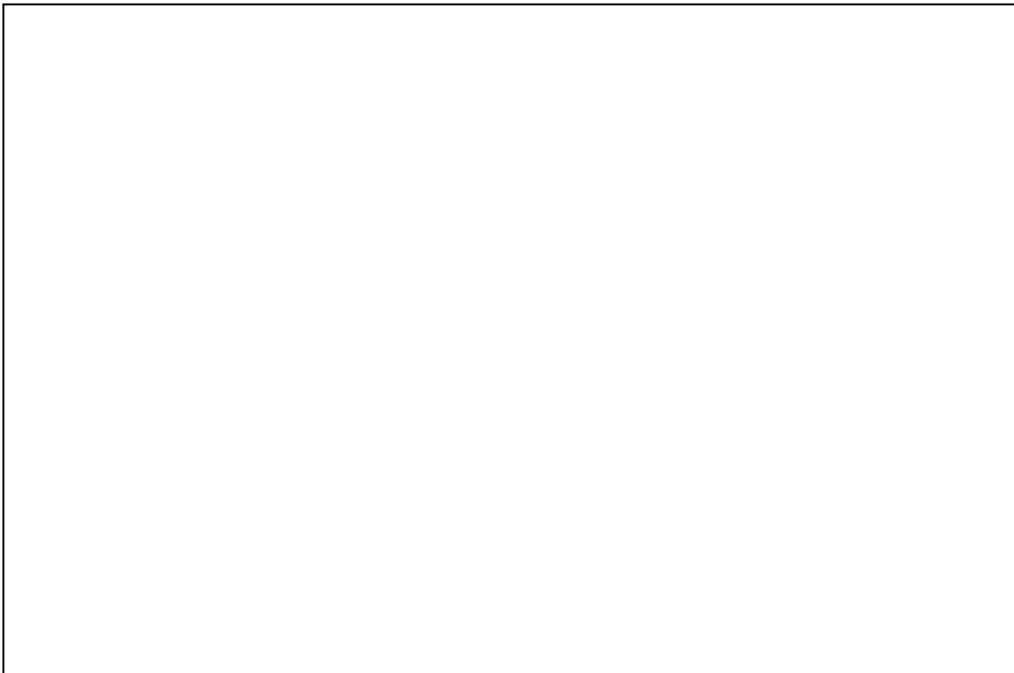


# **Air Force**

## **Reserve Officer Training Corps**

### **Dining-In/Dining Out Guide**



## Preface

This booklet provides information on the broad range of activities associated with planning and carrying out an AFROTC Dining-In. It is intended for use by AFROTC cadets who are in the process of planning a dining-in/out. Even though much of the information contained in the booklet is common to the Air Force Dining-In, many items are unique to Air Force ROTC. In short, the purpose of this booklet is to provide information necessary for the proper planning and convening of the AFROTC Dining-In. Even though this is not a regulation and therefore not directive in nature, it is strongly recommended that the guidance given here be adhered to as closely as possible.

KATHLEEN DRAPEAUX, Capt, USAF  
Field Leadership

Updated 2003  
Supersedes 1998

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# Chapter 1

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## INTRODUCTION

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### History

The dining-in represents the most formal aspects of Air Force social life. The custom is a very old tradition. Although its origin is not clear, formal feasts to honor military victories and individual/unit achievements have been customary from pre-Christian Roman legions to King Arthur's knights in the sixth century.

The custom of the dining-in is not exclusively military. The tradition as we know it today is rooted in England where it was a custom in the monasteries. It was later adopted by the early universities and spread to the military when the Officers' Mess was established. With the adoption of the dining-in by the military, these feasts became more formalized. British soldiers introduced the custom to colonial America, where it was borrowed by George Washington's Continental Army.

These dinners have become traditional in all branches of the armed forces. In the Air Force and Navy, it is the dining-in; in the Army, the regimental dinner; in the Marine Corps and Coast Guard, mess night.

The Air Force dining-out format began in the United States Army Air Corps with General "Hap" Arnold's "Wing-dings". The Air Corps' association with the British in World War II increased its popularity, and since that time it has been modified into its present form. Faculty members in Squadron Officer School of Air University began having faculty dining-ins. They were later included in the curriculum for the students. Because of its success, dining-ins spread rapidly to other Air Force units. Many of the original traditions are still very much alive.

Although the term, "dining-in" is used throughout this guide, most of the information applies to the "dining-out" as well. The only significant difference between the two is that spouses and guests are invited to attend the dining-out.

### Purpose

The dining-in's purpose is to provide a situation for members of the Air Force unit to see how ceremony and tradition play an important role in the life of an Air Force unit. It helps enhance morale and esprit de corps, and provides an appropriate setting for recognizing individual and unit achievements. It can also be used to say hello to new unit members and to bid farewell to those departing.

The dining-in has served the Air Force well by giving commanders an opportunity to meet socially with other members of the unit. It gives members of all grades an opportunity to create bonds of friendship and better working relationships in an atmosphere of fellowship and camaraderie.

A dining-in for AFROTC cadets provides experiences and training in a traditional air Force social function and cultivates a spirit of loyalty, pride and enthusiasm. It is important for the success of the AFROTC dining-in that members enjoy the festivities, and those ceremonies are done in tasteful, dignified manner. Its format should be adhered to as closely as possible.

## Chapter 2

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# PLANNING

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### Where to Begin

Begin planning early. Ninety days to one year in advance is not too soon. You should begin with a tentative date, location and guest speaker well ahead of time. A Planning committee chaired by the arrangements officer should be established. Details for the various arrangements should be allocated to committee members and their specific duties should be outlined. (see chapter 4)

The size of the committee depends on the size of the function. Committee members must be motivated and action oriented. In addition to the arrangements officer, other possible members of the committee should include:

- Recorder
- Budget officer
- Invitations and reservations officer
- Food and beverage officer
- Decorations officer
- Protocol officer

### Date and Location

The first step of the planning committee should be to select a date and location. Initially the date should be tentative. Informally check your prospective guest speaker's schedule for availability. Make certain the date doesn't conflict with other military and university events that might affect participation.

The location is next. Many universities are located near a military installation. If it's convenient, consider using the officer's open mess. Pay close attention to what the caterer is providing. If a written contract is required, ensure that you understand and agree with everything before you sign. Keep in mind, the signer is legally liable. As a precaution, have the commander of commandant of cadets review the contract before signing.

## Guest Speaker

The guest speaker can be military or civilian and I expected to address the mess in an interesting manner on an appropriate subject. Once a firm date and location have been established, the guest speaker can be officially invited. It is recommended that an alternate speaker be kept in mind in the event the original speaker can't attend.

Care should be taken in choosing a guest speaker. A speaker can make or break a dining-in. Traditionally, the speaker is a high-ranking military officer, government, or university official. However, the list of potential speakers is almost endless.

An official invitation to the prospective speaker should be prepared by the arrangements officer for the detachment commander's signature. Make sure to include the date, place, time and dress of the dining-in as well as description of the audience and other applicable facts about the occasion. Suggested topics along with the desired length of the speech can also be included in the invitation. You should also ask the speaker to provide you with a brief autobiography, which the President of the mess can use to make a proper introduction.

Further guidance regarding guest speakers for AFROTC dining-ins can be found in AFOATSSI 35-101 on the HQ AFOATS web page. AFROTC/PA should always be notified as soon as the guest speaker has accepted the invitation.

## Invitations and Place Cards

Formal invitations should be sent to all guests and extended in the name of the President or sponsoring organization. They should be ordered well in advance and mailed at least three weeks before the dining-in.

Place cards are required only at the head table. Seating arrangements are illustrated in Attachment 4. A folded, white, 3x5 inch card is acceptable. A computer-generated copy may be faster and more efficient. They should always be handwritten and easily read. For two work military titles, use only the conversational title such as: Lieutenant Colonel Jones would be written Colonel Jones. Even though place cards are not required at the other tables, they are appropriate, encouraged and add class.

## Program

A printed program also adds a touch of class to the dining-in. Contents may include:

A welcome statement from the commander or other appropriate official.

History of the dining-in.

Protocol of the mess.

Agenda

Schedule of and proper responses to toasts.

Biography of the guest speaker.

Biography of the commander.

History of the sponsoring organization.

Menu.

Rules of the mess.

Words to the Air Force Song.

Brief description of awards to be presented and recipients.

Other items for the program such as photographs may also be appropriate, depending on budgetary constraints, local practice, and commander's preference. A professional program does add a nice touch. Many people keep them as mementos of the occasion.

## Decorations

Table decorations should be limited to floral centerpieces and candelabra. Formal organizational decorations may also be appropriate. Centerpieces from a florist should be ordered at least one week in advance; however, if the location for the dining-in already has a centerpiece, use theirs if appropriate. Set a budget figure and let the florist work around that.

Other decorations might include unit seals, emblems, flags and colors TASTEFULLY displayed. When in doubt, keep the theme of the decorations patriotic such as red, white and blue colors.

The American flag is always appropriate. For information on flag protocol refer to AFMAN 36-2203, Chapter 7. Always ensure the American flag is properly displayed. If general officers attend, their flags should also be displayed.

## Budget

An exotic menu, elaborate decoration, engraved invitations, and a fancy program could result in exorbitant cost to attendees of the mess. Meals of the official guests are usually prorated or paid for by members of themes.

With a little imagination, some simple decorations and moving and patriotic ceremony can turn an otherwise plain dining-in into a “first class” affair without excessive costs.

After tentative costs are determined, the budget officer should develop an operating budget. Once that is accomplished, the approximate cost to each member can be determined.

### Photographer

Some units hire a professional photographer. When this is done, make certain the photographer is briefed beforehand and given a copy of the agenda. List the specific photographs desired. The photographer should not distract from the ceremonies or festivities. Instead of hiring a professional photographer, it may be just as easy to assign a cadet the task of recording the dining-in on film.

## Gift for the Speaker

A gift to the speaker is not necessary. If presented, it should be of nominal value. Gifts found most appropriate include such university mementos as T-shirts, paperweights, ceramic mugs, banners, hats, etc. HQ AFOATS/SDPP (AFOATS Awards and Units Recognition Program; AFOATSI 36-101)

## Chapter 3

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# RULES AND PROTOCOL

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### Relationship of the President and Vice

The President of the mess is usually the cadet wing commander, or the commander of the unit holding the dining-in and sets the standards for members of the mess. The President is the sold judge regarding toasts, requests, infractions and appropriate punishment for infractions, and he or she retains the authority to control rowdy, boisterous or improper behavior. Specific duties of the President are listed in Chapter 4.

The Vice President serves as the President's principal assistant and plays the role of interpreter between the President and members of the mess. It is essential that Mr. Or Madam Vice be totally familiar with the customs and traditions of the mess. This is an extremely demanding position, and the President should take care in choosing an articulate and bright cadet officer for these duties. The success of the dining-in hinges largely on the imagination and humor of this individual. Essentially Mr./Madam Vice keeps the program moving and stimulates table conversation through keen wit and impromptu speaking.

Traditionally, the Vice President sits alone at the back of the dining room facing the President. This position allows him or her to observe the proceedings to monitor the flow of the program. Convenience and the physical layout of the dining room might dictate seating in another location; however, the Vice President should never be seated near or at the head table. (Refer to Atch 4) A more detailed list of the Vice's duties can be found in Chapter 4.

### Dress

Proper attire for the formal portion of the dining-in for all cadets is either the semi-formal uniform as prescribed in AFOATSI-36-2008. (HQ AFOATS/POC: AFROTC/DOS) or the mess dress. POC cadets are encouraged to purchase the mess dress which is the uniform traditionally worn at dining-ins. Cadets at summer field training encampments may wear the light blue shirt/blouse with short sleeves.

Detachment officers and field training staff officers wear the mess dress uniform. Civilian guests usually wear semi-formal or business attire. The proper civilian dress should be stated in the invitation. Retired officers attending the dining-in may wear either civilian attire or the mess dress. Enlisted members attending the dining-in wear the mess dress or semi-formal uniform.

It is customary to have a brief period (commonly referred to as the cocktail period) before the dinner to arrive and meet guests. This period usually takes the form of a reception or cocktail period. If alcoholic beverages are served during this period, one should take care not to overindulge.

Each member of the mess should arrive not later than ten minutes prior to dinner. The Mr./Madam Vice will sound the dinner chimes to direct the mess to proceed to the dining room. Members should enter the dining room and stand quietly behind their chairs. Drinks and lighted smoking materials should never be taken into the dining room.

Once the mess has assembled and before the head table enters Mr./Madam Vice should explain proper protocol procedures for the evening such as how to propose a toast from the floor; when women guests stand; the correct response for person(s) being toasted; how to request permission to leave the mess before adjournment; etc. The President should brief the head table members on their protocol actions before entering the mess. This will ensure a snappy response and relieve embarrassing confusion.

The typical table arrangement for a dining-in is the banquet style of T, U, or E formation. Ease of passage and space between place settings should be considered when deciding on specific arrangements. Usually, Mr./Madam Vice is seated alone at the end of the room opposite the head table.

Head table seating is strictly according to protocol, with the senior honored guest to the right of the President, the next senior person to the left of the President, and so forth. Usually, the senior honored guest is the guest speaker; however, if this is not the case, it is customary to informally ask the senior honored guest if he or she will cede that position to the guest speaker. It is never proper to seat guests at the ends of a table.

If the means are available, consider playing ruffles and flourishes (if appropriate, depending on the guest of honor). Also consider a posting of the colors ceremony appropriate as well. These are not mandatory, but enhance the overall program.

There are other ceremonies that may be used to open the mess. A sword ceremony has been successfully used by some units where a sheathed sword is brought to the President. The President then removes the sword from its scabbard and places it on the table. This symbolizes that the dining-in is a time when warriors lay aside their arms and enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of their companions.

There are other ceremonies that might enhance the program, limited only by imagination and *good taste!*

WHILE THESE CEREMONIES MAY ADD “CLASS”, TOO MANY OR POORLY DONE CEREMONIES DETRACT FROM THE SUCCESS OF THE DINING-IN. KEEP THEM SIMPLE, WELL REHEARSED AND LIMITED.

### Invocation

After the mess has been officially opened, the chaplain presents the invocation. The chaplain is usually a cadet who has been assigned the duties of chaplain. However, Air Force chaplains or local clergy may be used. If space permits, the chaplain normally is a member of the head table. Once the invocation has been given, formal toasting begins.

### Addressing the Mess

A member of the mess may wish to propose a toast from the floor, raise a point or order, or identify infractions of the mess. The proper way to do this is to rise and state, “Madam/Madam Vice, a point of order.” When recognized by the Vice they will identify themselves, and state their business. The use of poetry or the interjection of humor is appropriate and highly recommended. Madam/Madam Vice will interpret the issue for the President. When the President decides what action is appropriate, this decision is relayed to the member by Mr./Madam Vice. Toasts or punishments, etc. may then be administered.

### Toasting

Toasting is an important part of the dining-in. The custom is universal. It came into wide acceptance after the effects of poison were discovered. When two people, who might be enemies, drank from the same source at the same time with no ill effects, a mutual trust was established. Once this rapport was certain, discussions could continue on a more cordial basis. Today, toasting is a simple courtesy to the person being honored.

Traditionally, toasting is done with wine. A non-alcoholic substitute must be considered for those who don't drink. Water is a suitable substitute.

Toasts are usually made to individuals. However, occasionally “Toast to the colors” is given. If the colors are toasted, they should be first in the order of toasts. The next toast is to the heads of any allied nations represented at the dining-in. If no allied officers are present, the President of the mess proposes a toast to the President of the United States. Mr. or Madam Vice

proposes a toast to the Chief of Staff of the US Air Force, except when a sister service member is present. If so, the President proposes a toast to the sister service in the following order: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and the Air Force.

It isn't necessary to properly drain the glass at the completion of each toast. A mere touch of the glass to the lips satisfies the ceremonial requirements. The mess always stands while toasting.

Toast should be worded in the following manner:

“To the Commander in Chief” (Toast proposal)

“To the President” (Mess response)

“To the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force” (Toast proposal)

“To the Chief of Staff” (Mess response)

After the toast to the Chief of Staff, all other responses to toasts are “Hear, Hear”. Once the chief of Staff of the Air Force has been toasted, there should be a toast with water to all of our brothers- and sisters-in arms that have served our country throughout our history as a nation. When toasts are concluded, the President should seat the mess. Guests at the head table are then introduced by the appropriate member of guest's escort.

It is customary to propose toasts to special guests after they have been introduced. When this is done, members of the mess stand, guests remain seated. The President should always stand while addressing the mess.

After the toast to the Chief of Staff, members may be recognized to propose other appropriate toasts or advise the President that a toast has been omitted. In such a case, the member will stand, identify himself or herself, and address the Vice by saying, “Mr./Madam Vice, I would like to propose a toast.” The Vice informs the President and receives his approval. Once the President approves the toast, the members stand (always allow enough time for the mess to stand and become quiet before beginning the toast). The toast may then be given by either the Vice or the member who proposed it. This kind of interaction gives the Vice an opportunity to add a bit of humor to the occasion by giving the toast in the form of a poem, verse, or limerick, etc.

Some dining-in rules do not allow extemporaneous toasts from the floor. Others encourage gag-type toasts. The decision must be made well in advance. If gag-type toasts are allowed, toasts may be made from the floor. Good taste is always the order of the day. Often times these toasts are made in the form of a poem or verse. Excessive toasting can significantly delay the program and cause many of the members to lose enthusiasm. The President

should always maintain control of themes and ensure that the evening proceeds as scheduled.

If a rigid time schedule must be followed, additional toasts beyond those required by protocol may be written out and given to the President before the mess is convened. He/she will determine whether or not they are appropriate and give them to Mr./Madam Vice. The President can then plan for them in the agenda. In this case, extemporaneous toasts will not be made from the floor.

### Infractions of the Mess

At various points during the dining-in, a member may be punished for violating the rules of the mess (Atch 7). Punishment might include singing a song, telling a joke, being sent to the grog bowl, or some other activity determined by the President.

Infractions of the mess may be noted at any time. Members bring infractions to the attention of the President through Mr./Madam Vice by raising a point of order. The President makes the final decision. Guest and dignitaries should never be subjected to punishment for violating the rules of the mess.

As in the case of toasting, excessive punishment of members for violating the rules of the mess can detract from the program.

### Grog Bowl

The grog bowl is not a necessary part of the dining-in and is not normally a part of the dining-out. The use of the grog bowl is a custom that varies greatly among organizations. Its use is rooted in British custom when Admiral Edward Vernon (1684-1757) diluted British sailors' daily ration of rum with water. Because Admiral Vernon was in the habit of wearing a program cloak, his crew nicknamed him "Old Grog" and his ration of rum became known as grog.

Some units have a grog mixing ceremony where the contents of the grog are combined along with humorous narratives from the vice. While the grog may be unsavory looking by adding such things as food coloring, dry ice, worchestershire sauce, tomato juice, etc., it should be drinkable. The unsavory nature of the grog should not be overly stressed. The "punishment" should be the open recognition and acknowledgment of the members' infractions and the requirement for them to properly address the grog in front of their peers.

At AFROTC dining-in/out the grog will always be non-alcoholic, and its use limited to 15 minutes.

The bowl is usually located on Mr./Madam Vice's table. When the President directs a violator to the grog bowl, the individual proceeds to the bowl promptly, squaring all corners in a military fashion. Upon arriving at the grow bowl, the violator:

- a. Salutes the grog.
- b. Fill the cup with grog (at least 1/3 full).
- c. Drains the grog from the cup without removing it from the lips.
- d. Tips the cup upside down over his/her head.
- e. Replace the cup, again salutes the grog, and returns to his/her seat. The violator is not permitted to speak during this process.

## Dinner

Once the invocation by the chaplain and the formal toasting is complete, dinner can be served. Courses are always served to the head table first. Madam/Madam Vice should be served immediately after the head table. Toasting and other activities during the course of dinner will take up so much of the Vice's time that he or she won't have an opportunity to eat unless served early.

Before serving the entrée, the President may add some humor to the meal to make certain it is fit for consumption by members of the mess. The Vice may compose an ode or poem to the meal.

## Recess

At the time scheduled for recess, the President raps the gavel three times to gain attention. When the mess is silent, the President raps twice and announces a short recess so the dishes may be cleared. Members should stand by their places until the head table departs, then the members of themes follow. Arrangements should be made in advance with the caterer to have the wine and wine glasses remain on the tables to toast the guest of honor following his/her presentation.

## Reconvening the Mess

At the end of the recess, Mr./Madam Vice sounds the chimes and directs everyone to proceed to the dining room. Once again, drinks and lighted smoking materials should not be taken into the dining room following the recess.

When the members reach their seats, they stand directly behind their chairs. The President then leads the head table party back into the dining room. The mess is seated with one rap of the gavel. If dessert and coffee or tea is part of the menu, they are usually served at this time. Once again, drinks and lighted smoking materials should not be taken into the dining room following the recess.

When members reach their seats, they stand directly behind their chairs. The President then leads the head table party back into the dining room. The mess is seated with one rap of the gavel. If dessert and coffee or tea are part of the menu, they are usually served at this time the lamp is lit.

### Awards and Recognition

If individual and/or unit achievements are to be recognized, an appropriate ceremony should be arranged. This ceremony should take place during the formal portion of the dining-in. A convenient time is immediately preceding the Guest of Honor's speech. Under no circumstances should any ceremony follow the speech, the highlight of the dining-in. Once the awards have been given, a toast to the recipients(s) may be in order.

### Guest Speaker's Address

After dessert, recognition and awards, or other scheduled activities, the President introduces the Guest Speaker. The address usually lasts 10 to 20 minutes. The guest speaker's address should be considered the highlight of the dining-in. At no time should any other formal activities such as mini-speeches, award presentations, points of order, etc., follow the speaker's presentation. After thanking the speaker, a toast is usually proposed to him/her by the Vice.

### Closing and Departure

After the toast to the Guest Speaker, the President should recognize those who organized the dining-in and thank Mr./Madam Vice. If desired, the colors may then be retired.

If there is to be post-dinner entertainment, the President should invite everyone to stay and enjoy the festivities. The President adjourns the mess with two raps of the gavel and an announcement that the mess is adjourned.

After adjournment, the members should remain long enough to pay their respects to the Guest of Honor.

#### Post Dinner Entertainment

If there is to be an informal portion of the dining-in, such as a dance, there should be a distinct break between the formal and the informal portions. This can be accomplished by having the mess adjourn to the lounge following the formal portion. The dining room can then be cleared and prepared for the informal ceremonies.

## Chapter 4

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# DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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The following is a list of duties of each committee member associated with planning and conducting a dining-in. This list is not necessarily complete.

### President

- Selects tentative date and location
- Appoints and briefs arrangements to officers
- Selects guest speakers and alternates
- Selects firm date and location
- Oversees entire organization and operation of the dining-in
- Sets budget ceiling
- Arranges for chaplain to deliver invocation
- Appoints and briefs Mr./Madam Vice
- Prepares list of official and personal guests
- Prepares agenda
- Appoints host officers
- Receives all guests before dinner
- Opens and closes themes
- Introduces guests to the mess
- Calls on Mr./Madam Vice to propose toasts
- Announces lighting of the smoking lamp

### Arrangements Officer

- Informally checks availability of proposed guest speaker
- Prepares letter of invitation to guest speaker
- Determines music requirements
- Determines attendance requirements

- Selects menu and wine
- Enters contract with caterer (after coordinating with the PAS or COC)
- Establishes tentative cost per person
- Prepares and directs advertising
- Orders invitations and place cards
- Publishes agenda
- Selects and acquires Guest Speaker's gift
- Prepares and sends formal invitations to all guests
- Arranges for ceremonies (color guard, etc.)
- Reserves quarters for Guest Speaker and other official guests (if appropriate)
- Designs program
- Arranges for photographer
- Orders flowers
- Determines firm attendance figures and notifies caterer
- Ensures public address system is available
- Ensures rostrum is available
- Obtains biography on guest of honor
- Determines table and seating arrangements
- Gathers accouterments of the mess (gavel, chimes, grog bowl, smoking lamp, etc.)
- Prepares seating chart
- Reserves distinguished visitor parking
- Performs on-site inspection
- Positions place cards and programs
- Positions flags and trophies
- Ensures all awards to be given are at hand
- Removes accouterments of the mess
- Prepares after action report

#### Protocol Officer

- Assists the arrangements officer and host officer, especially in determining seating arrangements and any other matters of protocol
- Prepares letter of appreciation to the Guest Speaker and other if appropriate

#### Host Officer

- Briefs guests on customs of the mess, such as when to rise during toast, proper dress, time, place, agenda, etc.
- If guests are from out of town, make arrangements to meet them when they arrive, arrange for transportation as required
- Ensures that each guest is properly introduced to the President of the mess, other guests, and as many of the members as possible
- Ensures that each guest is always in the company of several members of the mess, yet takes care that no individual or group of individuals monopolizes the guest
- Briefs guests on seating and other physical arrangements of the mess
- Upon departure, bids farewell on behalf of all members of the mess

#### Mess Officer

- Reserves the dining room and arranges convenient lounge facilities with adequate service for all personnel attending
- Decides on a suitable menu
- Coordinates time of food courses according to the President's instructions
- Arranges for mess charges to be paid (Guest of honor and perhaps some others, depending on desires of the committee, are generally not charged.)

#### Mr./Madam Vice

- Opens the lounge at the appointed time
- Sounds dinner chimes
- Prepares toasts as directed by the President. Composition of appropriate poems or witticisms in good taste relating to personalities and/or organizations present is encouraged
- Leaves the mess last

DAY	WHO	ACTION
89	President	Select tentative date and location.
89	President	Appoint and brief the arrangements officer.
89	President	Select desired guest speaker and alternate(s).
80	Arrangements Officer	Informally check on availability of proposed Guest Speaker
75	Arrangements Officer	Prepare letter of invitation to the Guest Speaker.
60	President	Select firm date and location.
60	Arrangements Officer	Determine musical requirements.
55	President	Determine attendance requirements.
55	President	Set budget ceiling.
45	Mess Officer	Select menu. Enter contract with caterer. Make provisions for payment.
45	Arrangements Officer	Prepare and distribute advertising to members
45	Arrangements Officer	Order invitations and place cards.
45	President	Appoint and brief the Vice
40	Members	Submit names of personal guests
40	Arrangements Officer	Prepare program. Print one per person plus 10 percent.
35	President	Prepare list of official and personal guests.
30	Arrangements Officer	Select Guest Speaker's gift.
30	President	Appoint or invite the Chaplain (if appropriate).
30	Arrangements Officer	Prepare formal invitations for all guests.
29	Protocol Officer	Send formal invitations to all guests.
20	Arrangements Officer	Arrange for Color Guard and/or other ceremonial activities.
15	Arrangements Officer	From responses and RSVP's, compile final guest list. Collect fees from members.
15	President	Appoint and brief host officers.

15	Arrangements Officer	Arrange for quarters for Guest Speaker and/or other official guests if appropriate.
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DAY	WHO	ACTION
15	Arrangements Officer	Arrange for photographer.
15	Arrangements Officer	Order flowers.
10	Arrangements Officer	Determine firm attendance figures. Notify caterer.
10	Arrangements Officer	Ensure public address system is available.
5	Arrangements Officer	Finalize table and seating arrangements.
5	Arrangements Officer	Gather accouterments of the mess (gavel, grog bowl, chimes, smoking lamp, etc.).
3	Arrangements Officer	Prepare seating chart.
2	Arrangements Officer	Reserve distinguished visitor(s) parking.
8 hrs	Arrangements Officer	Perform on-site inspection.
2 hrs	Arrangements Officer	Position place cards and programs.
30 min	Arrangements Officer	Make final check of the lounge and dining area.
0 min	Vice	Ensures lounge opens at scheduled time and sounds dinner chimes when appropriate.
+1	Arrangements Officer	Remove accouterments of the mess.
+1	Arrangements Officer	Pay caterer (This may have been done earlier, depending on contract.).
+1	Protocol Officer	Prepare letter of appreciation to guest speaker and any other appropriate individuals.
+2	Arrangements Officer	Prepare after action report.

- 1800 Lounge opens for refreshments. Host officers in place. Members and guests begin arriving.
- 1801 Lounge closes. Cocktail period ends. Mr./Madam Vice rings dinner chimes. Members and guests assemble in dining room.
- 1830 Mess is formally opened by the President.
- 1831 Invocation by the chaplain.
- 1834 Formal toasting.
- 1837 President seats the mess. Welcoming remarks are made. Members of the head table are introduced. (Guest speaker is introduced last.) President polls the mess for introduction of other guests.
- 1840 Toast by Mr./Madam vice to the guests.
- 1841 President seats the mess. Dinner is served.
- 1930 Recess.
- 1945 Mess reconvenes. Awards program.
- 2000 Introduction of the guest speaker and speaker's address.
- 2015 President thanks guest speaker.
- 2020 Toast to the guest speaker.
- 2021 Closing remarks by President.
- 2023 President retires the colors.
- 2025 President adjourns the mess. (Two raps on the gavel) Lounge is opened. (If informal activities are to follow the dining-in, they should be included in the agenda.)

VICE	-1820-	Sound dinner chimes in lounge and announce: "Please take your place in the dining room." Everyone will go to their place at the table and remain standing behind their chairs. Vice will go to his/her place and proceed with protocol briefing. Head table members assemble in the lounge for protocol briefing before entry.
VIVE		Once the members of the head table are ready to enter the vice will say: "Ladies and gentlemen, the distinguished members of the head table."
PRESIDENT	-1830-	After the members of the head table are in place, the President of the mess (POM) will approach the rostrum and say: "COLOR GUARD, POST THE COLORS." If the guest of honor is a general officer, ruffles and flourishes may be played as the color guard leaves the mess.
POM	-	(Rap gavel once)
CHAPLAIN	-1832-	Invocation
POM	-1834-	"Ladies and gentlemen, I propose a toast to The Colors."
MEMBERS	-	"To the Colors."
POM	-	"Ladies and gentlemen, I propose a toast to the commander in chief."
MEMBERS	-	"To the President."
VICE	-	"Mr. President."
POM	-	"Yes, Mr./Madam Vice?"
VICE	-	"I propose a toast to the Chief of Staff of the United

		States' Air Force.”
MEMBERS	-	“To the Chief of Staff.”
VICE	-	“I PROPOSE A TOAST TO THE COMMANDER AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND.”
MEMBERS	-	“HEAR, HEAR”
VICE	-	“I PROPOSE A TOAST TO THE COMMANDER OF AFROTC.”
MEMBERS	-	“HEAR, HEAR”
POM	-1837-	<p>“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, PLEASE BE SEATED.”</p> <p>“GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, ON BEHALF OF ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE AFROTC DETACHMENT ____, LET ME EXTEND A HEARTY WELCOME AND SINCERE THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AT OUR (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer) DINING-IN/OUT. WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE YOU SHARE THIS VERY SPECIAL EVENT WITH US.”</p> <p>Background information of the dining-in and certain rules of protocol might be mentioned here.</p>
POM		<p>“I HAVE THE DISTINCT PLEASURE THIS EVENING OF INTRODUCING OUR HEAD TABLE GUESTS. WOULD YOU PLEASE STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED AS I INTRODUCED YOU?”</p> <p>INTRODUCTIONS: (Guest speaker should be introduced last. After guests at the head table are introduced, the President asks the mess to introduce any special guests in attendance. If there are any, they are introduced by their escort.)</p>
VICE	-1840-	“MR./MADAM PRESIDENT”
POM	-	“YES, MR./MADAM VICE?”

VICE	-	“I PROPOSE A TOAST TO OUR DISTINGUISHED GUESTS.”
MEMBERS	-	“HEAR, HEAR”
POM	-1842-	Seat the mess and reply: “Mr./Madam Vice!”

VICE	-	“YES, MR./MADAM PRESIDENT?”
POM	-	“THE MESS HUNGERS.”
VICE	-	“YES, MR./MADAM PRESIDENT?” I WILL INQUIRE ABOUT THE MEAL.”  Vice quickly walks to the kitchen for a few seconds, then returns.
VICE		“MR./MADAM PRESIDENT, DINNER IS READY.”
POM		“EXCELLENT, WOULD YOU INSPECT THE FOOD?”  A tray is brought to the vice. He/she tastes the food and replies:  MR./MADAM PRESIDENT, THE FOOD IS SKILLFULLY PREPARED AND FIT FOR THIS OCCASION.”
POM		“VERY GOOD. DINNER WILL NOW BE SERVED.” Further toasting can occur during dinner. Violators of the rules of themes may also be punished during dinner. This too will NOT exceed 15 minutes.
POM		“MR./MADAM VICE, WHAT IS THAT OBJECT ON YOUR TABLE?”
VICE		“MR./MADAM PRESIDENT, IT IS A GROG BOWL.”
VICE		“YES, A BOWL FILLED WITH FOUL FLUIDS THAT CARRY PUNGENT BOUQUETS. THEY ARE A PENANCE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE VIOLATED THE RULES OF THE MESS.”
POM		“WILL THE GROG BE OFFENSIVE TO ANY MEMBER OF THE MESS?”
VICE		“OF COURSE!”

POM		“YOU SPOKE OF VIOLATIONS. HAVE RULES BEEN PUBLISHED?”
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VICE		“TO BE SURE, BUT I’M CERTAIN THERE ARE THOSE 10 PERCENT THAT DIDN’T GET THE WORD. LET THEM NOW BE RECOGNIZED AND TAKE THEIR TRIP TO THE GROG.”
POM		“DO I HEAR ANY VIOLATIONS OF RULES FROM THE FLOOR?” After 10 to 15 minutes the vice will state:
VICE		“MR./MADAM PRESIDENT!”
POM		“YES, MR./MADAM VICE?”
VICE		“VIOLATIONS ARE TOO RAMPANT. YET, I FEEL ENOUGH HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH, JUSTICE HAS BEEN SERVED AND THE DECORUM OF THE MESS HAS BEEN RESTORED.”
POM		“I AGREE, MR./MADAM VICE THAT HAVING BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, PUNISHMENT WILL EASE.” Once the main course is complete, the POM may desire to light the smoking lamp.
POM	-1930-	(Raps gavel twice.) Duties are cleared. Dessert and fresh wine are set.
VICE	-1940-	Mr./Madam Vice rings chimes and announces assembly. (Members of themes reassemble in the dining room and stand behind their chairs.) (Members of the head table assemble in the lounge.)
VICE	-1945-	“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE HEAD TABLE!” Members come to attention
POM		(Rap gavel once) “LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE MESS WILL COME TO ORDER. PLEASE BE SEATED.”

VICE		“MR./MADAM PRESIDENT!”
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POM		“MR./MADAM VICE?”
POM		“LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE THIRD COURSE IS NOW SERVED. ENJOY YOUR DESSERT.”
POM	- -	“IT IS NOW TIME TO RECOGNIZE SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS.” (Recognition and awards are presented now.)
POM	-2000-	“IT IS NOW MY HONOR TO PRESENT OUR GUEST SPEAKER FOR TONIGHT.” (Give the biography of the guest of Honor. Be thorough, but brief.)
	-	Guest speaker’s address.
	-2015-	“GENERAL _____, ON BEHALF OF AFROTC DETACHMENT _____, I OFFER OUR SINCERE THANKS FOR YOUR INSPIRING WORDS.”
POM	-2020-	“MR./MADAM VICE, A TOAST?”
VICE		“TO OUR DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER!”
MEMBERS		“HEAR, HEAR”
POM	-2021-	(Closing remarks)
POM	-2023-	“WILL THE COLOR GUARD NOW RETIRE THE COLORS?”
COLOR GUARD		(Retires the Colors)
POM	-2025-	(Two raps of the gavel) “THE MESS IS ADJOURNED. THE LOUNGE IS NOW OPEN.”

**Flag Stand**

**Head Table**

**Trophy  
Table**

**Mister-Madam**

**Vice**

**Flag Stand**

**Head Table**

**Trophy Table**



**Membership**



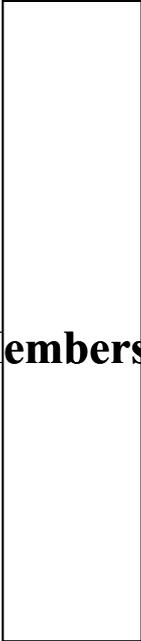
**Mister-Madam**

**Vice**

**Flag Stand**

**Head Table**

**Trophy Table**



**Membership**

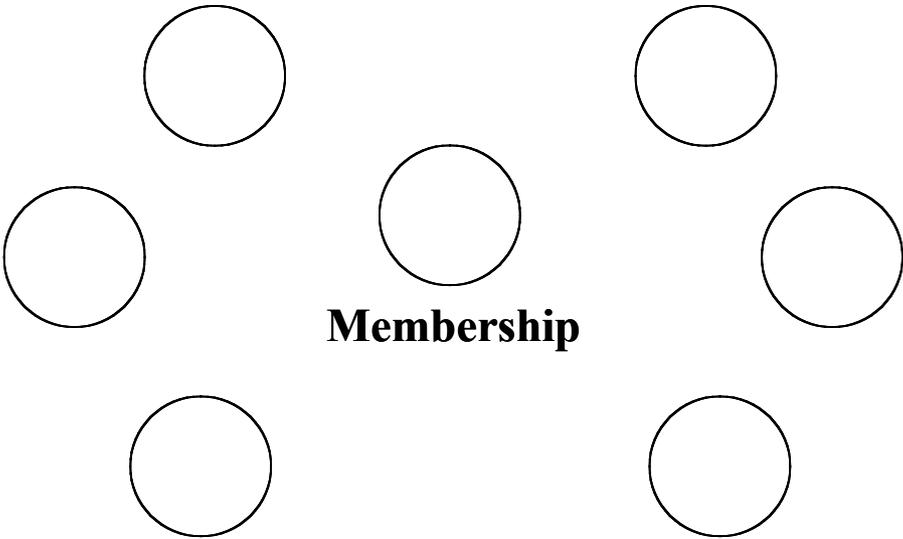
**Mister-Madam**

**Vice**

**Flag Stand**

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**Trophy Table**

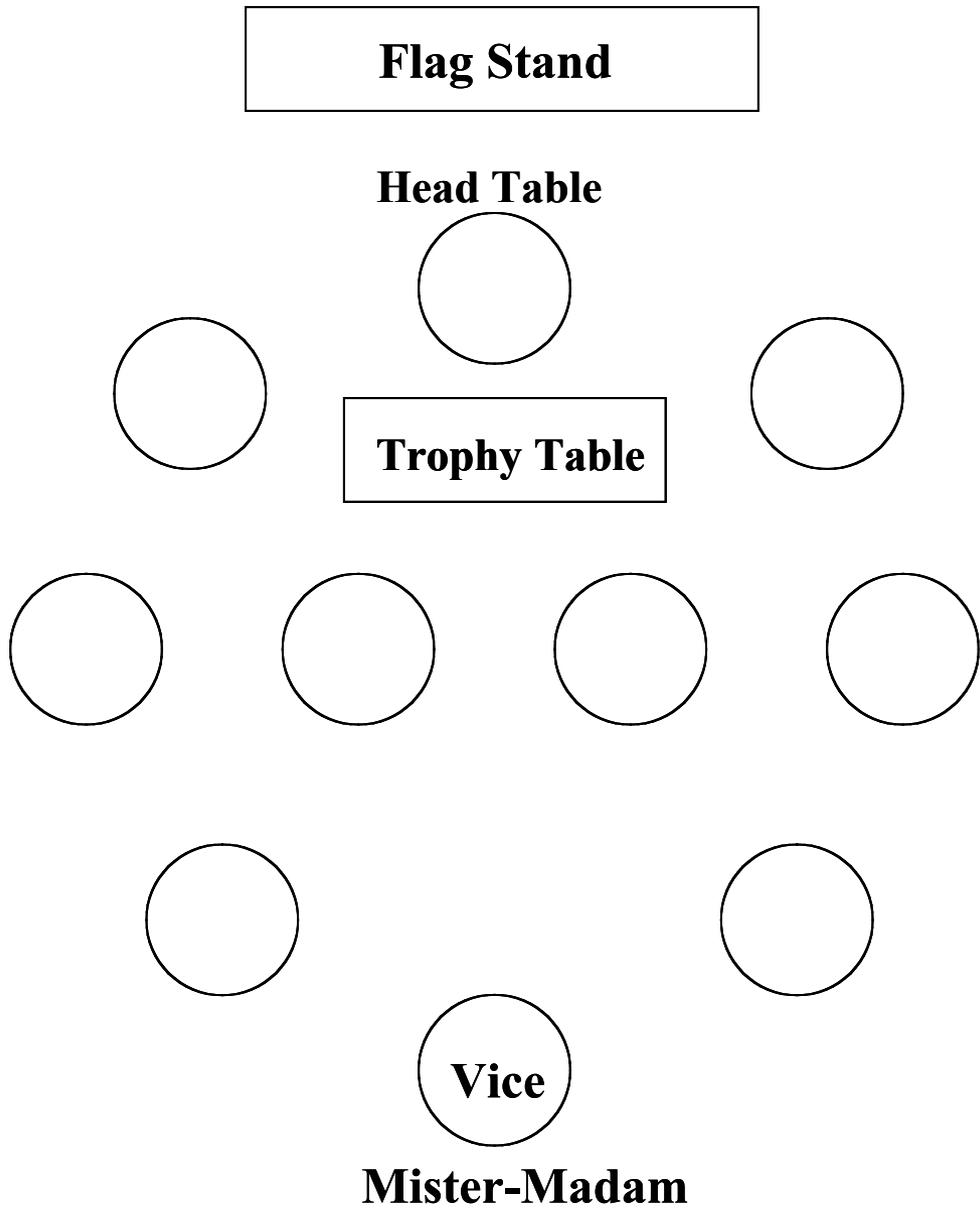


**Membership**

**Mister-Madam**

**Vice**





*Fruit Cup*

*Green Salad - Assorted Dressing*

*Roast Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus*

*Baked Potato*

*Peas*

*Rolls and Butter*

*Cheesecake*

*Iced Tea or Coffee*

1. Does the speaker and microphone system work properly?
2. Is there a spare bulb for the rostrum light?
3. Are flags and other decorations properly displayed?
4. Is there a gavel at the President's place?
5. Are dinner chimes at the Vice's place?
6. Is there a microphone at the Vice's place?
7. Has the grog been concocted?
8. If awards are to be presented, are they in place?
9. Is the seating chart (if one desired) displayed in a convenient location?
10. If organizational trophies are to be displayed, are they in place?
11. Are parking areas reserved and marked for distinguished guests?
12. Is everything according to plan?

The following is a list of rules under which the mess will be conducted. They are designed to conform to tradition and promote levity. Violators are subject to the wrath and mischievousness of Mr./Madam Vice (with the President's permission, of course). All assigned penalties will be carried out before the membership.

1. Thou shalt not be late.
2. Thou shalt make every effort to meet all guests.
3. Thou shalt move to the mess when thee hear's the chimes and remain standing until seated by the President.
4. Thou shalt not bring drink or lighted smoking materials into the mess.
5. Thou shalt not leave the mess whilst convened. Military protocol overrides all calls of nature.
6. Thou shalt participate in all toasts unless thyself or they group is being honored with a toasts unless thyself or thy group is being honored with a toast.
7. Thou shalt ensure that thy glass is always charged while toasting.
8. Thou shalt keep toasts and comments within the limits of good taste and mutual respect. Degrading or insulting remarks will be frowned upon by the membership. However, good-natured needing is ENCOURAGED.
9. Thou shalt not murder the Queen's English.
10. Thou shalt not open the hanger doors (talk shop).
11. Thou shalt always use the proper toasting procedure.
12. Thou shalt fall into disrepute with thy peers if the pleats of thy cummerbund are inverted.
13. Thou shalt also be painfully regarded if thy clip-on bow tie rides at an obvious list.
14. Thou shalt consume thy meal in a manner becoming gentlepersons.
15. Thou shalt not laugh at ridiculously funny comments unless the President first shows approval by laughing.
16. Thou shalt not overindulge thyself in alcoholic beverages.
17. Thou shalt not question the decisions of the President, otherwise known as caviling.
18. When the mess opens or adjourns, thou shalt rise and wait for the members at the head table to take their places or depart.
19. Thou shalt not begin eating a course of the meal before members of the head table.

20. Thou shalt not engage in conversation while another member has the floor.
21. Thou shalt not wear all ill-fitted or discolored mess jacket.
22. Thou shalt enjoy thyself to thy fullest.

OFF WE GO INTO THE WILD BLUE YONDER,  
CLIMBING HIGH INTO THE SUN  
HERE THEY COME, ZOOMING TO MEET OUR THUNDER;  
AT 'EM BOYS, GIVE'ER THE GUN!  
DOWN WE DIVE, SPOUTING OUR FLAME FROM UNDER,  
OFF WITH ONE HELL-OF-A ROAR!  
WE LIVE IN FAME OR GO DOWN IN FLAME.  
(SHOUT) NOTHING WILL STOP THE U.S. AIR FORCE!