

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc.

Annual General Meeting

DATE: Monday 26 September 2016
TIME: 7.30pm, with dinner at 6pm
VENUE: Upstairs function room at the "505 Wine Room"
505 Malvern Road, Hawksburn 3142.

Business of the Meeting

1. Formal matters

Chair: Meredith Doig was elected Chair of the meeting

Apologies: Chris Fotinopoulos, Tristram Chellew, Hugh Harris

Proxies: 109 proxies were received, 62 in favour of the Chair; 45 in favour of Meredith Doig; 2 in favour of John Perkins. See list next page.

Members present

1	Meredith Doig	9	Sujai Thomann
2	Len Buller	10	Brett Davis
3	Richard Perera	11	Leo Brewin
4	Rosemary Watson	12	Hugh Wilburham
5	Barry Clearwater	13	Ken Davidson
6	Rohan Kapitany	14	Lesley Vick
7	Jonathan Meddings	15	Rod Bower
8	Sam Mason-Smith	16	John Perkins

In attendance

David James

Quorum: there being more than 10% of financial members present in person or by proxy, the Chair declared a quorum achieved.

List of Proxies

1	Brian Salter-Duke	Chair	43	Matthew Goddard	Chair
2	Michael Kakogiannis	Chair	44	John Elliott	Chair
3	Rohan Navaratne	Chair	45	Caroline Madin	Chair
4	Russell Boyd	Chair	46	Damian Ianno	Chair
5	John Hutchinson	Chair	47	David Higginbotham	Chair
6	Meryl Laity	Chair	48	David Lyons	Chair
7	Warwick Dunstan	Chair	49	John Hayman	Chair
8	Derek O'Reilly	Chair	50	Tom Evans	Chair
9	Mark Taylor	Chair	51	Greg Norton	Chair
10	Dominic Kelly	Chair	52	Paul Jones	Chair
11	Bill Swan	Chair	53	James Grieve	Chair
12	Walter Frank	Chair	54	Kevin McDonald	Chair
13	Peter Beckingham	Chair	55	Geneieve Armson	Chair
14	Anthony Cooke	Chair	56	Rowan Darke	Chair
15	Robert Bourne	Chair	57	Garry James	Chair
16	John Bushell	Chair	58	Mary Bergin	Chair
17	Ian McDonald	Chair	59	James Fodor	Chair
18	Stuart Rawlinson	Chair	60	Wal Parker	Chair
19	Richard Clifford	Chair	61	Chris Poulsen	Chair
20	Aziz Islam	Chair	62	Rud Crawford	Chair
21	Shaun McCarthy	Chair	63	Brian Morris	Meredith Doig
22	Charl Nienaber	Chair	64	Kathryn Harries	Meredith Doig
23	Craig Sankey	Chair	65	Robert van de Graaff	Meredith Doig
24	Michael Sorokin	Chair	66	Behn Payton	Meredith Doig
25	Rob Barrow	Chair	67	John Turner	Meredith Doig
26	Daniel Varney	Chair	68	Alan Jones	Meredith Doig
27	Colin Harwood	Chair	69	Stella Thomas	Meredith Doig
28	Peter Ostarek-Gammon	Chair	70	Robert Newbold	Meredith Doig
29	Anthony Pickham	Chair	71	Gary Bakker	Meredith Doig
30	Nigel Fuss	Chair	72	Jan Radford	Meredith Doig
31	Josh Mikel	Chair	73	Margaret Gawler	Meredith Doig
32	Rei Junckerstorff	Chair	74	Roslyn Latham	Meredith Doig
33	Ruth Owens	Chair	75	June Blancett	Meredith Doig
34	John Retallick	Chair	76	Jenny Stonier	Meredith Doig
35	Neil Stewart	Chair	77	Tracy Burgess	Meredith Doig
36	Nick Smit	Chair	78	Chris Fotinopoulos	Meredith Doig
37	Simon Rouse	Chair	79	Craig Morgan	Meredith Doig
38	Tim Brown	Chair	80	Rob Scrivener	Meredith Doig
39	Antonio-Ciro Serbati	Chair	81	John Downey	Meredith Doig
40	Rob Wilkins	Chair	82	Steven Armstrong	Meredith Doig
41	Jarrood Dudley	Chair	83	Michelle Urbinder	Meredith Doig
42	Battana Chandrasena	Chair	84	David Urbinder	Meredith Doig

85	Graeme Lindenmayer	Meredith Doig	98	Victor Stevens	Meredith Doig
86	Lester Peters	Meredith Doig	99	Steve Davies	Meredith Doig
87	Malcolm Ronan	Meredith Doig	100	Valerie Bourke	Meredith Doig
88	Philip Sweeney	Meredith Doig	101	Ian Robinson	Meredith Doig
89	Fiona Patten	Meredith Doig	102	Trevor Lee	Meredith Doig
90	Scott Alterator	Meredith Doig	103	Elizabeth Needham	Meredith Doig
91	Ilsa Beilharz	Meredith Doig	104	Brett Connolly	Meredith Doig
92	David Freeman	Meredith Doig	105	Jacquie Connolly	Meredith Doig
93	Graziano Birgi	Meredith Doig	106	John Crellin	Meredith Doig
94	Dierk von Behrens	Meredith Doig	107	Judith Hoy	Meredith Doig
95	Rex Williams	Meredith Doig	108	Lyn Allison	John Perkins
96	Peter Trebilco	Meredith Doig	109	Diane Preston	John Perkins
97	Lyle Allen	Meredith Doig			

2. Minutes of the 2015 AGM

Minutes of the 2015 AGM had been circulated.

Motion 2.1: That the Minutes of the 2015 AGM be accepted as a true record.

Moved: Hugh Wilburham Seconded: Richard Perera Carried.

There was no formal business arising from the last AGM.

3. Reports

President's Report

President Meredith Doig spoke to her written report – see **Attachment 1** – highlighting in particular the significant increase in the number of opinion pieces by RSA Committee members that have been published over the last year.

Motion 3.1: That the President's report be noted.

Moved: Meredith Doig Seconded: Jonathan Meddings Carried.

Treasurer's Report

Rohan Kapitany reported that the finances of the RSA remain sound, with an overall surplus for the year to 30 June 2016 of \$24,486. This was largely due to the positive performance of our investments in managed index fund Vanguard. However, the Treasurer reminded members that an index fund is designed to track the market and so continued positive performance cannot be guaranteed.

Rohan welcomed Brett Davis as the Society's new Accountant and thanked him for his willingness to take up the role at short notice, following the unfortunate accident that led to our previous long term Accountant, Ken Wright, having to retire.

The Financial Statements are at **Attachment 2**.

Motion 3.2: That the Treasurer's report be adopted.

Moved: Meredith Doig Seconded: Rod Bower Carried.

4. Election of a Committee

The Chair explained that, in accordance with Rule 52(1), the Committee had agreed at its August meeting to set the size of the Committee for the following year to seven. There being seven nominations, the Chair declared the following elected until the 2017 AGM:

Len Buller, Tristram Chellew, Meredith Doig, Chris Fotinopoulos, Hugh Harris, Rohan Kapitany, Jonathan Meddings.

5. Annual Subscription Fee

The RSA has not increased membership fees since 2011 (5 years). Since that time, the general cost of living has increased an average 14%. This has affected the RSA's costs such as designing, printing and posting our flagship high quality journal, the *Australian Rationalist*. Postage in particular has increased – last year by over 40% from 70c per letter to \$1 per letter.

Motion 5.1: That the RSA membership fees be increased as follows:

- a. Single member – from \$50 to \$60
- b. Single concession – from \$40 to \$45
- c. Couple members – from \$70 to \$80
- d. Couple concession – from \$60 to \$65.

Moved: Meredith Doig Seconded: Rohan Kapitany Carried.

Motion 5.2: That the date of payment of annual membership fees be confirmed as the anniversary of the date of a member joining.

Moved: Meredith Doig Seconded: Rohan Kapitany Carried.

6. Special business

6.1 Amendments to the Rules

Each year the Committee reviews the Rules to ensure they are effective as a guide to operating the Society. As described below, a number of changes are recommended: to streamline the membership application process; to make the quorum for an AGM easier to determine; to revert to the RSA's previous history regarding the size of the Committee; and to introduce three new categories of member.

Member John Perkins proposed seven amendments to these changes. After extensive discussion, he withdrew five and proceeded with the following two proposals:

Proposed amendments to the suggested Rule changes

- Role and Power of the Committee: insert 42(3)(d) – “Co-opted members shall not have voting rights.”
- Composition of the Committee: delete proposed changes to 44(1) and 44(2). Replace 44(2) with “The President and the Secretary shall not be the same person.”

In the absence of a seconder, these proposed amendments lapsed.

The Chair then put the original motion.

Motion 6.1: That the RSA Rules be amended as indicated in the enclosed paper entitled "Rules of the Rationalist Society of Australia Incorporated" and explained below.

Moved: Meredith Doig

Seconded: Leo Brewin

Carried, with one absence.

	Rule	Change proposed	Reason
a	Definitions	Change “associate member” to “affiliated member”	This will allow the term “associate” to be used for one of the three new categories of members proposed – see below.
b	9. Application for membership	Clarify that an application must be accompanied by the annual membership fee.	The former Rule made no mention of the annual membership fee.
c	10. Consideration of application	Update to reflect the reality that most applicants apply via the website, rather than in hard copy.	<p>Most people join the RSA via the website, pay immediately and are sent a Welcome Pack.</p> <p>Under the former Rule, an applicant might have to wait up a month to know if their application had been accepted by the Committee.</p> <p>The new Rule proposes a more streamlined process, with applicants considered Members as soon as they pay their membership fee, <i>subject to</i> a veto by the Committee within a month.</p> <p>This veto is a minimal necessary protection against hostile takeover.</p>
d	11. New membership	Delete this section.	This is now covered by section 10.
e	12 (3). Annual subscription	Delete subsection.	This subsection assumes memberships are due for renewal at the beginning of the Financial Year, whereas our membership renewals are due on the anniversary of a member’s joining date.
f	14. Associate Members	Introduce three new categories of Member.	<p>Three categories of Affiliated Members are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Members • Honorary Members • Associates. <p>Details are described in new Schedule 1 (see below).</p>
g	18. (1) (iv) Register of Members	Change “associate member” to “affiliated member”	As a consequence of changing the definition of associate member to affiliated member – see above.

h	30 (2). Annual General Meetings	Delete this rule	This rule relates only to the first AGM and is therefore irrelevant to the RSA.
i	36 (2). Quorum	Define quorum at an AGM as the lesser of 10% of the members or 40 Members.	This provides greater certainty. The “10%” rule comes from the Standard Rules but in the past, RSA used to nominate a particular number (10 Members). Experience of previous AGMs shows that 40 is a reasonable number to achieve.
j	42 (3) (c). Role and Powers of the Committee	To allow the Committee to co-opt other members with special expertise to subcommittees.	Subcommittees like the Investment Subcommittee and the Editorial Subcommittee can benefit from the expertise of ‘subject matter experts’ who may not be ordinary Members. These persons can be designated Honorary Members for the duration of their contribution to their respective subcommittees.
k	44 (1) and (2). Composition of the Committee	To set the size of the Committee to between five and seven, plus the capacity to co-opt an additional two Members at the discretion of the Committee.	Allows some flexibility to invite potential new Committee members to ‘test out’ membership of the Committee. This is consistent with previous RSA practice.
l	51 Nominations	To clarify the way someone can be nominated for election to the Committee.	Previously any member could nominate themselves. The change ensures at least 2 members support someone for election to the Committee, and the official form is used and submitted 21 days before the AGM. This is consistent with previous RSA practice. A new Schedule 2 includes the format of the nomination form.
m	52 (1). Election of the Committee	This subsection is no longer necessary.	The former rule required the Committee to choose the size of the Committee prior to the AGM. The new rule 44 means this procedure will no longer be necessary. There are some consequential amendments in 52 (2).
n	53 (5) etc Ballot	These changes reflect VEC recommended practice in conducting a ballot.	Instead of handing out blank pieces of paper and expecting Members to write names on them (a lengthy procedure), the new procedure will hand out papers with the nominee names already on them and Members simply tick their choice(s) on the list. This procedure is supported by the Victorian Electoral Commission on its website.
o	Schedule 1	Lists three new categories of affiliated members (see below for further explanation).	1. Life Members 2. Honorary Members 3. Associates.
p	Schedule 2	Sets the nomination form.	

6.2 Categories of Members

Apart from ordinary financial members of the RSA, it is possible to have affiliated members in other categories. Affiliated members do not pay an annual membership fee and have differing privileges, as recommended below.

There was discussion about the appropriateness of those engaging with the Society on social media being considered ‘Associates’ as some may engage because they disagree with us. It was agreed this is not an appropriate way to characterise RSA Associate members. Rather, Associate members are those who have provided the RSA with their email address because they have come to an RSA

meeting, subscribed to RSA Daily, or subscribed to our occasional Mailchimp emails. These amendments to the motion were agreed to.

Motion 6.2: That there be three new categories of affiliated members:

1. Life Members

To be nominated by the Committee and approved by Members at an AGM to recognise distinguished contribution to the RSA over a sustained period. Membership is thereafter free for life. Life Members receive the journal and have voting rights at Members' meetings.

2. Honorary Members

To be appointed by the Committee in recognition of their standing in the community and/or their special expertise that may be of particular benefit to the RSA – for example, as subject matter experts on RSA Subcommittees. Membership is free until revoked by the Committee. Honorary Members receive the journal but do not have voting rights at Members' meetings.

3. Associates

Those who have engaged with the RSA on social media (eg, Twitter, Facebook etc) or who have attended an RSA event or subscribed to online RSA publications or occasional emails. Membership is free. Associates do not receive the journal and do not have voting rights at Members' meetings.

Moved: Meredith Doig

Seconded: Rod Bower

Carried.

7. General business

Rohan Kapitany reported on the outcomes of a member survey conducted over the previous month, and said the Committee will repeat the exercise next year. See Attachment 3 for details of the survey.

8. Next meeting

The next AGM will be held between 1 July and 30 November 2017. The Committee of Management will decide the actual date and notify members at least 21 days prior.

Meeting closed at 9:50pm.

President's Report

The past year has seen a significant increase in the number of articles written by Rationalists picked up and published in the media, due to a very active RSA board. Board members Hugh Harris and Chris Fotinopoulos and Editorial Subcommittee member Paul Monk have been the most prolific, and as President I have also had a fair share of public exposure.

Campaigns

Secular Government

The 2016 census saw the culmination of many years lobbying by the RSA and other freethought organisations. The Australian Bureau of Statistics brought the “No religion” option from the bottom to the top of the long list of possible choices. This was not because they agreed with us that choosing “No religion” should be given greater prominence but because it is ABS policy to place the most commonly chosen option at the top. Their statistical trends showed “No religion” is overtaking Catholicism as the most common choice by voters.

To raise awareness of this change, and to maximise the number of people choosing the No religion option, the Atheist Foundation of Australia mounted a large scale advertising campaign with the message “Not religious anymore?” and links to a well-resourced website. Along with the Sydney Atheists, the RSA made a significant financial contribution to this campaign, and used our social media channels to spread the word.

As part of the campaign, the RSA commissioned a poll in May asking two simple questions: “Do you *have* a religion?” and “What *is* your religion?” In the results, 39% of respondents chose No Religion (compared with 22% at the 2011 census) and 45% chose one of the Christian religions (compared with 61% at the last census).

The next stage of our lobbying efforts will be to seek a split of the Religion question into two: first, asking respondents “Do you follow a religion?” and then, if and only if the answer is Yes, asking “If so, what religion?”

Secular Education

Over the past year the Victorian Government has moved to ensure Special Religious Instruction is treated as elective, available only at lunchtimes or before or after school. At the same time, they announced the introduction of new curriculum on World Belief Systems to be taught from Foundation to year 10. This will cover the five major world religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism – *and* secular humanism & rationalism. The RSA was instrumental in achieving this last inclusion during consultations with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Civil Freedoms

In the second half of 2015 the Human Rights Commission convened a Freedom of Religion Roundtable, to review the extent to which religious freedom might be constrained in Australia. The RSA initiated contact with the HRC, and then sought and achieved a seat at the table for a number of representatives of the freethought movement. After a couple of meetings, the Roundtable has been suspended due to its convenor, Human Rights Commissioner Tim Wilson, vacating the post to be elected to Federal Parliament. The RSA's main stance put to the initial Roundtable meetings was that there is very little constraint on religious freedom in Australia and that on the contrary, there is significant religious privilege that should be curtailed.

Taxation

In April, the RSA commissioned a poll seeking the public's views on taxation of religion. The results were overwhelmingly negative, with less than 20% of Australians in favour of religious organisations having tax-free status. In media coverage afterwards, we explained we were not against religious organisations getting tax breaks for the genuinely charitable work they do, but giving tax exemptions for advancing belief in the supernatural was ridiculous. Interestingly, the poll showed people in rural areas were the strongest against religious tax exemptions.

Dying with Dignity

The RSA put in a major submission to the Victorian Government's *End of Life Choices Inquiry*. The submission argued in favour of legislation that allows for terminally ill people to end their lives on their own terms, assisted by a physician if they so require; and for those who may not be terminally ill but who face a life of slow but inevitable decline as a result of dementia, also to be able to end their lives at a time of their own choosing, described in an advance care directive that has legal force. We also recommended the Government gather data regarding the extent to which people are denied non-religious palliative care because of the dominance of religious organisations in that sector; and a major campaign to educate the public and the medical profession regarding conversations about end of life choices.

Projects

The *Reason Project* is progressing, with design of the new website nearly complete and much of the content written. The launch of the project is due over the coming months.

Communications

Media articles

Over the year, there has been a significant increase in the number of articles written by RSA members (particularly board members) published in the media – 49 published since October 2015 compared with 23 published in the previous 12 months to October 2015.

Topics have included the vexed issue of the getting the balance right between freedom of speech and freedom from hate speech (ie, should 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act be amended?); decriminalising abortion in states where it is still a crime; rational suicide; the difference between

race and religion in the Islamist debate; the census; proselytising in Bible classes; religious tax exemptions; the Safe Schools program; the treatment of refugees on Manus and Nauru; the Enlightenment; freedom of belief; and same sex marriage.

Links to these articles are listed on the Rationalist website.

Public meetings

Thanks to the efforts of long term RSA member Len Buller, we have continued our monthly public meetings at the 505 Wine Room in Hawksburn in Melbourne. Among the many 'talking head' meetings organised by other freethought groups, the RSA's Rationalist Think Tank offers something different. Attendees are provided a topic to consider beforehand, and at the meeting, discussions are held at each table so everyone gets a chance to have their say. Topics have ranged from the trials of Socrates, Jesus and Alan Turing, to freewill, abortion and euthanasia.

Now the format of these meetings has proven successful, the RSA is keen to expand public meetings to other cities.

Australian Rationalist Journal

We continue to publish the *Australian Rationalist* on a quarterly basis under the editorship of professional journalist David James. The last year featured cover stories on Sam Harris, the 100th issue of the journal, Rationalism 101, and the Open Society as advocated by whistleblower Edward Snowden.

RSA Daily

Our daily curated bulletin RSA Daily continues to attract subscribers, up 37% (to 423 from 309) with the number of views more than doubling (to 35 000 views from 16 000).

Website

There have been some updates to the website, the most significant of which was adding the ability for new or renewing members to pay annual subscription fees by credit card.

Social media

The RSA maintains a Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn presence but these tend to be passive rather than active.

Occasional emails

And we sent out 25 occasional newsletters during the year (last year 22).

Logo

The Committee oversaw the design and promulgation of an updated, more modern form of the RSA logo.

Administration

The Committee has met every two months during the year, with the Admin Subcommittee and the Investment Committee meeting on a quarterly basis. A new Editorial Subcommittee was established and also meets quarterly.

The RSA Rules were reviewed and some updates suggested at this meeting to streamline the membership process, make the quorum easier to determine, revert to the RSA's previous history regarding the size of the Committee, and formally establish three new classes of member – Lifetime Members, Honorary Members and Associate Members.

Investments

The Society's funds continue to be governed by an Investment Committee, comprising the President, the Treasurer and the Accountant, plus two professionally qualified independent experts, reporting to the main Committee. Following a prudent 'passive' investment policy, our funds have grown steadily over the past year.

The Committee

Thanks and appreciation are due to long time Committee member Diane Preston, who chose to resign from the Committee in January 2016, and to new member Nevena Spirovska who will be overseas for much of 2017 and thus unavailable to continue on the Committee.

We would like to acknowledge and pay particular tribute to the sterling contribution of the RSA's long term accountant Ken Wright. Ken suffered an accident in May 2016 and as a result, informed the Committee he needed to retire from the role he has undertaken for many years. We wish him every good wish for a full recovery. In Ken's place we have welcomed Brett Davis, a fully qualified accountant and auditor, who has kindly agreed to take on the role of the RSA's accountant *pro bono*.



Dr Meredith Doig

President

September 2016

Treasurer's Report

Not For Profit - Association Report

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc.

ABN 41 853 904 693

For the year ended 30 June 2016

Contents

3	Income and Expenditure Statement
5	Assets and Liabilities Statement
6	Notes of the Financial Statements
8	Movements in Equity
9	True and Fair Position
10	Certificate By Members of the Committee
11	Compilation report

Income and Expenditure Statement

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2016

	2016	2015
Income		
Investment Income		
Investment Income	88,263	46,391
Total Investment Income	88,263	46,391
Member Revenue		
Member Donations	860	3,270
Membership Fees	11,201	11,805
Total Member Revenue	12,061	15,075
Revenue from operating activities		
Event Revenue	4,205	473
Journal Subscriptions & Sales	4,048	5,330
Total Revenue from operating activities	8,253	5,803
Total Income	108,577	67,269
Gross Surplus	108,577	67,269
Expenditure		
Conferences and Events		
AARE Conference	-	50
Total Conferences and Events	-	50
Campaign Expenses		
Census 2016 Campaign	10,000	-
Commissioned Reports	1,600	-
Minor Collaborations	750	3,805
Reason Project	5,533	-
Think Inc	5,500	-
Total Campaign Expenses	23,383	3,805
General Expenses		
Bank Fees	-	30
President's honorarium	7,500	10,000
Statutory Reports	54	53
Total General Expenses	7,554	10,083
Journal Production Costs		
Authors and Contributions	1,340	1,075
Editors Fees	15,125	15,000
Journal Design Fees	4,900	-
Journal Posting and Mailing	4,410	3,802
Printing Journal	15,185	16,294
Total Journal Production Costs	40,961	36,171

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

	2016	2015
Marketing		
Brochures & Leaflets	-	865
Facebook Advertising	-	163
Marketing	2,903	-
Total Marketing	2,903	1,028
Office Expenses		
Admin Officer's Fee	1,998	2,332
Consulting & Accounting	-	495
Freight & Courier	-	623
Finance Charges	313	158
Legal expenses	608	-
Meeting Expenses	476	100
Office Expenses	1,683	267
Printing & Stationery	-	72
Total Office Expenses	5,078	4,047
Website Expenditure		
Domain Registrations	187	-
Web Hosting & Maintenance	1,064	430
Website Development	-	2,568
Web Services	390	-
Total Website Expenditure	1,640	2,998
Boghossian Tour Expenses	2,571	-
Total Expenditure	84,090	58,182
Current Year Surplus/ (Deficit)	24,486	9,087

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

Assets and Liabilities Statement

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc.

As at 30 June 2016

	NOTES	30 JUN 2016	30 JUN 2015
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash & Cash Equivalents			
Cash at Bank		2,337	5,914
Distributions Receivable		52,698	-
DRP Residual		5	26
Franking Credits Receivable		7,429	-
PayPal		883	1,401
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents		63,352	7,341
Trade and Other Receivables		-	6,998
Total Current Assets		63,352	14,339
Non-Current Assets			
Term Deposits		-	148,907
Direct Share Investments		66,057	60,937
Managed Funds		775,510	598,794
Total Non-Current Assets		841,566	808,638
Total Assets		904,918	822,978
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	1	-	2,865
Total Current Liabilities		-	2,865
Total Liabilities		-	2,865
Net Assets		904,918	820,113
Member's Funds			
Capital Reserve			
Asset Revaluation Reserve		60,319	-
Current Year Earnings		24,486	9,087
Equity		660,019	650,932
J R Howard bequest		160,094	160,094
Total Capital Reserve		904,918	820,113
Total Member's Funds		904,918	820,113

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

Notes of the Financial Statements

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2016

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act Victoria. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity as there are no users dependent on the general purpose financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

Income Tax

The Rationalist Society of Australia Inc is a registered organisation with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission (ACNC). The committee has completed the "Endorsement review worksheet for income tax exempt charities" and concluded that no change in the eligibility criteria occurred during the 2016 financial year or in the subsequent months after year end.

Having satisfied the eligibility criteria of a Tax Concession Charity (TCC) as prescribed by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), the financial reports for the 2016 financial year have been prepared on a tax exempt basis.

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

Cash on Hand

Cash on hand includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors

Accounts receivable and other debtors include amounts due from members as well as amounts receivable from donors. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received.

Dividend and interest income are recognised on a cash basis.

Grant and donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds, which is generally at the time of receipt.

Financial Assets

Investments in financial assets are initially recognised at cost, which includes transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value, which is equivalent to their market bid price at the end of the reporting period. Movements in fair value are recognised through an equity reserve.

Accounts Payable and Other Payables

Accounts payable and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the association during the reporting period that remain unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

	2016	2015
1. Trade and Other Receivables		
Trade Receivables		
Accounts Receivable	-	6,998
Total Trade Receivables	-	6,998
Total Trade and Other Receivables	-	6,998
	2016	2015
2. Trade & Other Payables		
Trade Payables		
Accounts Payable	-	2,865
Total Trade Payables	-	2,865
Total Trade & Other Payables	-	2,865

These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

Movements in Equity

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2016

	2016	2015
Equity		
Opening Balance	820,113	-
Increases		
Surplus for the Period	24,486	9,087
Retained Earnings	-	650,932
Other Increases	60,319	160,094
Total Increases	84,805	820,113
Total Equity	904,918	820,113

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These statements should be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report.

True and Fair Position

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2016

Annual Statements Give True and Fair View of Financial Position and Performance of the Association

We, Meredith Doig, and Rohan Kapitany, being members of the committee of Rationalist Society of Australia Inc., certify that -

The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30 June 2016.

Signed: 

Dated: **28/09/2016**

Signed: 

Dated: 28/9/16

Certificate By Members of the Committee

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2016

I, Meredith Doig of Unit 1 6 Pilley St, ST KILDA EAST, VIC, Australia, 3183 certify that:

1. I attended the annual general meeting of the association held on 26/9/16.
2. The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2016 were submitted to the members of the association at its annual general meeting.

Dated: 28/9/16

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Doig', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Compilation report

Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. For the year ended 30 June 2016

Compilation report to Rationalist Society of Australia Inc..

We have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements of Rationalist Society of Australia Inc., which comprise the asset and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2016, income and expenditure statement, the statement of cash flows, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. The specific purpose for which the special purpose financial statements have been prepared is set out in Note 1.

The Responsibility of the Committee Members

The committee of Rationalist Society of Australia Inc. are solely responsible for the information contained in the special purpose financial statements, the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information and for the determination that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that financial statements were prepared.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the partners we have compiled the accompanying special purpose financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting as described in Note 1 to the financial statements and APES 315 *Compilation of Financial Information*.

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile these financial statements in accordance with the basis of accounting described in Note 1 to the financial statements. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.

Assurance Disclaimer

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The special purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the committee who are responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the special purpose financial statements.

Brett Davis - CPA

Dated: 27 / 08 / 2016

Member survey

A total of 81 people responded to our survey; 60 (74%) were members, 8 (10%) were exclusively Facebook users, and 9 (11%) were both. Of the respondents, 61 (75%) were male, 17 (21%) were female, and 3 identified as neither. The **mean age of our respondents was 61**, with a standard deviation of 17 years (there was quite a range, with the youngest respondent(s) being 22).

Geographically, 33 (41%) were from Victoria, 17 (21%) were from New South Wales; 9 (WA), 8 (SA), 5 (QLD), 4 (ACT), 3 (Tassie).

There were surprisingly consistent results in what people personally felt should be the top priorities:

1. Science and Evidence Based Policy
2. Secular Education
3. Civil Liberties
4. Secular Government
5. Engagement Actions (direct and indirect).

The table below shows how important people think various topics are. The mean importance is out of a possible 10 and the summative value is the number who voted for this issue in their Top 5.

Topic	Mean Importance	Summative Value
Chaplains in Schools	9.33	56
Special Religious Instruction	9.28	21
Prayers in Parliament	8.1	21
Tax Exempt Churches	9.3	59
No Religion in Census	8.65	22
Secular Scorecard	8.31	14
Dying with Dignity	8.96	42
LGBTBIQ Discrimination	8.09	15
Islam Discrimination	7.19	7
General Discrimination	8.5	22
Abortion Access	8.7	22
Climate Change	8.94	30
Reasoning in Schools	9.39	37
Reasoning in Public	9.05	34
Anti Pseudoscience	9.08	34
Bodily Integrity	8.94	6
Drug Policy Reform	7.79	10
Worthy Causes \$	7.05	
Other Orgs \$	7.4	
Engage the Media	8.72	

Note: Items in grey are the most important items by value and rank.

Items in red are the least endorsed items.

General Topics for future consideration did not extend far beyond current issues (and there was considerable support for present range of topics). However, the following novel topics were raised:

- Animal Rights
- Efficacy and Funding of Social Welfare Programs
- Refugee Rights
- Nuclear Disarmament / Nuclear Power

With regard to specific campaigns the RSA could undertake in the future:

- Extending the cause of prayers in parliament to religiousness in citizenship ceremonies, ANZAC parades, state funerals, etc.

In terms of satisfaction with communications vehicles, out of a possible score of 4:

- the journal was ranked 2.9
- the website 3.08
- occasional Mailchimp emails 3.17
- RSA Daily 3.24.

A total of 30 people offered to help out the RSA directly in the future.

Summary of Survey Questions

Important Topics?

Which of the following areas should we emphasise:

1. Secular Education
2. Secular Government
3. Civil Liberties and Human Rights
4. Science and Evidence-Based Policy Making
5. Direct Public Engagement (Talking tours, etc.)
6. Indirect Public Engagement (Sponsoring ad campaigns, etc.)

Specific Projects?

To what extent you would like us to support specific projects:

1. Chaplains in schools
2. Special Religious Instruction
3. Prayers in Parliament
4. Tax-exempt status of religious bodies
5. Religion question in the census
6. Regular Secular Scorecards
7. Dying with Dignity
8. LGBTIQ+ anti-discrimination
9. Islamic anti-discrimination
10. Safe, legalised abortion
11. Climate change mitigation
12. Reasoning skills in schools
13. Reasoning skills in general
14. Pseudoscience
15. Bodily integrity
16. Drug law reform

Communications with members?

How satisfied are you with:

1. The Australian Rationalist journal
2. The RSA Daily bulletin
3. The RSA website
4. Occasional Mailchimp emails

Future campaigns?

What topics, campaigns or projects should we focus on in the future?