



St Vincent de Paul Society  
NSW  
*good works*

## **CONFERENCE OFFICE BEARERS - ROLE DESCRIPTIONS**

January 2021

## OUR MISSION

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope, and joy, by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.

## OUR VISION

The St Vincent de Paul Society aspires to be recognised as a caring Catholic charity offering ‘a hand up’ to people in need. We do this by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging people to take control of their own destiny.

## OUR ASPIRATION

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

## OUR VALUES

**Commitment:** Loyalty in service to our mission, vision, and values

**Respect:** Recognising our own value and the value of others

**Compassionate:** Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement

**Respect:** Service to all regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender, or political opinions

**Integrity:** Promoting, maintaining, and adhering to our mission, vision, and values

**Empathy:** Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship, and perception

**Advocacy:** Working to transform the causes of poverty and challenging the cause of human injustice

**Courage:** Encouraging spiritual growth, welcoming innovation, and giving hope for the future.

## CONFERENCE AS A COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LOVE

Members meet as brothers and sisters with Christ in the midst of them, in conferences that are genuine communities of faith and love, of prayer and action, spiritual bonds and friendships between members are essential, as is the common mission to help the poor and marginalized. The entire Society is a true and unique worldwide community of Vincentian friends (*The Rule*, Part 1: 3.3).

## OFFICE BEARERS

The Conference President, after consultation with the members of the Conference, appoints office bearers – at least a **Vice President**, **Spiritual Adviser**, **Secretary and Treasurer** – from among the members to assist the efficient operation of the Conference. They may also appoint a **Statistics Officer** and a **Social Justice Representative**, and seek a **Bailly** to provide guidance, especially where the Conference is a new one. Conferences with an interest in the Society’s Overseas Development Program can appoint a **Twinning Officer**. More detailed role descriptions for the Spiritual Adviser and Social Justice Representative are available through the links provided.

The term of appointment of office bearers is determined by the President and all appointments cease upon the election of a new President. The President should make appointments on merit and avoid

making appointments which are arbitrary or not consistent with the best interest of the Conference. The President and the Treasurer must not be relatives (*The Rule*, Part 3 Article 6).

### **Vice President**

The Vice President acts on behalf of the President when the President is unavailable for Regional/Conference related activities. The Vice President maybe invited to undertake special projects from time to time, such as recruitment.

### **Spiritual Advisor**

See separate document titled 'Conference Spiritual Adviser Position Description' on MAVS: <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Conference-Spiritual-Adviser-PD-Approved-2019.pdf>

### **Secretary**

The Conference Secretary takes the meeting minutes, handles inward and outward correspondence, maintains records and as required may assist with recording the statistics related to visits and those who are assisted by the Conference. All Conferences should have a dedicated mailbox with both the Conference President and the Secretary to have access it.

### **Treasurer**

The Conference Treasurer oversees Conference financial management and works closely with the Conference President and members, in collaboration with Regional Office staff to safeguard the Society's funds utilised by their Conference. The specific duties are as follows.

#### **Financial accountability**

- Assist members to understand and observe all financial policy and procedures, including how to record and document cash transactions
- Keep the Conference members up to date regarding available funds and expenditure
- Protect against fraud and theft and ensure safe custody of money, gift cards, and any other negotiable resources
- Review all internal processes and reporting methods.

#### **Banking, and record-keeping**

- Set up appropriate systems for payments, lodgements, and petty cash
- Issue receipts for donations made during fundraising
- Submit receipts schedule to regional finance staff.
- Keep up-to-date records of accounts submitted for payment.
- Deposit cash and cheques in bank account
- Ensure that record-keeping and accounts meet the conditions of St Vincent de Paul Society financial protocols.

#### **Reporting and payments**

- Authorise payment of bills when needed
- Present regular reports on the Conference`s financial position at the Conference meeting
- Participate in discussions about financial/in kind support to people assisted by the Conference.

Tasks may vary slightly between Central Councils.

### **Statistics Officer**

The Statistics Officer or Data Entry officer assists the Conference to provide accurate records of who is being assisted and how. This role consists of ensuring assistance records are maintained and provided to the Regional Office in a timely fashion. It may include:

- Entering data from records of visits provided by Conference members
- Keeping records in a secure location and maintaining the privacy of those records
- Preparing regular statistics generated from data recorded and provide to the Conference President or forward statistics directly to the Regional Office.

### **Social Justice Representative**

The Conference Social Justice Representative is the main champion for social justice advocacy within the Conference. Conference Social Justice Representatives will:

- Support and/or guide local advocacy activities such as forums, events, table talks and petitions
- Enjoy state-wide social justice forums and local social justice events
- Build on lively relationships with other Vinnies advocates, parishes, organisations and local social justice groups, such as by attending or convening local social justice networks
- Keep informed by signing up to our Social Justice Advocacy Network and help disseminate information to conference members
- Encourage members to take an interest in social justice advocacy activities and understand the relevance of social justice and systemic advocacy in conference work
- Share information, stories and case studies with SVDP State Support Office (SSO) team.

For more information go to <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice/>

### **Bailly**

A Bailly is the mentor who assists a Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society. The name 'Bailly' is a direct reference to Professor Emmanuel Bailly, who advised Frederic Ozanam and the other founders of the Society. The name 'Bailly' recognises the wisdom, guidance and support this role provides to the Conference.

A Bailly should have sound knowledge and experience as a Vincentian. They offer advice to the Conference members, empowering and supporting them. Their duties are to:

- encourage the spiritual formation of Conference members
- attend meetings as an observer
- offer advice when called upon
- assist the President with resolving issues or concerns if required
- assist members with choosing and focusing their activities.

### **Twinning Officer**

Twinning Officers are appointed by a Conference when that Conference commences participation in the Twinning Program. Twinning has three key elements: spirituality; learning; and fundraising. It should appear as a regular agenda item for Conference meetings once twinning is established.

The activities of the Twinning Officer include:

- encouraging and supporting prayers and Masses for or with twinned Conferences
- raising awareness and sharing communications from the twin with your Conference

- ensuring contact details of the twin are current
- receiving, managing and sharing project applications received from twins
- liaising with Central Council Twinning Officer
- encouraging your Conference, schools and Parish to participate in the Assist-a-Student Program
- promoting overseas development initiatives within the Parish including with schools
- instigating fundraising for overseas disaster appeals where the twinned Conference is impacted
- attending State OPDC meetings as an observer where possible
- keeping in touch with the Regional Twinning Officer and other Twinning Officers in your Region
- distributing promotional material or correspondence relating to twinning received from the State Program Support Officer
- arranging a guest speaker from the Overseas Partnership Development Committee or a local person who is well informed about your twinning country to speak at a Conference meeting.

As well as having a heart for overseas development, the Twinning Officer should have good communication skills and some experience with fundraising and managing donations.

For more information, Conference Presidents can visit the Overseas Development Programs page on MAVS <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/conferences/providing-assistance/overseas-development-programs/> or speak to the Regional or Central Council Twinning Officer.