

4 August 2020

## **MCOT member survey on constitutional issues**

The Multicultural Council of Tasmania emailed a survey to members on 17 July 2020, seeking responses by 31 July 2020. 81 responses were received.

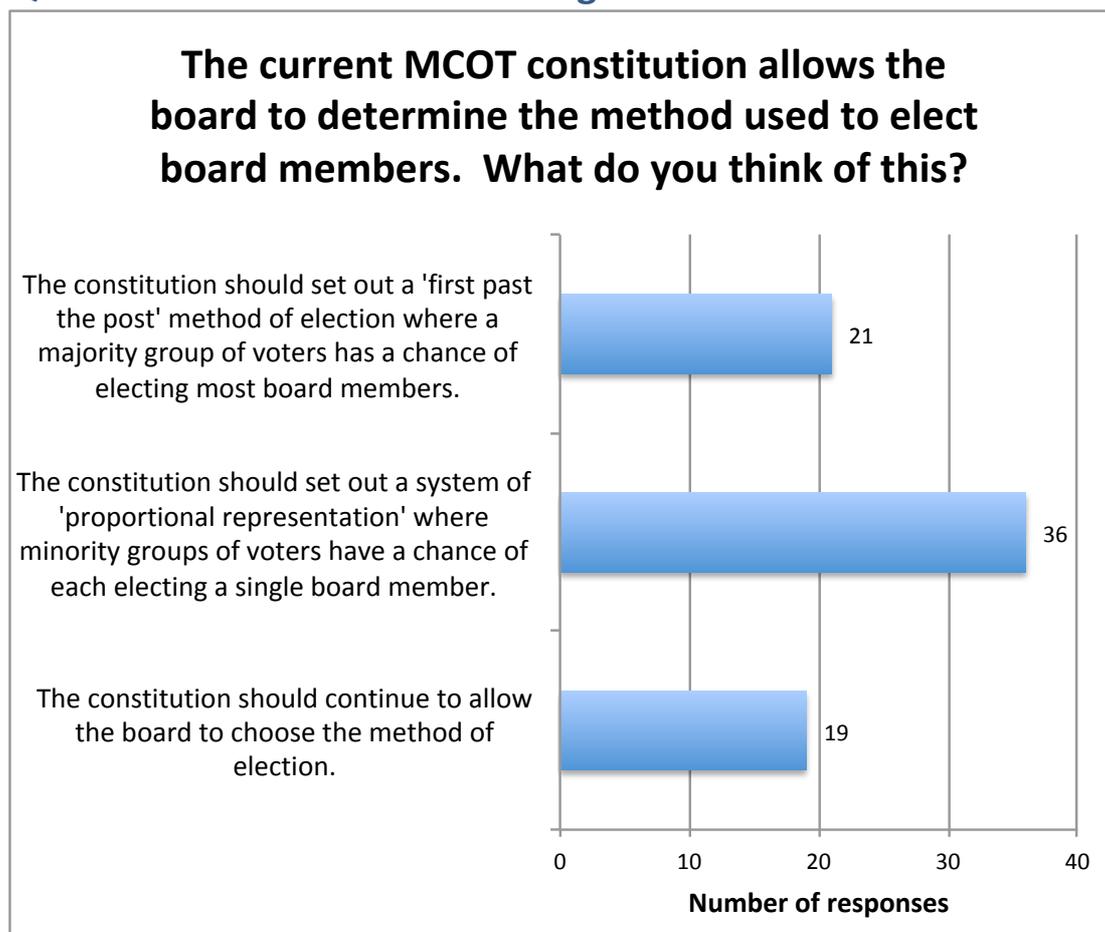
The results to each of the seven questions are set out below.

Comments printed are those of the respondents.

An information and discussion session on 10 August 2020 will provide a further opportunity for members to discuss constitutional issues.

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## Question 1 – Method of counting votes



The following written responses were also provided:

*The current election module been followed from last few years should be continued*

*The election module followed from the last few years should be continued*

*Don't know. I don't have enough background info*

*This is nearest of my preference but not quite*

*Most democratic and avoids any perception of board bias*

*the constitution needs to outline a method that remains consistent... all board members have the right to vote for their reps and giving too much power to the board members to adjust election methods is dangerous*

*Similar to Council Elections for Councillors*

*Consider including at least over half or three quarters of member communities to vote. Many are invisible communities!*

*The current Chair and Board have taken the organisation to new heights as reflected in quality of staff, growth in membership and increased funding. The*

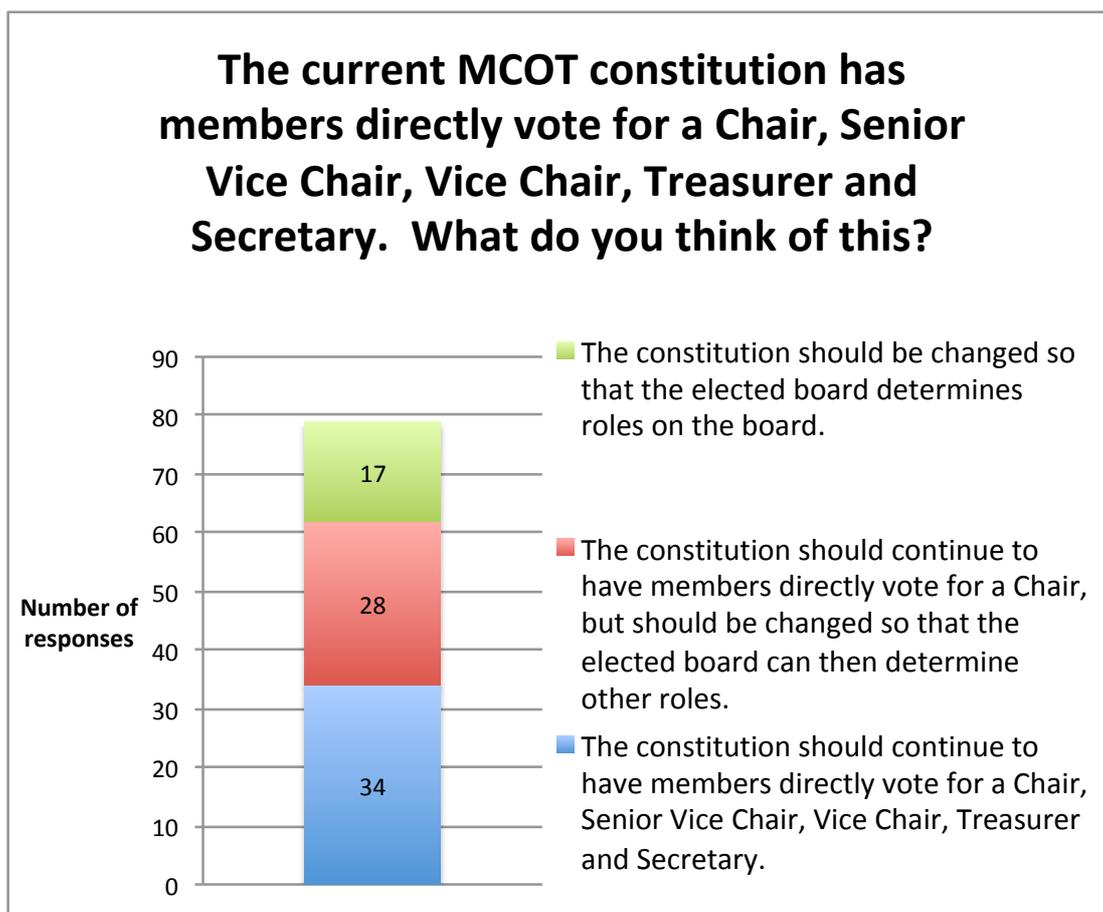
*constitutional change is the right step in the right direction and we welcome it open heartedly. One must contribute back to the society from which migrants have gained so much and one must learn form the Australian community. I am particularly pleased that the work undertaken aligns MCOT to the good governance principles of AICD. Well done and keep up the great work! We are proud of the work done so far.*

*Can there be a combination of "representation sub-board" (bigger number) together with a "review board" (smaller number)?)*

*The constitution should reflect the need for a broad skills base to ensure appropriate governance.*

*Combination - Board should be able to nominate Directors to represent minority groups if they are lacking from the selection - eg. someone with disability, LGBTQ etc*

## Question 2 – Method of determining positions on board



The following written responses were also provided:

*Worshipping Ceremony by using the coin the tossing between the candidates.*

*Members should elect to the board but board needs to determine office bearers members need to be able to vote for all board positions... otherwise there is too much risk for conflict of interest. the board represents its members so members should have full rights to vote for who they want*

*Direct Election can be limited to Chair & Secretary. All others can be through board*

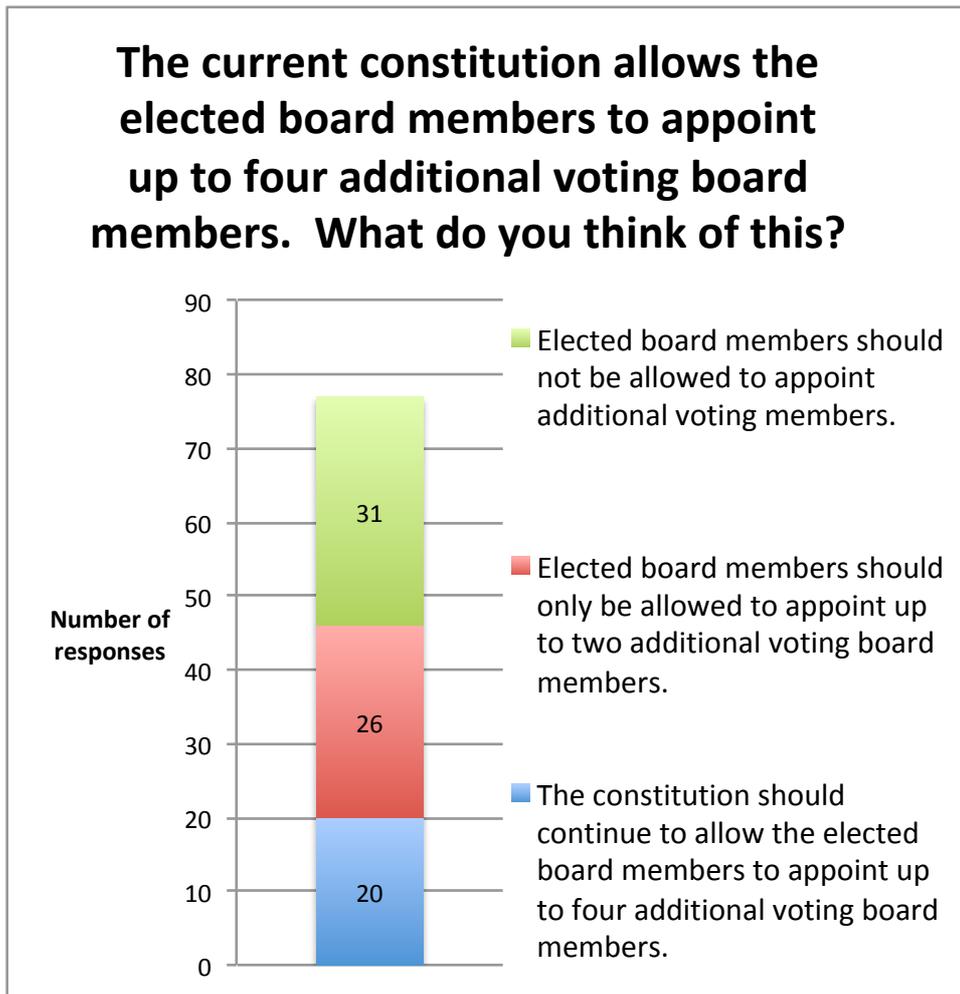
*Purpose of Board should be clearly understood by all who wants to take these roles. Harmony, unity and FairPlay with no strings attached. Being able to reach out by any of the communities for voicing their concerns . First priority is that he/she is prepared to act as a civil Australian .*

*The elected board in accordance with their skill sets and qualifications, elect a Chair and other roles, so that the Board can benefit with the individual skills collectively. Some greedy members who wish to chase titles will not support this but*

*its high time that the organisation aligns itself with best practice. Disgruntled members who hijacked the SGM for their personal interests should not be allowed to damage the future of the organisation. All migrant communities should be positive and supportive of each other.*

*What does best practice say? Follow best practice. Elected Board determines roles in light of skills and expertise.*

### Question 3 – Board appointments



The following written responses were also provided:

*I don't understand*

*Allow Board to appoint members with consultative status but not voting*

*these positions should be elected by the members, not the board*

*If the Elected Board is 10 members, co-opted members can be four totally 14*

*Could this four members be selected out of the ones Who may have just missed the top positions. ? Which means they've been voted in by the MCOT community..? ?*

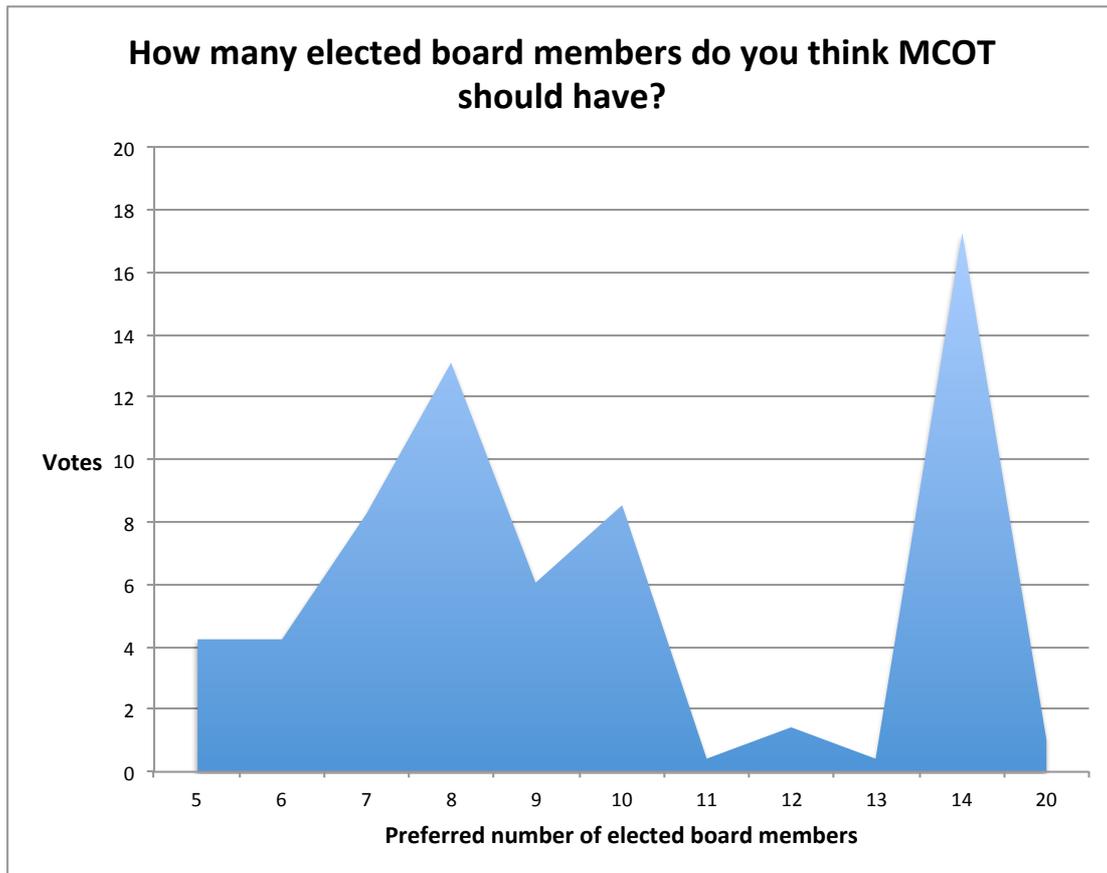
*The Board should be based on skills and qualifications. The elected Board should be allowed to appoint up to 2 members to fill skill shortages.*

*Role of board is good governance. The current board has done a phenomenal job. Align size of Board with best practice.*

*the Board ought to have set number of members all elected by members when a casual vacancy occurs the Board can fill casual vacancy*

*To meet inclusion targets eg. Board member with a disability, etc*

## Question 4 – Number of elected board members



The chart depicts the responses of 65 respondents. There were:

- 30 votes for there to be fewer than 9 elected board members;
- 6 votes for there to be 9 elected board members; and
- 29 votes for there to be more than 9 elected board members.

So the “median voter” voted for there to be 9 elected board members.

The most common vote was for there to be 14 elected board members.

The data from the chart is outlined in the table below. The fractions are explained on the next page.

Number of elected board members	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	20
Votes	4.25	4.25	8.25	13.083	6.033	8.533	0.45	1.45	0.45	17.25	1

### Explanation for the fractions

Some respondents wrote a range of numbers. The chart captures these responses by using fractions. For example if a respondent wrote two numbers, each number is given half a vote. Thus, when a respondent wrote “7 or 9”, half a vote was recorded for “7”, and half a vote was recorded for “9”.

### Explanation on how some written responses are depicted in the chart

Where a respondent wrote “Up to 14”, this was recorded in the chart as a vote for “14”.

Where a respondent wrote “Maximum 9 elected (voting) members plus consulting members as needed”, this was recorded in the chart as a vote for “9”.

Where a respondent wrote “The elected board numbers can be increased. An executive board of five may be elected within the board to execute decisions taken by board”, this was recorded in the chart as a vote for “14”.

Where a respondent wrote “I suggest to go for a number Less than 14 but more than 8 perhaps for a trial 2 Terms or four years . Assess whether to stay medium size or go back to 14??”, this was recorded in the chart as a fifth of a vote for “9”, a fifth of a vote for “10”, a fifth of a vote for “11”, a fifth of a vote for “12” and a fifth of a vote for “13”.

Where a respondent wrote “Minimum 11”, this was recorded in the chart as a quarter of a vote for “11”, a quarter of a vote for “12”, a quarter of a vote for “13” and a quarter of a vote for “14”.

### Responses that are not depicted in the chart

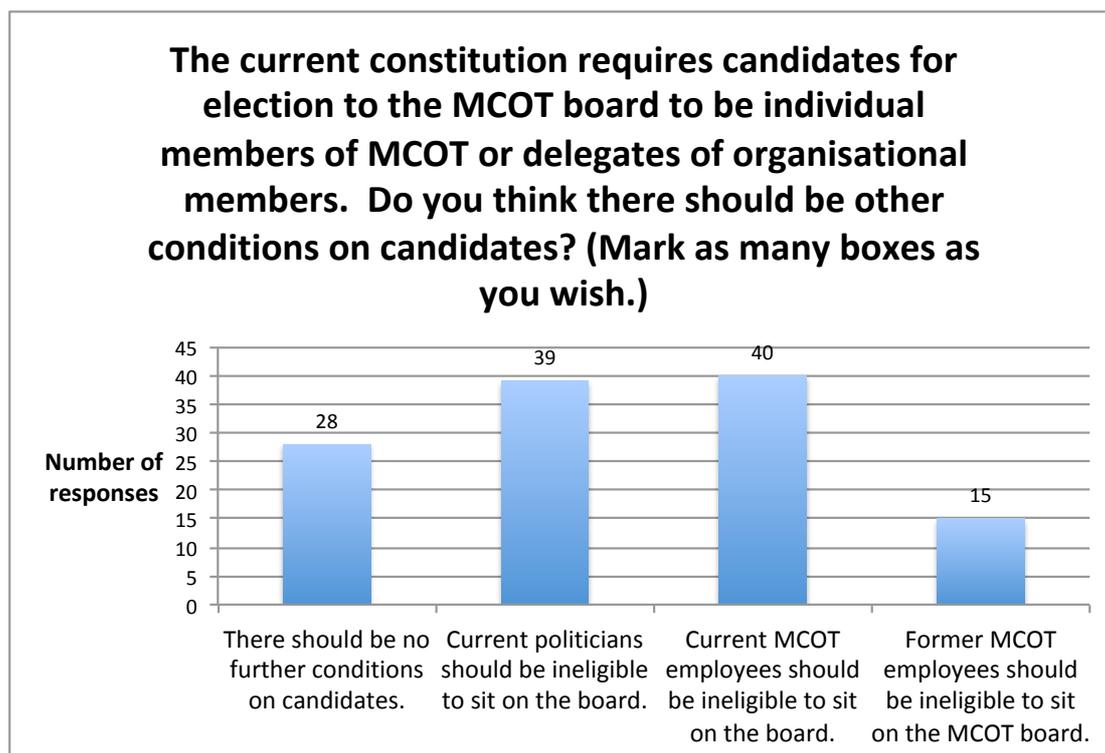
The following four written responses did not suggest a number, so are not depicted in the chart:

*Follow the best practice and AICD so the broader community, stakeholders and funding body have greater respect for the organisation. Well done to the current board to work on this so the future can be even brighter.*

*Enough to adequately represent the diverse ethnic communities  
equal representation of all ethnic communities in Tasmania*

*If expertise isn't available on the Board ought to be able to recruit to fill expertise  
so need to be flexible*

## Question 5 – Candidate eligibility



The following written responses were also provided:

*I don't understand the implication of this*

*Community representation alone should be allowed to elect board members.*

*This answer is based on a minimum of eight board members, if there were less than all these other restrictions should apply.*

*Ethnic in the community can be up eligible to become candidates*

*continue the same*

*Limit number of independent members also current MCoT members ineligible*

*relatives of spouses of MCoT employees should be ineligible to sit on the board*

*Politicians and MCOT employees should be restricted to consulting roles*

*board members should be from as many different member communities as possible*

*Former MCOT members with experience should be eligible provided that a gap of one or two terms prior to current.*

*Politicians should not be allowed as they will take the organisation in their own political interests and the poor community will be taken advantage of. The politicians have enough for themselves in Councils, Parliament, Senate etc. Current*

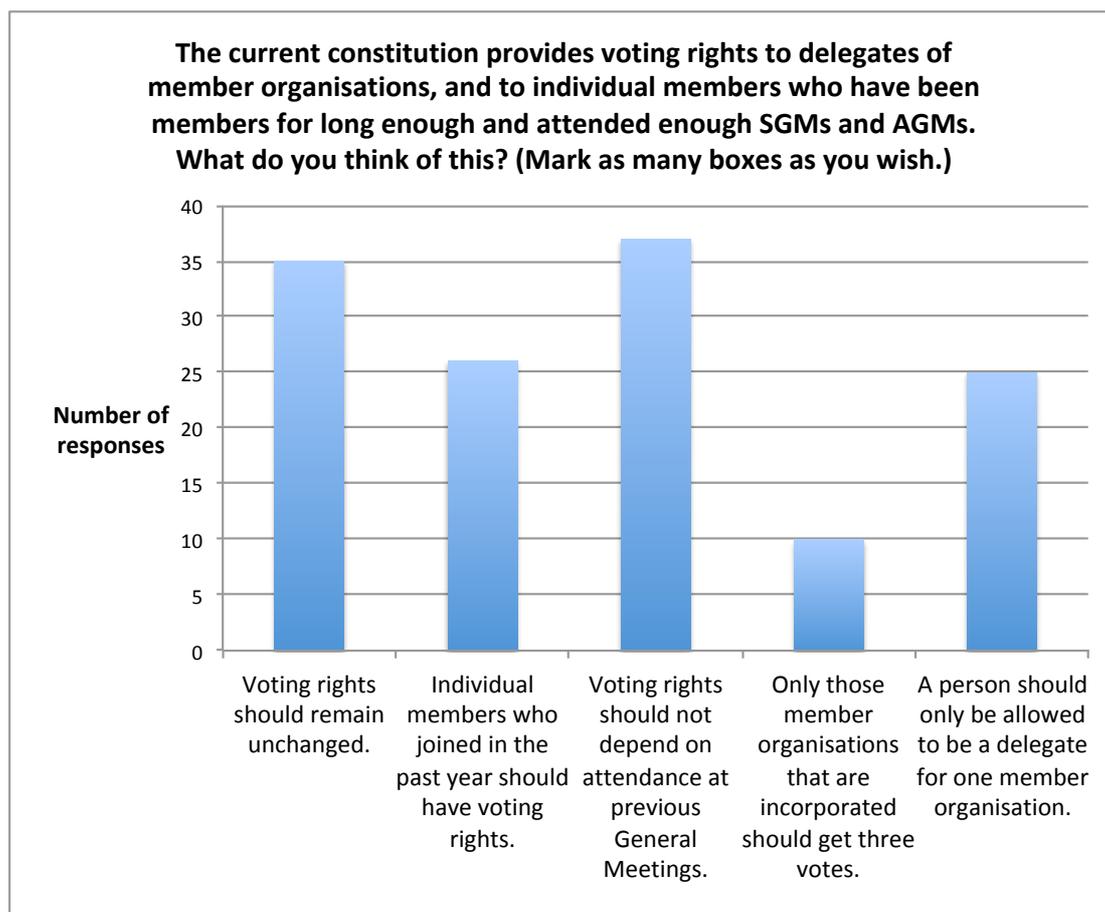
*and former employees should also not be allowed as they have all insider knowledge.*

*Keep the organisation apolitical so multiculturalism is promoted rather than a politician's political profile.*

*Former employees should be ineligible for a period of five years from when their employment ceased.*

*Individual members and Family members should not be allowed*

## Question 6 – Voter eligibility



The following written responses were also provided:

*Community representatives alone should allowed to elect board members.*

*Individual members can appoint co opt members or in various sub committees.*

*Sorry, we do not understand*

*Last box unclear*

*To serve on the board effectively, members available for election must demonstrate MCOT involvement experience*

*new organisations (or individual members) can vote only after 12 months. Only organisational representatives shall be allowed to elect the board. Individual members can be selected for committee or subcommittee member or co-opted members.*

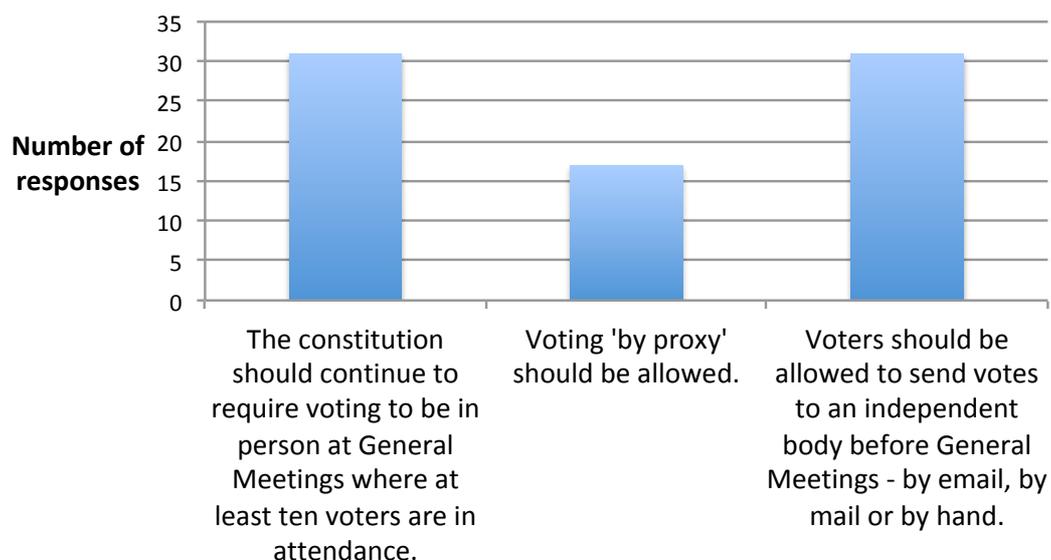
*Eligible list being available to voters? Voting by post or via email being introduced.*

*[Two comments raising concerns about being a delegate for multiple organisations are not published here as they include personal details.]*

*Work needs to be done to ensure one country cannot be over represented in numbers due to having multiple community groups and therefore swaying voting. For example China and India could both be represented by high numbers of member organisations in Tasmania with potential to unfairly influence the voting and direction of the board.*

## Question 7 – Timing and location for voting

**The current constitution requires voting to be in person at General Meetings where at least ten voters are in attendance. What do you think of this? (Mark as many boxes as you wish.)**



The following written responses were also provided:

*Both by proxy & also send votes to an independent body before General Meetings*

*This doesn't allow marking > 1 box. I tick last one also*

*Many people have conflicting commitments. Voting should maximise possibility of participation*

*All voting should only be indicated on official MCOT forms by whatever transmission method*

*Organisational representatives can do proxy voting*

*Voters should be allowed to send votes to an independent body. The current Board is bringing great change and ideas which are all supportive of a healthy and respectful organisation. Lets hope disgruntled members don't come in the way of this significant milestone. Well done to the Chair, Board and staff - we're proud of you and look forward to the new constitution be implemented soon!*

*What about one country being represented by a dozen small group member organisation who align their votes? Some older aggrieved members should move on to allow multiculturalism to flourish.*

*Agree with all of the above*

*attendance can be electronic as well*