



MINUTES OF THE MHSAA FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING – MON 20 February 2023 - Approved

Location: Zoom Pro Conference facilitated by the Federal President located in Canberra.

Present: *Nigel Webster (Chairperson), Dr Justin Chadwick, Steve Danaher, Leigh Ryan, Ian Stagoll, Russell Paten, Russell Linwood.*

Apologies: *Ian Curtis, Neil Dearberg, Terry Dinneen, Elizabeth Hobbs, Katrina Kittel, Duncan McConnell.*

Welcome by Chair: *Nigel Webster* opened the meeting at 06.00 pm (AEDST).

Previous Minutes:

That the minutes of the previous Federal Council (FC) meeting held on Monday 05 December 2023 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved: *Russell Paten* Seconded: *Russell Linwood*

Motion CARRIED.

After they have been approved at the next FC meeting on Monday 08 May 2023, these minutes will be published on the MHSAA website (as per FC Minute 9 of 25 Mar 19).

Business Arising:

Key Correspondence:

Out: Application for incorporation as an Association under the Associations Incorporation Act -1991 by the Federal MHSAA body in the Australian Capital Territory submitted to Access Canberra on 13 February 2023.

In: Letter from Mr. Daryl Binning about his article "Mist masks military myths" dated 16 November 2022 seeking MHSAA input on the Kokoda Track or Trail controversy.

Election of officials at the 2022 AGM:

Nigel Webster discussed the election of officials at the 2022 AGM. He summarised the position as:

The Federal Council consists of Office holders (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) and Ordinary council members. Council members serve for two years, half retiring each year (S.6(a)). When issuing the Notice of the AGM, the Secretary will also call for nominations for the various Council positions, the appointment of a proxy to conduct the election of a President, and any Special Business to be put to the meeting for a decision.

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As the MHSA must appoint a Secretary or at least an Acting Secretary for the society to continue hence this is why Nigel Webster is currently the acting Secretary and under the MHSA Constitution there is nothing to prevent an individual holding two offices.

Branch Office Holders and Ordinary Members (S.5A & 5B) are elected or appointed by a Branch (s.5C). The Branch representative does not have to be the President, only a Branch Committee member (S.7(d)). However, Leigh Ryan has recently pointed out that there is no mention of proxies in the Council deliberations (s.11F).

It appears that if a Branch appointed Federal Councillor is unable to attend a meeting there is nothing to stop that Branch appointing a replacement Branch Committee member in their stead. Good governance would require appropriate notification to the Secretary. If an elected Councillor is absent - they are absent from that meeting.

Nigel Webster stated that after consultation with Leigh Ryan, Russel Paten and advice given to him by the ACT Government (under the Associations Incorporation Act -1991) he is confident that the MHSA Federal Council has complied with the Model Rules and has a duly constituted Federal council with office bearers and council members for 2023. He said that this had been a valuable exercise and has tightened up understanding of the rules that the MHSA operates by.

Nigel Webster called for further discussion and updating of the MHSA business plan. Russell Linwood volunteered to work with Nigel on this and called for input and feedback from the members of Federal Council.

President's report

Nigel Webster spoke to the paper previously circulated highlighting value of incorporation and that an application for incorporation as an Association for the Federal body of the MHSA has been lodged with Canberra Access which cost \$209.00 in fees. He will also meet in person with Mr Robert Muscat (President) and the committee of the MHS NSW to further discuss mutual cooperation and amalgamation with the MHSA.

There was discussion on the current electronic issue of Sabretache being distributed to members of MHS NSW. Russell Patten said that it would be useful as a marketing tool to promote the MHSA journal. It was suggested by Ian Stagoll that the MHS NSW would be informed that past issues of Sabretache were available for free download from the MHSA website. This would allow them to access issues up to the last two issued to paying members. Katrina Kittel's written concerns were noted and addressed through this approach which was not covered in the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the MHSA and the MHS NSW on 09 May 2022.

A Letter from Mr. Daryl Binning about his article "Mist masks military myths" dated 16 November 2022 was received seeking MHSA input on the Kokoda Track or Trail controversy. Nigel Webster undertook to respond to this as he is familiar with the official position on the usage of Kokoda Track or Trail.

Nigel Webster mentioned that he has spoken with Duncan Connell to fix some dead links to documents on the MHSA.

Treasurer's Report:

Bank balance Dr Justin Chadwick informed the FC that the current balance of the MHSA account is \$10,639.28 to which is added a Term Deposit to the value of \$22,766.60.

Sabretache Editor's Report

The March 2023 edition of Sabretache has been distributed. There was also a call made for more articles to be sought for the journal from the membership in the States and Territories.

Russell Linwood spoke of the first volume of the latest Australian War Memorial official history, *"Born of Fire and Ash"* by Professor Craig Stockings, and his struggle to review this due to the density of content. He considered this a disappointment compared to Charles Bean and Gavin Long.

Ian Staggoll mentioned the possibility of republishing material from "Le Grogard", the ACT branch publication in Sabretache. Dr Justin Chadwick said that Sabretache material must be original only and the MHSA agreements with distributors, such as EBSCO, need to be abided by us.

Ian Staggoll suggested that his ACT members send their articles to Sabretache first which was agreed as the best strategy.

General Business

Russell Linwood requested an update on Sabretache author's prize, calling on all members to re-read minutes to familiarise themselves with the previous discussions. Nigel Webster will discuss this with Justin Chadwick and report back at the next FC meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.45 pm (AEDST).

Next Federal Council meeting will be at 6:00 pm (AEST) Monday 08 May 2023

Minutes drafted by Dr Justin Chadwick on Monday 20 February 2023.

Minutes cleared provisionally by Nigel Webster -Meeting Chairperson (and President) on 02 May 2023.