



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE & POWER ENGINEERS
Western Australian Branch

Honorary Secretary: Chris Blackmore – Assistant Federal Secretary: Andrew Williamson
National Organiser: Michael Carroll

Australian Electoral Commission
WA State Office

27th April 2018

Attention: Simon Bulloch, Manager Election Services
By email: Simon.Bulloch@aec.gov.au

Dear Mr Bulloch,

Re: Post-election Report E2017/235 AIMPE West Australia Branch

Thank you for the Post-election Report dated 6th April 2018 regarding the above uncontested election.

The AIMPE election rules have been in effect for all Branches of the organisation for many years and have not caused practical difficulties – even when contested ballots have been required. It is noted that this particular election did not require a ballot.

However it is acknowledged that the West Australia Branch of AIMPE received a similar Post-election Report comment about Rule 33 B (v) in 2015.

AIMPE remains of the view that the working patterns of AIMPE members who are employed on ships at sea (which means that members are away from home for many weeks at a time) is critical in understanding the AIMPE election rules. Common lengths of time at sea are 4, 5 or 6 weeks at a time.

A minority of members are employed on ships that travel overseas and their swing lengths may be up to 12 weeks. The purpose and intention of the advanced mailing procedure is to increase the opportunity for members who are engaged on ships and other vessels at sea to receive the notification of an upcoming ballot. The objective is to maximise the participation rate and help ensure that the democratic process is not structured so as to disenfranchise members working at sea.

Furthermore the frequency of postal delivery services has reduced in recent times. It is now becoming more frequent for AIMPE to receive complaints from members about the late arrival of mail. AIMPE posts the On Watch magazine to each member at their home address and the magazine is usually published 11 times per annum. So we have routine experience about the quality of the postal services.

There is no doubt that the quality of the postal services have declined in frequency.

Tel: 08 93176446
Fax: 08 9317 6450

169 Stock Road, Palmyra WA 6157

Email: awilliamson@aimpe.asn.au

Looking at the rate of return of ballot papers [in contested ballots within AIMPE] it would appear that the greater problem is that too many members are not returning the ballot papers at all – rather than that they are returning their ballot paper too early.

There is no clear evidence available to AIMPE from declarations provided by the AEC that there has been any significant number of early return of ballot papers. AIMPE believes the current rule 33 B. (v) should be retained to give seagoing members the greatest opportunity to participate in the election processes.

In relation to the second element of the Post-election Report relating to Rule 33B(xv) it is acknowledged that the sub-rule is silent on the time frames for submission of resumes however AIMPE is unaware of any real problems which have arisen regarding the submission of resumes. Of course, in the most recent uncontested election it was not an issue.

Practicality dictates that the Returning Officer would not call for candidate resumes until after nominations have closed.

Obviously resumes must also be submitted before ballots are posted.

This gives a fairly clear window of time during which the Returning Officer should call for resumes.

In the absence of any record of practical problems and in the light of the clear window of time available, AIMPE disagrees with the Post-election Report which states that the rules need to be amended to specify dates and times that resumes need to be submitted.

AIMPE notes that the Post-election Report also draws attention to the fact that there is no provision for the withdrawal of nominations in the AIMPE election rules.

This matter together with the whole of the Post-election Report will be brought to the attention of the AIMPE rules review committee.



Christopher Blackmore
Secretary
AIMPE WA Branch