

Australian Federation of Graduate Women

A Voice for Graduate Women



Newsletter

August 2012

President's Post Council Newsletter August 2012

On 21 July the teleconference Council meeting, as expected, was dominated by discussion about resolutions for the conference and it was pleasing to have observers present from all states, an advantage rare in face to face meetings. Sadly there was no news of a revival of AFUW NT but I am assured there is still hope.

I clarified to everyone that any change to make Education our main focus would in no way negate previous policy resolutions of either AFGW or IFUW and that I considered all future executives morally bound to honour them and to continue acting on them. There was also majority support for the view that Education encompassed peace, human rights and women's rights.

Marion Jones was congratulated on the efficiency she showed in launching the new website before time and under budget. I do hope you have all visited it. Access to the Members Only section will be by a password.

It was agreed that this issue of the newsletter should wait until the redrafting of the Constitutional Resolutions was complete following the discussion at Council. This has unfortunately left no time for corrections or amendments since these needed to reach Jocelyn Eskdale by 14 August. For this reason the drafts were only sent by email to Council members for onward distribution and this letter accompanies the final version as will be presented to Conference. It is sent as an attachment to all who receive the newsletter by email and will be posted on the website. The costs of mailing the 40 pages to all members who only receive communication by snail mail would be over \$1,000 and is hard to justify so I do ask those who want to read a paper version to contact their state executive or branch executive for one. In this way I hope that ALL members will have a copy of the final resolutions, Constitutional, Administrative and Policy, for discussion on which to base the State voting.

A reminder that the closing date for Policy and Administrative resolutions to reach Jocelyn Eskdale is 1 September. I emphasise that ALL resolutions will be available in printed form in the Conference documents when voting takes place.

As requested, I am including a copy of the diagram explaining how the proposed change in management structure would work, this time including the non-voting role of the Public Officer.

I personally feel very committed to the change and think it would be a retrograde step to continue with the status quo as is automatic if the vote fails to achieve a two thirds majority. Our constitution means any change would come into effect almost immediately and, while some of you may find this too fast, I remind you all that under the new structure it is only 12 months until a review at the 2013 AGM can take place rather than stalemate for another 3 years. This also enables us to include consideration of any changes in IFUW and dues more immediately. I accept it makes nominating for office a bit complicated but the CIR role at least remains unchanged and I think there may need to be some clarification and perhaps some emergency motions and nominations from the floor once the format of the executive has been decided. Decisions taken during the next year would also be subject to more widespread consultation and the Management Committee would meet more frequently if only electronically. Skype, however, is free and a considerable reduction in costs is anticipated.

There have been suggestions for a different type of State structure coming from Queensland. This is really a matter for Queensland members to decide but to remain a part of AFGW and IFUW the resulting change must result in a Constitution acceptable to both AFGW and IFUW. All members would still need to be State based.

Arrangements for the Triennial Conference continue well, with over 50 early bird registrants. There have been changes to the Public Day speakers necessitated by the Queensland election result and Dr Ann Stewart, President of Brisbane Branch, will now be keynote speaker. Full details will be in your Conference Bag.

It has also been agreed that a face to face Council meeting of PGWNet will take place on the Thursday evening of the Conference under the Chairmanship of Dr Dorothy Page. This will enable IFUW President, Marianne Haselgrave to be present. NZFGW representatives have already registered as have representatives from Fiji, and we hope for several other Pacific Island delegates. Observers from all the AFGW members are welcome but I do remind you that dinner on the Thursday is at your own expense and not included in the registration fee.

I urge you all to read the proposed Resolutions carefully, consult the membership widely and consider your votes. If my Presidency were to be remembered only for an attempt at renewal that failed I'd like to be sure it was as a result of careful consideration and an informed vote. Of course I should much prefer the 35th Triennium to be remembered as the trigger for a move into the twenty first century and preparation for a second century of AFGW! GWSA, our pioneers, are already planning their centenary in 2014 so the second century is just around the corner.

My next newsletter will be a final report of the 35th Triennium, after the conference, hopefully welcoming a transition to a new management structure. I wish all members well in the few remaining months of discussion, encourage everyone to think of suitable nominees to the positions of leadership and exhort all members to work whole heartedly with these leaders to make successful whatever system is chosen.

Jane Baker
President.

CURRENT STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

FEDERAL COUNCIL

VOTING MEMBERS

Executive

- President
- Coordinator for International Relations
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Vice-Presidents

- Presidents of each State and Territory Association (STA)

Conveners of Standing Committees

- Education [or Education (Schools) and Education Higher Education)
- Peace and Human Security
- Human Rights
- Resolutions
- Status of Women

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- National Registrar
- Fellowships Office
- Proxies for Vice-Presidents when the relative VP is in attendance
- Public Officer

MEETINGS

- Three per annum
- Formerly all face to face,
- More recently two face to face and one by teleconference
- Email votes on urgent matters between meetings
- The executive meets regularly by email or teleconference and prior to each council meeting

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

All constitutional amendments and policy resolutions must be approved by the National Conference

Conferences are held every three years

Voting is by quota by STAs dependent on number of financial full members.

PROPOSED STRUCTURE

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

President

Coordinator for International Relations

Combined Secretary/Treasurer/Registrar,
Communications officer

Each of the above elected for a 3-year term

Two Vice-Presidents

one of whom is the nominated Education Convener

Year 1: Immediate Past President + one STA President or her
nominee (a recent STA President)

Year 2: Two other STA Presidents or their nominees

Year 3: Presidents or their nominees from remaining 2 states

NON-VOTING MEMBER

Public Officer

The proposal gives Education the highest profile.

*This method would ensure each state had close involvement with the
Management Group.*

*This extension to 'nominees' is to cope with the differing terms of office of STA
Presidents and the lack of synchronicity of these terms. Recent past Presidents of
STAs are likely to have the relevant experience and expertise.*

MEETINGS

Electronically every two months

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The authority to make constitutional amendments and policy resolutions
would pass from the National Conference to the AGM.

To be held annually hosted by states in rotation.