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Patron - Mrs Margaret Grummitt

23rd October 2017

Board of Directors
Australian Men's Shed Association
board@mensshed.net

Re: Proposed Constitution of the Australian Men's Shed Association

Dear Sirs,

The Executive of Men's Shed Labrador Inc have read the Draft Constitution and the Explanatory Memorandum together with the Membership By-Laws and make the following comments for your consideration. First, this draft Constitution is a very good document and provides for involvement of the individual Shed.

Constitution

Clause 7.4 (c)

We do not believe that 1 week is sufficient notice. This does not allow for delay with the postal service nor does it give reasonable time for the Member to make arrangements to attend.

Clause 7.5 (b) (i)

A question – does AMSA own the term “Men's Shed”? If not, then we see this as difficult to enforce.

Clause 9.3 (a)

We believe that the composition of the Board as proposed is a good mix of Elected Directors and Appointed Directors. We also agree with the proposed tenure of the Directors.

Clause 9.5 (c)

Any member Shed can make nominations for Elected Directors without reference to the State Member.

We strongly support the concept of Elected Directors being nominated by a member Shed, However we feel, that through the Zone Representative system, the State Member can often have knowledge of a nominee that the Board may not have. It is one more level of checking the suitability of a nominee for the position of Director.

Clause 9.7 (c)

This sub-clause (c) is somewhat confusing. In the first sentence it states “A retiring Director is eligible for re-election or re-appointment, subject to a maximum of six (6) years in office.” The next sentence states “A Director who has served nine (9) consecutive years

How can a Director serve nine years if the maximum allowable term is six years?

Membership By-Laws

Clause 3.1 (b)

This Clause states that a Member Shed “is accessible to all men

Whilst we fully support the intent of this statement, it does not allow for exceptions. i.e. not every man will be suitable as a member of a Shed. Under this statement there is no provision for not accepting a man who applies but is unsuitable.

This Clause further states “..... or such other criteria as determined by the Board from time to time;”

Again, this is a somewhat open ended Clause in that a future Board might impose criteria that will be unacceptable. What mechanism is in place to counter this possibility?

Clause 5.3 (f)

What form does approved signage take? Is displaying the Membership Certificate sufficient?

General Comment

It is understood that a Shed, being a volunteer organisation, is not governed by the Work Place Health and Safety Act but in a Clause 5.3(b) the term “applicable laws” is used and in Clause 12.2 it refers to “statutory as well as common law principles.”

We are aware of our responsibility with respect to duty of care but the two Clauses referred to above imply that there are other laws with which we must comply. For the sake of clarity can these two Clauses be worded differently?

In conclusion, we commend the Board for the initiative of more involvement of Sheds and believe that this will lead to better governance and overall transparency and should strengthen this great movement called Men’s Sheds.

Yours faithfully,

Len Thomson
Secretary
(on behalf of the Men’s Shed Labrador Executive)