



# 75<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting MINUTES

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VENUE	Zoom
DATE	Friday, 3 July 2020
TIME	12.45 pm to 1.40 pm (AEST)

## In attendance

### Executive members

- Professor Nick James (Chair), Bond University
- Professor Natalie Skead (Deputy Chair), University of Western Australia
- Professor Stephen Bottomley (Immediate Past Chairperson), Australian National University
- Emeritus Professor David Barker, AM (General Secretary), AustLII/UTS
- Professor Alison Gerard (General Treasurer), University of Canberra
- Dr Johnathan Barrett (Editor – JALTA), Victoria University of Wellington
- Professor John Hopkins (NZ Chair), Canterbury University
- Associate Professor Matthew Berkahn (NZ Secretary), Massey University
- Professor Jennifer Corrin (Executive Member), University of Queensland
- Professor Alberto Costi (Executive Member), Victoria University of Wellington
- Professor Melissa Castan (Executive Member), Monash University
- Professor William MacNeil (Executive Member), Southern Cross University
- Associate Professor Jennifer Nielsen, Southern Cross University
- Professor Alex Steel, University of New South Wales

### General members

May Fong Cheong, Australian Catholic University

Dr Loganathan Krishnan, Monash University

Professor Robin Woellner, UNSW

Associate Professor Alex Sims, University of Auckland

### Apologies

Associate Professor Kate Galloway, Griffith University (Editor – LER)

Professor Jennifer McKay, University of South Australia

Associate Professor Vivien Holmes, The Australian National University

## 1. Welcome

Nick James opened the 75<sup>th</sup> ALAA AGM at 12.45pm and welcomed all attendees.

MOTION: That in view of the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 virus, the Association conduct this 75<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting by the alternative method of video conference. Moved by Robin Woellner, seconded by David Barker. The motion was passed.

## **2. Attendance and Apologies**

Attendance and apologies shown above were noted.

## **3. Minutes of previous meeting**

An amendment was made to the 2019 AGM Minutes: The General members in attendance were not listed. David Barker will amend the minutes accordingly.

MOTION: That subject to this amendment, the minutes from the 74<sup>th</sup> ALAA AGM held on 5 July 2019 at the School of Law and Justice at Southern Cross University, Coolangatta, QLD be approved by all members present. Moved by Robin Woellner, seconded by Stephen Bottomley. The motion was passed.

## **4. 2019-2020 President's Report**

The President of the Association is the Dean of the Law School that hosts the Conference. As the 2020 Conference was cancelled, there was no report from the 2019-2020 Presidents, Professor Simon Bronitt, University of Sydney and Professor Lesley Hitchens, UTS. Both Professors Bronitt and Hitchens have agreed to host the 2020-2021 conference and will remain as the Presidents of the Association in 2020-2021.

## **5. Chairpersons report – Nick James**

Nick James reported that he was delighted and proud to have been the Chair for the last twelve months. In the past year ALAA has continued and to a significant extent finalised the relaunch and rebuild of the Association.

- There was the change of name from ALTA to ALAA as a reflection of its renewed focus upon representing all academics in Australasia (Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific).
- There have been changes to the membership structure. In the past it was up to Law Schools to join the Association, and every academic within the Law School became a member. ALAA has moved to individual membership being free of charge, and an institutional membership category for law schools with an annual membership fee of \$2,000. The initial membership target was 500 individual members and 20 institutional members. NJ was pleased to report there are now just over 550 individual members and 19 institutional members.
- The website has been rebuilt providing information about the Association and a wide range of resources.
- ALAA now has a significant social media presence; we have a successful Facebook page, Twitter feed and LinkedIn page. Melissa Castan was thanked for her work.

NJ reported that his focus was on the rebuilding of the Association, and now that the rebuild is largely completed, he is happy to step aside as Chair and handover to a new leader. As outgoing Chair, he believes ALAA needs to step up as the voice for Australasian academics. There are many public issues at the moment where Australasian academics need to be represented and have their voices heard, such as the response to COVID-19; the transition by many academics to remote

teaching; the impact of the crisis upon early career academics especially casual academics; the impact of the Black lives matter movement and racial discrimination; and the issue of sexual harassment and abuse in the legal profession. These and many other issues are the sorts of debates and conversations in which Australasian academics need to have their voices heard. The Association is now extremely well placed to serve as that voice.

NJ hoped that Deputy Chair Natalie Skead's nomination as the new Chair would be successful and that she has his unqualified support in assuming the role of Chair and leading ALAA into the future.

Robin Woellner congratulated NJ and the Executive on their achievements in successfully relaunching the Association.

## **6. Treasurer's report – Alison Gerard**

AG has been the Treasurer for twelve months. She has also been recently appointed as the new Head of the Law School at University of Canberra, and was congratulated on her appointment. AG acknowledged the Administrative Officer at Charles Sturt University, Christy Larson, for her help with the ALAA accounts.

AG reported on the profit/loss for this year and the balance sheet (see attached). It was noted that the opening balance was \$160,000 and the healthy closing balance was \$185,000.

With 19 Institutional memberships we received a significant amount of membership fees. ALAA also received the profits of two previous conferences (the 2017 Uni SA conference and the 2018 Curtin Conference). Not reflected in the financial report was the revenue from the 2019 SCU conference. This was expected to be approximately \$3000 and will be chased up and reported as income for the next financial year.

The Association made a surplus of \$25,000 which was invested in a termed deposit due to expire in May next year. Set aside was \$10,000 for Legal Education Review and \$10,000 for the JALAA.

After tabling the draft budget, AG proposed a 50% reduction in the institutional membership fee for 2020-2021 to \$1,000 Schools. She reported that the Executive had debated whether the institutional fee be reduced from \$2,000 to \$1,500 or \$1,000. Given the challengers this year and the fact that many Law Schools are facing financial constraints it was decided that the usual annual fee be reduced to \$1,000. AG noted that the Association is in a position where it can afford the reduction, and the reduction may in fact attract new members.

NJ confirmed that the Legal Education Review payment will only be \$10,000 next year.

MOTION: That the 2020-2021 individual membership fee remain at zero and the institutional membership fee be reduced to \$1,000. Moved by Melissa Castan, seconded by David Barker. Motion passed.

MOTION: That AG's report be accepted subject to the following amendments:

- Membership revenue will as an abundance of caution be budgeted as 20 at \$1,000, but we hope to get more than 20 institutional members given the reduced fee.
- Expected expenditure on the LER remains at \$10,000, and the expected expenditure on JALAA be \$3750.

Moved by Robin Woellner, seconded by Stephen Bottomley. Motion passed.

## **7. New Zealand Executive report – John Hopkins**

The New Zealand Executive met regularly during the year. They now have a new administrator, Sophie Goosens. Their current focus is on increasing individual memberships; unlike in Australia, in New Zealand they don't have many individual memberships. ALAA NZ will follow up on Institutional memberships in all the Law Schools. They are also developing an ALAA NZ website which will be launched shortly, and planning a regular ALAA event for NZ members.

The NZ finances are robust, and they provided support for JALAA on a one-off basis.

MOTION: That JH's report be accepted. Moved by Jonathan Barrett, seconded by Bill MacNeil. Motion passed.

## **8. Editor's reports**

### **a. Legal Education Review – Natalie Skead**

NS provided a brief update on the Legal Education Review in the absence of Kate Galloway. NS reported that the move to the online platform Scholastica has been very successful. It has made the editorial process much simpler, and a lot more streamlined for everyone on the editorial committee. Volume 29 (2019) was very successful. There were nine published articles covering a range of issues. There has been one article published in the 2020 online volume. There has been some slowing down as a result of COVID-19.

NS thanked KG for her leadership of the Legal Education Review. NJ noted that the successful modernisation of the Association has been mirrored by the very successful modernisation of the Legal Education Review with transition to an online platform and rolling publication.

### **b. Journal of ALAA – Jonathan Barrett**

JB assumed the role of Editor in Chief of the Journal of ALAA after the AGM in 2019. The new board consists of JB, Sean Goltz and Jackie Mapulanga-Hulston. They managed to publish eight articles. NJ offered congratulations to JB and the team. JALTA has been re-launched as JALAA successfully, despite having the move quickly after the conference last year.

MOTION: That both reports by the Journal editors be accepted. Moved by Bill MacNeil, seconded by Loganathan Krishnan. Motion passed.

## **9. Election of Office Bearers – David Barker**

DB reported that all nominations were received correctly; and there were no positions with multiple nominees.

NJ announced and confirmed the election of former Deputy Chairperson Natalie Skead as Chairperson. There were no other nominations for the position.

NS announced and confirmed the election of the other ALAA Office Bearers:

- Kate Galloway, Deputy Chairperson
- Nick James, Immed. Past Chairperson
- David Barker, General Secretary
- Alison Gerard, General Treasurer
- Kate Galloway, Editor in Chief – LER
- Jonathan Barrett, Editor in Chief – JALAA

- W John Hopkins, NZ Chairperson
- Matt Berkahn, NZ Secretary
- Toni Collins, NZ Treasurer
- Jennifer Corrin, Exec member
- Stephen Bottomley, Exec member
- Alex Steele, Exec member
- Bill MacNeil, Exec member
- Alberto Costi, Exec member
- Melissa Castan, Exec member
- Vacant, NZ Exec member
- Simon Bronitt and Lesley Hitchens, 2020-2021 Presidents

NJ thanked all the members that had nominated and/or renominated as Office Bearers. He congratulated everyone appointed or reappointed to their positions. He particularly noted the appointment of Kate Galloway as the new Deputy Chairperson. NJ automatically assumes the role of Immediate Past Chairperson, formerly occupied by Stephen Bottomley, and NJ was delighted to report that SB has agreed to stay on as a General Executive member.

## **10. Honorary Life Membership nominations - David Barker**

DB called upon the new Chair, Natalie Skead, to speak to the proposed Honorary Life Membership for Nick James. NS noted that NJ had been a remarkable Chair of the Association during difficult times. He led the reimagination and reinvigoration of the Association and we now have a vibrant, energetic Association. Congratulations to Nick on his three years of service.

Stephen Bottomley then spoke to the nomination, and noted that Nick had done an outstanding job refreshing the Association.

MOTION: That NJ be an Honorary Life Member of the Association. Moved by NS, seconded by SB. Motion passed.

## **11. ALAA Conference – Nick James**

The 2020 conference was to be held Sydney and hosted by University of Sydney and University of Technology Sydney. Planning was well underway for a conference that would focus on research and scholarship within the legal academy before it had to be cancelled due to COVID-19.

NJ was delighted to confirm that both co-hosts have agreed to host the 2021 in Sydney.

NJ reported on discussions by the ALAA executive to find a suitable alternative platform for ALAA members – especially early career academics - to present their work. ALAA will be organising an event later in the year in collaboration with the Centre for Professional Legal Education. More information will be provided as things progress over the next few weeks.

## **12. Other business**

### *Outstanding matters*

Robin Woellner asked about the two items of other business from the previous year: the request of review of ranking of Law Journals, and the representation of Australia, ANZ and South Pacific on the Commonwealth legal education association.

The ranking of the Association's journals ties in with the ranking of Journals as part of the CALD exercise which is underway and not yet finalised. ALAA is participating and seeking to ensure that the Association's journals are recognised appropriately.

David Barker reported regarding the Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA). DB is the ad hoc Executive Committee Member/Regional Representative for Australia. The last Conference was held in Australia, and David attended the Conference and was re-elected as a representative. David has agreed to send out a newsletter and will keep everyone in ALAA informed.

#### *South Pacific report*

Jennifer Corrin reported on our South Pacific colleagues. ALAA has been in contact with the University of South Pacific and the University of Papua New Guinea to see if we can offer any assistance during this difficult time. Both of the Universities do not have Heads of School. There was some discussion regarding reaching out to the other Pacific Island Universities, for example, University of New Caledonia and University of French Polynesia.

**The meeting concluded at 1:40pm**

AUSTRALASIAN LAW ACADEMICS ASSOCIATION  
**STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS  
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
 30 JUNE 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<i>Revenue</i>	7,831.66	67,843.34
<i>Expenses</i>	(28,321.13)	(31,109.12)
	-----	-----
Loss before income tax	(20,489.47)	36,734.22
	=====	=====
<i>Income tax expense</i>	-	-
	-----	-----
Total income for the year	(20,489.47)	36,734.22
	=====	=====

AUSTRALASIAN LAW ACADEMICS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 30 JUNE 2019

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<i>Assets</i>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	160,101.39	180,590.86
	-----	-----
	160,101.39	180,590.86
	=====	=====
<i>Liabilities</i>		
Nil	-	-
	-----	-----
	-	-
	=====	=====
<i>Equity</i>		
Retained Earnings	160,101.39	180,590.86
	-----	-----
	160,101.39	180,590.86
	=====	=====

AUSTRALASIAN LAW ACADEMICS ASSOCIATION  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 2019**

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
<i>RECEIPTS</i>		
Membership	1,200.00	58,055.00
Interest	2,461.42	2,807.02
Conference Proceeds	---	---
LER	---	---
Refunds - ATO	1,406.28	---
Subscription Fees	20.00	2,812.86
Royalties	2,254.32	3,543.32
Copyright Agency Limited	489.64	625.14
	-----	-----
	7,831.66	67,843.34
	=====	=====
<i>PAYMENTS</i>		
Administrative Assistance	21,600.16	20,000.00
Bank Fees	120.00	390.16
Audit Fees	1,845.00	1,710.00
Publications	---	---
Sundries – Inc Tax, IT & Tax advice	---	---
Refunds	---	---
Proofreading, Typesetting	3,750.00	5,333.43
Website	914.86	3,135.03
Other Expenses	91.11	540.50
	-----	-----
	28,321.13	31,109.12
	=====	=====

AUSTRALASIAN LAW ACADEMICS ASSOCIATION  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 2019**

<u>STATEMENT OF FUNDS</u>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	\$	\$
Balance as at 1 July 2018		
- Commonwealth Bank Cheque Account	38,706.26	4,293.90
- Commonwealth Bank Term Deposits	108,867.29	106,236.19
- Business Online Saver Account	32,345.51	32,169.59
- Paypal	671.80	1,156.96
	-----	-----
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	180,590.86	143,856.64
	(20,489.47)	36,734.22
	-----	-----
	160,101.39	180,590.86
	=====	=====
This is represented by:		
Balances as at 30 June 2019		
- Commonwealth Bank Cheque Account	15,846.48	38,706.26
- Commonwealth Bank Term Deposits	111,190.74	108,867.29
- Business Online Saver Account	32,483.48	32,345.51
- Paypal	580.69	671.80
	-----	-----
	160,101.39	180,590.86
	=====	=====

## **Notes to the financial statements**

### **Basis of preparation**

The financial statements are prepared on a cash basis of accounting whereby revenue is recorded when it is received, expenses are recorded when they are paid. No assets or liabilities, other than cash and bank balances, are recorded.

### **Revenue**

During the 2019 financial year, no membership fees were charged to patrons as a result of a one off restructure of the Association. This resulted in a significant decline in revenue for the year.

### **Subsequent events**

Subsequent to the reporting date, the existence of the infectious disease COVID-19 ('Coronavirus') has become widely known, and begun to spread rapidly throughout the world, including Australia.

At the date of signing this report, the company had not experienced any significant downturn in operations. The company continues to monitor developments in COVID-19, and assess disruptions and other risks to its operations and are confident the going concern basis of preparation remains appropriate. The financial statements are prepared based on circumstances as at 30 June 2019, with recent developments as a result of COVID-19 considered a non-adjusting subsequent event.

There has not been any matter or circumstance, other than that referred to in the financial statements or notes thereto, that has arisen since the end of the financial year, that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect, the operations of the Association as at the date of this report, the result of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

**AUSTRALASIAN LAW ACADEMICS ASSOCIATION  
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report:

Presents fairly the financial position of the Australasian Law ACADEMICS' Association as at 30 June 2019 and its performance for the year ended on that date.

At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Australasian Law Academics Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Professor Nick James  
ALTA Chairperson / Treasurer 2018-2019



Dated this 18th day of May 2020



**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION TO THE DIRECTORS OF AUSTRALIAN LAW ACADEMICS ASSOCIATION**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief during the year ended 30 June 2019, there have been:

- no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* in relation to the audit; and
- no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

**MAZARS RISK & ASSURANCE PTY LIMITED**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'R. Megale'.

**Rose Megale**

Director

Sydney, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2020

LEVEL 12, 90 ARTHUR STREET, NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060 – PO BOX 1994, NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059  
TEL: +61 2 9922 1166 - FAX: +61 2 9922 2044 – [www.mazars.com.au](http://www.mazars.com.au)  
EMAIL: [audit@mazars.com.au](mailto:audit@mazars.com.au)

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## Independent Audit Report to the members of the Australasian Law Academics Association

### Qualification

In common with similar not for profit organisations, the Association is reliant on the honesty and integrity of its members and the officers to ensure:

- a) that all funds collected on its behalf are deposited intact into its bank accounts and;
- b) the validity of all payments made to suppliers.

Accordingly, our audit verification was limited to ensuring that actual receipts and payments recorded in the books of accounts have been properly reflected in the financial statements.

### Qualified Audit Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed, the financial statements present fairly in accordance with the cash basis of accounting, as described above, the payments and receipts of the Australasian Law Academics Association for the year ended 30 June 2019 and its cash and bank balances as at that date.

### Scope

We have audited the attached financial statements comprising of the Statement of Receipts and Payments and the Statement of Funds for the year ended 30 June 2019. The Committee is responsible for the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies used are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the association's constitution and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of the Statement of Receipts, Payments and Funds in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the Australasian Law Academics Association. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The Statement of Receipts, Payments and Funds has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Committee's financial reporting requirements under the constitution. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial statements to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared. Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australasian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the Statement of Receipts, Payments and Funds. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with the cash basis of accounting whereby revenue is recorded when it is received, expenses are recorded when they are paid, and no assets or liabilities, other than cash and bank balances, are recorded. Accounting Standards and other professional reporting requirements (UIG Consensus Views) are not applicable to the cash basis of accounting adopted by the Australasian Law Academics Association.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

### MAZARS RISK & ASSURANCE PTY LIMITED

**Rose Megale**

Director

Sydney, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2020

LEVEL 12, 90 ARTHUR STREET, NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060 – PO BOX 1994, NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

TEL: +61 2 9922 1166 - FAX: +61 2 9922 2044 – [www.mazars.com.au](http://www.mazars.com.au)

EMAIL: [audit@mazars.com.au](mailto:audit@mazars.com.au)

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