

Electronic Frontiers Australia, Inc. – 2017 Annual Report

Introduction

I am once again pleased to present the Annual Report of Electronic Frontiers Australia, Inc. Every year seems to be a busy one for digital rights. We've worked on a number of issues including copyright reform, encryption rights, privacy, data breach legislation, and more.

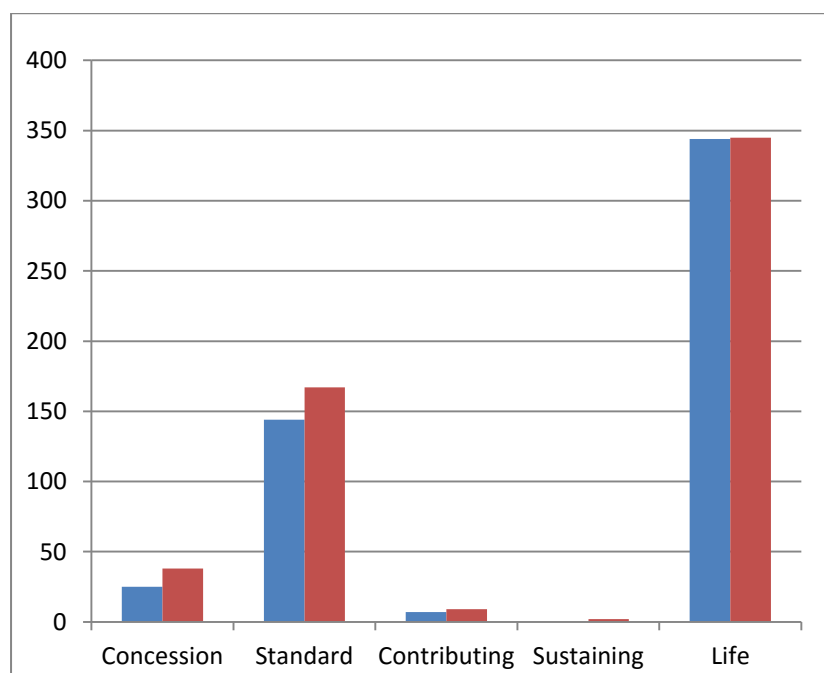
We have also worked hard on the proposed reincorporation project. These proposed changes will enable EFA to continue its work sustainably to and grow and expand into the future.

Membership

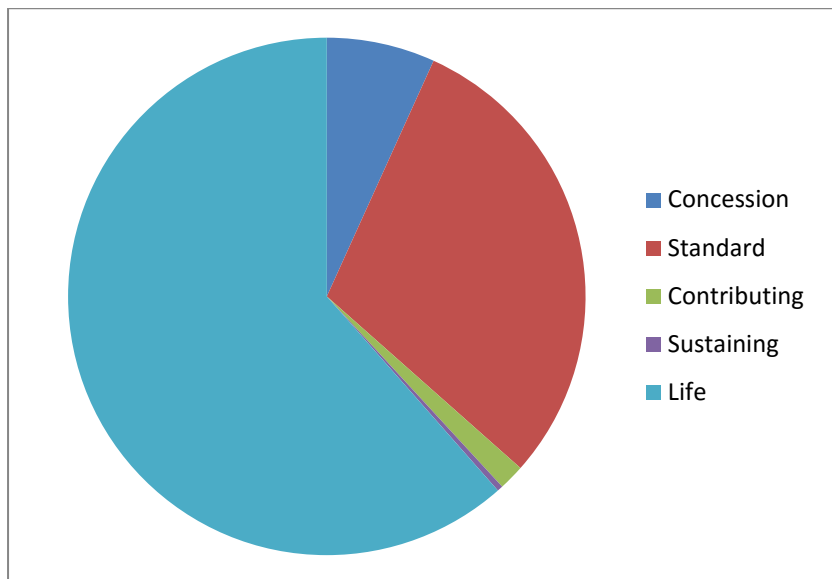
We are always concerned with maintaining and growing our membership. A growing membership is a sign of a healthy organisation, and reflects the growing importance of digital rights issues. It also is important to our financial health. Membership numbers do require effort to maintain, as members other than life members need to renew their membership every year. Last year I had to unfortunately report that membership had slightly fallen, this year I am pleased to report that membership has grown, and grown enough that it has countered the previous small fall.

Our Executive Officer has devoted significant effort to improving the process and wording of our membership renewal system over the last few months, which has seen a significant increase in the percentage of members renewing recently

Membership numbers: FY1516 (blue) versus FY1617 (red)



Membership split by type – at 30 June 2017



A number of members have now joined or renewed at our Contributing (\$199 per year) and Sustaining (\$499 per year) membership levels, which provides a much-appreciated boost to our annual revenue. We have also had our first Life Member join at the new \$1500 price point, which is also of course very welcome.

Our membership is still dominated by Life Members, many of whom joined many years ago and unfortunately have not made any recent financial contribution. We do have several Life Members that provide regular donations, which are of course very valuable and appreciated (as are all our regular donors).

Should we reincorporate as a Company Limited by Guarantee, this will involve all members electing to transfer their membership to the new organisation. This process will provide an ideal opportunity for long-standing Life Members that may not have made a financial contribution for many years, to make a (completely optional) donation at that time.

Our members are the heart and soul of the organisation. As always, I would like to thank all of our members for their pasts, current and future support.

Finances

Our only significant costs are staff related, and diminishing staff costs directly impact our ability to perform our work, and our ability to raise funds, so while continuing to closely monitor staff costs to ensure they are sustainable is an important part of the boards financial oversight role, we need to continue to focus on increased fundraising.

The proposed organisational change represents significant consideration and planning towards such a sustainable revenue model. It opens up several new fundraising options. We also are striving to improve our effectiveness at fundraising through our existing channels and have received advice from professional fundraisers during the year. We are also considering using further professional fundraising services where it can be justified.

As with last financial year, we have again received financial support from, and maintain a productive working relationship with, Google Australia. We have many shared policy positions, and on most of these issues, EFA's policy position predates the founding of Google itself. There are naturally some policy areas where we disagree. The Board is keenly aware of ensuring that this relationship does not materially influence our policy positions.

Efforts to expand our donor base to be less reliant on individual donations continue, and the board continues to be careful to ensure donations do not compromise our policy independence.

We have also received sponsorship for travel and accommodation to attend a variety of conferences, primarily from Google's Asia-Pacific office in Hong Kong. All international travel undertaken by EFA staff or volunteers was covered assisted by sponsorship or other travel support. We have spent a moderate amount on domestic travel, primarily for our Executive Officer to attend events and meetings with parliamentarians and other key stakeholders. The board is careful to ensure that travel costs are kept to a minimum.

Last year I advised that incurred costs from our financial payments provider related to repeated fraudulent transactions. I am pleased to advise that due to changes in our handling of payments, we have been able to deal with this issue, and may be in a position to recoup some of these charges in the very near future.

Media

EFA continues to actively promote discussion of digital rights issues in the media, and provide commentary in response to media inquiries. EFA representatives appeared in print, on radio, on television, in many online fora, and in person.

The number of EFA media appearances is too large (50+) to discuss in detail within the annual report, but all media appearances are recorded on our web site. We have appeared in media including ABC News, ABC Radio National, SBS News, The Guardian, The Daily Telegraph, 3CR, Huffington Post Australia, ZDNet, Business Insider, and more.

- 2017 media mentions and media releases: efa.org.au/media/media-2017/
- 2016 media mentions and media releases (some of which will have occurred since the 2016 annual report): efa.org.au/media/media-2016/

Policy

The policy and advocacy work of EFA is our core mission, and we are very grateful to our policy team who enable us to cover a wide range of complex issues. Our reputation is built on being able to provide technically-informed expert advice on digital rights issues, and we are very lucky to have staff and volunteers as knowledgeable as we do.

It has been another busy year, with a wide range of issues to deal with. That said, it has actually been a fairly light year in terms of the parliamentary submissions and other direct parliamentary policy work that normally provides a lot of our work, largely due to a government with a relatively light policy agenda. This has given our policy team some time to work on developing our own policy documents, and we expect to be able to show some of this work (such as a comprehensive update of our review of the Telecommunications Interception and Access Act) in the near future.

Copyright Reform

Copyright reform continues to be a focus for EFA, and we were pleased to see some significant steps forward this year. We continue to work closely with the Australian Digital Alliance in this context.

The **Copyright Amendment (Disability Access and Other Measures) Bill** became law this year, and this was a major step forward for Australia's copyright law. It removed restrictions that were disastrous for libraries, museums, and galleries seeking to work with digital collections. It freed up access to unpublished works, vital for researchers and increasing access to important historical archives (for example, historical diaries). Most significantly, it implemented the Marrakesh Treaty for the Blind and Vision Impaired, which removes domestic and international restrictions on format-shifting copyright works to create accessible versions. The Bill actually goes much further than the Treaty as it applies to 'all disabilities', not just those relating to vision.

We were, however, disappointed that the bill did go far enough. In order to ensure smooth passage of the bill, the government removed the one 'controversial' aspect of the original draft, which was designed to fix the historical anomaly introduced with the enabling legislation for the Australia-US Free Trade Agreement that saw the 'safe harbour' copyright protections restricted to 'Carriage Service Providers' (ie the major ISPs).

We believe extending the 'safe harbour' protections to all 'internet service providers' will rectify this anomaly, removing significant legal risk from a whole range of Australian organisations, particularly including universities and other educational institutions, as well as Australian-based platforms such as RedBubble, 99Designs etc. The government is continuing to work through this issue and has published proposed regulations which will extend the protections somewhat. We continue to monitor this issue.

Please see: <https://www.efa.org.au/2017/06/15/copyright-amendment-bill/>

Fair Use Reform

EFA has been a long term advocate of introducing a broad, flexible fair use exception into Australian copyright law. This year, we launched a campaign in conjunction with the Australian Digital Alliance – the Fair Copyright for Australia campaign – dedicated to promoting the introduction of a broad, flexible fair use provision into Australia's Copyright Act.

This reform has now been recommended by six separate government reviews over the last decade, most recently by the Productivity Commission, which described fair use as "a policy must-have".

See the PC's report at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/intellectual-property#report>

This campaign leveraged a decision by Australia's volunteer Wikipedia editors to serve banners to Australian visitors across the English-language Wikipedia site promoting the introduction of fair use in Australia. These banners generated a great deal of traffic to the campaign site which featured 'email your MP' functionality and resulted in nearly 10,000 individual emails sent to MPs, the vast majority of which were also copied to the relevant Senators, for a total of over 120,000 contacts. Follow-up meetings with a range of MPs and Senators have confirmed the significant impact of the campaign. The Copyright Agency has since responded with a counter-campaign, and the government recently released its response to the Productivity Commission report which included no formal

commitment on fair use other than 'additional consultation.' This campaign is planned to continue, likely into and beyond the next election, as no firm decision to proceed is expected before then.

See the campaign site at: <https://www.faircopyright.org.au/>

See also the Wikimedia blog post: <https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/FairCopyrightOz>

In summary, this year saw major steps forward for copyright reform, and our campaigning for copyright reform, but the issue will continue to be one we advocate for until our antiquated fair dealing provisions are replaced by a modern fair use scheme.

Privacy

Privacy is a rapidly evolving area of policy and law, and an increasingly complex field that is often difficult for non-experts to understand. Many privacy issues are intimately connected with digital rights issues and privacy continues to be a significant policy area for us.

Civil use of data retention proposal

Just before Christmas, in a fairly shameless attempt to minimise attention, the Attorney-General's Department announced a consultation on whether data retained under the mandatory data retention scheme should also be available for a range of civil cases.

We thought this was an outrageous, though predictable, example of how once major surveillance powers are introduced, no matter how limited and restricted their use expands to the point they become significant restrictions on individual privacy. The data retention surveillance scheme was still in the process of implementation when metadata we had been assured would only be used for the most significant criminal and national security investigations was being expanded to civil use. We thought this was a disaster, and opened the way to private browsing data being used in divorce proceedings, used against corporate whistleblowers, potentially in copyright cases, and many other ways that could potentially make the data retention scheme a true wholesale privacy disaster. We provided a strongly-opposed submission and also provided extensive guidance for people that wished to make submissions (see: <https://www.efa.org.au/privacy/metadata-civil/>). We were therefore very encouraged to see that, despite the consultation running over the Christmas/New Year period, some 260 submissions were submitted (most from individuals), with the vast majority also strongly opposed.

See our submission at:

<https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/EFA-dataretention-civil-cases-submission-170127.pdf>

In April, the government announced that it would not be expanding the data retention scheme to include civil cases – a significant win!

Proposed Data Re-identification law proposal

In what appeared to be a hasty and largely knee-jerk response to recent embarrassing examples of supposedly de-identified government data being found to be readily re-identifiable, Attorney-General George Brandis proposed new legislation to criminalise the re-identification of de-identified data (the Privacy Amendment (Re-identification Offence) Bill 2016).

This proposed bill was very poorly considered and was likely to criminalise legitimate research activities while doing nothing material to prevent malicious activity relating to the re-identification of data. These points were expressed in our submission (see: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp->

[content/uploads/2016/12/EFA-data-reidentification-submission-161219.pdf](https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/EFA-data-reidentification-submission-161219.pdf)) and subsequently both Labor and the Greens indicated that they would not support the bill. The government has therefore chosen not to introduce the bill into parliament, and we do not expect to hear of it again.

Mandatory Data Breach Notification legislation

In February, Australia finally passed legislation requiring notification of major data breaches, something EFA had advocated for several years. The implementation is now underway, and although the legislation was watered-down significantly to appease complaints from business groups, we still feel that the legislation will increase the likelihood that organisations of all types and sizes will increasingly treat privacy and information security issues as the core organisational risk factors that we believe they should be. We continue to monitor the implementation process as it continues.

'Revenge porn' laws

A bill criminalising the non-consensual sharing of intimate images became law in NSW (discussion focussed on what is often referred to as 'revenge porn', in which estranged former sexual partners share sexual images obtained during a relationship as an act of revenge with an intent to demean, but applied more widely. A similar bill was proposed by the ACT Greens. We provided a submission on the draft ACT bill (see: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/EFA-ACT-Crimes-Amendment-bill-submission-170728.pdf>), which concluded that the bill included appropriately balanced protections for rights such as free speech and a free press, while protecting privacy. The ACT bill was subsequently passed.

Encryption

As discussed in the 2016 annual report, EFA is concerned about global discussions around restricting encryption, and in 2016 we wrote to the Department of Premier and Cabinet in January 2016, and were pleased to report a letter that expressed government support for strong encryption (see: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/PMC-encryption-reply-160219.jpg>).

It was therefore an unwelcome surprise when the Attorney General expressed his intention to convince the Five Eyes group of countries (Australia, USA, UK, Canada and New Zealand) to make legal rulings to make all encryption keys available to authorities. This seemed to go against the previously expressed government position, and in what is now becoming somewhat of a Brandis trademark, was confusing expressed with mutually contradictory statements that were widely interpreted as showing a very poor understanding of the issue (such as insisting that private encryption keys needed to be available to the government, but he was asking for a 'back door').

Despite the incoherence of the proposal, we regarded this as a real threat, and an unwelcome return of encryption as a divisive issue in Australian politics.

As the meeting at which this was discussed between Attorneys-General took place in Ottawa, Canada, and the issue was a multi-national one, EFA joined with the campaign organised by international organisation Access Now, along with other Australian advocacy organisation such as Australian Privacy Foundation and CryptoAustralia. We thought this was a strong initial response, showing a united front from many global civil society organisations, and no concrete proposal has yet appeared.

We are very actively monitoring this issue, and working with CryptoAustralia and others, we will campaign very strongly against any proposals to restrict access to strong encryption by Australians.

See this press release: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Five-Eyes-encryption-release-170629.pdf>

Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

The TPPA is a treaty that EFA has campaigned against for multiple years. The TPPA contains several problematic sections covering copyright and intellectual property enforcement and Internet governance (and numerous other sections that we are sceptical about and have contributed to widespread protest, but we consider less directly relevant to EFAs mission).

The TPPA contains, due to US lobbying, provisions that enforce some of the worst aspects of US copyright law (criminalising bypassing Digital Rights Management even for otherwise legal reasons, extended copyright length, criminal liability for internet intermediaries like ISPs, etc), without any of the benefits. It also imposes rules on country code domains that fundamentally limit the ability of independent nations to make appropriate choices for their national needs, and misunderstand basic principles of Internet governance. We also strongly object to the process by which the treaty was negotiated, locking out not just civil society but even most elected politicians from the process, but allowing an inside track for industry lobbyists.

EFA made a submission to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee of the Senate in October 2016, and that submission summarises our many objections to the treaty, both in substance and process.

See: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/EFA-Senate-FADT-TPP-Enquiry-161031.pdf>

Though President Trump announced soon after his election that the US was pulling-out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the remaining countries continue to work towards making this agreement a reality, holding a meeting in Sydney in August.

In conjunction with a range of other organisations from across the remaining TPP countries, we signed an open letter calling for the copyright and ecommerce chapters to be renegotiated without the unfortunately excessive clauses pushed by the United States. See these press releases:

See: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/TPP11-copyright-release-170828.pdf>

And: <https://www.efa.org.au/main/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/TPP11-ecommerce-release-170828.pdf>

Australian Open Government Partnership Network

EFA is a founding member of the Australian Open Government Partnership Network. This network includes partners such as Transparency International Australia, Open Knowledge Foundation Australia, and the Open Australia Foundation. The AOGPN brings together these groups to jointly and effectively lobby for whistle-blower protection, improvements to freedom of information processes and access, release of government data, confidence in our electoral systems, more regular voluntary release of government data, and other improvements to government handling of information.

EFA continued to support the AOGPN and Jon Lawrence continued to serve on the initial Steering Committee until a more permanent management committee was established. EFA remains a member of the AOGPN

Digital Rights Management

We were very disappointed with the World Wide Web Consortium's decision to publish a digital rights management standard (the Encrypted Media Extension for web video). There are a number of problems with the standard, including lacks of protection for accessibility, lacks of legal protection for security researchers, and lack of protection for competition. We also feel that publishing a standard that is a divisive one, which is strongly dissented from by a sizeable majority of W3C members, undermines the consensus-based standards model that has driven the success of the web and the internet for decades.

The process involved in this decision was marked by unwillingness to negotiate from those organisations in favour of DRM, and has left the W3C deeply divided and backing a standard that lacks the basic legal protections required.

Electronic Frontiers Australia is not, and was not, a member of the W3C. However the Electronic Frontier Foundation was, and resigned in protest at this decision, and we support their position. We republished EFF commentary on to raise awareness of this issue.

See: <https://www.efa.org.au/2017/07/10/w3c-drm-for-the-web/>

International Internet Governance

EFA Chair David Cake continued to represent EFA within ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) community processes. David was elected to the Executive Committee of the Non-Commercial Users Constituency, representing the Asia Pacific region, and helped with outreach efforts to help involve civil society organisations around the world in internet policy work.

David is also very actively involved in ICANN policy making, most significantly as Vice-Chair of the Next Generation Registration Data Service Working Group, which is working towards replacing the WHOIS system that contains contact information for domain names, and making it compatible with modern privacy law and expectations of privacy protection. This is a central part of internet infrastructure, and strong privacy protection at the heart of the internet is vital to protect internet users from harassment. This effort is a multi-year effort, involving dozens of regular participants from a wide range of interests some of them strongly opposed to any pro-privacy change, but is of such global significance that it is important for a strong voice for civil society interests, especially those that are in favour of privacy rights.

David was able to attend ICANN meetings in Johannesburg and Copenhagen, and an ICANN Non-Contracted Parties House meeting in Iceland, through travel funding from ICANN for participants in its policy processes. No financial costs to EFA were incurred.

National Biometrics

As this report is being written, the government has announced its intention to use drivers licence data to form a national face recognition database (the National Facial Biometric Matching Capability). Obviously, the privacy implications of this are significant. EFA is actively following this issue.

See: <https://www.efa.org.au/2017/10/04/national-facial-recognition/>

Events

EFA organised a number of events this year, and participated in others.

Film Screenings

We presented three screenings of the film Killswitch: The Battle to Control the Internet.

In Killswitch: The Battle to Control the Internet, Lawrence Lessig, Tim Wu and Peter Ludlow frame the story of two young hactivists, Aaron Swartz & Edward Snowden, who symbolize the disruptive and dynamic nature of the Internet. Their lives parallel one another as they free information to millions on the Internet, putting them directly in the cross-hairs of the most powerful interests in the world.

Each screening was followed by discussion.

In Melbourne, the screening was hosted by Electron Workshop, and was followed by a discussion by a wide-ranging discussion led by our Executive Officer, Jon Lawrence and Matthew Cengia from Open Knowledge Foundation.

In Brisbane, the screening was at the Brisbane Square Library, and was presented in conjunction with the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties.

In Sydney, the screen was at the Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics' School of Arts, and was presented in conjunction with the NSW Council for Civil Liberties. Discussion following the film was a Q&A with Jon Lawrence, the Executive Director of EFA, and Christopher Camacho, Office Coordinator of NSWCCCL.

We intend to continue to present films in this format when we find appropriate films, and plan to include screenings in other cities where possible.

Surveillance Public Forum

EFA was part of the Surveillance Public Forum Melbourne in May, organised by the Office of the Victorian Commissioner for Privacy and Data Protection. Our Executive Officer Jon Lawrence participated in a debate about the tension between privacy, civil liberties and national security in the surveillance state.

See: <https://events.unimelb.edu.au/events/8577-surveillance-privacy-awareness-week-2017>

Conferences

Our Executive Officer, Jon Lawrence participated in a discussion panel on 'The big issues for the internet in Australia' at the **Australian Library and Information Association National Conference** in Sydney in February.

Also in February, David Cake and Jon Lawrence attended the **Australian Digital Alliance Copyright Forum 2017: Fair Use, Flexibility and Exceptions for Creativity** and actively participated in discussion there. This annual event is very valuable for anyone interested in copyright reform, and intellectual property reform generally.

In conjunction with the **World Wide Web Conference**, held in Perth, and the as part of the Festival of the Web of events associated with the conference, EFA presented a one day conference discussing digital rights issues called **Bytes and Rights**. The keynote speaker was Dr Wendy Seltzer, who a staff member at the World Wide Web Consortium, and has been a Fellow at Harvard's Berkman Center, a staff attorney at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a liaison to the ICANN Board, founded the Lumen clearinghouse (formerly known as ChillingEffects.org), and a director of the Tor Project. EFA intends to use the Bytes and Rights name for other events in the future.

David Cake and Jon Lawrence attended the Australian **Digital Alliance Copyright Forum 2017: Fair Use, Flexibility and Exceptions for Creativity** and actively participated in discussion there. This annual event is very valuable for anyone interested in copyright reform, and intellectual property reform generally.

We were sufficiently impressed by the speech by Karen Chester of the Productivity Commission that we published it on our web site.

See: <https://www.efa.org.au/2017/02/24/what-is-fair-karen-chester-from-the-productivity-commission/>

International Conferences

In December 2016, Board member Andrew Pam attended the global **Internet Governance Forum** in Guadalajara, Mexico.

In July, Jon Lawrence attended the **Asia-Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum** in Bangkok. This meeting was originally scheduled to be held in Melbourne, however the primary sponsor – auDA – decided to withdraw their funding, and a number of Thai organisations stepped in late to take over the meeting. Given that this was originally to be a major event in Australia, it was disappointing that Jon was the only representative of an Australian organisation to attend the event.

David Cake was able to attend the **Internet Freedom Festival**, held in Valencia, Spain. This is a meeting of internet activist groups from throughout the world, particularly focussing on privacy and security issues and internet activism. David was a co-presenter and organiser of an Internet policy making and civil society session.

Reincorporation Project

We have been discussing the proposed change from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee for some time. We have endeavoured to maintain an open dialogue with our members, and to be as consultative and open on this issue as practical.

We think that has been successful, we have received many useful and insightful comments from members, the majority of which we have incorporated into the final constitution presented to you at this AGM. We have also benefited from excellent pro bono legal advice from Rob Gregory of Maddocks, who have previously advised on the constitutions of other Australian Internet institutions.

EFA has struggled for some years to expand its funding, and it really has been a struggle. We have for the most part managed, but our reserves have shrunk, funding has proved less stable than we hoped (it can be much easier to get funding when there is a public issue we are dealing with, but that is also often when we are most pre-occupied). We certainly intend to keep doing so by existing methods, such as increasing membership, appeals to members and members of the public to donate one on one or continuing basis, and some donations from major corporate donors. But we also think that a key part of developing a stronger organisation to diversity our funding base, and the new constitution allows us to do that in a few ways, directly or indirectly. We hope it will be a major step in the positive evolution of EFA, increasing both our range of funding options and the range of activities we perform regularly. We also acknowledge that the higher reporting requirements of the new constitution will force the board to work a bit harder at governance and financial management, and we welcome that change.

There are, in addition, other reasons why our current situation is inadequate for our current needs. For example, as a nationally focussed organisation, it is no longer appropriate for us to maintain a state-based incorporation.

The current EFA Inc. Rules of Incorporation allow organisational members, but define them as a separate category of membership, meaning that a small number of organisational members would have an effective veto power over any constitutional changes. As a result, the board resolved at the commencement of the reincorporation project not to accept any organisational members under the current rules.

The proposed new constitution addresses this issue – there will be one category of member, including organisations, each with a single vote – thereby removing the disproportionate power for organisational members. This will allow us to develop closer working relationships with the many organisations with whom we regularly work, and also to attract commercial businesses aligned with our goals, thereby creating a potentially significant new source of revenue.

In addition, the new organisational objectives will smooth the path to attaining Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, which will open up additional, potentially significant revenue sources, which will assist with general organisation financial sustainability as well as enhance our capacity to fulfil our educational and advisory roles, such as providing up to date reference material on relevant legislation and other digital civil liberties issues.

Two primary sources of DGR funding will be:

- corporate giving programmes, which involve regular donations from employees managed through payroll that is then matched by the employer, and;
- grants from philanthropic foundations.

It should be noted that any additional funding received as a result of attaining DGR status is likely to be less than 50% of the total funding for the organisation, however this additional funding will ensure that a much higher percentage of non-DGR funding can be devoted to our advocacy and campaigning activities.

We have not yet finalised the full transition plan from the old to the new organisation – it is our intention to transfer all active memberships, all assets, and everything necessary for EFAs continued operation in as practical and transparent a manner as possible. The membership will be fully consulted on a transition plan to be created by the 2018 board. But we have looked at the basics required of such a plan, and are fully confident it is doable.

Other Organisational Changes

We have completed our transition away from using the Google platform and are continuing to shift our internet infrastructure towards open source services, with an implementation of NextCloud – an open source file management and collaboration platform – planned to occur shortly.

We are also migrating our hosting services away from a US provider to local provider Serversaurus, who are providing services to us at no cost, as an in-kind donation. Serversaurus is run by Marty and Nick from Electron Workshop in Melbourne, who have been strong supporters of EFA for many years. We have also been using Electron Workshop as a physical office for our Executive Officer, and it will serve as our Registered Office and Principal Place of Business should we reincorporate as a Company

Limited by Guarantee. The Board wishes to express its appreciation to Serversaurus and to Electron Workshop for their generous support.

Conclusion

There are no longer any years in digital rights that are not busy ones. These annual reports attempt to be fairly thorough, but almost omit many of the simpler events and issues we deal with, and also vital behind the scenes work. There are always policy processes that we do not have the time to address in the detail we wish, or that we look at and decide are not a high priority to make a submission to. And much of our most valuable work — such as informal discussions with policy makers and lawmakers that occur while policies and positions are still being formed, or coordination with other activist organisations — remains relatively invisible still. This annual report covers highlights, major issues, and big projects, but there is always work that doesn't appear.

We remain a mostly volunteer organisation, which finds itself dealing with increasing challenges that require more skills and higher governance requirements every year.

We remain incredibly grateful for all the efforts of our volunteers, thankful for all our collaborators and supporters, appreciative of those who engage with us and encourage us to work to a higher standard. The work we do is needed, and we strive to do it as well as we can with relatively limited resources. Thank you for reading, and thanks for your support.

David Cake

Chair

October 2017