

Candidate Nominations and Elections

KEY POINTS

- The Board supports the introduction of a **candidate assessment panel** to assist decision making during elections.
- The Board supports a **reduction in electioneering** during elections and seeks **grower input** on how this is structured.

CURRENT APPROACH

CBH encourages grower members to stand for election as a Member Director if they believe they have the skills, experience and ability to represent grower interests on the Board.

CBH currently has no assessment process for Member Director candidates standing for election. We do not place any restrictions over how candidates can campaign for votes during an election, a practice known as electioneering.

PEER REVIEW & BEST PRACTICE GOVERNANCE

Candidate Nomination

Most of our peers assess candidates before putting them forward to members for election and provide members with supporting material to assist in a decision. Appropriate materials include statements on a candidate's character, experience, education, skills and competency.

All agree the election and appointment process should be formal and transparent, and be based on merit and objective criteria.

Elections

Governance codes advise boards to consider which procedures and activities are appropriate to maximise and enable member participation in a co-operative's governance.

Most of our peers place strict protocols to limit electioneering due to its potential to affect the reputation of the organisation and discourage good candidates from running.

Of the 11 co-operative peers we interviewed, nine either do not allow electioneering or have restrictions on the ways candidates can do so.

THE BOARD SUPPORTS

Based on the insights gained through the peer review phase, the Board supports:

- publishing clear guidelines for skills and attributes required of Directors. To fulfil its role effectively, a board should collectively possess an appropriate balance of skills, experience and perspectives taking into account the demands and complexity of the organisation's business model and the environment in which it operates.



- introducing a candidate assessment panel, which includes external panel members to assess the capability of candidates in Member Director elections and provide members with an independent assessment of the candidates to assist in decision making. Sitting Directors would be required to participate in the panel process, while it could be optional for new candidates.
- introducing a reduction in electioneering to balance growers' needs to familiarise themselves with candidates while protecting the reputation of the co-operative.
- requiring graduation from the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) company directors course for all Member Directors within their first term.

FOR GROWERS TO CONSIDER

Candidate Assessment Panel

The Board would like grower input on the features of a possible candidate assessment panel.

In structuring the panel, all members could be external and independent, or there could be a mix of both external and internal CBH representatives.

Options also exist in the type of information the panel could provide on candidates, from a points system or score for each candidate to a general rating system (meets, exceeds, does not meet).

Electioneering

With most of our peers placing restrictions on electioneering, the Board would like to understand grower views on possible changes to our election processes.

Candidates can currently use a variety of channels to communicate with grower members during elections including:

- directly contacting grower members via letters, phone calls and emails
- conducting media interviews
- advertising
- submitting candidate profiles
- holding grower meetings

If there were to be a reduction in electioneering, the Board would like to understand which channels best support or negatively impact grower decision making during elections.

QUESTIONS

- Should the assessment panel be fully independent?
- What kind of information would you like from the assessment panel?
- What types of electioneering would you like to see controlled?