

FINAL



DISTRICT 17
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE MEETING #1
2025- 2026
MINUTES

September 6, 2025



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District 17 Minutes DECM # 1

September 6, 2025

1. Call to Order

District Director, Tom Bielski, called the meeting to order at 1.30pm.

2. Welcome

District Director, Tom Bielski, welcomed all and thanked attendees for their commitment to the District.

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens, offered the Acknowledgement to Country.

3. Inspiration

Area Director N23, Marlese Fairgray, offered the Inspirational Opening

4. Explanatory Remarks

District Parliamentarian, Michael Piotrowski, offered Explanatory Remarks to explain that this meeting would follow Robert's Rules.

5. Apologies

District Administration Manager, Robyn Richards, announced that she had received 2 apologies via email from;

Area N21 Director, Eloyise Braskic

Area C3 Director Guru Gupta

She then called for any apologies from the floor.

As there were none, the apologies were accepted.

6. Reading of District Mission

Club Growth Director, Desmond Miranda, read the District Mission.

District Director, Tom Bielski, reminded delegates that the District Mission is "The main thing that we need to keep front of mind as we navigate this Toastmasters year."

7. Credentials Committee Report

District Parliamentarian, Michael Piotrowski, offered the Credentials Report as follows;

Total votes This Year 22

Simple Majority 9

Two Thirds Majority 12

Quorum 50% + 1 12

Attendees 17

A Quorum is met.

Credentials Report Accepted.

8. Review & Adoption of Agenda

District Director, Tom Bielski, moved that the agenda as distributed to delegates via email and posted on the District 17 website, be adopted.

Seconded; Program Quality Director. Maree Pickens

Adopted

9. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

District Administration Manager, Robyn Richards, moved that the minutes of the previous DECM which had been on the district website and distributed via email be accepted.

Seconded: Area S34 Director, Morrie Goodz

Carried

10. Confirmation of Appointed Officers

District Director, Tom Bielski, submitted the list of Appointed Officers as distributed via email to delegates for confirmation. (See Tabled Report)

Seconded: Northern Division Director, Ray Brestovac

Confirmed

11. District Budget Review & Approval

District Director, Tom Bielski, submitted the Proposed Budget as distributed via email for Review and Approval. (See Tabled Report)

Central Division Director, Ian Pickens, stated he was not happy with voting on this at this stage, as delegates had not had enough time to review this document before this meeting.

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens asked if delegates would allow District Director, Tom Bielski, to review the budget details now, time permitting and at the delegates approval.

All delegates approved this.

After review in this meeting, District Director, Tom Bielski, stated that he would finalise the document soonest, and send to delegates via email for approval.

12. District Profit & Loss Statement Review & Approval

Immediate Past District Director, Jeff Zhang, presented the Profit and Loss Statement for the year ended June 30, 2025. (See Tabled Report) He explained that we had overspent in the last three months and the District Conference had run at a loss. District drew down from the Reserve account which is in the US. There is still \$14,000.00 in the Reserve account.

Seconded: CGD, Desmond Miranda

Approved

13. Audit Committee Report Review & Approval

Immediate Past District Director, Jeff Zhang, presented the Audit Committee Report for the year ended June 30, 2025. He congratulated the Audit Committee for their promptness in preparing the report and advised that this year it had been our turn to receive an additional audit from Toastmasters International as well as our local Audit Committee. He was pleased to inform the Committee that we had passed with flying colours.

Seconded: Southern Division Director, Cassie Walraven

Accepted

14. District Success Plan Review & Approval

District Director, Tom Bielski, presented the District Success Plan for year 2025-2026. (See Tabled Report) He stated that this year would still be a strenuous year with much work to do to continue the success of last year, but he had faith in this team of District Officers. He stressed the integral part each of us play in making this year even more successful as we had outlined in this report. He also identified that this Plan is a live document and that the Trio would revisit it often throughout the year to confirm we are meeting the plan and to update if required.

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens spoke to the Training, Distinguished Clubs and Eligibility sections of this plan. She stressed that well trained club and district officers was the most important factor to our district's success. She is happy with our results so far, but we do have a way to go to complete the high standard the Trio have set. She is endeavouring to bring high quality leaders and speakers to our district often throughout the year, not only in person but virtually as well.

Club Growth Director, Desmond Miranda, spoke to the club growth and membership sections of the plan. He emphasised the importance Division and

Area Directors play a big part in building our district. If leads come your way, please act on them immediately or hand them to him for follow up. He asked all members of this committee to be on the look out for leads at all times. The other integral element of this plan is to maintain the clubs we already have and to build them. Area Directors play a big part in facilitating this aspect. The Trio is relying on Area Directors to be diligent in understanding the nature of each club and to step in or ask for help from the Trio, should any club begin to struggle membership wise.

Moved: District Director, Tom Bielski

Seconded: Kalavathy Govindarajoo

15. Presentation of Reports

a. District Director Report

District Director, Tom Bielski, thanked the members of this committee for their acceptance of roles and their dedication to our district. He wants to build on the success of last year and make our district even stronger and larger. He declared that the first two months of this Toastmasters year had been hectic with Club Officer Training before the year even started, District Leader Training in Philadelphia and the International Convention then returning to Perth for this meeting. He particularly asked all members of this committee to immediately advise him if they are struggling with their role or need help. Please do not carry on if you are feeling overwhelmed. He is confident we can finish the year as Smedley Distinguished status, so long as each member completes their own tasks to the best of their ability. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

b. Program Quality Director Report

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens, congratulated all members of this committee for their work so far in this Toastmasters year and stressed the importance of completing one goal at a time. The first goal is to ensure all clubs submit their Club Success Plan to Toastmasters International in order to be eligible for any level of distinguished status in the Distinguished Club Program. At the moment we have 36 clubs have submitted their plan to Toastmasters International and 7 others have submitted to District 17. She will ensure these 7 are submitted in time. We have 15 clubs still to submit their plan. She asked Area Directors to reach out to clubs to support them if required. She has a video showing how to fill this plan in on the D17 website. She would like all plans submitted by September 25 to allow some breathing time before we move on to our next goal.

Regarding training, she is delighted with the numbers so far, but is certain that we can make this even better. At the moment, 57 of our 58 clubs have achieved the minimum of 4 Club Officers trained. She is hoping for 100% here as well as in District Officer Training. There are a couple of Area Directors still requiring additional training and she is working with the Division Directors to achieve this. (See Tabled Report)

c. Club Growth Director Report

Club Growth Director, Desmond Miranda, stated that his main focus this year is to have all our existing clubs remain strong, or even build stronger and to build new clubs. He is following up on at least 4 leads at the moment, and these all look highly likely to be successful in chartering. He is on the lookout for members willing to be Club Sponsors, Mentors and Coaches as always. He asked all members of this committee to please be aware of any members who may be interested in one of these roles and alert him to this fact so he can work with these members. (See Tabled Report)

d. District Public Relations Manager Report

Public Relations Manager, Angela Booker, stated she is excited about her role and the way the year has begun with the highly successful Gala Awards Night. She was particularly thrilled with the number of attendees and the fun that was had on the night. She welcomed all the members of her team and thanked them for their commitment to the success of the PR unit this year.

Her next objective is Voices of Experience. The first portion of this initiative is complete, and members will begin to see the outcome of this shortly. Coinciding with this initiative is the nomination of some members of our district in the Senior of the Year Awards. She hoped they would be recognised for their wonderful work as volunteers in Toastmasters WA. The next fun night is the Trivia Night which will be held in November and details will be distributed soon for this event.

She encouraged Area Directors and Division Directors to encourage members who have any skills relevant to this team to reach out and to become a part of the PR team. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

e. Immediate Past District Director Report

Immediate Past District Director, Jeff Zhang, is excited for the new team this year and the district as a whole. He is confident we can reach even higher than last year and has high expectations for us all to succeed. He believes our District is on an upward trajectory and success will follow. He thanked everyone for their support in making the Gala Awards Night such a success. A sold-out event was a marvellous outcome.

As we move into this new year, he is eager to fulfil his new role as Leadership Committee Chair. He acknowledged that we have so many dedicated leaders in our District and he is on the lookout for more to fill all the roles for next year. He urged all members of this committee to be on the look out for your successor and to plant seeds throughout the year for future leaders. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

16. Division Director Reports

a. Central Division Director Report

Central Division Director, Ian Pickens, reiterated that it has indeed been a whirlwind first few months to this Toastmasters year. He is thrilled with the team of Area Directors in Central Division and he is confident they will be successful in helping Program Quality Director, Maree, in her dilemma of club's submitting their Club Success Plan. He and his team are working hard with their clubs to achieve 100%. There are still 6 clubs to do this. He is particularly pleased to welcome Nataly Fernandez as Area C1 Director. This Area has not had an area Director for a few years and they will be grateful of the support Nataly will give them. (See Tabled Report)

b. Northern Division Director Report

Northern Division Director, Raymond Brestovac, thanked his team of Area Directors for their support so far this year and is fortunate to be working with them. His focus at the moment is to discover why the Club Officers who didn't attend training, didn't attend. He is hopeful this will help us to improve our training and have more successful clubs. The next item of focus for him and the Northern Division team is contests, and they are all working hard to have successful Club, Area and Division contests. He had held a successful Zoom meeting with his Area Directors. (See Tabled Report)

c. Southern Division Director Report

Southern Division Director, Cassie Walraaven, stated she is excited to inherit the best Division in the District and is thrilled to be working with her team of Area Directors. She is still awaiting contact with one of the Area Directors, but she is confident this will take place imminently. Most Area Finals dates have been set, and Area Directors are working with Clubs to gain details of club contests. The Southern Division Final will be held on November 15 at Curtin University, with the room TBA. (See Tabled Report)

17. Area Director Reports

a. Area C1 Director Report

Area C1 Director was absent today as she had only recently been appointed. No report.

b. Area C2 Director Report

Area C2 Director, Usha Raman, announced that she had visited 3 clubs already and she encouraged them to achieve Distinguished status this year. She supported the Club Officers to understand the requirements of this. She has noticed that one club had the incorrect dates of their meetings on their club website which made visiting a challenge. She has reached out to the Club Officers and is awaiting a reply. (See Tabled Report)

c. Area C3 Director Report

Area C3 Director is an apology today; however, a report was submitted prior to this meeting. (See Tabled Report)

d. Area C4 Director Report

Area C4 Director, Mariana Paliu, announced that she had visited all clubs in her Area and she has held an Area Council meeting, which was a first for her. She is happy to report that her Clubs are all supportive of her and willing to work towards Club and Area success. Two clubs have held their contest already, the others are set for September and her Area Final is set for October 5th. (See Tabled Report)

e. Area N21 Director Report

Area N21 Director is an apology today; however, a report was submitted prior to this meeting. (See Tabled Report)

f. Area N22 Director Report

Area N22 Director, Jo Parker, stated she feels most clubs in her Area Are doing well. She has done an informal visit to each club, and she has begun her formal visits. Banksia Speakers has only 10 members, but they are trialling a new time for their meetings in September, and she is looking forward to seeing how this works for them. She is hopeful it will boost their numbers. (See Tabled Report)

g. Area N23 Director Report

Area N23 Director, Marlese Fairgray, stated that she has visited all but 1 club and all clubs have set their contest dates. She is working with all Club Officers to increase membership in each club. The Area Final is set for October 16th at Maylands Club. (See Tabled Report)

h. Area N24 Director Report

Area N24 Director, Juith Allen, stated that she has visited most clubs, and some twice already. She only has to visit Easy Speak Ellenbrook, but she knows the Club and the Officers quite well, so this will be and comfortable visit. She has held an Area Council Meeting which was successful. Her worry is Heritage Towns, however she is working with the Club Officers to find a solution to their membership concerns. (See Tabled Report)

i. Area S31 Director Report

Area S31 Director, Somesh Ganesh, expressed his joy that on visiting 4 of the 5 Clubs in his Area, they were all excited for the year ahead. He has not visited CGH which is a corporate club which meets at 12 noon. This may be a problem and he has asked if Robyn Richards would be able to attend in his absence. He is awaiting a reply. All Club contest dates have been set except Melville, which he feels sure will be advised to him shortly. He is excited that CGH have indicated that they would like to enter the contests this round. He will work with the Club Officers to fulfil this desire and to encourage them to achieve 5 goals in the Distinguished Club Program. (See Tabled Report)

j. Area S32 Director Report

Area S32 Director, Suthan Mayilvaganam, announced that he has visited Willetton and Fremantle Gateway already and he has the other visits planned soon. The new Tamil club he is working on, now have 18 members, so he is confident that this club will charter soon. The Area Final is set for October. (See Tabled Report)

k. Area S33 Director Report

Area S33 has no appointed Director at this stage, however, Angela Booker has been “Caretaking” the clubs, and she is excited with the energy in this area. 3 of the 4 clubs have submitted their Club Success Plan and the other has promised this will be done soon. The Area Final is set for late October. (See Tabled Report)

l. Area S34 Director Report

Area S34 Director, Morrie Goodz, stated that he has visited all clubs, some more than once and he is happy with the state of the Area. He is working closely with all Club Officers and confident the Area will be successful. He does have some concerns which he details in his written report. (See Tabled Report)

18. Other Business

No new items of business were submitted at Item 8.

District Administration Manager, Robyn Richards, urged all Area Directors to submit to her ASAP the dates of their Club and Area Contests for inclusion on the District Calendar.

Aea S34 Director, Morrie Goodz, asked about the Read AI that was popping up during this meeting. District Director, Tom Bielski, advised that this was a form of Summary fo the meting that Club Growth Director, Desmond Miranda would distribute after this meeting.

19. Next Meeting

After discussion and a vote by delegates, December 6th was decided. This day would also have District Officer Training in the morning and Club Officer Training in the afternoon with a social event in the evening to celebrate the end of year 2025.

20. Afternoon Tea Break

21. District Officer Training

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens, ran an engaging training for attendees.

22. Meeting Adjourned

District Director, Tom Bielski, adjourned the meeting at 4.45pm.

