

WILTSHIRE FREEMASONS



VISITING - OFFICIAL AND REGULAR

The following guidance for the 'preferred arrangements' on an Official VO visit has been approved by the Provincial Executive, and the Provincial Grand Director of Ceremonies. It advises:

1. PRECEDENCE AND AVOIDING EMBARRASSMENT

- The PrGM, DepPrGM and AsstPrGM always take precedence if also in attendance. However, it is strongly recommended that VOs should arrange with Lodge Secretaries that their Official visit should NOT coincide with a visit from the PrGM, DepPrGM and AsstPrGM.

To avoid a situation where a member of the Lodge is embarrassed by inviting a member of the executive, it is important for the VO to make known at the earliest opportunity the date chosen for his official visit.

2. SALUTATIONS AT OFFICIAL VISITS

If it is the practice of the Lodge to give salutations, the following is the correct order:

- PrGM, DepPrGM, AsstPrGM if present – receive 7 or 5 according to their rank
- Irrespective of the Masonic rank of a VO he takes precedence over all other Brethren present with exception of the Provincial Grand Master (should he choose to be present.)
- The VO is named after the DepPrGM or AsstPrGM if either are present, but before any other Brother (see order of precedence).
- The DepPrGM and AsstPrGM will offer salutations to a VO on the occasion of his official visit.
- If the VO is Very Worshipful Brother he receives a salute of 5, otherwise he receives a salute of 3.

3. SALUTATIONS AT NON-OFFICIAL VISITS

If it is the practice of the Lodge to give salutations, when the VO visits on non-official visits he should be included in the salutes appropriate to his rank. In addition, the Lodge Director of Ceremonies should acknowledge the Lodge Visiting Officer with the courtesy of a court bow. There is no requirement for the VO to respond to the acknowledgement other than by returning the court bow.

4. VOS ADDRESSING THE BRETHERN AT OFFICIAL AND OTHER REGULAR VISITS

If the VO wishes to address the Brethren on an **OFFICIAL** visit there are two ways in which this can be achieved.

- The first is in the Lodge Room. If this option is chosen the correct time to speak is on the 2nd Rising.

- The second opportunity to address the Brethren is in the Dining Room. The correct point at which to do this is after the toast to the Provincial Grand Master who he is representing that evening.
- If the VO wishes to address the Brethren on a **regular visit** in the Lodge Room it is recommended that this is done in the dining room, and after the toast to the DepPrGM.

5. GREETINGS

If it is the practice of the Lodge for the WM to receive greetings from visiting Brethren, please note it is etiquette for the VO to abstain from offering them when his official visit. If in attendance on any other occasion the VO may give greetings on his own account, but he does not give greetings on behalf of the PrGM, Provincial Grand Officers present or past, or on behalf of The Provincial Grand Lodge.

6. RESPONSE TO TOASTS:

It is expected that the VO will, when appropriate, respond to the Toast to Provincial Grand Lodge after dinner, having first consulted with the Lodge Director of Ceremonies.

He will pass on Greetings from the Provincial Grand Master, followed by any Provincial initiatives or policy decisions made from time to time by the Provincial Grand Master and his Executive.

7. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS AT DINING :

Guidance has been given by the PrGDC for the preferred dining table arrangements on an Official VO's visit. These are as follows:

- The VO will sit on the top table on the immediate right of the WM unless the PrGM, DepPrGM or AsstPrGM are present and have requested to sit in that position, in which case the VO will be on his immediate right.
- The VO should always confer with the Lodge DC and Secretary to establish beforehand when he may address the Brethren – on the 2nd Rising or at the Dining Table. **The latter is preferred.**
- On a regular visit the VO should be offered the courtesy of being seated on the top table. However, it has become quite common for the VO to request that he be seated on a 'leg' or 'sprig.' It is purely a matter to be agreed between the VO and the Lodge.