

Stage 3 Constitution Vote

Frequently Asked Questions

Your questions and our answers

Member vote 30 October 2025 at 1:00PM (AEDT)

About the Constitution reform

Q: What are the Stage 3 reforms all about?

Stage 3 is the final step in a multi-year plan to strengthen the AVA Constitution, the document that underpins how decisions are made and how members are represented.

Stages 1 and 2 focused on procedural amendments and alignment with ACNC and the Corporations Act.

Stage 3 is about modernising how we govern to better reflect today's profession and support a stronger, more inclusive AVA.

Q: What governance improvements are planned?

The proposed changes aim to modernise how the AVA is governed making it fairer, clearer and more future-focused.

These proposed changes include:

- ✓ A Board, elected by voting members with guaranteed representation from key sectors including Cattle, Equine and Small Animal.
- ✓ Simplified membership categories with no loss of Member rights or voting entitlements.
- ✓ A focus on Board skills and experience, supported by a new skills matrix, clear position descriptions and an independent Nominations Committee.
- ✓ A clearer Constitution focused on governance, with operational details moved into policy.

What are the proposed changes?

Most of the Constitution is not changing



Clause Range	What it Covers	Status
Clauses 1-5 & 7-9	Purpose, structure and guarantee	No change
Clauses 11-16	Membership application, approval, fees, transfers	No change
Clauses 18-20	Dispute resolution and disciplinary process and Divisions	No change
Clauses 26-42	General meetings, resolutions and voting	No change
Clauses 46, 47 & 49-62	Directors, Board meetings, duties, powers	No change
Clauses 63-71	CEO, Secretary, financial year, records, notices	No change
Clauses 72-76	Indemnity	No change

Proposed updates for improvement



Clause Range	What it Covers	Update
Clause 10	Member categories	Streamlined based on member feedback.
Clauses 20-23	Divisions, Branches, SIGs and Other Groups	Simplified: structure retained, detail to Policy.
Clauses 24-25	Policy Advisory Council, Representation	Simplified: structure retained procedural elements to PAC Charter.
Clause 43, 44 & 48	Board composition, elections and appointments process	Updated: Clearer, skills-aligned nomination & appointment process.
Clause 45	President and Chair	Updated: The President and Chair would be separate roles with the President to always be a veterinarian.
Clause 6 & 77	Not-for-profit and Taxation	Makes the AVA's not-for-profit status clearer.
Clause 78	Definitions	New definitions added for clarity and consistency.

About the Constitution reform

Q: Are Member rights changing?

No. Your rights, including voting and participation **are not** changing.

What is changing is how member categories are defined, to make things simpler and more intuitive.

This helps all veterinary professionals across every sector and career stage understand where they fit and how to get involved.

These changes are about improving access and making it easier for the profession to be part of the AVA community.

Q: Will changes effect my membership fees?

No. These governance changes will not impact your fees.

As part of the broader Transition Project, the AVA Board has approved, in-principle, a new **all-inclusive membership model** in response to member feedback.

This work is not impacted by the Constitution Stage 3 reform.

Clause 10: Member categories

FROM



TO



WHY SIMPLIFY?

Categories of membership

Clause 10

There are currently 7 categories of membership

- (a) Full Membership
- (b) Life Membership
- (c) Student Members
- (d) Overseas Members
- (e) Associate Members
- (f) Honorary Members
- (g) Fellows

Simplify membership categories

- (a) Veterinarian
- (b) Student Members
- (c) Allied Professional

Simpler, more intuitive categories mean members can more easily identify where they fit.

Life Members, Honorary Members and Fellows will continue to be recognised in the constitution as accorded statuses.

✓ **75% supported the idea of fewer, clearer membership categories,** making it easier to join and engage with the AVA.

✓ **62% of members say our current categories don't reflect today's workforce.** Especially for those in part-time, locum or non-traditional roles.

✓ Necessary in simplifying AVA's pricing and back-end technology platforms for a streamlined member experience.

Clause 10: Member categories in practice

CATEGORY

CAREER STAGE MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

1 **Veterinarian**
Clause 10.2



Early career Veterinarian
(1-3 years) | (4-5 years)



Full-time Veterinarian



Part-time Veterinarian



Career break Veterinarian



Overseas based Veterinarian



Retired Veterinarian



Fellow

2 **Allied Professional**
Clause 10.3



Allied Professional



Honorary

3 **Student member**
Clause 10.4



Student

Clause 43: Number of Directors

FROM

Number of directors

Clause 43.1 The association has 9 Directors, made up of the President and 8 directors appointed in accordance with this constitution.

3 of these are SIG nominees who are directly appointed by the largest SIGs (by number as per clause 44.4).

6 of these are general members elected by the membership at the AGM

TO

Maintain up to 9 Directors with the proposed composition:

- 4 AVA Veterinarian Directors- from the general membership **elected by voting members**.
- 3 Sector Veterinarian Directors (one each for cattle, equine, small animal) - **elected by voting members**.
- 2 Independent Directors to bring specialist skills in areas like governance, finance and advocacy- **elected by voting members**.

BECAUSE

- ✓ 9 directors balances diversity, efficiency and strategic oversight
- ✓ 2 independent directors strengthen objectivity and broadens expertise.
- ✓ Balances sector and member representation with independent insight and risk oversight.
- ✓ Strengthens sector input and preserves objectivity and fairness to fulfil director responsibilities.

Clause 43: Number of Directors FAQs

Q: What are the proposed changes to the Board structure?

The proposal maintains up to nine Director positions on the AVA Board.

The new composition includes:

- Four AVA veterinarian Directors,
- Three veterinarian Sector Directors one each from Cattle, Equine, and Small Animal sectors, and
- Two Independent Directors.

All Directors will be elected by voting Members.

Q: How will the criteria for Board representation change?

The proposed changes include more formalised selection criteria to nominate for an AVA Board Director.

These include clear Director position descriptions, a Board-approved skills matrix and the oversight of an independent Nominations Committee.

A position description for the new sector-specific positions have been developed in collaboration with the relevant SIG Executive Committee and AVA Board.

Q: What is the role of the Board?

No changes to the role of the Board.

The Board remains responsible for strategic direction, governance leadership, financial stewardship and oversight of organisational risk while operational matters continue to be managed by the CEO and executive team of the AVA.

Clause 44: SIG Nominee to Sector Director

FROM

Clause 44.4 Nominees appointed by Largest SIGs By Number

Directors appointed by Special Interest Group

(a) Each of the three largest special interest groups by number..

(c) ... These Directors may hold office for a term of three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms.

TO

✚ 3 Sector Directors: One each from Cattle, Equine and Small Animal sectors **to embed representation.**

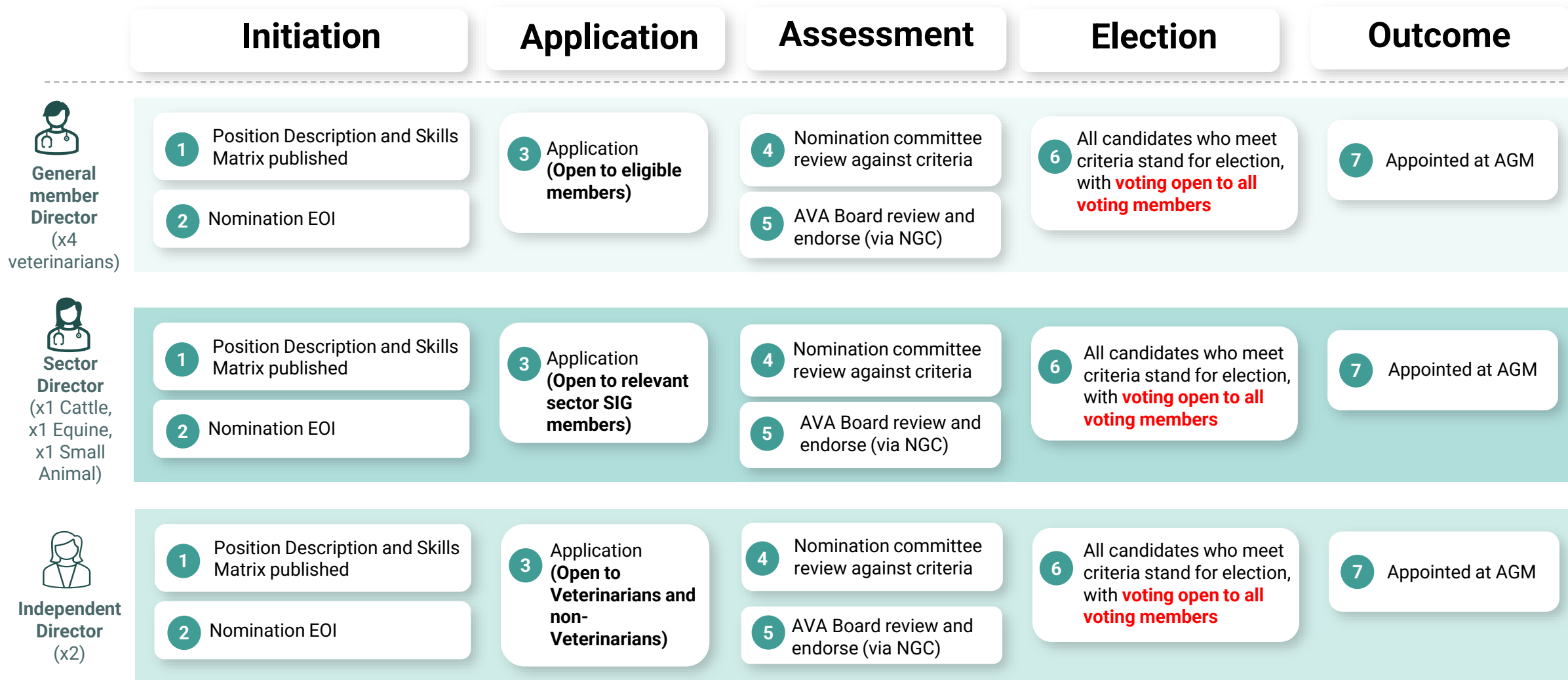
✚ These sectors reflect the largest and most established segments of the profession, irrespective of SIG size.

✚ A new independent Nominations Committee will assess all nominees against agreed criteria and recommend to the AVA Board via the Nominations and Governance Committee.

BECAUSE

- ✓ Sector representation guaranteed.
- ✓ SIG size may fluctuate; sector insights do not.
- ✓ Supports transparent, merit-based selection, helping Boards identify capability gaps and improve performance.
- ✓ Introduces objectivity, fairness, and protection from bias or conflicts of interest.

Nomination pathway: Proposed standardised process



Clause 44: Nominations committee

Q: How would the proposed independent Nominations Committee be formed?

The proposed independent Nominations Committee (iNC) would include a mix of AVA Members and independent representatives, appointed through clear criteria to support balance and fairness.

The Board approved Terms of Reference and position descriptions for committee members are available on the AVA website.

Q: Would the proposed Nominations committee block someone from standing for election?

No. The iNC would not prevent eligible members who meet the criteria outlined in the position description and skills matrix from standing.

As part of the process, they would assess candidates and make a recommendation to the AVA Board via the Nominations and Governance (NGC) Committee, a sub committee of the AVA Board.

Q: Will current AVA Directors be on the Nominations Committee?

No. Not under the current Terms of Reference.

Clause 44: Independent Directors

Q: Will members elect the Independent Directors?

Yes, all voting members will vote on all Director positions.

Candidate information would be shared in advance.

Q: Why two Independent Directors instead of one?

The goal is to strengthen governance by bringing in diverse external perspectives and skills. Two voices create better balance, more support and a greater impact than one alone. It also reduces the risk of isolation.

If the proposal is adopted, the two positions would be introduced in a planned and staggered way as existing director terms end, supporting continuity on the Board.

Q: Will an Independent Director be expensive?

No. The remuneration would be aligned with the current, member approved, Director arrangements.

As a purpose-driven organisation, we expect to attract experienced, values-aligned professionals who are motivated by purpose.

Clause 45: President and Chair

Q: Will the President always be a veterinarian?

Yes. This clause confirms that the AVA President must always be a veterinarian, directly responding to member feedback requesting this assurance.

Q: Why introduce a separate Chair role?

The revised clause creates a distinct Chair position to lead governance and Board meetings.

This role may be filled by an independent director, allowing the Board to draw on specific governance expertise while keeping the President focused on representing the veterinary profession.

Q: How will the President and Chair be elected?

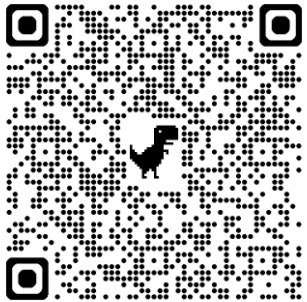
Each year, the Board will elect both a President (who must be a veterinarian) and a Chair (who may be an independent director) from among the current directors.

Thank you for your contributions

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Register to Vote
30 October 2025

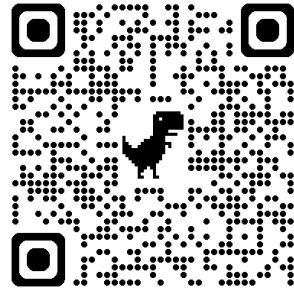
REGISTER HERE



2

Read the side-by-side proposal

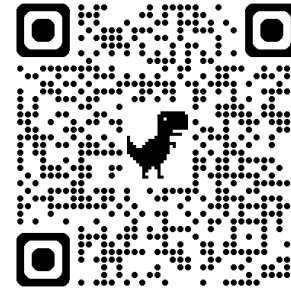
READ THE PROPOSAL



3

Watch the townhall recordings to catch up on the proposal

WATCH ONLINE



4

Ask us a question

EMAIL US

