



ABN 31548912869

CLEAA President's Report to AGM

19 October 2018, Brisbane

This annual report covers key activities and achievements since the last AGM.

Last year's AGM saw a vote of confidence in CLEAA's fundamental purpose, that there is value in continuing to provide a forum to bring together interested parties in the provision of continuing legal education and professional development of solicitors, barristers and judges.

The new Executive Committee held a planning day the outcome of which was agreement on a short to medium term strategy to

- Focus on common interests and core activities of value to members and stakeholders in areas where CLEAA has a good track record and capacity to deliver and
- Upgrade support services to improve the experience of members and position CLEAA to enhance and expand its activities in future

In summary, the key activities and achievements since the last AGM are as follows

- Planning day resulting in a clear strategy for rebuilding
- Appointment of a new secretariat
- Strengthened and streamlined some governance and administrative processes
- Membership categories simplified and fees reduced
- Website development aimed at streamlining back of house and the user experience
- More frequent communications (CLEAA Talk and social media)
- Planning and preparations for the Brisbane Conference

CLEAA Secretariat
PO Box R992, Royal Exchange, NSW 1225
Tel + 61 (0) 413 501 992
Email secretariat@cleaa.asn.au
www.cleaa.asn.au
Kathryn McKenzie, Business Angel Services

Executive Planning Day

The Executive met in Sydney on 24 November 2017 at UNSW CBD Campus to consider options for the way forward. There was agreement on a clear, not too ambitious strategy in the short to medium term to focus effort and resources on

- **Common interests** of members and stakeholders (rather than seeking to meet the diverse interests of various 'market segments')
- **Core activities** such as the annual conference and regular communications which are known to be of value to members and where CLEAA has a good track record and capacity to execute (rather than stretch resources too thin with activities such as multiple local networking events or research projects) and
- **Upgrading support services** in order to improve the experience of members and position CLEAA to enhance and expand activities in future

New Secretariat

From 1 February 2018 CLEAA welcomed Business Angel Services as the new provider of secretariat services. Business Angel Services was selected after consideration of several alternatives due in large part to the considerable experience of director Kathryn McKenzie with administration and event management of not for profit associations in the legal sector.

In addition to the routine secretariat functions (supporting Executive meetings/AGM, managing membership records, book keeping and financial reporting) Business Angel Services has undertaken or assisted the Executive with upgrading support services such as

- Accounting systems (setting up accounts in MYOB to replace the manual system)
- Financial processes (online banking, online payments for membership and conference

registrations)

- Setting up a dedicated CLEAA PO Box and mobile phone (yet to be implemented)
- Communications and records such as migration of records to a new mail out platform (Campaign Monitor – currently 283 active subscribers with further development in progress;) and enhanced document management (Google Drive)

Strengthening and streamlining governance and administration

Given that CLEAA is a small voluntary association an ongoing challenge is how to practice good governance and administration cost effectively. This year the Executive has

- Strengthened online banking arrangements with a 'two to approve' policy
- Confirmed end of financial year as 30 June (not AGM) with YTD update reporting
- Inspected files held at Leo Cussen with a view to better document management
- Started to review CLEAA's constitution and arrangements to make sure these are up to date with current requirements for not for profit associations.

Membership changes

Given the rebuilding aims, membership arrangements were simplified and the fee reduced.

This year sees only two categories of membership, Individual and Primary (the difference being in whether the individual or their employer pays the membership fee).

The membership fee was set at \$75 for both categories (previously \$135).

The category of Secondary Member (\$100 with additional secondary members free), was not offered this year. As has been the practice in the past a favourable conference registration fee was offered to include membership.

Website Development

KindleVision (Kim Senior) remains CLEAA's webmaster. KindleVision together with the Business Angel Services have been working on improving the functionality of the website and associated functions such as membership management, online payments, communications management.

The next phase is expected to see a shift in focus to content and related functionality aimed at the website being a useful and attractive resource.

Enhanced communications

Social media presence This year has seen CLEAA seek to stay in touch with members and reach out to colleagues by expanding its social media profile mainly via its own Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts but also by posting occasional comments elsewhere.

CLEAA Talk: The online newsletter has been renamed CLEAA Talk. The number of editions increased to six (Dec 2017 and Feb, April, June, Aug and Oct 2018).

Annual Conference

The 2017 annual conference was held in Sydney in October 2017 with around 56 registrations and speakers. Income and expenditure for the Sydney conference are accounted for in the 2017-18 financial statements.

Planning and preparations for the 2018 Brisbane conference have been a major activity of this year. Income and expenditure for the Brisbane conference will be accounted for in the 2018-19 financial statements.

We are most grateful to our many speakers, and the organisations that provide in kind support for the conferences, College of Law for last year's Sydney conference and Queensland Law Society this year. Without this support the conference logistics and economics would be quite different.

Facts & Figures

Executive Committee: In addition to the planning day, the Executive Committee (Ronwyn North, Jacquelyn Simon, Una Doyle, Sarah Collins, Christopher Lemercier, Francesca Saturno, Amal Cutler) met once face to face and otherwise monthly by telephone which is more often than the minimum of quarterly required under the Constitution.

Meetings we held on 19 Oct, 24 Nov, 15 Dec 2017 and 30 Jan, 22 Feb, March, 17 April, 15 May, 19 June, 19 July, 16 Aug, 6 Sept and 5 Oct 2018.

There were no separate subcommittees this year to enable the Executive to fully understand CLEAAs operations. Different members took the lead in organising the various activities with the result that communications between meetings were frequent including extra meetings for conference planning for example.

Membership: As at 30 June 2018 paid up membership stood at 52, and as at 14 October 2018 we have 66 current financial members with some renewals outstanding for 2019YE.

Budget and Financial Position: The usual approach to budgeting has been “break even or better” and “preserve reserves”. However, with membership revenue projected as unlikely to cover expenses in the 2018YE, the approach taken was to budget for a small loss and make strategic and limited use of cash reserves to fund

- Membership and conference registrations at an attractive rate and
- Upgrading of support services (secretariat and website development)

The financial statements are covered in the Vice President/Treasurer’s report, and we are projecting an improved bottom line for this financial year.

Thank you!

CLEAA is a group of people with common interests not a corporate entity so thank you to everyone who has made any contribution to CLEAA this year, no matter how large or small.

However, some special thanks to

- Fellow members of the Executive for your dedicated and diverse contributions, with even more special thanks to those who took the brunt of the extra load while I was unavailable for a time with personal/family matters.

- Kathryn McKenzie (Business Angel Services) and Kim Senior (KindleVision) for your most efficient support and practical wisdom
- Feona Duncombe, for the easy transition to the new secretariat
- Helene Breene and Angela Kurtz at Thynne MacCartney for conference assistance
- Elizabeth Loftus and Felicity Turner at Leo Cussen for continuing support CLEAA as the legacy secretariat.

Ronwyn North, CLEAA President 2017-18