

COUNCIL ON THE AGEING POLICY COUNCIL

COTA (Tas) POLICY COUNCIL- a vehicle for older Tasmanians and representatives of older persons organisations and relevant bodies to come together to give voice to older Tasmanians concerns and issues

TERMS OF REFERENCE

AUGUST 2010

Council appointment process

- COTA (Tas) Board Executive shall be responsible for implementing the selection process for membership to the Policy Council.
- Policy Council members shall sit on the Council for a maximum of 3 years and not be eligible to stand for election until a further 12 mths.
- Membership to the Policy Council will be determined on skills and attributes deemed necessary by the COTA (Tas) Executive and members will be selected via public advertisement.
- COTA (Tas) will actively seek older Tasmanian to nominate for the Council.

COTA Australia is guided by the following set of policy principles. These policy principles underpin the development of COTA (Tas) policies:

1. Maximising the social, economic and political participation of senior Australians

COTA seeks to maximise opportunities for equitable social and economic participation by senior Australians, including by promoting positive approaches to the contribution of seniors and the ageing of the Australian population.

2. Promoting positive views of ageing, rejecting ageism and challenging negative stereotypes

COTA supports initiatives that recognise the capacities and contributions of seniors and actively combat ageism and age discrimination. COTA National believes that the impact of ageism, based on negative age stereotypes, restricts the participation and inclusion of older people in all aspects of Australian life. This has adverse effects on the community and on older people.

3. Promoting sustainable, fair and responsible policies

COTA is committed to the development of sustainable and equitable policies for seniors that take account of the needs of the entire community in the short and long term. It will develop policies which are fiscally and economically responsible and which fairly balance the competing needs and interests of diverse groups amongst the senior population and other sectors of the community.

4. Focus on protecting against and redressing disadvantage

COTA believes all people have the right to security, dignity, respect, safety, high standards of treatment and care and to equal participation in the community regardless of income, status, background, location, frailty, or any other social, cultural or economic factor. As a result, COTA will have a strong focus on seniors who are most vulnerable or disadvantaged in terms of these criteria.

5. Protecting and extending services and programs that are used and valued by senior Australians

COTA develops policies and provides advice on maintaining and improving services and programs which seniors use and value. These include housing, health care, employment, utilities, public transport, recreation, social participation opportunities, aged support and care and education and training. It will seek to ensure there is an adequate safety net of services and income support which all seniors can access according to fair and equitable criteria in order to maintain a reasonable quality of life.

The key objectives and functions of the COTA (Tas) Policy Council are as follows:

Objectives

- Identify issues for COTA (Tas) policy focus (local, state and national).
- Make recommendations on priority of proposed policy and program responses.
- Ensure COTA (Tas) policies are based on stakeholder input, research and dialogue, and where possible, encourage the development of evidence based data, in accordance with COTA (Tas) Mission and Goals and agreed policy principles.
- Provide support in the advocacy of COTA (Tas) policy, through leadership and expertise on ageing issues.
- Recommend main strategies for developing and advancing COTA (Tas) policy agendas.
- Ensure that COTA (Tas) is an active participant in the COTA National policy forum.

Functions

- Provide the COTA (Tas) channel through which members and stakeholders contribute to the identification of issues and development of policy.
- Facilitate consultation, research and dialogue, and where possible, encourage the development of evidence based data, on a state wide basis.
- Support the Board and CEO in liaison with politicians, key public servants, representative bodies and other sectors, academic and research institutions and other appropriate bodies and where approved by the COTA Board and/or COTA policies, use the credible reputation of Council members to influence relevant sectors, organisations and individuals to educate and inform on issues concerning older Tasmanians.
- Advise COTA (Tas) Board on policy directions and provide recommendations on strategies to achieve policy acceptance by relevant stakeholders.
- Provide input into the COTA National policy agenda by commenting on draft policies generated from other jurisdictions or the National office and by submitting draft policies for consideration by the National Policy Council.

Activities

- The policy Council shall meet at least quarterly.
- It shall communicate via teleconference, email and other means in between each meeting.
- The Policy Council shall be chaired by a member of the COTA (Tas) Board.
- The Council shall convene working parties from time to time to research and develop recommendations for the Policy Council. Working parties may comprise both Council members and co-opted experts and shall have a clearly defined time limit to their involvement on the Council.
- The Policy Council shall receive administrative support from the COTA (Tas) operational staff/volunteers.

Procedures

- Operational staff shall in collaboration with the policy council chair develop and distribute an agenda for each meeting in advance together with minutes and relevant papers supporting the agenda.
- Reports shall be presented (written or oral) by working parties and relevant operational staff at each meeting.
- Normal meeting procedures shall apply.
- Meetings shall determine the need for out of session communication and the establishment of additional working parties.
- Recommendations from the TPC will be progressed at the discretion of the COTA Board President/TPC Chair, directly to the NPC and/or the COTA (Tas) Board.