

MINUTES – GPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

Held on Monday 28 July 2025 commencing at 09:00 AEST

A hybrid meeting held at the Victoria Hotel Board Room, Victoria Hotel, 215 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000 and virtually via Zoom Webinar.

Attendee list

| Surname | First Name | Affiliation |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Bridgman | Peter | GPA Director |
| Cooper | Ashley | NSWF |
| Everitt | Justin | NSWF |
| Fowler | Mark | WAFF |
| Gladigau | John | GPSA |
| Hooke | Mitchell | GPA Director |
| Hosking | Brett | VFF |
| Large | Barry | GPA Chairman |
| Mellings | Jason | VFF |
| Milgate | Ryan | VFF |
| Perry | Brad | GPSA |
| Taylor | Brendan | AgForce Qld |
| Weidemann | Andrew | GPA Board |
| Young | Duncan | GPA Board |
| Schilling | Mark | GPA Board |
| Madden | Matthew | GPA Board |
| Bettles | Colin | GPA Staff |
| Milne | Michael | Company Secretary |
| Hill | Matthew | Grower Member |
| Daniel | Paul | Grower Member |
| Oxborrow | Rachael | GPA Staff |
| Fox | Charlotte | GPA Staff |
| Cassidy | Cindy | GPA Board |

1) Welcome

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 9:00am and welcomed those in attendance to GPA Annual General Meeting. The Chairman expressed his appreciation to everyone for making themselves available noting that a Policy Council meeting will follow.

2) Apologies

There were no apologies received for the meeting.

3) Minutes of Last Meeting (29 July 2024)

It was agreed to amend the previous meeting by removing Adrian McCabe from the list of attendees and adding John Gladigau.

Resolution 1

The meeting confirmed the amended Minutes of the AGM of the Company held 29 July 2024 as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved: Andrew Weidemann

Seconded: Mitch Hooke

CARRIED

4) Chairman's Report

The Chairman presented his report, the highlights of which were as follows:

- The Chairman welcomed members, state funding organisations, directors and GPA's broader support base, recognising their importance to the organisation.
- He described the past 12 months as another year of growth for GPA, noting that the organisation had demonstrated resilience and an ability to respond to challenges.
- A major challenge during the year was Colin Bettle's accident. The Chairman expressed relief that Colin had returned home safely and was continuing his recovery.
- He reaffirmed GPA's full support for Colin and wished him a complete recovery, acknowledging the personal significance of seeing Colin present at the AGM.
- The Chairman thanked everyone who stepped up to support GPA during Colin's absence, with particular recognition given to Pete Arkel for his willingness to help and the contribution he made during that period.
- He advised that the 2025 Annual Report had been prepared and was available on the GPA website
- He noted that GPA's review process was continuing. While progress had been slow, he emphasised that the priority was to get the process right rather than rush it.
- Members and stakeholders were encouraged to approach the review process with empathy, open-mindedness and a willingness to work together toward practical solutions.
- The Chairman raised the issue of GRDC reserves, arguing that a decision needed to be made and that GRDC should show respect to representative organisations and act to protect growers' interests. He suggested that the current GRDC position reflected the strength and vibrancy of the grains industry rather than a failure of the model.
- He linked the growth in reserves and industry change to advances in technology, increased cropping activity and broader structural shifts in agriculture.
- The decline of the sheep industry was identified as one factor contributing to more land being converted into cropping, further strengthening the grains sector.
- The Chairman stated his belief that the Australian grains industry is in a very strong and healthy position.

- He described the levy review process as an important platform for facilitating grower consultation and communication.
- He noted that consultations for the levy review process, which began in 2022, would be concluded.
- Key questions for the levy review were framed around whether the current arrangements are fit for purpose, fair, equitable and delivering value for growers.
- The Chairman said GPA would remain open to engagement with industry parties but stressed that its central focus is returning profits and value to growers.
- Biosecurity was highlighted as an ongoing priority area, supported by strong financial backing and linked directly to protecting growers' interests.
- He argued that reallocating funds from GRDC toward priorities such as biosecurity and grower representation was a logical step.
- On GPA's financial position, the Chairman stated that the organisation was in a sound position, with reserves at a good level. However, he cautioned that as GPA achieves more goals and expands its work, expenditure pressures are increasing and more capital investment is required.
- He identified rising costs as a significant issue, warning that GPA cannot continue to absorb increased costs indefinitely.
- The Chairman noted that GPA is currently attempting to balance its budget and avoid operating at a deficit.
- He pointed out that 26% of GPA's income comes from state farming organisations, creating pressure when those organisations face their own challenges and circumstances.
- He said GPA needs to keep reviewing how it is resourced so it can properly represent Australian grain growers through its state farming organisation members.
- The Chairman thanked supporters, including Nufarm, for backing GPA's Mental Health Project.
- He acknowledged Brad Hogg's work as instrumental in helping GPA establish a presence in the mental health space and seek to make a positive difference.
- He recognised Minister Julie Collins and Department Head Adam Fennessy for making time to engage with GPA.
- He thanked the GPA board for its support and GPA staff for their significant efforts during the year.
- He gave particular appreciation to the state farming organisations, recognising their commitment, participation and efforts to make a difference for Australian grain growers.

5) 2025 Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Company Secretary presented the report, highlights of which were as follows:

- the organisation recorded a deficit of approximately \$132,000 for the year, which was a significant movement from the prior year, when the organisation recorded a surplus of approximately \$98,000.
- Voluntary levy income increased by approximately \$52,000, a strong and positive outcome attributed to effective work in attracting contributors.
- The Company Secretary identified higher contractor costs and other costs as contributors to the financial result. Some of these costs were associated with the period during which the Chief Executive was absent for an extended period.
- The Company Secretary also highlighted unbudgeted project expenditure related to important projects that the organisation and members considered necessary to progress as a factor contributing to the deficit.
- The GPA independent review was also identified as an area of continuing expenditure.

- The balance sheet was in a reasonably strong position, and it was emphasised that the organisation still had a reasonable amount of funds in the bank which were earning interest, providing an additional source of income to support business operations.
- There were no bad debts at year end.
- The Company Secretary invited questions from attendees regarding the annual report.

6) Director Appointments

The meeting resolved that the following nominees endorsed by the Selection Committee be elected as directors in accordance with clause 15.1 of the GBA Constitution.

- Western Region Grower Director – 1 position vacant
There being only one nomination received, Mr Duncan Young was re-elected unopposed.
- Southern Region Grower Director – 1 position vacant
There being only one nomination received, Mr Andrew Weidemann was re-elected unopposed.
- Northern Region Grower Director – 1 position vacant
There being only one nomination received, Mr Brendan Taylor was re-elected unopposed.

Moved: Matthew Madden

Seconded: Justin Everitt

CARRIED

7) Auditor

The meeting resolved:

That Herries Davidson & Co - Chartered Accountants of Goulburn & Braidwood - be appointed as the Auditor for Financial Year ending 31 March 2026.

Moved: Duncan Young

Seconded: Andrew Weidemann

CARRIED:

8) Other Business

- New South Wales Farmers expressed concern that the GPA review has taken too long, noting it has been three years since the 2022 report with concern that decisions continue to be delayed.
- It was suggested that “low-hanging fruit” recommendations, especially those already agreed by all states, should be progressed quickly.
- The GBA board was asked to provide clearer direction on issues such as director term limits.
- GPA has had to balance the review with other priorities, including federal action and resource constraints. A clear process is being developed to progress recommendations before the next AGM, including draft amendments and dedicated sessions to build consensus.
- Charlotte Fox’s appointment was highlighted as a positive step in strengthening organisational capacity.
- GPA’s ability to execute was expected to improve over time, with the review process placed high on the agenda.
- Legal advice and budget have been allocated to support the constitutional amendment process.
- Peter Bridgman’s historical knowledge and experience with the original constitution will be used to inform the process.
- John Gladigau supported New South Wales Farmers’ concerns, stating his board also wanted to see solid progress within about six months.
- The Chairman said progress made during policy council should provide members with more confidence.

- The Chairman acknowledged the concerns, said they were well noted, and committed to trying to reduce pressure on member organisations.

9) Close of meeting

The Chairman thanked those in attendance for their contributions. He also thanked Cindy Cassidy for her contributions prior to resigning from the board, and the organisation wished her well.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:21am.