

# **Policy Manual**

## **Pacific Northwest Region, National Model Railroad Association**

### **A. Executive Handbook**

#### **A-1. Executive Handbook**

1. The Executive Handbook consists of the governing documents of the Pacific Northwest Region, including:
  - a. PNR Bylaws
  - b. PNR Policy Manual
  - c. PNR Convention Policy Manual
2. The PNR Bylaws provide for the governance of the Region. Amendments to the Bylaws in most cases require approval of the Board of Directors and of the membership.
3. The PNR Policy Manual supplements the Bylaws and contains both policies and procedures for the various offices, committees, and programs of the Region. Amendments to the Policy Manual require approval of the Board of Directors or of the membership; both are not required.
4. The PNR Convention Policy Manual is incorporated by reference into the PNR Policy Manual but is maintained separately due to its size and extended need for separate distribution.

#### **A-2. Executive Handbook Maintenance**

1. Physical maintenance of the Executive Handbook is the responsibility of the Secretary. This task may be delegated.

#### **A-3. Policy Manual Maintenance**

1. Any PNR member may recommend a change to the Policy Manual.
  - a. A proposed revision shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary. The proposal should include the specific wording of the proposed change(s) and supporting rationale. If the revision is proposed by the responsible officer or committee chair, this step is not required.

- b. The Secretary will report receipt of the proposal to the President, who will identify the officer or committee chair responsible for reviewing the proposal. The Secretary will then forward the proposal to said responsible individual.
- c. The responsible individual shall review the proposal and submit a report to the Secretary. The report shall address the positive, negative, and financial aspects of the proposal. The report will be unbiased and as objectively factual as possible.
- d. The Secretary will forward the report to the individual who made the proposal and to the entire BOD. The BOD distribution will be made with sufficient time to allow members to study the issue prior to the next meeting of the board.
- e. The proposal shall be placed on the agenda for the next BOD meeting and voted on at that time. A simple majority of votes cast is required for the proposal to pass.

**A-4. Executive Handbook Distribution**

- 1. The Executive Handbook shall be made available on the Region's official web site. The latest revised version shall be posted as soon as possible, no later than 30 days after amendments are approved.
- 2. Printed copies will be provided, on request, to members of the BOD and to committee chairs, free of charge.
- 3. Printed copies will be provided to other NMRA members on request. A fee to cover the cost of printing and postage may be required.

## **B. Office of the President**

### **B-1. Vacancy in Office**

1. Upon the death, incapacitation, or resignation of the President, the Vice President shall succeed to that office and the office of Vice President shall become vacant. Incapacitation must be determined by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of votes cast by the Board of Directors.
2. If there is no Vice President to succeed to the office of President the Board shall appoint, by majority vote of the remaining members, an Interim President.
  - a. If the time remaining in the term of office is less than 9 months, the Interim President will serve until the new officers elected in the regular election are installed.
  - b. If the time remaining in the term of office is 9 months or more, the Interim President will serve pending election of a new President and Vice President in a special election to be held no later than 90 days after the Board certifies the vacancy.

## **C. Office of the Vice President**

### **C-1. Vacancy in Office**

1. Upon the death, incapacitation, resignation, or promotion of the Vice President, the Board may appoint, by majority vote of the Board, a new Vice President from the membership.

## **D. Office of the Secretary**

### **D-1. Recordkeeping**

1. The Secretary shall maintain records of the PNR for the current year and the five previous years. At the end of the year, the older records will be forwarded to the Kalmbach Memorial Library for archiving.
2. General records may be maintained in electronic format, but all signed legal documents shall be maintained in their original form.

### **D-2. Meeting Action Items**

1. Following each BOD or membership meeting the Secretary shall prepare a list of those items assigned for action during the meeting. This list will include the specific action to be completed, the individual or committee assigned responsibility, and the specific schedule for completion. This list may be included in the meeting minutes or may be distributed separately.

## **E. Office of the Treasurer**

This section is reserved for future use.

## **F. Office Manager**

### **F-1. Assignment.**

1. The Office Manager is appointed by the President and serves as a principal assistant to the President.
2. The Office Manager is responsible to the President for conduct of the routine business of the PNR, to the BOD for proper execution of those duties, and to the Treasurer for financial matters.
3. The BOD has the authority to require the President to terminate the Office Manager for just cause.
4. As a non-voting member of the BOD, the Office Manager is not required to submit a formal proxy to permit a designated representative to a BOD meeting.

### **F-2. Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The Office Manager is responsible for membership records of the Region. Specific responsibilities are:
  - a. To maintain the PNR membership database, working with NMRA Administration Department personnel to resolve conflicts with the NMRA membership database.
  - b. To keep the PNR membership mailing list current for purposes of communicating with members and distributing publications.
  - c. To forward membership reports from the NMRA to the President, the Vice President, and division superintendents or their designees. Division superintendents will be given only the information for the members of their respective divisions.
  - d. To prepare an annual membership report.
  - e. To provide items of membership interest, such as a list of new members, for publication in *The Switchlist*.
  - f. To prepare up-to-date mailing labels for *The Switchlist*, division newsletters, and PNR convention mailings, as requested.
  - g. To provide on request, and in accordance with the Confidentiality Policy, membership information required by committee and program chairs to carry out their specific duties.

- h. To assist PNR members in resolving membership problems with the NMRA Administration Department.
- i. To prepare and distribute to new members of the Region a New Member Packet.

**F-3. New Member Packet**

1. The New Member Packet will be distributed to all new members of the Region, whether new to the NMRA or transfers into the Region.
2. The packet should contain materials of interest to a new member, including but not limited to:
  - a. PNR Bylaws.
  - b. The latest edition of *The Switchlist*.
  - c. Directory of PNR officers and committee chairs.
  - d. Web site address of interest to new members (such as the region and division web sites).
3. The packet may be assembled as an assembly of information sheets, a special edition of *The Switchlist*, or other appropriate format.
4. The cost of the packet normally should not exceed \$3.50. Cost of the packet will be assigned to the budget account for Membership.

## **G. Divisions**

### **G-1. General**

1. Because divisions may be separately incorporated under the laws of their respective states, provinces, and countries, a common set of duties and responsibilities is not practical. Nevertheless, each division, regardless of legal organization, is expected to conform to and be in compliance with the NMRA Regulations, PNR Bylaws, and both NMRA and PNR policies.
2. All officers of a division must be NMRA members in good standing while serving in office.
3. No one shall be a member of a division who is not also a member of NMRA.

### **G-2. Division Superintendent Guidebook**

1. A Division Superintendent Guidebook is published separately from the Executive Handbook for the benefit of division superintendents. Its use is recommended.

### **G-3. Vacancy in the Office of Superintendent**

1. A vacancy in the office of Superintendent will be filled in accordance with Division bylaws and policies.
2. If the division has no established procedures to fill a vacancy in the office of Superintendent, the President, subject to ratification by majority vote of the Board, shall appoint an Interim Superintendent to serve until such time that the division elects a new superintendent.

### **G-4. Division Boundary Changes**

1. Division boundaries shall be established by the Board of Directors.
2. The Board of Directors may act of its own accord to change Division Boundaries. Such action should not be taken lightly or without good reason (such as conformance with national requirements). In the case of a Board-generated boundary change, notification shall be sent to the affected divisions and all members being moved from one division to another. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, such boundary changes will take effect on September 1.
3. Divisions and members may petition the Board for boundary changes. A group of members may initiate the process by requesting approval of the two divisions. A petition for a boundary change must include the following:
  - a. A precise definition of the change.

- b. Approval by a majority of the members being moved. This may be accomplished by signatures of over half the members in the area, indicating their agreement to the proposal. Note that this means half the members, not half of those signing.
- c. Minutes of the board meetings at which each division approved the change.
- d. Proposed effective date of the change.

## **H. Meetings**

### **H-1. General**

1. All meetings of the Board of Directors or of the membership shall be conducted according to the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, revised*.

### **H-2. Board of Directors Meetings**

1. Board meetings shall be held as required by the Bylaws.
2. Additional Board meetings may be called by the President or by majority vote of the Board members. These other meetings may be held by any means allowable under applicable law.
3. The standard Order of Business for Board of Directors meetings shall be:
  - a. Call to Order
  - b. Introductions
  - c. Minutes of Previous Meeting
  - d. Officer Reports
    - (1) President
    - (2) Vice President
    - (3) Secretary
    - (4) Treasurer
  - e. Division Reports
    - (1) Division 1
    - (2) Division 2
    - (3) Division 3
    - (4) Division 4
    - (5) Division 5
    - (6) Division 6

- (7) Division 7
  - f. Office Manager Report
  - g. Committee and Program Reports
    - (1) Achievement Program
    - (2) Contest Program
    - (3) Convention Committee
    - (4) Education Program
    - (5) Membership Program
    - (6) Publications Program
  - h. Unfinished Business
  - i. New Business
  - j. Announcements
  - k. Adjourn
4. The President shall normally preside over all Board of Directors meetings. In the event the President is not available, the Vice President will preside. If the Vice President also is not available, the directors shall choose a presiding officer from among their number.
5. A quorum at a Board of Directors meeting shall be 50% of all voting members of the Board.

### **H-3. Annual Membership Meeting**

1. The standard Order of Business for the Annual Membership Meeting shall be the same as that prescribed for Board of Directors meetings, except that the reports to be made are at the discretion of the President.
2. All PNR members have the right to speak during the Annual Membership Meeting.
3. A quorum at the Annual Membership Meeting shall be the lesser of 25 Region members or 10% of the PNR membership.

#### **H-4. Other Membership Meetings**

1. Membership meetings other than the annual meeting may be scheduled by the President or by petition by the membership. Such a petition shall have at least 30 signatures of PNR members, no more than 10 of which from any single division shall count toward the minimum of 30.
2. A quorum at an Other Membership Meeting shall be the lesser of 25 Region members or 10% of the PNR membership.

## **I. Region Administration**

### **I-1. Membership List Control**

1. PNR and division membership lists are not intended for general distribution or release. These lists shall be maintained under the direct control of the individual to whom they are issued.
2. A member who requires a membership list for the conduct of official PNR or division business may obtain a mailing list label printout from the Office Manager.
3. Should any provision of this policy conflict with the NMRA or PNR Confidentiality Policy, the stricter interpretation shall apply.

### **I-2. Membership Requirements**

1. NMRA insurance coverage of PNR-sponsored events is an issue of concern at all levels. Failure to comply with this policy could result in denial of NMRA insurance coverage for some or all PNR activities.
2. All officers of PNR and its divisions must hold valid NMRA membership throughout their terms of office.
3. All PNR convention committee officers and chairs must hold valid NMRA membership throughout their periods of service.
4. No one shall be a member of PNR who is not also a member of the NMRA.

### **I-3. NMRA Insurance**

1. The President and division superintendents shall be responsible for applying to the NMRA Administration Department for initial or continued coverage of NMRA insurance for NMRA-sponsored activities and programs.
2. The President and division superintendents, as appropriate, also shall be responsible for verifying that all terms and conditions of NMRA insurance coverage are properly satisfied for events and activities under their respective jurisdictions.

### **I-4. Code of Ethics**

1. All region officers, directors (division superintendents), and committee and program chairs are expected to act in an ethical manner at all times. Specifically, but not exclusively, such individuals shall adhere to the following principles:
  - a. The individual will act in the best interests of the PNR and is not beholden to any special interest group.

- b. The individual will comply with all bylaws, policies, and other rules of the PNR, as well as applicable federal, state, and local laws.
  - c. The individual will perform the duties of his or her office with the appropriate standard of care.
2. Violation of this policy is sufficient grounds for removal from office, following the normal procedures for such removal.

#### **I-5. Confidentiality**

1. The confidentiality policy of the NMRA is hereby incorporated into this policy manual. It is repeated here because it is not yet readily available for reference. In case of differences between what is shown here and the current national policy, the national policy will apply.
2. Anyone with access to membership information obtained from the NMRA must agree not to disclose any such information to anyone who is not authorized to have access to the information for official use.
3. The NMRA is in the process of obtaining permission from each member to disclose his or her personal information to other members, as we have in the past for those wishing to visit or contact other members. Due to changes in the law and increased privacy concerns, we can no longer disclose such information without the consent of the members concerned. Moreover, no information should be disclosed by any NMRA official, elected or appointed, at any level of the NMRA, that would allow those without authorization to obtain personal information of other members. This would include mass electronic mail distribution with private email addresses in the “to” or “cc” address lines where the information can be read by any recipient.
4. Currently, member information such as name, address, phone number, and email address is made available to each region membership officer, and is also available to each region president. These individuals are expected to pass this information along to their division superintendents and membership officers so that they can use the information for official business. Welcome letters, rerail letters, newsletter, meeting notifications, and the like would be considered official business. Other official mailings to all region or division members are permitted.
5. This policy strictly prohibits dissemination of member information to 100% NMRA clubs. Such clubs are not part of the NMRA corporate structure, and the NMRA has no way to control how such information would be used. A 100% NMRA club is one whose members are all members of the NMRA, however, they have no other responsibilities to the NMRA. The Headquarters office will continue to identify if a person is a member of the NMRA to a 100% NMRA club for purposes of confirmation of the person's eligibility for membership in the club. However, we would request the club to first request a copy of the membership card from the prospective member in order to confirm eligibility.

6. Any NMRA official who passes personal membership information along to non-authorized individuals runs the risk of being held personally legally liable for this action. Moreover, the NMRA insurance does not apply to such disclosures by region or division officers or personnel.

#### **I-6. Conflict of Interest**

1. All region officers, directors (division superintendents), and committee and program chairs must, in the performance of their PNR duties, put the interests of the PNR ahead of any personal interest. This is particularly true when the individual or a closely-related entity stands to gain financially from a transaction with the PNR.
2. A closely-related entity is defined as an immediate family member (parent, child, sibling), a relative one degree removed (grandparent, aunt or uncle, niece or nephew, first cousin), or a business entity in which the individual has a financial interest. A financial interest is defined as being an employee or contractor, or having at least 5% ownership.
3. Each officer, director, and committee or program chair shall complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure form within 30 days after taking office, and annually thereafter between September 1 and September 30, inclusive. Additionally, each such individual shall update his or her Conflict of Interest Disclosure form whenever there is a material change to the information contained therein.
4. Having a personal interest in the outcome of an action of the PNR will not automatically disqualify an individual from participating. Such individual, however, shall recuse himself or herself from BOD votes on the matter at hand.
5. Individuals receiving compensation, gifts, or other gain from outside agencies attempting to establish business relationships with the PNR shall recuse themselves from all discussions and votes on such transactions, unless specifically summoned to provide information.
6. This policy does not prohibit an individual from doing business with the PNR. However, the individual will not be allowed to participate in his or her PNR role during negotiations on such transactions.
7. When an opportunity arises for the PNR to benefit from a particular transaction, no individual shall seek to accept such opportunity for personal gain until the PNR has rejected or denied the opportunity.
8. It is impossible to foresee and outline every possible circumstance that may arise as a conflict of interest. Where an unspecified situation occurs, the Board of Directors, not including the individual involved, has the authority to determine whether a conflict of interest does exist.

9. Violation of this policy is grounds for removal from office, following the normal procedures for such removal.

**I-7. Non-Discrimination**

1. The Region shall not deny membership or any rights of membership to any person based on the person's race, color, sex, religion, marital status, or national or ethnic origin.
2. The Region does not discriminate on the bases of race, color, sex, religion, martial status, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies, programs, or activities.

## **J. Region Finances**

### **J-1. Accounting Procedures**

1. The Treasurer shall maintain a checking account in the United States and one in Canada. Checks drawn on the Canadian account will be prepared by the Treasurer and forwarded to the Canadian Assistant Treasurer for signature and forwarding to the payee.
2. The Treasurer shall also maintain an investment account in the United States.
3. Accounts shall be kept on a cash basis.
4. PNR financial assets shall be held in three types of funds. Where appropriate, said funds may be comingled within individual accounts.
  - a. Subscription Fund. This fund holds payments received for subscriptions to *The Switchlist*. Disbursements are restricted to expenses related to publication. The BOD may authorize the distribution of excess funds to divisions in support of their newsletter requirements.
  - b. Investment Funds. These funds are generally designated for long-term purposes, such as funding life member subscriptions to *The Switchlist*. Earned income in investment funds should be retained and not distributed to the General Fund unless authorized by the Board of Directors.
  - c. General Fund. This fund holds all payments received from sources other than those mentioned above. Expenditures are in accordance with the budget.
5. The Treasurer will strive to pay all bills and claims within 15 days of receiving the supporting documentation. When this standard cannot be met, the Treasurer will notify the BOD.
6. The budget serves as authorization for disbursement of funds. Because not all expenses can be predicted perfectly as much as a year in advance, BOD approval is not required for expenses over budget up to and including the lesser of \$250 or 10% of the original budget, for a given budget category. Expenses exceeding these amounts require BOD approval.
7. When required for expediency, the President may authorize unbudgeted expenses of up to \$250 without first obtaining BOD approval. Such authorizations must be reported to the BOD at the earliest opportunity.

### **J-2. Budget Process**

1. The Treasurer is responsible for preparing a proposed budget.

2. The budget will be based on information in the current year budget and actual income and expenses. The Treasurer will ask officers and committee chairs for additional input.
3. The BOD will approve a budget at the BOD meeting closest to the start of the PNR fiscal year. Should this meeting occur after the start of the year, reasonable expenses will be deemed within budget if they are included in the proposed budget.

### **J-3. Audits and Reviews**

1. External audits and internal reviews of the Region's books and accounting practices shall be conducted on the following schedule:
  - a. At least once in every 3 fiscal years, preferable once in every 2 fiscal years.
  - b. Within 2 months of a new Treasurer taking office (before or after).
2. At least once in every calendar decade a review shall be conducted by an outside agency with no other connection to the Region. A full "audit" in the legal sense (requiring a Certified Public Accountant) is not required; a review is sufficient.
3. Other reviews may be internal, conducted by a member of the Region.
  - a. Persons conducting an internal review shall be selected based on a demonstrated knowledge of accounting practices.
  - b. The following relatives of the Treasurer shall not be selected to perform a review: parents, spouses, children, siblings, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, first cousins. This list should be interpreted to include step- and half- relationships, as well as adopted and foster relationships.
  - c. Later discovery that a review was performed by someone who does not qualify under this paragraph shall not invalidate the audit.

### **J-4. Travel Reimbursement**

1. Because of the distances that separate our divisions, board members may be required to travel long distances to attend BOD meetings. Distances greater than 350 miles one way are considered excessive.
2. Board members or their proxies traveling excessive distances may apply for reimbursement of mileage in excess of 350 miles one way. Mileage shall be determined by the most direct route.
3. Reimbursement for excess mileage will be calculated at the rate then in use by the United States Internal Revenue Service for charitable mileage.

4. Those eligible for reimbursement who travel by means other than automobile will be reimbursed the lesser of (a) the mileage reimbursement for the excess mileage, and (b) the difference between the lowest available fare and the reimbursement rate for 700 miles.
5. Members traveling together by road in one private vehicle will be allowed only a single reimbursement for the entire vehicle.
6. Reimbursement for lodging and meals is not available.
7. Reimbursement for a BOD meeting held in conjunction with the region convention is not available.
8. At the President's discretion, reimbursement may be made available for those who qualify based on mileage and who are specifically invited to a BOD meeting.
9. The Board of Directors has the authority to approve unusual travel expenses not specifically covered by this policy.

## **K. Committees and Programs**

### **K-1. Common Procedures**

1. Unless otherwise specified in the section relating to a specific program or committee:
  - a. The President shall appoint the program or committee chair. Where BOD consent is required it shall be so noted in the section relating to the program or committee.
  - b. The Chair shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. As a non-voting member, submission of a formal proxy is not required to appoint a representative to attend BOD meetings.
  - c. The Chair shall serve until replaced. There is no fixed term of office.

### **K-2. Standing Committees and Programs**

1. Certain committees and programs central to the existence and purposes of the Region shall exist perpetually. These are:
  - a. Achievement Program
  - b. Contest Program
  - c. Convention Program
  - d. Education Program
  - e. Membership Program
  - f. Publications Program
2. Certain other committees and programs do not necessarily need to exist constantly, but are required on a recurring basis. These include:
  - a. Election Committee
  - b. Nominating Committee
  - c. President's Award Program
3. Other committees and programs may be established by the President or the Board of Directors. Those established on a permanent basis shall have a section in this Policy Manual outlining their purposes, policies, and procedures.

## **L. Achievement Program**

### **L-1. General**

1. The Achievement Program Chair is appointed by the President and serves until replaced. There is no specified term of office.
2. The Achievement Program is a national program with policies and procedures specified in the NMRA Executive Handbook.
3. The Achievement Program Chair serves as a non-voting member of the PNR Board of Directors. As a non-voting member, the Achievement Program Chair does not require submission of a formal proxy to permit a designated representative to attend a BOD meeting.

## **M. Awards**

### **M-1. General**

1. The Region may establish awards for the recognition of service to or achievement in the hobby.

### **M-2. President's Award**

1. The President's Award shall be presented annually to honor a member of the PNR who has, through signal service to the hobby of model railroading, made the most significant contribution to the benefit and betterment of the PNR for at least the 12 months prior to the close of nominations.
2. The award shall be a properly engraved trophy or plaque suitable to the level of recognition of the award. The trophy or plaque will be provided by the PNR or may be donated by another sponsoring activity.
3. The President's Award is an individual award and will be retained by the individual to whom it is awarded.
4. The President's Award Program Chair is responsible for the following:
  - a. Publicizing the award to the membership.
  - b. Soliciting and accepting nominations.
  - c. Forwarding nominations to the President and Vice President.
  - d. Arranging for preparation and delivery of the trophy or plaque.
5. *Nominations*
  - a. All PNR members are eligible to nominate or receive the award, with the following exceptions:
    - (1) The President's Award Program Chair is not eligible to make nominations.
    - (2) A previous winner is not eligible to receive the award a second or subsequent time until 3 full calendar years following the most recent receipt.
  - b. Nominations shall be sent in confidence to the President's Award Program Chair. Copies should not be made of a hard-copy submission; electronic submissions should not be sent to anyone else.

- c. Nominations shall include the following information:
  - (1) Nominator's name and contact information.
  - (2) Nominee's name and division.
  - (3) Reasons for the nomination, preferably addressing one or more of the following categories:
    - (a) NMRA national service
    - (b) PNR regional service
    - (c) Divisional service
    - (d) Club participation
    - (e) Membership recruitment, retention, and service efforts
    - (f) Public support of the hobby
    - (g) Creative contribution to the NMRA, PNR, or division
    - (h) Other significant contributions in support of the hobby
  - (4) Additional comments in support of the nomination.
- d. Nominations are due to the President's Award Program Chair no later than 60 days before the published first day of the convention. If there is no convention, nominations are due no later than 60 days before the date at which the award is to be presented.
- e. Each division superintendent is highly encouraged to ensure at least one nomination is received from his or her division. The President's Award Program Chair will notify each superintendent when a nomination has been submitted for the division, but the nominee will not be revealed in this notification.

6. *Selection*

- a. The President and Vice President shall jointly make the selection of the individual to receive the President's Award.

- b. The President and Vice President may, at their discretion, jointly and discreetly interview the nominees and/or nominators. If this is done, all individuals in the appropriate category must be interviewed and all interviews must cover similar subject matter. Conducting interviews is discouraged and should be done only if absolutely necessary.
- c. Upon selection of the awardee, the President shall notify the President's Award Program Chair so that the trophy or plaque may be prepared.
- d. The identity of the awardee shall be kept in strictest confidence until presentation of the award.

7. *Presentation*

- a. The President's Award is the highest award given by the Region and should be presented with suitable dignity.
- b. The President's Award shall be presented at the PNR convention immediately following the close of nomination, during the banquet or other appropriate function at which maximum attendance can be expected. If there is no convention, the award may be presented at another suitable event.
- c. The previous award recipient will be offered the courtesy of making the presentation. If the previous recipient declines or is unavailable, the award may be presented by the President, the President's Award Program Chair, or the Vice President.

## **N. Contest Program**

### **N-1. General**

1. The Region shall operate a contest program consistent with the guidelines of the NMRA contest program. The Region program will be limited to the Model, Photo, and Arts & Crafts categories.
2. Unless exempted by the Board of Directors, a contest will be held at all region conventions. The Contest Program Chair may authorize additional contests at other times and locations.
3. Procedures for conducting contests are contained in the Convention Manual.

### **N-2. Types of Entries**

1. Model contests shall include a Kit-Built subcategory. Kit-built entries will be limited to a maximum score of 112.5 points.
2. Model, Photography, and Arts & Crafts contests may include both Novice and Open classes. Entries in the Novice class are limited to entrants who have not won first place in the particular entry category in any region or higher-level contest.
3. Any NMRA member is eligible to enter any PNR contest.
4. PNR members may enter contests via proxy; *i.e.*, by having someone else submit the entry. NMRA members who are not PNR members must be present.

## **O. Conventions**

### **O-1. General**

1. It is the intent of the Region to hold a convention every year at a time that does not conflict with the NMRA convention.
2. The Convention Handbook is published separately due to its size and its need for separate distribution. It is incorporated into this policy by reference. Where specific policies differ between the Policy Manual and the Convention Handbook, those in the Policy Manual will prevail.

### **O-2. Convention Contract**

1. The division conducting each convention will enter into a contract with the PNR to that regard.
2. The Secretary will retain the signed original of each executed contract.

### **O-3. Convention Report**

1. Following each convention, the local committee will prepare a report for submission to the Board of Directors through the region chair. The information required in such report is outlined in the Convention Manual.

### **O-4. Convention Loan**

1. It is normal for conventions to require funds before they start collecting registration fees from attendees. The local host committee may apply to the Convention Program Chair for a loan of up to \$1000 (US). The Convention Program Chair will review the request to determine completeness and compliance with loan guidelines. Upon a favorable review, the Convention Program Chair will forward the request to the President and Treasurer for final approval.

### **O-5. Convention Attendance**

1. NMRA membership shall not be required for convention attendance.
2. A primary registrant for a convention, if not an NMRA member, shall be charged a premium to encourage recruitment. This premium must be an amount at least equal to the current price of an NMRA RailPass membership, and will include such membership if the attendee is eligible.
3. A reduced registration fee may be established for individuals accompanying a primary registrant to the convention. These accompanying individuals shall not be charge a non-member premium, if applicable.

4. Attendees who are not NMRA members may not participate in contests or meetings, receive awards or recognition reserved to NMRA members, or receive any other benefit reserved to members.

## **P. Education Program**

### **P-1. General**

1. The Education Program shall be consistent with NMRA education programs and will concentrate on achieving NMRA education goals and objectives.
2. The President appoints the Education Chair, who serves until replaced. There is no fixed term of office.
3. The Education Chair is a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. As such, there is no requirement to submit a formal proxy to appoint a representative to attend BOD meetings.

### **P-2. Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The Education Chair will develop programs and materials to:
  - a. Support general public education on the history of railroads and the importance of railroads to the growth of nations.
  - b. Provide basic skill education for new entrants to the hobby. Such program materials should be available for use at division clinics or in support of public clinics at meets and shows.
  - c. Provide advanced skill and knowledge clinics for more experienced members for the purposes of increasing skill levels, exchanging modeling ideas and experiences, and improving the overall quality of modeling.
2. Other duties include:
  - a. Develop and maintain a list of clinicians and clinics within the PNR that are available for presentation during meets, shows, and conventions. The list may also include clinicians who are available to make presentations outside their home divisions.
  - b. Continuously investigate new methodologies and new outlets to improve education availability to members and the general public (for example, public access television productions and community college non-credit courses).
  - c. Keep the President, along with division superintendents and education chairs, apprised of new materials and programs available in the program and the successes achieved through the program.

## **Q. Elections**

### **Q-1. Nominating Committee**

1. In January of even-numbered years, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of at least three and at most five members.
2. The President shall designate one member of the committee as the Chair.
3. The Nominating Committee shall:
  - a. Endeavor to nominate at least two candidates for each office.
  - b. Encourage the various divisions to present petitions on behalf of additional candidates.
  - c. Secure the written consent of each candidate to place his or her name on the ballot. Electronic confirmation is acceptable.
  - d. Submit information and qualification background, no later than April 30, to the Publications Program Chair for inclusion in the election issue of *The Switchlist*.
  - e. Publicize the list of nominees no later than March 15.

### **Q-2. Election Committee**

1. No later than April 15 of an even-numbered year, the President shall appoint an Election Committee Chair.
2. The Election Committee Chair shall:
  - a. Prepare the ballot and arrange for its distribution to all eligible, voting members of the PNR.
  - b. Appoint a US Ballot Chair and a Canada Ballot Chair.

### **Q-3. Ballots**

1. Ballots should be distributed to members no later than May 15 of an even-numbered year.
2. The ballot shall include instructions for marking choices and for submitting the ballot, including mailing addresses for the Ballot Chairs.
3. The ballot shall list all candidates in alphabetical order for each office. Other proposals must be stated in full. Candidate information statements and background information on other proposals will accompany the ballot.

4. The returned ballot must be postmarked by June 25 of an even-numbered year and received by the appropriate Ballot Chair no later than June 30.

**Q-4. Tallying Procedure**

1. Each Ballot Chair shall adhere to the following procedures for opening and counting the ballots.
  - a. All ballots shall remain sealed until the time of the tally.
  - b. All ballots shall be classified as valid or invalid by reason of tardiness or improper marking. Invalid marking for one office or proposal shall not disqualify the votes for other offices or proposals.
  - c. The votes for each candidate, including write-in candidates, shall be totaled.
  - d. The votes for and against each proposal shall be totaled.
2. No later than July 15, each Ballot Chair shall forward a report to the Election Committee Chair with the following information:
  - a. Total ballots received.
  - b. Number of invalid ballots, listed by reason.
  - c. Number of partially-invalid ballots, listed by reason. Note: a ballot with no vote for a particular office or proposal is not an invalid ballot.
  - d. Number of votes for each candidate, arranged by office, including all write-in votes.
  - e. Number of votes for and against each proposal.
  - f. Words attesting to the accuracy of the report. A signature is not required on an electronic report, but a signed, hard-copy report should be sent as a follow-up.
3. The Election Committee Chair, upon receipt of the reports from both Ballot Chairs, shall prepare a consolidated report.
  - a. In addition to the information provided by the Ballot Chairs, this report shall include the total number of eligible voters.
  - b. This report shall be submitted to the President and the Secretary no later than July 30. An electronic report may be submitted, but should be followed by a written, signed report.

**Q-5. Special Election Procedures**

1. When a special election is held the procedures will be the same as for a regular election, with adjusted dates.
2. The date by which ballots must be distributed to the membership will generally be in accordance with bylaws and policies applicable to the situation.
3. Returned ballots must be postmarked no later than 40 days following distribution and received no more than 5 days after the latest allowable postmark.
4. The Ballot Chairs must make their reports no later than 15 days following the final receipt deadline.
5. The Election Committee Chair must make his or her report no later than 15 days following the Ballot Chairs' deadline.

**Q-6. Ballot Retention**

1. The Ballot Chairs will retain, in confidence, the ballots received.
2. Destruction of the ballots may be authorized by the Board of Directors any time after August 30 or, in the case of a special election, any time later than 1 month following the date of the Election Committee Chair's report.
3. Should the Board of Directors fail to authorize destruction of the ballots, they may be destroyed 6 months after the original receipt deadline.
4. The Board of Directors, for valid cause, may require longer retention of the ballots. Such action must take place before the automatic destruction date, and must include a specific deadline after which the ballots will be destroyed without further Board action. Indefinite retention shall not be specified.

## **R. Membership Program**

### **R-1. General (version 1)**

1. The primary purposes of the Membership Program are:
  - a. Retain current NMRA members.
  - b. Recruit new NMRA members.
  - c. Educate the public on the purpose of the NMRA and the benefits of membership.
2. The Membership Program will be operated in coordination with the NMRA membership program.
3. The Membership Chair is appointed by the President and serves until replaced. There is no fixed term of office.
4. The Membership Chair is a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. As such, there is no requirement to submit a formal written proxy to appoint a representative to attend BOD meetings.

### **R-2. Duties and Responsibilities**

1. The Membership Chair is responsible for:
  - a. Developing plans to provide programs and activities to attract new members.
  - b. Developing plans to retain current members.
  - c. Acting as the liaison to clubs within the region boundaries.
  - d. Developing and maintaining a list of clubs and providing a means of communication with them through mailing lists and news articles in *The Switchlist*.
  - e. Keeping the President informed of the progress with ongoing programs and projects.
  - f. Communicating any prospective members through mailings to all Region members.
  - g. Communicating with all clubs within the Region boundaries to promote membership in the NMRA.
  - h. Developing and maintaining an active Rerail program in the Region.

- i. Developing and promoting programs to involve more youth members.
- j. Preparing articles publicizing member services and benefits for publication in *The Switchlist*.

**R-3. Visitors and Guests**

1. The Region and all divisions are encouraged to invite guests to their functions.
2. Visitors should be encouraged to join the NMRA in order to take part in official activities.
3. The Region and its divisions shall not allow visitors to participate in NMRA programs and activities that are considered to be member benefits. For example, visitors are not allowed to participate in contests.

## **S. Publications Program**

### **S-1. General**

1. The Publications Program oversees production of the Region's official publication, which shall be known as *The Switchlist*.
2. The Publications Program Chair is appointed by the President and serves until replaced. There is no fixed term of office.
3. The Publications Program Chair is a non-voting member of the Board of Directors. As such, there is no requirement to submit a formal written proxy to designate a representative to BOD meetings.
4. The Publications Program Chair serves as Editor of *The Switchlist*.
5. *The Switchlist* serves as an in-house publication and will contain all official articles of the Region, including notices of election for elected officials, as well as information of general interest to the membership.

### **S-2. Editor Responsibilities**

1. The Editor is responsible for preparing, editing, and producing *The Switchlist* in accordance with the PNR bylaws and policies.
2. The editor shall publish a timely, quality publication within the budget; solicit articles and photographs of general interest to the membership; acknowledge receipt of information; edit articles; provide camera-ready masters; and ship the camera-ready masters to the printer of choice.
3. The Editor shall keep the President and the Treasurer informed of deadlines, potential problems, and financial issues at all times.
4. The Editor shall provide the Treasurer with financial reports within 2 weeks after publication and distribution of each issue of *The Switchlist*.

### **S-3. Editorial Board**

1. The President will appoint an Editorial Board to assist in determining the content and size of issues of *The Switchlist*.
2. The Editorial Board will be advisory in nature, with full authority for the publication remaining with the Editor.

#### **S-4. Support Staff**

1. The Editor shall assemble a support staff to assist in the production of *The Switchlist*. Positions should include:
  - a. Advertising Manager, responsible for obtaining paid advertisements.
  - b. Publication and Distribution Manager, to manage the actual production of the hard-copy document and its delivery to all subscribers.
2. Specific duties of support staff members will be established by the Editor.

#### **S-5. Financial Considerations**

1. *Advertising Revenue.* Advertising revenue shall be retained the the Subscription Fund to offset publication and distribution costs.
2. *Budget.* It is the responsibility of the Editor to plan and publish within the approved budget.
3. *Advertising Rates.* Advertising rates for *The Switchlist* shall be set by the Editor. The Editor shall inform the Board of Directors of rate changes.

#### **S-6. Delivery Considerations**

1. No attempt will be made to redeliver copies of *The Switchlist* that are returned by postal authorities. When address corrections become known, the corrections shall be sent to the Office Manager.