

**Bio & Policy Statement from
A Nominee for Associate Member Governor
Board of Governors 2018-2019**



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A few years ago, Australia's then shadow treasurer Joe Hockey came to speak at the FCC, and I asked him over lunch whether his country's 3-year parliamentary term was too short to get anything done. 'I'll tell you what,' he said. 'When you're in opposition it's too long!'

And so it's election time again at the FCC. As is often the case, the presidency and vice presidency, which along with the majority of the board is elected just by correspondents, is uncontested. As a former president, I trust you believe me when I say that's because most club-active members know how much work it is, and if there's good candidates, as there are this year, to be grateful that they are offering their service.

As is also often the case, the most-contested category is the one where all FCC members can vote – for your four associate governors. As associates are the vast majority of our membership, often have more of the practical experience club management needs, and love the FCC, its values, heritage and future as much as anyone else, that's hardly a surprise. If constitutional change comes up again, associates' representation should be increased.

So who should we vote for? If you've read the manifestos, or enjoyed elections past, you'll see there are a range of issues, preserving this practice, changing that one, reintroducing another. Or maybe as we've sadly seen in many real-world elections recently, there'll be outrage and misunderstanding that motivates voting. We all enjoy gossip and a good story, and if everything is spin or fake news, then let's just mark the box of the person who promises to make the FCC great again.

We're better than that of course. And less than the fate of the world or a nation's soul is at stake here. But the FCC, at 75, is at a watershed. The next year will see us bid farewell to the only general manager I have known, and a new one take the helm.

One of the privileges of being elected is getting to know our staff better and to see the club through their eyes, and Gilbert Cheng is friends to more members than the 350 or so who vote every year. He embodies the FCC's best memories and the most important job of the governors you elect will be to ensure that his successor settles in and takes our club forward.

That is why I'm asking for your vote, and running for the board for the sixth and final time. While lacking the skills of most of my fellow associates (I was a journalist for 20 years!) I took up the popularity-inducing role of treasurer in the outgoing board, so if you've any grievances about anything in the past year, it's my fault. If elected, I will continue to spritz cool water on suggestions which I don't think are in the best interests of the club.

In fact, I think the FCC's best years are ahead. Real news in the form of the international organisations whose correspondents gather here is more important than ever, and our landlord, and China's foreign ministry, recognize that. A new management can refresh our F&B offering and Hong Kong will never lack a cosmopolitan, intelligent, witty and cultured community that wants an unstuffy heritage building to call home.