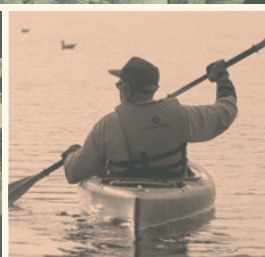


Annual Report 2019/2020



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About COTA

Our mission

We advance the rights, interests and futures of Australians as we age.

Our vision

Ageing in Australia is a time of possibility, opportunity and influence

Our values

- Respect
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Integrity

Who we are

COTA Tasmania is a small, not-for-profit organisation made up of a team of staff and volunteers who are passionate about advancing the rights and interests of Tasmanians as they age, particularly those aged over 50 years.

As the peak body representing older Tasmanians, we stand beside our community, listen to their concerns and work to ensure that their rights are upheld. We promote a positive view of ageing and challenge age stereotypes, foster inclusion and participation, and support independence and choice.

COTA Tasmania is part of the COTA network that is represented in every Australian state and territory and at a federal level through COTA Australia.

COTA Tasmania gratefully acknowledges funding support from:



Strategic Plan 2020–2025

What we do

Advocacy

For all older Australians, particularly the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Education

Our volunteer peer educators deliver free information sessions across the state, including remote and rural areas.

Policy

Contributing to discussions at the highest level of government both locally and nationally.

Consultation

Seeking out and listening to the concerns of older Tasmanians from diverse backgrounds.

Events

Delivering Seniors Week, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and year-round workshops and events that benefit older Tasmanians.

Strategic goals

- 1 We are well known and valued.
- 2 We connect with, listen to and learn from our community.
- 3 We are effective and enduring in all we do.
- 4 We attract, value and retain passionate people

Priority areas

- Making ageism a thing of the past.
- Positive reform in aged care.
- Claiming a space for mature age workers in the workforce.
- Increasing online access for older people.
- Prevention of elder abuse.

For further information about our strategic plan please see our website www.cotatas.org.au.



Our people



Sue Leitch,
Chief Executive Officer

Well, what a year! And the next reporting period will be one that will be very difficult to predict as well.

As part of this year's Annual Report we have included a specific section to comment on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on both the organisation as a whole, and also on the older Tasmanian community, who we are here to serve.

But firstly, I would like to report on our pre-COVID-19 period and the considerable work that was achieved by the organisation during this time.

From an organisational strategy point of view, we reviewed our Strategic Plan early in the reporting period and the Board committed to a new Strategic Plan through to 2025. There was a commitment to make five areas of focus for the upcoming period of 2020 to 2025:

- Making ageism a thing of the past
- Positive reform in aged care
- Claiming a space for mature age workers in the workforce
- Increasing online access for older people
- Preventing elder abuse

We were supported in this large body of work by Graham Flower of Hexagon Consultancy and we were deeply saddened by his sudden death in April. We were united in expressing our deepest sympathy to his family, friends and broader client network.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has shown that the areas of priority that we identified as part of our planning processes are wicked problems, not just here in Tasmania but across the globe, and there is still much more to do.

We have ongoing work on reviewing our Constitution that has been delayed due to COVID-19.

In January and February, we began to work with our new Minister, the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MHA, the Deputy Premier and his advisors. These early relationships were very beneficial and have assisted with our ongoing work with the Government during the COVID-19 crisis.

I attended the Governance Summit held annually by the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) in March, just prior to lockdown and this gave very interesting insights on potential impacts of COVID-19 to organisations and society in general, many of which have eventuated.

Organisationally, we have renewed our commitment to embed our new customer relationship management system and finalised our website. We are also in the process of moving our other operational systems to the cloud. These system changes have had a positive outcome for the organisation particularly during the lockdown period, to allow us to capture, collate and record the impact of COVID-19 on the people we are here to support.

My heartfelt thanks to my team, the Board and Policy Council for their enthusiastic support during this challenging time. It has been tough on all of us to adapt quickly to changed circumstances and to problem solve things quickly, but they have all been up to the task and personally very supportive of me.



Philippa Roberts, President

I don't think we will forget 2020; it has been a very peculiar year and has impacted all of us. Although we have seen some wonderful acts of kindness, we have also seen some of the worst examples of ageism in media reporting about COVID-19, and disturbing reports on the management of the virus in some aged-care homes. Both highlight the need for a strong, vibrant and sustainable peak voice for older Australians.

It has been a very tough year for our staff and volunteers. We are very fortunate to have a strong, resilient and flexible team at COTA Tas, who, at significant personal challenge, ensured our programs and advocacy continued almost seamlessly. Creative thinking pivoted projects on-line so that we had Talk Against Elder Abuse in June, and new projects such as Tassie's Kindness Connection.



David Strong, Treasurer

At the start of the year no-one could predict the situation we would all find ourselves in at the end of the financial year. Like all organisations we had to react quickly to the impacts of COVID-19 to ensure we could ride out those impacts in the short-term. As a result of the hard work of our team there has been essentially no impact on our financial status. We have benefited from additional Government funding while securing additional grants funding for services and projects. In addition, we have spent less funds on projects due to COVID-19 restrictions. The combination of additional revenue and less spend has resulted in an extraordinary surplus for this year.

The impact of COVID-19 has highlighted the importance and key role of not-for-profit, community organisations like ours in advising governments, providing data and transmitting critical information in a large-scale emergency. In addition, our team ensured the voices of older people, particularly those most vulnerable, were heard.

My term on the Board expires in November. It has been an enormous honour to represent older Tasmanians and to serve as President. We don't yet know how or when we will fully emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic; the next 12 months will be challenging.

I wish everyone in our COTA family every success in the future.

Our reporting has required some changes to meet the statutory requirements of the ACNC and recording of COVID-19 impacts. This year there is one additional statement and director's declaration. The Statements have been renamed to meet the legislative requirement and there are some presentation changes that as a result when comparing last year's numbers as presented in last year's annual report may be different to how they are presented this year but the overall result does not change.

We achieved a "net surplus for the year" of \$29,781 compared to \$4,773 last year.

Significantly, our revenue increased by \$318,446 to \$1,335,046 from \$1,016,600 last year with a corresponding expenditure increase of \$293,438 to \$1,305,265 this year compared to \$1,011,827 last year.

The majority of the revenue increase came from additional grants funding of \$285,483 plus increased funding from Administration Services (\$35,929) plus the COVID-19 relief funding (\$11,621) less the reduction in Sponsorship funding (\$9,500). The additional grants funding came from COTA Australia (\$208,978), DHHS (\$19,911) and State Growth (\$57,055).

The majority of the expenditure increase came from employee entitlements (salaries, superannuation and leave entitlements) of \$231,899 due to more staffing and staff being unable to take leave as previously planned due to COVID-19 restrictions. There was increased expenditure for projects (\$35,929) we were required to roll-out plus additional spend on consultants (\$19,233), IT contract (\$4,149) offset by decreased spend on COTA National Levy (\$6,651), website (\$22,017) and client support services (\$7,977).

Our total equity increased to \$135,722 as at 30 June 2020 from \$105,941 last year an increase of 28%. "Total Current Assets" increased marginally (3%) to \$585,291 from \$564,054 but they were changes in where the assets were being held. Cash at Bank decreased by \$36,159 (55%) and Receivables by \$124,207 (64%) while Term Deposits increased by \$183,408 (63%). Non-Current Assets increased by \$21,363 as a new motor vehicle was purchased during the year.

Current Liabilities increased from \$477,636 to \$490,455, an increase of \$12,819 (3%). The increase is due to an increase in the Provision of Employee Entitlements (\$41,940) and Payroll liabilities (\$8,776) offset by a decrease in funds being held for incomplete projects (\$21,865) and tax liabilities (\$16,032). The increase in employee entitlements is due to annual accumulations of long service plus staff being unable able to take leave due to COVID-19 restrictions.

While COVID-19 has had an impact on us both positively with additional funding and less spend due to reduced opportunities it has had a negative impact with respect to increased employee entitlements plus the inability for staff to take well earned leave. The impacts of COVID-19 will flow into next financial year when restrictions are lifted and we can spend out carried over project funds and staff can take leave. There may be additional expenditure required for resourcing to deliver our project obligations that have been delayed alongside other projects next year. However, we are well situated financially to deal with those financial impacts on the expectation that annual grant funding from governments will continue together with additional COVID-19 recovery funding.

I wish to thank the team (staff and Board) for their assistance and support during my first year as Treasurer in what has been an extremely unusual year.

Board of Directors

(as elected on Wednesday 20 November 2019)

Philippa Roberts

President

Executive Committee
FARM¹ Committee
Tas Policy Council
CRC² Committee

7 of 7 meetings attended.

John Pauley

Vice President

National Policy Council
Representative
Tas Policy Council Chair
Executive Committee
FARM¹ Committee
CRC² Committee

7 of 7 meetings attended.

David Strong

Treasurer

(appointed Nov 2019)

Executive Committee
FARM¹ Committee
CRC² Committee

6 of 7 meetings attended.

Rita Meaney

Treasurer

(term ended Nov 2019)

FARM¹ Committee
Executive Committee
CRC² Committee
SAT³ Alliance

(Chair from Nov 2018 –
Nov 2019)

3 of 4 meetings attended.

Brigid Wilkinson

Minute Secretary

Executive Committee
MC⁴ Committee

7 of 7 meetings attended.

Peta Cook

Tas Policy Council

6 of 7 meetings attended.

Glenda Daly

(resigned Nov 2019)

Tas Policy Council

1 of 4 meetings attended.

Leanne Doherty

MC⁴ Committee

3 of 4 meetings attended.

Ian Fletcher

(appointed Nov 2019)

FARM¹ Committee
SAT³ Alliance
Tas Policy Council

3 of 4 meetings attended.

Lisa Free

MC⁴ Committee

6 of 7 meetings attended.

Robert Hill

MC⁴ Committee

6 of 7 meetings attended.

Kate Hiscock

MC⁴ Committee

3 of 6 meetings attended.

Pip Shirley

FARM¹ Committee
(July – Nov 2019)

CRC² Committee
Tas Policy Council

6 of 7 meetings attended.

- 1 Finance, Audit & Risk Management
- 2 Constitution Review Committee
- 3 Seniors Alliance Tasmania
- 4 Marketing & Communications



Staff

Sue Leitch

Chief Executive Officer

Deb Lewis

Operations Manager
Senior Policy Officer

Natalie Lo

Administration
& Finance Officer

Rosalind Herbert

Project Officer
Active Ageing

Soula Houndalas

Project Officer
Aged Care Know How

Alexis Martin

Specialist Support Worker
Aged Care System
Navigator Trial

Lyn McGaurr

Project Officer
Elder Abuse Prevention

David Rose

Project Officer
Communications
& Seniors Week

Keree Rose

Project Officer
Peer Education
IT Information

Alison Smith

Information Hub Project Officer
Aged Care System Navigator
Trial, North

Luke Summers

Coordinator, Strength for Life

Margarita White-McColl

Information Hub Project Officer
Aged Care System Navigator
Trial, South

Craig Clark

Customer Liaison Officer
Seniors Week

Marguerite Grieve

Project Officer
Aged Care Know How

Volunteers

Tas Policy Council

Peta Cook
Glenda Daly
(resigned Nov 2019)
Ian Fletcher
David Henty
Ngaire Hobbins
Rita Meaney
(appointed in Nov 2019)
Kimbra Parker
John Pauley (Chair)
Philippa Roberts
Mary Sharpe
Pip Shirley
(appointed in Nov 2019)

Peer Educators

SOUTH

Rhonda Claridge
Barry Heather

Annette Horsler
Martin Modinger
Peter Orpin
Maureen Rudge
Susan Walter

NORTH

David Henty
Marion Cassidy
Michael Cassidy

Aged Care Know How Peer Support

Jill Burbury
Marion Cassidy
Michael Cassidy
Rhonda Claridge
Glenda Daly
David Henty
Judy Kile
Mez Newman

Peter Orpin
Barbie Rae
Mary Sharpe
Paul Turvey
Victoria Vyvyan
Rosa Walden
Cate Warren
Kathryn White
Derryn Wilson

IT Support

Gerald Englebrechtsen
Peter Orpin
Rosa Walden

Administration Support

Glenda Daly
(Meet & Greet Coordinator)

Events and highlights

Age Discrimination Commissioner's tour of Tasmania

COTA CEO, Sue Leitch, accompanied Dr Kay Patterson, Age Discrimination Commissioner, on a tour of regional Tasmania in August 2019.

Alongside meetings with Parliamentarians, Dr Patterson visited a number of regional communities and talked about the rights of older Australians, as well as age discrimination, elder abuse and supports that are available for people affected.

A special poster and bookmarks featuring key anti-elder abuse advice and messages were widely distributed at all stopovers.



Ashton Applewhite tour

In November 2019 COTA Tasmania partnered with EveryAGE Counts to host a presentation on Ageism by social justice campaigner Ashton Applewhite. Ashton gave her inaugural presentation on her Australian tour to a Hobart audience and directly challenged ageist stereotypes that we internalise and see in the world around us.

COTA is a member of the EveryAGE Counts national coalition of individuals and prominent organisations with a long term agenda for change, including reframing getting older as a valid, positive and meaningful part of life

www.everyagecounts.org.au

“

Ageing doesn't need to confer special rights, but we feel very strongly that as Tasmanians age, we must have an equal opportunity to participate and contribute in meaningful ways in our community.”



Seniors Week 2019

Seniors Week in October was the 21st annual activities program for Tasmania's seniors and the ninth run by COTA Tasmania since it took over management from the State Government.

In keeping with COTA Tasmania's practice of creating an over-arching theme for each Seniors Week, this year's theme was a "Connections" message, aligning with COTA's overall community engagement and peer education activities.

The official Seniors Week launch, traditionally held a few weeks ahead of the start of official activities, embraced the Connections theme. COTA highlighted its many community connections by conducting a mini expo where COTA staff provided a range of practical advice about our many projects and activities to the 100 guests from government and community.

Seniors Week is renowned and appreciated for its ability to bring people together so the Connections theme was naturally evident during the week of events.

The just over 500 events around the state fell short of 2017's record number but still provided plenty of variety for the thousands of patrons statewide.



The usual favourites were available including sporting and light exercise events, while the creative and information-seeking types were also well catered for with a wide range of sessions available.

Musical performances were also well patronised with choral concerts here and there, and the popular Army Band again performed to an enthusiastic crowd.

COTA gratefully acknowledges the ongoing financial support of the Tasmanian Government through the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Communities.

We also acknowledge the ongoing financial or in-kind support of sponsors: TasNetworks, The Senior newspaper, MerseyLink Coaches, Australia Post, plus an array of smaller local businesses and organisations that provided support via paid, printed-program advertising. We also acknowledge the valuable assistance provided by local government, event organisers, volunteers and COTA members.



Photo courtesy of the Examiner.



COTA Tasmania Annual General Meeting

We were thrilled to welcome Olympic gold medallist, Shane Gould MBE, to our 2019 AGM. As expected Shane drew a large crowd, sharing insights into her life as a competitive swimmer, her time on reality series Australian Survivor, and her life on the East Coast. The audience was also treated to some swimming tips!

We elected two new members to the Board — Leanne Doherty and Ian Fletcher, who returned to the Board after a two-year break. The remaining four positions were filled by existing Board members re-elected to their positions. We were fortunate to have a strong field of applicants with twelve nominations for the six vacant positions.

Piecing it Together — Clarence 2020

The second Piecing it Together intergenerational street art project was successfully delivered in January in partnership with Clarence City Council and Eastlands. Eleven younger and older people came together to design and create a piece of street art, challenging stereotypes about being younger and becoming older in the process.

Tasmanian muralist, Jamin, headed up the team again to bring everyone's ideas together after reflecting on past life experiences and future aspirations. Younger and older participants paired up to prepare stencils and

spray-paint their shared vision about taking risks and stepping into the unknown to embrace change and possibility, much like a bird leaving the nest.

Videos and photos of the process and final product are on the COTA Tasmania website.





Tasplan International Women's Day Award for Excellence 2020

The COTA Board and team were delighted when CEO, Sue Leitch's exceptional leadership was recognised in the Tasplan International Women's Day Awards for Excellence held in March 2020. Sue was named as the Community Sector Inspirational Leader for her effective promotion of positive ageing and her impact on public policy. By calling out ageism and challenging stereotypes Sue has directly furthered the cause of older Tasmanians.

Meet and Greet

Meet and Greet were initially created as a way for COTA to connect with people in the north of the state. Commencing in 2017, they have become a regular fixture on the COTA calendar establishing a loyal following.

During COVID-19 the decision was made to deliver the meetings online via Zoom. This proved very successful bringing an audience from across the state.

COTA would like to thank former Board Member, Glenda Daly, for her assistance in coordinating these sessions.

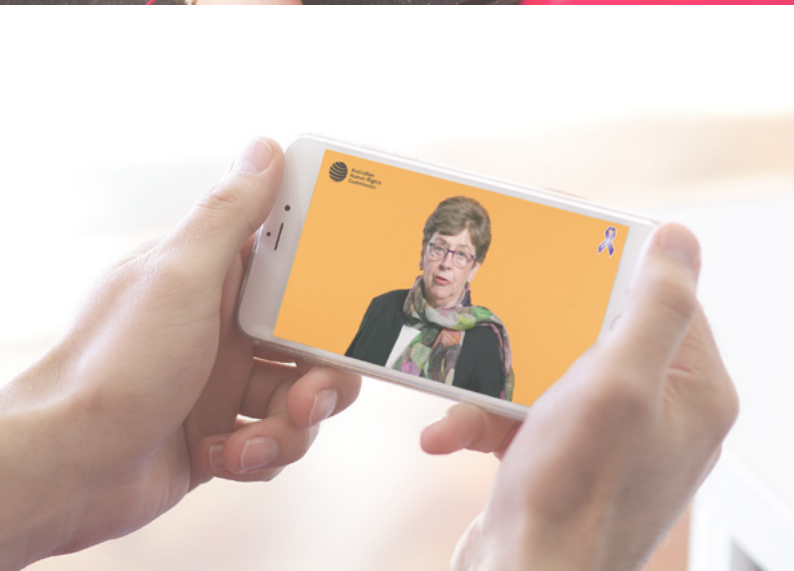
Launch of Work45+ website for older job seekers and employers

In 2019, COTA Tasmania began developing a new website to support older job seekers and encourage employers to look at older workers with fresh eyes. We could never have imagined how much would change before the website launch in late May. When COVID-19 arrived, we had to quickly rethink the site, adding information about new and adjusted income supports, additional workplace health and safety requirements, and dramatically increased economic uncertainty. Despite the additional challenges COVID-19 has created for job seekers aged over 45, the core of www.work45plus.org.au remains the fact that it was informed by the lived experience of job seekers, employer and employment service providers who generously gave us their input. The site, developed with the support of Department of State Growth, was launched by the Minister for Education, the Honourable Jeremy Rockliff MP and attracted praise from Tasmania and interstate.

Free Legal Advice for older Tasmanians

COTA Tasmania was pleased to continue its partnership with Legal Aid, delivering free monthly appointments with a Legal Aid lawyer in our Hobart office. The clinics were well attended, and continued to be so, during COVID-19 when the transition was made to phone appointments only.

During the year, Legal Aid transitioned appointments about elder abuse from the legal clinic to its new trial case-management service called Senior Assist. The monthly legal clinic remains popular for general civil law advice but COTA Tasmania now refers cases of possible elder abuse directly to Senior Assist.



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2020

In a very different lead-up to WEAAD this year, Tasmanians responded to our call to *Talk Against Elder Abuse* by sharing videos to help overcome the isolation created by social distancing. On the day itself, 15 June, the Governor of Tasmania Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AC, Mayor of Launceston Alderman Albert van Zetten, Commonwealth Age-Discrimination Commissioner Dr Kay Patterson AO and Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Sarah Bolt joined elder abuse prevention service providers in COTA Tasmania's first ever webinar, *Talks Against Elder Abuse: Stories of Hope*, supported by the State Government. The forum was a great success, with powerful insights provided in de-identified case studies of people achieving positive outcomes through their own actions or by reaching out for support.

A highlight of the event was the launch of a new elder abuse awareness campaign by the Minister for Human Services the Honourable Roger Jaensch MP.

**This year on
World Elder Abuse
Awareness Day [June 15] I'm**



**TALKING AGAINST
ELDER ABUSE**

Programs and projects

Policy, Consultation and Advocacy

In many ways the 2019-2020 policy year was dominated by the Aged Care Royal Commission. COTA Tasmania was actively involved in the preparation of the COTA wide submissions to the Royal Commission, liaising directly with the staff of the Royal Commission and supporting older Tasmanians, their families and supporters on matters related to the Royal Commission.

The Royal Commission visited Tasmania twice in the latter months of 2019 for a Community Forum in Launceston and Royal Commission Hearings held in Hobart. Witness statements were both challenging and heart wrenching and contributed significantly to the Commission's understanding of the lived experience of older Tasmanians in relation to aged care and informed the Commission's interim Report entitled *Neglect*.

Other major policy issues for the year included the development of a COTA Tasmania position statement on the End of Life Choices (Voluntary Assisted Dying) Bill 2020 and the Retirement Incomes Review. The Tasmanian Policy Council has been active in formulating policy positions in these and many other areas over the year.

COTA Tasmania made the following submissions during the financial year:

- Aged Care Royal Commission submissions via COTA Australia
- Affordable Housing Select Committee Inquiry
- Adult Learning Strategy 2019-22
- Religious Discrimination Bill Exposure Draft
- State Government Budget Submission

- Premiers Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Committee consultation
- Retirement Incomes Review via COTA Australia.
- Report on the Public Transport Experiences of older Tasmanians

COTA Tasmania continued to advocate strongly on behalf of older Tasmanians in respect of the Review of Section 87 of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 to seek amendments that would see older Tasmanians treated equally in respect of weekly payments.

Energy issues were also a feature of our advocacy this year to seek to ensure fair outcomes for all energy consumers and older Tasmanians in particular. COTA Tasmania also provided input to a Palliative Care Workforce Planning project conducted by Stenning & Associates for Palliative Care Tasmania. In addition, we met with a representative of the Investigation and Conciliation Officers of the Australian Human Rights Commission to discuss federal discrimination and human rights legislation and the complaint process.

The Tasmanian Policy Council met eight times during the year and worked on many projects outside the meeting schedule. With the advent of COVID-19 restrictions from March 2020 the meetings of the Tasmanian Policy Council moved seamlessly to the online Zoom platform.

Commonwealth Home Support Program — Sector Support Project

Funding Partner: Department of Health

The major theme behind our work under this program was wellbeing. Our objective was to interpret the concepts of wellness and reablement for older Tasmanians engaging with the aged care system. To this end our Project Officer embarked on a process of co-design with older Tasmanians to create an information session, a workshop 'tool kit' and a Living Well at Home help sheet that would assist people to better understand the concepts that underpin aged care assessment and the delivery of services.

In addition, we focussed on tailoring information sessions that would meet the needs of male audiences and outreach to the north west coast for the provision of aged care information sessions.

The following support was delivered through this project:

- Aged Care Know How help sheets on short term care options were developed and added to the suite of resources.
- 15 partnerships established by providing information sessions, resources and offers of ongoing support. In the Southern region, the Statewide organisations were ACAT, ACSA and the THS.
- 21 information sessions were delivered, with 14 provided to community groups. Tailored presentations were also provided to stakeholders, service providers and electoral offices.



- In the North West, COTA was invited to present to 13 community groups with 166 participants in total. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive with 98% of respondents rating the sessions either 4 or 5 out of 5 (very good or excellent) with 67% rated at 5 (excellent).
- The final tailored wellness information session and workshop for this period was provided in Hobart in early March, with 14 participants.
- 541 help sheets were delivered to a mix of clients, volunteers of community based organisations, electoral offices and service providers in North West and Southern Tasmania. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with an increase in awareness of aged care options; increased client confidence and capacity to interact with assessors, service providers and hospitals.

Due to the advent of COVID-19 restrictions, group sessions were placed on hold between March and June 2020.



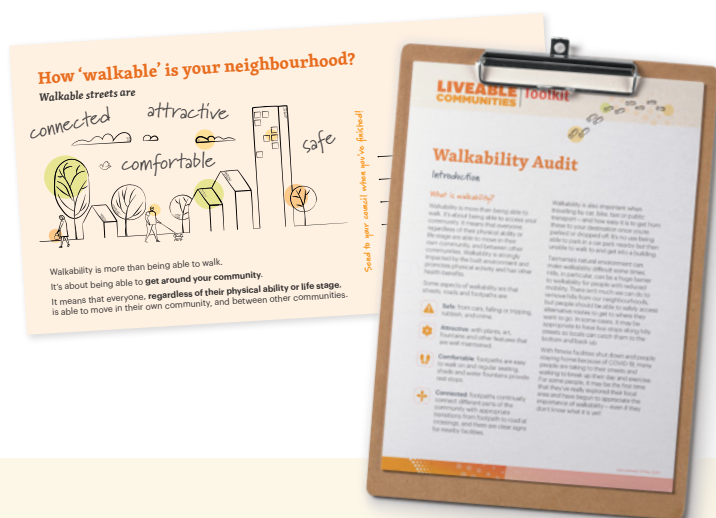


Active Ageing

Funding Partner: Department of Premier and Cabinet

COTA's Active Ageing project continues to deliver a diverse range of initiatives that aim to empower Tasmanians as we age to be active participants in how we live our lives in our communities.

- Crew the Community Activities and Events webpages (735 activities to 912 activities state-wide)
- Delivered Piecing it Together 2020 in Clarence
 - Resulted in discussions with two other councils and developing a crowdfunding campaign for future projects
- Development of All Ages: Business for Everyone online training modules, informed by a survey of Seniors Card Businesses
 - In discussion with Clarence City Council regarding implementation
- Tasmanian Liveable Communities Toolkit update and launch
- Walkability Audit and postcard
- Ageing Workforce input to Work45+ website
- Attitudes to Ageing survey (yet to be distributed due to COVID-19)
- Energy advocacy: Facilitating COTA Energy Advocates; Aurora Community Consultation Forum; TasNetworks Pricing Reform Group; Tas Networks Policy and Regulatory Working Group; OTTER Customer Consultative Committee; Power\$mart Home Stakeholder Advisory Group; Project Marinus; Aurora product service fee; Invited to provide input to the AER's review of the Consumer Challenge Panel; Panel member for the Energy Consumers Australia Board Stakeholders' Forum



Aged Care System Navigator Trial

Funding Partner: COTA Australia

COTA Tasmania is one of 30 organisations delivering 62 trial activities across Australia. The project focuses on supporting vulnerable people and those with complex needs who are accessing aged care for the first time or are transitioning between the Commonwealth Home Support Program, Home Care Packages and/or Residential Aged Care.

The trial aims to inform future decision-making and test different system navigator models in different circumstances with the ultimate aim of improving access to aged care services.

During 2019-20 COTA Tasmania has delivered the following support to older Tasmanians, their families and supporters to assist them to navigate the aged care system:

- 62 group information sessions to an audience of 933 people
- 553 instances of individual support, many of which were carried out face-to-face
- Distributed nearly 900 separate Aged Care Know How help sheets

These results were achieved despite the need to stop delivering group information sessions and face-to-face support between March and June 2020 due to restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Feedback from participants in the program has been very positive with the majority finding the support invaluable in navigating the aged care system.

Toward the end of the period, COTA Tasmania was advised that the trial was likely to be extended through to the end of the 2020/21 financial year and negotiations were underway to agree to the scope of the extension.



Peer Education

In 2019 – 2020, the Peer Education program underwent significant change, expanding our library of peer education modules and commencing another initiative. Amidst all this hard work all peer education, including the Digital Inclusion Initiative, was suspended in March. Considering the Christmas break seen by COTA TAS in January and February, The Peer Education Program has been very quiet in the second half of this financial year.

Organisations had their choice of the four original information modules:

Wake Up: Home Fire Safety

Funding Partner: Tasmania Fire Service

This module was available to organisations for the sixth consecutive year. Discussions were held with the Tasmanian Fire Service to change this module to incorporate lessons learnt from the 2019 bushfires.

Eat for Life

Funding Partner: Department of Communities

Developed from dietician Ngaire Hobbins' book, *Eat to Cheat Ageing: Eat for Life*, this module remains one of our most popular. In this peer education season we delivered six sessions across the state.

You're Worth It

Funding Partner: Department of Health and Human Services

There are two modules we deliver under this banner: *Protecting Yourself from Abuse* and *Protecting Your Finances from Abuse*. The *Protecting Yourself from Abuse* module has been developed in conjunction with COTA's Elder Abuse Prevention Officer to help people recognise the signs of elder abuse. *Protecting Your Finances from Abuse* is a practical module offering valuable information on scams and tips for keeping your information safe.

Digital Inclusion Initiative

Funding Partner: Aurora Energy

Aurora Energy is funding COTA TAS to deliver one-on-one digital help sessions to older Tasmanians. These hourly sessions are conducted onsite at Westella or through IT Pop-up stalls for older Tasmanians across the state. As an add on, we also introduced a new module: *Secret Photo Business* which, with the assistance of a step by step guide assists older Tasmanians to transfer their photos off their phones onto a storage device.

Eat to Cheat Ageing

Tasmania
Peer Education
Program



Protecting Yourself from Elder Abuse

Tasmania
Peer Education
Program



Secret Photo Business

Tasmania
Peer Education
Program



Elder Abuse Prevention

Funding Partner: Department of Health and Human Services

- CEO Sue Leitch supported Commonwealth Age-Discrimination Commissioner Dr Kay Patterson OA in a meet-and-speak tour of Tasmania's east, north and north-west to promote elder abuse awareness. UTAS intern Brett Lazdins and COTA Tas staff provided logistics assistance and distributed tens of thousands of associated resources through mail-outs and Seniors Week brochures.
- Board member Dr Peta Cook recorded a long interview with COTA Tasmania's elder abuse prevention project officer as a teaching aid to raise awareness of elder abuse among students of the Bachelor of Ageing and Dementia Studies at the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre.
- COTA Tasmania demonstrated its influence as a voice for older Tasmanians through its representation on the Statewide Elder Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee and three of its working groups.
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day activities included a very well-attended online forum and a campaign encouraging prominent Tasmanians to post videos to raise awareness and encourage connection in the interests of elder abuse prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic (see page 13 for more details).
- Peer education sessions and information sessions for staff and volunteers who work with older people were strong in the first half of the year. Not surprisingly, numbers declined significantly in the second half of the year due to COVID-19 restrictions which ultimately resulted in peer education being suspended until safe to resume.



Seniors Week

Funding Partner: Department of Premier and Cabinet

Seniors Week was held from the 14 October 2019 for the 21st consecutive year with an overarching theme centred around community connections.

- There were just over 500 events arranged by 194 organisers and attended by an estimated 10,000 people.
- The official "Connections" launch event in Launceston was a mini COTA expo, utilising the majority of COTA Staff who provided a range of advice to launch guests.
- Free Seniors Week travel was again available to MerseyLink bus patrons however, for the first time, free travel was not available for Metro bus patrons during Seniors Week.
- Strategies were implemented to more effectively measure participant numbers and feedback including assistance from volunteers attending events.
- Successfully engaged with more community newspapers and radio stations (in addition to mainstream media) to boost awareness of Seniors Week, Seniors Week registration and the availability of the official events guide.



Strength for Life

Funding Partner: Australian Sports Commission

Commenced the roll out of the *Strength for Life* program in Tasmania, including activities such as:

- Delivered an information session in Hobart.
- Promoted the program at events, such as Seniors Week in Launceston and the Spring into Health Expo in Kingston.
- Delivered a Strength for Life Instructor Accreditation Course in Hobart over two days, with 11 instructors successfully gaining their Strength for Life accreditation.
- Accredited a fitness facility in Hobart as the first Strength for Life provider.
- Developed marketing materials and program content for the COTA Tasmania website, including an online expression of interest form that received 102 submissions.
- Commenced a pilot examining online delivery of Strength for Life sessions.

The Australian and Tasmanian governments introduced a range of measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, including restrictions on activities in the fitness industry.

This resulted in an almost complete shutdown of the fitness industry. Restrictions started to ease during June 2020; however, some facilities remain closed and others are operating at a limited capacity, with reductions in areas such as: client numbers; available equipment; service offerings; and trading hours.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many activities related to the roll out of the Strength for Life program in Tasmania had to be paused.



Organisational impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented both challenges and opportunities for COTA Tasmania as an organisation.

The decision in March to move from our offices in Westella to a home based work environment meant that our IT system was tested and our skills using zoom and other online communication systems were quickly upgraded. We were fortunate to receive an Essential Technology Grant from the State Government to assist in the purchase of necessary IT equipment and subscriptions to communication software.

For a team that thrives on shared passion and ideas it has been challenging at times to be working independently at home. An investment in wellbeing coaching proved beneficial as have regular catch ups online and a Facebook Messenger group called COTA Cats where the banter, laughs and updates could continue to be shared.

As COTA Tasmania stepped up our advocacy and support services for older Tasmanians we fell into a pattern of reviewing our existing outputs, negotiating new objectives and keeping in regular contact with older Tasmanians. Our increased project load has kept everyone incredibly busy rolling out timely information, resources and advocating strongly for older Tasmanians.

We were pleased to deliver a series of COVID-19 supports for older Tasmanians, made possible by the support of the Tasmanian Government through Communities Tasmania.

The support of all our grantors in re-designing our work to meet the needs of the new circumstances we all find ourselves in has been greatly appreciated.

All our staff continued to work, however it was necessary to place many of our regular face-to-face programs in the community on hold due to COVID-19 restrictions. Many of these programs involve our fabulous volunteers, so we have had less contact in the last few months than we would usually have.

In most cases we have found new ways of working — webinars, phone support, hard copy resources, Facebook Live and YouTube videos to name a few. Notwithstanding the fact that we have new and some well-honed older skills in place, we are all looking forward to moving back to face-to-face interactions using COVID-safe practices as soon as possible.

Additional income related to COVID-19:

- Department of Communities Grant to deliver information and resources to older Tasmanians during the COVID-19 pandemic (\$65,000)
- Essential Technology Grant (\$4,000)
- Australian Tax Office Cash Flow Boost (\$11,621)

Please note that we anticipate further ATO Cash Flow Boosts in the next financial year.

Additional expenses related to COVID-19:

- IT Equipment (\$6,735)
- IT contractor support (\$2,040)
- Home office support — equipment and consumables (\$617)
- Communications (\$1,049)
- Wellbeing of staff (\$768)
- Cleaning (\$895)

Please note that we anticipate increased cleaning costs when we return to the office; potential for further HR expenses related to wellbeing and some additional IT costs.

Impact of COVID-19 on Older Tasmanians

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the strength, resilience and kindness of our Tasmanian community. It has tested, and continues to test us all. This year like no other in recent memory has adversely affected older Tasmanians in a number of areas. Principally, it has underlined existing and known shortcomings in our systems.

Loneliness and social isolation

COTA Tasmania is very concerned about the impacts on the mental health of older people who have been socially isolated during the pandemic and are fearful of the risk associated with re-engaging with community activities, even as other community members are reconnecting through the recovery period. Even before the pandemic, a large proportion of the Tasmanian population had risk factors for loneliness and social isolation including older age, entering retirement and living alone.

It is highly likely that social isolation experienced due to the pandemic is contributing to the deterioration of mental health among older Tasmanians. COTA Tasmania would like to see more investment in mental health initiatives specifically targeting older Tasmanians.

Health and Wellbeing

It is widely acknowledged that the rates of many chronic health conditions in Tasmania are higher than the national average. COTA Tasmania is very concerned that the impact of COVID-19 restrictions in both residential aged care and in the community will result in declining physical health of older Tasmanians. Decisions to stay at home, not engage in regular community activities and/or exercise will be having an impact on physical health. When coupled with reductions in presentations to GP's during the pandemic for regular checks and management of chronic conditions, there is strong reason for concern. As our community continues to age, a focus on preventative health care and wellbeing is critical.

Ageism

During times of crisis, we sometimes see groups of people being treated as ‘others’ in our community. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted again that ageism exists in our community in a number of forms. We are seeing more and more examples of ageist stereotypes in our media and in the stories about the impact of COVID-19 from around the world.

The heightened susceptibility of older people to the virus and specific public health advice that they self-isolate is sometimes seeing older people blamed for the restrictions placed on the community at large. Language used in the media and in relation to vulnerable groups, including over 70’s, also has the potential to entrench stereotypes that all older people are frail and dependent. COTA Tasmania maintains that the human rights of all people are intrinsic. Older people have equal rights in the community and should not be marginalised, provided lesser services or disparaged as a consequence of their age.

Aged Care

The Aged Care Royal Commission has laid bare the failings, challenges and successes within the aged care system in Australia. Many of these issues have been raised by COTA for some time during the ongoing process of aged care reform. The COVID-19 pandemic has again manifestly highlighted the shortcomings of the aged care system in Australia. COTA Tasmania is working with our partners to ensure that the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners are heard and acted upon to build a high quality experience for all older Australians accessing aged care services.

Digital inclusion

Any crisis response plan should include elements to mitigate the impact of a future crisis, or a recurrence of the current crisis. Building community resilience is key. The ability of many older Tasmanians to cope in the face of the pandemic has been compromised by low levels of digital engagement.

While many older Tasmanians are effective users of digital technology, Tasmanians over the age of 65 are among some of the most digitally excluded populations in Australia and Tasmania. In 2019, Tasmanians over 65 years had the second lowest Australian Digital Inclusion Index (ADII) score of all demographic groups in Tasmania.

Affordable, Appropriate and Accessible Housing

Affordable, appropriate and accessible housing that will meet Tasmania's current and future needs is critical to underpinning the wellbeing and success of our community. Prior to the COVID-19 emergency, Tasmania was experiencing a housing crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has again reinforced the critical need for affordable, appropriate and secure housing that will enable older Tasmanians to age in place. Many older Tasmanians are forced to leave their homes in rural locations to move to regional and metropolitan centres to find housing options that meet their needs. This dislocation from their community networks is both isolating and disempowering.

The links between secure housing and both physical and mental health have never been more apparent. As unemployment and underemployment increase because of the pandemic more Tasmanians, many of whom are already living under the poverty line and on fixed incomes, will be impacted by housing stress and homelessness.

There is a critical need for an increase in the supply of affordable and appropriate housing in our state that reflects the evolving needs and desire of our population to age in place.

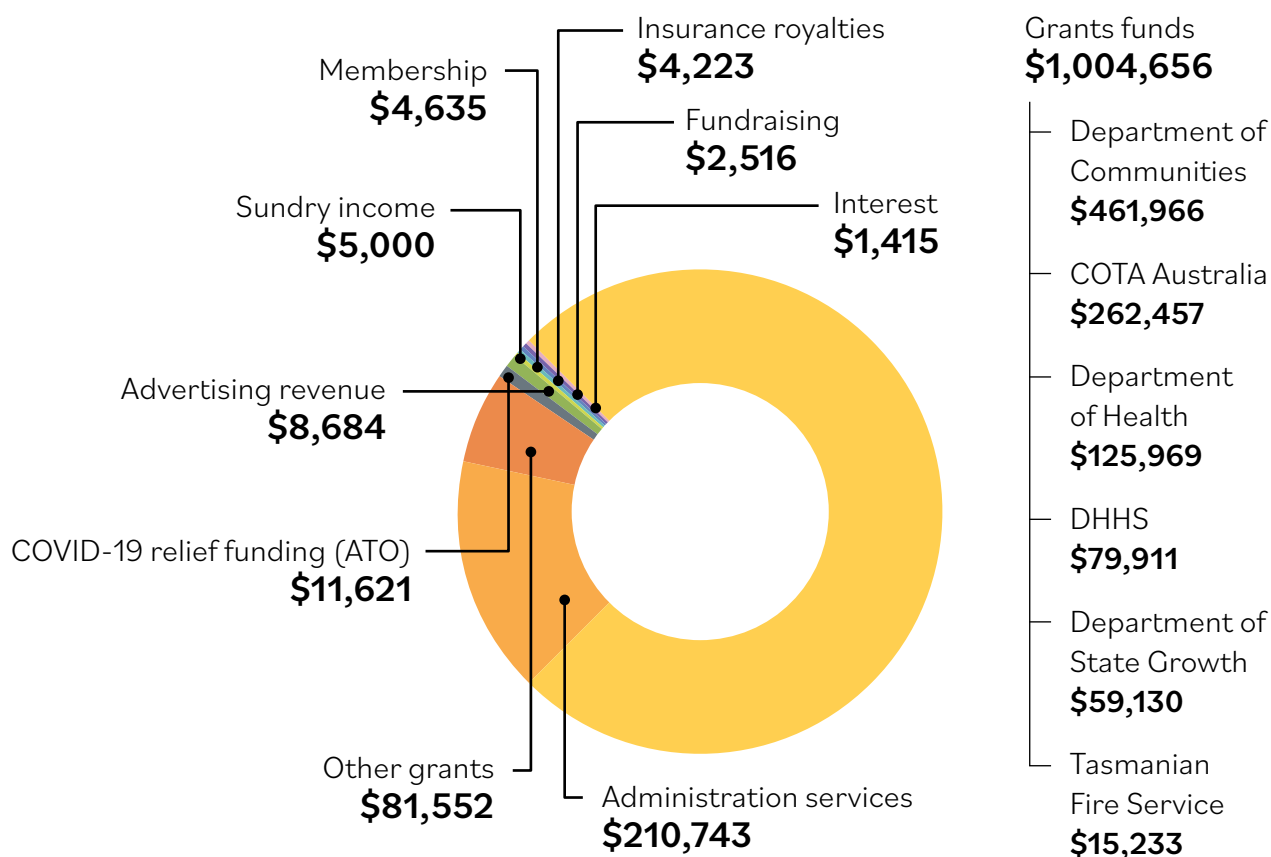
Mature age workforce

It is difficult to predict the impact that COVID-19 will have on older workers. However, there are past examples of older workers being unable to re-join the workforce after global economic downturns, as we expect to see in coming months as the economy recovers from COVID-19. Women have also been disproportionately impacted by job losses during the pandemic due to their high levels of employment in many of the hardest hit industries including retail, social services and the tourism and hospitality sectors. Many older women in the workforce have low superannuation balances, low levels of savings and many live in rental accommodation. As a result, they are not well prepared to withstand long periods of unemployment and may be forced into early retirement and reliance on the pension.

COTA Tasmania is concerned about the ongoing impacts of the pandemic on mature age workers. It is essential that any plan for economic recovery includes targeted and specific programs to assist older jobseekers to find and maintain employment during the economic downturn.

Financial statements 2019–20

Sources of income



Income: areas of growth

Grants



Administration services



Statement by members of the Board



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Financial declaration for Responsible Person

Financial year ending 30 June 2020

In accordance with section 60.15 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*, the Directors of the Board declare that in their opinion:

- (a) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- (b) the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.

Signed on behalf of the Board by:

David Strong

Treasurer
COTA Tasmania

Dated this 23 day of September 2020

Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank, on Hand	29,588	65,747
Bond	7,990	7,990
GST Due from ATO	6,581	8,386
Petty Cash	100	100
Term Deposits	473,337	289,929
Receivables	67,694	191,901
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	585,291	564,054
Non Current Assets		
Computers at Cost	15,934	15,934
Deduct Provision Depreciation	(15,934)	(15,934)
Motor Vehicles at Cost	55,643	32,229
Deduct Provision Depreciation	(14,757)	(12,706)
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	40,887	19,524
TOTAL ASSETS	626,177	583,577
Deduct Current Liabilities		
Payroll Liabilities	19,913	11,137
Provision Employee Entitlements	137,757	95,817
GST Due to ATO	22,321	38,353
Unexpended Project Funds	310,464	332,329
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	490,455	477,636
NET ASSETS	\$135,722	\$105,941
Equity		
Accumulated Funds Brought Forward	105,941	101,168
Net Surplus for Year	29,781	4,773
TOTAL EQUITY	\$135,722	\$105,941

Statement of financial performance

for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Income		
Grants Funds:		
City of Hobart	-	3,028
COTA Australia	262,457	53,479
DHHS	79,911	60,000
DoH	125,969	124,108
Department of Communities	461,966	491,299
Tas Fire Service	15,223	21,138
State Growth	59,130	2,075
Total Grant Funds	1,004,656	755,126
Administration Services	210,743	174,814
Other Grants	81,552	45,599
COVID-19 Relief Funding (ATO)	11,621	-
Advertising Revenue	8,684	10,392
Sundry Income	5,000	4,900
Membership	4,635	4,963
Insurance Royalties	4,223	3,255
Fundraising	2,516	5,957
Interest	1,415	2,094
Sponsorship	-	9,500
TOTAL INCOME	1,335,046	1,016,600

	2020	2019
<i>Deduct Expenses</i>		
Salaries	667,129	469,262
Projects	210,743	174,814
Employee Entitlements	70,937	56,541
Superannuation	65,369	45,733
Advertising, Promotion	64,156	38,866
Consultancies	52,625	33,392
Rent	45,717	42,386
Equipment, Consulting	12,912	11,238
Travel, Accommodation	11,769	10,291
Postage	11,327	9,630
Photocopier, Printing	10,038	7,462
Telephone, Facsimile, Internet	9,864	6,100
Insurance	9,589	7,991
IT Contract	8,868	4,719
Volunteer Expenses	7,364	5,086
Motor Vehicle	7,139	6,683
Board, Conference, Annual Report	6,903	5,521
Subscriptions	5,193	4,007
COTA National, Australia Levy	5,131	11,782
Staff Benefits, Development, Recruitment	4,211	7,117
Website	3,853	25,870
Electricity	3,626	4,255
Client Support Services	2,683	10,660
Depreciation	2,051	4,707
Audit, Accounting	2,025	2,000
Sundry Expenses	1,810	2,023
Meeting expenses	1,785	696
Repairs, Maintenance	448	2,995
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,305,265	1,011,827
NET SURPLUS FOR YEAR	\$29,781	\$4,773

Statement of cash flows

for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Cash Received from Operations		
Receipts from Grants	1,086,209	1,076,826
Receipts from other sources	374,849	87,096
Deduct Expenditure on Suppliers and employees	(1,290,395)	(998,193)
Cash Deficit from Operations	170,663	165,729
Cash Used in Investing Activities		
Purchase of Motor Vehicle (Net)	(23,304)	-
Cash Deficit from Investing	(23,304)	-
Net cash reduction for the year	147,359	165,729
Balance at start of year	355,667	189,938
Balance at end of year	\$503,026	\$355,667
Made up by:		
Cash at Bank	29,688	65,847
Deposit	473,337	289,929
Total cash at year end	\$503,026	\$355,777

Result for Year is reconciled to cash surplus from operations as follows:

Operating Surplus (Deficit) for the year	29,781	4,773
Changes in non-cash items		
Depreciation	2,051	4,707
Employee entitlements	41,940	33,354
Payroll liabilities	8,775	2,169
Unexpended funds	(21,865)	276,119
Sundry debtors	126,012	(184,989)
Sundry creditors	(16,032)	29,596
Cash Surplus (Deficit) from Operations	\$170,663	\$165,729

Statement of change in equity

for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Retained surplus (\$)
Balance 1 July 2018 brought forward	101,168
Surplus for the year attributed to members of the entity	4,773
Balance as at 30 June 2019 carried forward	105,941
Balance 1 July 2019 brought forward	105,941
Surplus for the year attributed to members of the entity	29,781
Balance as at 30 June 2020 carried forward	135,722

Notes to the financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

1 Basis of Preparation

1.1 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1964, the requirements of the Association's Constitution and the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission. The Board of Governance has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity as defined in Statement of Accounting Concepts 1: Definition of the Reporting Entity. The Association has however, prepared the financial report in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and the Reduced Disclosure Requirements.

The Council on the Ageing (Tasmania) Inc. is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under the Accounting Standards.

1.2 BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements, other than the statement of cash flows, has been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair value of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

1.3 CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting policies adopted are consistent with prior years.

2 Significant accounting policies

The following significant accounting policies have been adopted in the preparation of these statements and are consistent with prior years unless otherwise stated.

- AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements
- AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows
- AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
- AASB 1048 Interpretation of Standards
- AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures.

3 Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the Association is exempt from income tax under Div. 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. The Association holds deductible gift receipt status.

4 Goods and Service Tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australia Taxation Office (ATO).

5 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and at bank and deposits held at call with banks.

6 Revenue

Revenue comprises income from the sale of services, government grants, client contributions and donations.

Revenue is recognised when the amount of revenue can be measured reliably, collection is possible, the costs incurred or to be incurred can be measured reliably.

7 Property

Motor vehicle assets are brought to account at cost less any accumulated depreciation. The carrying amount of fixed assets is reviewed annually to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount of these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of expected net cash flows which will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal.

Movements in carrying amounts	
Balance at 1 July 2019	19,524
Additions	23,414
Depreciation	(2,051)
Carrying amounts at the end of the year	40,887

8 Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated on a straight line or a diminishing value basis over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The rate of depreciation on the motor vehicle is 10%.

9 Employee Benefits

9.1 SHORT-TERM EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Short term employee benefits are benefits, other than termination benefits, that are expected to be settled within twelve (12) months after the end of the period in which the employees render the service. A liability is recognised for the amount expected to be paid if the Association has a present or constructive obligation to pay this amount as a result of past service provided by the employee and the obligation can be estimated reliably.

9.2 OTHER LONG TERM EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Provision is made for the organisation's liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Policy is to accrue 0% of long service leave for casual employees with less than 12 months of service. For other staff long service leave provisions are accrued on the basis of 2.5% per annum. The allocation is reviewed annually.

10 Economic Dependence

Although there is no reason to believe that funding will cease, the ongoing viability of the Association as a going concern is dependent on continued grant funding.

11 Auditor payments

Payments to the auditor were \$2,025 in 2020 and \$2,000 in 2019. No other payments were made in either year.

Independent auditor's report

To members of the Council on the Ageing (Tasmania) Inc.

I have audited the special purpose financial report of the Council on the Ageing (Tasmania) Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the special purpose financial report of the Council on the Ageing (Tasmania) Inc presents fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia the financial position of the Association as at 30 June 2020 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

In my opinion, the financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set down in Division 60-45 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (as amended)*.

Management Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee is responsible for preparation and fair presentation of the special purpose financial report and information contained therein. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the accounts are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting amounts and other disclosures in the accounts, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Concepts and Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views) (where applicable), and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Association's financial position and the results of its operations and cash flows.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

To the best of my knowledge and belief, there has been no contravention of auditor independence and any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Limitation of Scope

It is not practicable to establish complete accounting control over all transactions processed by the Association from all of its activities. Verification therefore has been limited to the transactions recorded in the Association's financial records.

MAX PECK & ASSOCIATES



Rendell W. RIDGE

1 September 2020



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