

# INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD



WISE-RA Rule Book  
2016 Edition

## Preamble to the IWW Constitution

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organisation formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organised, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organising industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

**CONSTITUTION**  
of the  
**Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England**  
**Regional Administration**

of the

**Industrial Workers**  
**of the World**



**2016 Edition**

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## 1 Name

1.1 The name of the union is 'Industrial Workers of the World'.

1.2. The Regional Administration will be named after the 4 nations which comprise its territory, namely the Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England Regional Administration (WISE-RA).

## 2 Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Regional Administration will be as follows:

a) To promote the aims of the union as set out in the Preamble to the Constitution.

b) To support branches locally in any activity to promote and protect the interests of workers.

c) To co-operate with other friendly organisations as and when necessary to promote the interests of workers.

d) To promote the educational and cultural wellbeing of members.

e) To oppose capitalism and any force in society that seeks to divide the workers from one another.

f) To recruit members to the Industrial Workers of the World.

## 3 Executive Council

3.1 The Regional Administration executive council will comprise the regional secretary, the regional treasurer, area organisers, general organisers, chairs of departments, access facilitator, women's officer, legal officer, and one mandated delegate from each chartered branch of the Regional Administration.

3.2 The regional secretary, regional treasurer, area organisers, general organisers, chairs of departments, access facilitator, women's officer and legal officer will have voice but not vote on the Regional Administration executive council.

3.3 The union should aim to reach a gender balance and be diverse, supporting both equality and diversity in its structures.

## 4 Component Parts

4.1 The Regional Administration will be composed of workers brought together in an organisation consisting of Workplace Union Branches, Local Industrial Union Branches, General Membership Branches, Unwaged Members Branches and groups.

Branches will exist in one of four forms. These are:

### 4.2 Workplace Union Branches

Where ten or more members work at the same workplace they will form an Industrial Union Workplace Branch.

### 4.3 Local Industrial Union Branches

Where ten or more members work in the same industry and the same locality but not the same workplace, and are therefore unable to form a branch under the terms of section 4.1 above, they will form a Local Industrial Union Branch.

### 4.4 General Membership (or Mixed Industries) Branches

Where ten or more members work in different industries in the same locality they will form a General Membership (or Mixed Industries) Branch.

### 4.5 Unwaged Members Branches

Where ten or more unwaged members live in the same locality they may form an Unwaged Workers Branch of Industrial Union 680.

### 4.5 Groups

Where less than ten members live in the same locality or work in the same workplace they will form a group. Groups may combine with their nearest branch for the purposes of electing delegates to annual conference.

Branch procedures:

4.7 Where any member is not a member of a Workplace Union Branch, Industrial Union Branch or Unwaged Members Branch they will be a member of their nearest General Membership (or Mixed Industries) Branch.

4.8 All branches of the union will endeavour to fulfil the following:

a) To meet at least monthly and make all decisions by majority vote.

b) To meet in the first or second week of any month in which annual conference is scheduled to take place, to send an agenda to all members no later than seven days in advance of said branch meeting, and to elect and mandate a delegate to the annual conference.

c) To hold an annual general meeting in which the election of branch officers will take place.

d) To maintain a branch bank account.

e) To elect at least three branch officers, including a treasurer, secretary and Regional Administration executive council delegate, in addition to a membership and recruitment officer, communications officer and access and equalities officer.

f) To inform members of internal union affairs on a regular basis.

#### New Branches:

4.9 New branches will be chartered by the Regional Administration executive council so long as the prospective branch presents a 'Petition to Charter' including the following:

a) The names of at least two prospective branch officers (including a treasurer and secretary).

b) A declaration to abide by the rules of the union and Regional Administration.

c) The signatures of at least ten members in good standing who wish to be members of the new branch.

d) A commitment to apply for a branch bank account within three months.

e) Administrative procedures in place as per the union policy, and confirmed by an area organiser, general organiser or secretary of an area council.

## 5 Quorum

5.1 Not less than five members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of branch business.

5.2 No paid official of any part of the Industrial Workers of the World shall be permitted to vote in branch meetings.

## 6 Local Co-Ordination

6.1 Where four or more branches of the union exist in the same area or locality they will apply to the Regional Administration executive council

to charter an Area Council so long as the prospective council presents a 'Petition to Charter' including the following:

- a) The name of a prospective Area Council secretary.
- b) The signatures of at least four branch secretaries who wish to form the Council.
- c) Administrative procedures in place as per the union policy, and confirmed by an area organiser or general organiser.

6.2 The Area Council will co-ordinate the work of the union in an agreed given area and appoint organisers as may be deemed necessary, subject to the approval of the Regional Administration executive council. The Area Council will not be represented at the Regional Administration executive council.

## 7 Industrial Co-ordination

7.1 Where four or more branches of the union exist in the same industry they may apply to the Regional Administration executive council to charter an Industrial Council so long as the prospective council presents a 'Petition to Charter' including the following:

- a) The name of a prospective Industrial Council secretary.
- b) The signatures of at least four branch secretaries who wish to form the Council.
- c) Administrative procedures in place as per the union policy, and confirmed by an area organiser or general organiser.

7.2 The Industrial Council will co-ordinate the work of the union in an agreed given area and appoint organisers as may be deemed necessary, subject to the approval of the Regional Administration executive council. The Industrial Council will not be represented at the Regional Administration executive council.

## 8 Officers

8.1 Elected chairs of departments as per section 23 are part of the Regional Administration.

8.2 The officers will be elected by a biennial ballot as provided in section 9 and appendix 1.



8.3 The officers and Regional Administration executive council will supervise the affairs of the Regional Administration between annual conferences.

8.4 On stepping down, outgoing officers will be responsible for the training of new officers within 60 days.

## 9 Method of Nomination and Election

9.1 Three months prior to the annual conference of each election year the Regional Administration executive council will publish and distribute to all members of the union a notice calling for nomination of officers. Nominations may be made by any part of the union identified in sections 3 and 4 above.

9.2 The election will commence using the referendum process specified in section 16 below.

9.3 On the ballot an option of reopen nominations (RON) will appear.

a) Should RON win the vote the Regional Administration will re-advertise for nominees and hold a new election within one month.

b) Votes will then be counted by a reconvened Election Committee, ideally drawn from members of the same branch.

c) RON will appear on the ballot regardless of the number of candidates.

9.4 The votes will be counted by an election committee to be elected from annual conference.

9.5 An announcement of the result will be made at the annual conference and communicated to the wider membership.

9.6 The successful candidate will take up office at the close of conference and will serve for two years. No officer may serve more than two consecutive terms.

## 10 Administration

The Regional Administration executive council will design and enact administrative procedures in between annual conferences as necessary to meet the aims and objectives of the Regional Administration as stated in section 2, and in line with union rules and policy as determined by the Rule Book ,Manual of Policies and Procedures and Annual Confer-



ence.

## 11 Membership

11.1 It is the aim of the union to build worldwide working-class solidarity. The union therefore actively opposes bigotry and discrimination on and off the job. No applicant will be excluded from the union because of race, ethnicity, sex gender, nationality, creed, disability, or sexual orientation. No unemployed or retired worker, no working-class student, apprentice, carer, prisoner or unwaged volunteer on a project initiated by the union or any subordinate body thereof will be excluded from membership on the grounds that they are not currently receiving wages.

11.2 Membership can be denied to those workers whose employment is incompatible with the aims of this union.

11.3 All applicants will agree to abide by the constitution and regulations of the union, to diligently study its principles, and acquaint themselves with its aims, objectives and mission outlined in the Preamble.

## 12 Finance

### Funding:

12.1 In addition to dues retained the Regional Administration will be funded by a £5 per month levy on branches, and may seek donations from branches and members at any time.

12.2 The Regional Administration will set each branch of the union a quarterly budget that is equal to 50% of the mean average dues paid in Sterling to the Regional Administration during the previous quarter multiplied by the number of members in good standing in that branch at the end of the quarter.

12.3 The treasurer will scrutinise all budgets put forward by officers and department chairs before submitting a recommendation to the executive council which will approve or reject them.

### Expenses:

12.4 Travelling expenses of delegates will be met from branch funds. In the event of a branch having insufficient funding these expenses will be met from funds held by the Regional Administration.

## 13 Duties of Regional Administration Officers

### Regional Administration Secretary:

13.1 The secretary will convene meetings of the Regional Administration executive council, will co-ordinate the publication and distribution of the internal bulletin in advance of annual conference, and will oversee the activities of other officers.

13.2 The secretary (or appointed proxy) will represent the Regional Administration nationally and internationally subject to oversight by the Regional Administration executive council.

13.3 The secretary will be a signatory to the Regional Administration bank account.

13.4 The secretary will receive all email correspondence, co-ordinating responsibility for action accordingly.

13.5 The secretary shall ensure all motions that are heard by conference are in order.

13.6 Should the secretary feel a motion is out of order for conference business they will first attempt to assist the member to bring it into order.

13.6.1 Any out of order motions will be referred to the Delegate Executive Council who will ratify the secretary's referral.

13.6.2 Members may appeal this decision to conference.

### Regional Administration Treasurer:

13.7 The treasurer will be responsible for compiling a financial report to each meeting of the Regional Administration.

13.8 The treasurer will be responsible for maintaining the Regional Administration bank account.

13.9 The treasurer will be a signatory to the Regional Administration bank account.

13.10 The treasurer will be responsible for arranging the payment of expenses to members and payment of contractors for work done.

13.11 The treasurer will be responsible for creating a draft annual budget for the union, and liaising with the Regional Administration executive council, branch officers, department chairs, and general and

area organisers as per union rules and procedures.

13.12 The treasurer will be responsible for funding branch and department budgets as per union rules and procedures set at Annual Conference.

#### Women's Officer:

13.13 The women's officer will self-define as a woman.

13.14 The women's officer will take the lead in encouraging initiatives and action by the whole union on women and gender equality in the union. This will include recruitment of women, supporting women in the workplace and equality and opportunities for women throughout the union.

13.15 The women's officer will encourage the development of training on gender issues and measures to facilitate the participation of women in training.

13.16 The women's officer will be consulted on any internal affairs that have a gender dimension.

#### Area Organisers:

13.17 Area Organisers will be elected from the members in good standing who are included in the area of provision, and will be accountable to those members.

13.18 Area organisers will co-ordinate and oversee the ongoing development of the union in their area, at all scales up to and including Regional Administration level, according to the aims and objectives in section 2.

13.19 Area organisers will assist members and groups to form branches in their area and participate fully in the democracy of the union.

13.20 Area organisers will be responsible for co-ordinating training within their area and encouraging member participation.

13.21 Area organisers will represent the Regional Administration within their area subject to oversight by the Regional Administration executive council.

13.22 Area organisers will submit an annual report of their activities to conference.

## General Organisers:

13.23 General organisers will support organising drives and campaigns in selected workplaces and industries according to the aims and objectives laid out in section 2 and under the guidance of the relevant departments.

13.24 General organisers will support the activity of the union in their respective jurisdictions and draft annual budgets as deemed necessary.

13.25 General organisers may establish a committee for their respective jurisdictions as well as host summits for their workplace or industry, subject to the approval of the Regional Administration executive council.

13.26 General organisers will submit an annual report of their activities to conference.

## Membership Officer:

13.27 The membership officer shall ensure all the tasks of the membership administrator are completed and completed to an adequate standard. This shall be either through ensuring the membership administrator role is filled or where the position is vacant ensure the tasks are completed through delegation and/or completing the tasks oneself.

13.28 The membership officer shall respond to all request for information regarding membership, either by passing the query to the administrator (if technical information is needed or changes need to be made) or answering the question oneself.

13.29 The membership officer shall submit an annual report of their activities to conference and regularly report to the executive council.

13.30 The membership officer shall liaise with the administrator and resolve concerns through dialogue. Anything the membership officer is unable to resolve shall be referred to the executive council or annual conference as appropriate.

## International Solidarity Officer:

13.31 The international solidarity officer will develop the union's link with other workers and worker organisations through acts and messages of solidarity.

13.32 The international solidarity officer will circulate proposed messages of support or protest for approval by the Regional Administration executive council.

13.33 The international solidarity officer will communicate with members in organising campaigns before sending messages.

13.34 The international solidarity officer will liaise with the International Solidarity Committee of the global union sections.

13.35 The international solidarity officer will attend international conferences of the Industrial Workers of the World and like-minded workers' rights organisations as agreed by the Regional Administration executive council.

#### Access Facilitator:

13.36 The access facilitator will self-define as disabled.

13.37 The access facilitator will be a contact for anyone wishing to discuss access issues within the union.

13.38 The access facilitator will promote knowledge of the social model of disability, and conscious accessibility across all aspects of the union.

#### Legal Officer:

13.39 The legal officer shall endeavour to keep a record of all legal services used by members including cost, if any, type of service and outcome if appropriate.

13.40 The legal officer will be responsible for maintaining subscription to legal resources and liaising with the union's official firm of solicitors.

13.41 The legal officer will liaise with the regional secretary on matters concerning the union's legal obligations towards its membership and offices of state.

13.42 The legal officer will not offer legal advice to any member.

#### Regional Administration Executive Council:

13.43 The Regional Administration executive council will consist of one standing delegate from each branch. The term and remit of that delegate will be decided upon by each branch, but no delegate can be in post for more than 2 years.

13.44 Should that delegate not be able to attend an executive council meeting a temporary substitute should be elected in their place.

13.45 The Regional Administration executive council shall elect a chair-

person from its own number.

13.46 The Regional Administration executive council will have general supervision over all affairs of the union between annual conferences, and will watch vigilantly over the union's interests throughout its jurisdiction.

13.47 The Regional Administration executive council shall have power to make decisions on issues of policy impacting the finance and administration of the union. This includes amending policy when necessary. Policy here is understood to mean union best practice within the rules and procedures contained in the rule book, manual of policies and procedures and annual conference.

13.48 The Regional Administration executive council will be assisted by the officers and members of all organisations and branches subordinate to of the union. It will appoint such organisers as the conditions of the organisation may justify in consultation with the relevant departments.

13.49 The Regional Administration executive council will not appoint or cause to be appointed any organiser against the protest of, and without first notifying, the relevant departments having jurisdiction in the territory in which the organiser is to operate.

13.50 All organisers so appointed will at all times work under the instruction of the Regional Administration executive council, and will report to all relevant departments their activities between sessions of the council.

13.51 The Regional Administration executive council will have full power to issue charters to branches and area councils.

13.52 The Regional Administration executive council will have full power and authority over all Regional Administration publications in consultation with relevant departments.

13.53 The Regional Administration executive council will have the power to visit any subordinate body of the Regional Administration, and have full authority to examine and audit all accounts of such bodies and to enforce the use of a uniform system of bookkeeping.

13.54 The Regional Administration executive council will meet at least four times per year on the call of the chairperson or majority vote of the Regional Administration executive council. The Regional Administration executive council should meet in person except in exceptional circumstances.

13.55 The Regional Administration executive council will be quorate

whenever five or more members are present to vote or delegates from over 50% of chartered branches are present. Individual Regional Administration executive council members hold no special authority outside the remit imposed on them within the duties of the Regional Administration executive council.

13.56 All matters pertaining to the organisation will be settled by the Regional Administration executive council by mail or email when absent from headquarters. It will take a majority vote to settle any question.

13.57 The Regional Administration executive council will issue an annual report of its activities to conference.

## 14 Annual Conference

14.1 The Regional Administration executive council will call an annual conference, which will determine the principles and policies of the union in the jurisdiction of the Regional Administration, and will be able to amend the Rule Book by a two-thirds majority.

14.2 The date of the annual conference will fall between eleven and thirteen months of the previous conference. The date and venue will be announced by the Regional Administration executive council no less than three months in advance.

14.3 Representation at the annual conference will be from branches on the basis of one delegate for each ten members or part thereof. Branches determine the number of delegates on the basis of members in good standing.

14.4 Branches more than 200 miles away from the venue can carry up to two proxy votes each, in accordance with the total number of votes the branch is entitled to.

14.5 An extraordinary conference may be called at the request of two branches or upon the decision of the Regional Administration executive council.

14.5 Branches will elect and mandate their delegate not earlier than 21 days beforehand.

14.6 Any conference will record votes for and against, and abstentions, on all business.

14.7 Annual conference will determine the principles and policy of the union in the geographical jurisdiction of the Regional Administration.



14.8 Conference is the supreme decision-making body of the union.

## 15 Dues

15.1 Union dues (monthly) will be as follows:

Monthly income Monthly dues

£2,478 or above 1%

£1,911–£2,477 £18.00

£1,344–£1,910 £10.00

£778–£1,343 £5.00

£231–£778 £2.00

£230 or less £1.00

15.2 The dues structure can only be revised by a referendum vote of the membership (see appendix 1).

15.3 The Regional Administration will have the power to levy branches at any time provided that the reasons for the levy are explained and a full account is given of expenditure.

15.4 Methods of dues payments and reporting:

a) All members will pay dues to the Regional Administration using the GoCardless or similar Direct Debit scheme as the default method as provided for under 15.4(b).

b) Branches which have been compliant with administrative and financial duties as per the union's Rule Book, policy and the law (including making annual returns to the Regional Treasurer in good time) may make special arrangements with members and the Regional Treasurer to allow the payment of dues directly to the branch by monthly or annual cash, cheque or standing order. The Regional Treasurer will grant this request whenever the above criteria have been met, and this arrangement will continue as long as the criteria continue to be met.

c) Monthly dues are payable on the first of each month. Members whose dues are 60 days in arrears (from the first of the month when dues were payable) will be in bad standing and will not be entitled to any rights or benefits in the union or from exercising any union office until such dues have been paid. After four months in bad standing members will no longer be considered members and will have to reapply to join.

## 16 Referenda

16.1 The Regional Administration executive council or annual conference may by majority vote refer an issue of controversy to a vote by membership referendum (paper or electronic). The same process may be initiated by the request of three branches in consultation with the regional secretary.

16.2 The regional secretary shall send out ballots (paper or electronic) to all union members within six weeks of receiving notice of a referendum as set out in section 16.1.

16.3 The specific regulations and procedures are in appendix 1.

## 17 Recall of Officers

If branches representing 10% of the combined membership of the union under the jurisdiction of the Regional Administration demand a recall ballot of an officer or Regional Administration executive council delegate this will be held within 28 days of the receipt of this demand.

## 18 Relations with Employers

While the aim of the union is to abolish the employment relationship the regulation of relations will rest with the appropriate branches, save that:

a) No branch will be permitted to agree arrangements for the deduction of union dues from wages.

b) No branch will be permitted to agree to any strike-breaking or the undertaking of any work boycotted by another union.

## 19 Political Parties

The Regional Administration will not seek to formalise links with any political party, organisation or anti-political group save that branches or groups of the union may co-ordinate activities with any organisation sympathetic to the broad aims of the union.

## 20 Speakers and Organisers

20.1 No members of the union will present themselves as spokespersons of the organisation within the jurisdiction of the Regional Adminis-

tration without first having been authorised by the Regional Administration executive council, the annual conference, or a subordinate part of the union.

20.2 No organiser for the union, while on the platform for the union, will advocate any political party platform.

## 21 Publications and Media

21.1 The Regional Administration will produce materials to inform workers outside the union of the union's activities.

21.2 The Regional Administration will maintain a website and other on-line capabilities to inform workers outside the union of its activities and to facilitate the union's procedures.

21.3 The Regional Administration will maintain a Manual of Policies and Procedures which will be an authoritative record of current policy, procedure and guidance, and which will be made available to all members on request.

## 22 Information

22.1 The Regional Administration will publish, at least annually, an internal bulletin to inform members of internal affairs. This must contain the minutes of the previous annual conference, and an agenda and details of all motions on notice and discussion topics for the next, as well as the deadlines for submissions for the next internal bulletin. The internal bulletin must reach members no less than two months before the next annual conference.

22.2 The chair or other officer of every Regional Administration meeting will compile a written report of the meeting, which will be distributed to branches and members.

22.3 The minute taker of every Regional Administration meeting will distribute accurate minutes of that meeting to all branches no more than 21 days after that meeting. A copy of these minutes will be placed on the internal section of the Regional Administration website no more than 21 days after that meeting.

## 23 Departments

23.1 The Regional Administration will establish competent departments to carry out responsibilities as agreed by annual conference.

23.2 Such departments will be subordinate to, and report to, the Regional Administration executive council and annual conference.

23.3 Each department is also encouraged to increase its finances by fundraising.

## 24 Training and Education

24.1 The Regional Administration will endeavour to provide all members with training and education in the methods and ideas of the union.

24.2 The Regional Administration will prioritise the development of members' capabilities insofar as they contribute to the organisational capacity of the union and/or the members' ability to participate fully in the union's democracy.

## 25 Vacancies

25.1 A post normally elected by the membership of the Regional Administration becomes vacant if:

- a) the holder of the post resigns;
- b) two consecutive Regional Administration executive council meetings conclude in which the holder of the post does not give a report or is absent and has not sent apologies; or
- c) the holder of the post is removed from office by some other valid procedure.

25.2 Vacant posts will be communicated to the membership.

25.3 Until the post can be filled, the regional secretary will assign the duties of the post to another officer (or department member, in the case of department roles) or, where this is not possible, decide which duties will go unfulfilled. If the regional secretary post is vacant, then the officers acting together will do this.

25.4 The post will be filled only by ballot of all members following a timeline of: 1 month from resignation for nominations; followed by 2 weeks for collating and announcing; and finally one month for all ballots to be counted and announced, unless the vacant term has six months or fewer remaining.

The Regional Administration Executive Council may appoint an officer

or delegate to the role on an acting basis while the ballot is arranged. In the event that six or fewer months remain in the term of the vacant post, the Regional Administration executive council may appoint an officer or delegate to fill the post.

The filling of a vacancy is to complete the term of office, i.e., the end of the term is unchanged. However, for the purposes of determining eligibility to serve again, incomplete terms of office will count as full terms, unless the post being filled has six or fewer months remaining.

## 26 Amendments

Amendments to this constitution can only be made by a two-thirds vote at the annual conference or by a referendum of all members.

## Appendix 1 Procedure and Regulations for Referenda

1. The regional secretary will be responsible for drawing up ballot papers.
2. All ballot papers will be sent by post or electronically to individual members no later than 21 days before the closing date of said ballot.
3. On the closing date for the receipt of ballots the election committee will count individual postal ballots and compile a report, which will be issued to all members.







