



INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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Telephone 020 8906 2211

October 15, 2010

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Re: Recommending local elders as district convention speakers

Dear Brothers:

The effectiveness of the district convention programme depends much on the speaking and teaching abilities of those presenting parts, as well as on the speakers' good example in Christian living. In an effort to ensure that qualified speakers are not being left out, we would like your assistance in recommending elders serving in your congregation who may qualify to be considered for district convention parts. These recommendations should be **sent to your circuit overseer** using the *2011 Elder Speaker Ratings (S-315)* form.

Review process: The coordinator of the body of elders, the Theocratic Ministry School overseer, and the auxiliary counsellor (or another respected elder if the auxiliary counsellor is the coordinator of the body of elders) should prayerfully review the abilities and the example of each elder who has been approved by the body of elders to give outgoing public talks. The following questions may be helpful: What is the reputation of the brother as a speaker in the congregation? Is he warm and enthusiastic before a large audience? Can he develop outlined material well? Can he clearly explain the Scriptures? Is he logical and coherent in his delivery? Is he articulate and fluent? Are his presentations easy to listen to and follow? Is he known as a humble, reasonable, and balanced man? Are he and his family well respected and a good example for others to follow? Is he zealous in the ministry? Conversely, these questions should also be considered: Does he have a reputation for being opinionated and dogmatic? Is he known as one who is harsh in judgment? Does he view his own opinion on matters as the final word? Does he procrastinate or handle assignments in a cavalier fashion? If there are questions about his dress or grooming, has he responded to counsel? The brother's overall life pattern should be taken into consideration when determining whether he is truly given to following fads. (*w92 8/15 p. 14 pars. 19-21*) If you know that using a certain brother could be offensive to some in the audience because of past problems or family difficulties, it may be best not to consider him. Great discernment should be exercised in reviewing these questions in order to be fair and balanced.

Grading instructions: If after careful review you wish to recommend a brother to your circuit overseer, please grade the brother in each of the following categories: INT—Talk with interviews, DEM—Talk with demonstrations, DRA—Could oversee a drama, TLK—Could develop and give an outline talk, TXT—Could cover daily text and comments, and MSS—Effective as a manuscript reader. In addition to the "A," "B," and "C" ratings, you can use "+" or "-" to give the grading a finer distinction. Those rated "C" would be average speakers at a district convention in your area. Those rated "B" would be above-average speakers at a district convention in your area. Those rated "A" would be superior speakers at a district convention in your area. Those rated "NR" would not be recommended for a category.

Please note that the ratings for a brother should reflect his speaking ability at a *district convention level*. It has been reported that some recommendations from congregations could

Re: Recommending local elders as district convention speakers

October 15, 2010

Page 2

more accurately reflect the speaker's ability. For example, a number of congregations have rated all their elders as "A" speakers, even those who had never even given a part on the circuit level. Typically, a brother who has not previously served as a speaker at the district level would not qualify to be rated as an "A" speaker or as a superior speaker at a district convention. We request that you be careful when grading speakers so that your recommendations reflect a balanced and realistic evaluation. In addition, when members of the grading committee grade themselves, each member should step out of the room while the other two brothers grade him. Upon his return, generally there should be no discussion, change, or adjustment to the ratings that have been agreed upon.

Additionally, it would be helpful for you to include insightful comments regarding the brother's teaching ability and circumstances. Your comments should begin with a description of his ability as a speaker. For example, what is his style or manner of delivery and tone of voice? Is his delivery intellectual or heartfelt? Also include comments regarding his reputation as a field worker and as a family man. If he has children and they live at home, list their ages or note whether his children are grown and no longer living at home. Please indicate if you recommend the brother to care for a part on family life. The brother should be known as an exemplary family head. His children should recognize and obey parental and theocratic authority. The *entire* family, including his wife, should be recognized as good examples of Christian living by all in the congregation. A brother who has grown children not living at home may also be recommended if his children continue to serve Jehovah and have a good reputation. However, if the family reputation of a brother is not exemplary and would detract greatly, please indicate this also in your comments.

Submitting your recommendation: Please fill in the *2011 Elder Speaker Ratings* form listing the brothers you wish to recommend. (An electronic version of the S-315 form is available in the *Forms* section of the jw.org website under the *Documents* tab. The form may be filled in on the computer and then printed.) If you need extra blank copies of this form, you may make photocopies or print them from the site. We would appreciate your giving this matter your prompt attention, since the circuit overseer will need to receive your recommendations **no later than December 20, 2010**. No copies of these completed forms should be retained.

We pray Jehovah's blessings on your efforts in rating potential speakers for the upcoming district conventions. Please be assured of our warm Christian love and best wishes.

Your brothers,

International Bible Students Assⁿ

cc: Travelling overseers