

**GMB@SAS Branch Constitution**

**1. Name**

The Branch of the GMB Scottish Ambulance Service **SC A33** shall be known as **GMB@SAS**.

**2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Branch shall be to:

* Organise, recruit, and represent all members.
* Protect and where possible improve, terms and conditions of employment within the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS).
* Keep members informed of local, regional, and national matters.
* Effectively consult with members on issues affecting their work.
* Promote the work of GMB Union within SAS.

**3.** **Branch Membership**

The Branch shall consist of members employed by SAS and retired life members who had previously been employed by SAS.

**4. Branch Organisation**

* The Branch shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) no later than 30th June each year along with 3 other quarterly meetings. The Branch will also hold 4 quarterly Shop Stewards meetings per year. Dates for these should be finalised in January of each year and communicated to relevant parties via the Branch Secretary.
* All Meetings will be held either face to face or virtually, using technology as appropriate. Given the geographical spread of GMB@SAS, Branch meetings may be held via electronic format.
* The Branch Secretary and President may call Emergency Branch or Stewards meetings, as necessary.
* For both Branch and Shop Stewards meetings, members and Shop Stewards should confirm their intention of attending, by notifying the Branch Secretary no later than 7 days prior to the meeting.
* The Branch shall elect a Branch Committee at every 4th AGM, which should include, as a minimum, the following:

Branch Secretary

Branch President

Branch Convenor

Recruitment Officer

Equalities Officer

Youth Officer

Communications Officer

Health and Safety Officer

Race Officer

Auditors x2

Regional Lead Stewards x3

Amalgamation of some of the above positions is permissible, but the Committee should contain a minimum of 9 members in total.

The Branch Committee will act within the powers as set out within the GMB rulebook.

The Branch Full Time Officer will also select Shop Stewards who will act as Senior Stewards within the Branch. These are not elected positions.

* The Branch will set out a development plan each January for the year ahead. This will be sent to the Regional Secretary of GMB Scotland. The plan will then be referred to the Regional Committee, as per the rulebook.

**5. Branch Election Procedures**

**Shop Stewards**

* Shop Stewards may be appointed in line with Rule 43 of the rulebook. In addition, members may notify their intention to stand for position of Shop Steward by displaying a Staff Representative poster at their base location. This poster should be displayed for 21 days and will be available from either the Branch President or Branch Secretary. After this time has elapsed, should any other member have expressed an interest in challenging for the position, a local election will be held, overseen by the Branch Secretary. Otherwise, after 21 days, the member will be appointed as a Shop Steward.
* Shop Stewards will also take on the role of Safety Representatives.
* Shop Stewards should stand for re-election every 4 years. This will be done by displaying a poster at their base location and allowing other members to stand against them. Should there be a challenge for the position at re-election, a local election will be held, overseen by the Branch Secretary.
* Ordinarily, there should be no more than 1 Shop Steward per Service location. At the discretion of the Branch Committee, exceptions may be made to this, dependent on local circumstances.
* Any potential Shop Stewards shall have been fully paid up financial members of the Union for at least 53 weeks prior to seeking appointment.

**Branch Committee**

* The Branch Committee will be elected at the AGM every 4 years. Voting will be by a show of hands or a ballot by those taking part. Nominations are invited in the preceding 3 meetings prior to the AGM. Branch Committee members must also already be elected Shop Stewards.
* Decisions on voting procedure will be decided upon by the Branch Secretary and President in the run up to any election. In the event of a show of hands, candidates may be asked to leave the room whilst the election takes place.
* For contested positions, candidates will either be invited to make a brief speech on their candidacy at the relevant meeting or submit a written supporting statement which will be circulated, along with the ballot. This will depend on the voting method chosen for any election.
* Should a vacancy arise on the Branch Committee prior to a 4 year term being completed, the vacancy shall be filled based on either a show of hands at the next Branch meeting, or a ballot conducted in advance. The term of office for this position shall be temporary – until the next AGM where the Branch Committee require appointment.
* All positions on the Branch Committee shall be voted upon by the membership who have, in advance, confirmed their attendance at the AGM.

**6. Role of a Shop Steward**

* Elected Shop Stewards will act within the powers as set out within the GMB rulebook.
* Shop Stewards are expected to represent members at any meeting where representation is permitted and requested. Where necessary, meetings should be postponed ensuring representation for members is available.
* Shop Stewards are expected to take up their allocated seats at all SAS Partnership meetings or working groups. This will be co-ordinated by Regional or Department Lead Stewards.
* A Shop Steward will attempt to ensure there are high levels of union density within their geographical location. It is fundamental that the Shop Steward aims to recruit on a continual basis.
* Shop Stewards are expected to attend at least 1 quarterly Shop Stewards meeting per year. Exceptions to this will be considered, but only when this has been put in writing to the Branch Secretary. Subsequent decision making on this will be by the Branch Committee.
* A Shop Steward will take responsibility for providing leadership and maintaining effective communication within their location.
* A Shop Steward will be a conduit for passing information about members concerns to the Regional Lead Steward, Department Lead and Branch Committee as appropriate.
* Appointed Shop Stewards will also take on the role of Safety Representative. They will be expected to take an active role in this work, which is in accordance with the Functions of a Safety Representative, as detailed in relevant health and safety legislation.
* Shop Stewards can be removed from post if they are not carrying out the role and duties expected of them by the Constitution and the Branch Committee.
* In locations where the Branch do not have an appointed Shop Steward**, Station Organisers** may be appointed by the Branch Secretary. Station Organisers will be a point of contact and will be expected to disseminate relevant Branch information to their local membership. They will also be expected to communicate effectively with their nearest Shop Steward or members of the Branch Committee, as appropriate.

**7. Dissemination of information**

The Branch will disseminate information to it’s members by various means. Shop Stewards and Station Organisers will be expected to maintain noticeboards and regular electronic mail and SMS mailings will be sent out via GMB Scotland. The Branch will also maintain a website and use social media where it is deemed appropriate. Communication will take cognisance of GDPR legislation.

**8. Balloting of members and industrial action**

The Branch Committee or a Branch or Shop Stewards meeting may in furtherance of the Union’s objectives, decide to authorise industrial action, including strike action. All such action must adhere to and comply with the relevant statutory obligations. In advance of industrial action, a Consultative ballot will normally have taken place to gauge initial support.

**9. Altering the Branch Constitution**

The Branch Constitution may be altered by a majority vote at a Branch meeting, following draft amendments being proposed and circulated in advance. Any alterations should be in line with the Rulebook and where necessary, approval should be sought from the Regional Committee before use.