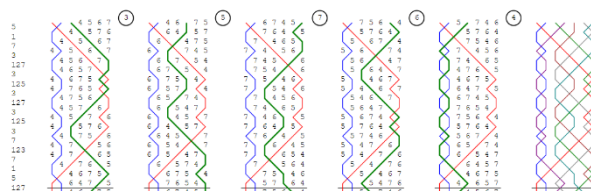


Framework for Method Ringing: Version 2

By Tim Barnes (on behalf of the CC Framework team)



The first version of the Central Council Framework for Method Ringing became effective on June 1st 2019. Since then, the CC Framework team have received a number of suggestions for changes and developments, as well as identifying areas for improvement ourselves, prompting us to work on a second version.

This new version is now in a completed draft state and has been reviewed by the CC Executive. The purpose of this article is to explain the changes in version 2 and launch a ringing community consultation to enable those interested to provide any feedback.

Draft v2 is at <https://framework.cccbr.org.uk>.

Adelaide amendment

As those who have followed the Framework development will be aware, a key difference between the Framework and the former CC Decisions that it replaced is that there are no criteria other than length for what constitutes a peal (or other performance). A peal is now defined simply as a touch with a length of 5000 or more changes.

There is then a norms regime that enables readers of performance reports to know what they can assume about a performance if nothing is stated to the contrary. The established norms are listed in section 6.C and include that the performance started and ended in rounds, was true, was rung without interval, and so on. If a norm is not followed, this does not mean, in the eyes of the CC, that a peal (or other length) was not rung. The requirement is to disclose in the performance report any norms that were not followed so that readers of the report have an accurate understanding of the performance that was rung.

A performance at Adelaide in June 2019 highlighted a norm that was missing in Framework v1 (and was also not covered by the Decisions). An attempt to ring a 10080 of Stedman Triples was lost in the second extent; the first extent was then published as a peal of 5040 changes. Discussion in the pages of the RW and elsewhere ensued.

In light of this, we've added a new norm that 'The Performance was not part of a failed longer attempt' (6.C.2 n). In the further explanation for 6.C.2 we've noted that this does not apply to

false starts, or attempts such as long lengths that are called round early.

We've also made 'norm' a defined term (6.A.3), and expanded 6.C.1 to explain the overall purpose of the norms regime. (The Adelaide performance report included a footnote noting the departure from this new norm, thereby meeting Framework requirements.)

New forms of method ringing

An area of focus for version 2 was the new forms of ringing that took off during the pandemic. As noted above, the approach of the CC under the Framework is not to rule in, rule out, or otherwise pass judgement on different types of method ringing, but to ensure that readers of performance reports are clear about what was rung, and how, so they may form their own opinions.

We therefore wanted the performance reporting requirements in section 6 of the Framework to include sufficient information to make clear how a performance was rung.

The first step was to define 'Ringing Style' as a new term (6.A.4). Today when entering a performance on BellBoard, the starting point is to select 'Tower bells' or 'Handbells'. We envisage this being expanded to also include the categories 'Keyboard' (such as with Ringing Room, but would also apply to a method ringing performance on a carillon); 'Other' (rare cases such as ringing from the frame (East Bergholt) or tapping handbells with mallets); and 'Mixed' (e.g., a Ringing Room performance where some ringers used key presses and others used eBells or dumbbells).

The second step was to define 'Distributed Ringing' (6.A.5) – ringing in which the ringers were not all present in the same location. Note that ringing on platforms such as Ringing Room is not necessarily distributed ringing. E.g., a handbell band might find themselves in the same location without a set of real handbells, but each has a laptop and headset, so they decide to ring on Ringing Room while all in the same room.

Step 3 was to define Simulator Ringing and Online Ringing (6.A.6 and 6.A.7). Simulator Ringing was the hardest item to define as it became clear that a ringing simulator meant different things to different people. We settled on: 'Simulator Ringing: Ringing that involves,

or takes place via, a computer-based ringing simulator.'

The minimum involvement of a simulator is to electronically generate bell sounds when ringing real bells whose clappers are tied (e.g., for sound control purposes). This extends up to the simulator providing a simulation of a full ringing environment (e.g., visual and aural aspects as with Handbell Stadium), and possibly also simulating one or more of the ringers.

The final step was to define Automated Ringing (6.A.8) – this is ringing in which one or more bells (but not all bells) were 'rung' by a computer or 'bot' such as Wheatley.

The five terms above are then used in section 6.B.1, which describes the content to include in a performance report. We believe this content now covers the new ways in which method ringing is being performed, and will enable readers to be clear on how a performance was rung. We are in discussions with the RW on how best to capture this new information in a user-friendly manner in BellBoard, and plan to coordinate the 'go live' of v2 with any changes needed to BellBoard to support this new content.

Finally, we adjusted the norms such that if a simulator is named in a performance report (e.g., Ringing Room or Abel) then the sound is assumed to be simulated, and vice versa – see 6.C.2 h).

Naming new methods

Version 2 contains one alteration and one clarification relating to the requirements for naming a new method.

Under Framework v1, a new method can be named either by ringing it in a QP or longer, or ringing an extent of it. With the increase in 3- and 4-bell ringing, this means new methods can be named by ringing as few as 6 changes.

Naming a new method is a privilege in ringing circles. The new method is permanently added to the Central Council's Methods Library and will always be known by the name given to it. This privilege is traditionally 'earned' by ringing a sufficient amount of the new method to justify its recording in the Library, and many would consider ringing 6 changes, or 24 or 120, to be insufficient. We're therefore proposing in v2 that the minimum length to be rung in order

to name a new method is a quarter peal. The QP can still be multi-method – it doesn't have to be a single method QP in the new method.

Only a very small percentage of new methods are named by ringing an extent rather than a QP or longer. E.g. in 2020, 586 new methods were named, of which 29 (5%) were named by ringing an extent. However, 21 of these 29 new methods were subsequently rung to a QP shortly afterwards, leaving only 8 (1%) that have only been rung to an extent.

The clarification relating to method naming is on the use of automated ringing in a performance that names a new method.

Framework v1 (and the former Decisions) were silent on automated ringing, so we've added recent new methods named in performances with automated ringing to the Methods Library, and this seemed appropriate during the pandemic restrictions. But we believe most ringers would think that a new method should be named by an all-human band, so we propose making this a requirement that will take effect on the implementation of version 2 (see 5.E.1 g).

All methods named with automated ringing prior to the implementation of v2 will continue to be recognized and will remain in the Library. We'd be pleased to hear any views on this proposal via the consultation.

Classification

There are no changes to the classification of methods in v2. We've made the classification chart in 4.A.1 more prominent by moving it into the top line (it was previously in the Further Explanation section and was easy to miss). We've also added a chart in 4.C.1 that shows how the upper classification levels are based on the cycles present in a method.

Alternative leadhead codes

Appendix C of the Framework provides the traditional codes that have been used to identify the first leadhead of standard methods. For example, Plain Bob is a group 'a' method, Cambridge Surprise is group 'b', and Bristol Surprise Major is group 'm'.

However, it is becoming more common for methods with Plain Bob leadheads to identify the first leadhead by reference to the equivalent number of plain leads of Plain Bob. For example, Cambridge Surprise is referred to as a '+2' method, meaning that the first leadhead of Cambridge Surprise is the same row as would be reached by ringing two plain leads of Plain Bob. London Surprise is a '-1' method, meaning the first leadhead of London Surprise

is the same row as going backwards one lead in Plain Bob.

Appendix C now has a new section F that documents this alternative leadhead code system, and it also provides a table that maps between the traditional and alternative codes.

Table of false course heads

The CC previously published a table of false course heads as part of printed method collections, and it was suggested this table should be added to the Framework. This therefore now appears as a new Appendix J.

Jump change notation

Version 1 of the Framework recognized jump changes as an alternative way of traversing between rows, but it didn't provide any standards for notating jump changes. Appendix A (Place Notation) has now been extended with our proposed standard for notating jump changes. In drafting this section, the Framework team drew from discussions on the Ringing Theory email group on this topic.

We've also compiled a list of all known rung jump methods – there are 12 of them – and added these to the CC Methods Library using the new notation. They can be found in the text files section of <https://methods.cccbr.org.uk>.

Call Changes

It's been suggested that the Framework should be expanded to incorporate call change ringing. We've discussed this among the Framework team and with CC Executive members and have concluded that there isn't a need for this at the moment. While call change ringing is a well-established and important branch of change ringing, there is much less of a tradition of publishing call change performances, there isn't a central library with named call change callings nor a classification system for call changes, there aren't record lengths rung of call changes, and so on, these being the main areas addressed by the Framework. And there are other ringing publications available that explain the mechanics of ringing call changes.

Detailed changes

The foregoing summarizes the main changes in Framework version 2. There are other smaller changes that are mainly in the category of wordsmithing and seeking to improve clarity. A full table of changes, together with a 'redline' comparison of v1 and v2 can be found in section 2 (Versioning) of Framework v2.

Consultation

With this article, we are launching a consultation on version 2 to give interested members of the ringing community a chance to provide feedback. The consultation takes the form a free-form survey where any comments can be provided. Submissions can be anonymous if preferred. The feedback will be added to Appendix I of the Framework. The survey can be accessed at <https://forms.gle/qwMrf2SyJfJRzWrB7> and will be open until Fri Jul 16, 2021.

Next steps

As with version 1, the Framework team will review all the feedback received from the consultation and incorporate changes as appropriate. Our responses to the feedback received will be added to Appendix I of the Framework. The CC Executive will then review the final version, and once in agreement, they will implement it with 3 months' notice in accordance with CC rules.

Will there be a Version 3?

At this point, the Framework team have two goals for further development of the Framework. First, the team plan to undertake a review of all the method extension processes (Appendix D). This is the most complex part of the Framework, and we will investigate whether there are any ways to streamline, simplify and/or otherwise improve this area.

The second is to rework the Framework website so that it is easier to use on small-screen devices such as smartphones.

And while we hope v2 of the Framework covers most foreseeable method ringing scenarios, we fully expect that method ringing will continue to evolve as it has done for over 350 years, and that additional items will come to light, no doubt requiring further updates to the Framework from time to time.