



## **Rotary International**

### **Technology Task Force**

**Mission:** Strengthen Rotary's ability to serve communities and the world by improving communications and training through the use of available technology.

### **An Important Message for all Rotarians**

1 October 2000

Electronic Communication has proven to be most useful in Rotary. Email is fast becoming the preferred form of communication in many clubs and districts. It is the preferred form of communication in all Task Force work. And all of Rotary is beginning to see the potential of Email as a way to communicate quickly.

But as is often true with new experiences, we have some excesses, and some misuse of Email. Some valid criticisms are being expressed, complaining about the volume of Email and complaining about broadcasting and copying too many Rotarians on Email. It is not surprising to be hearing complaints like these at this point in the development of our use of Email, but it does indicate we need to give some definition to the use of Email and Electronic Communication in Rotary.

Our newly formed Customer Focus Group, appointed by President Devlyn, has now developed "Guidelines for the use of Electronic Communications in Rotary International". We believe these will be very helpful as we use Email for effective communications in Rotary.

Tom Todd  
Chair  
Technology Task Force  
Customer Focus Group

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF Electronic Communications (Email) IN ROTARY INTERNATIONAL**

Electronic communication is fast becoming the preferred method of communication in our Rotary world. These **Guidelines** have been developed to promote the efficient and effective use of electronic communication.

## **Use and Privacy of Email Addresses**

Rotary Leaders and Rotarians interested in future Leadership positions at any level of Rotary are strongly encouraged to both have Email addresses and use the Internet. (See RI Board recommendation November 1999) When a Rotarian submits their Email address to the club, district or Rotary International, the Rotarian thereby acknowledges and agrees that Rotary may use the Email address for purposes of Rotary communication at that level. Rotarians who accept leadership positions acknowledge and accept that **their** Email addresses will be used for Rotary communication as appropriate at all levels of Rotary International.

No one should freely distribute Email addresses without the owner's consent. Similarly, forwarding of Email should not be done without first obtaining permission of the initiating author.

## **Group and Broadcast Email:**

No Rotarian should be added to an “e-groups” or other type of bulk mailing list without that person’s permission; excepting mailing lists specifically established for RI Directors, Trustees, and Officers (including, but not limited to District Governors, District Governors Elect, District Governors Nominee), as well as RI Committee members, RI Task Force Chairmen and Coordinators, DICOs, CICOs, and Club President. By virtue of having accepted the duties and responsibilities of their positions, Rotarians included in the “exception” list shall be presumed to have given permission to receive Email pertaining to their positions.

Whenever possible, one to one Emails are encouraged. When essential for efficiency, Emailing to a select group of Rotarians directly involved in a particular task or interested in a particular subject is acceptable. Copying Rotarians who may not need to receive the Email is discouraged, to help minimize the quantity of Email received.

Broadcast Email is discouraged except where essential for efficiency or effectiveness. Rotarians are cautioned to avoid frequent use of this method. Broadcast Email should not be used outside your assigned area of responsibility in another assigned area without first obtaining permission from the Rotarian responsible. Broadcasting or copying numbers of other leaders on Emails is also discouraged.

## **Email Form:**

Subject line identification can be useful and efficient in identifying Rotary Email. “Rotary” should be used in the subject line.

All Rotary Email should contain a signature block that includes the name of the person sending the Email and the sender’s title or committee designation (if any).

Replies should be placed at the top of a message for easy reference. All policies and procedures contained in the Rotary International Manual of Procedure pertaining to circularization shall be applicable to all Email communication.

### **Brevity:**

Brevity in all Emails is encouraged. Wherever possible, “copy and paste” content into the body of the Email message, rather than add attachments. When attachments must be used, employ some file form generally used by everyone, such as Adobe Acrobat file form or rich text format.

## **Communication Chains, Database Security and Management**

### **(a) The President, the District Governor, the Club President**

The communication chain between these three offices is considered special and reserved. In this key communication chain, organizational structure is to be respected: The President should always copy the District Governor on communications via Email with the Club Presidents. The Club President should always copy the Governor should they communicate with the President. Others are not expected to use this communication chain as an Email communication path.

The President will communicate via Email with District Governors and Club Presidents bi-monthly using an Action Team Update. Only under special circumstances, which, in the judgment of The President, require quick communications, will The President use broadcast Email to these groups more frequently. These same general guidelines are commended to the District Governor in communicating to the District.

For logistical reasons, The RI President cannot respond to all Email. Rotarians are encouraged to:

1. First communicate on issues with their Governor or, if appropriate, Task Force Coordinators.
2. Consider communicating with Secretariat staff listed in the Rotarian Magazine

The database of Email addresses for this communication chain is both stored by and managed by the Secretariat. Security of this information is important, and requests for access to this information by others will require the approval of The President or the General Secretary. It is envisioned that The President would give permission for the Webmaster to have access to the Email addresses of the Governors and Club Presidents to carry out his instructions on Emails. And it is envisioned that the General Secretary might give such approval to a staff person for a particular communication purpose. The Secretariat and/or the Webmaster will execute this communication.

### **(b) Other Key Rotary Leaders: Task Force Appointees, DICO, DTFC, DMDC, CICO**

This communication chain is essential to the successful operation of the Task Forces and of Rotary Administration. This database will be stored at the Secretariat and managed by the Secretariat, but will be available to the Chairs of the Task Forces, and other Key Rotary Leaders as approved by The President or the General Secretary. At this time, it is envisioned that such Email activity will be done outside the Rotary based Email system

### **(c) Incoming District Governors, Incoming Club Presidents**

This communication chain is essential to continuity and to the President elect’s planning. This data base will be stored at the Secretariat and managed by the Secretariat, but will be available to the President elect, and other Key Rotary Leaders as approved by The President elect or the General Secretary

### **(d) Update and distribution of Database:**

When approved, MIS will provide updated Email addresses in electronic format as an Excel spreadsheet, on a routine and regular basis during the first week of each month.

**(e)Additional of Key Positions to the [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org) Registration system**

The General Secretary will review and approve all additions of Key Positions to the Registration system.

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**Email Guidelines for Rotarians**

1. Email pertaining to Rotary should contain “Rotary” in the subject line.
2. All Rotary Email should contain a signature block that includes the name of the person sending the Email and the sender’s title or committee designation (if any).
3. No Rotarian should be added to an “e-groups” or other type of bulk mailing list without that person’s permission; excepting mailing lists specifically established for RI Directors, Trustees, and Officers (including, but not limited to District Governors, District Governors Elect, District Governors Nominee), as well as RI Committee members, RI Task Force Chairmen and Coordinators, DICOs, CICOs, and Club President.
4. By virtue of having accepted the duties and responsibilities of their positions, Rotarians included in the “exception” list in Guideline #3 shall be presumed to have given permission to receive Email pertaining to their positions.
5. There should be no presumption of delivery of Email, unless the Email is acknowledged by the recipient.
6. E-groups and other bulk mailing lists shall not be used for expressing political views or for the distribution of “spam,” such as jokes and the like.
7. All policies and procedures contained in the Rotary International Manual of Procedure pertaining to circularization shall be applicable to all Email communication.
8. E-mail lists shall not be published in any form that is available to the public. Websites containing mailing lists or individual e-mail addresses (other than the e-mail addresses of the webmasters) should be password protected. Such passwords should not be distributed to non-Rotarians.
9. All users of e-mail should be encouraged to maintain an up-to-date version of virus-checking software on their computers.
10. Whenever possible, attachments to e-mails should be avoided. Copy and paste information into the body of the email. If an attachment is absolutely necessary, the attachment should be scanned to ensure that it is virus free before it is sent.
11. Brevity in email messages is encouraged. No Forwarding of email without consent. Copying large numbers of Rotarians is discouraged.