

EFA Annual General Meeting Minutes

28 October 2023

Attendance

Present

Members

- Fahad Ali
- Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker
- John Pane
- Les Kitchen
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Paul Ruberry
- Justin Warren
- Craig Lawton
- Amy Patterson
- Jean Linis-Dinco
- Ross Floate
- Dirk Hunter

Non-members

- N/A

Apologies

- Erica Mealy

Meeting Introduction

The meeting was declared open at 2:10 pm AEDT by Justin Warren (Chair) and quorum was declared.

An acknowledgement of Country was delivered by the Chair.

Only members can vote on a motion or a poll. The text of each motion will be input into the meeting chat prior to the vote. Others may attend as observers but may not vote.

For each voting item – proposed and seconder followed by a vote – questions not related to item in General Business at end.

Presentation of the Annual Report

Justin Warren presented the chair's annual report to the meeting.

The report began with a thanks to the current Board.

EFA has developed a strategic plan, which will be carried forward by the incoming Board.

Membership is down by a little under 8% compared to last year – it has been a tough year, especially with broader economic conditions. Has not been helped by systems issues and payment integration into CiviCRM, which has affected new memberships and renewals. We believe we have fixed the issue, thanks to the efforts of multiple members and Kiki Fong Lim in particular. It is an ongoing piece of work, but we would like to make it much easier for people to join EFA.

We partner with other organisations and people in the community, and we have particular strong relationships with Digital Rights Watch, and maintain good relationships with the Australian Internet Governance community (Internet Australia, AuDA, APNIC, Linux Australia, and others). We also did some co-campaigning with Choice in the past year and the half around privacy.

We try to find common ground with other organisations while still maintaining our own voice and objectives – which has been productive.

The report acknowledged our supporters, including Fastmail, Serversaurus, and Electron Workshop.

It was also a busy year with the media. We try to engage with the media to increase awareness of digital rights and increase evidence of effective protection of digital rights. We have worked with journalists to assist them in understanding the issues and in framing of articles.

We had 14-15 specific media appearances, and we have also diversified our media appearances. It has been great to have more people speak to the media, and upskilled in media engagement.

We appear at least once a month – sometimes more often, especially if there is a big data breach or relevant government policy. However, we are a little down on the media this year compared to the year before.

Our campaign focus areas are privacy, data security, facial surveillance, automated decisions and AI, and encryption. The Robodebt fallout has made algorithmic decision making a policy concern for the government. However, there is a renewed push globally to break encryption again.

Our policy action highlights from the last year include the Latitude Financial data break, the Privacy Act review, the Bunnings facial surveillance, Safe and Responsible AI consultation, government rejection of online age verification, the Global Encryption Coalition, and OAIC at Senate Estimates.

Our big wins – Privacy Act review report has lots to like in it. There are a lot of important things in the review, and the language from government illustrates that EFA and other organisations in

this space are managing to get through to them. Clarification on what “personal information” is, having a “fair and reasonable” test in there; if we can get these phrases into the text of the act – and an individual right of action – it will be a massive win for privacy in Australia. We need to keep up the pressure. Some areas of caution: data brokers hate this, but there are potential loopholes for small businesses and political parties, and the media.

Another win is rejection of age verification: eSafety still wants it, but this could still come in the form of digital identity. There are also commercial interests at play. Again, vigilance is required.

Last win is on Bunnings facial surveillance – it is not a full-win, but facial surveillance is not running while the review is running. There was a lot of blow-back, and Bunnings is clearly very sensitive to criticism on this issue. Again, we need vigilance, but we should take this as an encouraging sign that speaking up on these issues, pressure on these large organisations does have an effect.

There is a lot more to be done: we need to do more to increase access to beneficial, rights-preserving technologies. There is an increasing awareness of digital rights, which we can all help by talking to our friends and families about things like password managers – we need to help people recognise that technology should work for them, not against them. We need to model that behaviour and encourage people to get involved – progress is possible.

The Chair also thanked EFA, the Board, and the meeting after six years of service on the Board, and wished the incoming Board every success.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2022 AGM

Motion: That the meeting accept that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12 November 2022 be accepted as true and correct record of that meeting.

The minutes will be updated to correct a misspelling raised by Les Kitchen.

Moved: Justin Warren

Seconded: Paul Ruberry

In favour:

- Fahad Ali
- Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker
- John Pane
- Les Kitchen
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Paul Ruberry
- Justin Warren
- Amy Patterson

Abstain:

- Kiki Fong Lim
- Ross Floate
- Craig Lawton
- Dirk Hunter
- Jean Linis-Dinco
- Ross Floate

Against: None

Motion carried.

Presentation of the Annual Accounts

The accounts were presented by Treasurer Paul Ruberry.

We have received an unqualified audit report from Arabon, we are not a reporting entity, and the report was produced on that basis.

We operated on a small loss last year, but as a not-for-profit, we attempt to break-even. Last year we chose to dip into our cash reserves to revitalise our website. We have a very healthy operating reserve and we are able to sustain small losses from time to time.

The bulk of our expenses have been for maintaining a contractor for social media management.

Motion: That the meeting accept the financial statements and auditor's report as a true and fair view of the financial position of the organisation.

Moved: Paul Ruberry

Seconded: Justin Warren

In favour:

- Fahad Ali
- Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker
- John Pane
- Les Kitchen
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Paul Ruberry
- Justin Warren
- Amy Patterson
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Ross Floate
- Craig Lawton
- Dirk Hunter
- Jean Linis-Dinco
- Ross Floate

Abstain: None

Against: None

Motion carried.

Motion: That Arabon Audit & Assurance be appointed to audit the accounts for the 2023-2024 financial year.

Moved: Paul Ruberry

Seconded: Justin Warren

In favour:

- Fahad Ali
- Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker
- John Pane
- Les Kitchen
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Paul Ruberry
- Justin Warren
- Amy Patterson
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Ross Floate
- Craig Lawton
- Dirk Hunter
- Jean Linis-Dinco
- Ross Floate

Abstain: None

Against: None

Motion carried.

Election of Board Members

There are five vacancies on the Board. Nominations were received from Jean Linis-Dinco, Ross Floate, Craig Lawton, Erica Mealy.

In accordance with Rule 10.7, all nominees were declared duly elected by the Chair.

General Business

Motion: To thank Justin Warren and Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker for their contributions to EFA during their service on the Board and to wish them all the very best.

Moved: Paul Ruberry

Seconded: Justin Warren

In favour:

- Fahad Ali
- Kathryn Gledhill-Tucker
- John Pane
- Les Kitchen
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Paul Ruberry
- Justin Warren
- Amy Patterson
- Kiki Fong Lim
- Ross Floate
- Craig Lawton

- Dirk Hunter
- Jean Linis-Dinco
- Ross Floate

Abstain: None

Against: None

Motion carried.

Meeting declared closed 2.51 pm AEDT