

1 June 2017

Dear Members,

The Board of the Association will hold elections on 10 July for the five National Executive office bearers – National Chairman, Deputy National Chairman, National Secretary, National Treasurer and National Membership Director. In the latest edition of *The Order* nominations were invited for these positions.

All members are entitled to be members of the Board, whether as one of the five National Executive members or as a State or Territory Branch nominated Director. It is up to each State and Territory Branch to consult and decide who should be the Branch Director on the Board.

Our Association is a company and, in the same way as private enterprises, we are subject to the same governance and legal requirements of the Commonwealth *Corporations Act 2001*. Our Board is responsible for the company's financial performance, its adherence to laws and regulations and for the achievement of our core purposes.

An important reality is that we are an Association of States and Territories. The heart of our organisation is the State and Territory Branches – our grass roots are our strengths. And the national Board has to give great respect to Branches. That is why State and Territory Branches have eight positions on the thirteen member Board.

The Association's Constitution provides that the national Board takes the decision on who should be elected to be the five Non-Branch Nominated Directors of the Association. Perhaps in an ideal world it might be envisaged that all members across Australia get a direct vote on who should be a Non-Branch Nominated Director but this would be very expensive to organise and could give disproportionate influence to the larger States.

Over and above the written rules of our Constitution and the *Corporations Act* there are matters which are unwritten. The Board has to give leadership, set the tone for the Association and take the initiative to advance our core goals. Getting more nominations for awards is a core function as is motivating young people. And as the recent speakers arranged by various Branches – Victoria's Governor Linda Dessau, Li Cunxin (Mao's Last Dancer), Professor James Dale, Wendy James, Deborah Terry, Ken Gillespie, Susan Ryan, Vincent Monterola, Frank Madill and many others – made clear our members value highly hearing inspiring stories and challenging ideas from interesting Australians, irrespective of whether they are public figures or not well known. We all like hearing about the people who have given long years of support to country towns – they get the loudest applause at investiture ceremonies.

Warm regards to all,

Philip Flood
President