

Petition to establish a Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT) Oceania independent chapter, 2 November 2017

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Background

We propose to establish a new SRNT chapter which encompasses the Oceania region including countries Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands. We identified a number of advantages to a SRNT Oceania chapter including:

- The region does not have an independent science-based society or peak organisation representing nicotine and tobacco research. A number of small, specialised groups managed by local cancer councils, universities or government departments exist, however they often are not science based, are focussed on local advocacy and policy or program delivery, do not represent the entire region, and do not advance knowledge in the field. A SRNT Oceania chapter will bring these groups together to provide a united and locally relevant society.
- The Oceania region has a unique identity. For example, tobacco use in Indigenous populations across Australia, New Zealand and Pacific countries is much higher than the general population, and share historical and cultural factors that may contribute to smoking. Similarly, vaporised nicotine products are much more restricted in the region than in many other parts of the world. In some areas of tobacco control, Australia and New Zealand lead the world, such as use of pricing policies and plain cigarette packaging. Furthermore, our economies and health systems are similar. An Oceania chapter, which represents these unique qualities, will provide a voice for the region and a platform for accelerated research development.
- Geographically, the region shares similarities and narrower time zones. Dependence on the US based SRNT or SRNT Europe chapter for conferences, webinars and other educational and communication events is difficult for members in the Oceania region due to distance, time zones and cost, particularly for junior researchers. An Oceania chapter delivering regional based events and activities will counter those barriers to participation.
- An Oceania chapter will also be an efficient mechanism for SRNT to directly link with members in the region, and ensure greater participation and collaboration of the broader SRNT membership in Oceania research and other activities.

Proposed Governance and Activities of the SRNT Oceania chapter

As per the Policy on the Formation of SRNT Chapters (2017), SRNT Oceania chapter will form by-laws that are consistent with the SRNT By-laws (See attachment A for Proposed SRNT Oceania Chapter By-Laws).

Membership will consist of no less than 50 members (see Attachment B for results of survey of chapter interest in the Oceania region). Once the SRNT Board accepts this petition, a formal call for expressions of interest in membership will be made. Members will be required to be SRNT general members. Chapter membership will involve a small additional fee (e.g. AUD \$20-50 from which students and postdocs within 2 years of PhD will be exempt). Tobacco industry members will not be eligible for chapter membership.

A chapter governing body will be formed with members electing to hold positions on the chapter management group (President, President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Lead, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Lead, Maori Lead and Pacific Region Lead). In order to establish the chapter a small executive will be formed of those submitting this petition (Professor Billie Bonevski, Associate Professor Natalie Walker and Associate Professor Coral Gartner). The executive will lead the establishment of the chapter, and hold executive positions in the chapter for no less than its first year of operation.

It is anticipated that in its first two years of operation, the SRNT will plan to undertake a number of activities.

Year 1:

- Webinar with invited speaker
- Establishment of an EMCR network
- Establishment of an Indigenous researchers network
- Establish a social media presence

Year 2:

- Local conference, possibly as a joint meeting with a local conference such as the Oceania Tobacco Control Conference which is scheduled for 2019 in Sydney
- Webinar with invited speaker

In addition, other activities planned:

- Mentoring and gender equity programs for EMCRs and female researchers
- Establishment of special interest groups
- Establishments of members-only listservs
- Participate in policy and legislative position papers and submissions relating to nicotine and tobacco in the Oceania region

The proposed Oceania chapter will meet the SRNT Minimum Chapter Standards as outlined in the Policy on the Formation of SRNT Chapters.

ATTACHMENT A

SRNT Oceania Bylaws DRAFT 20/10/2017

(November, 2017)

SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH ON NICOTINE AND TOBACCO, Oceania CHAPTER

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this chapter of the Society shall be the "Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco Oceania (SRNT-O)."

ARTICLE II

DEFINITION, MISSION STATEMENT, AND GOALS

The mission and goals of the SRNT-O will be identical to those of the "Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco, Inc." (SRNT), for the Oceania region.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERS

SRNT-O represents SRNT members residing in the Oceania region defined by the Pacific Ocean. Oceania is a geographic region comprising Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia and Australasia. This includes thousands of islands, the largest and most populous include Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Tonga and Samoa (note Hawaii is located in Polynesia but is a US state). Membership in SRNT-O is voluntary, based on payment of annual dues established by the SRNT-O Board. Any member of SRNT may join SRNT-O, and all SRNT-O members must be members in good standing of SRNT.

ARTICLE IV

MEETINGS OF MEMBERS AND VOTING

- 1. *Time, Place, and Call.*** The annual meeting of the SRNT Oceania shall be held at such place and on such date as may be determined by the SRNT-O Board.
- 2. *Voting.*** Each Full Member of SRNT-O shall have one vote. In the election of the Board members of SRNT-O, individuals who receive a plurality of the votes cast shall be elected.
- 3. *SRNT-O Board Meetings:*** SRNT-O Board holds a minimum of four (4) Board meetings per year, one of which is during the annual SRNT-O Conference.

ARTICLE V

BOARD MEMBERS

- 1. *Election.*** The SRNT-O Board consists of nine (9) elected SRNT-O members, who shall each serve for three (3) years. Each year, two (2) new Board members are elected by the SRNT-O membership in an election organized by SRNT-O (see Annex for details of the election procedure).

SRNT-O Board elections are to specific Board positions. One position is President-Elect. The individual elected to this position will serve as President-Elect in their first year, President in their second year, and Past-President in their third year. The other position is for one of the other Board positions (Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Lead, Capacity Building Lead, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Lead, Maori Lead and Pacific Region Lead), on a rolling basis.

In addition, the SRNT-O Board includes the SRNT Member Delegate for Oceania.

The Member Delegate for Oceania is elected for three (3) years by the Oceania membership of SRNT in an election organized by SRNT.

2. Terms of Office. All elected Board positions are for a period of three years. All Board members can be re-elected at the end of their term.

3. Qualification for Office. Any Full Member of SRNT-O residing in Oceania and in good standing shall be eligible for nomination and election to any elective office.

4. Vacancies. If the office of President becomes vacant, the President-Elect shall fulfil the unexpired term.

If any of the Board member positions becomes vacant, a special election will be held and the Board will re-constitute itself.

5. Duties of Officers. The duties of officers will be as hereinafter specified or as otherwise provided by law.

a) President. The President shall preside at and schedule meetings of the Board, the Annual General Meeting of SRNT-O, and any special meetings that may be called. The President shall prepare the agendas for said meetings. The President shall be responsible in all matters, stated or implied, that are related to the welfare, stature, and proper operation of SRNT-O. The President shall perform such other duties as are necessarily incident to the office of President or as may be prescribed by the Board.

b) President-Elect. In the event of the President's absence at any meeting, the President-Elect shall be chairperson. In case of the absence, disability, or resignation of the President, the President-Elect shall perform the duties of the President. The President-Elect shall work closely and cooperatively with the President on all executive matters.

c) Past-President. In the event of the President's and President-Elect's absence at any meeting, the President-Elect shall be chairperson. In case of the absence, disability, or resignation of the President and President-Elect, the Past-President shall perform the duties of the President. The Past-President shall work closely and cooperatively with the President a President-Elect on all executive matters.

d) Secretary. The Secretary shall assist the President and other Board members in preparing documents related to SRNT-O, and assume responsibility for preparing the minutes of all meetings. Minutes must be mailed to the Board members within one month after the meeting.

e) Treasurer. The Treasurer is jointly responsible for the receipt, custody, and disbursement of all funds of the Society. The Treasurer is signatories on the SRNT-O bank account. The Treasurer shall report on the financial condition of the Society to the Board and the SRNT-O membership at the Annual General Meeting of SRNT-O. The Treasurer assists in fundraising in collaboration with the President and Communications Officer.

f) *Communications Officer.* The Communications Officer is responsible for SRNT-O external communications, including maintaining SRNT-O's Internet and social media presence, and communications with SRNT-O members and external agencies (e.g., media requests etc.). The Communications Officer also coordinates the recruitment of new SRNT-O members and reports to the President.

g) *Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Lead, Maori Lead and Pacific Region Lead.* These SRNT-O members (3) will represent the main Indigenous peoples of the Oceania region, attend SRNT-O Board meetings, and are responsible for ensuring cultural appropriateness of all SRNT-O policies and actions.

Member Delegate for Oceania. In addition, the Member-Delegate for Oceania is a member of the SRNT Board with voting rights. The Member Delegate for Oceania is responsible for representing the interests of the SRNT-O at the SRNT Board, and for providing information on developments and discussions concerning the entire SRNT to SRNT-O.

ARTICLE VI

LEGAL STATUS

SRNT-O shall comply and conform to SRNT Bylaws and policies and shall uphold the standards of SRNT.

SRNT-O shall follow Australian fiscal policies related with its registration as a non-profit scientific society.

SRNT-O shall use its approved name on all official documents, correspondence and contracts.

ANNEX

Election procedure

Each year two new Board members are elected. The call for candidates should be sent to each SRNT-O member by e-mail from SRNT secretariat, and also posted by the President of SRNT-O on the SRNT listserv, no later than the end of June. Deadline for candidatures should be no later than the end of July. SRNT-O members should then cast their vote no later than the end of August. Following the distribution of the election ballot, votes should be sent by E-mail to the President of SRNT-O. The results of the election should be communicated to the SRNT-O membership no later than the end of September.

Candidates to the Board of SRNT-O should be full members of SRNT-O residing in Oceania. Their candidature should be seconded by two (2) SRNT-O members. Each SRNT-O member can only support two (2) candidates. Candidates should provide a very short CV of not more than 250 words, and complete the SRNT disclosure of competing interest form.

The responsible individual in the country in which the SRNT-O bank account is held is appointed by majority vote of the SRNT-O board, with this appointment reviewed and approved on an annual basis by the SRNT-O board. There are no other restrictions on the duration for which an individual may be appointed as responsible individual

ATTACHMENT B

Results of a 2017 survey of SRNT members who reside in Oceania

The survey was emailed to SRNT current and lapsed members and non-members conference delegates listed on the AAOLA group, plus individuals known to Bonevski, Walker and Gartner as nicotine and tobacco research active in the Oceania region. Not all participants received all questions (as Walker sent a sub-set of questions to a NZ listerv), hence sample size differences by question.

Q1. If established, would you join a SRNT Oceania chapter (n=83)?

Yes: 72

No: 2

Unsure: 9

Q2 Would you be interested to participate in SRNT Oceania chapter Governance, responsible for managing SRNT Oceania activities (eg, President, President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications officer, Meetings/conference Manager, etc) (n=70)?

Yes: 31

No: 18

Unsure: 21

Q3 Which of the following possible SRNT Oceania chapter benefits would you be interested in (n=70)?

	N Yes	N No
Webinars on various topics	55	15
A short conference (possibly held in association with Oceania Tobacco Control Conference, or other)	64	6
Topical workshops held before or after conferences	66	4
Members input into policy documents and position statements	58	11
EMCR networking and mentoring programs	49	21
Participate in locally relevant SRNT Special Interest Groups (eg, Indigenous populations)	59	11
Participate in member-only listservs	54	16

Q4: Are you primarily based in (n=83):

Australia: 53

New Zealand: 25

Pacific nation: 2

Other: 3