



Position Description

Conference President

Position title:	Conference President
Reports to:	Regional President
Positions reporting to this position:	Conference Members
Primary position objective:	"Following Christ's example, the Presidents at all levels of The Society endeavour to be servant leaders. They provide an encouraging atmosphere in which the talents, capacities and their spiritual charisms of the members are identified, developed and put to the service of the poor or to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The President of the Conference or Council will have special responsibility for promoting Vincentian spirituality". (The Rule: 2012 Edition: Part 1: 3.11)
Length of Term	Up to 4 years

St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation operating in 149 countries and has 950,000 members worldwide. The Society is one of the largest charitable providers in Australia today, helping people in many areas of need. The Society's work is carried out by members and volunteers and is supported by a small number of professional staff. In Australia there are 1,163 conferences and 19,950 members and assist 2,243,261 people annually in Australia. The St Vincent de Paul Society operates a number of Special Works including youth programs, homelessness services & accommodation, retail, refugee & migrant support, Mental Health & food services.

Mission

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

Vision

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

Our Aspiration

An Australia transformed by compassion and built on justice.

Our Values

- **Commitment:** Loyalty in service to our mission, vision and values
- **Compassion:** Welcoming and serving all with understanding and without judgement
- **Respect:** Service to all regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions
- **Integrity:** Promoting, maintaining and adhering to our mission, vision and values
- **Empathy:** Establishing relationships based on respect, trust, friendship and perception
- **Advocacy:** Working to transform the causes of poverty and challenging the cause of human injustice
- **Courage:** Encouraging spiritual growth, welcoming innovation and giving hope for the future

Conference as a community of faith and love

“The members meet as brothers and sisters with Christ in the midst of them, in conferences that are genuine communities of faith and love, of prayer and action, spiritual bonds and friendships between members are essential, as is the common mission to help the poor and marginalized. The entire Society is a true and unique worldwide community of Vincentian friends”. (The Rule: 2012 Edition: Part 1: 3.3)

Duties and Responsibilities

The primary duty of the Conference President is to lead the conference in fulfilling the Society Mission, Vision and Aspiration. The Conference President is encouraged to do this by:

Conference Leadership and Management

- Being familiar with The Rule and nurturing conference members discussions about The Rule in all meetings and activities
- Consulting with the conference to appoint office bearers to share in the leadership roles of the conference
- Appointing a Spiritual Advisor in accordance with The Rule
- Ensuring that the conference complies with all higher council policies, procedures and guidelines
- Providing support to the Conference Secretary to maintain accurate and complete minutes for all conference meetings
- Maintaining relevant records of the people assisted by the conference as required by State Council Policy
- Providing monthly and quarterly reports in a timely manner
- Implementing all actions for the safety of persons being assisted, members, volunteers and any other person affected by the actions of The Society and its members as required by OSH legislation, policy and guidelines
- Promoting and sharing communication from all relevant Society Councils to conference members without delay
- Supporting the Regional Council President and all Regional Council members in their endeavours and decisions of the Regional, Central, State and National Councils.

Representation

- Being an active member of the Regional Council and representing local issues, needs and concerns at the Regional Council meetings
- Considering the needs of the Society across the Regional Council or the Society in Australia more broadly

- Communicating regularly to the parish and local community about conference activities, needs and concerns; seeking ways to involve the parish and the local community in the work for the conference.

Recruitment, Formation and Training

- Actively recruiting new conference members and carefully considering the suitability of applicants
- Maintaining an environment where new members are enthusiastically welcomed, trained, engaged and respected
- Ensuring new members complete all paperwork associated with the application process
- Encouraging participation in training and spiritual formation activities to deepen conference members spirituality, foster their Vincentian vocation and support them in their work
- Actively encouraging leadership development in conference members
- Developing succession plans for leadership roles within the conference and Regional Council

Society Ethos, Values and Rule

- At all times conducting oneself in a manner which protects and enhances the reputation of The Society
- Never accepting any private benefit and informing the Regional President of any perception of conflict of interest in writing prior to any decision

Skills and attributes

For the well-being and effectiveness of the conference the Conference President should be Roman Catholic and have the ability to:

- Positively and effectively communicate
- Create a welcoming and friendly environment
- Motivate and encourage others
- Delegate to other members
- Encourage reflection and faith development of the members
- Engage and work with a diverse group of people
- Respond to changing needs
- Ensure ethical and accountable decisions are made on behalf of the Society
- Ensure compliance regarding any legal or Society policies and procedures
- Encourage communication with other internal networks and external agencies where required
- Seek assistance and support from Society staff and members on human resources, financial, and administrative matters where required

(Please refer to Conference President Skills and Attributes Booklet for further detail).