



**DRAFT MINUTES OF EHA LTD  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Thursday 9 December 2021  
Google Meet (1.00 pm) (AEDST)**

**Attendance:** Phil Swain (Chair), Melissa Burn, Wendy Gambley, Erin Hogan, Ingo Steppat, Ian Goldthorpe, Vic Andrich, Sarah Ainsworth, Michelle McLennan, Glenys Nicholls, Samantha Smith, Donna Thompson

**Apologies:** Joseph Zappavigna, Helen Psarras, Kirstin Ross, Andrew Mathieson, Jacob Handley, Ian Gillespie, Kellie Williams, Divya Dwarakanath

**Meeting started 1.00 pm**

**1. Confirmation of AGM Minutes from 26 November 2020**

<b>Motion 9 December 2021/1: That the Minutes of Members' Annual General Meeting held on 26 November 2020 be accepted.</b>
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<b>Moved: P Swain</b>
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<b>Seconded: M Burn</b>
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<b>Carried Unanimously</b>
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**2. National President's Report**

The President provided a report on the activities and achievements of EHA over the past twelve months. This included an update on the National Strategic Plan, a website upgrade, working collaboratively across states on workforce issues, university accreditation, congratulating the recipient of the 2021 Margaret Hind Memorial Award, thanking our Associate Members and providing information on the National conference planned for 2022.

The President thanked the national board members for their commitment to board attendance and involvement with board activities over the past twelve months. He also thanked the National Communications Officer and the National and State Executive Officers for their hard work and dedication to the association.

A full copy of the President's report is attached to the draft minutes.

**3. Audited financial statements for the financial year ending 30 June 2021**

The President provided a summary of the audited financial statement and an overview of the financial position of EHA LTD for the year ending 30 June 2021. The audited statement shows a loss to the company of \$34,002. This is attributed to the revamp of the national and state websites. The company is viable and able to meet all financial commitments.

<b>Motion 9 December 2021/2: That the Audited Financial Statement prepared by Audit Assist Pty Ltd, for the financial year ending 30 June 2021 be accepted.</b>
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<b>Moved: W Gambley</b>
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<b>Seconded: I Steppat</b>
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<b>Carried Unanimously</b>
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#### **4. Appointment of an Auditor for EHA LTD Financial Accounts 2021-2022**

This is the second year that Audit Assist Pty Ltd has prepared the audited financial statements for EHA LTD. It was proposed that Audit Assist Pty Ltd be appointed to prepare the financial accounts for 2021-22.

<b>Motion 9 December 2021/3: That Audit Assist Pty Ltd be appointed to prepare the financial statements for EHA LTD for 2021-2022.</b>
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<b>Moved: E Hogan</b>
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<b>Seconded: G Nicholls</b>
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<b>Carried Unanimously</b>
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#### **5. Appointment of Directors on the EHA National Board**

In accordance with the Constitution (clause 31.3) half of the Directors must retire from office at each annual general meeting. The positions of Directors Wendy Gambley, Helen Psarras and Dr Kirstin Ross were declared vacant. There were no new nominations to the Board from members and no election of Directors was required. The following board members renominated for a position on the national board.

<b>Motion 9 December 2021/4: That the members agree to appoint Wendy Gambley as a Director on the EHA Ltd Board.</b>
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<b>Moved: P Swain</b>
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<b>Seconded: E Hogan</b>
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<b>Carried Unanimously</b>
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<b>Motion 9 December 2021/5: That the members agree to appoint Helen Psarras as a Director on the EHA Ltd Board.</b>
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<b>Moved: P Swain</b>
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<b>Seconded: G Nicholls</b>
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<b>Carried Unanimously</b>
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<b>Motion 9 December 2021/6: That the members agree to appoint Dr Kirstin Ross as a Director on the EHA Ltd Board.</b>
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<b>Moved: P Swain</b>
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<b>Seconded: V Andrich</b>
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<b>Carried Unanimously</b>
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#### **6. Business from members**

V Andrich thanked P Swain for his leadership and dedication as the EHA National President. The Chair thanked all attendees for their time and participation in the EHA LTD 2021 AGM.

**Meeting closed 1.21 pm (AEDST)**

Phil Swain LFEHA  
President  
9 December 2021

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## **Presidents Report – National President, Philip Swain LFEHA - December 2021**

We are currently in the midst of the worst global pandemic in over 100 years, hindering our ability to even move around our own country, something we took for granted only a couple of years ago. EHA National has managed operationally through the year with staff working from home and being part of the substantial shift to online meeting and activities.

### **Strategic Issues**

The EHA Strategic Plan has this month been finalised by the Board and will be circulated shortly. I look forward to moulding the many actions in the plan into achievable and measurable outcomes for the organisation moving forward. The Board has made substantial commitments during the year with a website upgrade for the National and Association websites, to ensure compatibility with handheld and tablet software. The Board is continuing to try and find ways to better advocate for the profession and improve the sustainability of the National Company and the Associations, in challenging times. To this end I would like to acknowledge, and thank, Helen Psarras for her commitment to the Strategic Plan Review.

There are existing and emerging issues associated with our own environmental health workforce, and not just due to the pandemic. There are current shortages in many parts of Australia associated with the environmental health workforce and there is work going on in the various states to address this. I still strongly believe that we need an Australia wide environmental health workforce study. In June I participated in a meeting with enHealth on the subject, and we are currently lobbying the Department of Home Affairs with respect to skilled migration, which has been down to a trickle for nearly two years now.

We are continuing to lobby for changes in relation to skilled migration for Environmental Health Officers. There are a significant number of graduates from our universities, that are from overseas and currently employed in Environmental Health Officer roles around the country. Due to problems with the current visa system many of these colleagues are unable to return to Australia if they venture home to see family, many of which, they haven't seen for a number of years. And most will not have a path to citizenship after five (5) years due to their current class of visa.

That said, our University courses are for the most part reasonably stable, at the moment, despite the unprecedented funding pressure that the Universities are under, and graduation numbers are starting to trend up.

### **Board Representation**

The Board has been well represented by all Association Members and attendance at monthly meetings has been very good. I would like to thank all Directors for their participation and contribution during the year. The Directors during the year were as follows;

Philip Swain (appointed 24 August 2011)  
Melissa Burn (appointed 3 February 2017)  
Giuseppe (Joe) Zappavigna (appointed 11 December 2009)  
Wendy Gambley (appointed 13 March 2019)  
Mark Dwyer (appointed 13 September 2010) Retired October 2021

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Glenys Nicholls (appointed 14 February 2018)  
Dr Kirstin Ross (appointed 12 December 2014)  
Helen Psarras (appointed 13 January 2015)  
Erin Hogan (appointed 10 December 2020)  
Chris Vakas (appointed 26 November 2020)  
Sarah Ainsworth (appointed 15 May 2021)

I would like to make a special mention of Mark Dwyer who's dedication and commitment to the Environmental Health Profession has been exemplary throughout his employment and for these past several years into his retirement. Unfortunately, we were unable to acknowledge Mark at the National Conference in the Blue Mountains, which was our intention. I was able to make a small presentation to Mark in Hobart during the UTas Accreditation visit, but I again thank him for his enormous dedication over so many years.

### **Staffing**

National Office staffing has been stable over the year with National Executive Officer, Divya Dwarakanath and National Communications Officer, Samantha Smith and Project Officer Donna Thompson. I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing commitment of all Executive Officers for the Associations and Donna Thompson for her commitment to the National Office and the Accreditation Programme, despite her many State Association responsibilities. The Board acknowledges the difficulties and commitment of staff to the ongoing operation of the organisation at this time.

### **National Financial Performance**

The National Accounts have again demonstrated an operational loss for the 2020-21 year, however this follows our substantial (\$40,000) commitment to the website project. The National company remains stable and financially viable with the presence of a sound reserve fund backing the organisation.

I am pleased to advise that our Association and National websites have all been rejuvenated in the last financial year with the project being recently completed. The changes mean that the websites are substantially compatible with handheld devices, and we have a new look and increased functionality for all the sites. I would like to thank all our National staff and State Executive Officers for their substantial contribution to the project.

We are continuing to explore ways of improving the company performance and providing support to the Associations, through products and services. In that regard I thank the State Boards and the Associations for their continued support of the federated structure of EHA and their commitment to the service agreement.

Our professional tools including I'M ALERT, FoodSafe, FoodSafe Plus and AFSA are readily available and we have continued to develop relationships and partnerships with companies in the Environmental Health space. In that regard, I would like to acknowledge our National Associate members in Kernow, Open Office, Osborne Richardson and First for Training. And I encourage individuals and organisations that would like to support EHA nationally and obtain a National focus to consider Associate Membership.

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### **Course Accreditation**

Despite the pandemic and the numerous border control measures we have managed to get our University Accreditation Programme back on track during the year – Western Sydney University was accredited in March and the Queensland University of Technology accreditation was conducted in May. And I am also pleased to announce the provisional accreditation of the new course at the University of Tasmania. For our Tasmanian counterparts to have been able to get this course up and progressing, at this particular time, is nothing short of extraordinary. I am also pleased to advise that the Course Coordinator at the University of Tasmania is our recent Margaret Hind Memorial Award winner Belinda Davies. I wish her and her team all the best into the future.

EHA is also finalising the re-accreditation of the Graduate Diploma and Masters courses at Flinders University in South Australia, after the panel met in Adelaide last month. Our current schedule also includes the re-accreditation of the Graduate Diploma at Curtin University in Western Australia in February or March next year.

In relation to our Environmental Health courses and workforce I encourage all Managers in environmental health to consider particularly our post graduate courses for cadet internship and traineeship opportunities within your organisations. The substantial shift to online materials in the University sector and the ability to bring science graduates into our profession and facilitate their training over a one to two year period is something that could make a real contribution to officer shortages.

### **Conferences**

I am pleased to announce that the next National Conference will be held in Tasmania around 25-29 September 2022. Unfortunately, the proposed October National Conference in the Blue Mountains had to be cancelled and I commend the NSW Association Board for taking this tough decision in October this year. EHA is still lobbying for the 2024 International Environmental Health Congress to be held in Perth, Western Australia as we wait, and hope, that the World Congress in Malaysia goes ahead in August 2022.

### **NATSIEH**

For those that are unaware EHA now manages the funds for and runs the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference originally developed as a concept by enHealth. This conference only runs every two (2) years and due to COVID 19 was delayed from 2021 until 2022. The next conference will be held 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in Darwin and I have recently signed the venue contract for the same.

### **International Activities**

It has been a difficult year to maintain our relationships with our international partners and friends, however EHA has maintained its membership with the IFEH and we have close working relationships with the National Environmental Health Association in the United States and our counterparts in New Zealand and Malaysia.

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Our National Communications Officer Samantha Smith has also run a series of events during the year and including our “LifeChat’s” including world environmental health day on the 24<sup>th</sup> September and National Food Safety week on the 16<sup>th</sup> November. I encourage Members to join in on these events as a unique way of maintaining your continuing professional development.

### **IFEH**

The IFEH Board embarked on a series of reforms to the organisation to ensure that the IFEH becomes a more modern, democratic and flexible organisation to respond to the needs of Member countries in all the regions in a changing world. The organisation was able to achieve Observer status at the recent COP26 meeting in Glasgow and we continue to advocate for EH input into numerous issues and debates around the world through the IFEH. I would like to acknowledge the continuing role of Andrew Mathieson as the Education Liaison Officer position on the IFEH Board. Andrew has observer status at IFEH meetings.

In closing, I have been continually impressed with the professionalism and focus of the various National and Association volunteers and staff at our various forums and the willingness to try and make things happen for Members through such a difficult time. For many Members the most prominent feature of EHA is their attendance at Conferences and Seminars and I encourage you all to keep up the good work in this regard, and hopefully open Member’s hearts and minds to the bigger tasks that we are all engaged in, to promote and advocate for the industry and the profession. Whether it is nominating for a Board, volunteering to assist with a function or task, mentoring a new member of the profession, commenting on policy or simply writing a submission on a subject that a Member has a special interest in, everyone has a role to play. Thankyou.

Yours in Environmental Health

Philip Swain LFEHA

National President

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