



**Com.It.Es.**  
Comitato degli Italiani all'Estero  
South Australia

**Com.It.Es Meeting– Tuesday 12 May 2020, 6:15pm**  
**Zoom meeting**

MINUTES:

**1. Welcome & apologies**

- Present: Dr Christian Verdicchio, Gianna Vorrasi, Mark Quaglia, Michael Donato, Prof Angela Scarino, Alessandro Ragazzo, Hon Tony Piccolo, Andrea Ramon (video conference).
- Apologies: Antonio Rosato, Martina Matta (on maternity leave).
- Consular Rep: Dott Adriano Stendardo - Consul of Italy
- Guest: Prof. Franco Papandrea - CGIE Representative

**2. Conflict of Interest**

None.

**3. Confirmation of the agenda**

None.

**4. Confirmation of February 2020 minutes**

Gianna Vorrasi moved, seconded Mark Quaglia and carried.

4.1.1 Business arising

None.

**5. COVID-19**

Letters were sent to the Australian Federal Government regarding support to temporary Visa Holders.

A letter was sent to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Di Maio about supporting Italians here in Australia and New Zealand. Christian Verdicchio thanked Franco Papandrea for his help in this matter.

Franco Papandrea pointed out that attention is needed for Italians living in Australia with temporary visas, in particular student and working holiday visa holders. Although the Australian Prime Minister has urged temporary visa holders who are unable to support themselves in the next six months, should return home as soon as possible, it's not that simple and they may still find themselves in a situation of great difficulty and could face trouble.

Com.It.Es South Australia  
(Committee for Italians Abroad)  
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Has received response regarding funds allocation to assist Italian citizens who, being abroad, are in conditions of poverty or serious need due to the health situation linked to the pandemic from COVID-19. The subsidy may also go to citizens who are not registered with the AIRE. The Italian Government has allocated 4 million euros, however only 1.000,00 euros will go to Sydney and 1.300,00 to Melbourne, nothing to the other states. This is based on what states had received in the previous year regarding emergency funding. In Australia there is not a great demand to request such subsidies as the health system is quite good. Will send information to the Ambassador and to the Consul.

Discussion followed:

- Emergency funds allocation greater to South America countries
- Com.It.Es. members surprised and disappointed about money allocation and the Italian Government logic relying on what states have received previously instead of considering the current circumstances. It is crucial to break this way of dealing funds
- Australia has the largest number of Italian students than other countries, yet its ignored
- Australia is in disadvantage of the way that funds have been allocated (including language and culture)
- 'Virtual Institutes' can they boost academic study, increase students number?
- Ensure appropriate funds to Italian living in Australia that don't qualify because not registered with AIRE
- Stimulus payment. Victoria, ACT, Tasmania and Queensland Governments have provided support to all temporary visa holders with a \$250 one off payment per person in financial hardship as a result from COVID-19
- As for the Prime Minister's statement 'has urged temporary visa holders who are unable to support themselves in the next six months, should return home' the matter is that they should have enough money to survive for 12 months
- Job Keeper payment scheme to support businesses to keep more people in jobs, many WHV are unable to receive the payment being casual workers and for only 6 months with the same employer. However with their work they have made a substantial and growing contribution to the economy and the local community that they deserve to be assisted to endure hardship
- Send as soon as possible a letter to the Premier asking to consider providing a one-off payments to temporary visa holders
- The State might not be able to assist as subsidies have come from the Federal Government. The Italian Government should support financially.

*Michael Donato moved that a letter be sent to the Premier regarding stimulus payment for temporary holder's visa that are unable to get any government assistance, seconded by Mark Quaglia, all in favour.*

**Action:** Christian Verdicchio to draft the letter and send it to executive members for approval.

## 6. Reports

### 6.1.1 President's – Dr Christian Verdicchio

1. **Italian Liberation Day update.** The event organised by the Army Forces went ahead and posted on social media. The Carabinieri (Joe Scalzi) were not invited. This year was a one off but for the 2021 event it will be discussed with the Army Forces.
2. **ARIA.** It has been relaunched and the new President is Dr. Ilaria Pagani. She would like to meet to discuss some ideas for projects and would like to get Com.It.Es. involved. **Action:** Christian Verdicchio will send an invitation to Dr. Pagani to attend the next Com.It.Es. meeting.
3. **SACE Board Prize Form.** Document tabled. They have required a Prize/Award Criteria.
  - a. Proposed amount \$250 for 4 years (local funds).
  - b. Angela Scarino will assist with the criteria form.

*Michael Donato moved to approve the proposed amount and years, seconded by Angela Scarino, all in favour.*
4. **Michael Donato stepping down from Executive position.**

Email received tabled. The committee thanked Michael Donato for all his contribution as an executive member.

*Mark Quaglia moved to accept Michael Donato's resignation as Executive member, seconded by Angela Scarino, all in favour.*

Christian Verdicchio asked nomination from the floor. Gianna Vorrasi was nominated.

*Christian Verdicchio moved to accept Gianna Vorrasi nomination for the Executive position, seconded by Angela Scarino, all in favour. Gianna Vorrasi accepted the position.*
5. Christian Verdicchio on behalf of Com.It.Es. thanked the Consul for all his assistance during these unprecedented times and constant updates to Com.It.Es. And thanked the whole committee for their support.

*Alessandro Ragazzo moved to accept the President report, seconded by Gianna Vorrasi, all in favour.*





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6.1.2 Secretary's – acting Dr Christian Verdicchio

Correspondence in dropbox.

Martina Matta will be on maternity leave, will be missing two meetings, should be available September meeting.

6.1.3 Treasurer's – Mark Quaglia

Received funds for Cap. 3103/2020 for \$11,945.70.=. Extra funds received last year regarding the seminar are still available, the use of it could not be changed for other projects.

Com.It.Es. has received a quote of \$1,100.00.= from Matteo Farina for the translation of the Community Engagement Report “Understanding the Past, Present and Future”.

**Tony Piccolo moved to accept and approve the quote for the translation, seconded by Alessandro Ragazzo, all in favour.**

***Angela Scarino moved to accept and approve the Treasurer report, seconded by Alessandro Ragazzo, all in favour.***

7. **Consular Report** - Dott Adriano Stendardo Italian Consul

The Consulate has been busy dealing with COVID-19, staff alternating shifts to provide continues service. There has been a significant drop in calls and regular service, people have put on hold their renewal passport or a new application as it is not possible to travel. There are no funds allocated for financial assistance for Italian citizens abroad in significant distress but the Consulate will help through other revenues and it would be considered as a loan with a promise to repay. The Consulate has an obligation to help.

Franco Papandrea asked whether there have been, in South Australia, Italians on a temporary visa who wishes to return to Italy. The Consul replied that there have been, not a significant number, mainly visitors who are living with relatives.

Celebrations of the Italian Republic Anniversary (2 June) have been cancelled this year due to COVID-19 restrictions about gathering and distances. A message will be post on the Italian Consulate website. Any initiative from others regarding this event is fine but he will not be able to attend.



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Christian Verdicchio suggested having a video message together Com.It.Es. and Consul. If not possible Com.It.Es. will post a message on social media.

Franco Papandrea added that Com.It.Es. Canberra had the same discussion and they will do a symbolic ceremony online.

**8. CGIE Report – Prof. Franco Papandrea**

See discussion on COVID-19, item 5 of the agenda.

A lot of discussion has occurred this year with Intercomites meetings online, Fire Emergency, COVID-19, Correspondence, etc. He thanked Christian Verdicchio for his support, pleased that this Com.It.Es., President and committee member, has shown leadership. Any issue that arises he will be available and happy to participate to the Com.It.Es. meetings.

**9. Sub-Committees Reports**

**9.1.1 Community Engagement and Public Relations – Dr Christian Verdicchio**

1. Community engagement report to be translated and finalised by Matteo Farina.  
Quote tabled, see Treasurer's report. Discussion followed regarding social gathering for a possible forum in 2020 because of COVID-19. Probably by September there should updates on the situation.

2. New Arrivals Seminar.

Given COVID-19 it is suggested whether to consider having the forum online and provide information about social support available during these times. Extra funds from last year of \$1,500 are still available and could pay people to provide their expert opinion. It is decided to put the Seminar on hold until the second semestre.

3. AIRE publicity drive

Aim to increase numbers registered in South Australia. We have now dropped as other states have increased registration numbers. This is important to ensure need for the Consulate and better numbers for any future funds. It is also important to register to be able to deal for any emergency situation. We have funds to promote the matter and this has done well in Melbourne driven by both Com.It.Es. and Consulate.

Michael Donato reminded that back in 2009 and again in 2013 the Italian Government was closing the Adelaide and Brisbane Consulates as not enough people were registered to AIRE to justify keeping open the 2 consulates.

  
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The Consul proposed to add the question of AIRE to the New Arrivals Seminar agenda to promote awareness. Young people, on temporary visa, have asked for service but were not registered to AIRE.

Franco Papandrea suggested to consider to apply for extra funds for this project.

**Action: Christian Verdicchio and the Consul will work on the project and ask for a quote in relation to printing to submit for extra funds.**

9.1.2 Education and Research – Prof Angela Scarino

Language report completed and sent a copy to SAATI & Dante Alighieri Society Adelaide as they have collaborated to this project, have received immense support from them. Happy to organise the forum at UniSA when it will be possible at no cost, Com.It.Es. just need to organise food. Those who were involved with the project will be invited, including teachers.

Hope to be able to continue with this project and extend it. The report highlights what is meaningful to the children, to be able to listen to them and understand what is important, listening to new arrivals children who have their stories to tell was brilliant.

Angela Scarino urged Franco Papandrea to do more in this area.

**Action: Christian Verdicchio to send the report to Franco Papandrea**

*Mark Quaglia moved to accept all reports, seconded by Michael Donato, all in favour.*

10. Other business

None.

11. Meeting Close 8.15 pm

Next meeting Tuesday 14 July 2020 at 6:15pm



*Dr Christian Verdicchio*  
**President**



*Mr Mark Quaglia*  
**Treasurer**