

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**18 OCTOBER 2024**

**QUEST APARTMENTS**

**750 BOURKE STREET, DOCKLANDS, VIC 3008**

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1. **PRESENT:** Phil Swain (Chair), Melissa Burn, Joseph Zappavigna, Sarah Ainsworth, Max Payne Helen Psarras, Wendy Gambley, Glenys Nicholls, James Williams, Amanda Hutchings, Andrew Waters, Donna Thompson

**APOLOGIES:** Kirstin Ross, Vic Andrich, Anthony Komives

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**Meeting opened at 5.01 pm (AEDT)**

2. **Acknowledgement of Country:** The Chair acknowledged the *Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin* as being the original custodians of the land on which we are meeting today and pay respects to elders past and present.

3. **Confirmation of AGM Minutes from 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

<b>Motion 18 October 2024/01:</b> That the Minutes of Members' Annual General Meeting held on 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 be accepted as true and correct.		
<b>Moved:</b> G Nicholls	<b>Seconded:</b> M Burn	Carried unanimously

4. **National President's Report**

Phil Swain LFEHA, presented his final report as EHA National President. He provided a summary of the activities and achievements of EHA over the past twelve months. The report is included as an attachment to the minutes.

5. **Audited financial statements for the financial year ending 30 June 2024**

The Treasurer provided a summary of the audited financial statement and an overview of the financial position of EHA LTD for the year ending 30 June 2024. The audited statement shows a loss for the financial year. The financial report reflects the NATSIEH accounts which cannot be separated out of the financial statements. The notes explaining the NATSIEH income and expenditure are on page 15 of the audit report. Despite the audited statements showing a loss, when the NATSIEH figures are removed from the chart of accounts, the report reflects a surplus for EHA for the financial year ending 30 June 2024. EHA has cash in the bank and in term deposits. EHA is a viable company and is able to meet all financial commitments.

<b>Motion 18 October 2024/02:</b> That the Audited Financial Statement prepared by Integrated Audit Services, for the financial year ending 30 June 2024 be accepted.		
<b>Moved:</b> J Zappavigna	<b>Seconded:</b> A Hutchings	Carried unanimously

## 6. Appointment of an Auditor for EHA LTD Financial Accounts 2024-2025

This is the second year that Integrated Audit Services has prepared the audited financial statements for EHA Ltd. It was proposed that Integrated Audit Services be appointed to prepare the financial accounts for 2024-2025.

<b>Motion 18 October 2023/04:</b> That Integrated Audit Services be appointed to prepare the financial statements for EHA Ltd for 2024-2025.		
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<b>Moved:</b> P Swain	<b>Seconded:</b> W Gambley	Carried unanimously
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## 7. 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 following Directors are due to retire:

- Phil Swain (WA)
- Melissa Burn (TAS)
- Amanda Hutchings (QLD)
- Sarah Ainsworth (NSW)

<b>Motion 18 October 2024/05:</b> That Members agree to reappoint the above-mentioned Directors on the EHA Ltd Board.		
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<b>Moved:</b> G Nicholls	<b>Seconded:</b> H Psarras	Carried unanimously
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There are currently two Directors that have nominated for a position on the EHA Ltd Board. They are:

- Andrew Waters (WA) – formerly an Observer
- Max Payne (NSW) – filling a casual vacancy

<b>Motion 18 October 2024/06:</b> That Members agree to appoint the above-mentioned Directors on the EHA Ltd Board.		
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<b>Moved:</b> W Gambley	<b>Seconded:</b> S Ainsworth	Carried unanimously
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## 8. Business from members

There was no business arising from Members.

M Burn thanked P Swain for his support and leadership as President of EHA for the past 6 years.

**Meeting closed at 5.19 pm (AEDT)**

## President's Report

### EHA Ltd Annual General Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the original inhabitants of the area we meet upon today, the Woi-wurrung and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin nation. I acknowledge the traditional owners of these lands and pay my respects to elders past present and those emerging. And in doing so, I acknowledge one of the world's oldest continuous cultures.

It has been an honour and a privilege to help steer the organisation nationally over these past six (6) years. I believe we have a dedicated, stable and well-functioning group of Directors and committed and diligent staff at the National and Association levels. I thank all Members, Staff and Directors for their continued support over my tenure in the role of National President. It is, however, time that I pass the leadership baton. I hope to remain engaged at the National level and to assist with a smooth transition following this Annual General Meeting. And continue the necessary work for our Accreditation Programme. In that regard I thank the Board of EHA (WA) for their recent support in that endeavour.

I again commend everyone for their efforts in maintaining their important roles, through our Associations. All our Associations are financially stable with reserve funds available. EHA Ltd manages funds on behalf of enHealth for the biennial running of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Conference (NATSIEH). Our Treasurer will explain the implications of that funds management and the impact on our budget from year to year. During the year Environmental Health Australia's activities have included:

1. Board agreement to invest considerable funds to the upgrade of National and Association websites and data storage to improve Member services well into the future.
2. The conduct of the 17<sup>th</sup> International Federation of Environmental Health, World Congress. Held in Perth 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> May this year. The event was not only an enormous success from a training, educational, networking and social perspective but EHA (WA) also delivered a substantial profit for the organisation, a percentage of which has come to the National body. This has made some difficult decisions around member services and particularly our upcoming website upgrades a little easier.
3. The conduct of the two yearly NATSIEH conference in Melbourne, Victoria.
4. Our partnering with Australian Standards to review *Australian Standard 4674-2004: Construction and fit out of food premises* is progressing. And I thank the many Members that have expressed an interest in this review and I can assure you that, although EHA has two (2) seats on the working group, all interested Members will be consulted as the review progresses.
5. The regular meeting of our Educators Forum around Australia and their activities including developing a new online environmental health textbook and liaison on various research topics for students around Australia. I have long said the profession needs more students undertaking doctorates and it has been pleasing to see the Universities advancing this notion.

6. Nationally the implementation of Food Standard 3.2.2A has provided a real opportunity for EHO's to engage with the food industry to implement training and monitoring in businesses that produce ready to eat foods. It is important to acknowledge reforms such as the new standards which have at their core food safety training and food safety monitoring, something EHA introduced retail industry to in the 1990's, and later, with FoodSafe, FoodSafe Plus and I'm Alert, amongst other initiatives. EHA is exploring opportunities to engage with research on the effectiveness of the new standards as we move forward.
7. We are currently finalising the policy review of the National Accreditation Policy before commencing the next round of 5 yearly course accreditations. Cognisant of the pressure universities are under, it has been disappointing to see the recent moves to end the University of Tasmania postgraduate and most recently move the Swinburne postgraduate into teach out. EHA is continuing to lobby for our undergraduate and postgraduate courses around Australia. We still need more environmental health officers in Australia and industry support to achieve that.
8. The organisation continues to engage on contemporary issues around Australia and most recently EHA participated with the high pathogenicity avian influenza (H5N1) Task Force in a scenario exercise in conjunction with the Centre for Disease Control. I thank those individual Members who gave up valuable work time to participate in the same.
9. The National Board reached agreement on specific recognition of environmental health officer qualification within the membership classes of our Association constitutions earlier this year. Whilst the science and practice of environmental health is far bigger than the role of officers, and we welcome all that have an interest into our Membership, recognition at this level is important for clarity with respect to appointments around Australia. I am pleased to advise that the Associations are undertake the necessary work to amend constitutions at the state level to give effect to this agreement.
10. Our continued marketing and communications role through the work of Samantha Smith, Donna Thompson and all our Executive Officers across the Associations. *(As a footnote, I congratulate Sam and her husband on the recent safe and healthy delivery of their first child)* During the year marketing and communications included:
  - a) A forum for World Food Safety Day on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June 2024.
  - b) Our continuing Cross Tasman Collaboration with the New Zealand Institute of Environmental Health, (NZIEH) including the recent World Rivers Day forum run last month by the NZIEH.
  - c) Regular newsletters, social media posts and press releases.
  - d) The focus on the various mechanisms to improve the supply of qualified officers through both qualification and migration. The dire shortages of EHO's in both metropolitan and regional areas has been a key area of advocacy this year on workforce. We know that graduate supply is still not meeting demand around Australia. Through the Associations we have continued to develop a variety of website materials which are available for those that can pursue the appointment of a trainee, cadet or intern. And we are continuing to utilise various stakeholder contacts to raise the profile of the profession. In this regard the recent decision by Jobs & Skills Australia to list EHO's as not a shortage in regional areas, thereby restricting the use of 482 Visa's for international recruitment is

difficult to understand. And dare I say, has no bearing in fact! EHA is continuing to lobby local Federal Members and Federal Ministers in this regard. Efforts have also included various job and employment expositions around the country and I commend the assistance of the Associations for a visible presence at such forums. Additionally, EHA Ltd also attended and conducted an EHO workforce promotion at the Australian Local Government Association, National General Assembly 2-4 July 2024. I thank particularly Sarah Ainsworth and her team from NSW for their efforts in what I think was a valuable first attendance at this event.

- e) Arboviruses continue to be a major concern for the profession. Members would be aware of the significance of the recent movement of Japanese Encephalitis virus across Australia. And in the Kimberley, there have been more recent cases of Murray Valley Encephalitis. There have also been a number of Murray Valley Encephalitis cases in NSW for the first time, and sadly deaths in Victoria, the Northern Territory and most recently two deaths in Western Australia. The National Board is committed to advocating more on the urgent need for better understanding of particularly mosquito borne diseases in Australian communities and the role that environmental health professionals play in that educational role. And the linkages to climate change in this regard should not be underestimated.
- f) Given the urgency of the climate situation EHA is continuing to encourage all environmental health professionals to engage with efforts in Disaster Risk Reduction, especially at the local level. The increasing prevalence of events such as floods and bushfires are essentially a given due to the extent that climate change is already locked in. And will impact communities for decades to come even in the unlikely scenario of limiting temperature increases to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial times. EHA is continuing to engage nationally and internationally on the Sendai Framework and disaster risk reduction (DRR) and to raise awareness about both DRR and emergency management.

I was able to acknowledge two incredibly dedicated environmental health professionals at the World Congress. Mr Vic Andrich was advanced to Life Fellow by EHA (WA). And I was able to present a President's Award to Mr Joe Zappavigna for his substantial commitment to the Board over many years in the role of Secretary Treasurer. Joe is stepping down from the Board, but I take this opportunity to again thank him for his unwavering commitment to the profession. Vic continues to Chair the IFEH Asia Pacific Group amongst many other activities that continue to advance the profession.

Again, I thank the Board Members past and present, our dedicated staff and the broader membership for the support I have enjoyed over my tenure as National President.

Finally, I ask Members to please promote the science and practice of environmental health into the future with the National Board's definition for the profession agreed in Perth:

"We protect people from hazards in their environment"!

Thankyou

Philip Swain LFEHA  
National President  
Environmental Health Australia