



Serra International

Handbook for Serrans

Serra Council of Australia, New Zealand & The South Pacific

"Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest." (Mt. 9:38)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
A Message to Serrans	3
Serra International Objectives	3
Serra Clubs	4
Club Leadership	4
Club Board of Trustees	5
Club Officers	6
Club Committee Structure	9
Resources	13
Serra in Australia & New Zealand.....	14
National Councils.....	14
Serra Council of Australia, New Zealand and The South Pacific	15
SCANZSPAC Board	16
District Governors	16
District Councils	16
Serra Australia Foundation	16
Serra International and Its History	
Serra International	17
History of Serra International	17
International Structure	
International Officers	17
Board of Trustees	18
Episcopal Adviser	18
Standing Committees	18
Executive Director	19
Serra International Foundation	19
International Activities	
Annual Convention	19
THE SERRAN Magazine	20
Evaluating the Serra Club and its Members	
Evaluating Serra Club Leaders	21
Evaluating Club Operations	22
Self-Evaluation	23

Introduction

Welcome to the Serra Club which is part of Serra International. Members of Serra Clubs are known as Serrans.

The purpose of this Handbook for Serrans is to help you in understanding your role in the Club and the opportunities for you to serve our Church in a very special apostolate for Vocations.

There are vocations which manifest themselves.

They must be fostered.

There are vocations which are not conscious of themselves.

They must be awakened.

There are vocations which do not dare manifest themselves.

They must be found and encouraged.

There are vocations which are in fear of being lost.

They must be reassured.

There are vocations which meet with opposition.

They must be strengthened.

There are vocations which are paralysed by poverty.

They must be helped financially.

A Message to Serrans

“Prove to everyone, with clarity and without compromise, your sincere adherence to Christ and to the Church. Prove, at home, at work, in your associations, that the message of Jesus forms real men and women capable of coping serenely with the harshness of daily life. Be available with all your strength to the construction of a civil society more worthy of mankind. Prove in your whole behaviour that, with the grace of God, it is possible to put into practice in the modern world the “Sermon on the Mount” and the “Beatitudes” with all the radicalism they involve.

With these wishes I invoke the abundance of divine favours on your meritorious activity, on you all and on your dear one and I willingly impart my Apostolic Blessing”

- Pope John Paul II

Serra International Objectives

At the time of Serra’s formation in 1935, as now, the two great needs for the Church were for informed Catholic lay leaders who understood and lived their own Christian vocations to service, and for dedicated priests and religious. The objectives of Serra, which were adopted soon after formation, were defined as -

- To foster and promote vocations to the ministerial priesthood of the Catholic Church as a particular vocation to service and to develop appreciation of the ministerial priesthood and of all religious vocations in the Catholic Church, and
- To further Catholicism by encouraging its members, in fellowship, through education, to fulfil their Christian vocations to service.

These objectives were ratified by delegates at the 1968 International Convention.

In 2005, the wordings of these aims were reviewed and redefined as follows:

- To foster and promote vocations to the ministerial priesthood in the Catholic Church as a particular vocation to service and to support priests in their sacred ministry;
- To encourage and affirm vocations to consecrated religious life in the Catholic Church; and
- To assist its members to recognize and respond in their own lives to God's call to holiness in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

Serra Clubs

The basic unit of Serra International is the Serra Club. The Serra Club is the primary presence of Serra International in the local community. Serra's International, National, Area and District structures exist to assist the Serra Club in functioning as efficiently as possible in the local community. Each Serra Club is governed by a Board of Trustees.

Volunteer service is one of the cardinal principles of Serra and is a prime factor in its success. All Serra Club members give of their time and talent voluntarily to the work of Serra. The only remuneration desired by them is the satisfaction which comes from the increased success of Serra as an organisation and the service which it is able to render to the Church in the many communities, Dioceses and Archdioceses where local Clubs are situated.

Serra Clubs meet regularly (weekly, semi-monthly or monthly), preferably at mealtimes. A typical meeting will take approximately 75 to 90 minutes. The Club President presides at these meetings. The meetings are planned in advance with the assistance of the various Committees and Sub-Committees which are described below. The focus of the meeting is primarily on the program to be presented. Most Club business is handled outside of the regular Club Meeting either by posted notices or through the Club newsletter. A Club Meeting is usually preceded with a Mass and then the meeting may take the following form:

Gathering and hospitality	15 minutes
Opening prayer, meal or refreshments	20 minutes
Special announcements	2 to 3 minutes
Chaplain's message	3 to 5 minutes
Program presentation	30 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Adjournment with prayer	

It is the responsibility of each Club to arrange for the appointment of either a Chaplain or Spiritual Director with support of their local Bishop. Vocation Directors have often served as Club Chaplains

Club Leadership

The Serra Club presents an excellent opportunity for the training and development of skills in leadership. An effective leader is interested in the growth of the members as well as in Club accomplishments. A leader creates an atmosphere of ease, co-operation, and good fellowship where everyone works as a team to further the objectives of Serra International.

The best Clubs are Clubs in which the members are engaged, interested, active and where every member assumes some responsibility in the Club. Serra Officers and Committee Chairpersons are always aware of members' skills and interests and use these resources for the good of the Club.

In addition, good Serra leaders are constantly identifying and training their own successors. The best legacy that a Club Officer can leave is a well-trained successor who is able to assume the responsibilities of leadership with ease.

Club Board of Trustees

The Club Board of Trustees is the overall policy-making, governing, and co-ordinating body of the Club. It has general control over all Officers, Members, Committees, Budgets, approves all accounts and conducts all ordinary business. Its decisions are final unless overruled by a two-thirds majority of the active members present and voting at a regular Meeting of the Club.

The Club Board of Trustees meets at least once each month, preferably at a time and place separate from the regular Club Meetings. The Members of the Board of Trustees are elected annually as provided in each Club's By-Laws.

Responsibilities

- determines tasks and functions for the year
- assigns appropriate responsibilities to the Members, Committees, and Sub-Committees
- establishes the Club budget
- oversees election of the Club's delegate to the International Convention and District Meetings
- arranges regular meetings with all Committee and Sub-Committee chairpersons
- ensures that each Club Officer performs his or her assigned duties
- ensures that required reports are sent promptly to the District Governor, District Governor-Elect and/or Deputy Governor
- fills any vacancy in the Office of a Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, or Trustee for any unexpired term of such Office
- prepares, adopts and amends Local Club By-Laws as needed or required

Composition

- Club Officers
 - President
 - President-elect
 - Four Vice Presidents
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Immediate Past-President
- Club Trustees (three recommended)

Qualifications of Members

- understanding of and dedication to:
 - Serra's objectives
 - the Catholic Church and its role in human society
 - the needs of the Club, the community and the Diocese or Archdiocese in which the Club functions
 - the Constitution and By-Laws of Serra International
- understanding of Constitution, By-Laws and policies of the Local Club
- consistent attendance at meetings and participation in Club programs
- ability to get along and deal impartially with Club Members
- ability to lead justly and delegate responsibility
- dependably carry out Club responsibilities
- have a calm, confident manner
- be an articulate speaker

Terms of Office

Club Officers usually serve a one-year term while the Club Trustees serve staggered, three-year terms. Clubs, however, make the decision on the length of the term.

Club Officers

Club President

Responsibilities

- preside at Club and Board Meetings
 - prepare agenda with assistance of Club Secretary
 - arrive at meetings prior to starting time
 - call meetings to order at appointed time
 - conduct each meeting according to suggested Serra procedures
 - develop democratic and effective Club Committee structures
 - confer with Committee Chairpersons on appointment of Sub-Committee Chairpersons and Members
 - attend Committee Meetings as often as possible
 - co-ordinate the work of Committees -- check for duplications
 - help Committee Chairpersons identify and understand their responsibilities and duties
 - ensure good record-keeping of Officers and Chairpersons
- with the Secretary, bring Club history up-to-date prior to expiration of term of Office
- induct new Officers at the first regular meeting following the start of their term of Office unless the function is performed by the District Governor
- represent Club:
 - at all Inter-Club Meetings, activities and District Meetings
 - at International Convention when designated as delegate
 - in community
 - in its contacts with the local Ordinary
- serve as Member of District Board of Trustees
- maintains close contact with District Governor
- in a new Club:
 - visit the local Ordinary with the Committee of the Board of Trustees to ask for the appointment of a Club Chaplain
 - invite the Ordinary to Charter Night and to visit the new Club periodically
- perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may assign, or as may be required by the Club's By-Laws

Club President-Elect

Responsibilities

- attend all Club and Board of Trustees Meetings
- serve on the Club Board of Trustees
- at the request of the President, serve on specific Committees
- in partnership with the President, ensure timely implementation of Local, National Council and Serra International Board actions
- attend and actively participates at the Leadership Planning Conference
- attend Regional and District Conferences as requested by the President
- provides advice to the President when requested
- participates in budget preparation for the next financial year
- develop working relationship with Diocesan Vocation Organisations
- identify potential Officers, Chairs and Committee Members
- perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President and Board of Trustees

Vice-President for Vocations

Responsibilities

- chair the Club Vocations Committee
- maintain the success of all Club vocation efforts
- encourage the formation of a Diocesan and/or Parish or Deanery Vocations Committee
- invite the following to participate in Club vocations efforts:
 - Serrans
 - Club Chaplain
 - Vocation Directors from the Archdiocese, Diocese and Religious Orders
 - Priests, Religious and Laity interested in Church vocations
 - representatives of Priests' Senates, Sisters' Councils, Seminarians and Novices
- identify and collaborate with other organisations that are actively involved in supporting vocations, such as Knights of the Southern Cross.

Goals

- to study particular needs and problems at the Diocesan level
- to consider possible activities and carry out those that offer the greatest promise
- to initiate and maintain successful vocations programs that meet the needs of the local Diocese

Vice-President for Membership

Responsibilities

- chair the Club Membership Committee
- take over the functions of the Vice-President for Program in the absence of the Vice-President
- maintain the success of all Club membership efforts
- invite other Club Members to serve on this Committee and as Chairpersons of the following Sub-Committees:
 - Search
 - Orientation
 - Induction
 - Reception
 - Attendance
 - Health
 - Extension
- recommend assignments for each Club Member to the Club President

Vice-President for Program

Responsibilities

- chair the Club Program Committee
- preside and take over duties in the absence of the President
- plan, conduct and evaluate one year of bi-monthly, educational Serran programs
- duties at meeting
 - arrange place of meeting
 - arrange seating at head table (if head table is used)
 - consult with the President on special announcements
 - supervise distribution of literature and other material
 - introduce, or arrange for introduction of, the Speaker
- plan and communicate schedule of programs
- determine financial requirements of Club programs
- co-ordinate programs with the Club President and the Club Board of Trustees
- ensure that the Club programs clearly relate to the objectives of Serra International

- educate and inform Club Members on Catholic issues and subjects through lectures, discussions, debates, videos or films and case studies
- delegate responsibilities to Committee Members to involve each of them
- develop a follow-up method
- recommend Serrans for membership on the Club Program Committee
- develop and distribute the agenda for each Program Committee Meeting

Goal

- to carry out the third principle of Serra, namely, to assist its members to recognize and respond in their own lives to God's call to holiness in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

Vice-President for Communications

Responsibilities

- chair the Club Communications Committee
- maintain the success of all Club communications efforts
- develop a long range plan for public relations with specific goals for the current year
- establish contacts with, for example
 - Catholic newspaper editors
 - religious feature editors of secular newspapers
 - broadcast personnel
 and keep the local media informed of Serra events
- maintain contact with the Communications Committee of Serra International and keep the District informed of Club events
- serve on the Club Board of Trustees and remind members about ways in which their projects can become public relations projects
- develop a cadre of Club spokespersons who are available to talk with the media as the need arises
- implement communications projects developed by the Serra International and /or National Communications committees

Treasurer

Responsibilities

- chair the Club Finance Committee
- set Club dues
- collect all dues
- maintain the financial books and pay accounts as authorised
- obtain financial statements of the preceding financial year from predecessor
- have custody of all funds of the Club
- deposit all funds of the Club in an account of the Serra Club in a bank or financial institution approved by the Board of Trustees
- prepare periodic reports of the Club as directed by the Club President including:
 - financial status of Club at each Trustee Meeting
 - status of delinquent payment of dues by Club Members
- pay all accounts and obligations
- arrange, through resolution of the Trustees, for new signatures for all banking accounts
- along with the Club Secretary and Vice-President for Membership, maintain an up-to-date register of Members
- perform such further duties as ordinarily pertain to the Office of Treasurer

Secretary

Responsibilities

- notify Members of all meetings
- notify Members of appointments to Club Committees and special assignments in writing
- arrange for reporting visiting Serrans
- publish and maintain Club Committee Lists
- work with the Club Committees on the Club Bulletin/Newsletter
- assist the President in preparing the agenda for each Club Meeting
- help prepare the agenda and attend Board Meetings
- prepare and maintain an up-to-date register of Members
- take minutes of each Meeting for the permanent file
- keep accurate and permanent attendance records at all Club Meetings
- maintain the permanent Club history
- authenticate, by signature, all records and documents
- bring a copy of the International Constitution and By-Laws and Club By-Laws to each Meeting
- read all papers as requested by Club
- Arrange for payment of Speaker's Fee and expenses
- write letters of appreciation to Speakers
- have stationery printed as required
- prepare periodic reports as required

Chaplain

Responsibilities

- be familiar with the duties of each of the Club Officers
- attend (if possible):
 - every regular Club Meeting
 - meetings of the Board of Trustees
 - District Meetings
 - Serra International Conventions
- preside at the Liturgy of the Eucharist
- oversee the spiritual development of the Club Members
- work regularly with the Club Committees in the following ways:

Programs

- organizing a resource group of Priests, Religious and Serrans to plan the year's program
- assisting in the planning of a broad-based program
- suggesting specific topics and speakers
- suggesting books and pamphlets for study

Vocations

- contacting the Archbishop or Bishop, the Diocesan Vocations Director and other priests
- aiding the Committee in finding specific, material ways to create an atmosphere in which vocations can flourish

Membership

- sharing his knowledge of the Parish and Diocesan structures
- suggesting new Parishes from which new members could be invited
- introducing the membership chairperson to the Pastors of Parishes where Serra is not represented
- attend Chaplains' workshop at International Convention and District Meetings

Club Committee Structure

Each Serra Club has a Committee structure to plan and do the work of the Club. The most basic structure for a Club consists of six Standing Committees - Executive, Finance, Vocations, Membership, Program and Communications. In addition, the President and the Board of Trustees may organise ad-hoc committees as needed.

The four Vice-Presidents serve as Chairs of their respective Standing Committees. Both the Executive and Finance Committees are made up of the Officers of the Club with the President serving as Chair of the Executive Committee and the Treasurer as Chair of the Finance Committee. Each Committee Chair may create Sub-Committees that are assigned specific tasks within the Committee area. Club Members are appointed to Committees by the President with the assistance of the Committee Chairs and other Club Officers.

A description of each Committee, its structure and composition is given below:

Club Vocations Committee

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Club Vocations Committee is to establish a comprehensive vocation program through joint efforts of the Bishop, Vocation Directors, Priests, Religious, Serrans and other lay persons.

Structure

The size of the Committee should be determined by the nature of the job to be done. It should be small enough to facilitate good progress but both large and diverse enough to make the programs work.

In larger Clubs, this Committee should consist of three to nine Members appointed on a rotating basis. Where it is deemed advantageous or appropriate, Sub-Committees may be appointed.

Composition

Members on the Committee should:

- have special interests in Church Vocations
- have the time and energy to work on Vocation projects
- represent a variety of experiences and points of view
- be of a variety of ages
- have previous experience as a Club Officer, if possible

Meetings

The Committee should:

- meet monthly or as required in order to fulfil its responsibilities
- send notices of the meeting in advance to the Committee Members along with the proposed agenda
- keep and circulate adequate records

The Committee also should work closely with the Internal Program Committee to help Serrans to gain a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, Church vocations.

Club Membership Committee

Goals

- to invite new members
- to orient and induct new members
- to retain current members
- to form new Clubs with the District Governor

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Club Membership Committee is to establish a comprehensive membership program and to obtain good, active members. Because of Serra's need and demand for regular attendance (Members are expected to attend all meetings and must attend at least 55% of meetings), some particular Committee duties are:

- to encourage all Members to attend every Meeting, including special events;
- to maintain with the Club Secretary, a correct, current Club register and to keep a complete, permanent record of all membership attendance;
- to call any Member who misses two consecutive Meetings and let the Member know he or she is missed;
- to submit quarterly attendance reports (30th September, 31st December, 31st March and 30th June) to the Club Board of Trustees.

Structure

The Committee should comprise two to three Members for each active Sub-Committee appointed on a rotating basis.

Composition

Members of the Committee should:

- have the time and energy to work with potential new Members, Priests, and Bishops
- understand clearly what Serra is and be willing and able to explain Serra to others
- be of a variety of ages
- be interested in promoting Serra among diverse ethnic and age groups

Sub-Committees

Typical sub-committees of the Membership Committee are:

- **Search:** Seek new Members and recommend them to the Board.
- **Orientation:** Acquaint new Members with the history, objectives and requirements of Serra, and see that all Members are periodically re-oriented. The orientation Sub-Committee should include Serrans who understand the role of the Church in the modern world and the special part Serra must play. It is suggested that this Committee should comprise three Serrans and the Club Chaplain.
- **Induction:** Plan a formal Induction Ceremony, usually at Mass, and ensure that new Members become active and are made to feel at home in the Club.
- **Reception:** Create a friendly and hospitable atmosphere within the Serra Club. Sub-Committee Members are expected to:
 - greet new and old Members and provide necessary introductions.
 - introduce each new Member to older Members and assist in membership incorporation.
 - distribute, collect and store identification badges for each Meeting and social event.
 - extend Club hospitality to guests and arrange for their introduction, seating and comfort and the provision of name tags.
 - supervise physical arrangements for each Meeting including seating, tables, food services, lectern, bell and Father Serra statue and attend to storage of physical equipment.
 - procure, distribute and collect Serra guest attendance cards for mailing.
- **Attendance:** Encourage new Members to attend all Meetings and assist the Club Secretary in maintaining a permanent record of attendance.
- **Health:** Promptly inform Club Members of a serious illness or of the death of a Serran or family member.
- **Extension:** Assist the District Governor in the formation of new Clubs.
- **Nomination:** Nominate Club Members for Officer positions. The Sub-Committee should try to mix old with new wherever possible, allowing the new Members to get a feel for the Club operations from the inside and selecting Officers from those people who have done their Committee jobs well.

Meetings

The Committee should:

- meet monthly or as required in order to fulfil its responsibilities;
- send notices in advance of the Meeting to the Committee Members along with the proposed agenda.
- keep and circulate adequate records.

The Committee also should work closely with the other Club Committees to help find the most suitable Club responsibility for each Member.

Club Program Committee

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Club Program Committee is to carry out the third principle of Serra, namely, “to assist its members to recognise and respond in their own lives to God’s call to holiness in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit”.

Subjects for each program are generally developed within the Committee which is chaired by the Vice-President for Programs. By talking to other Club Members and by reading the Catholic press, Committee Members identify subjects relevant to the times. Subjects which interest each Club Member and make them enthusiastic about the continuing education program are subjects that would receive high priority during the Committee planning process.

Structure

The size of the Committee should be determined by the amount of work to be done. The Committee should be small enough to facilitate good progress but both large and diverse enough to make the programs work.

It is recommended that Committee Members be appointed on a rotating basis. Where it is deemed advantageous or appropriate, Sub-Committees may be appointed.

Composition

Ideally, the Committee should consist of members who are:

- involved in Diocesan and/or Parish affairs and know many potential speaker sources
- veteran Serrans to provide history regarding identified programs
- new and young Serrans to provide new insight to the Committee

The Chaplain should be an advisory member of the Committee.

Meetings

The Committee should:

- have a defined agenda of subjects to be explored.
- meet on a regular basis in order to fulfil its responsibilities
- delegate responsibilities for Action Items to individuals or small groups of Committee Members who work on them outside of Committee Meetings
- develop a follow-up system to ensure that the work on assigned items is satisfactorily progressing to the completion date
- be aware of District Events, Serra International requirements and outside-sponsored events
- be aware of the financial impact of all programs and communicate budgetary needs to the Club President, Treasurer and Board of Trustees for budgeting and ultimate approval
- send notices of the meeting in advance to the Committee Members along with the proposed agenda
- keep and circulate adequate records

The Committee also should work closely with the Vocations Committee so that vocations activities and internal programs fully support each other and fulfil the three objectives of Serra.

Club Communications Committee

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Club Communications Committee is to establish a comprehensive communications program and to facilitate good communications on Club, District, and International levels.

Structure

The size of the Committee should be determined by the number and types of jobs to be done. There are specific responsibilities, such as producing a Newsletter, that may require a separate Sub-Committee with its own Board or Chair.

In general, the Committee should consist of a sufficient number of Members to accomplish the stated objectives. It is suggested that all Committee Members be appointed on a rotating basis. Where it is deemed advantageous or appropriate, sub-committees may be established.

Composition

Members on the Committee should:

- have special interests in public relations
- have the time and energy to work on press releases, newsletters, or generating publicity
- if possible, have previous experience in public relations, journalism or advertising.

Meetings

The Committee should:

- meet monthly or as required in order to fulfil its responsibilities
- send notices of the Meeting in advance to the Committee Members along with the proposed agenda
- keep and circulate adequate records

The Committee also should work closely with the other Club Committees to gather ideas and information that can be used in public relations efforts.

Ad-Hoc Committees

From time to time, a President may need to appoint a Temporary Committee to perform a certain function. Typical ad-hoc committees are:

- a Convention Committee, responsible for:
 - promoting District Conferences, Leadership Conferences, and International Conventions
 - obtaining materials on registration and accommodation
 - co-ordinating transportation (car pools, airline/train schedules)
- a By-Laws and Constitution Committee, responsible for:
 - reviewing any proposed deletions, additions, or amendments to the local Club By-Laws or the By-Laws and Constitution of Serra International
 - reporting the Committee's recommendations to the Club Board of Trustees

Resources

- Manuals
- President's Manual
- Vocations Manual (including Vocation Project Portfolio)
- Membership Manual
- Organizing a New Serra Club
- Program Manual
- Communications Manual
- Secretary's Manual

- Treasurer's Manual
- Chaplain's Manual
- Serra International Constitution and Bylaws
- Suggested Local Club Bylaws
- *THE SERRAN* Magazine

Serra in Australia & New Zealand

At a meeting in 1964 at Cupertino, California, Paul Mariani Jnr raised the possibility of starting Serra Clubs in Australia with Frank James, an Australian businessman. On his return to Australia, Frank discussed the introduction of Serra with the then Father Frank Little, whose support was unequivocal.

Paul Mariani Jnr came to Australia in 1965 and approached Prelates in the Archdioceses of Sydney, Canberra/Goulburn, Brisbane, Adelaide and Hobart. All of the Bishops agreed with the need to promote Vocations and indicated support for Serra. Acceptance of Serra, however, was not immediate.

Paul and Frank approached the Melbourne Vocations Director, Fr. James Wall and, together, they requested permission from the Archbishop to introduce Serra into the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Unfortunately, permission was not forthcoming.

Following the appointment of Archbishop (later Cardinal) James Knox as Archbishop of Melbourne in 1967, Frank and the Vocations Director at that time, Fr. Michael Fitzpatrick, made a further approach which was successful. His Grace told them to proceed "slowly and quietly". This proved to be sound advice

The first meeting was held on 24th November 1967) at the home of Frank James. Those attending were Fr. Fitzpatrick, Judge Arthur Adams, Joe Stewart, Bill Pringle and Dr. Clarke. The decision to launch Serra was taken and these men became active and enthusiastic Serrans. The first dinner meeting was held on 28th February 1968 in the Elizabeth Hotel after Mass at St. Francis Church.

Serra was introduced into the Archdiocese of Sydney by Frank James, Fr. Brian O'Dwyer and Dr. Kevin Lynch. The Serra Club of Sydney, with Kevin Lynch as President, was chartered on 27th January 1970. The Serra Club of Melbourne, with Frank James as President, was chartered on 28th January 1970.

Other Clubs were chartered in New South Wales, Victoria, Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, Tasmania and New Zealand.

National Councils

Serra International recognises the beneficial role that a National Council can provide by representing the Clubs at the National level and by ensuring more effective extension work within the country. National Councils must be approved by the Board of Trustees of Serra International. The formation, constitution, and operations of National Councils are governed by Article IX of the International By-Laws.

National Councils have been established in Great Britain, Brazil, Spain, Italy, Mexico, the Philippines, Canada, United States of America and Australia.

The National Council for Australia is The Serra Council of Australia, New Zealand and The South Pacific (SCANZSPAC) which covers Clubs in these areas. Serra International maintains offices in several countries to support the work of Serra.

The Serra Council of Australia, New Zealand & The South Pacific (SCANZSPAC):

From its introduction into Australia in 1970, Serra was managed by Area Trustees from Serra International. Working closely with District Governors, the Movement grew in Australia and New Zealand. Serra Councils were first set up in Great Britain and Brazil in 1970. This led to the formation of several working Committees to see how a Council could be set up in Australia.

The Interim Board of SCANZSPAC was formed in 1994 with John Stephens, President of the Canberra Serra Club as Chairman. The Interim Board worked on the Mission and Role of SCANZSPAC with its Constitution being approved in 1996. The first Board Meeting of SCANZSPAC took place after the inaugural SCANZSPAC Convention in Wagga Wagga in October 1996. John Stephens was elected as the first President.

The SCANZSPAC Board meets three times a year.

The Mission Statement of SCANZSPAC is to actively promote the work of Serra International within Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific by

- providing a regional organisation to represent all Serrans, Serra Clubs and Districts;
- liaising with Conferences of Catholic Bishops;
- developing contacts with religious and secular media;
- determining the direction and aims of Serra by creating the policies and programs required to extend effectively the work of Serra throughout the SCANZSPAC Area.

Elections are called each year for positions on the SCANZSPAC Board and are open to Office Bearers from each Club in its area.

SCANZSPAC Board

President

Vice-President Programs

Vice-President Membership

Vice-President Vocations

Vice-President Communications

Immediate Past President

Secretary

Treasurer

District Governors (1 for each District 89, 92, 99)

Chairman of Serra Australia Foundation

District Governors

The District Governors report to the Board of SCANZSPAC.

Responsibilities

- meet with all Clubs in the District and their Members annually
- maintain contact with the Ordinary and the Vocation Office
- communicate with Clubs through personal contact, regular letters, and District Meetings

- maintain regular contact with SCANZSPAC
- promote District-wide membership growth
- start or maintain a Club-in-Formation and identify new areas for future growth
- encourage attendance at the International Convention and at the District or Regional Conference.
- develop and train Club leaders
- supervise election of Governor-Elect

Term of Office

A two-year term is recommended. However, each District makes the decision regarding the length of term. The Term of Office begins at the conclusion of the SCANZSPAC Convention that follows his or her election. In the event of the resignation, illness or death of the Governor, the Governor-Elect succeeds to the Office and completes the Governor's full term.

District Councils

Individual Clubs are grouped into areas known as Districts

The co-ordination of the affairs of the District may be provided by a District Council. A District Council is composed of the District Governor, Governor-Elect, Immediate Past-Governor, Deputy District Governor and Club Presidents of that District. (Some District Councils include all past District Governors as de-facto members)

Purpose

To ensure effective continuity, balance, and co-ordination of policies, programs, activities, and relations throughout the District and within its Clubs.

Objectives

- To seek to attain the objectives of Serra International within the District and through the Clubs of the District.
- To co-operate with Serra International in organizing new Clubs and educating and strengthening existing Clubs within the District.
- To further Catholicism through an increase of fellowship and co-operative effort of the Clubs within the District.
- To promote participation of the Clubs of the District in the general purposes, programs and policies of the District, SCANZSPAC and of Serra International.

Activities

- meet quarterly as a District Council to co-ordinate activities for and throughout the District.
- hold an annual District or Regional Conference for all Members of Clubs within the District
- plan District Leadership Planning Conference in April or May for the training of new Club Officers

Serra Australia Foundation

The Serra Australia Foundation was launched on 31st January 1982 during the 4th Regional Convention in Hobart. The Foundation was established to provide funds for vocations projects within the Regional area. Now the SCANZSPAC area of Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific.

The Foundation receives support from Clubs (through either donations or fund-raising activities), individual Serrans and benefactors.

Serra International and Its History

Serra International

Serra International is aggregated to the Pontifical Work for Vocations to the Priesthood within the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. Since its formation in 1935, almost 1,100 Serra Clubs have been chartered in 44 Countries. Membership of Serra is in excess of 20,000. Members are Catholic laymen, laywomen and Permanent Deacons. Serra is named after Blessed Junipero Serra, the noted Spanish Franciscan missionary priest who played a leading part in early missionary work in Mexico and the Western United States.

History of Serra International

The Serra Movement had its beginnings in America in the winter of 1934-1935. Its founders were four Catholic laymen in Seattle in the State of Washington, USA. Dan Rooney, Leo Sharkey, Richard Ward and Harold Haberle organised luncheon meetings for business and professional men to exchange ideas on Catholic thought.

During these informal meetings, the four became aware of the need to set up an organisation which encouraged knowledge, and the spreading, of Catholicism in modern society. In this way, the first Serra Club was born. The official date of founding was 27th February 1935.

Over the course of a few years, the Serra Movement extended to the whole of North America. On 2nd July 1938, the Club became Serra International. With the expansion of Serra, a central office was opened in Chicago in 1947.

International Structure

To operate efficiently, the Serra International Constitution and By-Laws provide for a carefully defined organisational structure. Led by an International Board of Trustees which includes the International Officers, Serra also draws upon the services of an Episcopal Adviser, volunteer Standing Committees, the Serra International Foundation, a full-time Executive Director and paid staff.

International Officers

Responsibilities

*Duties of International Officers are set out in the Serra International Constitution, Article IV, **Duties of International Officers**, and By-Laws*

Composition

- President
- President-Elect
- Four Vice Presidents
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Immediate Past President

Terms of Office

At the International Convention, the President, President-Elect, and Vice Presidents are elected for one year while the Secretary and Treasurer are elected for two years.

Board of Trustees

Responsibility of Board of Trustees

- general control and supervision of Serra International

Responsibilities of Trustees

- serve as liaison and consultants to the District Governors where no National Council exists in their area
- assist District Governors in whatever way possible
- delegate to, and work with, the Deputy Trustee in areas where a Board Member requests, and the International Board appoints, a Deputy Trustee.

Composition

- eleven Area Trustees
- eight International Officers
- Immediate Past President
- such additional Trustees, not to exceed three, as from time to time may be determined by the Board of Trustees.

Terms of Office

All Trustees, International Officers and the Immediate Past President serve on the Board of Trustees concurrently for the duration of their elected Office.

Episcopal Adviser

Responsibilities

- lead Serrans in the development of their spiritual lives and vocations
- counsel and advise the International Board on general policies and on the principles of faith

Term of Office

The International Board of Trustees invites a member of the hierarchy to serve as Episcopal Adviser for a term of three years.

Standing Committees

Responsibilities

- develop and promote programs for the year in their respective areas of responsibility;
- adhere to Serra objectives and board policies;
- work in close harmony with National, District and Club Committees.

*Responsibilities of the nine Standing Committees are set out in the
Serra International Constitution, Article V, Sections 1-10,
International Committees*

Standing Committees

- Vocations
- Internal Program
- Constitution and By-Laws
- Membership
- Finance and Budget
- Long Range Planning
- Communications
- Audit
- International Convention

Terms of Office

Nine Standing Committees, each consisting of no less than three members, are appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Trustees. In addition, the President may appoint Special Committees as needed.

Executive Director

Responsibilities

- work closely with the International Board of Trustees
- manage the day to day functioning of the International Office
- oversee the International Convention, publications and committees

Term of Office

The Executive Director is appointed by, and is responsible to, the Board of Trustees.

Serra International Foundation

Responsibilities

- provide financial support to Vocation activities approved by Foundation Board and Serra International
- raise, invest and disburse funds so as to provide the means to carry out the objectives of Serra International

Terms of Operation

- At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of Serra International on 25th October 1951, the Serra International Foundation was created and incorporated in Illinois as a not-for-profit corporation.
- The Foundation obtains its funds from private and corporate sources and those who wish to advance the objectives of Serra International around the world.

International Activities

To further its objectives and to conduct its business, Serra International holds regular Committee and General Meetings and publishes *THE SERRAN* Magazine.

Annual International Convention

Description

The International Convention is an opportunity for Serrans to:

- share in fellowship and inspiration as well as acquire a clearer vision of the purposes and broad relationships of Serra;
- strengthen their dedication to Serra through the Convention Program and contact with representatives of Clubs from around the world;
- advance the internationality of Serra;
- stimulate better Club work by establishing common policies, standards and program emphases

In addition, the International Convention is:

- self-supporting (Convention operating expenses are covered by registration fees)
- held at a time and in a place determined by the International Board of Trustees
- where the business of Serra International (approving the International budget, electing International Officers, amending the International Constitution and By-Laws) takes place

THE SERRAN Magazine

Description

THE SERRAN Magazine is:

- the official publication of Serra International
- the official source of Local, District and International news and inspiration on every phase of Serra organisation and activity
- published four times a year in June, August, December and March

Evaluating the Serra Club and its Members

Our Spiritual Advisers tell us that, if we are to make progress in our personal lives, occasionally we must take inventory of how well we are doing. The same principle applies to a Serra Club and its Members: if we are to progress, our leaders must regularly evaluate how well things are going in the Committees and the Club, how well each Member is performing, how to continue what is successful and how to remedy that which is not working.

Evaluating Serra Club Leaders

From time to time, Club Members should rate their Club Leaders as “S”(Strong), “A” (Average) or “W” (Weak) on the following points.

My Serra Club Leaders:

1. . . . have a thorough understanding of Serra, its objectives, history, By-Laws, policies, organisation structure and activities.
2. . . . use Serra’s objectives and policies as the basis for leadership activities.
3. . . . elicit wide participation in decision making.
4. . . . apply sound criteria in selecting other leaders.
5. . . . delegate responsibilities effectively.
6. . . . encourage short and long range planning of goals and of the steps needed to accomplish those goals.
7. . . . adjust their efforts to the unique characteristics and needs of the Club and area.
8. . . . provide in-service training of other leaders in Serra.
9. . . . see that budgets are planned, approved, and executed effectively.
10. . . . co-ordinate the various phases of Serra effectively.
11. . . . communicate effectively inside and outside the organisation.
12. . . . check the progress of the Club periodically against the objectives and policies of Serra and adapt or adjust accordingly.
13. . . . exemplify sound principles of human relations in organising and directing the Club.

Evaluating Club Operation

Various policies, procedures, principles, and suggestions for successfully conducting a Serra Club are mentioned throughout this Handbook for Serrans. Periodically, Serra Officers and Members should rate their Clubs as “S” (Strong), “A” (Average) or “W” (Weak) on the following points and then take whatever action is indicated by this analysis.

1. All Club Members have a thorough understanding of Serra’s objectives.
2. The Club occasionally analyses Serra’s objectives in terms of today’s problems and needs and the results of this analysis are communicated to all Members of the Club.
3. The Club demonstrates its empathy with many groups related to the Priesthood and Religious Life through its various activities: Youth, Seminarians, Sisters, Brothers, Deacons, Pastors, Associate Pastors, Parents and Others.
4. Club Leaders continually develop Club Members in their spirituality and vocation work.
5. Club Officers and Committee Members regularly study all material on Club leadership found in this Handbook for Serrans and other manuals for assistance and guidance in serving the Club competently.
6. Club Officers are nominated and elected from among those who have been members of the Board of Trustees and/or have served on at least one Committee.
7. All Officers and Members of Standing Committees have, and use, appropriate Serra International manuals and other materials related to their areas of responsibility.
8. The terms of Club Committee assignments allow for a reasonable amount of carry-over of experience from one administration to another.
9. Committees have a balance of experienced and new Members.
10. Club Leaders are continuously trained including instruction in the basic principles of leadership.
11. The Club plans and schedules events in advance including regular Club Meetings, Special Meetings, Board Meetings, Meeting Programs, Vocations Activity, Finances (*delete comma*) and Conventions.
12. Most Members actively participate in Club decision making.
13. Actions of the Board of Trustees are promptly communicated to Club Members.
14. The content of the talks given at regular Serra meetings are related to the Club’s activities.
15. Qualified Members are given opportunities to participate in the Meeting Program in order to continue their interest in the Club and to utilize potential talent.
16. Club programs allow for discussion and analysis of contemporary Catholic and Church issues.
17. Club Leaders encourage the creativity of all of the Members and implement ideas whenever possible.

Self-Evaluation

From time to time, Serrans should rate themselves as “S” (Strong), “A” (Average), or “W” (Weak) on the list of statements which follow:

1. I have a reasonable understanding of the organisation and structure of Serra International.
2. I increase my understanding of Serra’s role in the Church today by regularly reading THE SERRAN and other pertinent literature.
3. I continue to develop a deeper understanding of the Church, its principles, and its problems.
4. I am a better Catholic as a result of the opportunities offered to me by Serra.
5. I am developing a deeper understanding and appreciation of Church Ministry.
6. I do my share to encourage Church Vocations especially by assisting my own Parish Priest.
7. I attend Serra meetings faithfully.
8. I devote a reasonable amount of my time to Serra activities, in addition to regular attendance at Serra meetings.
9. I help to develop a spirit of friendliness and fellowship among all Members of the Club.
10. I have been responsible for adding at least one new active Member to the club during the past three years.
11. I carry out any assignments or responsibilities given to me in the Club.
12. I attend other Serra Meetings, Conferences, and Conventions.
13. I grow in my ability to serve Serra in a leadership position.