



Judicial Conference of Australia

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING: 2014/2

Held by teleconference on **Thursday 1st May 2014**
commencing at 5.00 pm Eastern Standard Time

Participating

Justice Philip McMurdo (President) in the Chair
Judge Michael Baumann, AM
Chief Magistrate Elizabeth Bolton
Justice Timothy Ginnane
Chief Magistrate Graeme Henson
Magistrate Don Jones
Justice Hilary Penfold, PSM
Justice Steven Rares (Vice President)
Magistrate Marc Sargent
Justice Michael Walton
Judge Brian Withers (Treasurer)

Apologies

Justice Robert Beech-Jones
Chief Justice Alan Blow, OAM
Judge Allan Fenbury
Justice Judith Kelly

In attendance

Christopher Roper, AM (Secretary)

1 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th February 2014 had been circulated.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2014 be approved.

2 President's report and business

The President reported that all of the matters listed on the agenda had been discussed at the recent Governing Council meeting and there were no further developments. He said that a discussion paper in regard to the International Association of Judges was being compiled and would be considered at the next Governing Council meeting.

3 Financial matters

A financial report for the period to 31st March 2014 had been circulated and was noted. The Treasurer reported on the current balances in the accounts at the bank.

He reported that, as a result of some recent adjustments, the surplus on the 2013 Colloquium would be now slightly over \$9,000.

Resolved:

That the Treasurer's report be received.

4 Budget for July 2014 – June 2015

A draft budget had been circulated and was discussed. The Treasurer noted that the budget provided for a deficit but most of the amount of the deficit was due to the research project being conducted by Professor George Williams and the introduction of the online membership renewal system. He said there would be a need to ensure that, for the future, the JCA's finances were kept on an even keel.

It was noted that an increase in membership would help balance the budget.

It was also suggested that it could be useful to permit non-members to attend the Colloquium. It was agreed that non-members be permitted to attend the Colloquium at a fee which was \$150 more than the early bird fee and the regular fee. Those registering in this way would be advised that their fee included membership of the JCA up to June 2015. It was noted that the Colloquium brochure could, as a result, be circulated to all members of courts.

Resolved:

That the budget for July 2014 to June 2015 be approved.

5 Membership matters

A report for the period to 31st March 2014 had been circulated and was noted. Some changes to the membership of courts were reported.

6 Secretariat matters

There were no matters to report.

7 Membership renewal process

A memorandum, together with a proposal from Fly Digital, had been circulated. The proposal was discussed.

Justice Ginnane suggested that, before full implementation, a trial be undertaken of the system.

The Secretary was asked to arrange that payment could also be made by bPay, if possible.

It was agreed that initially a paper renewal form would also be sent to all members.

Resolved:

1. That an online membership renewal system be introduced to run, initially, in parallel with the existing system.
2. That, with the introduction of the new system, the membership database be transferred from the Edwards Marshall server and be housed on the JCA's server.
3. That the proposal from Fly Digital be accepted.
4. That the new system be trialled before full implementation.

8 2014 Colloquium

Justice Rares reported that the program had been finalised and briefly outlined it.

It was agreed that details of the Colloquium would be circulated, as soon as possible, to members via the weekly media clippings, from AM Meetings Plus in the form of the Colloquium brochure and also via Governing Council members.

It was also agreed that the brochure would be distributed to Governing Council members with a request that they would promote the Colloquium to members of their courts. It was noted that there would be an added printing cost involved.

Judge Baumann noted that Governing Council members could, at the same time, encourage membership of the JCA amongst those who were not members.

The Secretary was asked to seek from Governing Council members an indication of how they intended to distribute the Colloquium brochure in order to know how many extra copies should be printed.

It was agreed that on the Friday evening there would be welcome drinks but dinner on that night would be 'own arrangements'. The Secretary was asked to arrange for details of the hotel restaurant to be included in the Colloquium brochure.

9 Development of a policy on the judicial selection and appointment process

Justice Rares reported he had recently received a draft of the report from the Secretariat and hoped to be able to take this project forward shortly.

10 Development of guidelines on the use of social media by judicial officers and courts

Justice Rares reported that he had not been able to take any further action on this project.

11 Productivity Commission report on access to justice

Justice Rares briefly outlined the context for this report and its content which ranged over a number of issues. He said that the issue for the JCA was whether it should make a submission on behalf of judicial officers, in the knowledge that the Council of Chief Justices would also be making a submission. It was noted that the date for making submissions was 21st May.

The matter was then discussed.

It was agreed that the JCA should make a submission and the President and Vice President indicated that they would work on a draft. It was also agreed that the JCA should ask for an extension of time to make a submission.

There was some discussion of the desirable level of generality for the submission. Judge Baumann suggested that it should be at a more general, philosophical level as the JCA would not be in a position to obtain a consensus amongst its members on the detail.

12 Next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 24th July 2014 at 5.00pm Eastern Standard Time.