

ASF Nullarbor Special Interest Group Charter

1. Name of the Group

- 1.1. The Group is a Special Interest Group of the Australian Speleological Federation and shall be called the Australian Speleological Federation Nullarbor Special Interest Group.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **'AGM'** means an Annual General Meeting
- 2.2. **'ASF'** means the Australian Speleological Federation Inc.
- 2.3. **'Charter'** means this document
- 2.4. **'CM'** means a meeting of the Committee of the Group
- 2.5. **'Committee'** means the committee of management of the Group
- 2.6. **'EGM'** means an Extraordinary General Meeting
- 2.7. **'GM'** means an ordinary general meeting
- 2.8. **'Group'** means the ASF Nullarbor SIG
- 2.9. **'in writing'** shall mean any form of written text including on paper or by email
- 2.10. **'member'** means a member of the Group, a person
- 2.11. **'Nullarbor'** means the calcareous rocks of the Australian Eucla Basin
- 2.12. **'Object'** means objectives as defined in clause 3 of this document
- 2.13. **'post'** shall mean any form of manual or electronic delivery system
- 2.14. **'SIG'** means a Special Interest Group of the ASF
- 2.15. **'year'** means a calendar year from the 1st of January to the 31st of December

3. Objects of the Group

- 3.1. The Group aims to contribute to and foster cooperation in furthering the understanding of, and raising the awareness of, features and values of the karst and caves of the Nullarbor.
- 3.2. Specifically, the Group aims to foster work to locate, identify, document, map, and if appropriate publish its work/findings.
- 3.3. The Groups aims to encourage the sharing of knowledge of the karst and caves of the Nullarbor.
- 3.4. The Group further aims to support scientific research of the Nullarbor, including but not limited to geological, biological, paleontological, and archaeological/anthropological disciplines.
- 3.5. The Group aims to identify and engage with stakeholders of the Nullarbor including landowners, land managers and Traditional Owners.
- 3.6. The Group aims to identify threats to, and in conjunction with the ASF Conservation Commission, advocate on matters relating to conservation and protection of the Nullarbor.

4. Management of the Group

- 4.1. Special Interest Groups allow members of ASF, who have a certain interest in common, to associate and communicate in a more detailed way than would be practicable amongst the total membership.
- 4.2. This SIG is a group of ASF members who agree to be bound by this Charter, with activities carried out in a responsible manner in keeping with the objectives of ASF and the relevant ASF policies, guidelines, and codes of practice.
- 4.3. The Group shall actively encourage diversity and inclusion.
- 4.4. The Group shall be managed by an elected Committee as shall be determined by a simple majority vote of members at an AGM of the Group. The committee shall comprise up to eight (8) persons:

- 4.4.1. Chair; Secretary; Treasurer; and
- 4.4.2. up to five (5) additional Committee Members.
- 4.5. All members of the Committee shall take office at the end of the AGM at which they were elected and shall retire at the end of the AGM at which their successor was elected; any member shall be eligible for re-election in accordance with clause 4.6.
- 4.6. The term of office shall be one (1) year up to a maximum of four (4) consecutive terms in a specific role with up to eight (8) consecutive years on the Committee in any capacity.
- 4.7. If a committee member resigns or is no longer a financial member of the Group, there will be a casual vacancy on the Committee. This position shall be filled directly by nomination of the Committee, and the nominee will take office until the next AGM.
- 4.8. The Committee shall be free to organise the conduct of its business. The powers of the Committee shall be informed by the Objects of the Group and guided by the regulations determined by the ASF.
- 4.9. The Group shall hold an Annual General Meeting each year. Notice for an AGM shall be made to all members giving at least 28 days' notice of date, venue, and time. Motions for consideration must be submitted to the Secretary in writing to arrive not less than fourteen (14) days before the AGM.
- 4.10. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened as required, upon unanimous vote of the Committee or upon the presentation to the Committee of a written motion signed by not less than ten (10) members or one fewer than 50% of the membership whichever is the lesser. Notice for an EGM shall be made to all members giving at least 7 days' notice of date, venue, and time. EGMs may only discuss the motion proposed in the notice.
- 4.11. A General Meeting shall be held at least every three (3) months for the transaction of general business. Notice for a GM shall be made to all members giving at least 7 days' notice of date, venue, and time.
- 4.12. All financial members shall have a right to participate and vote at AGMs, EGMs, or GMs either in person, via electronic means, or by sending a letter/email to the Secretary, to arrive not less than three (3) days before the meeting, expressing their participation and/or vote. Members may accompany their written vote with a letter of no more than 500 words to be read out at the meeting. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.
- 4.13. At any meeting, the Chair shall have an extra vote to decide an issue when the votes on each side are equal.
- 4.14. Alterations to the Charter of the Group shall be made only at an AGM. A dated Charter shall be submitted to the ASF Executive for approval and shall not be brought into force until such approval has been given.
- 4.15. A quorum for any AGM, EGM or GM shall be ten (10) members or one fewer than 50% of the membership whichever is the lesser. A quorum for a Committee Meeting is four (4).
- 4.16. Electronic participation at any meeting will be considered as attending the meeting.
- 4.17. Non-receipt of notification of any meeting shall not invalidate the meeting. Non-receipt of postal votes shall not invalidate a meeting's decisions.
- 4.18. At all meetings where there is any doubt or question as to the procedure, etc., the Chair's ruling shall be final.
- 4.19. Any matter of doubtful interpretation, or not provided for in the Charter, shall be dealt with by the Committee of the Group pending endorsement at a General Meeting, subject to the requirements of the Charter.

5. Management of Funds

- 5.1. The funds of the Group, shall be administered by the Committee and placed within a specifically identified ledger within the ASF accounts that shall have the title ASF Nullarbor SIG.
- 5.2. Financial records with an inventory of assets or other material held by the Group shall be kept, and a report of the Group's financial activities and inventory shall be provided to the members and the ASF General Secretary at least once a year.

6. Membership and Activities

- 6.1. Election to membership, types of membership, and termination of membership shall be as determined by the Group in accordance with the Group's By-laws.
- 6.2. All members of the Group must be members of the ASF. Any member who ceases to be an ASF member also ceases to be a member of the Group but can be re-admitted to the Group after reinstatement of ASF membership.
- 6.3. Any activity organised by the Group in the name of the Group shall be authorised in advance by the Committee.

7. The Group and the ASF

- 7.1. The Group shall liaise with the ASF Conservation Commission, Cave and Karst Numbering Commission, Library and Archives Commission, and other Commissions and Committees as required.
- 7.2. The Group shall ensure that one copy of all the material it publishes is deposited with the ASF Librarian, and also lodge copies of unpublished maps and reports, etc., as appropriate.
- 7.3. The Group will similarly encourage copies of data, unpublished maps, and reports to be lodged with the relevant ASF Karst Area Coordinator.
- 7.4. Regular contact must be maintained between the Group and the ASF, including a brief Annual Report.
- 7.5. In the event of the dissolution of the Group, its assets, including realised assets, data, and intangible assets, after discharge of all liabilities shall be offered to the ASF. If the purpose of the dissolution is for the Group to re-form as a Corporate or Provisional Member of the ASF, and if the ASF accepts such an application for membership, then the Group's assets shall be retained by the Group. In other situations, ASF shall give due consideration to a request for the Group to retain its assets.
- 7.6. Nothing in the Group's Charter shall be so construed, or be so amended, that it would contravene the ASF's Constitution or By-laws, or would have the effect of making the ASF cease to be an environmental organisation.

8. By-laws of the Group

- 8.1. The Group may establish By-laws for operation of the Group. These must be available to all members.
- 8.2. The By-laws are to specify the orderly operation and policies of the Group consistent with this Charter.
- 8.3. By-laws can be established, revoked, or amended at an EGM or AGM meeting of the Group.

9. Dissolution of the Group

- 9.1. The dissolution of the Group may take place after a postal ballot/email of all financial members of the Group if there is a 75% majority of those voting in favour of such dissolution. Members shall be given a minimum of eight (8) weeks in which to register their vote in any such ballot.

BY-LAWS

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1. Applications for new membership must be in writing, signed by the applicant, and contain information similar to that requested on the Membership Application Form (Appendix I), as approved by Committee.
- 1.2. All members will pay an annual fee of \$10 to be a member of the ASF Nullarbor SIG, or such other amount determined from time to time, to be a member of the SIG, at such time as determined at an AGM.
- 1.3. Admission to membership of the Group will be determined by the committee, but may be revoked by resolution at an AGM or EGM.
- 1.4. A record of membership shall be kept as a sub-group in the ASF Membership Database.

2. ASSOCIATES

- 2.1. The SIG may engage non-ASF members e.g., scientists, land managers, Traditional Owners from time to time as a non-voting Associate of the SIG.

3. DEFAULTING MEMBERS

- 3.1. Any member who deliberately acts in a manner contrary to the Objects of the Group, shall, if voted for at an AGM or EGM, be expelled from the Group.
- 3.2. Any member who remains non-financial after six months of such annual fee being due, shall be deemed no longer a member of the Group.

4. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 4.1. In the case of a dispute between the Group and any member or entity, or between members, the procedures laid down in the Constitution and By-laws of the ASF shall apply.

5. COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

- 5.1. In addition to Chair, Treasurer and Secretary the Committee shall allocate roles to Committee Members, or co-opt expertise from the wider membership as required. Roles may include but not be limited to:
 - Stakeholder Liaison Officer
 - Records Liaison Officer
 - Membership Officer
 - ASF Liaison Officer

6. PUBLICATIONS

- 6.1. Publications shall include but not be limited to maps, documents, reports to stakeholders, photographs, press releases, and social media posts.
- 6.2. Copyright shall always be retained by the original author, and if transferred to the Group shall be royalty-free.
- 6.3. The Group shall acknowledge the original author of any publication, unless by exception the author wishes to remain anonymous in the public domain.

7. RECORDS

- 7.1. The Group will liaise with the ASF Karst Area Coordinator for the Nullarbor, namely the Cave Exploration Group of SA (CEGSA), and also liaise with the ASF Library and Archives Commission.