

# ANNUAL REPORT

2017

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Australian  
Fabians.



**Australian  
Fabians.**

## **Australian Fabians Inc.**

### **NATIONAL CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2017**

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Dear members,

It is with great pride, and quite a bit of sadness that I write my final Annual Report as Chair of the Australian Fabians. My term in the role expires at the 2018 AGM and due to some significant changes in my personal circumstances (including the imminent arrival of my first child) I've chosen not to stand for re-election.

This brings to a close over a decade of continuous elected positions within the Fabians both at a State Branch and National Board level. So it's fair to say that the Fabians have been a huge part of my life over that period and it will certainly feel very strange to have months go by without Board meetings and the constant stream of discussion and debate that happens both formally and informally.

But I step down confident in the knowledge that the organisation is in very good health, and that the next National Board will be filled with highly committed and capable people that will steer the Fabians to towards greater success over the coming two years.

The last few years in particular have been a dynamic period, in which the organisation has experimented, adopted new practices and technologies, and generally sought to modernise itself. Such processes are never entirely smooth, or fully successful, but I hope the membership is as pleased about the current state of the Fabians as I am.

It's vital that the Fabians be equipped with the culture and tools it needs to be an effective advocate for change because inequality in Australia is growing, and it will take an almighty effort by a range of actors to change that trajectory. We must, and I believe will, play an important role in achieving that change.

So let me conclude in the usual way by thanking my fellow Board members, all of whom put in an enormous amount of time and energy into the management of the Fabians and we'd be lost without their enthusiasm and patience.

A special thanks to Roger Byrne, who as Secretary and Membership Officer has been the engine room of much of what we have achieved this year.

To the incoming Chair, Billy Colless, I wish you all the very best. Many members may not have had the chance to meet Billy yet but I can assure them that he is an impressive young man and will bring a new energy and urgency to our movement.

Yours in equality,

Tim Sonnreich  
National Chair



**Australian  
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## **Australian Fabians Inc.**

### **NATIONAL SECRETARY'S & MEMBERSHIP OFFICERS' ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017**

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#### **Secretary's Report:**

We have had another great year rebuilding the Australian Fabians, with many great outcomes and only a few setbacks:

- Completed our AGM in Sydney.
- Got the QLD branch fully functioning with a new Executive team.
- Got our new NationBuilder web site fully functioning under the Directorship of Billy Colless, including the addition of automatic renewal via credit card to reduce the administrative effort. This has also allowed us to better balance membership with income. Thanks Billy
- Continued a highly active National Board with new directors nominated by Victoria, NSW & Queensland
- Had difficulties with reactivating TAS & ACT.
- Undertook Strategic Planning day in Sydney and developed several major projects some of which have been completed. Some are still being acted on, and others have been put on hold.
- Increased our financial membership to 780 being the second highest over the last 9 years.
- Enhanced our email subscriber and social media access through Facebook and Twitter increasing our listings to record levels (currently just over 11,000).
- Produced some 9 FabiansTV productions of our most successful events providing all members with access without having to travel to the event. We have also completed several live Facebook links and podcasts for other events.
- Continued our efforts on recruiting young Fabians, reducing our age profile, balancing our gender mix with some moderate success, comparing 2014 with 2017.

○ Year	2014	2017
○ Average Age	65.2 yrs.	56.3 yrs.
○ Gender Male / Female	72 / 28	67 / 33 %
○ Young Fabians (<30) -	78#	63 #

- Modernized the National Financial reporting system and finalized Commbiz electronic systems for National and Branch accounts eliminating the need for branch Treasurers.
- Produced 12 monthly Equality newsletters. Thanks to the wonderful efforts of Victoria Fielding with some help from Pauline Gambley and all the active branches.
- On the downside we have:
  - Made inadequate use of our volunteer register
  - Not attracted the number of Young Fabians we had hoped to.
  - Been unsuccessful in reactivating the ACT & TAS branches.
- Completed all regulatory reporting requirements to CAV and ASIC.

### Activities Undertaken in 2017

Events/Branch	VIC	NSW	QLD	ACT	SA	WA	TAS	NT	NAT
Events	11	4	4	0	2	3	0	0	NA
Dinners	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	NA
AGM's	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1
Exec Meeting	10	5	4	0	1	8	0	0	14
Planning Day	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Totals	25	12	11	0	5	9	0	0	16

I refer all readers to the individual branch reports for 2017 that will be circulated to branch members separately via email.

### Membership Officers Report:

We have had another great year rebuilding the Australian Fabians. However the matter of membership numbers has been a disappointment with us only achieving 70% of our 2017 targets.

The key reasons for this were multiple including:

- Troubles with our new web site.
- The changes in our membership categories
- Our failure to implement the branch ring around approach as planned.

Changes to our web site and issues with the new auto renewal membership system have been overcome and should serve us well in 2018. It is interesting to note that 53% of members have adopted auto renewal saving us enormous amount of administrative effort.

I believe that we are now on top of all these factors and current membership growth back on track to achieve our 2018 targets.

However our total strength also lies in our other forms of participation (Social Media) we now have the following approximate numbers as compared with 2016 figures. These are the greatest reach the Fabians have ever had when prior to this time 1200 has been the greatest mail list we have held. Many similar organisations would be happy with this exposure. Congratulations to all involved:

	2016	2017
1. Membership list	585	774
2. Mail lists (email)	4300	7880
3. Facebook Page	1800	3700
4. Twitter Accounts	550	294
5. FabiansTV views	NA	1400
6. TOTALS	7100	14,048

This total mail list picture represents a far greater level of exposure for Fabians than we have ever had before and is reflective of our objective of recruiting younger members using modern social media trends.

The membership categories for 2017 showed the following numbers compared with the 2016 numbers.

	2016	2017
Individual Members	230	375
Concession Members	195	216
New Members	160	163
Special Members	0	11
Life Members	11	10
TOTALS	598	774

To see the distribution of members across all branches / states please refer to the Membership Drive report for December 2017 attached separately.

Our changes in membership categories and revised pricing for 2017 have been well accepted by the membership, so far, however only the full year will tell. The new web site will substantially reduce the administrative effort that has been required this year. It will also offer greater ability for branches to communicate with members.

### **Conclusions & Acknowledgements:**

The Australian Fabian are rebuilding and are operating nationally with the growing our total contacts with a younger age profile, and improved gender balance all promoting greater equality within our Australian Society.

Like all volunteer organisations we are heavily dependent on a small number of people. I would like to thank all the National Board members and Branch Executives for their support and hard work.

I would especially like to thank the National Chairman Tim Sonnreich, who is retiring, the Treasurer, Jill Byrne, Publications Director Victoria Fielding and Web Director/s Osmond Chiu & Billy Colless for their wonderful efforts and great support.

I also note that I will be retiring as Assistant Sec (Membership Officer) after 11 years in the job. Long service leave being claimed.

Regards

**Roger Byrne**  
**National Secretary & Membership Officer**  
**March 2018**



## **Australian Fabians Inc.**

### **ANNUAL BRANCH REPORTS 2017 CALENDAR YEAR**

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#### **ACT BRANCH REPORT**

No report received

#### **NSW BRANCH REPORT**

President Lachlan Drummond stepped aside due to work commitments in favor of Amanda Rose at the end of last year. At the AGM held at NSW Parliament on 11 April 2018, Amanda was unanimously elected for the full year to the position of President.

Membership: Financial membership in 2015 is 164 as at today. At the end of 2017, we had 215 members, growth over 167 in 2016. We hope to continue growing as a branch.

Events: Since our last AGM, we held numerous events including on political donations, tax settings and inequality and planning. We also held another sold out annual dinner with Anne Aly and launched a policy pamphlet at NSW ALP Conference to a packed crowd.

We also held a planning meeting with members earlier this year to help guide our agenda for the year. Tentative plans for events that focus on topics such as young people, the republic and policies for a good society.

Activities: Over the past year, we have continued to build relationships with other likeminded organisations and held a very successful fringe event and stall at NSW ALP Conference.

We continue to prioritising publishing as we believe it is important to build a culture of publishing ideas. A follow-up to our successful NSW policy pamphlet (which received media coverage) is in preparation and we are planning to launch it at NSW ALP Conference.

We also have plans to expand what the branch does with more member-led activities. This includes establishing a social policy commission led by our national patron Eva Cox and the convening of a regular Fabian reading group.

Challenges: The constant challenge of a volunteer run organisation is resources. We currently rely heavily on free venues for most of our events



and our annual dinner to pay for expenses across the year. We need to continue to find other sources of revenue to underwrite activities and be innovative in our approaches. The use of crowdfunding for our previous pamphlet is an example of how we have been testing other measures.

The other big challenge is ensuring continuity of membership. There are many former members that we need to approach about rejoining.

An ongoing challenge is attendance at events. While a regular gathering is important, people are increasingly busy and cannot always attend an event. As a branch that covers an entire state, a number of our members live outside of Sydney and cannot attend. The greater use of technology is one way of accommodating that. It means we need to consider doing things in addition to our podcasts like live streaming and live tweeting events to maximise our reach. Members are already proposing the use of technology to overcome these challenges. We are also discussing holding events outside of the Sydney CBD.

It is also important that the NSW Fabians has a better gender balance on its Executive. It is an issue that is not limited to New South Wales or the Fabians. We have improved it over the past few but need to continue to reach parity.

## **NT BRANCH REPORT**

The NT branch has not functioned for several years and operates under the SA Branch auspices. However the National Board will assist any keen Fabians to reactivate this branch.

## **QLD BRANCH REPORT**

No report received

## **SA BRANCH REPORT**

The SA Branch has concentrated its efforts on maintaining contact with like-minded organisations in an environment where our network of members and activists have been focused on maintaining and re-electing a progressive SA government in 2018.

Recruitment effort was accordingly minimised and membership joins and renewals were low as a result. We intend to address that state of affairs in 2018.

We have supported the Don Dunstan Foundation's work especially at the 2017 (and 2018) Adelaide Fringe and contributed significant voluntary effort towards the Australian Fabian Publications and the National Board, and the national Labor Academy Project.

SA Convenor Pauline Gambley continued in the role in 2017.

The 2018 AGM will be held on 6 May 2018 in Adelaide.

Fabians SA will host (with the Fabians Board), an event at the ALP National Convention 'Fringe' in July 2018 at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

## **TAS BRANCH REPORT**

The TAS branch has not functioned during 2017 however the 20 members are now reactivating under the leadership of Clair McCann.

## **VIC BRANCH REPORT**

2017 was a very busy year for Victorian branch. Over the calendar year we ran 11 events, with 16 speakers including our Annual Dinner, held two planning days, and 10 executive meetings. This does not count subcommittee meetings of which there were some for publicity, some for events, and some for social media. We also, right at the beginning of 2017, conducted a fairly major Victorian membership survey broadly asking about how members would like us to manage events, what they wanted as topics and what other organisations' events they attended, amongst other things.

To bring this report up to the date of the May AGM, in 2018, we have this year run five events. On April 26th Victorian Fabians had their 2017 AGM and elected a new Chair, Julia Thornton, replacing Nick Brain who had undertaken an enormous task in chairing Victorian Fabians while working full time and running for local government. He had been on leave of absence from the Chair position from early August 2016 onwards.

For the Victorian Fabians AGM year debut, we had planned an Autumn series of events around the theme "Do we need a new "New Deal". So at this same date and venue, we ran our first event of the Autumn series Is neoliberalism destroying social democracy? with Anna Yeatman (Whitlam Institute) and Tim Lyons, (Research Fellow at Per Capita, and former Assistant Secretary of the ACTU). The second event in the Autumn series, on May 30th, was "What do people really want from government?" Speakers were Ben Wellings of Monash University European and EU Centre and Peter Lewis, the CEO of Essential Media. The third, on June 28th, our autumn event was "Should we pursue a new "New Deal"? How to reach a new social compact", with Hutch Hussein, Victorian ALP Party President, and John Quiggin, Australian Laureate Fellow in Economics at the University of Queensland. as an extra standalone event, on August 2nd, we hosted Andrew Giles MP, and Terri Butler MP, speaking on "Tax Settings to Reduce Inequality". This event attracted around 75 people. Our Spring Series was planned around the theme of "Digitisation and Democracy". On 23rd August we held our first Spring event, "Digitisation of government data: democratic benefits and possible costs" with Janet McCalman of Melbourne University and Chris Culnane, also of Melbourne University. On 27th Sept the second event title was "Digital manipulation of democracy" and the speakers were journalist commentator and broadcaster, Stilgherrian, and Vanessa Teague of Melbourne University

The third event "How can digitisation benefit democracy and equality?" was held on Wednesday 27th Oct and featured Marta Poblet of RMIT University, Adam Jacoby, the Founder, Chief Steward and Council Member of MiVote, and Simon Longstaff, philosopher and the Executive Director of The Ethics Centre.

The Victorian Fabians Annual Dinner on Tuesday 28th November was well attended again, we sold 135 tickets, and our speaker was Tim Colebatch, former Age journalist and present writer for Inside Story. He spoke on "Government in a slow growth, fast changing world".

## **WA BRANCH REPORT**

The branch finished the 2017 year with 55 members and a good functioning executive with inventive ideas for 2018. In February 2017, the Chairperson Philip O'Donoghue had opinion piece published in the West Australian newspaper.

In November 2017, we held our first major fundraiser, a comedy/satire, "The Trial of Donald Trump" which was a great success with the large audience.

In April 2017, following the successful election of the WA Labor Government, we hosted an address on by respected election analyst, William Bowe and WA Opinion Poll founder Karen Luscombe to track the quantitative and qualitative data on progressive voting in WA. In 21 May 2017 we held a "High Tea and AGM".

The WA Executive Committee met on six occasions during 2017 and plans are on foot for a great 2018 working with the National Board to advance the fight for greater equality.

**Roger Byrne**  
**National Secretary**



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## Returning Officer's Report – 2018 Elections

The following members have been nominated by two members and since only one person for each position has been received by the due date, I declare them confirmed in their respective positions.

Chair:	Billy Colless
Deputy Chair:	Dr. Frank Alafaci
National Secretary:	Roger Byrne
Membership Secretary:	Pauline Veronica Gambley
Treasurer:	Jill Byrne

**Max Dumais**  
Returning Officer  
8<sup>th</sup> April, 2018

**FABIANS 2017 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP OFFICER REPORTS 24 DEC 2017 USING NB PEOPLE FILTERS - BRANCH MEMBERS ByNB Tot**

STATE	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Life	TOTALS	ByNB Tot
<b>MEMBERSHIP to 23 DEC 2017</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>780</b>
<b>Increase for month</b>											
<b>% of Total Members to date</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>40.4%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>		
2016 official total membership	31	167	3	87	28	16	214	28	11	585	
<b>% of Actual 2016 Membership</b>	<b>103.2%</b>	<b>128.7%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>120.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>112.5%</b>	<b>147.2%</b>	<b>196.4%</b>	<b>90.9%</b>	<b>133.3%</b>	
2017 Target membership see below	75	266	5	130	72	55	366	40	15	1024	
<b>% of 2017 Target Membership</b>	<b>42.7%</b>	<b>80.8%</b>	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>80.8%</b>	<b>38.9%</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>137.5%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>76.2%</b>	
<b>Target Members 2018</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1040</b>	

Progressive Members 1st of Mth	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct / 1Nov	Final
<b>2016 Year</b>	279	301	373	466	481	487	495	516	542		585
<b>2017 Year</b>	200	320	374	495	527	552	607	699	712		780

**FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP HISTORY - At 30 October each year - Years Estimated after discussions with Race Matthews & others - shown with E**

2002E	30	150	5	120	20	20	500	20	5	870
2003E	45	200	8	130	20	20	540	20	10	993
2004E	50	280	10	150	25	25	580	30	12	1162
2005E	45	320	8	145	35	32	575	40	12	1212
2006	40	290	5	102	32	30	547	31	7	1084
Used for 2009 constitution committ 2007	37	262	4	92	30	28	489	27	7	976
2008E	42	255	4	80	28	18	420	20	6	873
2009	56	175	4	75	22	13	340	12	6	703
2010	40	150	2	60	22	12	275	10	7	578
2011	33	112	3	78	25	8	273	9	3	544
2012	48	96	2	75	28	5	285	8	4	551
2013	34	146	1	66	31	2	248	12	2	542
2014	74	223	1	94	59	46	318	27	8	850
2015	70	227	2	79	56	41	334	34	11	854
2016	31	167	3	87	28	16	214	28	11	585
2017	32	215	2	105	28	18	315	55	10	780

**AUSTRALIAN FABIAN NATIONAL & BRANCHES  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT TO 31 DECEMBER 2017 AGAINST BUDGET**

	BUDGET 2017	TOTAL 4 QTRS	1st QTR 31-03-2017	2nd QTR 30-06-17	3rd QTR 30-09-17	4th QTR 31-12-17
<b>INCOME</b>			\$	\$		
Membership	20,700.00	14,544.07	1,887.84	5,154.43	2,024.29	5,477.51
Donations	2,500.00	1,010.00	630.00	160.00	95.00	125.00
Interest received	600.00	256.07	73.89	67.02	60.09	55.07
Advertising		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Event Income	10,000.00	24,498.64	4,171.14	1,833.74	4,368.88	14,124.88
Other /raffias/boos sales etc		1,363.64			0.00	1,363.64
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>33,800.00</b>	<b>41,672.42</b>	<b>6,762.87</b>	<b>7,215.19</b>	<b>6,548.26</b>	<b>21,146.10</b>

**EXPENDITURE**

**Recurring Expenditure**

**ADMINISTRATION / MEMBERSHIP**

Bank Fees-Combitz CBA	600.00	747.75	211.47	176.73	200.64	158.91
Merchant Bank Fees CBA	400.00	156.37	32.73	32.73	32.73	58.18
Processing Fees - Credit Card	1,200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Telephone Calls Various	200.00	76.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	76.74
Printing & Stationery Various	250.00	483.40	303.40	57.40	73.60	49.00
Postage	200.00	174.56	105.07	0.00	33.00	35.59
PO Box Rental & Redirection	950.00	1,008.59	1,008.59	0.00	0.00	0.00
Publications Postage	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Statutory Charges	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Insurances	2,200.00	1,938.50	0.00	1,938.50	0.00	0.00
Member Surveys (monkey)	1,000.00	261.82	261.82	0.00	0.00	0.00
Secretarial Membership Assistance	850.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Accounting Fees	2,450.00	2,275.00	700.00	450.00	650.00	475.00
Audit fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other / non allocated/tee shirts	500.00	362.73	44.55	0.00	318.18	0.00
<b>Website</b>						
ISP Hosting	750.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Domain Names	60.00	83.34	83.34	0.00	0.00	0.00
Nation Builder fees	1,680.00	1,743.32	199.90	661.98	431.42	450.02
Mail list fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Support / Maintenance Billy Colles	1,500.00	1,200.68	0.00	0.00	630.00	510.68
Nation Builder training	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
New Website links etc.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Board</b>						
Teleconferencing Int Air Conferencing	1,200.00	2,037.77	547.19	547.52	557.55	385.51
Teleconferencing Subcommittees	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
AGM&S planning day including Travel	5,000.00	4,938.48	681.10	3,876.69	380.69	0.00
ALP Fringe Event	400.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Election Fees (Electronic if required)	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Publications</b>						
EQUALITY e Newsletter (11 #)	400.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
FABIAN NEWS (4#)	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Designer Fees Publications (Celine)	1,500.00	60.00	60.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Editorial Assistance	0.00	576.27	0.00	150.00	426.27	0.00
Printing (Booklets)	750.00	3,320.27	0.00	3,320.27	0.00	0.00
<b>Events / Competitions</b>						
Venue Hire	7,500.00	16,046.12	6,171.95	0.00	2,639.17	7,285.00
Equipment Hire	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Speaker fees /gifts/expenses	4,000.00	3,216.78	1967.31	773.83	81.00	394.64
Event management	1,000.00	1,033.63	135.58	140.84	135.00	622.11
Young Fabian Writers Competition Costs /Priz	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Fabian TV</b>						
Travel	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interview Video Activities	7,200.00	5,953.64	1,850.00	2,303.64	0.00	1,800.00
Editing & Loading Costs	1,000.00	1,241.60	1,241.60	200.00	1,600.00	0.00
WMEQ & other licences	400.00	404.00	185.00	219.00	0.00	0.00
<b>SUB TOTAL Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>49,990.00</b>	<b>51,841.36</b>	<b>16,241.60</b>	<b>14,849.13</b>	<b>8,449.25</b>	<b>12,301.38</b>

**Discretionary / Major Expenditure (Hoped For)**

Website Nation Builder Upgrade	0.00	2,150.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,150.00
Other Events Banners	1,000.00	467.27	0.00	0.00	467.27	0.00
Production of AFL video and booklet	7,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Assistance SA revival	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Assistance WA revival	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Assistance TAS revival	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Assistance QLD revival	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Assistance ACT revival	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>SUB TOTAL Discretionary Expenditure</b>	<b>10,000.00</b>	<b>2,617.27</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>467.27</b>	<b>2,150.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>59,990.00</b>	<b>54,458.63</b>	<b>16,241.60</b>	<b>14,849.13</b>	<b>8,916.52</b>	<b>14,451.38</b>
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT) 2017</b>	<b>-26,190.00</b>	<b>-12,786.21</b>	<b>-9,478.73</b>	<b>-7,633.94</b>	<b>-2,368.26</b>	<b>6,694.72</b>

SIGNED

Jill Byrne - National Treasurer

Tim Sonnreich - National Chairman

Roger Byrne - National Secretary

Approved by National Board - Normal Meeting 12 February 2018