



# Group Study Exchange

## District 9790

# MANUAL

## Information Schedule for Clubs



**Don Hamilton  
District Chair  
Group Study Exchange 2008-2009**

## Index

1. General Description	2
2. History of the Group Study Exchange (GSE) Programme	2
3. Quality of the Exchange	2
4. GSE Committee	3
5. GSE Awards and Types of Exchange	4
6. Outbound Team	
Choosing the Team – The Interviews	4
Team Leader Role	4
Team Leader Selection	5
Team Member Selection	5
Team Member Qualifications	6
The Right Mix	6
Other Information	7
7. Applicants, Publicity	7
8. Behavioural Expectations	7
9. GSE and World Community Service (WCS) Connections	7
10. Team Leader Responsibilities	8
11. Selecting Alternates	8
12. Sanction, removal of a Team Member	8
13. Badges, Lapel Pins and Name Tags	8
14. Sponsor Clubs	9
15. Post-Exchange Responsibilities	9
16. Inbound Team	9
17. Regional Choices and Rotation	10
18. Rotary International (RI) Materials	11
19. Host Families	11
20. Mail, Internet and the Telephone	12
21. Who Pays?	12
22. Vocational Exchanges	12
23. Representative Sights and Activities	13
24. Food	13
25. Quality Control, Leadership Meetings	13
26. Rest Breaks	13
27. RI and Reference Materials	13
28. Health and Travel Insurance	14
29. Passports and Visas	14
30. Language Materials	14
31. GSE Manuals	14
32. Web Page References	15
33. RI Staff	15
34. Exchange Evaluation	15
35. Some GSE Statistics	16

## **Group Study Exchange – Information Schedule for Clubs**

### **1. General Description**

Group Study Exchange (GSE) is a Rotary International Foundation programme which is a two-way exchange of young professional and business people between D9790 and another district.

GSE is a unique cultural and vocational exchange opportunity for young business and professional men and women in their initial years of professional life. The Programme is designed to develop professional and leadership skills among young people to better prepare them to address the needs of their communities and an increasingly global workplace. Group Study Exchange participants follow a rigorous Programme:

- **Vocational activities**, which provide opportunities to observe vocations as practiced in another country, thereby allowing for a reciprocal exchange of ideas in their respective fields, which will benefit all communities involved;
- **Cultural experiences**, which allow participants to study another country, its people and institutions through experiences in an organised and meaningful host programme, and to promote an appreciation of cultural diversity worldwide;
- **Fellowship opportunities**, which encourage team members and hosts to meet, communicate and live with each other in a spirit of fellowship and goodwill; to be aware of each other's problems, aspirations and community concerns; and to foster lasting friendships and international understanding; and
- **Rotarian involvement**, which offers Rotarians specific, practical and meaningful opportunities for International Service by providing young, formative professionals to experience their vocation in another country and culture. Furthermore, GSE offers Rotarians the opportunity to participate in the process of sending, and through home hosting receiving and sharing educational experiences of study teams that will enhance the worldwide mission of Rotary.

### **2. History of the GSE Programme**

The GSE programme began in 1955 as the idea of a New Zealand district. Originally known as the Rotary Overseas Travel Award (ROTA), it was adopted by the Trustees as an official educational programme in 1965. At the end of 2005-06 Rotary year, almost 12,000 teams have travelled. Through that same period, more than 57,000 individuals took advantage of the programme. In 2005-06, 543 teams travelled abroad. Expenditures through 2005-06 totalled \$92 million. In 2005-06, 543 teams travelled abroad at an expenditure of \$3.9 million. Every district which participates is awarded one GSE each year funded by The Rotary Foundation through its World Fund; District Designated Funds (DDF) are not used for this programme. RI Staff is composed of one supervisor, one senior coordinator, two coordinators, and a secretary. Languages spoken are French, German, Spanish, and Italian, and staff have experience living in France, India, Austria, Spain, Mexico, Croatia, the USA, and Canada.

### **3. Quality of the Exchange**

A lot rides on the quality of our GSE exchange - the Rotary effort of building bridges of peace and understanding, District relations, the future attraction of applicants, the reputation of our District, and more. With good planning, goal-driven design and active participation of dedicated Rotarians, a GSE can be an exceptional educational experience for both GSE teams and the participating Rotarians.

#### **4. GSE Committee**

This Rotary year, D9790 is participating in two Exchanges, one to the United States and the other to France. Therefore for this year the GSE Committee is composed of a Chair and two Co-ordinators plus other members. A Chair may have a three year or longer connection with the Committee - first year as a committee member or GSE team leader, building over time to the position of Chair. This pattern provides continuity and consistency in leadership, and “quality control” in the District GSE programme.

#### **5. GSE Awards and Types of Exchanges**

RI makes “GSE Awards” (the right to have a GSE) based on a quality GSE application by our District. To receive a pairing, District applications for a GSE programme in one Rotary year are due to The Rotary Foundation (TRF) before October 1 in the prior Rotary year. Though one GSE per year is normal, two Exchanges per year are not uncommon. As mentioned previously, D9790 will be conducting two Exchanges this Rotary year.

GSE come in a variety of types:

- traditional exchanges with varied occupations and ages, the general purpose being building bridges of peace, understanding and vocational exchange,
- joint District exchanges, where both in-bound and out-bound teams are shared by two districts,
- single-vocation exchanges, where a single profession, occupation - or related occupations - is the focus (e.g. engineers or health workers or farmers) and that vocation is prevalent in the host District,
- cultural exchanges, where artists, educators, linguists and museum curators join to share culture,
- RI emphasis areas, e.g. focus on literacy or drug abuse, or
- Project-based exchanges, where a World Community Service (WCS) project or international project is the focus of the exchange, and the vocations are selected so as to make the project succeed, e.g. a water project in a developing country, meaning water district employees, civil or mechanical engineers, equipment providers, or dam builders make up the team.

#### **6. Outbound Team**

##### **6.1 Choosing the Team - The Interviewers**

A GSE Team Leader and Alternate are selected during an interview, a fortnight after that another round of interviews is held to select Team Members. The process is led by the GSE Chair. A November 1996 RI Trustee Decision requires the GSE selection committee to include the District GSE chair, immediate PDG, current DG, DGE, and three committee members (Rotarians on staggered terms). RI permits the selection committee to include “non-voting advisors”. D9790 also looks to include the TRF Chair on the selection committee.

We usually include the D9790 Rotary Foundation Chair in both interviews, and the newly selected team leader and sometimes the alternate team leader in the team member interviews. The interview committee typically has a prior GSE Team Leader. We also try to include a recent Team Member in the interview committee. It's helpful to have at least 6 interviewers for different perspectives, but not so many as to be intimidating to the applicants.

Interviews are normally conducted on a weekend day or two, depending on the number of applicants.

## **6.2 Team Leader Role**

The Team Leader is a Rotarian who is a member in good standing of a Club within D9790. While not mandatory, RI recommends that Team Leaders be within 20 years of the oldest team member, so they can bond and work well with the team; thus the prime ages for a team leader are 45 to 60.

The Team Leader not only guides/leads the Team, but during the exchange is a full participant and can have vocational exchanges, learn about Rotary clubs, Rotaract, Interact, Rotary Community Corps and other aspects of Rotary in the host District, and learn about successful and new projects in the host District. In short, for the Rotarian Team Leader an Exchange can be an eye-opening or potentially life-changing experience. For that reason, consideration should be given as to whether the target country is one that is new for the selected team leader. If he/she is a regular visitor, this may detract from that Rotarian leader's growth and development. The interview team should question leader applicants on this; not just automatically accept or reject based on country familiarity or language; but instead make a judgement as to what is "best" for both the Team and Team Leader.

## **6.3 Team Leader Selection.**

Clubs are expected to assess Team Leader applicants before submitting the application. Applicants should complete and sign an application form and include a photo. The club should endorse the applicant and have the application form signed off by the club president. Clubs are also expected to provide assistance and support where appropriate. Soon after the application deadline, applicants will be notified of their interview date and time.

Current governors, immediate past governors and governors-elect may not serve as GSE team leaders, since this role is incompatible with the effective discharge of their duties. As of January 2007, RI has determined that the Team Leader may not be the spouse, lineal descendant, or step child (whether adopted or not adopted) of a living immediate past governor, current governor, or governor-elect of the district making the appointment.

At the end of the in-person interviews, a Team Leader and an Alternate Team Leader are selected, and usually confirmed later that day; the unsuccessful candidates are then called later and advised of the outcome.

Usually a consensus emerges among interviewers; but if not the Chair and the DG who arranged the exchange have the most influence in the selection. Once installed, the two Team Leaders are oriented by the Committee Chair as follows: given the Timeline for the exchange, a copy of the paperwork between the Districts which spells out the exchanges, the relevant RI manuals and forms, and they are assisted in the first steps by the Committee Chair and Co-ordinators.

## **6.4 Team Member Selection**

GSE Team Members are selected during a process that culminates with in-person interviews conducted by the same committee which conducted the Team Leader interview, although in this instance the Team Leader and Alternate will also be involved. The Team Member applications and essays will be distributed to the selection committee well before the interview dates. The sponsor clubs are expected to support their applicants wherever possible; and are also responsible to check that the applicants are qualified to apply.

If the GSE Chair is concerned about the qualifications of an applicant, the sponsor club will be contacted to

verify certain information about the applicant's suitability. If in the opinion of the GSE Chair a Team Member applicant is not qualified, they will not be interviewed. Shortly after the application deadline, applicants and sponsor clubs will be advised of their interview date and time.

Rotarians who serve on a club or district-level selection committee for GSE and other TRF programmes are expected to exercise complete transparency and disclose fully any familial, personal, or business relationship(s) with any applicant. They must notify the GSE Chair in advance of the selection process of any actual or perceived conflict of interest due to the committee member's association with a TRF programme award candidate, e.g. a familial relationship, employees of the same firm or organisation, members of the same Rotary club or other organisation, member of the club which sponsors an applicant, etc. The GSE Chair will decide how and if that committee member should participate in the selection process for that candidate with whom there is an actual or perceived interest, or all applicants. If the GSE Chair is the individual with an actual or perceived conflict of interest, the TRF Chair will decide if and how the chairperson should participate in the selection process.

Interviews are usually conducted on a weekend day or two, depending on the number of applicants. Usually a consensus emerges among interviewers; but if not the Chair and the DG who arranged the exchange have the most influence in the selection. The relevant Team Leader also has significant input into this part of the process.

Five Team Members finalists (four Team Members and one Alternate Team Member) are selected at the end of the interviews, and advised the evening that the interview process is completed. After the five members are confirmed, the unsuccessful candidates *who indicated they would consider being an alternate* are called and encouraged to re-apply next year. The unsuccessful applicants are then contacted and advised that they were not selected.

## **6.5 Team Member Qualifications**

Each Team Member applicant should complete an application, an Essay of Intent, and provide a colour passport type photo. Applicants may include a letter of recommendation from their employer, supervisor, governing board, a fellow professional or a Rotarian, indicating support and why the applicant would make a good team member. It is in order to include other supporting letters or documents, or resumés; but only the application, essay and photo are required.

Team Member applicants must be Australian citizens and at least 25 years but not older than 40 years *at the time of signing the Application Form*.

RI policy (April 2007 Containing Trustee Decisions through January 2007) defines ineligible persons as those that include Rotarians; honorary Rotarians; employees of clubs, districts, or other Rotary Entities (as defined in the *Rotary Code of Policies*) or of Rotary International; spouses, lineal descendants (children or grandchildren by blood, legal adoption, or marriage without adoption), spouses of lineal descendants, or ancestors (parents or grandparents by blood of persons in the foregoing categories; or employees of agencies, organizations, or institutions partnering with TRF or RI; and any other individual identified in Section 9.3 of the TRF bylaws.

They must be employed full-time and intend to remain working in foreseeable future. Full-time employment is usually considered to be in excess of 30 hours per week. Permanent part-time employment will qualify provided the applicant holds two or more permanent part-time jobs in the same

field, i.e., education, nursing for example where the total weekly hours worked exceed 30.

Proficiency (if not fluency) in the host district language is encouraged, but failure to meet this standard is not sufficient reason to decline an application. RI will cover the reasonable cost of an applicant who endeavours to learn some proficiency in the host district language through personal study.

## **6.6 The Right Mix**

In selecting the Team members, interviewers should use their judgment about which members will comprise the best team - their mix of personalities and skill sets in providing entertainment (sing, dance, or play instruments) supporting the Team with technology (computers, cameras, video, printing) or other important factors.

If the exchange is a traditional multi-vocational exchange, having a good mix of vocations is important; or if a specialised exchange, having the right mix to meet the special purpose is important.

## **6.7 Other Information**

During or before the interview, Applicants should be told:

- about the timing for selecting team members,
- frequency of meetings (and probably during weekends), and the first meeting date,
- RI will pay the plane fare; the host District will arrange lodging or home hosting, most internal transportation and admissions during the exchange, and pay for most food and drink.
- costs *team members* will incur include: passport, visa, inoculations, health insurance, some clothing, gifts for host families and vocational exchange people, miscellaneous food and drink, transport to/from airports; these could range in total upwards of \$500 to \$1,000.
- about spouses/significant others and extensions (see 27 below)

## **7. Applicants, Publicity**

It is highly desirable to have at least 15 but not more than 30 applicants, as this gives a good choice and higher likelihood of success to the team experience; however interviews should not extend over a two-day period. Flyers and/or letters describing GSE and soliciting applicants must be prepared and distributed to the typical referral sources, for example: District leaders, club presidents, club directors of International Service, GSE alumni (both leaders and members), and prior applicants. The District Website should also carry information about the Exchange.

In addition, press releases can be sent to local news media and local radio.

## **8. Behavioural Expectations**

Team members will have explained to them what is expected of them by Rotary - in time commitment, and pre and post-Exchange District and club presentations. At any time during the process – during team meetings, preparation sessions, language studies, in company with team members, with Rotarians, on Rotary Club visits, on the GSE trip, and afterward during presentations -they expected to be on their best behaviour.

They will treat each other, our guest speakers, volunteers, host families, Rotarians and all others they meet with the highest respect and dignity.

What follows are obvious protocols, but they are also the specific behaviours we expect:

- no violations of law of any kind, either at home or in the host Country/District,
- no drugs except accepted prescription medication, legal herbal remedies,
- no overindulging in alcoholic beverages,
- no physical or verbal conflicts,
- attend all meetings, arrive early or on time and stay the duration. If an emergency arises, contact the Team Leader, or if not available the GSE Chair; then “make up” as best you can,
- do your tasks early and professionally,
- volunteer ... it’s how things get done, how we each earn the respect of our team members, and
- follow directions from Team Leader or Alternate Leader and District leaders,

### 9. GSE and World Community Service (WCS) Connections.

GSE is a natural breeding ground for World Community Service (WCS) project work. GSE Teams often visit developing countries, observe first hand their needs, and make good Rotary and other vocational or in-country contacts that would facilitate a WCS, or Matching Grant project in that country. Moreover, they may be moved to assist the friends met in solving a strong local community need. Therefore, DG’s and WCS Committees should be open to receive project suggestions from a returning Team; and it may help for WCS Committee members to participate in the preparation of a Team by educating them on what to spot, what information to collect, what contacts to establish, so that groundwork is laid for the handoff to WCS. Similarly, if a significant matching grant has already occurred, a GSE is a natural follow-up.

### 10. Team Leader Responsibilities.

- **Leadership Style.** The GSE Team Leader is the main architect of the Team’s activities, but with the encouragement, support and supervision of their GSE Chair and Co-ordinator. The Team Leader is encouraged to lead with a facilitative, but not autocratic style and to create an environment where Team Members can flourish. In short, to try to make this the “Team’s Exchange”. Team Leaders should explain to the Team that their role may change as the Exchange begins, in that the Team Leader becomes a participant in both the cultural and vocational aspects of the Exchange.
- **Chair Role with Team.** Even though they share past experiences, create the framework, inspire, encourage and even occasionally cajole, GSE Chairs *do not organize or direct* the team and its work - the Team Leader does.
- **Calendar, Deadlines.** Early on the Chair should inform the Team Leader of RI deadlines, the Exchange calendars (inbound and outbound), the amount of time it takes to prepare; then the Team Leader will set meeting dates.

### 11. Selecting Alternates

Alternate leader and team members are necessary to assure the Exchange will occur despite illness, job change or personal problems; alternates frequently do “go” on the Exchange. In conjunction with the relevant Co-ordinator, the Chair will determine if an Alternate Team Leader must take charge of an Exchange and travel with the team.

An alternate team member will not normally go on the Exchange unless another team member becomes ill or is otherwise unavailable. The alternate is usually expected to prepare nearly as fully as any team member - culture and language studies, a presentation, photos, uniform, etc. - so they are fully prepared to step on the plane if needed. If a member selected to be an alternate does this, their

application to be a member for a future GSE team should receive more favourable consideration; but if not they will not be encouraged to re-apply for a future GSE team.

If team members or alternates do drop out, the Chair and Team Leader may invite the next best of the unsuccessful applicant to join.

## **12. Sanctions, Removal of a Team Member**

Where a Team Member's performance during preparation is not up to the expected standard, or their behaviour creates conflicts within the Team, the Team Leader may, after consulting with the GSE Chair and also the DG, impose certain conditions or sanctions. In extreme situations a Team Member may be removed from the Team either in preparation or during an exchange, but this is an unusual occurrence.

## **13. Badges, Lapel Pins, and Name Tags**

It is customary for the Team Leader and all Team members to wear a Rotary badge on their uniform jacket, and an engraved plastic name tag. GSE badges can be hand-sewn or basted on coats. Uniforms and clothing selected for an exchange should be sensitive to what Rotarians wear or expect in the host District. Cross-flag lapel pins of Australia and the host country are also suitable if available. Enquiries made of Rotary Down Under [www.rotanet.com.au](http://www.rotanet.com.au) in Parramatta, New South Wales will ascertain their availability.

## **14. Sponsor Clubs**

Each team member and leader must have a sponsoring club. For the Team Leader it is her/his normal club. For Team Members it is usually a club near work or home which is willing to sponsor. District expects the Sponsor Club to satisfy themselves as to the applicants suitability as a Team Member and to ensure they meet the qualification standards as laid down by RI. Once these requirements are met, the Sponsor Club signs the Team Member's Application form, which is forwarded on to the GSE Chair.

Ideally the sponsor club should appoint a mentor to their Team Member who should provide an orientation to Rotary - both internationally and in the local area, invite the Team Member to participate in fellowship activities, club projects, dinners or hands-on projects, and give the Team Member opportunities to speak to the club in preparation for the exchange and upon their return.

If the applicant is successful and is selected as a member of the outgoing team, the Sponsor Club should provide sufficient club banners for presentation to clubs in the host District with a few to spare (typically 15 to 20).

## **15. Post-Exchange Responsibilities**

On their return, in addition to any work or family responsibilities, each member of the Team is responsible to:

- attend the D9790 Conference,
- speak at their sponsor Rotary Club, and all other Rotary Club's that request a GSE speaker,
- complete Exchange Evaluation forms within 2 weeks of return, and
- complete Exchange Final Report Form within 2 months of return.

## **16. Inbound Team**

### Team Leader

Like ours, the Inbound GSE Team has a Team Leader, who reports to the D9790 GSE Chair. Once

selected, the GSE Team Leaders may want to exchange email or talk by phone to compare notes. The inbound Team is typically housed in a hotel during their first two nights to recuperate from their flight. There is usually a “Welcoming Event” which may be before hotel rest, but no other activities or home visits should interrupt it.

This “Event” usually gives the Host District DG and GSE Chair the opportunity to meet the incoming team and to ‘de-brief’ them on local customs, currency differences, etc., and to answer any queries the team may have. This may be conducted by the first host club if they so wish, but it is important to respect the needs of the incoming team and allow them the two days set aside for rest and recuperation.

#### D9790 Programme

D9790 already have developed a Visits Programme for the Inbound Team in cooperation with each participating Club. Work on this schedule should start around November and the finished schedule completed some two months before the visit starts so that a copy may be provided to the GSE Chair of the incoming team.

That detailed schedule will include at a minimum:

- address, phone (and email where appropriate) details of each host family,
- each city visited with start/end dates, region co-ordinator and phone number,
- each vocational exchange (including place, name of contact, team member/leader involved) together with the name of the accompanying Rotarian (if known at the time),
- each major cultural activity or site to be visited, including parks, factory and/or plant tours, non-Rotary events, and regional attractions,
- each club visit,
- the beginning and final gatherings (e.g. welcoming or goodbye party/picnic)

The GSE Chair of the incoming team should also be advised before departure of what weather the team is likely to encounter across the visit and recommend suitable clothing, etc.

#### Itinerary Exchange

To enhance the vocational quality of the host itineraries for visiting GSE teams, Host Districts should submit a detailed itinerary to the partner Sponsor District and TRF. The partner districts should discuss the itinerary with their outbound GSE team and send their specific vocational visit requests and suggestions to the Host District.

Host itineraries must reflect vocational days, personal and/or rest days, travel days and locations for the entirety of the GSE visit.

### **17. Regional Choices and Rotation**

Everyone should have an opportunity to enjoy the internationality of Rotary by hosting a GSE Team. Methods for selecting a host clubs are not rigorously defined, but are based on the judgment of the Committee as to which club will provide the best exchange for the inbound GSE Team.

Typically, around seven D9790 clubs participate directly in each Inbound Exchange. Clubs apply each year for hosting privileges and they are decided around November annually. Clubs are selected on the value they can impart into an Exchange either by way of variety, vocational value,

cultural input or a unique locality. The Committee endeavours to spread the hosting across both country and metropolitan clubs as much as is practicable.

There are competing interests or factors to balance:

- What do in-bound teams expect in order to get a reasonable “taste” of the host District?
- Where are the best vocational opportunities located for the particular team (usually decided by the vocational needs of Team Members),
- Where are the best cultural opportunities located for the particular team?
- Which clubs are best organised, so that the GSE experience is at a high quality level?
- Of those clubs applying to host, which have not had a recent opportunity (a fairness element)?

The key to club selection is to balance these factors. In making their submissions to host, clubs are asked to highlight specific areas of interest and/or relevance for the incoming GSE team. The Chair, together with the other GSE committee members, will take this information and make a decision. There is no fixed formula, so clubs are encouraged to develop strong proposals for vocational exchanges for each team member emphasising good hosting, club visits, and unique cultural and vocational activities suited to the inbound Team. Selections will be made based on this information. Hosting periods should stay within the club, but a club may call on other clubs to assist with other aspects of the visit if appropriate.

Clubs will be invited to submit expressions of interest to host at the end of September, and submissions will close by the end of October.

Clubs are *strongly encouraged* to cooperate with neighbouring clubs to choose which club hosts and which provides which vocational opportunities, cultural visits, and team transportation. The GSE Committee will meet early in November to decide on host clubs. Successful clubs should keep in mind that if there is duplication in proposed cultural/vocational visits with a neighbouring club they will be asked to co-operate with a view to removing this duplication.

Clubs are responsible to provide host families for the Team (the Leader plus Members), excellent vocational exchanges for each of them, transportation, and sight-seeing tours of highlights in the area. Where possible, host clubs are to invite the team to their normal weekly meeting so the incoming team can (a) make their team presentation, and (b) experience Rotary meetings at a local level. Host clubs are encouraged to make these meetings a multi-club visit by inviting those neighbouring clubs which do not have the opportunity to host the incoming team.

Transportation from one club to the next, or from one host family to the next, is the responsibility of each club. If they can't agree, it is the responsibility of the first club to transport to the second. The cost of meals/food, etc at this changeover is usually met by the receiving club if no previous arrangement has been made.

Well before arrival, please designate a club transportation co-ordinator, and have him/her contact the GSE Chair or designate. Be sure each transportation coordinator or escort has the Programme, other itinerary details, Host Family list, a travel map, contact information for others who are involved in the Exchange, funds for meals and admissions, and special clothing or weather gear, etc.

## **18. RI Materials**

Each club co-ordinator and Host Family will receive a District produced manual which provides

information on the incoming team, host clubs and host families, and the itinerary. There will also be contact numbers of key District TRF and GSE personnel together with guidelines and a checklist for club co-ordinators and host families.

## **19. Host Families**

Host families should provide all meals, and may provide non-programme activities to “fill in” holes in a team member’s day; keeping in mind the often tiring aspect of the Exchange and its impact on the Team Member. Most often, Team Members relish time spent talking about life in the family, community and region, and special events in the host family; even reading to children or playing games.

Team members are often embarrassed to ask to have their washing done for them, sometimes offering to do it for themselves. Typically they will not have the time or opportunity to do so, so they will appreciate it if the host family volunteers to do this job for them.

Host families should indicate which pets they have, and be sure the hosted Team Member does not have allergies or concerns about the pets.

Here is a suggested checklist for preparation of each host family:

- I have met my Club Coordinator, and been briefed,
- I have received and read the materials in Sec. 18 above,
- I have received and studied the itinerary; know all the activities involving my Rotary club,
- I have read the brief bio about the Team Member who will stay with me, their vocation, vocational exchange preferences, and have a photo,
- I know if my guest is disabled, requires medication, has allergies, food allergies or special requirements, reaction to smoking, special needs, etc.,
- I know each day and time when I am to drop off or pick up my guest, or am a group driver,
- I have prepared my family for our guest’s visit; we have learned at least some basics about the country, language, customs, economy, religion/spirituality, foods, etc.,
- I may optionally give a gift to my guest, but not “too much” which might embarrass them.

## **20. Mail, Internet, Telephone**

Team members will want a place to receive mail or faxes, read/receive e - mail, and browse the internet. Please be prepared to provide this at least every few days. Hosts are not expected to cover the cost of overseas long distance telephone calls; but you can assist by obtaining long-distance calling cards that work to call their home area, and assist them in getting used to our phone system.

Team Leader or Team Member use of phones (including Mobiles and SMS messaging) is highly discouraged during vocational exchanges or daily team activities. These calls should be restricted to the quiet time after the activities of the day if this is necessary.

## **21. Who pays?**

Each host club and its members should decide well ahead of the team visit who pays for what during the Exchange. The Rotary Foundation, this District and the inbound team expect that lodging, meals, transportation and ordinary admissions (e.g. to museums or zoos) will be provided at no cost to Team Members.

It is customary for host families to provide meals, lodging, and some entertainment at their own cost for their Team Member. Incidental food, personal shopping and purchases by a Team Member are at the Team Member's own expense. At the District level there is no budget for hosting, meals, internal travel, entertainment, or unanticipated expenses.

Should a club decide to accommodate the incoming team at a hotel or motel (this is discouraged by District) they will do so at their own expense.

## **22. Vocational Exchanges**

RI requires the inbound team to have at least five full days of personalised vocational visits organised for each team member (including the Team Leader). In general, hands-on activities or a day of "shadowing" a professional on the job are preferred to tours where team members merely observe a workplace or facility. Based on the expectations of many participants, more vocational days are better than fewer.

These exchanges must match as closely as possible the professional interests and vocational needs of the Team Member. Time spent in exploring the possibilities among Rotarian contacts and non-Rotarians is never wasted. Team Member employers expect significant vocational activity to justify time away from work. Insufficient vocational days may jeopardize our ability to participate in future Exchanges.

## **23. Representative Sights and Activities**

There is a natural tendency to show what is wonderful or "best" about your club or locality, and certainly some of that is desirable. Team members seek a balanced view (and RI recommends this). It is recommended that clubs include the problem areas of their community or region, and what is being done to remedy this situation. Consider a visit to a social service agency and look into infrastructure challenges. Educate them about pollution, endangered species, community needs, and things that provide a balance to the natural beauty and attractions of your locality.

## **24. Food**

The incoming team will want to experience local food, but also be sensitive that team members may be missing an essential staple local to their home cooking. They may want to cook wonderful native food for you; please consider asking and assisting them.

## **25. Quality Control, Leadership Meetings**

During the Exchange, the GSE Chair is responsible to insure the exchange proceeds according to the Programme, and is of good quality. Before or by the mid-Exchange rest and evaluation, the GSE Chair should meet with the inbound Team Leader to candidly evaluate the Exchange, and make any corrections which may be considered necessary.

## **26. Rest Breaks**

The tendency in GSE is to show the inbound Team everything of interest and pack their schedule with events. The cumulative effect of this during the month-long exchange is very wearing. Each club should include some quiet time when team members can be alone, and also some "team time" when the Team can be together to debrief, and when the Team Leader can discuss internal logistics, personal or behaviour issues. Clubs should ask the Team Leader how much team rest and meeting time is desired each day or week.

On this matter, the RI Team Handbook or Programme Guide requires:

- at least one half day mid-week and one full day each weekend for team members as “free time” to do as they wish. That means **no** activities planned for the team either by organising Rotarians or host families. Team members can rest, sleep, write letters home, shop, sightsee, or rest with their host families if they wish.
- a one or two day mid-tour isolation period with no Rotarian contacts to provide an opportunity for the team to compare impressions, assess the tour up to that point and to strengthen team spirit.
- Club visits restricted to about three or four per week (though this is more of a guideline than a fixed requirement)

## **27. Rotary International and Reference Materials**

### Rotary International

GSE is a programme of The Rotary Foundation (TRF), and general parameters are controlled by Rotary International which provides substantial funding.

### Travel, Spouses, Extensions

Air travel is arranged by RITS (Rotary International Travel Service), and District can suggest but not control flights or arrival/departure times. Team Leaders and Members must travel and arrive together to the destination, but may extend their stay or do a 2-leg trip at the end of the Exchange. Extension requests must be included in the initial RITS travel request. Additional travel costs incurred by a change in the normal end of the exchange are the responsibility of the person extending, and RITS will typically require that the added cost be prepaid.

Accommodation after an exchange will be at the Leader's or Member's own expense and by their own arrangement. Spouses and partners cannot join at any time during the exchange (even the last or few days or “free” days), but they can meet them after the exchange is complete if their trip is extended.

Also, if a Team Member or Leader who is designated to travel chooses not to travel, or does not have an excuse that is satisfactory to RI, any non-refundable travel costs must be paid or reimbursed by that Team Member. Satisfactory excuses, as explained by RI, include death, serious illness including advice by a doctor not to travel, complying with an employer's directive, or a parent passing away.

## **28. Health and Travel Insurance**

RI requires health care coverage, as shown on the medical insurance certificate in the Team Handbook, is the responsibility of the Team Member. We suggest you first check with your existing health insurer, and see if some or all of the required coverage is in place or available. If not, many health care providers can assist with some or all parts of the coverage required.

## **29. Passports and Visas**

Team Members are required to hold a current Passport, without which their participation in the Exchange cannot proceed. International regulations frequently require that Australian citizens obtain Visas for entry into selected countries. These must be obtained before RI will issue tickets and travel itinerary. The Team Leader will assist Team Members with this requirement.

## **30. Language Materials**

Costs for foreign language study are reimbursed by RI but only if (a) considered appropriate (see RI

Guidelines), (b) under US\$1000 total and (c) submitted in a single reimbursement request. The reimbursement request may be by letter, and it must include all receipts.

It is preferable if this be looked upon as a Team activity, so the Team Leader will assist and coordinate this requirement. All language materials should be purchased as early as possible so as to gain the maximum benefit. The Team Leader should submit the request for reimbursement to RI with a copy to the GSE Chair. (Note: RI will not reimburse freight/shipping associated with language materials, or general purpose tools like laptops or projectors.)

Any expenditure which is (a) not reimbursed by RI and (b) not included in the District GSE budget will be considered to be an un-reimbursed expense of the Team Leader.

RI will make every effort will be made to issue payments within 15 to 20 business days from the day of submission.

### **31. GSE Manuals**

The primary resources from RI, which include their requirements are the Team Leader Handbook (165EN.pdf) and Team Handbook (164EN.pdf). Also available for download are GSE Travel Request form 165en\_travel.pdf, GSE Brochures, Team Member Application (161-EN, required before officially admitted), Biographical Data Form (164, required over 3 months before departure), Programme Guide for Rotarians (165-EN), Insurance and Medical Certificates (165), Language Training Subsidy Form (165), Team Leader Application (260-EN), an Employer Brochure (304-EN) and GSE Programme Updates: Frequently Asked Questions

### **32. Web Page References**

See RI materials and requirements starting at [www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/gse/index.html](http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/gse/index.html) including the Downloads page, where brochures, manuals and forms can be found. Also see GSE pages at [www.rotary9790.org.au](http://www.rotary9790.org.au)

### **33. RI Staff.**

GSE Staff (as of November 2006) at RI is:

Hysan Gearing

Program Assistant, Group Study Exchange Department

The Rotary Foundation

1560 Sherman Avenue

Evanston, Illinois 60201-3698

Phone: (847) 866-3330

Fax: (847) 866-0934

[Hysan.Gearing@rotary.org](mailto:Hysan.Gearing@rotary.org)

### **34. Exchange Evaluation**

Within two months of the end of the Exchange each Team Member and the Team Leader are each required to complete two forms of evaluation, the GSE Exchange Final Report and the GSE Exchange Evaluation Form. The GSE Final Report form is in both the Programme Guide for Rotarians as well as the Team Handbook. (Please note: an extension of the end of the trip does not extend this deadline)

These reports should be two to four pages and mention both the highlights of the team's experiences and suggestions for improvement for the host district and the programme. In addition, we ask that the

teams include pictures and possible articles to be placed on both the GSE and District Websites and other publications.

These two forms should be sent to the GSE Chair of the GSE Committee who will assemble and forward them to District leaders and RI. They should be sent in electronic form, i.e. Word or PDF files, and Team Leaders and Members are encouraged to include photos. They should be smaller than 15MB in size. RI has advised that travel for next year's GSE team will be withheld until these are received.

*Don W Hamilton*

**Don Hamilton**

*GSE Chair 2007-2008*

*District 9790*

## Group Study Exchange Vocational Distribution of GSE Participants

(Percentages include Team Members and Team Leaders)

Vocation/Profession	Percentage of Team Members
Architecture	4%
Arts & Journalism	4%
Education	18%
Engineering, Science & Computer Science	10%
Finance	3%
Legal	3%
Management/Administration	25%
Medicine	11%
Other	4%
Public Service & Social Work	12%
Sales & Marketing	6%

GSE Team Members by Gender: Female: 51% Male: 49%

Source: The Rotary Foundation Report on Operations, 2004-2005

I would like to express my appreciation to Stewart Martin PP, GSE Chair 2006-2007, District 5100 without whose generosity this manual would not have been possible.