

CONSTITUTION OF BUDDIES REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP LTD

Australian Company Number (ACN) 606 820 302
Australian Business Number (ABN) 40 606 820 302

A charitable not-for-profit public company limited by guarantee and registered
with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC)

As amended 25 June 2023

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Preliminary

1. Name of the company

The name of the **company** is Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd (the **company**).

2. Type of company

The **company** is a not-for-profit public company limited by guarantee, which is established to be, and to continue as, a charity.

3. Limited liability of members

The liability of **members** is limited to the amount of the guarantee in clause 4.

4. The guarantee

Each **member** must contribute an amount not more than \$10 (the guarantee) to the property of the **company** if the **company** is wound up while the **member** is a **member**, or within 12 months after they stop being a **member**, and this contribution is required to pay for the:

- a. debts and liabilities of the **company** incurred before the **member** stopped being a **member**, or
- b. costs of winding up.

5. Definitions

In this constitution, words and phrases have the meaning set out in clauses **70** and **72**.

Charitable purposes and powers

6. Objectives

The **company's** objectives are to pursue the following charitable purposes:

1. To provide material, financial, and emotional support to asylum seekers and refugees in Australian communities and beyond, including education and training,
2. To provide asylum seekers and refugees with advice, and where appropriate, assistance to access professional services and advice, such as legal, medical and allied health services,
3. To advocate for the just and compassionate treatment of asylum seekers and refugees,
4. To support policies relating to asylum seekers and refugees that reflect respect, decency and generosity to those in need,
5. To advise and educate the community on issues concerning asylum seekers and refugees,
6. To raise funds and supplies to provide support to asylum seekers and refugees, and
7. To support the work, including financially, of like-minded constituted organisations.

7. Powers

Subject to clause 8, the **company** has the following powers, which may only be used to carry out its purposes set out in clause 6:

- a. the powers of an individual, and

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- b. all the powers of a company limited by guarantee under the **Corporations Act**.

8. Not-for-profit

1. The **company** must not distribute any income or assets directly or indirectly to its **members**, except as provided in clauses 8.2 and 69.
2. Clause 8.1 does not stop the **company** from doing the following things, provided they are done in good faith:
 - a. paying a **member** for goods or services they have provided or expenses they have properly incurred at fair and reasonable rates or rates more favourable to the **company**, or
 - b. making a payment to a **member** carrying out the **company's** charitable purposes.

9. Amending the constitution

1. Subject to clause 9.2, the **members** may amend this constitution by passing a **special resolution**.
2. The **members** must not pass a **special resolution** that amends this constitution if passing it causes the **company** to no longer be a charity.

Members

10. Membership and register of members

1. The **members** of the **company** are:
 - a. **initial members**,
 - b. any other person who has submitted an application to become a **member** of the **company**, in accordance with this constitution, and
 - c. any honorary life **members**, as defined under clause 16.
2. The **company** must establish and maintain a register of **members**. The register of **members** must be kept by the secretary and must contain:
 - a. for each current **member**:
 - I. name
 - II. address
 - III. date the **member** was entered on to the register.
 - b. for each person who stopped being a **member** in the last seven years:
 - I. name
 - II. address
 - III. dates the membership started and ended.
3. The **company** must, upon request, give current **members** access to the register of **members**.
4. Information that is accessed from the register of **members** must only be used in a manner relevant to the interests or rights of **members**.

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11. Who can be a member

1. A person who supports the purposes of the **company** is eligible to apply to be a **member** of the **company** under clause 12.
2. In this clause, 'person' means an individual.

12. How to apply to become a member

A person (as defined in clause 11.2) may apply to become a **member** of the **company** by submitting a membership application form to the secretary, which requires that they:

- a. want to become a member,
- b. support the purposes of the **company**, and
- c. agree to comply with the **company's** constitution, including paying the guarantee under clause 4 if required.

13. Membership register

The secretary must as soon as possible:

- a. enter the new **member** on the register of members, and
- b. put them on the **company** mailing list to receive the regular newsletter (Bulletin) and other general communications.
- c. formally advise the applicant that their application has been accepted, and the date that their membership started.

14. When a person becomes a member

Other than **initial members**, an applicant will become a **member** when they are entered on the register of members and have either paid the annual membership fee or are annually making a regular donation (or donations) at least equivalent to the annual membership fee.

14a. Membership fees

The annual membership fee or minimum regular donation is:

- a. the amount decided by the members from time to time at a general meeting.
- b. payable when, and in a way, the directors (the board) decide.

15. When a person stops being a member

A person immediately stops being a **member** if they:

- a. have not renewed their membership by paying the due annual membership fee or paying their regular donation within three months of the expiry of their membership financial status,
- b. die,
- c. resign, by writing to the secretary, or
- d. are expelled under clause 18.

16. Honorary life membership

1. If, in the opinion of the directors, a person has made an exceptional contribution to the **company** over a period of years, the directors may recommend granting that

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person the highest acknowledgement of contribution to the **company** in the form of an honorary life membership of the **company**.

2. A person granted membership under clause 16.1 becomes an honorary life **member** of the **company** on the later to occur of:
 - a. the person consenting in writing to be an honorary life **member**, and
 - b. the nomination being approved by a resolution at an annual general meeting.
3. An honorary life **member** has all the rights and privileges of a **member** under this constitution.
4. An honorary life member is not required to pay an annual membership fee.

Dispute resolution and disciplinary procedures

17. Dispute resolution

1. The dispute resolution procedure in this clause applies to disputes (disagreements) under this constitution between a **member** or director and:
 - a. one or more **members**
 - b. one or more directors, or
 - c. the **company**.
2. A **member** must not start a dispute resolution procedure in relation to a matter that is the subject of a disciplinary procedure under clause 18 until the disciplinary procedure is completed.
3. Those involved in the dispute must try to resolve it between themselves within 14 days of knowing about it.
4. If those involved in the dispute do not resolve it under clause 17.3, they must within 10 days:
 - a. tell the directors about the dispute in writing,
 - b. agree or request that a mediator be appointed, and
 - c. attempt in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation.
5. The mediator must:
 - a. be chosen by agreement of those involved, or
 - b. where those involved do not agree:
 - I. for disputes between **members**, a person chosen by the directors, or
 - II. for other disputes, a person chosen by either the Commissioner of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission or the president of the law institute or society in the state or territory in which the **company** has its registered office.
6. A mediator chosen by the directors under clause 17.5(b)(i):
 - a. may be a **member** or former **member** of the **company**,
 - b. must not have a personal interest in the dispute, and
 - c. must not be biased towards or against anyone involved in the dispute.
7. When conducting the mediation, the mediator must:

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- a. allow those involved a reasonable chance to be heard,
- b. allow those involved a reasonable chance to review any written statements,
- c. ensure that those involved are given natural justice, and
- d. not make a decision on the dispute.

18. Disciplining members

1. In accordance with this clause, the directors may resolve to warn, suspend or expel a **member** from the **company** if the directors consider that:
 - a. the **member** has breached this constitution, or
 - b. the **member's** behaviour is causing, has caused, or is likely to cause harm to the **company**.
2. At least 14 days before the directors' meeting at which a resolution under clause 18.1 will be considered, the secretary must notify the **member** in writing:
 - a. that the directors are considering a resolution to warn, suspend or expel the **member**,
 - b. that this resolution will be considered at a directors' meeting and the date of that meeting,
 - c. what the **member** is said to have done or not done,
 - d. the nature of the resolution that has been proposed, and
 - e. that the **member** may provide an explanation to the directors, and details of how to do so.
3. Before the directors pass any resolution under clause 18.1, the **member** must be given a chance to explain or defend themselves by:
 - a. sending the directors a written explanation before that directors' meeting, and/or
 - b. speaking at the meeting.
4. After considering any explanation under clause 18.3, the directors may:
 - a. take no further action,
 - b. warn the **member**,
 - c. suspend the **member's** rights as a member for a period of no more than 12 months,
 - d. expel the **member**,
 - e. refer the decision to an unbiased, independent person on conditions that the directors consider appropriate (however, the person can only make a decision that the directors could have made under this clause), or
 - f. require the matter to be determined at a **general meeting**.
5. The directors cannot fine a **member**.
6. The secretary must give written notice to the **member** of the decision under clause 18.4 as soon as possible.
7. Disciplinary procedures must be completed as soon as reasonably practical.
8. There will be no liability for any loss or injury suffered by the **member** as a result of any decision made in good faith under this clause.

General meetings of members

19. General meetings called by directors

1. The directors may call a **general meeting**.
2. If **members** with at least 5% of the votes that may be cast at a **general meeting** make a written request to the **company** for a **general meeting** to be held, the directors must:
 - a. within 21 days of the **members'** request, give all **members** notice of a **general meeting**, and
 - b. hold the **general meeting** within two months of the **members'** request.
3. The percentage of votes that **members** have (in clause 19.2) is to be worked out as at midnight before the **members** request the meeting.
4. The **members** who make the request for a **general meeting** must:
 - a. state in the request any resolution to be proposed at the meeting,
 - b. briefly state the reason for the request,
 - c. sign the request, and
 - d. give the request to the **company**.
5. Separate copies of a document setting out the request may be signed by **members** if the wording of the request is the same in each copy.

20. General meetings called by members

1. If the directors do not call the meeting within 21 days of being requested under clause 19.2, 50% or more of the **members** who made the request may call and arrange to hold a **general meeting**.
2. To call and hold a meeting under clause 20.1 the **members** must:
 - a. as far as possible, follow the procedures for **general meetings** set out in this constitution,
 - b. call the meeting using the list of **members** on the **company's** **member** register, which the **company** must provide to the **members** making the request at no cost, and
 - c. hold the **general meeting** within three months after the request was given to the **company**.
3. The **company** must pay the **members** who request the **general meeting** any reasonable expenses they incur because the directors did not call and hold the meeting.

21. Annual general meeting

1. A **general meeting**, called the annual **general meeting**, must be held:
 - a. within 18 months after registration of the **company**, and
 - b. after the first annual **general meeting**, at least once in every calendar year.
2. Even if these items are not set out in the notice of meeting, the business of an annual **general meeting** may include:

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- a. a review of the **company's** activities,
 - b. a review of the **company's** finances,
 - c. any auditor's report,
 - d. the election of directors, and
 - e. the appointment and payment of auditors, if any.
3. Before or at the annual **general meeting**, the directors must give information to the **members** on the **company's** activities and finances during the period since the last annual **general meeting**.
 4. The chairperson of the annual **general meeting** must give **members** as a whole a reasonable opportunity at the meeting to ask questions or make comments about the management of the **company**.
 5. The chairperson of an annual general meeting must relinquish the role, for the duration of the procedure for election of directors, to an interim chairperson elected by the members present at the meeting.

22. Notice of general meetings

1. Notice of a **general meeting** must be given to:
 - a. each **member** entitled to vote at the meeting,
 - b. each director, and
 - c. the auditor (if any).
2. Notice of a **general meeting** must be provided in writing at least 21 days before the meeting.
3. Subject to clause 22.4, notice of a meeting may be provided less than 21 days before the meeting if:
 - a. for an annual **general meeting**, all the **members** entitled to attend and vote at the annual **general meeting** agree beforehand, or
 - b. for any other **general meeting**, **members** with at least 95% of the votes that may be cast at the meeting agree beforehand.
4. Notice of a **general meeting** cannot be provided less than 21 days before the meeting if a resolution will be moved to:
 - a. remove a director,
 - b. appoint a director in order to replace a director who was removed, or
 - c. remove an auditor.
5. Notice of a **general meeting** must include:
 - a. the place, date and time for the meeting (and if the meeting is to be held in two or more places, the technology that will be used to facilitate this),
 - b. the general nature of the meeting's business,
 - c. if applicable, that a **special resolution** is to be proposed and the words of the proposed resolution,
 - d. a statement that **members** have the right to appoint proxies and that, if a **member** appoints a proxy:

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- e. the proxy does not need to be a **member** of the **company**,
 - f. the proxy form must be delivered to the **company** at its registered address or the address (including an electronic address) specified in the notice of the meeting, and
 - g. the proxy form must be delivered to the **company** at least 48 hours before the meeting.
6. If a **general meeting** is adjourned (put off) for one month or more, the members must be given new notice of the resumed meeting.

23. Quorum at general meetings

1. For a **general meeting** to be held, at least 20 **members**, or 20% of the register of **members**, whichever is the lower number (a quorum) must be present for the whole meeting. A quorum must include at least two directors, or a director and the secretary. When determining whether a quorum is present, a person may only be counted once.
2. No business may be conducted at a **general meeting** if a quorum is not present.
3. If there is no quorum present within 30 minutes after the starting time stated in the notice of **general meeting**, the **general meeting** is adjourned to the date, time and place that the chairperson specifies. If the chairperson does not specify one or more of those things, the meeting is adjourned to:
 - a. if the date is not specified – the same day in two weeks hence,
 - b. if the time is not specified – the same time, and
 - c. if the place is not specified – the same place.
4. If no quorum is present at the resumed meeting within 30 minutes after the starting time set for that meeting, the meeting is deemed to have a quorum.

24. Auditor's right to attend meetings

1. The auditor (if any) is entitled to attend any **general meeting** and to be heard by the **members** on any part of the business of the meeting that concerns the auditor in the capacity of auditor.
2. The **company** must give the auditor (if any) any communications relating to the **general meeting** that a **member** of the **company** is entitled to receive.

25. Using technology to hold meetings

1. The **company** may hold a **general meeting** at two or more venues using any technology that gives the **members** as a whole a reasonable opportunity to participate, including to hear and be heard.
2. Anyone using this technology is taken to be present in person at the meeting.

26. Chairperson for general meetings

1. The **elected chairperson** is entitled to chair **general meetings**.
2. The **members** present and entitled to vote at a **general meeting** may choose a director or **member** to be the chairperson for that meeting if:
 - a. there is no **elected chairperson**, or

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- b. the **elected chairperson** is not present within 30 minutes after the starting time set for the meeting, or
- c. the **elected chairperson** is present but says they do not wish to act as chairperson of the meeting.

27. Role of the chairperson

1. The chairperson is responsible for the conduct of the **general meeting**, and for this purpose must give members a reasonable opportunity to make comments and ask questions (including to the auditor (if any)).
2. The chairperson does not have a casting vote.

28. Adjournment of meetings

1. If a quorum is present, a **general meeting** must be adjourned if a majority of **members present** direct the chairperson to adjourn it.
2. Only unfinished business may be dealt with at a meeting resumed after an adjournment.

Members resolutions and statements

29. Members' resolutions and statements

1. **Members** with at least 5% of the votes that may be cast on a resolution may give:
 - a. written notice to the **company** of a resolution they propose to move at a **general meeting** (members' resolution), and/or
 - b. a written request to the **company** that the **company** give all of its **members** a statement about a proposed resolution or any other matter that may properly be considered at a **general meeting** (members' statement).
2. A notice of a members' resolution must set out the wording of the proposed resolution and be signed by the **members** proposing the resolution.
3. A request to distribute a members' statement must set out the statement to be distributed and be signed by the **members** making the request.
4. Separate copies of a document setting out the notice or request may be signed by **members**, if the wording is the same in each copy.
5. The percentage of votes that members have (as described in clause 29.1) is to be worked out as at midnight before the request or notice is given to the **company**.
6. If the **company** has been given notice of a members' resolution under clause 29.1(a), the resolution must be considered at the next **general meeting** held more than two months after the notice is given.
7. This clause does not limit any other right that a **member** has to propose a resolution at a **general meeting**.

30. Company must give notice of proposed resolution or distribute statement

1. If the **company** has been given a notice or request under clause 29:

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- a. in time to send the notice of proposed members' resolution or a copy of the members' statement to **members** with a notice of meeting, it must do so at the **company's** cost, or
 - b. too late to send the notice of proposed members' resolution or a copy of the members' statement to **members** with a notice of meeting, then the **members** who proposed the resolution or made the request must pay the expenses reasonably incurred by the **company** in giving **members** notice of the proposed members' resolution or a copy of the members' statement. However, at a **general meeting**, the **members** may pass a resolution that the **company** will pay these expenses.
2. The **company** does not need to send the notice of proposed members' resolution or a copy of the members' statement to **members** if:
- a. it is more than 1,000 words long,
 - b. the directors consider it may be defamatory,
 - c. clause 30.1(b) applies, and the **members** who proposed the resolution or made the request have not paid the **company** enough money to cover the cost of sending the notice of the proposed members' resolution or a copy of the members' statement to **members**, or
 - d. in the case of a proposed members' resolution, the resolution does not relate to a matter that may be properly considered at a **general meeting** or is otherwise not a valid resolution able to be put to the **members**.

31. Circular resolutions of members

1. Subject to clause 31.3, the directors may put a resolution to the **members** to pass a resolution without a **general meeting** being held (a circular resolution).
2. The directors must notify the auditor (if any) as soon as possible that a circular resolution has or will be put to **members** and set out the wording of the resolution.
3. Circular resolutions cannot be used:
 - a. for a resolution to remove an auditor, appoint a director or remove a director
 - b. for passing a **special resolution**, or
 - c. where the **Corporations Act** or this constitution requires a meeting to be held.
4. A circular resolution is passed if all the **members** entitled to vote on the resolution sign or agree to the circular resolution, in the manner set out in clause 31.5 or clause 31.6.
5. **Members** may sign:
 - a. a single document setting out the circular resolution and containing a statement that they agree to the resolution, or
 - b. separate copies of that document, as long as the wording is the same in each copy.
6. The **company** may send a circular resolution by email to **members** and **members** may agree by sending a reply email to that effect, including the text of the resolution in their reply.

Voting at general meetings

32. How many votes a member has

1. Each **member** has one vote.
2. A member is not entitled to vote at a general meeting if the member's annual subscription or regular donation is more than three months in arrears at the date of the meeting.

33. Challenge to member's right to vote

1. A **member** or the chairperson may only challenge a person's right to vote at a **general meeting** at that meeting.
2. If a challenge is made under clause 33.1, the chairperson must decide whether or not the person may vote. The chairperson's decision is final.

34. How voting is carried out

1. Voting must be conducted and decided by:
 - a. a show of hands
 - b. a vote in writing, or
 - c. another method chosen by the chairperson that is fair and reasonable in the circumstances.
2. Before a vote is taken, the chairperson must state whether any proxy votes have been received and, if so, how the proxy votes will be cast.
3. On a show of hands, the chairperson's decision is conclusive evidence of the result of the vote.
4. The chairperson and the meeting minutes do not need to state the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour or against on a show of hands.

35. When and how a vote in writing must be held

1. A vote in writing may be demanded on any resolution instead of or after a vote by a show of hands by:
 - a. at least five **members present**,
 - b. **members present** with at least 5% of the votes that may be passed on the resolution on the vote in writing (worked out as at the midnight before the vote in writing is demanded), or
 - c. the chairperson.
2. A vote in writing must be taken when and how the chairperson directs, unless clause 35.3 applies.
3. A vote in writing must be held immediately if it is demanded under clause 35.1:
 - a. for the election of a chairperson under clause 26.2, or
 - b. to decide whether to adjourn the meeting.
4. A demand for a vote in writing may be withdrawn.

36. Appointment of proxy

1. A **member** may appoint a proxy to attend and vote at a **general meeting** on their behalf.
2. A proxy does not need to be a **member**.
3. No person may hold more than two proxies.
4. A proxy appointed to attend and vote for a **member** has the same rights as the **member** to:
 - a. speak at the meeting,
 - b. vote in a vote in writing (but only to the extent allowed by the appointment), and
 - c. join in to demand a vote in writing under clause 35.1.
5. An appointment of proxy (proxy form) must be signed by the **member** appointing the proxy and must contain:
 - a. the **member's** name and address,
 - b. the **company's** name,
 - c. the proxy's name or the name of the office held by the proxy, and
 - d. the meeting(s) at which the appointment may be used.
6. A proxy appointment may be standing for a period of no more than six months.
7. Proxy forms must be received by the **company** at the address stated in the notice under clause 22.5(f) or at the **company's** registered address at least 48 hours before a meeting.
8. A proxy does not have the authority to speak and vote for a **member** at a meeting while the **member** is at the meeting.
9. Unless the **company** receives written notice before the start or resumption of a **general meeting** at which a proxy votes, a vote cast by the proxy is valid even if, before the proxy votes, the appointing **member**:
 - a. dies,
 - b. is mentally incapacitated,
 - c. revokes the proxy's appointment, or
 - d. revokes the authority of a representative or agent who appointed the proxy.
10. A proxy appointment may specify the way the proxy must vote on a particular resolution.

37. Voting by proxy

1. A proxy is not entitled to vote on a show of hands (but this does not prevent a **member** appointed as a proxy from voting as a **member** on a show of hands).
2. When a vote in writing is held, a proxy:
 - a. does not need to vote, unless the proxy appointment specifies the way they must vote,
 - b. if the way they must vote is specified on the proxy form, must vote that way, and
 - c. if the proxy is also a **member** or holds more than one proxy, may cast the votes held in different ways.

Directors

38. Number of directors,

1. The **company** must have at least three and no more than six directors.

39. Election and appointment of directors

1. The initial directors are the people who have agreed to act as directors and who are named as proposed directors in the application for registration of the **company**.
2. Apart from the initial directors and directors appointed under clause 39.5, the **members** may elect a director by a resolution passed in a **general meeting**.
3. Each of the directors must be appointed by a separate resolution, unless:
 - a. the **members** present have first passed a resolution that the appointments may be voted on together, and
 - b. no votes were cast against that resolution.
4. A person is eligible for election as a director of the **company** if they:
 - a. are a **member** of the **company**,
 - b. are nominated by two **members** entitled to vote,
 - c. give the **company** their signed consent to act as a director of the **company**,
 - d. are not ineligible to be a director under the **Corporations Act** or the **ACNC Act**, and,
 - e. hold a current Director Identification Number.
5. The directors may appoint a person as a director to fill a casual vacancy or as an additional director if that person:
 - a. is a **member** of the **company**,
 - b. gives the **company** their signed consent to act as a director of the **company**, and
 - c. is not ineligible to be a director under the **Corporations Act** or the **ACNC Act**.
6. If the number of directors is reduced to fewer than three the continuing directors may act for the purpose of increasing the number of directors to three or calling a **general meeting**, but for no other purpose.

40. Election and Role of the Chairperson

1. The directors must elect a director as the **company's elected chairperson**.
2. The role of the chairperson is:
 - a. to be the principal spokesperson for the company,
 - b. to chair general, special and annual general meetings, and directors' meetings.

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41. Term of office

1. At each **annual general meeting** any director appointed by the directors to fill a casual vacancy or as an additional director must retire.
2. Other than a director appointed under clause 39.5, a director's term of office starts at the end of the annual **general meeting** at which they are elected and ends at the end of the annual **general meeting** at which they retire.
3. Each director must retire at least once every three years.
4. A director who retires under clause 41.1 or clause 41.3 may nominate for election or re-election, subject to clause 41.5.
5. A director who has held office for a continuous period of six years or more may only be re-appointed or re-elected by a **special resolution**.

42. When a director stops being a director

A director stops being a director if they:

- a. give written notice of resignation as a director to the **company**,
- b. die,
- c. are removed as a director by a resolution of the members,
- d. stop being a **member** of the **company**,
- e. are absent for three consecutive directors' meetings without approval from the directors, or
- f. become ineligible to be a director of the **company** under the **Corporations Act** or the **ACNC Act**.

Powers of directors

43. Powers of directors

1. The directors are responsible for managing and directing the activities of the **company** to achieve the purposes set out in clause 6.
2. The directors may use all the powers of the **company** except for powers that, under the **Corporations Act** or this constitution, may only be used by **members**.
3. The directors must decide on the responsible financial management of the **company** including:
 - a. any suitable written delegations of power under clause 44, and
 - b. how money will be managed, such as how electronic transfers, negotiable instruments or cheques must be authorised and signed or otherwise approved.
4. The directors cannot remove a director or auditor. Directors and auditors may only be removed by a members' resolution at a **general meeting**.

44. Delegation of directors' powers

1. The directors may delegate any of their powers and functions to a committee, a director, an employee of the **company** (such as a chief executive officer) or any other person, as they consider appropriate.

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2. The delegation must be recorded in the **company's** minute book and register of delegations,

45. Payments to directors

1. The **company** must not pay fees to a director for acting as a director.
2. The **company** may:
 - a. pay a director for work they do for the **company**, other than as a director, if the amount is no more than a reasonable fee for the work done, or
 - b. reimburse a director for expenses properly incurred by the director in connection with the affairs of the **company**.
3. Any payment made under clause 45.2 must be approved by the directors.
4. The **company** may pay premiums for insurance indemnifying directors, as allowed for by law (including the **Corporations Act**) and this constitution.

46. Execution of documents

The **company** may execute a document without using a common seal if the document is signed by:

- a. two directors of the **company**, or
- b. a director and the secretary.

Duties of directors

47. Duties of directors

1. The directors must comply with their duties as directors under legislation and common law (judge-made law), and with the duties described in governance standard 5 of the regulations made under the **ACNC Act** which are:
 - a. to exercise their powers and discharge their duties with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable individual would exercise if they were a director of the **company**,
 - b. to act in good faith in the best interests of the **company** and to further the charitable purposes of the **company** set out in clause 6,
 - c. not to misuse their position as a director,
 - d. not to misuse information they gain in their role as a director,
 - e. to disclose any perceived or actual material conflicts of interest in the manner set out in clause 48,
 - f. to ensure that the financial affairs of the **company** are managed responsibly, and
 - g. not to allow the **company** to operate while it is insolvent.

48. Conflicts of interest

1. A director must disclose the nature and extent of any actual or perceived material conflict of interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting of directors (or that is proposed in a circular resolution):

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- a. to the other directors, or
 - b. if all of the directors have the same conflict of interest, to the **members** at the next **general meeting**, or at an earlier time if reasonable to do so.
2. The disclosure of a conflict of interest by a director must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
 3. Each director who has a material personal interest in a matter that is being considered at a meeting of directors (or that is proposed in a circular resolution) must not, except as provided under clauses 48.4:
 - a. be present at the meeting while the matter is being discussed, or
 - b. vote on the matter.
 4. A director may still be present and vote if:
 - a. their interest arises because they are a **member** of the **company**, and the other **members** have the same interest,
 - b. their interest relates to an insurance contract that insures, or would insure, the director against liabilities that the director incurs as a director of the **company** (see clause 66),
 - c. their interest relates to a payment by the **company** under clause 65 (indemnity), or any contract relating to an indemnity that is allowed under the **Corporations Act**
 - d. the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) makes an order allowing the director to vote on the matter, or
 - e. the directors who do not have a material personal interest in the matter pass a resolution that:
 - I. identifies the director, the nature and extent of the director's interest in the matter and how it relates to the affairs of the **company**, and
 - II. says that those directors are satisfied that the interest should not stop the director from voting or being present.

Directors' meetings

49. When the directors meet

The directors may decide how often, where and when they meet.

50. Calling directors' meetings

1. A director may call a directors' meeting by giving reasonable notice to all of the other directors.
2. A director may give notice in writing or by any other means of communication that has previously been agreed to by all of the directors.

51. Chairperson for directors' meetings

1. The **elected chairperson** is entitled to chair directors' meetings.
2. The directors at a directors' meeting may choose a director to be the chairperson for that meeting if the **elected chairperson** is:

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- a. not present within 30 minutes after the starting time set for the meeting, or
- b. present but does not want to act as chairperson of the meeting.

52. Quorum at directors' meetings

1. Unless the directors determine otherwise, the quorum for a directors' meeting is a minimum of three directors.
2. A quorum must be present for the whole directors' meeting.

Using technology to hold directors' meetings

53. Using technology to hold directors' meetings

1. The directors may hold their meetings by using any technology (such as video or teleconferencing) that is agreed to by all of the directors.
2. The directors' agreement may be a standing (ongoing) one.
3. A director may only withdraw their consent within a reasonable period before the meeting.

54. Passing directors' resolutions

1. A directors' resolution must be passed by a majority of the votes cast by directors present and entitled to vote on the resolution.
2. The chairperson for a director's meeting may have a casting vote.

55. Circular resolutions of directors

1. The directors may pass a circular resolution without a directors' meeting being held.
2. A circular resolution is passed if all the directors entitled to vote on the resolution sign or otherwise agree to the resolution in the manner set out in clause 55.3 or clause 55.4.
3. Each director may sign:
 - a. a single document setting out the resolution and containing a statement that they agree to the resolution, or
 - b. separate copies of that document, as long as the wording of the resolution is the same in each copy.
4. The **company** may send a circular resolution electronically to the directors and the directors may agree to the resolution by sending an electronic response to that effect, including the text of the resolution in their reply.
5. A circular resolution is passed when the last director signs or otherwise agrees to the resolution in the manner set out in clause 55.3 or clause 55.4.

Secretary

56a. Appointment and role of secretary

1. The **company** must have a secretary, who will normally also be a director.
2. The secretary must be a **member** of the **company**.

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3. The secretary must be appointed by the directors (after giving the **company** their signed consent to act as secretary of the **company**) and may be removed by the directors.
4. The directors must decide the terms and conditions under which the secretary is appointed.
5. A secretary who is not a director may attend a board meeting but does not have voting rights.
6. The role of the secretary includes:
 - a. maintaining a register of the **company's** members, and
 - b. maintaining the minutes and other records of **general meetings** (including notices of meetings), directors' meetings, register of delegations and circular resolutions.
 - c. sending notices of Buddies Ltd meetings and other corporate matters to members,
 - d. receiving and forwarding official correspondence to relevant members.

Treasurer

56b. Appointment and role of treasurer

1. The company must have a treasurer, who will normally also be a director.
2. The treasurer must be a member of the company.
3. The treasurer must be appointed by the directors (after giving the company their signed consent to act as treasurer of the company) and may be removed by the directors.
4. A treasurer who is not a director may attend a board meeting but does not have voting rights.
5. The role of the treasurer includes ensuring:
 - a. that all money due to the company is collected and received and that all payments authorised by the company are made, and
 - b. that correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the company, giving full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the company.

Minutes and records

57. Minutes and records

1. The **company** must, within one month, make and keep the following records:
 - a. minutes of proceedings and resolutions of **general meetings**,
 - b. minutes of circular resolutions of **members**,
 - c. a copy of a notice of each **general meeting**, and
 - d. a copy of a members' statement distributed to **members** under clause 30.
2. The **company** must, within one month, make and keep the following records:

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- a. minutes of proceedings and resolutions of directors' meetings (including meetings of any committees), and
 - b. minutes of circular resolutions of directors.
3. To allow **members** to inspect the **company's** records:
- a. the **company** must give a **member** access to the records set out in clause 57.1, and
 - b. the directors may authorise a **member** to inspect other records of the **company**, including records referred to in clause 57.2 and clause 58.1.
4. The directors must ensure that minutes of a **general meeting** or a directors' meeting are signed or approved within a reasonable time after the meeting by:
- a. the chairperson of the meeting, or
 - b. the chairperson of the next meeting, or
 - c. the directors at the next directors' meeting.
5. The directors must ensure that minutes of the passing of a circular resolution (of **members** or directors) are signed by a director within a reasonable time after the resolution is passed.

58. Financial and related records

1. The **company** must make and keep written financial records that:
 - a. correctly record and explain its transactions and financial position and performance, and
 - b. enable true and fair financial statements to be prepared and to be audited.
2. The **company** must also keep written records that correctly record its operations.
3. The **company** must retain its records for at least seven years.
4. The directors must take reasonable steps to ensure that the **company's** records are kept safe.

By-laws

59. By-laws

1. The directors may make, amend or repeal by-laws, not inconsistent with the Constitution, for the internal management of the company.
2. **Members** and directors must comply with by-laws as if they were part of this constitution.
3. A by-law may be set aside by a vote of members at a general meeting of the company.

Notice

60. What is notice

1. Anything written to or from the **company** under any clause in this constitution is written notice and is subject to clauses 61 to 63, unless specified otherwise.
2. Clauses 61 to 63 do not apply to a notice of proxy under clause 36.6.

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61. Notice to the company

Written notice or any communication under this constitution may be given to the **company**, the directors or the secretary by:

- a. delivering it to the **company's** registered office
- b. posting it to the **company's** registered office or to another address chosen by the **company** for notice to be provided
- c. sending it to an email address or other electronic address notified by the **company** to the **members** as the **company's** email address or other electronic address.

62. Notice to members

1. Written notice or any communication under this constitution may be given to a **member**:
 - a. in person,
 - b. by posting it to, or leaving it at the address of the **member** in the register of **members** or an alternative address (if any) nominated by the **member** for service of notices,
 - c. sending it to the email or other electronic address nominated by the **member** as an alternative address for service of notices (if any),
 - d. if agreed to by the **member**, by notifying the **member** at an email or other electronic address nominated by the **member**, that the notice is available at a specified place or address (including an electronic address).
2. If the **company** does not have an address for the member, the **company** is not required to give notice in person.

63. When notice is taken to be given

1. A notice:
 - a. delivered in person, or left at the recipient's address, is taken to be given on the day it is delivered,
 - b. sent by post, is taken to be given on the third day after it is posted with the correct payment of postage costs,
 - c. sent by email, fax or other electronic method, is taken to be given on the business day after it is sent, and
 - d. given under clause 62.1(d) is taken to be given on the business day after the notification that the notice is available is sent.

Financial year

64. Company's financial year

The **company's** financial year is from 1 July to 30 June, unless the directors pass a resolution to change the financial year.

Indemnity, insurance and access

65. Indemnity

1. The **company** indemnifies each officer of the **company** out of the assets of the **company**, to the relevant extent, against all losses and liabilities (including costs, expenses and charges) incurred by that person as an officer of the **company**.
2. In this clause, 'officer' means a director or secretary or treasurer and includes a director or secretary or treasurer after they have ceased to hold that office.
3. In this clause, 'to the relevant extent' means:
 - a. to the extent that the **company** is not precluded by law (including the **Corporations Act**) from doing so, and
 - b. for the amount that the officer is not otherwise entitled to be indemnified and is not actually indemnified by another person (including an insurer under an insurance policy).
4. The indemnity is a continuing obligation and is enforceable by an officer even though that person is no longer an officer of the **company**.

66. Insurance

To the extent permitted by law (including the **Corporations Act**), and if the directors consider it appropriate, the **company** may pay or agree to pay a premium for a contract insuring a person who is or has been an officer of the **company** against any liability incurred by the person as an officer of the **company**.

67. Directors' access to documents

1. A director has a right of access to the financial records of the **company** at all reasonable times.
2. If the directors agree, the **company** must give a director or former director access to:
 - a. certain documents, including documents provided for or available to the directors, and
 - b. any other documents referred to in those documents.

Winding up

68. Surplus assets not to be distributed to members

If the **company** is wound up, any **surplus assets** must not be distributed to a **member** or a former **member** of the **company**, unless that **member** or former **member** is a charity described in clause 69.1.

69. Distribution of surplus assets

1. Subject to the **Corporations Act** and any other applicable Act, and any court order, any **surplus assets** (including gift funds, defined in clause 69.3) that remain after the **company** is wound up must be distributed to one or more charities:
 - a. with charitable purposes similar to, or inclusive of, the purposes in clause 6, and

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- b. which also prohibit the distribution of any **surplus assets** to its members to at least the same extent as the **company**, and
 - c. that is or are deductible gift recipients within the meaning of the **Income Tax Assessment Act**.
2. If the **company** is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient and the **company's** deductible gift recipient endorsement is revoked (whether or not the **company** is to be wound up), any surplus gift funds must be transferred to one or more charities that meet the requirements of clause 69.1 (a), (b) and (c), as decided by the directors.
 3. For the purpose of this clause:
 - a. gift funds means:
 - I. gifts of money or property for the principal purpose of the **company**
 - II. contributions made in relation to the fund-raising event held for the principal purpose of the **company**, and
 - III. money received by the **company** because of such gifts and contributions.
 - b. 'Contributions' and 'fund-raising' have the same meaning as in Division 30 of the **Income Tax Assessment Act**.
 4. The decision as to the charity or charities to be given the **surplus assets** must be made by a **special resolution of members** at or before the time of winding up. If the **members** do not make this decision, the **company** may apply to the Supreme Court to make this decision.

Definitions and interpretation

70. Definitions In this constitution:

- **ACNC Act** means the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth)
- **Buddies** means Buddies Refugee Support Group Ltd (the **company**)
- **company** means the **company** referred to in clause 1
- **Corporations Act** means the *Corporations Act 2001* (Commonwealth)
- directors means the **company's** current board of directors
- **elected chairperson** means a person elected by the directors to be the **company's** chairperson under clause 40
- **general meeting** means a meeting of members and includes the annual **general meeting**, under clause 21.1
- **Income Tax Assessment Act** means the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* (Cth)
- **initial member** means a person who is named in the application for registration of the **company**, with their consent, as a proposed member of the **company**
- **member** means a person who has applied to be a member of the **company** by submitting a membership application form to the **company** secretary, under clause 12 and has fulfilled the requirements of clause 14, or is an honorary life member, granted under clause 16

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- **member present** means, in connection with a **general meeting**, a **member present** in person or by proxy at the venue or venues for the meeting
- **registered charity** means a charity that is registered under the **ACNC Act**
- **special resolution** means a resolution:
 - a. of which notice has been given under clause 22.5(c), and
 - b. that has been passed by at least 75% of the votes cast by **members present** and entitled to vote on the resolution
- **surplus assets** means any assets of the **company** that remain after paying all debts and other liabilities of the **company**, including the costs of winding up.

71. Reading this constitution with the Corporations Act

1. The replaceable rules set out in the **Corporations Act** do not apply to the **company**.
2. While the **company** is a **registered charity**, the **ACNC Act** and the **Corporations Act** override any clauses in this constitution that are inconsistent with those Acts.
3. If the **company** is not a **registered charity** (even if it remains a charity), the **Corporations Act** overrides any clause in this constitution that is inconsistent with that Act.
4. A word or expression that is defined in the **Corporations Act**, or used in that Act and covering the same subject, has the same meaning as in this constitution.

72. Interpretation

In this constitution:

- a. the words 'including', 'for example', or similar expressions mean that there may be more inclusions or examples than those mentioned after that expression, and
- b. reference to an Act includes every amendment, re-enactment, or replacement of that Act and any subordinate legislation made under that Act (such as regulations).