



**Australian Association for Environmental Education  
NSW Chapter Inc**

**CONSTITUTION**

Ratified 3 November 2016

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# Part 1 – Preliminary

## Definitions

In this constitution:

- ‘Association’ means the Australian Association for Environmental Education NSW Chapter Inc, the incorporated NSW Chapter of the Australian Association for Environmental Education
- ‘Director-General’ means the Director-General of the Department of Services, Technology and Administration
- ‘Ordinary Committee member’ means a member of the Committee who is not an office-bearer of the Association
- ‘Secretary’ means the person holding office under this constitution as Secretary of the Association
- ‘President’ means the person responsible for chairing the Executive of AAEE NSW Chapter Inc, calling general and Executive meetings; establishing initiatives for consideration of the Chapter; liaising with the State Liaison Officer and co-ordinating lobbying at the State level
- ‘Treasurer’ means the person responsible for administration and management of the Chapter’s funds
- ‘Public Officer of the Association’ means the person charged with undertaking oversight as established under the NSW Incorporations Act 2009 and its regulations
- ‘Special General Meeting’ means a general meeting of the Association other than an Annual General Meeting
- ‘the Act’ means the NSW Associations Incorporation Act 2009
- ‘the Regulation’ means the Associations Incorporation Regulation 2010
- ‘AAEE’ [Australian Association for Environmental Education] means the national body of the Australian Association for Environmental Education, of which the NSW Chapter is a member body. AAEE and the incorporated body is governed by the AAEE constitution under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (A1991-46, Australian Capital Territory)* and accompanying regulations.

In this constitution, a reference to ‘a function’ includes a reference to a power, authority and duty, and a reference to ‘the exercise of a function’ includes, if the function is a duty, a reference to the performance of the duty.

With regard to this constitution, the provisions of the NSW Interpretation Act 1987 apply.

This constitution is complementary to the constitution of the AAEE and reference is made within it to the National AAEE constitution, where appropriate.

## Part 2 – Objects of AAEE NSW Chapter Inc

The Objects of the AAEE NSW Chapter are:

- contribute to establishing and maintaining ecologically sustainable communities that protect and conserve the environment for future generations.
- deliver high quality and effective programs for educators
- promote networks and partnerships that promote good environmental education practice
- provide leadership for members and others across NSW who deliver environmental education
- advocate effectively for public policy for environmental education
- adhere to good governance and decision making processes
- seek diverse organisational funding
- foster diverse and growing membership.

These Objects establish the strategic directions of AAEE NSW and are consistent with the Objects within the AAEE Constitution.

## Part 3 – Membership

### 3.1 Membership generally

As membership of the Australian Association for Environmental Education NSW Chapter Inc equates to membership of the Australian Association for Environmental Education, the following applies.

- Members of AAEE who reside in NSW are automatically members of the Australian Association for Environmental Education NSW Chapter Inc, as determined in the AAEE Constitution.
- Members of AAEE who reside outside of NSW and who nominate on their membership form that they wish to belong to the Australian Association for Environmental Education NSW Chapter Inc are determined as NSW members [See AAEE Constitution and member form].

### 3.2 Register of members

The Public Officer of the Association will maintain a register of members specifying the name and postal or residential address of each person who is a member of the Association, together with the date on which the person became a member.

Because the Association is a chapter of AAEE, members join the national body as referenced in the AAEE constitution. Each two months, an up to date schedule of NSW members is provided by AAEE to the Public Officer. This register of NSW members is kept in New South Wales:

- at the main premises of the Association, or
- in the event that the Association has no premises, at the Association's official address.

The register of members is open for inspection, free of charge, by any member of the Association at any reasonable hour.

A member of the Association may obtain a copy of any part of the register on payment of a fee of not more than \$1 for each page copied.

If a member requests that any information contained on the register about the member (other than the member's name) not be available for inspection, that information must not be made available for inspection.

A member must not use information about a person obtained from the register to contact or send material to the person, other than for:

- the purposes of sending the person a newsletter, or a notice in respect of a meeting or other event
- relating to the Association or other material relating to the Association, or
- any other purpose necessary to comply with a requirement of the Act or the Regulation.

### **3.3 Fees and subscriptions**

Members of AAEE must, on admission to membership, pay to AAEE an annual membership fee. Within the AAEE Constitution, members' fees are set at the National AAEE AGM and membership falls within a number of categories.

In line with the decisions of the national Executive Council, and the AAEE constitution, a percentage of the fee drawn from NSW members of AAEE is paid annually to the Association.

### **3.4 Members' liabilities**

The liability of a member of the Association to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Association or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of the Association is limited to the amount, if any, unpaid by the member in respect of membership of the Association.

### **3.5 Resolution of disputes**

A dispute between a member and another member (in their capacity as members) of the Association, or a dispute between a member or members and the Association, are to be mediated by the President and one other person from the Association. If the dispute is not resolved within 4 weeks, then it is referred to a community justice centre for mediation under the Community Justice Centres Act 1983.

If a dispute is not resolved by mediation within 3 months of the referral to a community justice centre, the dispute is to be referred to arbitration.

The Commercial Arbitration Act 1984 applies to any such dispute referred to arbitration.

### **3.6 Disciplining of members**

A complaint may be made to the Committee by any person that a member of the Association:

- has refused or neglected to comply with a provision or provisions of this constitution, or
- has wilfully acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Association.

The Committee may refuse to deal with a complaint if it considers the complaint to be trivial or vexatious in nature.

If the Committee decides to deal with the complaint, the Committee:

- must cause notice of the complaint to be served on the member concerned, and
- must give the member at least 14 days from the time the notice is served within which to make submissions to the Committee in connection with the complaint, and
- must take into consideration any submissions made by the member in connection with the complaint.

The Committee may, by resolution, expel the member from the Association or suspend the member from membership of the Association if, after considering the complaint and any submissions made in connection with the complaint, it is satisfied that the facts alleged in the complaint have been proved and the expulsion or suspension is warranted in the circumstances.

If the Committee expels or suspends a member, the Secretary must, within 7 days after the action is taken, cause written notice to be given to the member of the action taken, of the reasons given by the Committee for having taken that action and of the member's right of appeal under Clause 3.7.

The expulsion or suspension does not take effect:

- until the expiration of the period within which the member is entitled to appeal against the resolution concerned, or
- if within that period the member exercises the right of appeal, unless and until the Association confirms the resolution under Clause 3.7, whichever is the later.

### **3.7 Right of appeal of disciplined member**

A member may appeal to the Association in a General Meeting against a resolution of the Committee within 7 days after notice of the resolution is served on the member, by lodging with the Secretary a notice to that effect.

The notice may, but need not, be accompanied by a statement of the grounds on which the member intends to rely for the purposes of the appeal.

On receipt of a notice from a member the Secretary must notify the Committee, which is to convene a General Meeting of the Association to be held within 28 days after the date on which the Secretary received the notice.

At a General Meeting of the Association:

- no business other than the question of the appeal is to be transacted, and

- the Committee and the member must be given the opportunity to state their respective cases orally or in writing, or both, and the members present are to vote by secret ballot on the question of whether the resolution should be confirmed or revoked.

The appeal is to be determined by a simple majority of votes cast by members of the Association.

## Part 4 – The Committee

### 4.1 Powers of the Committee

Subject to the Act, the Regulation, this constitution, and any resolution passed by the Association in a general meeting; and subject to the objects of the Association, the Committee:

- is to control and manage the affairs of the Association, and
- may exercise all such functions as may be exercised by the Association, other than those functions that are required by this constitution to be exercised by a General Meeting of members of the Association, and
- has power to perform all such acts and do all such things as appear to the Committee to be necessary.

### 4.2 Composition and membership of Committee

The Committee is to consist of:

- the office-bearers of the Association, and
- at least three ordinary Committee members, each of whom is to be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

The total number of Committee members is to be determined at each Annual General Meeting at the time of election.

The office-bearers of the Association are as follows:

- the President
- the Vice-President
- the Treasurer
- the Secretary
- the Public Officer.

A Committee member may hold up to two offices (other than both the President and Vice-President offices).

Each member of the Committee is, subject to this constitution, to hold office until the conclusion of the first Annual General Meeting following the date of the member's election. All Committee members are eligible for re-election.

### 4.3 Election of Committee members

Nominations of candidates for election as office-bearers of the Association or as ordinary Committee members:

- must be made in writing, signed by two members of the Association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form of the nomination), and
- must be delivered to the Secretary of the Association at least 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the Annual General Meeting at which the election is to take place.

If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the Committee, the candidates nominated are taken to be elected and further nominations are to be received verbally – and followed up by written nominations – at the Annual General Meeting.

If insufficient further nominations are received, any vacant positions remaining on the Committee are taken to be casual vacancies.

If the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated are taken to be elected.

If the number of nominations received exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot is to be held.

The ballot for the election of office-bearers and ordinary Committee members of the Committee is to be conducted at the Annual General Meeting in such usual and proper manner as the Committee may direct. A returning officer, who is not a candidate for election, should manage the process.

A person nominated as a candidate for election as an office-bearer or an ordinary Committee member of the Association, must be a member of the Association.

### 4.4 Roles of office bearers

#### **President**

The President will:

- represent the Association and its members to other organisations, the industry, government and public agencies, the media, and the public
- preside at all meetings of the members of the Association and the Executive Committee
- ensure decisions are made in a timely manner and then translated in to meaningful actions holding appropriate parties accountable for success
- facilitate accomplishment of the Association's strategic goals and objectives
- be responsible for the smooth running and organisational culture of the Association.

#### **Vice President**

The Vice President will:

- assist the President in delivering all his/her responsibilities, as negotiated
- preside at all meetings of the members of the Association and the Executive Committee, when the President cannot be present.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary of the Association must, as soon as practicable after being appointed as Secretary, lodge notice with the Association of his or her address.

It is the duty of the Secretary to keep minutes of:

- all appointments of office-bearers and members of the Committee, and
- the names of members of the Committee present at a Committee meeting or a general meeting, and
- all proceedings at Committee meetings and general meetings.

Note that these tasks may be delegated by the Secretary with the approval of the Committee.

Note also that Minutes of proceedings at a Committee meeting must be formally accepted by the Committee at the succeeding meeting.

### **Treasurer**

It is the duty of the Treasurer of the Association to ensure:

- that all money due to the Association is collected and received and that all payments authorised by the Association are made, and
- that correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the Association, including full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the Association.

### **Public Officer**

The Public Officer is responsible for:

- notifying NSW Fair Trading of any change in the Association's official address within 28 days
- collecting all Association documents from former Committee members and delivering the documents to the new Committee member; returning all Association documents to a Committee member within 14 days, upon vacating office
- acting as the official contact for the Association, including taking delivery of documents served on the Association and bringing them to the attention of the Committee as soon as possible
- custody of any documents as required by the constitution
- keeping a members' register for the Association (See Clause 3.2)
- keeping the Committee membership records for the Association.

### **4.5 Casual vacancies**

In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the membership of the Committee, the Committee may appoint a member of the Association to fill the vacancy and the member so appointed is to hold office, subject to this constitution, until the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting next following the date of the appointment.

A casual vacancy in the office of a member of the Committee occurs if the member:

- dies, or
- ceases to be a member of the Association, or

- becomes an insolvent under administration within the meaning of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth, or
- resigns office by notice in writing given to the Secretary, or
- is removed from office
- becomes a mentally incapacitated person, or
- is absent without the consent of the Committee from three consecutive meetings of the Committee, or
- is convicted of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty for which the maximum penalty on conviction is imprisonment for not less than 3 months, or
- is prohibited from being a director of a company under Part 2D.6 (Disqualification from managing corporations) of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth.

#### **4.6 Removal of Committee members**

The Association in a General Meeting may by resolution remove any member of the Committee from the office of member before the expiration of the member's term of office and may by resolution appoint another person to hold office until the expiration of the term of office of the member so removed.

If a member of the Committee to whom a proposed resolution referred to in Clause 4.1 relates makes representations in writing to the Secretary or President (not exceeding a reasonable length) and requests that the representations be notified to the members of the Association, the Secretary or the President may send a copy of the representations to each member of the Association or, if the representations are not so sent, the member is entitled to require that the representations be read out at the meeting at which the resolution is considered.

#### **4.7 Committee meetings and quorum**

The Committee must meet at least three times in each period of 12 months at such place and time as the Committee may determine.

Additional meetings of the Committee may be convened by the President or by any member of the Committee.

Oral or written notice of a meeting of the Committee must be given by the Secretary to each member of the Committee at least 48 hours (or such other period as may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the Committee) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.

Notice of a meeting given under Clause 4.1 must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that business is to be transacted at the meeting, except business which the Committee members present at the meeting unanimously agree to treat as urgent business.

Any four members of the Committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a meeting of the Committee.

No business is to be transacted by the Committee unless a quorum is present and if, within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting is to stand adjourned until a mutually agreeable date within ten days.

If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting is to be dissolved.

At a meeting of the Committee:

- the President or, in the President's absence, the Vice-President is to preside, or
- if the President and the Vice-President are absent or unwilling to act, one of the remaining members of the Committee may be chosen by the members present at the meeting is to preside.

#### **4.8 Delegation by Committee to sub-Committees**

The Committee may, by instrument in writing, delegate to one or more sub-Committees (consisting of such member or members of the Association as the Committee thinks fit) the exercise of such of the functions of the Committee as are specified in the instrument, other than:

- this power of delegation, and
- a function which is a duty imposed on the Committee by the Act or by any other law.

A function the exercise of which has been delegated to a sub-Committee under this clause may, while the delegation remains unrevoked, be exercised from time to time by the sub-Committee in accordance with the terms of the delegation.

A delegation under this clause may be made subject to such conditions or limitations as to the exercise of any function, or as to time or circumstances, as may be specified in the instrument of delegation.

Despite any delegation under this clause, the Committee may continue to exercise any function delegated.

Any act or thing done or suffered by a sub-Committee acting in the exercise of a delegation under this clause has the same force and effect as it would have if it had been done or suffered by the Committee.

The Committee may, by instrument in writing, revoke wholly or in part any delegation under this clause.

A sub-Committee may meet and adjourn as agreed under the delegation.

#### **4.9 Voting and decisions**

Questions arising at a meeting of the Committee or of any sub-Committee appointed by the Committee are to be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Committee or sub-Committee present at the meeting.

Each member present at a meeting of the Committee or of any sub-Committee appointed by the Committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled to one vote but, in the event of an equality of votes on any question, the person presiding may exercise a second or casting vote.

Subject to clause 4.5, the Committee may act despite any vacancy on the Committee.

Any act or thing done or suffered, or purporting to have been done or suffered, by the Committee or by a sub-Committee appointed by the Committee, is valid and effectual despite any defect that may afterwards be discovered in the appointment or qualification of any member of the Committee or sub-Committee.

## Part 5 – General meetings

### 5.1 Annual General Meetings – holding of

The Association must hold its Annual General Meetings:

- within 6 months after the close of the Association’s financial year, or
- within such later time as may be allowed by the Director-General or prescribed by the Regulation.

### 5.2 Annual General Meetings – calling of and business

The Annual General Meeting of the Association is subject to the Act and is to be convened on such date and at such place and time as the Committee thinks fit.

In addition to any other business which may be transacted at an Annual General Meeting, the business of an Annual General Meeting is to:

- confirm the minutes of the last preceding Annual General Meeting and of any Special General Meeting held since that meeting,
- receive from the Committee reports on the activities of the Association during the last preceding financial year,
- elect office-bearers of the Association and ordinary Committee members,
- receive and consider any financial statement or report required to be submitted to members under the Act.

An Annual General Meeting must be specified as such in the notice convening it.

### 5.3 Special General Meetings – calling of

The Committee may, whenever it thinks fit, convene a Special General Meeting of the Association.

The Committee must, on the requisition in writing of at least 5 per cent of the total number of members, convene a Special General Meeting of the Association.

A requisition of members for a Special General Meeting:

- must state the purpose or purposes of the meeting, and
- must be signed by the members making the requisition, and
- must be lodged with the Secretary, and
- may consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by one or more of the members making the requisition.

If the Committee fails to convene a Special General Meeting to be held within 1 month after that date on which a requisition of members for the meeting is lodged with the Secretary, any one or more of the members who made the requisition may convene a Special General Meeting to be held not later than 3 months after that date.

A Special General Meeting convened by a member or members must be convened as nearly as is practicable in the same manner as General Meetings are convened by the Committee.

#### **5.4 Notice**

Except if the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a General Meeting requires a special resolution of the Association, the Secretary must, at least 14 days before the date fixed for the holding of the general meeting, give a notice to each member specifying the place, date and time of the meeting, and the nature of the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting.

If the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a General Meeting requires a special resolution of the Association, the Secretary must, at least 21 days before the date fixed for the holding of the general meeting, cause notice to be given to each member specifying, in addition to the matter required under Clause 5.9, the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.

No business other than that specified in the notice convening a General Meeting is to be transacted at the meeting except, in the case of an Annual General Meeting, business which may be transacted under clause 5.2.

A member desiring to bring any business before a General Meeting may give notice in writing of that business to the Secretary, who must include that business in the next notice calling a General Meeting given after receipt of the notice from the member.

#### **5.5 Quorum for general meetings**

No item of business is to be transacted at a General Meeting unless a quorum of members entitled under this constitution to vote is present during the time the meeting is considering that item.

Five members present (being members entitled under this constitution to vote at a General Meeting) constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a general meeting.

If within half an hour after the appointed time for the commencement of a General Meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting:

- if convened on the requisition of members, is to be dissolved, and
- in any other case, is to stand adjourned to the same day in the following week at the same time and (unless another place is specified at the time of the adjournment by the person presiding at the meeting or communicated by written notice to members given before the day to which the meeting is adjourned) at the same place.

If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour after the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, the members present (being at least three) are to constitute a quorum.

## 5.6 Presiding member

The President or, in the President's absence, the Vice-President, is to preside as chairperson at each General Meeting of the Association.

If the President and the Vice-President are absent or unwilling to act, the members present must elect one of their number to preside as chairperson at the meeting.

## 5.7 Adjournment

The chairperson of a General Meeting at which a quorum is present may, with the consent of the majority of members present at the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time and place to place, but no business is to be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting at which the adjournment took place.

If a General Meeting is adjourned for 14 days or more, the Secretary must give written or oral notice of the adjourned meeting to each member of the Association stating the place, date and time of the meeting and the nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

Except as provided in Clauses 5.4 and 5.5, notice of an adjournment of a General Meeting or of the business to be transacted at an adjourned meeting is not required to be given.

## 5.8 Making of decisions

A question arising at a General Meeting of the Association is to be determined by either:

- a show of hands, or
- a written ballot, if the chairperson so moves, or if 5 or more members present at the meeting decide that the question should be determined by a written ballot.

If the question is to be determined by a show of hands, a declaration by the chairperson that a resolution has, on a show of hands, been carried or carried unanimously or carried by a particular majority or lost, or an entry to that effect in the Minute book of the Association, is evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of or against that resolution.

If the question is to be determined by a written ballot, the ballot is to be conducted in accordance with the directions of the chairperson.

## 5.9 Special resolutions

A special resolution may only be passed by the Association in accordance with section 39 of the Act.

## Part 6 – Miscellaneous

### 6.1 Insurance

Insurance required for the AAEE NSW Chapter Inc is currently carried through the Association's membership of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. This may change in the future if another organisation is found to be more suitable to provide the insurance needs of the Association.

### 6.2 Funds – source

The funds of the Association are to be derived from grants, entrance fees, annual subscriptions of members [as per AAEE Constitution] and donations. All sources are subject to any resolution passed by the Association in a general meeting, and include such other sources as the Committee determines.

All money received by the Association must be deposited as soon as practicable and without deduction to the credit of the Association's bank or other authorised deposit-taking institution account.

The Association must, as soon as practicable after receiving any money, issue an appropriate receipt.

### 6.3 Funds – management

Subject to any resolution passed by the Association in general meeting, the funds of the Association are to be used in pursuance of the objects of the Association in such manner as the Committee determines.

All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments must be signed by any two members of the Committee or employees of the Association, being members or employees authorised to do so by the Committee.

### 6.4 Change of name, objects and constitution

An application to the Director-General for registration of a change in the Association's name, objects or constitution in accordance with section 10 of the Act is to be made by the public officer or a Committee member.

### 6.5 Custody of books etc

Except as otherwise provided by this constitution, the Public Officer must keep in his or her custody or under his or her control all records, books and other documents relating to the Association.

### 6.6 Inspection of books etc

The following documents must be open to inspection, free of charge, by a member of the Association at any reasonable hour:

- records, books and other financial documents of the Association,
- this constitution,
- Minutes of all Committee meetings and General Meetings of the Association.

A member of the Association may obtain a copy of any of the documents referred to in clause 3.2 on payment of a fee of not more than \$1 for each page copied.

### 6.7 Service of notices

For the purpose of this constitution, a notice may be served on or given to a person:

- by delivering it to the person personally, or
- by sending it by pre-paid post to the address of the person, or
- by sending it by facsimile transmission or some other form of electronic transmission to an address specified by the person for giving or serving the notice.

For the purpose of this constitution, a notice is taken, unless the contrary is proved, to have been given or served:

- in the case of a notice given or served personally, on the date on which it is received by the addressee, and
- in the case of a notice sent by pre-paid post, on the date when it would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post, and
- in the case of a notice sent by facsimile transmission or some other form of electronic transmission, on the date it was sent or, if the machine from which the transmission was sent produces a report indicating that the notice was sent on a later date, on that date.

### 6.8 Voluntary closure of this Association

In order to close down, the Association must pass a special resolution that:

- approves the cancellation of its registration
- proposes the distribution of its assets.

An *Application for voluntary cancellation of registration of an Association* (Department of Fair Trading - Form A8) must be completed and lodged with NSW Fair Trading. The application must include:

- a copy of the special resolution that was passed
- a statement indicating the distribution of assets, to be approved by the Director-General
- a statement, verified by statutory declaration by two Committee members, that the Association has no outstanding liabilities
- the Association's certificate of incorporation (if still held), or a statement that it has been lost or destroyed.

### 6.9 Financial year

The financial year of this Association is:

- the period of time commencing on the date of incorporation of the Association and ending on the following 30 June, and
- each period of 12 months after the expiration of the previous financial year of the Association, commencing on 1 July and ending on the following 30 June.