

# Welcome



**Eleanor Scully, Richard Mainey, Garry Lee, Gary Rebgetz, Lorraine Smith and Richard Barwick**

As our Annual General Meeting in early October draws closer, members will be provided with all the necessary information required to vote on the proposed changes to our Constitution. Any change to our Constitution will require a 75 per cent majority 'in favour' of those members voting, both in person and by proxy.

As the member enquiries and discussion with the Board have become more frequent in recent times during the lead up to the AGM, The Board Page this month aims to provide some more detailed information about the proposed amendments, and to dispel some common myths.

It is important to understand that no current Ordinary Member of CMCA will be disadvantaged by the proposed changes to the 'qualifying vehicle' definition. If you are currently an Ordinary Member and do not own a self-contained vehicle, your Ordinary Member status will be covered under a grandfather clause with the proposed amendments to the Constitution. If you are currently an Associate Member who owns a self-contained vehicle, you will be entitled to become an Ordinary Member.

It seems the Club's Self Contained Vehicle Policy requires further explanation, and a better understanding by the general membership. The policy is available on the Club's website. In the 2016 Member Satisfaction Survey, 93 per cent of our members indicated that they owned a vehicle that had the potential to become self-contained. Our discussions with all levels of government identify the growing importance of self-containment in the RV industry,

and we can confirm that the majority of our members are able to meet this requirement.

One issue that seems to be causing members concern, is around voting rights and who may lose these or not have them. As it currently stands, Ordinary Members have full rights of voting and standing for the Board, and Associate Members do not. This will not change. The simple fact around voting is that members currently don't place a great value on their ability to vote or stand for the Board. I can say this as only 6.7 per cent of members voted in 2016, 9.4 per cent in 2015, and 8.7 per cent in 2014. At the AGM in 2016, there was a motion around our rallies that had some emotion and the interest of many members. That motion was decided by a vote of less than one per cent of possible voting members. We are currently in the middle of the Board Election 2017. We have a field of four candidates for the two positions available. I have my own ideas on why voting is not that important for some members and the small numbers who wish to become a Director, but in saying this, the issue should not be a negative one in the adopting the proposed changes to the Constitution.

Recently, an analysis of our membership was completed. We looked at this analysis over the last five years, mainly around Ordinary Memberships versus Associate Memberships, and the actual growth in memberships. From 2012 to 2017, Ordinary Memberships actually decreased. Not by a large number, but there was no growth. For the same period, Associate Memberships grew by 27.8 per cent.

This reinforces the idea that voting is not that significant in attracting new members, but more importantly, our ability to maintain our membership into the future has to have some doubt. The actual manufacturing numbers of campervans and motorhomes against other forms of recreational vehicles confirm that it will be difficult to maintain our current membership numbers.

It has been suggested by some members that the Board wishes to increase membership at any cost, and these changes to the Constitution will facilitate this. CMCA is the largest RV Club in Australia, and needs to understand what this means in respect to our government representation and liaison. If we don't maintain at least the current level of membership or even better, grow the Club, the Board believes our credibility and effectiveness will diminish. To this extent, it means that the Board must investigate all means of increasing membership to maintain this position.

The comment has been made to me that 'this is not what the Whitworths envisaged'. This could not be further from the truth. Our CEO Richard Barwick and the Board, have consulted with Erica Whitworth on these proposed changes. I refer to the interview with Erica published in the May edition of *The Wanderer*. The article states that Erica is pleased with where the Club is at and the direction it is taking these days. Erica quotes "I'm delighted with the way the Club is going and we have to keep moving ahead." Her last comment in that article, and I quote, "The Club is the members and it's up to them to make sure they support the Club really. Change is coming whether we like it or not and it's inevitable, so we have to try and make the right decisions and support our Board".

A long time Life Member recently stated to me "The Club's future strength is to become an organisation that continues to be the voice of the RV traveller, to ensure the gains to date for Freedom of Choice are maintained. Through growth, we ensure that gains made with all levels of Government are consolidated and enhanced, so that our children and grandchildren have the opportunity to embrace and enjoy the lifestyle that we do." Enough said really.

*Travel Safely and  
Laugh More, Live Longer.  
Garry Lee A67278  
Chairman, on behalf of the CMCA  
Board of Directors*