



Canberra Environment Centre Incorporated

Constitution

Name, Incorporation & Objects

- 1 The name of the Association is the Canberra Environment Centre Incorporated.
- 2 The Association is incorporated under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*.
- 3 The objects of the Association shall be:

To empower the community of the Canberra region to be sustainable by providing education, information and resources; and subject to these rules, do all other things seen to be necessary and agreed by the association in pursuance of the above object for the benefit of the community.

- 4 The assets and income of the Association shall be applied solely in the furtherance of its objects and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the organisation except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation.

5 Establishment of a Public Fund

To establish and maintain a public fund to be called the Ecoaction Fund for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objects/purposes of Canberra Environment Centre. The Fund is established to receive all gifts of money or property for this purpose and any money received because of such gifts must be credited to its bank account. The Fund must not receive any other money or property into its account and it must comply with subdivision 30-E of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Part 1.1 Preliminary

1. Definitions

In these rules:

Note A definition applies except so far as the contrary intention appears (see Legislation Act, s 155).

financial year means the year ending on 30 June.

member means a member, however described, of the association.

ordinary committee member means a member of the committee who is not an office-bearer of the association as mentioned in section 12 (1) (a).

secretary means the person holding office under these rules as secretary of the association or, if no such person holds that office, the public officer of the association.

the Act means the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*.

the regulation means the *Associations Incorporation Regulation 1991*.

1A Application of Legislation Act 2001

The *Legislation Act 2001* applies to these rules in the same way as it would if they were an instrument made under the Act.

Part 1.2 Membership

2. Membership qualifications

(1) A person is qualified to be a member if

(a) the person is a person mentioned in the Act, section 21 (2) (a) or (b) and has not ceased to be a member of the association at any time after incorporation of the association under the Act; or

(b) the person—

(i) has been nominated for membership in accordance with section 3(1); and

(ii) has been approved for membership of the association by the committee of the association.

(2) An organisation is qualified to be a member if

(a) the organisation has not ceased to be a member of the association at any time after incorporation of the association under the Act; or

(b) the organisation —

(i) has been nominated for membership in accordance with section 3 (1); and

(ii) has been approved for membership of the association by the committee of the association.

3. Nomination for membership

- (1) A nomination of a person for membership of the association
 - (a) must be made by a member of the association in writing in the form provided by the Canberra Environment Centre; and
 - (b) must be lodged with the secretary of the association.
- (2) As soon as is practicable after receiving a nomination for membership, the secretary must refer the nomination to the committee which must decide whether to approve or to reject the nomination.
- (3) If the committee decides to approve a nomination for membership, the secretary must as soon as practicable after that decision notify the nominee of that approval and request the nominee to pay within 28 days after receipt of the notification the sum payable under these rules by a member as the entrance fee and the first year's annual subscription.
- (4) The secretary must, on payment by the nominee of the amounts mentioned in subsection (3) within the period mentioned in that subsection, enter the nominee's name in the register of members and, on the name being so entered, the nominee becomes a member of the association.

4. Membership entitlements not transferable

A right, privilege or obligation that a person has because of being a member of the association

- (a) cannot be transferred or transmitted to another person; and
- (b) terminates on cessation of the person's membership.

5. Cessation of membership

A person ceases to be a member of the association if the person

- (a) dies or, for a corporation, is wound up; or
- (b) resigns from membership of the association; or
- (c) is expelled from the association; or
- (d) fails to renew membership of the association.

6. Resignation of membership

- (1) A member is not entitled to resign from membership of the association except in accordance with this section.

- (2) A member who has paid all amounts payable by the member to the association may resign from membership of the association by first giving notice (of not less than 1 month or, if the committee has determined a shorter period, that shorter period) in writing to the secretary of the member's intention to resign and, at the end of the period of notice, the member ceases to be a member.
- (3) If a person ceases to be a member, the secretary must make an appropriate entry in the register of members recording the date the member ceased to be a member.

7. Fee, subscriptions etc

The annual membership fee of the association is determined by resolution of the committee.

8. Members' liabilities

The liability of a member 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 relation to membership of the association as required by section 7.

9. Disciplining of members

- (1) If the committee is of the opinion that a member
 - (a) has persistently refused or neglected to comply with a provision of these rules; or
 - (b) has persistently or willfully acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the association; or
 - (c) persistently or willfully acted in a manner inconsistent with the objects of the association.

the committee may, by resolution

- (d) expel the member from the association; or
 - (e) suspend the member from the rights and privileges of membership of the association that the committee may decide for a specified period.
- (2) A resolution of the committee under subsection (1) is of no effect unless the committee, at a meeting held not earlier than 14 days and not later than 28 days after service on the member of a notice under subsection (3), confirms the resolution in accordance with this section.
- (3) If the committee passes a resolution under subsection (1), the secretary must, as soon as practicable, serve a written notice on the member—

- (a) setting out the resolution of the committee and the grounds on which it is based; and
 - (b) stating that the member may address the committee at a meeting at a date determined by resolution of the committee; and
 - (c) stating the date, place and time of that meeting; and
 - (d) informing the member that the member may do either or both of the following:
 - (i) attend and speak at that meeting;
 - (ii) submit to the committee at or before the date of that meeting written representations relating to the resolution.
- (4) Subject to the Act, section 50, at a meeting of the committee mentioned in subsection (2), the committee must—
- (a) give to the member mentioned in subsection (1) an opportunity to make oral representations; and
 - (b) give due consideration to any written representations submitted to the committee by that member at or before the meeting; and
 - (c) by resolution decide whether to confirm or to revoke the resolution of the committee made under subsection (1).
- (5) If the committee confirms a resolution under subsection (4), the secretary must, within 7 days after that confirmation, by written notice inform the member of that confirmation.

Part 1.3 Committee

10. Powers of committee

The committee, subject to the Act, the regulation, these rules, and to any resolution passed by the association in general meeting—

- (a) controls and manages the affairs of the association; and
- (b) may exercise all functions that may be exercised by the association other than those functions that are required by these rules to be exercised by the association in general meeting; and
- (c) has power to perform all acts and do all things that appear to the committee to be necessary or desirable for the proper management of the affairs of the association

11. Constitution and membership

- (1) The committee consists of—
- (a) the office-bearers of the association; and
 - (b) up to 5 ordinary committee members; each of whom must be elected under section 13 or appointed in accordance with subsection (4).

- (2) The office-bearers of the association are—
 - (a) the president; and
 - (b) the vice-president; and
 - (c) the treasurer; and
 - (d) the secretary.
- (3) Each member of the committee holds office, subject to these rules, until the conclusion of the annual general meeting following the date of the member's election, but is eligible for re-election.
- (4) If there is a vacancy in the membership of the committee, the committee may appoint a member of the association to fill the vacancy and the member so appointed holds office, subject to these rules, until the conclusion of the next annual general meeting after the date of the appointment.

12. Election of committee members

- (1) Nominations of candidates for election as office-bearers of the association or as ordinary committee members must be made in writing, signed by 2 members of the association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the nomination form); and
- (2) If the committee resolves that there is a conflict of interest the committee may determine not to accept the nomination of a member for a position on the committee.
- (3) A person is only elected to the committee if the majority of voting members at the AGM supports the election.
- (4) The ballot for the election of office-bearers and ordinary committee members must be conducted at the annual general meeting in the way the committee may direct.
- (5) If the number of nominations received exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot must be held.
- (6) A person is not eligible to simultaneously hold more than 1 position on the committee.

13. Secretary

- (1) The secretary of the association must, as soon as practicable after being appointed as secretary, notify the association of his or her address.
- (2) The secretary must keep minutes of—

- (a) all elections and appointments of office-bearers and ordinary committee members; and
- (b) the names of members of the committee present at a committee meeting or a general meeting; and
- (c) all proceedings at committee meetings and general meetings; and
- (d) make them available to the committee in a timely manner.

14. Treasurer

(1) The treasurer of the association must—

- (a) oversee the keeping of correct accounts and books showing the financial affairs of the association with full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the association.

15. Vacancies

(1) For these rules, a vacancy in the office of a member of the committee happens if the member—

- (a) dies; or
- (b) ceases to be a member of the association; or
- (c) resigns the office; or
- (d) is removed from office under section 17 (Removal of committee members); or
- (e) suffers from mental or physical incapacity; or
- (f) is disqualified from office under the Act, section 63 (1); or
- (g) is absent without the consent of the committee for 3 consecutive meetings without prior approval of the committee

16. Removal of committee members

The association in general meeting may by resolution, subject to the Act, section 50, remove any member of the committee from the office of member of the committee before the end of the member's term of office.

17. Committee meetings and quorum

- (1) The committee must meet at least 6 times in each calendar year at the place and time that the committee may decide.
- (2) Additional meetings of the committee may be called by any member of the committee.
- (3) 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 any other period that may be

unanimously agreed on by the members of the committee) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.

- (4) Notice of a meeting given under subsection (3) must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that business may be transacted at the meeting, except business that the committee members present at the meeting unanimously agree to treat as urgent business.
- (5) Any 3 members of the committee constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a meeting of the committee.
- (6) No business may be transacted by the committee unless a quorum is present. If a quorum is not present, the committee must adjourn to a time as soon as possible after the scheduled meeting.
- (7) At meetings of the committee—
 - (a) the president or, in the absence of the president, the vice president presides; or
 - (b) if the president and the vice-president are absent—1 of the remaining members of the committee may be chosen by the members present to preside.

18. Delegation by committee to subcommittee

- (1) The committee may, in writing, delegate to 1 or more subcommittees (consisting of the member or members of the association that the committee considers appropriate) the exercise of the functions of the committee that are specified in the instrument, other than—
 - (a) this power of delegation; and
 - (b) a function that is a function imposed on the committee by the Act, by any other Territory law, or by resolution of the association in general meeting.
 - (c) A delegation under this section may be made subject to any conditions or limitations about the exercise of any function, or about time or circumstances, that may be specified by the committee
- (2) Any act or thing done or suffered by a subcommittee acting in the exercise of a delegation under this section has the same force and effect as it would have if it had been done or suffered by the committee.
- (3) The committee may, in writing, revoke wholly or in part any delegation under this section.
- (4) A subcommittee may meet and adjourn as it considers appropriate.

19. Voting and decisions

- (1) Questions arising at a meeting of the committee or of any subcommittee appointed by the committee are decided by a majority of the votes of members of the committee or subcommittee present at the meeting.
- (2) Each member present at a meeting of the committee or of any subcommittee appointed by the committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled to 1 vote but, if the votes on any question are equal, the person presiding may exercise a second or casting vote.
- (3) Subject to section 17 (5), the committee may act despite any vacancy on the committee.
- (4) Any act or thing done or suffered, or purporting to have been done or suffered, by the committee or by a subcommittee 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 subcommittee.

Part 1.4 General meetings

20. Annual general meetings—holding of

- (1) With the exception of the first annual general meeting of the association, the association must, at least once in each calendar year and within 5 months after the end of each financial year of the association, call an annual general meeting of its members.
- (2) The association must hold its first annual general meeting—
 - (a) within 18 months after its incorporation under the Act; and
 - (b) within 5 months after the end of the first financial year of the association.
- (3) Subsections (1) and (2) have effect subject to the powers of the registrar-general under the Act, section 120 in relation to extensions of time.

21. Annual general meetings—calling of and business at

- (1) The annual general meeting of the association must, subject to the Act, be called on the date and at the place and time that the committee considers appropriate.
- (2) In addition to any other business that may be transacted at an annual general meeting, the business of an annual general meeting is—
 - (a) to confirm the minutes of the last annual general meeting and of any general meeting held since that meeting; and
 - (b) to receive from the committee reports on the activities of the association during the last financial year; and
 - (c) to elect members of the committee, including office-bearers; and

- (d) to receive and consider the statement of accounts and the reports that are required to be submitted to members under the Act, section 73 (1).
- (3) An annual general meeting must be specified as such in the notice calling it in accordance with section 23 (Notice).
- (4) An annual general meeting must be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this part.

22. General meetings—calling of

- (1) The committee may, whenever it considers appropriate, call a general meeting of the association.
- (2) The committee must, on the requisition in writing of not less than 5% of the total number of members, call a general meeting of the association.
- (3) A requisition of members for a general meeting—
 - (a) must state the purpose or purposes of the meeting; and
 - (b) must be signed by the members making the requisition; and
 - (c) must be lodged with the secretary; and
 - (d) may consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by 1 or more of the members making the requisition.
- (4) If the committee fails to call a general meeting within 1 month after the date when a requisition of members for the meeting is lodged with the secretary, any 1 or more of the members who made the requisition may call a general meeting to be held not later than 3 months after that date.
- (5) A general meeting called by a member or members mentioned in subsection (4) must be called as nearly as is practicable in the same way as general meetings are called by the committee.

23. Notice

- (1) 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, email or send by post to each member at the member's address appearing in the register of members, a notice specifying the place, date and time of the meeting and the nature of the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting.
- (2) 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, send notice to each member in the

way provided in subsection (1) specifying, in addition to the matter required under that subsection, the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.

- (3) No business other than that specified in the notice calling a general meeting may be transacted at the meeting except, for an annual general meeting, business that may be transacted under section 21 (2).

24. General meetings—procedure and quorum

- (1) No item of business may be transacted at a general meeting unless a quorum of members entitled under these rules to vote is present during the time the meeting is considering that item.
- (2) Five members present in person (who are entitled under these rules to vote at a general meeting) constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a general meeting.
- (3) No business may be transacted by the committee unless a quorum is present. If a quorum is not present, the committee must adjourn to a time as soon as possible after the scheduled meeting.
- (4) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time appointed for the start of the meeting, the members present (being not less than 3) constitute a quorum.

25. Presiding member

- (1) The president, or in the absence of the president, the vice-president, presides at each general meeting of the association.
- (2) If the president and the vice-president are absent from a general meeting, the members present must elect 1 of their number to preside at the meeting.

26. Adjournment

- (1) The person presiding at 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 may be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting at which the adjournment took place.
- (2) 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.

- (3) Except as provided in subsections (1) and (2), 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.

27. Making of decisions

- (1) A question arising at a general meeting of the association is to be decided on a show of hands and, unless before or on the declaration of the show of hands a poll is demanded, a declaration by the person presiding 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.
- (2) At a general meeting of the association, a poll may be demanded by the person presiding or by not less than 3 members present in person or by proxy at the meeting.
- (3) If the poll is demanded at a general meeting, the poll must be taken—
 - (a) immediately if the poll relates to the election of the person to preside at the meeting or to the question of an adjournment; or
 - (b) in any other case—in the way and at the time before the close of the meeting that the person presiding directs, and the resolution of the poll on the matter is taken to be the resolution of the meeting on that matter.

28. Voting

- (1) Subject to subsection (3), on any question arising at a general meeting of the association a member has 1 vote only.
- (2) All votes must be given personally or by proxy but no member may hold more than 3 proxies.
- (3) If the votes on a question at a general meeting are equal, the person presiding is entitled to exercise a second or casting vote.
- (4) A member or proxy is not entitled to vote at any general meeting of the association unless all money due and payable by the member or proxy to the association has been paid, other than the amount of the annual subscription payable for the then current year.

29. Appointment of proxies

- (1) Each member is entitled to appoint another member as proxy by notice given to the secretary no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting for which the proxy is appointed.

- (2) The notice appointing the proxy must be in the form set out in appendix 2.

Part 1.5 Miscellaneous

30. Funds—source

- (1) The funds of the association must be derived from entrance fees and annual subscriptions of members, donations and, subject to any resolution passed by the association in general meeting and subject to the Act, section 114, any other sources that the committee decides.
- (2) All money received by the association must be deposited as soon as practicable and without deduction to the credit of the association's bank account.
- (3) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments must be signed by any 2 members of the committee or employees of the association, being members of the committee or employees authorised to do so by the committee.

31. Funds—management

- (1) Subject to any resolution passed by the association in general meeting, the funds of the association must be used for the objects of the association in the way that the committee decides.
- (2) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments must be signed by any 2 members of the committee or employees of the association, being members of the committee or employees authorised to do so by the committee.

32. The Public Fund

Requirements of the Public Fund

The organisation must inform the Department responsible for the environment as soon as possible if:

- it changes its name or the name of its public fund; or
- there is any change to the membership of the management committee of the public fund; or
- there has been any departure from the model rules for public funds located in the Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations.

Ministerial Rules

The organisation agrees to comply with any rules that the Treasurer and the Minister with responsibility for the environment may make to ensure that gifts made to the fund are only used for its principal purpose.

Not-for-Profit Conduit Policy

The income and property of the organisation 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, directors, or trustees of the organisation.

Any allocation of funds or property to other persons or organisations will be made in accordance with the established purposes of the organisation and not be influenced by the preference of the donor.

Winding-up

In case of the winding-up of the Fund, any surplus assets are to be transferred to another fund with similar objectives that is on the Register of Environmental Organisations.

Statistical Information

Statistical information requested by the Department on donations to the Public Fund will be provided within four months of the end of the financial year.

An audited financial statement for the organisation and its public fund will be supplied with the annual statistical return. The statement will provide information on the expenditure of public fund monies and the management of public fund assets

1. The objective of the fund is to support the organisation's environmental purposes.
2. Members of the public are to be invited to make gifts of money or property to the fund for the environmental purposes of the organisation.
3. Money from interest on donations, income derived from donated property, and money from the realisation of such property is to be deposited into the fund.
4. A separate bank account is to be opened to deposit money donated to the fund, including interest accruing thereon, and gifts to it are to be kept separate from other funds of the organisation.
5. Receipts are to be issued in the name of the fund and proper accounting records and procedures are to be kept and used for the fund.
6. The fund will be operated on a not-for-profit basis.
7. A committee of management of no fewer than three persons will administer the fund. The committee will be appointed by the organisation. A majority of the members of the committee are required to be 'responsible persons' as defined by the Guidelines to the Register of Environmental Organisations.

33. Alteration of objects and rules

Neither the objects of the association mentioned in the Act, section 29 nor these rules may be altered except in accordance with the Act.

34. Common seal

- (1) The common seal of the association must be kept in the custody of the secretary.
- (2) The common seal must not be attached to any instrument except by the authority of the committee and the attaching of the common seal must be attested by the signatures either of 2 members of the committee or of 1 member of the committee and of the secretary.

35. Inspection of books

The records, books and other documents of the association must be open to inspection at a place in the ACT, free of charge, by a member of the association at any reasonable hour.

36. Service of notice

- (1) For these rules, a notice may be served by or on behalf of the association on any member either personally, electronically or by sending it by post to the member at the member's address shown in the register of members.
- (2) If a document is sent to a person by properly addressing and sending to the person a letter containing the document, the document is taken for these rules, unless the contrary is proved, to have been served on the person at the time when the letter would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post or electronic transmission.

37. Surplus property

- (1) At the first general meeting of the association, the association must pass a special resolution nominating—
 - (a) another association for the Act, section 92 (1) (a); or
 - (b) a fund, authority or institution for the Act, section 92 (1) (b); in which it is to vest its surplus property in the event of the dissolution or winding up of the association.
- (2) An association nominated under subsection (1) (a) must fulfill the requirements specified in the Act, section 92 (2).