

Special Resolutions to amend the AUSIT Constitution – October 2020

Introduction

- The National Council has been reviewing the AUSIT Constitution (current version: 2018) and wishes to propose a number of amendments to it, as explained below, to be voted on by electronic ballot in accordance with Clauses 10.4.5 and 10.4.7 of the Constitution.
- This announcement is the notice required under Clause 10.1 of the Constitution: electronic voting will therefore open 28 days from the sending of this announcement, on **Wednesday 18 November 2020**, and close on **Friday 18 December 2020**.
- Shortly before 18 November, all eligible members will receive information on how to access the electronic ballot, which will be set up to prevent double voting. After voting closes on 18 December, the results will be tallied up and members notified as soon as possible about the result.
- Rather than being presented as a single resolution, the proposed amendments will be presented in a series of **six** Special Resolutions, each of which will be voted on separately, and each of which will need to be approved by at least three-fourths (75%) of the total votes cast in order to pass.
- This announcement will provide some general background on this series of amendments, and then set out each Special Resolution, a detailed table of the changes proposed, and an explanation of the reason for each. A full 'clean copy' version of the Constitution, as it would look if all amendments are accepted, will also be placed on the AUSIT website for any members who wish to refer to it.

General Background

- Although there have been several amendments to the Constitution in the last 5 years (2015, 2016, and 2018) only one of these, in 2015, could be described as more wide-ranging. Even then, large parts of the Constitution remain substantially as they were when the Constitution was first drafted in the late 1980s, and no longer reflect the situation in the 2020s.
- Amongst other things, this has meant that there are anomalies such as the following major ones:
 - + AUSIT's status as a not-for-profit organisation is not clearly spelt out;
 - + there are several references to Acts or Regulations that either no longer exist, or have since been amended or renamed;
 - + the provisions relating to National Council (and the Executive of NC) reflect the situation 30 years ago, before teleconferencing and then video-conferencing allowed NC to meet virtually, and when members of the Executive often had to be all from the same state because of the cost and inconvenience of gathering from all over Australia;
 - + as well as making provision for branch committees, the Constitution also makes provision for 'section' committees (in essence, for members sharing similar professional interests, such as literary translation or conference interpreting), but these have not existed for many years, if ever, and are now replaced by electronic discussion forums;
 - + the prescribed structure for branch and sub-branch committees is outdated (for instance, a treasurer is no longer essential, but there is no mention of other positions that are, such as a PD coordinator); and
 - + some of the provisions relating to General Meetings (for instance, a quorum of only 15 members in an association of over 1,000) need updating.
- More detail on these and other proposals for amendment will be provided under each Special Resolution.

National Council commends these proposed amendments to members and urges all who are eligible to take part in the electronic vote, to give the resulting decisions maximum validity.