



**INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS
SOCIETY OF
VICTORIA**

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC
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Annual General Meeting 2021

Minutes

Time and Date: 5.30 pm, Thursday, 25 November 2021
Venue: Zoom Videoconference

1. Introduction and Attendance

The President welcomed those in attendance to the Annual General Meeting of the Industrial Relations Society of Victoria with an acknowledgement to the traditional owners of the land from where we do our business tonight and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

There were 26 current financial members present at the meeting:

- Chris Meallin
- Anna Lee Cribb
- Wayne Harbor
- Katie Sweatman
- Kelly Thomas
- Amanda Threlfall
- Julian Teicher
- Sally Wilson
- Virginia Wills
- Lisa Alcock
- Niki Howells-Schramm
- Michael Butler
- Grace Turner-Mobbs
- David Cragg
- Natascha Boehm
- Kay Steel
- Greg Bamber
- Caitlin Farmer
- Matt Luddington
- Trevor Clarke

- Claire Brown
- Karena McNeely
- Leigh Johns
- Robert Laird
- Rachael D’Rozario
- Wayne Townsend

Under Rule 23(2), the General Meeting requirement for a quorum of at least fifteen financial members to be present was confirmed by the Secretary.

2. Apologies

The Secretary reported that apologies had been received from the following members:

- Janet Whitecross
- Brian Lacy
- Mary-Jo Durrant
- Nick Perica
- Mark Caile
- Richard Clancy
- Lyndal Ablett
- Mark Caile
- James Farrugia
- Debra Hill
- Hanan Ismail
- Elise Jasper
- Nicola McNeil
- Peter O’Donoghue
- Ronan O’Donnell
- Angela Politis
- Patrick Steele

3. Minutes of Previous AGM

The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 10 December 2020 as circulated with the Notice of Annual General Meeting for 2021 were tabled for discussion followed by a motion by the President that they be accepted.

- *Moved:* *Greg Bamber*
- *Seconded:* *Sally Wilson*

Carried

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

The Secretary reported that there was no business arising from the minutes.

5. Correspondence

The Secretary reported that there had been no correspondence received regarding the AGM.

6. Reports

6.1 President's Report

The President, Niki Howells-Schramm, reported that like the previous year since the last AGM, it had been another very challenging year for the IRSV with the impact of COVID-19 in particular for Victoria with the extended period of lockdown and therefore only the ability to offer virtual functions, including the ALERA National Conference that was to be held in Victoria. Despite these challenges, it has been another successful year for the IRSV with the automated iMIS membership system allowing for seamless online renewal and event registration with membership growth continuing to be a key priority.

The three strategic imperatives for the Society established from the strategic planning workshop in 2020, continues to be the following:

- Member growth and sustainability
- Service innovation
- Operational efficiency

The extended restrictions of COVID-19 through most of the second half of the year did not permit the usual Advocacy Course in conjunction with the Fair Work Commission to be conducted which was disappointing given the consistent popularity of this course where demand always exceeds the number of places available each year.

The President thanked the Executive Committee for all their work during a very challenging year and look forward to hopefully having the usual events back again next year with members back at many more functions in attendance, although likely that on-line events will continue given their convenience for member accessibility.

6.2 Flagship Functions Report

The Vice President – Functions, Claire Brown, reported that despite the challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic, 2021 had still been a successful year with improvisation to run and adapt function on a virtual basis where possible under the circumstances.

Again, the traditionally popular, 'Meet the Commission' function as the customary first function of the year was unable to be held and despite numerous attempts to reschedule for later in the year, it was not possible due to the ongoing restrictions.

A successful 'Women in Industrial Relations Group' (WIRIG) function was held on-line in October with Dr Niki Vincent, Victorian Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner, as speaker.

6.3 Membership Engagement Report

The Vice President - Membership Engagement, Mary-Jo Durrant, was an apology and her report was read by the Secretary.

The IRSV membership numbers by category at the end of the 2020-2021 year totalled 156 as follows:

- Academic 13
- Profession 43

- Management 42
- Union 22
- Government 15
- Retired 16
- Student 5

Membership renewal notices were sent out on 5 October 2021, with very positive early renewals in the first few days of nearly 80 along with the addition of 14 new members. It is anticipated these numbers will increase further over the coming month trending towards the numbers of the previous years.

The upcoming social networking event that had to be cancelled twice due to COVID-19 is now a fortnight away and we look forward to seeing as many members as possible at the Crafty Squire on 9 December at 5.30 pm which will be very exciting for members and those who are considering joining the IRSV to finally meet other members face to face.

Mary-Jo Durrant is resigning from the role after 2-years and Nick Perica after one year as the Student Representative now that he will be taking up a full-time legal position in 2022 and the Secretary thanked them for their contribution over this time.

6.4 National Affairs Report

The Vice President – National Affairs, Julian Teicher, reported that it had been again a difficult year for the National body ALERA with most of the usual rotation of Executive Committee meetings being conducted Zoom teleconference meetings.

The National Conference that was held virtually in October due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions impacting on travel and venue attendance was very successful with far more registrations than what would have been expected had it been run in attendance at the Novotel Melbourne as originally planned.

The objectives of the ALERA Executive Committee in 2021 have been reviewing their strategic goals and purpose through facilitated workshops with an emphasis in providing greater relevance and value-added purpose to supporting the State and Territory Constituent Societies.

The JIR is also being reviewed as to how it can be improved for the benefit of the members including it's format being transitioned to being an on-line publication consistent with the direction of other professional and academic journals.

The IRSV Representatives to the ALERA National Executive for 2021 were Greg Bamber (ALERA President), Anna Lee Cribb (ALERA Secretary), Niki Howells-Schramm (IRSV President) and Julian Teicher (Vice President–National Affairs) Julian thanked the sub-committee members for their support during the year and as IRSV representatives on the ALERA National Executive.

6.5 Professional Development Report

The Vice President – Workplace Conflict Resolution and Professional Development, Janet Whitecross, was an apology and provided a written report (Attachment 1) that was read out by the Secretary.

The Secretary proposed a motion that all the Reports by the President and Vice Presidents for the 2021 year be accepted.

- *Moved:* Trevor Clarke
- *Seconded* Leigh Johns

Carried

7. Financial Report

The Treasurer provided a report to the meeting (*Attachment 2*) that covers the period from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021 as prepared by the IRSV's Auditing Firm, BGL Partners whom we thank for their support and assistance for preparing the IRSV accounts again this year.

The 2020-2021 year like the previous one before in 2019-2020 has been a very challenging year for all organisations (big and small) to manage the raft of imposed government restrictions to control COVID-19 that impacted how they operated and this was no exception for our Society as reflected in our finances.

The Auditors have completed their report for the 2020-2022 membership year and have confirmed that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Society will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due in the near future.

The Treasurer proposed the following motions:

Motion 1:

- *That the Financial Report is accepted by the members presented today, as I believe it represents a fair view of the financial position of the Society in the 2020-2021 year.*

- *Moved:* Greg Bamber
- *Seconded* Anna Lee Cribb

Carried

Motion 2:

- *That BGL Partners be reappointed as the Auditors for the IRSV for the next year of 2021-2022.*

- *Moved:* Michael Butler
- *Seconded* Claire Brown

Carried

A copy of the full Financial Report will be available from the IRSV website. The report will also be available from the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission after we lodge our annual report in 2022.

The Treasurer acknowledged and thanked Mark Caille for his support during the year as the Assistant Treasurer.

8. Election of a Returning Officer

The Secretary reported that Trevor Clarke has offered to perform the role of Returning Officer this year which was supported by those present and elected unopposed.

9. Election of the 2022 Committee

Rule 12(1)(3), states that the elected committee member positions hold office for one-year duration, *“except for the President, who holds office until the annual general meeting two years after the date of his or her election and after that holds the office of immediate past President”*.

Rule 13(1)(4), states, *“If the number of nominations received are equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated shall deemed to be elected.”*

The Returning Officer reported that the number of nominations for each vacant position had met the requirement of Rule 13(1)(4) and the nomination sheets had been provided to him to be verified were all found to be in order as submitted.

The Returning Officer then declared accordingly those elected for the 2022 year as follows:

• President	Niki Howells-Schramm	Management	(Mid-Term)
• Vice President #1	Julian Teicher	Academia	(Elected)
• Vice President #2	Virginia Wills	Union	(Elected)
• Vice President #3	Lisa Alcock	Union	(Elected)
• Vice President #4	Richard Clancy	Government	(Elected)
• Treasurer	Wayne Harbor	Management	(Elected)
• Secretary	Chris Meallin	Academia	(Elected)
• Assistant Secretary	Kelly Thomas	Union	(Elected)
• Assistant Treasurer	Sally Wilson	Management	(Elected)
• Committee Member #1	Leigh Johns	Government	(Elected)
• Committee Member #2	Greg Bamber	Academia	(Elected)
• Committee Member #3	Karena McNeely	Student	(Elected)
• Committee Member #4	Anna Lee Cribb	Profession	(Elected)
• Committee Member #5	Natascha Boehm	Profession	(Elected)
• Committee Member #6	Caitlin Farmer	Management	(Elected)
• Committee Member #7	Amanda Threlfall	Union	(Elected)
• Committee Member #8	Claire Brown	Profession	(Elected)
• Immediate Past President	Katie Sweatman	Profession	(Mid-Term)

Rule 11(3) states that the composition of the committee must meet the following requirement in that, *“at least two members of the Committee shall come from management, two from the unions, two from government services, two from professions and two from academic institutions.”*

The Returning Officer confirmed that the composition of the elected committee for 2022 met this requirement with a minimum of at least two in each category as follows:

• Profession	4
• Government	2
• Management	4
• Union	4
• Academia	3

The Secretary reported that the following members have expressed an interest to continue, or become ‘co-opted members’ of the committee in 2022:

- David Cragg
- Trevor Clarke

- Janet Whitecross
- Matt Luddington

The Secretary proposed a motion that these Co-opted members be accepted:

- *Moved:* Julian Teicher
- *Seconded* Sally Wilson

Carried

The Secretary also welcomed Karena McNeely as the IRSV Student Representative for 2022 and thanked Nick Perica who vacates the role having completed his academic studies and is now employed in a full-time legal position.

The Secretary expressed thanks to Trevor Clarke for undertaking the role of Returning Officer for the AGM this year and welcomed all the elected and co-opted members to the Executive Committee for the 2022 year.

General Business

The President noted the sad passing of former IRSV Patron, Geoffrey Giudice, and past President, Charles Englander, over the past year and acknowledged their significant contribution to the Society. The Secretary also expressed thanks to Michael Butler and Brian Lacy who had assisted in the writing of the tribute that was published by both the IRSV and the Law Institute of Victoria, in which Charles had been actively engaged in both for many years. Michael Butler proposed that a special award be considered in memory of Charles, especially given his passion and active involvement in the education and professional development of students/early career practitioners. The President advised that this was a great suggestion that would be considered by the Executive Committee next year.

Greg Bamber reported on behalf of ALERA in his capacity as the National President, that the Journal of Industrial Relations (JIR) would be likely to be on-line for all the State and Territory Societies by mid 2022 which would enable members to have more expedient access to the JIR, along with the additional features of back issues and search function. It is hoped that this will lead to the phasing out of the current hardcopy format, (unless specifically requested), which will be a significant saving in cost as well as being more environmentally sound. Greg also expressed thanks to the organising committee of the ALERA National Conference hosted by the IRSV in October which despite having to pivot to being on-line due to the pandemic restrictions, was a great success.

The Meeting was closed at 6.18 pm

Attachment 1



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VP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

(IRSV Annual General Meeting – 25 November 2021)

The ability for the IRSV to run its preferred suite of professional development programs over the past year has yet again been compromised by continually changing COVID-19 restrictions and lengthy lockdowns within Melbourne metropolitan area and major regional centres.

For the second consecutive year, it has not been possible to run the IRSV's Advocacy Training Program - our flagship professional development event, which continues to attract a lot of member interest. I wish to recognise and thank Brian Lacey and Chris O'Grady for their continued commitment to facilitating this program, and to my fellow IRSV committee members (Nikki Howells-Schramm and Sally Wilson) for their efforts in assisting me with attempts made to run this program. With the lifting of COVID restrictions I am confident that it will be possible for the Advocacy Training Program to be run in 2022, and I wish all involved the best of success in delivering this program.

My thanks also to DP Richard Clancy and Commissioner Leigh Johns for their work in preparing and presenting their webinar entitled "Fair Work Commission - Hearing Room to Virtual Commission" on 28 September 2021. The focus of this webinar was to educate IRSV members on the FWC Virtual Hearings Operating Model, introduced to ensure FWC service requirements and standards were not compromised in light of the inability of parties to meet on a face to face basis during the pandemic. A very big thank you to Katie Sweetman for all her work liaising with IRS NSW to establish a web portal to promote this event and enable it to be run so smoothly.

Whilst arrangements for two other Professional Development programs were also made during the past year, the increased workloads placed on members of the IR and HR community responding continually changing COVID-19 restrictions and lengthy lockdowns prevented these sessions going ahead. Thus, I must also acknowledge and thank the work done by the following IRSV members who were unable to share their insights to the broader membership

- Kaitlyn Gulle and Alice Alexander from Lander & Rogers who prepared a presentation on COVID-19 issues in the Workplace, and
 - Emma Watt (former FWC Conciliator, current with SES) who prepared a presentation on the topic of Dismissal Dispute Conciliation.

Their preparedness to support the IRSV is greatly appreciated.

Finally, I wish every success to the in-coming IRSV Executive Committee for the coming year.

Janet Whitecross
Vice-President – Professional Development

Attachment 2



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INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SOCIETY OF VICTORIA TREASURER'S REPORT IRSV ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the Executive Committee for their support over the year. Also, I wish to thank and acknowledge the work of our Auditors, BGL Partners.

Financial Report Summary

A Financial Report of the Society covered the period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021. Let me highlight the major figures for the Annual Financial Report: Our operating income will be a net deficit of \$598, which is a significant improvement on last year (2020 deficit \$26,216).

The Society's total revenue for 2020- 2021 year was around \$20,949 compared to \$18,492 in the prior year. Whilst our revenue traditionally comes from two main sources being membership fees and receipts from activities, restrictions imposed to manage COVID-19 has continued to severely impacted our revenue from activities. We had an increase in membership revenue (\$2,932). Our expenses for the past year were down from \$64,684 in the prior year to \$21,547. The financial outcome of the recent IRSV/ALERA Conference held in October 2021 will be reported in next year's report.

Overall, the 2020-2021 financial year was a positive year in that we had higher revenue but reduced expenses. In the current reporting year, we had no extra ordinary items to report.

The Society has strong cash position including reserves (\$157,378). We have increased our cash and cash equivalents by \$13,714 compared to 2019-2020 year (\$143,664).

I would therefore seek that the members of the Society present at this AGM accept this report as it represents a fair view of the financial position of the Society, and that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Society will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due in the future.

Wayne Harbor
IRSV Treasurer

23 November 2021