

CONSTITUTION

(July 2018 Revision)

NAME

1. The name shall be the Australasian Study of Parliament Group, hereinafter referred to as 'the Group'.
- 1A. For the purposes of this Constitution, "Australasian" is defined to encompass Australia, its states and territories; New Zealand; and South Pacific Nations.

OBJECTIVES

2. The objectives of the Group are the encouragement and stimulation of research, writing and teaching about parliamentary institutions in Australasia and the South Pacific in order to generate a better understanding of these institutions. In order to achieve these objectives, the Group should conduct activities with the aim of:
 - (a) providing a general forum at least once a year for interaction between those with an interest in parliament and parliamentary affairs, including academics, staff and members of parliament, and the media;
 - (b) maintaining a dialogue between those whose major research interests are in the area;
 - (c) facilitating exchange of reports or other useful information on the study of parliament for research and teaching purposes;
 - (d) publishing a journal at appropriate intervals which will further these aims;
 - (e) informing and educating the general public about parliamentary institutions and legislative processes;
 - (f) encouraging appropriate organisations to include in their conferences special sections on parliament and related matters;
 - (g) contributing to the process of reform and improvement of parliamentary institutions and the legislative processes;
 - (h) providing an avenue for publication of research and other studies, particularly related to parliamentary institutions.

MEMBERSHIP

3. Membership shall be open to any person with an interest in parliament and parliamentary affairs including members and officers of the National, State and Territory parliaments of Australasia and the South Pacific, library and research staff attached to those parliaments, and journalists, academics and others interested in

parliamentary government. A member of any Chapter, having paid the necessary fee as per section 25A, is taken to be a member of the Group.

REGISTER OF MEMBERS

4. The secretary of each Chapter shall maintain a register of members in that Chapter specifying the name and address of each member together with the date on which the person became a member and their financial status.
5. [Section 5 deleted: 5 October 2016]

ANNUAL MEETING

6. The annual general meeting of the Group shall be held in association with the annual conference or at such other time as is decided by the Group. A quorum shall be eleven persons.
- 6A. Each Chapter is to provide to the ASPG Secretary, one month before the annual general meeting, a report on their membership and activities for the year.

VOTING and DECISIONS

7. Questions arising at any meeting are to be determined by a majority of the votes of members present at the meeting.
8. Each member present, including the person presiding at the meeting, is entitled to one vote. In the event of an equality of votes on any question, the question shall be resolved in the negative.
- 8A. A corporate membership will be entitled to one vote only at any meeting of the ASPG.
9. Questions are to be determined on a show of hands; however, a poll by secret ballot may be demanded by the chair or by at least 4 members present in person. If a poll is demanded at a general meeting, the poll must be taken.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

10. An Executive Committee will consist of a President, Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor and two representatives nominated by each Chapter. The Executive Committee shall have full responsibility for the conduct of the affairs of the Group between its annual general meetings subject to such directions as the annual general meeting shall give.
- 10A. The positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected at an annual general meeting for a period of two years. The ASPG's executive office-holders of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are the initial decision-making body for the Group and they refer their decisions to the Chapters for ratification.

- 10B. Voting will be in accordance with sections 7 to 9.
- 10C. A Returning Officer will be appointed by the Executive.
- 10D. Three months before an annual general meeting at which elections will be held, the Returning Officer shall call for nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer by post, email or like system addressed to the representative nominated by each Chapter, who will circulate the call for nominations to all members in the Register of Members maintained by that Chapter.
- 10E. Nominations will close six weeks before an annual general meeting at which elections will be held, and the Returning Officer will advise the representatives nominated by each Chapter of the candidates for each position. The representatives nominated by each Chapter will advise all members in the Register of Members maintained by that Chapter of the candidates for each position.
- 11. The quorum of an executive meeting shall be seven and all members of the Executive Committee may vote.
- 12. The Executive Committee may determine that the positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be filled by the same person where administratively appropriate.
- 13. A casual vacancy on the executive, including for the Returning Officer, may be filled by the Executive for the unexpired portion of the term of the vacated position and where a Chapter representative that Chapter shall nominate its representative.
- 14. Chapters may nominate up to two alternative representatives who shall perform the duties and have the voting right of a Chapter representative on the Executive Committee during the absence of a representative.

SECRETARY

- 15. It is the duty of the Group Secretary to keep minutes of all appointments of office-bearers and members of the Executive Committee, the names of members present at an executive meeting or a general meeting; and all proceedings at executive meetings and general meetings.
- 16. It is the duty of the Group Secretary to ensure that minutes of proceedings at a meeting are signed by the chair of the meeting or by the chair of the next succeeding meeting.

TREASURER

- 17. It is the duty of the Treasurer to ensure that all money due to the Group is collected and received and that all payments authorised by the Group be made.
- 18. It is the duty of the Treasurer to ensure that correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the Group, including details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the Group.
- 19. It is the duty of the Treasurer to ensure all returns required by law are lodged on

time and the Group's books of account are appropriately audited before each annual general meeting.

AUDITOR

20. An auditor shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and the auditor shall report to the annual general meeting.

PATRON

21. The Executive Committee has responsibility to choose a Patron for the Group.

CHAPTERS

22. Each State and Territory of Australia, and New Zealand, shall constitute a Chapter of the Group. Each Chapter shall have its own constitution and executive. The Chapters' main role is to promote the objectives of the Group through holding their own Chapter-led events with a view to growing the membership base of their Chapter. Chapters are responsible for maintaining membership lists and accounts. Chapters will be responsible for determining how their accounts will be audited. Each Chapter shall produce for its membership a Treasurer's Financial Report at least once a year, or to be made available on request.
- 22A. As part of the annual Chapter Report, Chapters must provide written assurance that they have a true and accurate record of accounts.
23. Further Chapters may be admitted by resolution of an annual general meeting.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

24. The Annual Conference shall rotate each year. The Chair shall be nominated by the executive of the Chapter organising the Annual Conference and annual general meeting for that year and be a member of that Chapter.

FINANCES

25. The finances of the Group shall be devoted to the objectives of the Group. Audited accounts shall be presented to each annual meeting of the Group.
- 25A. Chapters are responsible for the collection of membership fees and can set fees as they see fit, with the proviso that such fees are devoted to advancing the objectives of the Group and growing the membership base of their respective Chapter.
- 25B. The Group Treasurer will determine the annual Chapter fee to be levied to each Chapter on the basis of the Group's estimated operating costs for the year. The Chapter fee is payable by each Chapter to the Treasurer no later than 31 August each year. Chapter fees will be retained by the Group Treasurer to cover all expenses relating to the Australasian operations of the Group.

NOT FOR PROFIT

26. The income and property of the Group shall be used and applied solely in promotion of its objects and no portion shall be distributed, paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or by way of profit to members of the Group.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

27. There shall be an Editorial Committee consisting of one representative of each Chapter that wishes to nominate a member from its jurisdiction together with invited persons nominated by the Editor and approved by the executive. The role of the committee will be to provide assistance and advice to the Editor as requested by the Editor.

AMENDMENTS

28. The constitution and rules shall be determined and may be altered only by the annual general meeting provided that twenty-one days' notice in writing has been given to each Chapter.

DISSOLUTION AND WINDING UP

29. In the event of the Group being dissolved, the amount that remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be transferred to an organisation with similar purposes within Australia that is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members.