



Animal Care Australia

2023

MEETING CODE OF PRACTICE



Version 1 — August 2023

Animal Welfare is Animal Care

Animal Care Australia Meeting Code of Practice - 2023

This Code sets the formality and procedures for Committee, General and Annual General Meetings of Animal Care Australia Incorporated.

It is intended that this Code of Practice will operate as a living document, which will be improved upon as policy is updated.

We encourage all stakeholders (applicants, associations and members) to feel comfortable in raising issues regarding this Code of Practice, with a view to clarifying policy to improve the administration of the organisation.

Animal Care Australia Incorporated – INC1801209

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“Animal Care Australia acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we reside, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.”

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Contact us

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This Code of Meeting Practice will hereafter be referred to as Meeting Code.

This Meeting Code applies to all meetings of Animal Care Australia of which all the members are committees members of Animal Care Australia, members, supporters and the general public

MEETING PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Meetings should be:
 - Transparent:* Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
 - Informed:* Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
 - Inclusive:* Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
 - Principled:* Decisions are aligned with the policies of Animal Care Australia (unless drafting or reviewing a policy for the purpose of updating or implementing).
 - Trusted:* The community has confidence that the committee act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community and the ethos of the organisation.
 - Respectful:* Committee and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
 - Effective:* Meetings are well organised, effectively run and chaired.
 - Orderly:* Committee and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.
- 1.2 Meetings may be held in person or via telecommunications such as teleconference (Zoom/Teams/dial-in) or as a combination of both.

BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of Committee meetings

- 2.1 Committee meetings will be held on the second Monday of each month
- 2.2 The committee shall, by simple motion, adjourn or cancel a committee meeting in order to facilitate a specified need for adjournment or cancellation.
- 2.3 Committee meetings scheduled for the same date as a General Meeting must commence following the closure of the General Meeting and following the departure of all members and guests.

General meetings

- 3.1 General Meetings are to be held every 'odd' month on the second Monday of that month, with the exception of January.
- 3.2 A General Meeting shall by motion at the previous General Meeting be closed to the general public or guests — but not necessarily to current financial members — for the purpose of ensuring confidentiality, or matters related to any special resolution or resolution of conflict.
- 3.3 A General Meeting may be cancelled or postponed with no less than seven (7) days notice. Notice must be made to all members in writing (bulk email mailout)
- 3.4 Individuals wishing to attend General Meetings must RSVP their details via the Animal Care Australia public email address (aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au) by no later than 5pm on the day of the General Meeting.
- 3.5 The Chair or Secretary will respond providing any information relating to the whereabouts of or access to the General Meeting along with a copy of the agenda. This must be completed no later than one hour prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Agenda and business papers for Committee Meetings

- 4.1 The Chair must cause the agenda for a committee meeting to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.
- 4.2 The Chair must (where applicable) ensure that the agenda states:
- (a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings and
 - (b) any matter or topic that the Chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and
 - (c) all matters requested by other Committee members to be considered at the meeting, and
 - (d) any other business.

Agenda and business papers for General Meetings (excluding the Annual General Meeting)

- 4.3 The Chair or Secretary may provide a copy of the agenda at any time prior to the meeting, that does not contravene clause 3.5.
- 4.4 The Chair or Secretary (responsible for issuing the agenda) must not include in the agenda for a General Meeting any business which would be deemed, unlawful, confidential or of a sensitive matter. Such items must be dealt with at a Committee Meeting. The Chair may report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next General Meeting once the matter/s have been resolved.

Agenda and business papers for the Annual General Meeting (& Special General Meetings)

- 4.5 The Chair or Secretary may provide a copy of the agenda at any time prior to the meeting, that does not contravene clause 3.5 or Part 4 of the Animal Care Australia Constitution.

COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by Committee Members at meetings

- 5.1 All Committee Members must make reasonable efforts to attend Committee and General Meetings,
Note: A Committee Member may not cast a vote at a Committee Meeting until they have Read and signed agreement to the Statement of Responsibilities.
- 5.2 Where a Committee Member is unable to attend a meeting that must send an apology at the earliest opportunity stating they are unable to attend that meeting.

The quorum for a meeting

- 5.3 A quorum for meetings is as prescribed in the Animal Care Australia Constitution. That being:
- Committee Meetings: 3 Committee members or office bearers, or,
 - General, Special and Annual General Meetings: 5 members.
- 5.4 A meeting must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:
- (a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or
 - (b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or
 - (c) at any time during the meeting.
- 5.5 The adjournment must be recorded in the minutes outlining the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting, together with the names of the members present.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

- 5.6 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.
- 5.7 Recordings of meetings may be maintained providing all participants are made aware the meeting is being recorded.
- 5.8 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of following approval from the Committee, but not prior to recording and agreement of minutes from that meeting.

The Chairperson at all meetings

- 5.9 The Chairperson (referred to as the Chair) is appointed in accordance with Clause 29 of the Animal Care Australia Constitution.

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR GENERAL MEETINGS

- 6.1 At a General Meeting, the order of business is fixed as:
 - 1. Welcome & Introductions
 - 2. President & Species Representatives Reports
 - 3. General Business & open question time:
 - 4. Other Business
 - 5. Close Meeting
- 6.2 The provision of including the opportunity for members and guests to provide introductions is at the discretion of the Chair.

Species Representatives Reports

- 6.3 Species Representatives should provide a report. If there is nothing to report they should (where possible) still introduce the current workings or areas of concern for their individual species.
- 6.4 Reports provided by Species Representatives should be concise and cover the most recent subject matters or concerns, and may include updates or outcomes from previous General Meeting reports.

President's Report

- 6.5 The President's Report should provide an overview of the current 'lay of the land' for the organisation including any known forthcoming matters or business
- 6.6 In the absence of the President this report is to be delivered by either the Vice President or Assistant to the President—as pre-arranged prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Questions

- 6.7 A question may be asked by any participant within the meeting by following meeting protocols.
- 6.8 A Representative to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a Representative is unable to respond to the question at the meeting, they may take it 'on notice' and report the response to the next meeting and/or the individual directly. Should the person require an answer privately, the contact details of that individual are to be obtained for the purpose of responding but are not to be recorded in the minutes without expressed permission.
- 6.9 All members must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

Meeting Protocols

- 7.1 The following Meeting Protocols apply to all meetings held by Animal Care Australia.
- 7.2 At the commencement of business, the Chair will place all participants participating via audio/visual methods, on mute. Participants attending in person will be requested to cease speaking and remain silent.
- 7.3 The Chair will commence the meeting and will conduct the order in which business is to be addressed.
- 7.4 Each individual will be invited by the Chair, to speak following their indication of a desire to do so. This indication is to be made via the raising of a hand — either physically or technologically. Despite raising of the hand, the participant must wait until addressed and invited to speak by the Chair.
- 7.5 The Chair is to monitor the order in which participants indicate their intention to speak and provide a fair opportunity for all those wishing to speak to do so.
- 7.6 Participants should mute themselves/return to remaining silent immediately following having provided input, until invited to speak again by the Chair.
- 7.7 The Chair will, at their discretion and at any time, override the speaker electronically by muting all, OR, request the person cease speaking. Any participant refusing to follow this instruction will be removed from the meeting by the Chair.

Motions Protocols

- 7.8 A motion can be put forward by a Committee Member within a meeting seeking a debate on that matter.
- 7.9 A motion can be put forward by a financial Member prior to the Meeting having provided it to the Secretary not less than 7 days before the meeting.
- 7.10 A motion cannot be debated until it has been seconded.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

- 7.11 It is the duty of the Chair to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.
- 7.12 The Chair must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.
- 7.13 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion, the Chair is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.
- 7.14 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the Chair has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Amendments to motions

- 7.15 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.
- 7.16 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt within the original motion and must not be a direct negative of the original motion.
- 7.17 An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the Chairperson.
- 7.18 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved. However, this must be carried out at the next General Meeting in order to provide time to re-assess the consequences of the new motion and/or amendment.,
- 7.19 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

- 8.1 A member who, during a debate at a meeting, has the right to speak and a right of reply following on from all other participants being provided the opportunity to respond to the original statement/speech.
- 8.2 That right of reply will be limited to five (5) minutes to enable the member to make a statement limited to explaining any misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- 8.3 The Chair may at any time put an end to the debate and move the meeting forward.
- 8.4 The Chair may permit the debate to continue should they deem it necessary in order to achieve a resolution.
- 8.5 Once the Chair has declared the debate on a matter has concluded and the matter dealt with, the Chair must not allow further debate on the matter.

Points of order

- 8.6 A Committee Member may draw the attention of the Chair to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.
- 8.7 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The Chair must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the Member raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached.
- 8.8 The Chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Expulsion from meetings

- 8.9 All Chairpersons of meetings are authorised under this code to expel any person, including any Committee Member, from a meeting, for having failed to comply with a requirement of the Chair or this code.
- 8.10 If a person attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the Chair of the meeting or a person authorised by the Chair may terminate that person's audio-visual link to the meeting
- 8.11 Where a person is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

VOTING

- 9.1 Voting is carried out in accordance with clauses 23 and 33 of the Animal Care Australia Constitution.

TIME LIMITS ON MEETINGS

- 10.1 Meetings of the Committee are to conclude no later than **two hours after commencement**.
- 10.2 General Meetings are to conclude no later than **90 minutes after commencement**.
- 10.3 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at the designated time, the committee may, by agreement, extend the time of the meeting.
- 10.4 If the business of the meeting is unfinished and it is not resolve to extend the meeting, the Chair must either:
 - (a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next meeting, or
 - (b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the Chair.
- 10.5 Clauses 10.1 and 10.2 does not limit the ability of the Chair to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of meetings

- 11.1 The Secretary is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of all meetings.
- 11.2 At a minimum, the Secretary must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the minutes:
 - (a) the names of committee members and office-bearers attending and where applicable the names of members and guests—to be listed separately.
 - (b) details of each motion moved and of any amendments moved to it,
 - (c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,
 - (d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost,
 - (e) the agreed actions to be taken by any individuals and the names of those individuals, and
 - (f) such other matters specifically required under this code.
- 11.3 The minutes of a meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting.
- 11.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.
- 11.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.
- 11.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.
- 11.7 The confirmed minutes of a meeting must be made available by request of a member.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

- 11.8 Upon request from a current financial member of the organisation, to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting, the Committee must determine whether the external release of such documents could provide a conflict to or breach of:
 - a. the organisations right of intellectual property
 - b. the confidentiality of other persons or organisations
 - c. the relevance of said documents to the individual or member organisation making the request
- 11.9 While making the determination for Clause 11.8, the Committee may decide to release the documents in a redacted form.

Note: Animal Care Australia is not subject to the provisions of 'Freedom of Information'



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