these groups has, to a greater or lesser degree, its own internal communications processes and methods of retaining and documenting its own corporate memory, including related documentation and key decisions. For example, many of the polling Peerage orders:

- Have a formal clerk of the Order, as the official contact and secretary
- Maintain a closed email list, with new members added and (if applicable) former members promptly removed
- Hold 6 meetings per year, scheduled at the major events
- Publish formal minutes of these meetings to the members of the group, including decisions and actions
- Maintain an online forum, for the longitudinal documentation of comments, recommendations and advice, with the ability to append related documents.

In addition, there are channels of communication that currently exist between these groups, which may be formal or informal.

Finally, these groups are often privy to sensitive information about individuals and situations, which must be managed in an appropriate manner, without withholding information from those that need it to make informed decisions for their individual group and the Kingdom as a whole.

Problem Statement

Several different problems have been identified with the current systems:

Communication within groups

Although good processes exist within some groups, these may not be well used by the group, reducing their effectiveness. A review is required to ascertain the extent to which these are in operation and effective, and if any improvements can be made.

While some groups have clear processes for managing internal and external communication, others, such as the Order of the Rose, or the Landed B&Bs, do not have such clear process. However, more complexity may not be necessary for the purpose of the group and may even hinder its operation. A review is required to ascertain whether additional structure, processes would be useful for each of these groups, or would become an unnecessary overhead.

Communication between groups

Although most communication occurs internally, each group operates by its very nature as a siloed entity. However, some situations require communication between groups, in order to:

- Manage recommendations for multiple awards for the one person
- Identify patterns of behaviour, or related issues appearing in multiple groups

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- Solve similar problems in different groups
- Consider current or former issues with a specific person or persons, which might impact decisions.

The current cross-group communications rely on individuals who span several groups, such as multiple peers and the current Crown.

There is a communication disconnect between SCA Ltd Board and the Kingdom, which is reinforced by the in-game/out-of-game model. This is problematic when the Board makes policy decisions and the Crown and/or Officers must implement them.

The current approach needs review to confirm whether it is effective and robust, or if additional measures are required.

Corporate memory

The Kingdom of Lochac started some 36 years ago and while some aspects of our history have been well documented, this is not the case for all matters. In many cases, formal records may not be needed – a fireside story is the correct medium. However, it is important that we record issues, solutions and actions in order to avoid repeating mistakes, to identify patterns of behaviour (both good and bad), and to have a record of fact rather than relying on hearsay.

The Peerage orders generally manage this well, through the use of formal minutes and forums, but practices in some Orders may be more effective than in others.

Some Crowns have gone to considerable effort to record actions and issues during their reign, to pass on to their successors, but other Crowns have not recorded their own reign well, have not passed on all the historical files, or have edited them to reflect their own perspective.

Barons and Baronesses make annual reports to the Crown. Since the Crown is bi-annual, these reports are only received by every second Crown and they vary greatly in content and format. In some cases the Barony has not kept records of these, nor is it common practice for Baronial successors to have access to past records.

The Lochac Seneschal has the most comprehensive records of the progress of the Kingdom and its subjects, but this does not include the annual Baronial reports and the current Seneschal may not be aware of the existence of historical records.

Privacy and security

Whilst it is essential to maintain appropriate records, manage channels of communication, and learn from the experience of others, this must be undertaken with consideration for appropriate privacy and security of individuals and groups, and relevant FOI legislation.

In some cases, information must be deliberately hidden for a period of time. For example, isolating the SCA Ltd Board or SCANZ Committee from interim progress and views on a specific issue, so they can make an unbiased judgement.

The review of current practices and proposed solutions must clearly identify how this privacy and security are managed, or could be managed in the future.

Authority

Following a scoping discussion between the Crown and members of the SCA Ltd Board, this review is being undertaken at the instigation of the Crown and under their authority.

At Rowany Festival, March 2016, Their Majesties Gilbert and Bethony addressed the peerage orders and Seneshallate, to raise their concerns that some areas of communication may not be operating well, and that better solutions should be considered, to better support the needs of the Kingdom.

The Crown has worked with these groups to identify representatives for a working party to review the state of internal communications within the Kingdom, and to report back to Their Majesties with their findings and recommendations.

An initial meeting was held by Skype on 1 May 2016, to discuss and confirm the scope of work and terms of reference for the working party.

Scope of work

In scope

The working party will:

- Document the current processes, tools and channels of communication for the following groups:
 - Royalty, including the current Crown and Royal Peers
 - Orders of the Peerage – Chivalry, Laurels, Pelicans, Master of Defence
 - Landed Barons and Baronesses
 - Kingdom officers
 - SCA Ltd Board and SCANZ Committee
- Review the effectiveness or otherwise of current process, including:
 - Communication within the group
 - Communication with other groups on matters of mutual significance
 - Corporate memory and documentation of issues and decisions over time
 - Access control, security and privacy
- For those areas identified as problematic:
 - Identify potential solutions
 - Make recommendations as to the most suitable options
- Where new approaches are endorsed by the Crown:
 - Support identified projects to implement these changes.

Out of scope

The working party is not required to:

- Review other groups within Lochac, such as non-peerage orders
- Instigate or manage projects to implement new processes.

Considerations

Members of the Working Party must ensure that any case studies or examples they present to illustrate instances of good or bad communication are appropriately de-identified, recognising that the proceedings of the working party may be shared widely. Where de-identification inhibits the useful discussion of an example, or proves to be insufficient, the Working Party is required to respect the confidentiality of any such case studies or examples. It is each member's responsibility to ensure that, when they report back to their group on the proceedings of the party, they do not disclose anything discussed in confidence.

The level of formality in any proposed new system must be commensurate with the scale and purpose of the specific group under review. The SCA is a voluntary organisation and the overhead of addition of additional structure, tools and systems may have more negative impact in a group than benefit.

The current Crown has placed a high priority on this review, but will step down at Midwinter. Their successors may have other priorities for the Kingdom peers and officers.

Proposed approach

The Crown has set up a Working Party comprised of members of all the relevant groups:

Working Party member	Group Roles
Sir Gilbert Purchase (David Hurst)	Current Crown Knight
Lord Nicodemus Novello (Jeremy Gregson)	Lochac Seneschal
Mistress Rowan Perigrynne (Robyn Spencer)	Laurel Pelican Viscountess Former Baroness Former Seneschal
TH Lady Yvonne de Plumetot (Michele le Bas)	SCA Ltd Board
Master William de Wyke (Alistair Muckart)	Laurel
Mistress Elspeth Caerwent (Cathy Leviston)	Laurel Pelican Baroness
Mistress Glynhyvar of River Haven (Glynnis Hollindale)	Pelican Former Baroness

Working Party member	Group Roles
Mistress Cairistiona nic Bheathain (Tina Bean)	Laurel Pelican Viscountess Former Seneschal Former SCAA & SCA Ltd Board
Sir Torg of Hawkhurst (David Ramsbottom)	Knight Former Baron
Master Caleb Adolphus (Ben Gibbons)	Master of Defence
Mistress Anna de Wilde (Angela Wells)	Pelican SCANZ Committee

This Working Party will confer through meetings, shared documents and online discussion to undertake the scope of work detailed above.

Next steps

Following the finalisation of the Terms of Reference (this document), the following steps are required to progress the review:

- Develop the review document, to evaluate the current state
- Based on this document, prepare options and recommendations for the Crown.