

FINAL



**DISTRICT 17
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE MEETING #3
2025- 2026
MINUTES**

January 31, 2026



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District 17 Minutes DECM # 2

December 6, 2025

1. Call to Order

District Director, Tom Bielski, called the meeting to order at 9.39am.

2. Welcome

District Director, Tom Bielski, welcomed all and thanked attendees for their commitment to the District by attending this meeting early on a Saturday.

He then offered the Acknowledgement to Country.

3. Inspiration

District Administration Manager, Robyn Richards, offered the Inspirational Opening stating that we are so lucky to have not been amalgamated with any other districts at this time. This means that it is imperative that we continue to grow our district and she inspired us all to contribute to this growth in the final few months of this Toastmasters year and into next year.

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 4 apologies via email from;

Are S31 Director, Somesh Ganesh

Area N23 Director, Marlese Fairgray

Northern Division Director, Raymond Brestovac

Area C4 Director, Mariana Paliu

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.

7. Credentials Committee Report

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

Total votes This Year	22 (1 Vacancy)
Simple Majority	8
Two Thirds Majority	10
Quorum 50% + 1	12
Attendees	15

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: District Finance Manager, Kalvathy Govindarajoo,

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: Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens

Approved

10. District Budget Review

District Finance Manager, Kalavathy Govindarajoo submitted the Proposed Budget as distributed via email and on the District 17 website for Review and Approval. (See Tabled Report)

11. District Profit & Loss Actuals Statement Review

District Finance Manager, Kalavathy Govindarajoo, presented the Profit and Loss Statement as distributed via email and on the District 17 website.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be approved. (See Tabled Report)

Approved

District Director, Tom Bielski explained the District Reserve Account.

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens explained how we can draw down from our Reserve Account.

Area N24 Director, Judith Allen asked about Division Directors having access to funds for Division Contests.

District Director, Tom Bielski explained the budget for Contests can only be 5% of the overall budget. This year, yes, the District had allowed funds in the budget for Division Contests Venue Hire.

12. District Success Plan Review

District Director, Tom Bielski, presented the District Success Plan for year 2025-2026. He explained that we are on target to meet our DSP. He stated that we are the second fastest growing district in the world. We have chartered 2 new clubs so far this Toastmasters year and all of our clubs are currently "In Good Standing".

He also stated that the Trio had set a goal to visit more clubs and at the present time, this is down slightly on their goal, but they intend to raise this now clubs are back meeting in 2026.

Accepted

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens explained that just like Club Success Plans, this document is not a "set and forget" document. It should and is being continually reviewed by the Trio and adjustment can be made if necessary.

District Public Relations Manager, Angela Booker commended the Trio as she has recently been approached by a member who said they were glad to see the District Leaders "Out & About". This member said this had not happened for several years, but this year and last year they had seen a vast improvement.

13. Presentation of Reports Towards District Success Plan

13.1 District Director Report

District Director, Tom Bielski, asked that his report as tabled be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

13.2 Program Quality Director Report

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens, stated that she had sent an updated Tracker via email to all Area and Division Director this morning.

She was happy to see Clubs, Area and Divisions have plans locked in for Contests.

She has a "predicted" report of Clubs she believes will achieve Distinguished Status. She asked all Area & Division Directors to monitor their clubs against this report and if required, talk strategies with her if any clubs look like they are labouring to meet this goal.

She reiterated the Online Leadership Event being presented soon and encouraged all members to encourage the members of their club to attend.

She was excited to announce that we had secured for our May Conference, the 2020 World Champion of Public Speaking Champion, Mike Carr. (See Tabled Report)

She then asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted.

Accepted

13.3 Club Growth Director Report

Club Growth Director, Desmond Miranda, was extremely happy to report that we are on track to meet our goal of achieving Smedley Distinguished status. We have chartered 2 new clubs and another will charter next week. We also have 2 other clubs very close to chartering, with only a few members required.

Membership Payments are over 1300 and that means we are approximately halfway to our target. He believes with the new clubs chartering, we should meet this goal. (See Tabled Report)

He asked that his tabled and verbal reports be accepted.

Accepted

13.4 District Public Relations Manager Report

Public Relations Manager, Angela Booker, stated that the target for her and her team in these last few months of this Toastmaster year, is to ensure that all clubs in our District have up to date and current details on their website. She wants every club to be findable and potential guests to be contacted within 24 hours of initial contact with the club.

She would like to see this team encouraging all club officers to prioritise that they “feel good” because they have done a good job leading their team.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

13.5 Immediate Past District Director Report inc. District Leadership Committee Report

Immediate Past District Director and District Leadership Committee Chair, Jeff Zhang stated that the call for nominations for District Leader roles had been sent via email to all members.

He reiterated that we have 6 elected roles and 12 unelected roles to fill. He encouraged all members of this committee to be diligent in looking for a successor for their position.

He stated that the Division Director roles should ideally be filled by past Area Directors, but this is not compulsory.

He reminded us that anyone nominating for Club Growth Director should be made aware they are realistically nominating for a 3 – 4 year commitment.

He encouraged all members to encourage members in their midst to consider nominating, even if it only for the experience. He would like to encourage those considering nominating to speak to the current incumbents and other leaders to learn about the role.

Nominations close on February 22, 2026, and he would love to be able to present a report with nominations for all roles.

He asked his report be accepted.

Accepted

14. Division Director Reports

14.1 Central Division Director Report

Central Division Director, Ian Pickens stated he is very proud of his Division and the Central Division Area Directors. He knows that 1 new club will charter next week and possibly 2 more before the end of the year. He believes the Division will Achieve President's Distinguished Status.

He asked that his tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

14.2 Northern Division Director Report

Not in Attendance – (See Tabled Report)

District Director, Tom Bielski asked that the Northern Division Report as tabled be accepted.

Accepted

14.3 Southern Division Director Report

Southern Division Director, Cassie Walraven stated She has had contact with some Area Directors who have given her Area Final dates and some club contest dates. She wanted to congratulate Canning Vale Toastmasters Club for being the largest club in the District with 38 members and Canning Vale and Harrisdale Piara Waters Toastmasters for achieving President's Distinguished Status by December.

She is working with the Area Directors to assist struggling clubs so that all will retain their "In Good Standing" status at the end of the year.

She asked that her tabled and verbal report be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

15 Area Director Reports

15.1 Area C1 Director Report

Area C1 Director, Nataly Fernandez was absent from this meeting and did not table a report.

15.2 Area C2 Director Report

Area C2 Director, Usha Ramen stated that she is very proud that now all 5 clubs in this Area are now "In Good Standing".

She thinks all clubs are working well and is proud of City of Perth Toastmasters who have created an "APP" which tracks members progress and scheduling. They are trialling it at the moment, and she is excited to see how that turns out.

She reported that all clubs are engaged in contests and she has set deadlines for these to be held and winners to be sent to her.

She noted that some clubs have set "Speechathons" to give members the best chance of completing Level 2 which enables them to participate in the International Speech Contest.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

15.3 Area C3 Director Report

Area C3 Director, Guru Gupta was absent from this meeting and did not table a report.

15.4 Area C4 Director Report

Area C4 Director, Mariana Paliu was absent from this meeting and did not table a report.

15.5 Area N21 Director Report

Area N21 Director, Eloyise Braskic stated that she has a great Area and all clubs have a great culture. She has loved visiting them and getting to know the members.

The date for the Area Final is April 26th at Northern Gourmet Toastmasters.

She has been distributing the coins she was given at the beginning of the year and has found the members who received them to be excited.

She has identified a few members she believes capable of succeeding her in the role and will speak with them soon.

The goals at the moment include finding Test Speakers for all club and the Area Evaluation Contests and finding members willing to present workshop at struggling clubs for more momentum.

She has been in contact with all presidents to schedule the next round of visits.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

15.6 Area N22 Director Report

Area N22 Director, Jo Parker, stated that she is enjoying her role and her area is healthy.

Her tricky club is Banksia Speakers as they really only have 3 active members but continually refuse help or advice. They are looking for a new venue and then to update their website hoping to attract more members.

Stirling Toastmasters have found a new venue and have attracted 5 new members recently. This club is looking very positive.

She will be running an online COT for club leaders in her Area and invited other Area Directors to guide leaders from their clubs to the details in order to access training.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

15.7 Area N23 Director Report

Not in Attendance – (See Tabled Report)

District Director, Tom Bielski asked that the Area N23 Report as tabled be accepted.

Accepted

15.8 Area N24 Director Report

Area N24 Director, Juith Allen, stated that all the clubs in her Area are off to a good start in 2026.

She is pleased to report that Heritage Towns Toastmasters now have 8 members and had several guests attend their last meeting. The possibility to increase their membership is looking promising.

Swan Toastmasters have added 5 new members this year already and are looking great.

All the clubs and the Area Contest dates are set and booked.

She has made 1 official visit already and the others are scheduled soon.

She has identified a couple of potential successors for her role. She will investigate this further soon.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

15.9 Area S31 Director Report

Not in Attendance – (See Tabled Report)

District Director, Tom Bielski asked that the Area S31 Report as tabled be accepted.

Accepted

15.10 Area S32 Director Report

Area S32 Director, Suthan Mayilvaganam announced that his Area is very strong and he has 2 very experienced Toastmasters helping, Ross Wilkinson and Sophy Gotsis. He thanked them for their support in his role.

He stated that most club sin this Area nominate contest speakers.

Fremantle Gateway are holding their 1300 meeting next week and he believes this will be a highlight for his year as Area Director.'

He called the members of Willetton courageous for their willingness to step up to leadership roles.

Fremantle Gourmet Toastmasters have dropped form 15 members to 10 and this is a little concerning. He will work with Ross to endeavour to improve this before the end of the year.

The newest club, Sangam Tamil are working on their Club Success Plan and will have that submitted on time. They are doing well in their projects and they would like a workshop on Pathways to help them.

He asked that his tabled and verbal reports be accepted (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

District Director, Tom Bielski congratulated Sangam Tamil as they also have a large Gavel Club which is exciting for the future of the Club and the District. Suthan stated that soon they will split the Gavel Club into years 1-6 (Primary) club and a years 7-12 (Secondary) club as the numbers have grown so much.

15.11 Area S33 Director Report

Area S33 has no appointed Director at this stage, however, Angela Booker has been "Caretaking" the clubs. She stated that all 4 clubs are going well. She is encouraging them to work on getting officers to COT and to work on Renewals early to avoid stress later.

She is expecting most clubs to achieve Select Distinguished. The biggest challenge is the inexperienced club officers who may not know what is required.

Rockingham Toastmasters Club has inexperienced club officers and they are trying to build the club slowly. She is hoping to find experienced members to attend the meetings to support them. Not necessarily a Club Coach role, as the club doesn't qualify for one, but a taste of what that is like. If any members of this committee know of anyone that might like to fill this role, please contact her ASAP.

She would like to "Trade" for Area Contests for Test Speakers and functionaries etc.

She asked that her tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

15.12 Area S34 Director Report

Area S34 Director, Morrie Goodz, stated that his Area has now grown to 6 clubs with the inclusion of City of Fremantle. All clubs have reactivated in 2026.

He sees membership being the biggest challenge for most clubs and he is working with the club officers to build this. 3 clubs are maintaining their base membership and 3 have decreased. He is working with the club officers on a membership building drive for Bunbury Toastmasters and Touch of Gold Toastmasters Clubs.

He has sent reminder emails to all club officers who have not attended or registered for Cot this morning.

He has organised a “Mock Contest” online for the Area so that speakers can experience a contest, however there will be no judges, but a group evaluation.

Area S34 Contest Final will be held in Kalgoorlie on March 1st. This is a long weekend, and he is hoping that many Perth based Toastmasters might take the opportunity to visit Kalgoorlie for a weekend of fun and Toastmasters. Touch of Gold Toastmasters members are willing to billet if required.

He asked that it would be amazing if District could find it in the budget to have some Perth based members come down to the South West, to run workshops and other activities to build membership and knowledge.

3 clubs in the Area are Hybrid/online clubs, and he was excited to tell us that Donnybrook Gourmet Toastmasters had a guest from Sri Lanka at their last meeting. They are hopeful of having a new member in their midst soon.

He asked that his tabled and verbal reports be accepted. (See Tabled Report)

Accepted

District Director, Tom Bielski stated that he had been fortunate to book a flight to Kalgoorlie for the Area Final for not much more than the train fare. He encouraged members to research both means of transport.

16 Other Business

16.1 District Leader Mid-Year Training Report

District Director, Tom Bielski stated that he believes the biggest benefit for District Leaders at this training was the opportunity to talk with other leaders from our region and he found they are all experiencing the same challenges. We are not alone. He loved how they were able to share ideas and the Trio would implement some. He loved spending time with our Region Advisor and got a personal tour of Kuala Lumpur with him. He learned much from this experience, and stated that some of those leaders, whom he has built a relationship with over the past 3 years, he may never see again. He found this a sad note to a very successful training.

Program Quality Director, Maree Pickens stated that her biggest learning this time was around the District budget/Funds Accountability. She learned that we cannot think the money is ours to spend, it is always Toastmasters International’s money and she will approach filling next year’s budget quite differently. She is extremely grateful for the opportunity to spend time at this training.

Club Growth Director, Desmond Miranda stated that this was his first time at Mid-Year training and he enjoyed it more than the training before International Convention. Probably because he had more of an idea of what the role entailed now, he knew the other CGDs better and could network more. He found it impressive that the CEO of Toastmasters, Dan Rex, spent time sitting with them and sharing knowledge. He loved seeing that other Districts have the same challenges as we do.

District Director, Tom Bielski concluded this report with his observations that this training’s benefits included the learning and the networking which he found truly rewarding.

17 Next Meeting

TBA

18 Meeting Adjourned

District Director, Tom Bielski, adjourned the meeting at 11.09am.