

The Federation of Rural Australian Medical Educators FRAME

12 July 2004

DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND

FRAME is a grouping of organisations whose primary purpose is the education of medical students outside major metropolitan centres. FRAME was conceived at a meeting of rural medical academics from Australian medical schools held during the 7th National Undergraduate Rural Health Conference in August 2003 at Pinjarra, Western Australia. At this meeting it was recognised that there were many common areas of interest and importance for academics working in the Rural Clinical School (RCS) and Rural Undergraduate Support and Coordination (RUSC) programs that were not able to be met in a focused way by other current national organisations.

AIMS of FRAME

To promote rural medical education as an essential and successful component of Australia's rural medical workforce, higher education and regional development strategies.

To provide an efficient and transparent vehicle for influencing national policy that effects the goals and function of the Rural Clinical Schools (RCS) and Rural Undergraduate Support and Coordination (RUSC) programs throughout Australia.

To provide a portal whereby external agencies can bring issues or ideas to the rural medical education sections of all Australian medical schools.

To facilitate the successful development and maintenance of the RCS and RUSC programs in all medical schools through collaboration, discussion and sharing of ideas.

To work collaboratively with other relevant national organisations, in particular, the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM), the Australian Rural Health Education Network (ARHEN), and the Committee of Deans of Australian Medical Schools (CDAMS).

MEMBERSHIP of FRAME

Membership of FRAME is open to:

1. Directors/Heads of Rural Clinical Schools
2. Rural Academic Coordinators of RUSC programs
3. Other rural-based academics working in RCS, RUSC or similar programs. The membership of such other academics must be supported by the nominated Reference Group member (see below) from that medical school.

WORKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR FRAME

FRAME is a non-subscription, non-secretariat, non-incorporated entity.

The principal method of communication will be via the FRAME website (see <http://som.flinders.edu.au/frame> for a draft site) and email.

Policy documents will be developed collaboratively on an as needs basis on a secure, password protected website. Discussion and policy document production will be open to all members of FRAME, however, it will be expected that members from each medical school will caucus and provide a consensus view to minimise confusion and electronic traffic. It is hoped

that this process of local caucusing will also assist in bringing together, at the local level, those working in the RCS and RUSC programs.

REFERENCE GROUP (FRAME OF REFERENCE)

In order to reach fair and agreed positions on issues raised under such arrangements, members will refer these issues to a Reference Group. Each Australian medical school that has a RUSC and/or RCS program will have ONE nominated voting delegate. In addition one member of the Reference Group shall be selected by FRAME members living and working in the NT. This group of thirteen (currently) delegates will be known as the Reference Group. All FRAME decisions and policy, prior to external dissemination, will be authorised by the Reference Group by an agreement of at least 75% of voting delegates. One representative from ARHEN will be invited to be a non-voting observer on the Reference Group.

The Reference Group will annually elect a Chair from within its number, who will be the spokesperson for FRAME for that calendar year (unless other members are specifically delegated by the Chair to be a spokesperson/representative for a specific issue/purpose). In the situation where members are unhappy with the conduct/representation of the Chair, a special meeting to discuss the relevant matters can be called by not less than 50% of the Reference Group delegates. At such a meeting, the Chair can be removed on the basis of a no-confidence motion supported by at least 75% of voting delegates. A new Chair will then be elected for the remaining portion of that year.

Reference Group decisions will ordinarily be made by electronic vote, instigated by the Chair, unless all Reference Group delegates are present at a face-to-face and/or teleconference meeting. Ordinary Reference Group meetings will only be held on the basis of a request by at least three Reference Group delegates. The Chair will be responsible for arranging the timing and facilities for the meeting. Face-to-face meetings will be held in such a way as to minimise travel and accommodation costs ie adjacent to other relevant national conferences/meetings.

To be effected, this Draft Constitution must be accepted by at least 75% of the voting delegates in the Reference Group. Future changes to this document can be suggested by any member of FRAME, but to be effected must likewise receive at least 75% support of Reference Group voting delegates.

DISCLAIMER

Although FRAME will endeavour to represent the consensus view of the Rural Clinical Schools, it shall not have the authority to represent any one university or its views in external discussions or forums.