

WANTOK 2014 (MACKAY)



FUTURE VISIONS

A FEDERATION/ORDINARY COMMUNITY MEMBER MODEL

Day Three Discussion Paper



In light of the community consultation process undertaken so far, what a national incorporated association of ASSI organisations and community members could look like.

**A FEDERATION/ORDINARY COMMUNITY MEMBER MODEL
DISCUSSION PAPER
Dated: 25 March 2014**

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Document prepared by: Michael Chapman

in consultation with: various governance experts, Gilbert and Tobin Lawyers, ASSI Elders and imminent persons, and members of the ASSI.PJ Board

for and on behalf of: Australian South Seas Islanders (Port Jackson) Limited.

Nothing in this document is ‘set in stone’ – it is a document for discussion, negotiation and development.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The community consultation process so far in regards to formulating a National Body representing the collective interests of Australian South Seas Islanders (“ASSI”) has revealed that, amongst other things, a national governance structure should aspire to:

- providing a coherent national voice for Australian South Sea Islanders while recognising community diversity and local interests;
- engaging from across the nation as many ASSI people, organisations and community groups to participate in the decision making process;
- acknowledging, accepting and sharing the wisdom of Elders;
- engaging and nurturing the involvement of established community organisations;
- developing innovative strategies to encourage direct engagement and retain involvement of ASSI youth (under 33s);
- assisting with the sustainability and cohesion of state, regional and local ASSI organisations.

This proposed model also seeks to address community concerns raised by the Wantok 2013 model regarding adequate regional representation, the question “*who is representing us as president,*” and the possible exclusion of some ASSI communities from the process.

Taking into consideration various community consultations regarding a national governance model, a model incorporating representation and direct participation of both ordinary community members and established (and to be established) community organisations is proposed.

For this exercise, it is best to broadly view the proposal as having three governance elements:

- **National Council** (representative / identifying what needs to be done)
- **National Board** (skill based / deciding how it is going to be done and being responsible for making sure it is done)
- **National Administration** (organising execution / assisting with doing it)

In essence, the proposed new governance structure can be described as:

- an **ASSOCIATION** with **TWO CLASSES OF MEMBER** (ordinary ASSI persons; affiliate ASSI organisations);
- **MEMBERS** in meeting elect by secret ballot (with postal voting provisions) **TWO CO-PRESIDENTS/CHAIRS** and a **NATIONAL COUNCIL** to deliberate and set policy;
- the **NATIONAL COUNCIL** elects from its own number nine persons who together with the **TWO CO-PRESIDENTS/CHAIRS** form the 11 member **NATIONAL BOARD** which manages the day-to-day business of the Association and implements policy between meetings of the National Council and reports to Members annually;
- an affiliate ASSI organisation of standing is appointed by the National Council to provide **NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION** supporting the National Council and National Board.

In seeking to find a method of governance that includes ASSI cultural considerations, it is also important to hold in mind the constant refrain of members of the Stolen Generations *“decisions about our lives were made behind closed doors that adversely and detrimentally affected our lives.”* This refrain can equally be applied to Australian South Seas Islanders, the misery of slavery and indenture, their experience of the White Australia Policy and the resulting intergeneration disadvantage, trauma and dysfunction.

This model also addresses the three keys to good governance for community organisations:

- Openness
- Transparency
- Accountability

Oversight is provided at each stage by various mechanisms within the governance structure. For example, provision is made for:

- Association Members being able to observe National Council and National Board meetings;
- National Council members being able to attend National Board meetings;
- vacancy of both Co-President/Chair offices triggering an Extraordinary Meeting of Association Members;
- vacancy of three National Board positions triggering an Extraordinary Meeting of the National Council;
- resignation of the National Administration triggering an Extraordinary Meeting of the National Council and followed up by an Extraordinary Meeting of Association Members;
- the National Administration certifying together with the Co-President/Chairs that the Association’s annual financial statements have been prepared correctly

Nothing in this document is ‘set in stone’ – it is a document for discussion, negotiation and development.

It is envisioned that this document will be discussed and further defined at Wantok 2014 (Mackay) and then refined by the National ASSI Governance Work Group (“NASSIG Work Group”) and through that Work Group’s community consultation process.

3 NATIONAL AUSTRALIAN SOUTH SEAS ISLANDER ASSOCIATION

It is envisioned that a national incorporated body be formed to represent the interests and hear the voices of both ASSI community organisations and ASSI individuals.

Appendix 1 of this document provides the draft text of work already undertaken on the proposed national body's:

- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement
- ASSI Values
- Purpose
- Draft Objectives
- Key Focus Areas

3.1 ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Two classes of member form the Association:

- Affiliated local/regional/state ASSI organisation (say five votes at general meetings/in ballots of the Association) ("Affiliate ASSI Organisation")
- Ordinary ASSI identifying and identified person aged 18 or over (one vote at general meetings/in ballots of the Association) ("Ordinary Association Member")

The specific criteria for membership of both classes of member to be discussed and formulated at Wantok 2014 and during the NASSIG Work Group process.

3.1.1 Affiliate ASSI Organisations

An Affiliate ASSI Organisation is an organisation that promotes the welfare and wellbeing of ASSI persons and/or an ASSI community or communities, and which meets certain criteria.

It is proposed that Affiliate ASSI Organisations be entitled to a certain number of votes each at general meetings of members. This is to be discussed at Wantok 2014.

3.1.2 Ordinary Association Members

An Ordinary Association Member is a person who meets certain criteria.

For the purposes of electing certain 'restricted' seats on the National Council there are two sub-classes of Ordinary Association Member, namely, Elders and Under 30s.

Membership of the Elder sub-class is determined by entry on the Register of Elders.

Membership of the Under 33 sub-class is determined by age on the day of an election.

3.1.3 Criteria for Membership of the Association

The specific criteria for membership of the Association will be discussed and defined at Wantok 2014 (Mackay) and further refined by the NASSIG Work Group.

3.1.4 Meeting of Association Members

Members of the Association meet annually to conduct the business of the Association which includes receiving reports, approving accounts, conducting elections for Co-President/Chair and the National Council, and considering any other matter of concern to members.

A process will be developed to enable members to bring matters before the annual meeting.

3.1.5 Extraordinary Meetings of Association Members

An Extraordinary Meeting of Association Members may be called by:

- [X per cent] of Ordinary Association Members petitioning the National Board and/or National Council;
- [X number] of Affiliate ASSI Organisations petitioning the National Board and/or National Council;
- both Co-Presidents/Chairs;
- [X number] of members of the National Council;
- [X number] of National Board Members;
- National Administration

Three National Board vacancies, both positions of Co-President/Chair vacant, or the resignation of the National Administration trigger an Extraordinary Meeting of Association Members.

3.2 CO-PRESIDENTS/CHAIRS

Together the two classes of Association Member elect two Co-Presidents/Chairs (one female and the other male) for a term of two years.² [Men's business/Women's business balanced. Kastom and Cultural significance – we need a phrase descriptor for this.]

3.2.1 Role and responsibilities of a Co-President/Chair

The role and responsibilities of a Co-President/Chair may include:³

- to be a leader of the Association and the Australia-wide ASSI community, and advance community cohesion
- to promote ASSI cultural and community awareness and, in conjunction with the National Council, National Board and National Administration, ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between the Association and ASSI communities across Australia
- to be a principal member and spokesperson of the Association and to preside at its meetings
- to ensure that the business of meetings of the governing body is conducted efficiently, effectively and properly in accordance with provisions of the Association's Constitution
- to propose a committee structure and to nominate chairs of committees, subject to ratification by the National Council
- to lead members of the National Council and the National Board in the exercise of their responsibilities and in ensuring good governance
- to ensure the timely development of the Association's strategic plans and policies, and to promote their effective and consistent implementation, including by promoting partnerships between the Association and key stakeholders
- to present and propose adoption of the annual operational plan and budget
- to deliver an annual public statement outlining progress made during the previous twelve months in implementing the Association's Strategic Plan and Delivery Program, and identifying key issues for the future
- to exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body between meetings of the National Council and the National Board
- to represent the Association on regional organisations and in inter-government forums at regional, State and federal levels
- to advise, manage and provide strategic direction to the National Administration in accordance with the Association's strategic plans and policies
- to lead performance appraisals of the National Administration
- to carry out the community and ceremonial functions of the office of Co-President/Chair
- to exercise such other functions as the Association determines.

On election the Co-Presidents/Chairs automatically become the co-chairs of both the National Council and the National Board.

As the Co-President/Chairs are also members of the National Council and the National Board, they also have the responsibilities of a member of those bodies.

² At the inaugural election, the winning candidate with the least votes to serve for one year only.

³ An adaption of criteria provided in Section 9, Political Leadership and Good Governance of *Revitalising Local Government – Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel* October 2013
<http://www.localgovernmentreview.nsw.gov.au/Information.asp?areaindex=LGR&index=102&mi=9>

3.2.2 Mechanisms for the Election of Co-Presidents/Chairs

The nominations of candidates for Co-President are to be supported by [a number greater than 10] ordinary members [of which x must be ASSI Elders]. The Co-Presidents/Chairs are elected via a secret ballot of both classes of member. This is a democratic way to select two spokespersons/leaders who can represent the interests of both classes of member.

Both classes of Member of the Association participate in the election of the Co-Presidents/Chairs. Voting mechanisms for election to the office should be by secret ballot and preferential⁴, and include postal voting provisions.

3.2.3 Casual Vacancies

If a Co-President/Chair resigns or for any reason cannot continue in that role, a poll of members will be conducted at the next annual meeting for another person to complete the remainder of the term of the Co-President/Chair concerned.

If both offices of Co-President/Chair are vacant at the same time, an Extraordinary Meeting of Members is to be called and a poll of members is to be conducted to fill these positions for the remaining terms of office.

⁴ The term preferential refers to the voter being required to indicate an order of preference for candidates on the ballot paper. Suggest, partial preferential – the voter must show a minimum number of preferences for candidates.

3.3 NATIONAL COUNCIL (representative / what do we need to do)

The National Council meets at least twice yearly to deliberate and set Policy.

The two classes of member also elect the National Council. There are a number of classes of seats on the National Council with differing nomination and electoral procedures.

3.3.1 Role and Responsibilities of National Council Members

The role and responsibilities of the National Council may include:⁵

- to provide effective civic leadership and guidance to the community
- to consult regularly with community organisations and other key stakeholders and keep them informed of Association's activities and decisions
- to direct and control the affairs of the Association in consultation with the Nation Board and National Administration and in accordance with Association's Constitution
- to ensure as far as possible the financial sustainability of the Association
- to determine and adopt the Association's Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and other strategic plans and policies
- to determine and adopt a revenue policy and operational plans that ensure the optimum allocation of the Association's resources to implement the strategic plan and for the benefit of national ASSI communities
- to make decisions in accordance with those plans and policies
- to keep under review the performance of the Association and its delivery of activities
- to determine the process for appointment of the National Administration and monitor its performance
- to ensure that the Association acts honestly, efficiently and appropriately in carrying out its responsibilities

3.3.2 Classes of Seats on the National Council

The National Council provides for broad representation of views through the following classes of 'seats':

- Co-President
- National Administration
- Regional
- State
- Elder⁶
- Under 33
- Open

The National Council sets Policy and provides general guidance to the National Board on matters that need to be addressed by the Association. The Council meets at least at the conclusion of each year's Annual General Meeting and again mid-year.

All votes in Council are equal – one seat, one vote. No person can hold more than one seat.

⁵ An adaption of criteria provided in Section 9, Political Leadership and Good Governance of *Revitalising Local Government – Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel* October 2013
<http://www.localgovernmentreview.nsw.gov.au/Information.asp?areaindex=LGR&index=102&mi=9>

⁶ Elder does not necessarily refer to age – a person so recognised is one of wisdom, knowledge, experience and dedication to community.

Seats on the Council are for a term of two years with half the seats declared vacant each year.⁷

In regards to identifying the geographic boundaries of the regions to be used in determining regional representation, the 36 administrative areas used by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) for the election of Regional Councils which represent the local Indigenous population, and as used by Australian Bureau of Statistics, will be used (see Annexure 2). Regions will only be represented if affiliated regional/local ASSI organisation(s) exist in that area. **[FACT CHECK ALLOWED USAGE OF ATSIC MAP – other ways?]**

The table on the following page sets out:

- class or type of seat on the National Council
- method of election for the class of seat
- number of seats held by the class

⁷ A procedure will need to be developed for the inaugural election as to which seats are only for a year term.

3.3.3 Table of National Council Classes of Seats

| CLASS OF SEAT | METHOD OF ELECTION | NUMBER OF SEATS FOR THE CLASS |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| National Co-Presidents/Chairs | Automatic on election as Co-President/Chair. | 2 seats |
| National Administration | Automatic on election as National Administration. | 1 seat |
| Regional | Presidents (or representative) of affiliated regional/local entities in each Region ⁸ elect 1 of their number. | Max 36 seats Current Status: ? |
| State | Each state or territory is entitled to 1 seat to be held by a State organisation (must be incorporated). [develop criteria] Probably no voting in this class as criteria may permit recognition of only 1 entity per State. | Max 8 seats Current Status: 0 Near future: Queensland and possibly NSW |
| Elders ⁹ | Elected by Elder class only with no more than [X] members elected from any one Region. (see "Register of Elders" below for further discussion.) | 1/3 of total National Co-President/Chair, National Administration, Regional and State classes. |
| Under 33 | Elected by Under 33 class only with no more than [X] members elected from any one Region. Candidates to be ordinary Association Members under the age of 33 years at the day on which the election is called. Nominated by 3 Ordinary Association Members. | 1/3 of total National Co-President/Chair, National Administration, Regional and State classes. |
| Open | Elected by both classes of member with no more than [X] members elected from any one Region. Candidates to be ordinary Association Members. Nominated by 3 Ordinary Association Members. | 2/3 of total National Co-President/Chair, National Administration, Regional and State classes. |

⁸ The 36 administrative areas used by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and by Australian Bureau of Statistics.

⁹ Elder does not necessarily refer to age – a person so recognised is one of wisdom, knowledge, experience and dedication to community.

3.3.4 Election Mechanisms for Elder, Open, Under 33 and Regional National Council Seats

Voting mechanisms for election to this body for Elder, Open and Under 33 classes of seat should be by secret ballot, preferential¹⁰ and proportional¹¹, and include postal voting provisions.

All Association Members participate in the ballot for the Open class of seats.

The Elder class of seat is elected by those Association Members identified as Elders.

For the Under 33 class of seat, voting is restricted to those Association Members who are under the age of 33 years on the day of the vote.

In the case of Regional seats, representatives of affiliated regional and local ASSI organisations within a geographic boundary will meet to elect one of their number as Regional representative. [This process needs to be further defined at Wantok 2014 and by the National Governance Work Group.]

3.3.5 Meetings of the National Council

Apart from the two scheduled National Council meetings (conclusion of each year's Annual General Meeting and mid-year), the Board by resolution may call a meeting of the Council. [X] Council members can also call a meeting of the Council. [Identify procedure.]

Meetings of the National Council are open to non-Council Association Members but they may not speak (unless the Council moves to a 'committee of the whole'). Part of a meeting can be closed to observers if the item under consideration is a matter of commercial confidence or a staff matter.

3.3.6 National Council Meeting Quorum

A quorum of the National Council for decision making purposes will be 60 per cent of the total membership of the Council with 50 per cent of each class of Elder, Open, Under 30s and Regional seats to be present.

3.3.7 Register of ASSI Elders

NB: this concept is for discussion at Wantok 2014.

The National Council will institute and keep a Register of ASSI Elders.

It is envisioned that a major celebration of ASSI Elders would launch the Register and honour existing ASSI Elders. Then at each year's annual meeting of the Association any new candidates would be inducted onto the Register.

Matters, amongst others, to be considered:

- criteria for recognition and induction to the Register as an ASSI Elder
- 'approval' process
- nomination process for Elder seats on the National Council

¹⁰ The term preferential refers to the voter being required to indicate an order of preference for candidates on the ballot paper. Suggest, partial preferential – the voter must show a minimum number of preferences for candidates – equal to the number to be elected for a class of seat.

¹¹ Proportional voting aims to produce election results where winners gain seats in proportion to the votes they secure. The method used for Senate elections in Australia.

3.3.8 Vacant Seats / Filling Vacancies

Casual vacancies of National Council seats for Elder, Under 33s and Open classes will be filled for the remainder of the term by a count-back¹² of the ballot that elected the person to the seat.

In the case of a casual vacancies of Regional seat, representatives of affiliated regional and local ASSI organisations within a geographic boundary concerned will meet to elect one of their number as the new Regional representative to complete the remainder of the term.

3.4 NATIONAL BOARD (skill based / how are we going to do it)

The two Co-Presidents/Chairs and nine members of the National Council elected by the Council form the core of the National Board (voting rights). The National Board manages the day-to-day business of the Association as informed by Policy set by the National Council.

The two Co-Presidents/Chairs on election automatically become members of the National Board.

A nominated representative of the National Administration is an ex officio member of the National Board and has all rights of a National Board Member except being able to vote on Resolutions. (It is best to think of the National Administration role as being similar to the function of a Chief Executive Officer.)

The National Board, at its discretion, co-opt up to four independent ASSI or non-ASSI persons of specific expertise (no voting rights).

3.4.1 Role of National Board Members

The role of the National Board may include:¹³

- to manage the business of the Association between meetings of the National Council
- to implement National Council policy and decisions
- to assist the Co-President/Chairs' in preparing strategic plans and budgets for approval by the National Council
- to act in the interests of Association Members and the National Council
- to exercise such other functions as the Association determines

National Board Members also have the responsibilities of being a member of the National Council.

3.4.2 Voting Mechanisms for Election to the National Board

The nine National Council Board Members are elected by the National Council for a term of one year by secret ballot using a preferential proportional method.

Co-Presidents/Chairs and the National Administration are upon separate election automatically National Board Members.

¹² A recount of the ballot is conducted as if the candidate in question was not on the ballot paper.

¹³ An adaption of criteria provided in Section 9, Political Leadership and Good Governance of *Revitalising Local Government – Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel* October 2013
<http://www.localgovernmentreview.nsw.gov.au/Information.asp?areaindex=LGR&index=102&mi=9>

3.4.3 National Board Meetings

National Board to meet a minimum of 10 times per 12 months, either in person or by teleconference.

Members of the National Council may attend meetings of the Board, and participate in discussions with the consent of the Board.

Association Members may also attend and observe National Board meeting by prior written arrangement with the Proper Officer. Such observers may not speak. National Board meetings can be closed to observers if the item under consideration is a matter of commercial confidence or a staff matter.

3.4.4 National Board Meeting Quorum

A quorum of the National Board for decision making purposes is seven full members of the National Board and any decision must receive the support of six full members of the National Board.

3.4.5 Casual Vacancies

A casual vacancy occurs when a National Board member resigns, or for another reason is unable to hold the office. A casual vacancy also occurs when a National Board member does not attend three consecutive National Board meetings without seeking leave.

Casual vacancies on the National Board are filled by election at the next meeting of the National Council.

If more there are more than three vacancies on the National Board, an Extraordinary Meeting of the National Council is to be called. (Vacancies do not include vacant co-opted National Board member positions but does include the National Administration ex officio National Board member.)

3.5 NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION (organising execution / doing it)

3.5.1 Role of National Administration

The role of National Administration may include:¹⁴

- to provide administrative support to the National Council and the National Board
- to be an ex officio voting member of the Nation Council
- to be an ex officio non-voting member of the Nation Board
- to organise, in consultation with the Co-Presidents, meetings of Association Members, the National Council and the National Board
- to be a general contact for Association Members and the general public
- to keep and maintain a Register of Members and other Registers
- to keep and maintain, if necessary, a 'trust account' for any monies received on behalf of the Association
- to engage and communicate with Association Members regarding activities of the national body
- to assist, in consultation with the Co-Presidents/Chairs and the National Board, with advocacy work with government and more broadly
- to represent the Association as requested by the Co-Presidents/Chairs and governed by a 'delegation of powers' from the National Council
- to conduct the day-to-day management of the Association in accordance with the National's strategic plans and policies
- to advise the Co-President/Chairs, National Council and National Board on the development and implementation of policies and programs, including the appropriate form and scope of community consultation
- to prepare, in consultation with the Co-Presidents and National Board, the Association's Strategic Plan and the Association's Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan, and Annual Report
- to certify, together with the Co-President/Chairs that the Association's annual financial statements have been prepared correctly
- to ensure that the Co-President/Chairs, and National Board and National Council members receive timely information, advice and administrative and support necessary for the effective discharge of their responsibilities
- to implement lawful decisions of the National Council and National Board in a timely manner
- to exercise such of the functions of the National Council and National Board as are delegated by the those bodies to the National Administration
- to appoint staff in accordance with an organisation structure and resources approved by the National Administration
- to direct and dismiss staff
- to undertake such other functions as may be conferred or imposed on the National Administration by the National Council or by any law

It is best to think of the National Administration role as being similar to the function of a Chief Executive Officer.

¹⁴ An adaption of criteria provided in Section 9, Political Leadership and Good Governance of *Revitalising Local Government – Final Report of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel* October 2013
<http://www.localgovernmentreview.nsw.gov.au/Information.asp?areaindex=LGR&index=102&mi=9>

A regional or state organisation of 'stature' elected for a term of three years by both classes of members.

On election as the National Administration a representative of the successful organisation is automatically appointed to the National Administration seat on the National Council and to the National Board.

It is expected that the successful organisation will provide a range of personnel and resources to fulfil this administrative role.

3.5.2 Appointment of the National Administration

National Administration is appointed by the National Council.

An Affiliate ASSI Organisation self-nominates to be a candidate for undertaking this role.

The National Administration is to assess self-nominated candidates against certain criteria and select the affiliated organisation best able to meet the criteria.

3.5.3 Term of Appointment of National Administration

The term of a National Administration is two years calculated from the date of the Inaugural Meeting of the National Council until the first National Council Meeting at the conclusion of the third annual general meeting of Association Members. (E.g. the first ever meeting of the National Council is held directly after the meeting that adopts the Association's Constitution in November 2014; an annual meeting of Association Members is held in November 2015 followed directly by a meeting of the National Council; an annual meeting of Association Members is held in October 2016 followed directly by a meeting of the National Council at which the term of the National Administration expires and a new National Administration is appointed.

An Affiliate ASSI Organisation shall be appointed to the role of National Administration for one term consecutive term only, except in the case where no other Affiliate ASSI Organisation can fulfil the criteria and/or is unwilling to undertake the role.

3.5.4 Casual Vacancy

In the case of an organisation appointed as the National Administration and cannot continue to provide such support due to insolvency or bankruptcy, the National Board may appoint a suitably qualified Affiliate ASSI Organisation to fulfil this role until the next meeting of the National Council, when the National Council can ratify the decision or appoint by simple majority another affiliate organisation to complete the term. In such a case the replacement Affiliate ASSI Organisation remains eligible to be appointed to the next term of the National Administration.

In the case of the National Administration resigning or relinquishing the role of National Administration, an Extraordinary Meeting of the National Council will be called to appoint another eligible affiliate organisation and to decide whether the circumstances require calling an Extraordinary Meeting of Members of the Association.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF A FEDERATION / ORDINARY COMMUNITY MEMBER MODEL

This model is based on the contributions of volunteers. Positions on the National Council and National Board are not paid positions.

The various financial implications of this model include:

- Postal voting
- Returning Officer
- Mid-year and any extraordinary meetings of the National Council
- National Board meetings
- National Administration attendance at National Council and National Board meetings
- Creating and maintaining a Register of ASSI Elders

In light of what would be a significant administrative burden for the role of the National Administration, consideration for the funding or part-funding of the National Administration through grants or other means should be made.

5 APPENDIX 1: PERTINENT WORK WANTOK 2012 AND WANTOK 2013

Significant work has already been undertaken at Wantok 2012 and Wantok 2013 and during other community consultations on developing a draft:

- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement
- ASSI Values
- Purpose
- Draft Objectives
- Key Focus Areas

The text of the Wantok 2012 (Bundaberg) document supplying these drafts is reproduced below.

5.1 Draft Vision Statement

We are a national body which acknowledges and believes in the unique ways that Australians of South Sea Islander heritage contribute to the broader Australian society. This contribution reflects our South Sea Islander heritage and will be recognised by all Australians because we are of: One Spirit; One Mind; One Voice --- commonly seeking prosperity based on respect.

5.2 Draft Mission Statement

To advance the cultural, social and economic condition of Australian South Sea Islanders through good governance and leadership by:

- Modelling ASSI values
- Inspiring the shared vision of ASSI's
- Enabling ASSI people to act
- Challenging the processes
- Encouraging and supporting ASSI people
- Operating effectively and with influence in different cultures

5.3 Draft ASSI Values

The organisation is underpinned by the ASSI values of:

- The importance of our unique common cultural heritage
- The assurance of identity as Australians with South Sea Islander heritage
- A unity of purpose in constructing a legitimate and unique place in Australian society
- The central place of family in building for the future
- Establishing in our children a confidence in themselves and their right to develop complete personhood
- A sense of integrity in our interaction with the wider Australian society
- A vision in terms of the potential and unique contribution that Australians with South Sea Islander heritage can make to the wider Australian society

5.4 Draft Purpose

The purpose and role of the National ASSI Representative Body is to:

- Formulating policy and advice
- Advocacy, lobbying and diplomacy

- Ensuring the presence of, and contributing to, mechanisms to monitor and evaluate government performance

5.5 Draft Objectives

- (a) To provide a forum and a voice for the Australian---born descendants of those Pacific Islanders (known as "South Sea Islanders" or in particular, the men, women and children who were also known as "Kanakas") who were brought either voluntarily or by deception or force to work as indentured labours in Australia before 1906. (The descendants of these people shall be hereinafter called "Australian South Sea Islanders" or by the acronym, ASSI);
- (b) To build a case that shows that members of ASSI have been a disadvantaged group within Australian society for more than a century and to gain official recognition for ASSI by the Australian, State and Territorial and Local Governments, as a disadvantaged culturally and linguistically diverse, minority group of Australian citizens;
- (c) To get legislation passed which will provide the additional assistance necessary to enable the ASSI to attain equality of life with other Australians;
- (d) To establish communication systems and mechanisms for educational purposes, both universal and specialist, to overcome the social and economic disadvantages which now exist in the ASSI community, Australia---wide;
- (e) To provide opportunity for ASSI to acquire land to develop primarily for ASSI appropriate community farms, affordable housing and community living areas, by whatever lawful means necessary or convenient, and generally for the benefit of everybody;
- (f) To stand together with the Sovereign First Peoples of the Country "The Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders" together, known as "First Australians" - and herein appear as "Sovereign Peoples") in their vision for recognition and equality.
- (g) To employ a mutual understanding of the importance of human dignity and generosity of spirit that potentially can be found within Australian values to foster a respect, inclusion and acceptance of every person into Australian society;
- (h) To research, create and establish entities that are historically, traditionally, culturally, socially, technologically and futuristically appropriate for ASSI;
- (i) In addition to these basic objectives, and to promote and advance the aspirations of ASSI, the purpose of National ASSI Representative Body shall be deemed to include:
 - i) Establishing and supporting National ASSI Representative Body Associations, Corporations, Funds, Foundations, Trusts, Schemes, or whatever Bodies or Conveniences are deemed necessary (hereinafter called "entities") and assisting in the establishment and support of ASSI or ASSI individual entities;
 - ii) Using the above bodies to accept gifts and bounties that will advance the objectives of the National ASSI Representative Body;
 - iii) Making submissions and proposals for contributions to promote the objectives of and the entities it establishes, supports and assists;
 - iv) Establishing a consciousness and a favourable understanding within the broader Australian society of the unique history of Australians of South Seas Islander

heritage and their past contribution to Australian welfare and their subsequent social disadvantage by linking into existing networks of the media, in all of its genres, and using all lawful means of raising awareness of all ASSI entities; and

- v) Developing financial awareness and engaging in the investment, borrowing and lending of finances to promote the welfare of ASSI members and ASSI entities.

5.6 Draft Key Focus Areas

- Promote Cultural Awareness within and without the ASSI
- Reconnection between individuals and families of the SSI heritage in Australia and Vanuatu
- To work for Legislative Change
- To develop Corporate Governance and Leadership
- To work for Justice for who have been disadvantaged by past governmental and societal practices
- To develop a Sustainable Economic Future for members of the ASSI Associations
- To gain Access to Governmental Finances and Resources
- To improve the overall Health of members of the ASSI Associations
- To ensure the adequate Education of children and youth of the ASSI
- To improve Housing for members of the ASSI
- To develop Identity – through historic research and data collection, collation and usage
- To build Strategic Relationships with all entities who can advance ASSI welfare
- To improve Employment opportunities for ASSI members
- To develop an awareness and pride in the unique history and culture of members of the ASSI
- Identification, preservation and maintenance of the significant cultural heritage sites, artefacts, and oral histories of ASSI people and ensuring that any interested parties have free and unencumbered access and that they are legally protected for future generations of ASSI people
- Ensuring the ongoing cultural transmission of the oral histories and values of ASSI people so that the youth and the following generations have an awareness of and a deep connection with their heritage and their history

6 DIAGRAMS AND MAPS

Diagrams regarding the proposed governance structure and map(s) of regions are to be supplied at a later time.