

# Changes to the National Policy Congress

The Renewal Working Group (RWG), established in the late 1990s to move the Association from its previous governance under Royal Charter to its current governance under Corporations Law, recommended the establishment of a council as part of ALIA's structure, to advise the Board of Directors on policy, strategic planning and the setting of direction and vision for the Association.

The RWG suggested a particular model for this council which, after consultation with members, General Council, the then governing body of ALIA, subsequently modified and endorsed as the National Policy Congress (NPC) to be made up of one representative from each of the Association's divisions (that is, self-nominating groups). The Congress also elects two of the Association's seven Board members. The National Policy Congress is defined in the Association's current constitution.

In 2000 and 2001 when the first two NPCs met, each ALIA division (group) was invited to send a representative. Following feedback from the 2001 NPC, a two-tiered model was introduced in 2002. This involved a series of regional meetings across the country which were attended by representatives of ALIA self-nominating groups and from which eight state/territory representatives were selected as delegates to a second meeting. This meeting included ALIA directors and representatives of ALIA self-nominating and policy and advisory groups with interests relevant to the NPC agenda. This model is still current with the addition in 2004, of personal members and institutional member representatives being able to attend and vote at regional meetings.

It is proposed that from 2005 a new model be adopted. This would involve regional meetings, open to all members, held throughout the year to communicate and exchange information about the work and planning of the Association and the interests of members and groups in the region. Ideally such meetings would run in conjunction with other ALIA activities and, where possible, would be attended by a Director and a member of ALIA National Office staff. At an ALIA annual national meeting the Board would meet with delegates from the regional meetings and representatives from relevant policy areas to review issues arising from regional meetings or the Board's agenda, actions taken and/or still outstanding and also to identify emerging policy issues.

At the 2004 NPC, delegates raised and discussed the issue of the name 'National Policy Congress' and agreed that this name does not really fit the primarily planning function of the congress. Delegates suggested possible alternate names for the congress which would better express the broader focus it represents: namely National Advisory Congress or National Planning Congress.

The Board of Directors agreed that since the congress fulfilled a broad advisory role to the Board that the name should be changed to communicate this function more accurately and resolved to change the name of the National Policy Congress to the National Advisory Congress. While no model for the National Policy Congress is defined in the Association's constitution, thus enabling this to be modified as necessary, the congress itself, as mentioned above, is defined in the constitution as the National Policy Congress. Hence change of name to National Advisory Congress involves a change to the Association's constitution which requires a special resolution passed at a general meeting of the Association. By definition, to be carried a special resolution needs a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the meeting.

The next general meeting of the Association is the seventeenth Annual General Meeting scheduled for Thursday 19 May 2005. A motion moved by the president and seconded by the vice-president seeking to alter the Association's constitution by special resolution by changing the name National Policy Congress in all instances it appears in the constitution to National Advisory Congress is set out in the formal notice of the meeting (p11). ■



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## ALIA Elections for directors and vice-president (president-elect)

Voting papers have been distributed with this issue of *inCite* for election by the membership at large (with a special mailout to the institutional member representatives) for one director and the vice-president (president-elect). An additional voting paper will be sent to those with joint membership.

Separate voting papers will be forwarded to the National Policy Congress representatives for election of one director.

Voting closes: 5:00pm AEST Monday 11 April.

Candidates for director are Rachael Browning, Philip Keane and Ann Ritchie; and for vice-president (president-elect) Kevin Dudeney and Dagmar Schmidmaier. ■