

THE CONSTITUION OF THE FIANNA



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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FIANNA AS AMENDED
BY THE ARD-FHEIS, 1913.

OBJECT.

TO RE-ESTABLISH THE INDEPENDENCE OF IRELAND.

MEANS.

The training of the youth of Ireland, mentally and physically, to achieve this object by teaching scouting and military exercises, Irish history, and the Irish language.

DECLARATION.

I promise to work for the Independence of Ireland, never to join England's armed forces, and to obey my superior officers.

THE CONSTITUTION.

I.—GENERAL.

1. Na Fianna Eireann (Irish National Boy Scouts' Organisation) shall consist of a President, two Vice-Presidents, an Hon. Secretary, an Hon. Assistant Secretary, an Hon. Treasurer, an Ard-Fheis (Congress), an Ard-Choisde (Central Council), Coisdi Ceanntair (District Councils), and Sluaighte (branches or troops). The officers of the Ard-Choisde shall be members ex-officio of all Coisdi Ceanntair and Committees of the organisation.

2. Membership of Na Fianna Eireann shall be open to all boys who endorse its Constitution and make the Declaration of the Fianna.

II.—ARD-FHEIS (Congress).

3. The Ard-Fheis shall be the supreme governing and legislative body of the organisation.

4. Representation at the Ard-Fheis shall be as follows:—Sluaighte with eight to fifty members shall be entitled to two delegates, and one delegate for every additional fifty members. Each authorised Coisde Ceanntair shall be entitled to one delegate.

5. The Ard-Fheis shall meet at least once a year. A special meeting shall be convened at any time on a requisition of at least one-third of the Sluaighte affiliated, or by resolution of the Ard-Choisde.

6. The Ard-Fheis shall, at its annual meeting, elect a President, two Vice-Presidents, an Hon. Secretary, an Hon. Assistant Secretary, and an Hon. Treasurer. It shall also elect by ballot six members, who, together with these officers, shall form an Ard-Choisde.

7. Notices of motion for the agenda of the Ard-Fheis, and nominations for the Ard-Choisde, must reach the Hon. Secretary at least fourteen days before the date of the Ard-Fheis.

III.—AN ARD-CHOISDE (Central Council).

8. The Ard-Choisde shall be (except when the Ard-Fheis is in session) the supreme governing body of the organisation.

9. The Ard-Choisde shall meet at least once every three months.

10. Each member of the Ard-Choisde shall belong to a bona-fide Sluagh.

11. Each Sluagh shall pay a levy of twopence per member per quarter to the Ard-Choisde on application.

12. The Ard-Choisde shall appoint or approve of the appointment of the chief officer of every Sluagh, and shall have the power to depose or reduce such officers at their discretion.

13. Annual reports of the working of the Ard-Choisde shall be forwarded to the Sluaighte at least seven days before date of the Ard-Fheis.

IV.—COISDI CEANNTAIR (District Councils).

14. A Coisde Ceanntair may be formed, under the authority of the Ard-Choisde, in centres with three or more sluaighte, and all sluaighte in these centres shall be subject to the control of the Coisde Ceanntair.

15. A Coisde Ceanntair shall be composed of the chief officer (or his deputy) and secretary from each local Sluagh.

16. Coisdi Ceanntair shall appoint the leaders and higher officers for the sluaighte under their control.

17. The examination in first, second and third class Fianna tests shall be carried out under the supervision of the Coisdi Ceanntair.

18. Meetings of Coisdi Ceanntair shall be held at least once a month.

19. A Coisde Ceanntair shall be entitled to one delegate to the Ard-Fheis.

20. All Coisdi Ceanntair shall submit their rules for approval to the Ard-Choisde.

V.—SLUAIGHTE (Branches or Troops).

21. No person shall have power to start a Sluagh of Na Fianna Eireann without first getting a written permission from the Ard-Choisde.

22. Sluaighte shall be affiliated by vote of the Ard-Choisde, and shall pay an affiliation fee (as provided for in Rule 23) to the funds of the Ard-Choisde. In centres where Coisdi Ceanntair exist no Sluagh shall be affiliated without first receiving the permission of that Coisde.

23. A Sluagh of eight to sixteen members shall pay an affiliation fee of 2/6; a Sluagh of 16-50 members shall pay 5/-; a Sluagh with over fifty members shall pay, for every additional 50 or part of 50 members, 2/6 extra.

24. Each Sluagh having from eight to fifty members, shall be entitled to be represented at the Ard-Fheis by two delegates, and one delegate for every additional fifty boys.

25. All boys shall serve three weeks on approbation and pass the preliminary tests before being administered the Declaration or given the badge of the Fianna.

26. Each Sluagh shall hold a meeting for the election of civil officers, etc., at least once a year.

27. Each Sluagh shall forward a report of the working of the Sluagh at least seven days previous to quarterly meetings of the Ard-Choisde.

28. All Sluaighte shall be, as far as possible, divided into sections of eight boys, including a leader.

29. No Sluagh of the Fianna shall take part in elections, either Parliamentary or municipal. Any member taking part in elections in his private capacity must not wear either badge or uniform of the Fianna.

30. All Sluaighte shall submit their rules for approval to the Ard-Coisde.

COURTS MARTIAL.

I.—PROCEDURE.

1. When any member of the Fianna has, in the opinion of his officers or of the committee of his Sluagh, or any higher committees, broken any rule or committed any misdemeanour, he may be courtmartialled.

2. A member who has been notified that he is to be courtmartialled shall be a suspended member until the decision of the Courtmartial is announced, and he shall then be dealt with as the Courtmartial shall direct.

3. Every charge preferred against a member must be in writing, and the accused shall receive a copy of this charge at least two days before the charge is to be tried.

II.—CONSTITUTION OF COURTMARTIAL.

1. The Courtmartial shall, save in exceptional circumstances, consist of three members appointed to try the case by the committee immediately superior to the officer or committee preferring the charge

against the accused—that is to say, if a member is ordered for Courtmartial by the officer of a Sluagh, the court shall be appointed by the committee of the Sluagh; if by the Committee of a Sluagh, the court shall be appointed by the District Council, or where none exists, by the Ard-Choisde; if by a District Council, the court shall be appointed by the Ard-Choisde; and if by the Ard-Choisde, the court shall consist of three members of the Fianna appointed by the Ard-Choisde itself.

III.—EVIDENCE.

1. The accused shall be accorded every reasonable facility to produce any witnesses in his favour, and may cross-examine witnesses brought by the prosecution, and the prosecution shall in all respects have equal facilities.

2. Only evidence that is relevant to the written charge shall be received, and the court shall give its decision impartially and solely on the evidence given at the trial.

3. Any person accused may select another member of the Fianna to act as defending counsel.

4. The court shall decide whether evidence tendered by persons who are not members of the Fianna is admissible or not.

IV.—APPEALS.

1. Both the accused and the prosecution shall have the right of appeal from the decision of the court to the next higher authority—that is, from the decision of a court appointed by the committee of a Sluagh to a District Council, or where none exists, to the Ard-Choisde, or by the District Council to the Ard-Choisde, or by the Ard-Choisde to a court appointed by the Ard-Fheis, whose decision shall be final.

2. An expelled member may seek re-admission to his old Sluagh, or to another Sluagh, after a period of six months has elapsed from the

date of his expulsion. The Sluagh desiring to re-admit him to the Fianna must obtain the permission of their District Council or (where no District Council exists) of the Ard-Choisde.