



# Policy Framework

Policy No: BP 09

Policy Detail	
<b>Policy Description</b>	This document details the development and hierarchy of policies.
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Chair, Governance Committee
Policy Approval	
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## 1. Introduction

The Policy Framework is the operational structure for developing, implementing, reviewing and maintaining all AIA policies and procedures in a consistent format. Implementation and use of the Policy Framework will provide clarity and a model for good practice and governance.

### 1.1 Purpose

Board members, staff and members are subject to legislation and policies that are designed to promote and support a high standard of governance and organisational integrity.

The Policy Framework outlines the approach taken in the development of policy and the process to be followed in the design, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of policy. Adherence to the framework will ensure that all policies are necessary, current, and relevant. The Policy Framework sets out:

- The Hierarchy of Precedence
- Types of AIA documents
- Principles of the Policy Framework

It is the responsibility of the Policy Owner to oversee application of the framework so that all policies (including procedures and guidelines) are approved, remain current and are reviewed within applicable timeframes. It is the responsibility of each management area to implement procedures to ensure the requirements of each policy are met.

All AIA board members, staff and volunteers must follow all policies and procedures applicable to them. Policies must also be followed by contractors where their agreement or contract states that they must comply with relevant AIA policies and procedures.

### 1.2 Hierarchy of Precedence

Within the Policy Framework, a policy hierarchy orders the precedence of the instruments. A document lower in the hierarchy must relate to, and be consistent with, a document higher in the hierarchy. Procedures or guidelines should include links to the relevant overarching policy.

The hierarchy of the five levels is as follows:

1. Legislation/Regulations
2. Board Policies
3. Management Policies
4. Procedure
5. Guidelines or work instructions

### 1.3 Hierarchy Levels

#### 1.3.1 Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing AIA are the Corporations Act 2001, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013. In addition, AIA is subject to a range of legal requirements imposed by government agencies at local, state and territory and Commonwealth levels.

AIA's regulators include:

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- Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission (ACNC) - is the independent national regulator of charities. AIA is a registered charity. To remain eligible to be registered and receive charitable tax concessions, charities must meet certain obligations to the ACNC
  - Australian Securities & Investment Commission (ASIC) – is principally responsible for the enforcement of the Corporations Act. ASIC is also responsible for overseeing the ASIC Act
  - Australian Taxation Office (ATO) - administers tax legislation
  - State government fundraising regulators – administers fundraising regulation (where that function has not been harmonised with the ACNC)
  - State government revenue offices – state taxes, stamp duty and compliance
  - Office of the Australian Information Commissioner – is responsible for privacy functions conferred by the Privacy Act and other laws

### 1.3.2 National Board Policy

A policy is a concise, definitive, statement of direction. Policies state the major principles and provisions that provide the governance parameters (framework) or the philosophical approach to a particular issue.

AI Australia is part of Amnesty International globally. The National Board must ensure that AIA's policies conform to and are consistent with Amnesty International's decisions and policies as they apply to sections and the movement generally.

Policies are mandatory and state:

- WHAT the Board's position is on a specific topic or issue,
- WHY it has adopted that position
- TO WHOM it applies.

Board policies are categorised as either governance policies or operational policies.

### 1.3.3 Management Policies

Management policies are policies that have been developed at the direction of the National Director in response to specific responsibilities which arise in that area such as human resource, employment, technology systems, information and security related policies. These policies are approved by the National Director and can apply to employees, volunteers and/or contractors employed by AIA, as relevant.

### 1.3.4 Procedure

A procedure is linked to a policy and is a series of step-by-step instructions that detail how a policy is to be implemented.

Procedures state:

- WHO is responsible,
- WHAT they need to do, and
- HOW and WHEN they should do it.

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### **1.3.5 Guideline or work instruction**

A guideline sets out how the procedures should be implemented within the work environment.

## **1.4 Principles**

The following general principles will apply to the development and review of policies.

All policies must:

- Be supported by an implementation and communication plan
- Be written concisely, in plain English and clearly expressed using the definitions contained in the Glossary of Terms
- Be presented in a common format using the Policy Template
- Be assigned a Policy Owner who will have overarching responsibility for the policy document, including its communication, the carrying out of reviews and maintaining currency
- With the exception of Management policies (which are approved by or as authorized by the National Director), be approved by the relevant Committee prior to being presented to the Board for approval.

## **1.5 Policy Register**

Details of all policies are entered on the Policy Register.

## **1.6 Glossary of Terms**

To avoid duplication in every policy, a glossary of terms used in documents covered by the Framework and generic information is referenced in the Glossary of Terms document attached at Appendix 1.

## **1.7 Roles and Responsibilities**

Information about who is involved in the process of developing and approving policies and what they do is provided at Appendix 2.

## **1.8 Policy Template**

All policies will be issued in the format of the Policy Template attached at Appendix 3.

## **1.9 Access to Policies**

Access to approved policies is provided to:

- Directors, members of board committees, and senior staff members;
- Employees and contractors

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## 1.10 Review of Framework

Amendments to this framework (not including the appendices) are to be approved by the Board, unless amendments are minor and do not affect the substance of the framework.

Amendments to the appendices to this framework (comprising a glossary of terms, a statement of roles and responsibilities and a policy template) can be approved by the Governance Committee.

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## Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

**Amnesty International Australia or AIA:** The company limited by guarantee established under the name “Amnesty International Australia.

**Amnesty Management Team:** Means the senior management team of AIA, led by the National Director.

**ACNC:** Australian Charities and Not-For-Profits Commission.

**ACNC Act:** The Act establishing the ACNC and setting out its functions, powers and rules applicable to registered charities.

**Activism and Leadership Committee:** A Committee established in clause 14.2 of the AIA Constitution.

**Activism and Membership Committee:** A Committee established under clause 14.1 of the AIA Constitution.

**AGM:** The Annual General Meeting.

**ARC:** Audit and Risk Committee, a committee of the Board of AIA established under 13.17 of the AIA Constitution.

**Budget Year:** The period determined by the Annual General Meeting of AIA or, in default of such determination, by the Board, for which a budget must be prepared.

**Chair:** Means: the person elected by the National Board as the Chair of the National Board of AIA in accordance with the AIA Constitution. The Chair is the public representative of the Board and provides leadership to AIA and the Board

**Commonwealth:** The Commonwealth of Australia and its external territories.

**Corporations Act:** The Corporations Act 2001.

**Disqualified Person:** Is a person disqualified from managing corporations and has the meaning ascribed to it by the Corporations Act.

**Employees:** Refers to any internal contractors or casual, part-time or full-time staff members engaged by AIA to perform services for the organisation.

**Global Assembly:** Peak global decision making body of Amnesty International.

**Governance Committee:** A Committee of the Board of AIA.

**International Board:** The International Board of Amnesty International.

**Member:** Any person who is a member of AIA.

**National Director:** The National Director, in partnership with the Board, provides leadership, stewardship and operational management of the organisation. The National Director is not a member of the Board.

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**National Board:** Refers to the board of directors of AIA. The Board was formerly known as the National Executive Council or NEC.

**Regions:** Are the geographical areas to which members are ascribed in accordance with cl. 11.8 of the AIA Constitution.

**Regional President:** The member of the Activism and Leadership Committee appointed by that Committee in accordance with cl. 14.6 of the AIA Constitution.

**Secretary:** The secretary means any person appointed by the National Board as a company secretary of AIA in accordance with clause 13.4(g) of the AIA Constitution.

**Youth Advisory Group or YAG:** Is a forum of young people who are consulted on campaigns, governance, policy, strategies and other organisational issues.



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## Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
<b>Board</b>	Responsible for approving the policy.
<b>Committee</b>	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reviewing the policy</li><li>- Making a recommendation to the Board that the policy be approved.</li></ul>
<b>National Director or senior staff member authorized by National Director</b>	Responsible for approving Management policies.
<b>Company Secretary</b>	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Maintaining the Policy Framework</li><li>- General oversight of the requirements of the Framework, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Use of the Policy Template</li><li>» Use of plain English and definitions contained in the Glossary of Terms</li><li>» Ensuring the policy is concise</li></ul></li><li>- Recording in the Policy Register details of approved policies</li><li>- Ensuring policies are reviewed within the timeframe prescribed in each document.</li><li>- Authorising publication of the policy on [x]</li><li>- Oversight of publishing approved policies on [x]</li><li>- Maintaining superseded policies in the Policy Archive.</li></ul>

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## Policy Owner

Responsible for:

- The content of the policy, expanding on any direction provided by the Board as to how the requirements of the legislation or prudential standard will be met
- Ensuring an implementation and communication plan is developed in conjunction with the development or review of the policy.
- Determining what training is to be provided and to whom
- Determining whether formal attestation that the policy has been read and understood is required.

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## APPENDIX 3 Policy Template

### ● NAME OF POLICY

Policy no: XXXX

#### ● Policy detail

Policy description	[A sentence detailing what area/scenario the policy covers]
Policy applies to:	[A sentence summarising the information from the 'Scope' section of the policy]
Policy owner:	[Name of person who has overarching responsibility for the document]

#### ● Policy approval

Approved by Governance Committee:	[Insert date of Committee Meeting]
Approved by Board:	[Insert date of Board Meeting]
Effective date:	[Insert date agreed]
Publishing:	[Internal Document: unrestricted access via intranet Policy Portal / External Document for publishing on website]
Version control:	[eg Draft – 5 June 2018]
Version number:	[x]
Review date:	[x]

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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# 1. Policy, scope and purpose

## 1.1 Introduction

[Paragraph or two on the reason the Policy has been developed].

## 1.2 Overview

[Provide a succinct summary of the policy.]

## 1.3 Purpose

[Details of the purpose of the Policy, for example:]

1. [This Policy meets the requirements of [legislation / regulation / ACNC recommendations]
2. [This Policy details the principles and controls which apply to .....]

## 1.4 Scope and application

[When and to whom the Policy applies, for example:]

*[This Policy applies to all employees and volunteers of AIA. Volunteer status is determined by virtue of ....]*

# 2. Policy Content [Format = Heading 1]

## 2.1 Sub-heading [Format = Heading 2]

Normal text lorem ipsum Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, in cum altera audire constituto.

**2.1.1** Ad eos ullum dissentiunt, quo in mutat dissentias, congue veritus cu eam. Usu ea deleniti salutandi accommodare. Tota virtute per ut, oportere consulatu sea at, eum no debitis mnesarchum. Assum interpretaris ut ius, et accusam prodesset ius.

**2.1.2** Ad eos ullum dissentiunt, quo in mutat dissentias, congue veritus cu eam. Usu ea deleniti salutandi accommodare. Tota virtute per ut, oportere consulatu sea at, eum no debitis mnesarchum. Assum interpretaris ut ius, et accusam prodesset ius.

**2.1.2.1 [Format = tab once for fourth level detail].**Ad eos ullum dissentiunt, quo in mutat dissentias, congue veritus cu eam. Usu ea deleniti salutandi accommodare. Tota virtute per ut, oportere consulatu sea at, eum no debitis mnesarchum. Assum interpretaris ut ius, et accusam prodesset ius.

**2.1.2.2** Ad eos ullum dissentiunt, quo in mutat dissentias, congue veritus cu eam. Usu ea deleniti salutandi accommodare. Tota virtute per ut, oportere consulatu sea at, eum no debitis mnesarchum. Assum interpretaris ut ius, et accusam prodesset ius.

## Policy drafting hints

- Write the policy in plain English. Be clear and concise, avoiding jargon, complex language and long paragraphs. The aim is to communicate as simply and effectively as possible.
- Do not allow for every possible interpretation of the policy as this can unnecessarily complicate the policy. The policy should details the broad parameters of the Board direction with more specific detail provided in the underpinning procedure.

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- If an action is mandatory, use 'must'
  - If the action is recommended, use 'recommended'
  - Avoid use of the words 'should' and 'shall'
  - Limit the use of the word 'will' using it only to describe a future action [and not as a synonym for 'must']
  - Use the present tense and active voice where possible
  - Avoid gender-specific pronouns, for example use 'they' instead of 'he' or 'she'
  - When using an acronym, on the first usage, detail the full term or title followed by the acronym in brackets, for example, Amnesty International Australia (AIA).

### **3. Policy governance**

[In this section 'housekeeping' information is detailed.] For example:

#### **3.1 Record keeping**

Documentation to demonstrate the *[insert]* will be retained in accordance with the [Records Management Policy].

#### **3.2 Availability of this Policy**

This Policy is available to *[insert]*

#### **3.3 Review**

A formal review of this Policy will be undertaken every [three] years or more frequently if required due to legislative changes or changes to AIA's operations.

#### **3.4 Board approval**

Material amendments to this Policy are to be first approved by the [Governance Committee] prior to obtaining the formal approval of the Board.