

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Seniors peak body welcomes Banks Report**

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Tasmania welcomes the release of the report by Tasmania 's Anti Discrimination Commissioner, Ms Robin Banks, which highlights apparent discrimination in regard to accident and injury insurance for older volunteers.

COTA Chief Executive Officer, Sue Leitch says COTA has been concerned about this issue for some time and is very pleased that it's now been officially highlighted - quite appropriately in National Volunteers Week.

"Older Tasmanians make up a significant proportion of Tasmania's volunteer workforce, and many organisations, including COTA, could simply not operate their popular and sometimes essential programs without their senior volunteer armies", Mrs Leitch said.

"The experience, enthusiasm and overall contribution by older Tasmanians to many organisations, not to mention their support to the community in general, is invaluable and shouldn't be under estimated.

"The apparent discrimination of older people highlighted in the Banks report discourages volunteers from applying, and organisations from employing these selfless people."

Mrs Leitch says it's very instructional that in her report, Commissioner Banks said that in her view, the statistical data provided to insurance companies for their risk assessments did not support the view that age alone was the only or best indicator of risk of accident, injury or other forms of ill-health that may result in a claim under volunteer insurance policies.

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“Accordingly, COTA Tas now calls on insurance companies to remove these barriers for organisations wishing to have older people work with them as volunteers.”

Mrs Leitch says that COTA is also pleased that Attorney General Wightman has undertaken to examine Ms Banks’ report to see if it has any implications for the current Anti-Discrimination Act.

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