

THE USE OF EMAILS IN PROVINCIAL COMMUNICATION

Electronic communication is inevitably taking over from previous methods. If a Secretary or Scribe is unwilling, or unable, to embrace this development, the lodge or chapter should consider appointing a lodge or chapter 'Correspondent', experienced in this area, to receive and pass on such communications to the Secretary/Scribe, and facilitate the reply to them. This will be expected from every Lodge and Chapter from October 2013.

The Metropolitan Grand Lodge in London insisted from the day of its creation that all Secretaries and Scribes should be on email or a Correspondent be appointed. In the interests of our own members, this example will be followed in West Lancashire.

The use of email communication within the Province is encouraged as it is both direct and comparatively inexpensive. Postal charges, on the other hand, are rising steadily. The use of email can also be more reliable. However, as we gain experience, The Province is discovering a number of the weaknesses and dangers of email communication: some to do with systems and some to do with people!

We have reverted to sending our *seasonal mailings* to lodges and chapters by surface mail because some Secretaries and Scribes are not prepared to download and printout documentation for their lodge/chapter members. Sometimes such material was simply remaining on their computer and not even reaching the 'Secretary's Table', where it was traditionally placed. Brethren and Companions were thus not hearing of matters of importance. Other Provincial communication, however, is increasingly by email.

All emails sent from The Province now are sent **direct from our server in Liverpool** and do not go via our Internet Service Provider (ISP). (Emails can be delayed or detained by an ISP for a variety of reasons.) As a result of this new method, the Province now knows that, if we do not receive a delivery failure message from **YOUR** ISP, then our message has reached them, and thus *should* reach you!

However, some lodge secretaries (and others) are not being vigilant enough in interrogating their system for emails. One Group Officer this year eventually discovered a month's worth of emails hiding **on his ISP's server**, which we knew we had successfully sent him, but as far as he was concerned had not 'arrived'. You cannot safely assume that mail will just drop onto your computer! **It depends how you retrieve your emails: do you go out to your ISP to retrieve them, or do they automatically arrive on your home computer? If the former, you won't receive them unless you go to collect them.**

The most frequent reason for late delivery, or non-delivery, is that our emails are being interpreted as ***spam***, which is a danger for any organisation which sends out bulk emailings. Some of you can actually have TWO spam boxes in different places. If you access your email from the internet, then you should check your spam folder. If, however, your email is delivered direct to your desktop/laptop, then you should **also** regularly log into your email account **on your ISP** and check the spam folder **THERE**, too. **Please check your spam box(es) regularly!**