

Australian Computer Society
Constitutional Reform Working Group (CRWG)
Round 3 Consultation Document

Outline

Version of 12 June 2022

The first two rounds of consultation have established what members want their Society to be like. This third and final round is about the clauses that have been drafted in order to express those needs in a new constitutional document.

This document is a one-page Outline of the proposal.

There are three further, more detailed documents in the set:

- An 8-page Overview of Key Features
- A 9-page Discussion of Governing Committee Models
- The *Draft* Constitutional Document

The overall design seeks to balance many considerations, including members' needs, differences among the Branches, the need for practicality and agility, and regulatory requirements.

How to Provide Your Comments on This Document

A web-form is provided in the HTML version of this document. It generates a posting to the Online Forum. You can respond in this way at any time. If you wish to read other people's responses, and the conversations, you need to login to that Forum (if you've already joined it), or register as a new participant in the Forum.

Alternatively, you can submit text or an attachment via the Submission Form, or participate in one of the discussion sessions organised by the Branches, national Committees and CRWG, as advertised on the landing-page.

1. The Society's Nature and Values as Drivers of the Society's Behaviour

Clauses 1-3 of the constitutional document declare what the Society is about, require the Society's operations to be consistent with its values and fulfil its mission and purposes, and establish the basis for evaluating the governing committee's performance against those requirements.

Clauses 4 and 5 establish the centrality of the professional membership. Clause 6 specifies the procedures for General Meetings.

2. The Governing Committee and Congress

The model proposed has a similar shape to the present Management Committee and Congress, but its features ensure a close link between members and the people making decisions about the members' Society. This is expressed in Clauses 10 and 11 of the draft constitutional document.

3. Effective Accountability of the Governing Committee to the Members

Provisions oblige the governing committee to be transparent to the membership, and to engage with the members. Mechanisms are specified that enable members to communicate concerns. Key categories of decision-making are subject to ratification or approval through online voting. Members have the ability to move motions and call meetings. Fallback mechanisms are provided whereby members of the governing committee can be removed. These provisions are expressed in Clause 12 of the constitutional document.

4. Branch Powers and Resources

The constitutional document needs to reflect the differences in local circumstances and the strong association that members have with their Branches and Chapters. Clause 8 ensures that regional activities are managed regionally, and member involvement is stipulated as being necessary when making changes to relevant aspects of the By-Laws.

5. Member Participation and Delegations to the Society's Staff

Further provisions are designed to ensure that members have opportunities to contribute to the Society's directions and activities. Key aspects of the By-Laws are subject to appropriate degrees of member input, expressed in Clause 7 and Schedules A and B. The Panels (previously called 'Boards') and Committees are empowered by Clause 9. The governing committee needs to be able to delegate to employed staff the conduct of the organisation's mainstream operations; but strategy and policy remain responsibilities of the membership through national Committees, Panels, the Congress and the governing committee, with staff playing a supporting role. This is expressed in Clause 13.

6. Organisational Agility

Given the degree of control that members want to exercise over their Society, there is a serious risk that bureaucracy might be increased rather than agility improved. The constitutional document and the subsidiary By-Laws have been checked, and need to be further reviewed, in order to streamline processes and achieve efficiency and practicality.

7. Transitional Provisions

The adjustments involved in the changes to the Society's constitution need to be conducted smoothly, to minimise disruptions. Measures to achieve this are expressed in Clause 16.
