

## **Grand Commandery of Ohio – Division Realignment Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **1. Why are we changing the Divisions?**

There were a number of factors that drove the decision to realign the Grand Commandery of Ohio into a new division structure. The committee members spent many months discussing and analyzing the situation before coming to the conclusion that a realignment was necessary.

- a. Multiple Divisions were down to having 6 or less Commanderies creating a disproportional spread of Commanderies across 10 Divisions. A more even spread of Commanderies across larger Divisions is desired.
- b. Strong leaders are in high demand with all the various bodies of Masonry which are competing in an environment where there are less and less strong leaders willing to devote the time and effort necessary to effectively manage above the subordinate body level.
- c. Ten divisions were too many to effectively manage the state and provide balanced representation in the decision-making of the Grand Commandery. The organizational structure had become “top heavy” with too much middle management (Division Commanders and DDCs).
- d. Although we are confident that Templary will survive in the coming decades, we expect a continued contraction for the next several years, which will only worsen the other considerations/concerns listed above.

### **2. If more balanced representation in the Grand Commander decision-making was a factor, why doesn't the Grand Commandery simply return to 10 progressive officers, so that all 10 current Divisions could have a Sir Knight in the Grand Line?**

Years ago, the Grand Commandery made a decision to reduce the progressive elected line to 6 positions to make the Grand Line journey less onerous and more appealing to the shrinking pool of strong Masonic leaders that we seek. It was also no longer reasonable to expect that each Division would always have a Sir Knight who was both willing and capable of being a Grand Commandery officer when it was that Division's “turn” for a Grand Commandery officer appointment. Furthermore, as mentioned in FAQ 1 above, there were multiple considerations that went into the decision to realign and taking a backward step with the structure of the progressive officer line does not address those other concerns.

### **3. Why did some Divisions stay virtually intact and others face significant mergers and changes?**

After the decision to realign was made, the committee considered many variations on how to arrive at a more manageable number of Divisions and their spread across the state. Here are some of the alternatives that were considered:

- a. No Divisions.
- b. A “wagon wheel” type distribution where there would be a central hub Division and then multiple Divisions branching out from there.
- c. Divisions aligned with the Council Arches.
- d. Divisions aligned with KYCH Priory Districts.
- e. “Clean slate” re-alignment where all current Division lines would be deleted and start fresh.

Ultimately the committee decided that the most advantageous approach would be wholesale merger of some of the current Divisions to minimize splitting up and fragmenting current fraternal bonds and CTA treasuries. With this underlying assumption, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Divisions were considered “right-sized” already and the 9<sup>th</sup> Division was geographically situated to best remain “as is.” The rest of the Divisions were then paired and merged. After reviewing the result of this initial realignment, the committee took into consideration the resulting Division sizes, geography, and other factors and determined that there were some Commanderies that would need to be split off to other Divisions. Hence we have Clinton, Marion, Elyria, Akron, Allenby, and Cuyahoga Falls Commanderies being redistributed. So keeping the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Divisions virtually intact, was not done out of favoritism or politics, but simply because we sought to minimize any fragmentation of divisions and they were already “right-sized” from the standpoint of number of Commanderies and geography.

### **4. The realignment has caused greater driving burdens for inspection visitations.**

Under the current 10 Division structure, 2 Divisions already have Commanderies that are 120 or more miles apart. Middletown to Portsmouth in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division is roughly 127 miles and Marietta to Ironton in the 4<sup>th</sup> Division is roughly 120 miles apart. Under the new realignment, the only Division that will exceed 127 miles driving distance will be the Eastcentral Division (merged 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Divisions). In that new Division, the commute between Columbus and East Liverpool (Pilgrim #55) is roughly 170 miles. The Committee understands that represents a challenge; however, after thoroughly considering the concerns raised by a

number of Sir Knights in the 5<sup>th</sup> Division and analyzing multiple alternatives and the second and third order effects that will result, the Committee believes the merger of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Divisions is still the best solution. Creating more, smaller Divisions to shorten travel times is not the best solution for the Grand Commandery of Ohio. Moreover, the Masonic bodies that have smaller districts with shorter commutes are seeing just as much of a challenge in getting their members to travel. The Grand Commandery has high expectations for Commandery officers, Division Commanders, and DDCs, but Templary is worth it!

**5. Are we asking too much of our DDCs to take on 8 or more Commanderies and the extensive travel the realignment will require?**

We continue to have high expectations for our Division leaders, but the Committee is very mindful of the need for the right balance of responsibilities and travel burden for these leaders. As the realignment progresses, this will be constantly monitored and addressed.

**6. What about CTA funds? How do these get allocated to account for Commanderies splitting off to new Divisions?**

The Grand Commandery is relying on the Division leaders to work through CTA treasury issues with the constituent Commanderies. How the funds are split and distributed will likely be driven by how they were collected. For instance, if a CTA charges the Commanderies “per capita” dues, then it might make best sense to determine each Commandery’s basic “stake” in the CTA treasury, based on membership totals. In other words, if Commandery A represents 30% of the population of the Division, their stake in the CTA treasury is 30%. If the CTA charges a “flat rate” for each Commandery, then it might make best sense to simply divide the CTA treasury by the number of Commanderies to determine each Commandery’s stake in the treasury. Once the basic stake of each Commandery is determined, then from there, the CTA can take into account any other significant factors to adjust these proportions. After all adjustments are settled and voted through the CTA, whatever final proportion of the treasury that has been determined to be attributable to that Commandery would transfer with them to their new Division. These are merely suggestions to start the process and discussions. The Realignment Committee is available in an advisory capacity as needed, but the expectation is that the Divisions will decide for themselves on how the CTA treasuries will be handled in the realignment. In the end, this is a Christian Order and the Grand Commandery officers are confident that the Sir Knights can work together and arrive at a reasonable and equitable decision.