



Memo to Port Phillip EcoCentre (PPEC) members to advise on proposed changes to the Constitution

Over the last 6 months, the Committee has been reviewing the PPEC Constitution.

The current constitution has served us well, and although it has been amended from time to time, most recently at the 2023 AGM, we decided it needed modernising and updating.

A number of factors contributed to that decision:

- The introduction of the Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2023 bringing changes to the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association. Changes were made to financial reporting thresholds -now aligned with those of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC), and to the voluntary cancellation/winding-up process. Also, the Model Rules now support the use of modern communication technology, including at meetings; there are new processes for disciplinary appeals; and a requirement to maintain a conflict -of -interest register.
- From 1 January 2024, the PPEC has had a new deductible gift recipient (DGR) endorsement. The endorsement now covers the whole organization as an environmental organization, not just the Public Fund - now re-named the Gift Fund. It is no longer necessary to have a separate committee to administer the Gift Fund.
- The need to generally simplify and modernise format and language, and reduce technicality.

The new Constitution is based on the Model Rules for an incorporated association, with some variations to meet particular PPEC needs. There are no material changes to the current Constitution in relation to key elements such as our Statement of Purposes, the powers of the Association, membership, roles and responsibilities of office bearers and the Committee of Management, rules governing meetings, elections, financial arrangements, reporting obligations and delegations.

Some sections of the Model Rules are required by law but unlikely to be used, for example - rules about grievances and disciplinary procedures.

We will be inviting the members to adopt the revised Constitution as a single document -- a replacement Constitution.

Members can read the new Constitution here - <https://www.ecocentre.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/PPEC-REVISED-CONSTITUTION-DRAFT-27-Oct-2024.pdf>

- *Prepared October 2024 by Vice President Ian Gray AM (Retired lawyer and Judge)*