



**COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIAN ARCHIVES  
AND RECORDS AUTHORITIES**

# Constitution

**Version 1.3 approved 8 January 2025**

Original Constitution approved by Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities  
(CAARA) members at its meeting held on 22 May 2017 at Archives New Zealand.

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**OFFICIAL**

## **1. Name**

- 1.1. The name of the organisation is ‘Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities’ hereafter referred to as CAARA.
- 1.2. CAARA is registered on the Australian Business Register as an “Other Unincorporated Entity”. CAARA’s Australian business number (ABN) is 99 544 366 936.

## **2. Organisation and aims**

- 2.1. CAARA is a peak body of government archives and records authorities in Australia and New Zealand. It facilitates collaboration between member organisations in the areas of strategic planning, formulating policy advice and setting standards.
- 2.2. CAARA recognises that public records and archives contribute to the accountability of Government and its public offices. The activities that CAARA undertakes are designed to assist governments in achieving improved recordkeeping through the capture, management of, and access to government records and archives.
- 2.3. CAARA archives strive to ensure the memory of government across Australia and New Zealand is preserved, secured and accessible.
- 2.4. CAARA aims to:
  - 2.4.1. Share experience and knowledge to unlock the long-term value of government records and archives for the people of Australia and New Zealand.
  - 2.4.2. Collaborate and build expertise to secure, preserve and make records available to communities today and in the future.
  - 2.4.3. Create common understanding of emerging issues and opportunities for records and information management, so we can respond more effectively together.
- 2.5. CAARA undertakes the research, collection, and sharing of data and information about the government archives and records management sectors of Australia and New Zealand.

- 2.6. CAARA assists in the coordination of policy advice and standards provided by members to their relevant jurisdictions.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1. Full membership of CAARA is open to the government archives authorities of the Commonwealth of Australia, and each of the Australian States and Territories.
- 3.2. Associate membership of CAARA is open to the government archival authority of New Zealand.
- 3.3. Full and Associate members will be represented on CAARA by the head of each respective authority.
- 3.4. Full Members of CAARA may participate fully in CAARA activities, are entitled to form part of The Executive and are entitled to equal voting rights.
- 3.5. Associate Members of CAARA may participate fully in CAARA activities but are not entitled to form part of The Executive and are not entitled to voting rights.
- 3.6. The membership can be expanded to include new classes of membership with all such changes, including the addition of new members, requiring the majority vote of Full Members.
- 3.7. Membership of CAARA can be suspended or cancelled by a majority vote of Full Members.
- 3.8. Members have the right to appeal suspension or cancellation via an independent adjudicator determined by mutual agreement of the member and The Executive.
- 3.9. Any member may resign their membership by providing written notice to The Executive.

### **4. Organisational structure and Executive**

- 4.1. CAARA's organisational structure is made up of a Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer, non-executive Full Members, and Associate Members collectively known as 'The Council'.
- 4.2. The Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer are collectively known as 'The Executive'.
- 4.3. Voting members of CAARA will appoint from its Full Members a Chair.

- 4.4. Voting members of CAARA will appoint from its Full Members a Deputy Chair.
- 4.5. The Chair shall act as the spokesperson for the Council
- 4.6. The following committee member presides at a meeting of the Council:
  - 4.6.1. The Chair
  - 4.6.2. If the Chair is absent - the Deputy Chair
  - 4.6.3. If both the Chair and Deputy Chair are absent - one of the Members present at the meeting, as elected by the other Members.
- 4.7. The member presiding at the meeting has:
  - 4.7.1. A deliberative vote, and
  - 4.7.2. In the event of an equality of votes - a second or casting vote.
- 4.8. The Chair has authority to approve expenditure and other actions arising from decisions made by the majority of the Council.
- 4.9. In the event of the absence or unavailability of the Chair, or where the Chair declares a conflict of interest that prevents them from carrying out their authorities and functions, the Deputy Chair will assume the authorities, functions and accountability for the responsibilities of the Chair for the period of that absence or unavailability.
- 4.10. With the approval of The Council the Chair may designate an Executive Officer to assist with their duties for a duration not exceeding the term of the Chair and with duties and responsibilities approved by the Council.
- 4.11. With the approval of The Council the Chair may designate a Treasurer to assist with their duties for a duration not exceeding the term of the Chair and with duties and responsibilities approved by the Council.

- 4.12. The Treasurer shall ensure:
- 4.12.1. All money owed to the Council is collected, and
  - 4.12.2. All payments authorised by the Council are made, and
  - 4.12.3. Correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the Council, including full details of receipts and expenditure relating to the Council's activities.
- 4.13. With the approval of The Council the Treasurer may designate an Assistant Treasurer to assist with their duties.
- 4.14. The Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer shall each have a two-year term of office and are eligible for re-appointment but shall not serve for more than four years consecutively in the same office.
- 4.15. The Chair, Deputy Chair or the Treasurer may be removed by a majority vote of Full Members.
- 4.16. The Chair is to also be nominated as the Primary Authority for CAARA with the Australian Business Register (ABR) and Australian Tax Office (ATO). With the approval of the Council, the Chair may also nominate the Treasurer and/or Executive Officer as an Authorised Contact.

## **5. Meetings**

- 5.1. CAARA will hold meetings as often as required, but no less than twice yearly, with one meeting timed to coincide wherever possible with the annual meeting and conference of the Australian Society of Archivists (ASA).
- 5.2. Members must be given reasonable notice of any meeting.
- 5.3. Members may be represented at a meeting by a delegate as long as notice is given to the Chair in advance of the meeting.
- 5.4. A delegate to a meeting will assume all the rights of the member they are representing. This includes the right to vote at the meeting on behalf of the Full Member.
- 5.5. The Chair will call a meeting. Any member may request a meeting be held provided a majority of The Council agree.

- 5.6. Meetings can be held in person, by telephone or by video conference or other means agreed by a majority of The Council.
- 5.7. Decisions at meetings may only be made where a quorum is present. A quorum consists of a majority of Full Members and must include one member of The Executive.
- 5.8. Any decisions made out-of-session may only be made where a quorum responds to and endorses the decision in writing.
- 5.9. The Chair, Treasurer, non-executive Full Members and Associate Members are all entitled to submit items for CAARA's consideration.

## **6. Powers**

- 6.1. CAARA may raise money in order to meet its stated aims by:
  - 6.1.1. Collecting annual membership fees in support of its agreed aims.
  - 6.1.2. Accepting donations, deeds or gifts in line with its stated aims and in accordance with the Laws of the Commonwealth of Australia.
  - 6.1.3. Charging for any specialist services that are deemed appropriate.
- 6.2. CAARA may employ staff or engage volunteers to assist in fulfilling the aims of the organisation.
- 6.3. The Chair and the Treasurer may request financial support from CAARA to fund the costs of providing executive support to assist with the fulfilment of executive responsibilities.
- 6.4. CAARA may conduct research and form working groups using available funds.
- 6.5. CAARA may partner with member organisations and external groups in the provision of services.
- 6.6. CAARA may charge any organisation or group requesting a service from CAARA, for the cost of provisioning the requested service.
- 6.7. Where CAARA charges for the service provided, it may decide to reimburse the donor CAARA member who provides the service for the costs incurred.

6.8. CAARA may carry out other duties in pursuit of the stated aims of CAARA.

## **7. Finance**

- 7.1. Any money acquired by CAARA, including membership fees, donations, bequests, loans or grants shall be paid into an account administered by the Treasurer.
- 7.2. Bank accounts shall be opened and operated in the name of *Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities*.
- 7.3. The Treasurer will administer CAARA's budget and ensure funds are allocated in support of the stated aims of CAARA and solely at the direction of The Council.
- 7.4. Official accounts will be maintained by the Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for obtaining an annual professional examination of CAARA's financial holdings.
- 7.5. The Treasurer must produce an annual financial report to be presented to the Council at the earliest opportunity after the end of a financial year and no later than the second meeting held after the end of a financial year.
- 7.6. The Chair or Treasurer must complete the annual *Not for profit self-review return* for income tax exemption in accordance with Australian Tax Office requirements.

## **8. Administration of Membership Fees**

- 8.1. CAARA members pay annual fees which contribute to the corpus used to fund CAARA activities.
- 8.2. Membership fees may be set collectively for all members or for individual member organisations and must be approved by a majority of Full Members of the Council.
- 8.3. Full Members of CAARA may agree to alter, adjust or suspend membership fees at any time collectively for all members or for individual member organisations.
- 8.4. A CAARA member wishing to receive relief from the payment of fees must make a submission to the CAARA Executive for approval, either in writing or at a CAARA meeting, with endorsement to be documented either in writing or in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

- 8.5. Due to the high costs of travel in attending CAARA meetings and other CAARA designated events, CAARA reserves the right to use its revenue and income to fund travel and attendance costs of members to CAARA events and activities.
- 8.6. Members requiring assistance in this regard are to seek approval from the CAARA Executive in advance of any bookings being made or expense incurred.
- 8.7. Approved requests for financial assistance will be processed by the Treasurer on a reimbursement basis. An invoice from the individual member or member organisation should be submitted to the Treasurer for an amount no higher than that agreed to by The Executive.
- 8.8. CAARA may choose to set a limit on the amount of CAARA funding that members may apply to access at either a collective level for all members or for individual member organisations.

## **9. Constitutional Review**

- 9.1. This Constitution shall be reviewed at a meeting of The Council at least once during the term of each Chair.
- 9.2. Proposed alterations to the Constitution or dissolution to the group must be conveyed formally in writing by a member of The Council to The Executive.
- 9.3. The Executive shall provide members with reasonable notice that alterations to the Constitution or dissolution to the group is proposed for consideration at a scheduled meeting.
- 9.4. Proposed alterations to the Constitution or dissolution of the group will be considered by all members of The Council and must be agreed upon by a majority vote of Full Members.

## **10. Dissolution**

- 10.1. CAARA may be dissolved by The Council in a majority vote at a meeting. Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be returned to their providers or transferred to organisations with similar aims at the discretion of The Executive.