



7 July 2020

To: Governance Committee Chair, Mr Kevin Kadirgamar, FECCA Executive,
admin@fecca.org.au

Re: First discussion paper on review of FECCA constitution

Thank you for the opportunity to provide initial comments on the review of the FECCA constitution. Below are some responses to the questions in the first discussion paper released by FECCA. We note that FECCA will prepare a second discussion paper with specific recommendations, to which MCOT will have the opportunity to respond.

Does the current scope of membership place FECCA in the best place to advocate broadly on all issues pertaining to multicultural Australia? (e.g. is FECCA's role to primarily represent the interests of the state/territory peak bodies, or does it have a broader role in advocating for multiculturalism as a policy for all Australians?) Is there a need to broaden FECCA's membership base or to create a new class of membership?

MCOT considers that FECCA's advocacy for multiculturalism is not constrained by the current scope of its membership. The only constraint is to prevent advocacy contrary to the interests of the membership, which is an appropriate constraint.

As its name suggests, FECCA is a federation of councils that serve ethnic communities. A departure from the model where FECCA's primary members are state/territory peak bodies would mean FECCA would effectively cease to be this federation of councils serving ethnic communities. If there is a space for a body with an unconstrained membership to promote multiculturalism, that space need not be filled by FECCA.

Were FECCA to accept membership from beyond its current membership, this would often involve an organisation or individual joining FECCA instead of a state/territory peak body. (The only way to avoid such conflict would be for FECCA to only accept membership from an individual or organisation that is concurrently a member of all relevant state/territory peak bodies.)

Is the current correlation between the financial contribution and voting rights appropriate? Should the votes allocated to constituent members be based on financial contribution alone or should there be a different measure such as the number of people that each the organisation represents (i.e. peak bodies from the more populous regions



get more votes)? Should the amount of financial contribution that a member makes be based on their respective annual turnover?

Continuing to allocate voting rights in line with financial contributions is appropriate and sustainable.

The suggestion of basing financial contributions on an organisation's annual turnover is reasonable.

Basing voting rights or financial contributions on the total population of the jurisdiction the organisation operates in is not supported. The total population of a jurisdiction does not necessarily reflect the size of the CALD population of that jurisdiction, and the size of the CALD population of a jurisdiction may indicate the potential relevance of an organisation, but does not indicate its actual relevance.

Does the current governance structure appropriately represent the Federation's membership and constituency? If not, what changes would you like to see?

Does the current governance structure achieve the right balance between the need for the Executive to be representative of FECCA's constituency while maintaining the required independence of the members to serve the needs of FECCA as its own entity?

Is the current size of the Executive appropriate? If not, what would be an ideal number of people to form the Executive?

Should there be an avenue for FECCA to co-opt members to the Executive to fill gaps in fields of expertise?

Should the positions in the FECCA executive be elected directly as in the current framework or is a collegiate system (where the members elected from the AGM as general executive members internally elect the specific roles) preferred?

Are you satisfied with how the executive is nominated and elected?

MCOT queries the suggestion that there is a need for the FECCA Executive to maintain independence from members, and that FECCA has needs 'as its own entity' that are separate from the interests of members.

Given the large size of the FECCA Executive, further increasing the size through co-opting members to the Executive would be inappropriate.

It would be better to simply elect the FECCA Executive and for the Executive to then elect Executive members to roles the Executive deems necessary. This would ensure the best quality Executive is elected, and that the Executive has the freedom to determine the most effective internal arrangements.